

**ETHNOGRAPHY OF VOTING: NOSTALGIA, SUBJECTIVITY, AND POPULAR
POLITICS IN POST-SOCIALIST LITHUANIA**

by

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
the School of Arts and Sciences in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

University of Pittsburgh

2006

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
THE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

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Politics in Eastern Europe has become increasingly defined by apparent paradoxes, such as majority voting for the ex-communist parties in the early 1990s and strong support for populists and the radical right later in the 1990s and 2000s. The tendency in political science studies is to speak about the losers of transition, and to explain success of the ex-communist, radical and populist parties and politicians in terms of the politics of resentment or protest voting. However, what subjectivities have been produced during post-socialism and why/how they are articulated in particular dialogues among politicians and people, are questions that have not been discussed in most studies. In this dissertation I explore political subjectivities to explain voting behavior in the period of 2003-2004 in Lithuania. I analyze nostalgia for socialism and individuals' relations to social and political history, community, nation, and the state. I argue that voting is an enactment of a social text or a performance of social history, in which a subject embodies his/her experience and knowledge. Voting is a meaningful action not just a protest. Electoral politics is a semantic and symbolic competition.

My analysis is informed by phenomenology, semiotics, interpretative anthropology, post-structuralist theory as well as post-socialist and post-colonial studies. The research was conducted in 2003-2004 in three village communities and the cities of Vilnius and Kaunas, Lithuania.

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PREFACE

Many people were involved in research leading to this dissertation. I express my gratitude to everyone who opened their homes and shared their lives and thoughts, who guided me through the lived post-socialist history and taught me to see and feel as they did. I especially wish to thank Danguolė Lukošienė, Adomas Subačius, Diana Jankauskienė, and Zoja for their precious knowledge, initiative, guidance, and invaluable support and friendship during the research. My deepest thanks also go to Rasa Butkienė, Gema Jurkūnaitė, Romualda Hofertienė, Onutė Suncovienė, Ona Volungevičiūtė, and Saulius Žukas. I also wish to thank sincerely Asta, Veronika and Albertas Dzikai, Andrius Gruzdaitis, Uljana and Stasys Knystautai, Aušrinė Krikščionaitienė, Algis and Vida Mickiai, Malvina Panavienė, Danutė, Audra and Jaunius Subačiai, Dalius Vibrantis, Violeta Triponienė, Violeta Židonytė and Vytautas Židonis. I am also very grateful to Jonas Praškevičius, Albina Budrienė and Jonas Stelmokas.

Friends and colleagues have shared ideas with me and have read drafts of this work at various stages of its development. For their valuable criticism and suggestions, I thank Diana Mincytė, Visvaldas Legkauskas, Arnas Zdanevičius, and Narcis Tulbure. I am also grateful to Egidijus Aleksandravičius, Gintautas Mažeikis, Jūratė Imbrasaitė, Remigijus Grėbliūnas, Rada Drezgić, Vilius Leonavičius, Arvydas Anušauskas, and Aukšė Balčytienė. Thanks to the University of Chicago Europe Workshop group, especially to Brian Schwegler and Jessica Greenberg. I thank Elissa Helms, Xia Zhang, Eugene Raikhel, Patrick Wilson, and Golfo Alexopoulos for suggestions of literature.

Funding for the dissertation research was provided by the Soros Foundation, Lithuanian Foundation as well as the European Union Center of the University of Pittsburgh. The Department of Anthropology, the University Center for International

Studies, and the European Center of the University of Pittsburgh funded the preliminary dissertation research. The Center for Russian and Eastern European Studies provided assistance in many ways. My graduate studies were supported by the Fulbright, Lithuanian Foundation, and teaching fellowships from the Department of Anthropology, University of Pittsburgh.

Of all the people who have inspired and guided this project along the way, my greatest debt is to my professors at the University of Pittsburgh. My deep gratitude goes to my advisor Robert Hayden, who has guided the project and raised me intellectually. His critical feedback, suggestions, and editing as well as his thoughts and ideas formed my thinking. I am also extremely grateful to Nicole Constable for her valuable advice to look behind the data and expand my ideas theoretically and geographically. I deeply thank Nicole Constable for helping me to see the possible future of some of my arguments.

I gratefully acknowledge comments and criticism of Andrew Strathern and his generous suggestions to think carefully and critically as well as to search for meaning of the seemingly meaningless. I am very grateful to Ilya Prizel who gave generously his time to discuss various directions in which the arguments could develop. I also thank Ilya Prizel for nurturing in me historical and comparative sensitivity as well as for his warm support at every time. I am extremely grateful to Alberta Sbragia for her insights and suggestions as well as for encouragement to cross the boundaries of my discipline as well as of my research sites.

I also thank David Kideckel for sharing his ideas and the manuscript. Kideckel's ideas about marginalization in Romania were a transformative moment in the way that I conceptualize people's experiences and ideas about post-socialist history.

I give special thanks to Phyllis Deasy, Rachel Paolone, and Emily Boyle for their logistical support.

My deepest thanks go to Violeta Kelertas for her support, critical advice, and editing. I am especially grateful to her for saving many thoughts from being lost in translation. I also thank Joana Gruodytė, Galia Jakaitienė, and Vaiva Misevičiūtė for transcribing audiotapes. I render especial gratitude to Violeta Meiliūnaitė for her invaluable assistance with the research as well as friendship.

My love and gratitude goes to my family, my parents Virginija and Kęstutis Misevičiai, my sister Vaiva Misevičiūtė, my aunt Nijolė Petkuvienė, and my daughter Ieva Juškaitė. I thank Giedrius Subačius for being the most ardent critic and the most inspiring supporter. Ultimately the responsibility for any possible errors or inaccuracies lies with me alone.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Texts come before us as the always-already-read; we apprehend them through sedimented layers of previous interpretations, or—if the text is brand-new—through the sedimented reading habits and categories developed by those inherited interpretive traditions (Frederic Jameson 1981).

The culture of people is an ensemble of texts, themselves ensembles, which the anthropologist strains to read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong (Clifford Geertz 1973:452).

The history of Eastern Europe has become increasingly defined by apparent paradoxes, such as large-scale voting for the ex-communist parties in the early 1990s and support to the populist and the radical right in the 1990s and 2000s. The tendency in political science is to speak about the losers of transition, and to explain the success of the ex-communist, radical and populist parties and politicians in terms of the politics of resentment, or protest voting (see, e.g., Ebata 1997, Kapetanyannis 1995, Minkenberg 2002, Betz 1994, Lubecki 2004). However, what subjectivities have been produced during post-socialism, and why/how they are articulated in particular dialogues among politicians and the people, have not been discussed in many studies.

In this dissertation I explore political subjectivities to explain political communication in the elections of 2003–2004 in Lithuania. I analyze nostalgia for socialism and people's relations to social and political history, community, nation, and the state. I argue that voting is a meaningful action and the expression of subjectivity and experience. Voting is not acting

against one's interest, as is argued in common explanations of American voting behavior (see Lakoff 2004). In this dissertation I show how experience and subjectivity are translated into votes during elections and how electoral campaigns gain success by exploiting shared meanings and values.

My analysis is informed by phenomenology, semiotics, interpretative anthropology, post-structuralist theory as well as post-socialist and postcolonial studies. Following phenomenologists (see, e.g., Jackson 1996, Merleau-Ponty 1962, 1963) I prioritize the knowledge which people share and I make their voices audible. Applying a semiotic approach I seek access to the conceptual world in which subjects live; I also inquire into meanings, signs, and signification (cf. Geertz 1973, Baudrillard 1981, Lotman 1990, Barthes 1972). Following poststructuralists I locate the subject primarily in language or discourse (see, e.g., Foucault 1977, 1984). I see language as the primary medium to understand people's thinking and their subjectivities. I explore informants' ideas and stories they tell about themselves and to themselves (Geertz 1973). Experience and action are important as articulated and narrated by an individual himself/herself. I use the notion of a "social text" to speak about shared discourses, ideas and meanings. A "social text" is a web of significance,¹ which actors have spun and in which they are suspended. It is a narrative about history, community and self containing particular meanings, values and beliefs. Texts people use are reflective of their experiences, subjectivities, and ideological positioning. Elections are textual performances (cf. Edelman 1988) and voting is the enactment of social texts.

I see social texts as dialogic, open and changing. Social texts reflect dialogized voices (Bakhtin 1981). Speaking implies inhabiting multiple voices that are not "self-enclosed or deaf to one another," but rather "hear each other constantly, call back and forth to each other, and are reflected in one another..." (Bakhtin 1984:75, cited in Yurchak 2003:485). The new nodes of texts become integrated into existing articulations of society. Even abrupt

¹ C. Geertz, following Max Weber, argues that "man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun" (Geertz 1973:5). Geertz takes culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be an interpretative science in search of meaning (Geertz 1973:5).

changes like the demise of the Soviet discursive empire, leave tracks in narratives about social and political history. Social texts are intersubjective (Taylor 1979). They are socially shared interpretations (Geertz 1973:453). Taking the position of interpretative anthropology, I see my writing as an interpretation of social texts which are informants' interpretations.

I use the concept of "social otherness" to understand particular experiences and to describe emergence of particular subjectivities. "Social otherness" refers to regimes of difference, which produce subjects as outcasts to publicly imagined community and deprive them of particular privileges, resources, and opportunities. In the Soviet state there were people like deportees and Catholics who were marginalized publicly. In the post-Soviet state there are the dispossessed poor villagers and former industrial town workers who are among the public outcasts (cf. Humphrey 2002, Kideckel, forthcoming). Understanding of circulation of difference, of recognition, values, and meanings as well as technologies of articulation of society, control and discipline is key to understanding post-socialist political subjectivities and voting.

Informed by postcolonial studies (see, e.g., Ashcroft et al. 2002) I approach subjects as hybrid, embodying traditions of socialism and post-socialism. I borrow the terms "marginality" and "subalternity" to speak about certain forms of experience as peripheral to the ideology and hegemony of the official history. The marginalized are the others produced in the gaze of the center (Ashcroft et al. 2002). They are the excluded or "mastered" subjects created by the discourse of power (Spivak 1985).

1.1 THE RESEARCH SITES

1.1.1 Villages

The villages² where the research was conducted are different in respect to population, location, and history. They lie in the eastern and central parts of Lithuania. *The smallest village* is located in eastern Lithuania. The name of the village was mentioned on the 2nd of January, 1707 in the baptism documents of church archives.³ Most probably the village was founded in the middle of the 16th century. The village is one of the Wallachian reform⁴ examples still preserved in Lithuania. The agrarian reform known as the Wallachian reform took place in that area in 1557.

The village was part of Poland from 1920 to World War II. People report that the village was ethnically Lithuanian all the time. Under the Poles the state officials and teachers at school were Poles, but the priest was Lithuanian. At present there are two Russian women, Old Believers who bought a house in the village several decades ago. Lithuanian-speaking Russian women, their parents and grandparents always lived in Lithuania.

The smallest village lies in between two towns which are 4 km away from the village. The nearest city is 20 km away. The village is crossed by the road, connecting urban places of Lithuania to Belarus. Buses pass several times a day. The relative isolation comes from inability to travel very often. Many informants considered a trip to the city expensive.

Most of the younger village people moved to cities after World War II. The ones who stayed and still live there are the generation born in the 1910s, 1920s or 1930s. In the village there is also a family with a 12 year old daughter and four men in their 30s and 40s. Some of the elderly villagers moved back to the village in the early or mid 1990s. During my research 29 people lived there.

² The names of villages are not mentioned and the names of informants are changed following American Anthropological Association Code of Ethics (see, e.g., Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban (1992) Ethics. In: Bernard H. Russell, ed. *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology*. Walnut Creek, Lanham, New York, Oxford: Altamira Press. P.173–203.) and University of Pittsburgh, Institutional Review Board suggestions.

³ National History Archives of Lithuania (Lietuvos Valstybės Istorijos archyvas).

⁴ The agrarian reform of 1557. It is known for distinct house arrangement patterns.

The elderly are retired and receive state pensions. The younger generation depends on temporary jobs. Pensioners are seen as well-off by the unemployed. However, according to the Department of Statistics,⁵ pensioners are one of the most vulnerable strata of society.

The church, a shop, and a primary school for the only child in the village are 4 km away. In 2003 the only public institution in the village was a small wooden milk delivery post. Due to low buying prices and decreasing delivery of milk, the milk delivery post was closed in 2004. The small house itself was sold to one of the inhabitants of the village who turned it into a steam bath.

The other important public place that belongs to village's past is a poultry farm. Eight buildings constituted the poultry farm, which closed in the mid 1990s. Inside one of the buildings which I entered by breaking through the tall grass and bushes, were remnants from the times when the farm was working. Smashed windows were decorated with weeds, the broken roof and walls witnessed time-caused destruction or someone's attempts to acquire building materials for small scale home projects. Most of the women of the village were employed in this poultry farm. They came there every morning and the building was full of noises of humans and chickens. At present in one of the former farm buildings there is a lumber mill. Several people from a nearby town work there.

In his memoirs about the village Adomas Subačius (1999) writes that he could never find his village on the maps or in the encyclopedia. According to Subačius, the village is dying out. Reading his book with abundant pictures of weddings and children from the past, I get a similar impression. The same ideas come to mind walking through the village, talking to the old villagers, visiting the cemetery which is large and "populated" much more densely, incomparably more densely, than the village itself. Some names of the living villagers are already inscribed on the gravestones and they come to take care of their own graves. During the fieldwork two informants passed away. One villager passed away when I started research in the village. Two other informants passed away when I left the field. One family with children moved in.

⁵ See "The index of life level and relative poverty," Department of Statistics. <http://www.std.lt/lt/pages/view/?id=1333>. Accessed on 01/02/2005.

In the village there is a cross built on a small hill. The cross is for the partisans of the village. Some villagers argued that these “partisans” were not involved in any anti-Soviet activity, but hid in the shelter under a barn floor to avoid mobilization by the Soviet Army. Someone from the village informed the Soviet authorities, the barn was set on fire and the men died. Building a cross is an attempt to reread one’s family history in the social texts of the post-Soviet official history, which speaks of partisans as fighters for the freedom of Lithuania, contrary to the Soviet images of partisans as “bandits.”

The second largest village in which I conducted research is located in the central part of Lithuania. The archives of the village were burned during one of the wars. People remember that in the middle of the 19th century the village was part of the upheavals in the region. In the surrounding forests there are monuments for the insurgents of 1863.

At present the village has 115 inhabitants, 56 men and 59 women. According to Bronius Kviklys (1966), in 1923 in the village there were 49 houses with 237 inhabitants, in 1959 230 people lived there. According to the librarian from a regional center, in 1991 there were 32 houses and 100 people. It is not clear whether these numbers include scattered other small villages.

Ethnically the village is predominantly Lithuanian. There is one Lithuanian-speaking Russian, a former Soviet state militia officer. His wife is a Lithuanian. There are also some people who come from mixed families (Lithuanian and Russian), but consider themselves Lithuanians.

The village is located in the woods. The larger settlement, a regional center of about 2,000 inhabitants is 7 km away. One has to pass these 7 km taking a route through a forest and riding on a sand road. The bus that connects the village to Kaunas, the large city approximately 40 km away, comes two times a week.

The land in the village is poor and not suitable for intensive cultivation. Still, in the Soviet period most of the land was used for cultivation. Currently, only a few villagers work on the restituted land. None of families own large farms (100 ha or more). Most of the cultivation on small plots (2–3 ha) is carried out for family needs.

Informants remember that in 1987–1988, before the movement for independence, the state planned to revive the village. There were 11 new houses built. Young families, willing to work in the kolkhoz (the collective farm), were invited to settle in the village. Several houses were populated by newcomers; others were assigned to native villagers.

In the village there is a wooden church, built in 1933 by the villagers themselves. In 1936 a parish was established in the village. During the Soviet period the village had a parson who lived by the church. Recently, the visiting priests have worked in the village.

A primary school was founded in the village in the 1920s. In the late 1980s a new primary school was built as part of the village revival project, a two-story brick building with a gym. In the early 1990s, the school was led by a former party secretary and had a Catholic profile. It was closed in the late 1990s due to insufficient financing. Villagers report that there were not enough children to attend the school. The school was privatized, bought by a parliament member who reconstructed it including the gym. The former school is mainly used as a summer residence for the parliamentarian's family. Some villagers call it a *fazenda* (a term which most likely they borrow from the Mexican soap operas) to connote the large size of the residence. The settlement with the primary school is 7 km away. There is a school bus during the school year.

A medical center was also a part of the village revival project, but it burned down a few years after it was built. The nearest medical center is 7 km away.

The village is decorated with wooden poles depicting mythological creatures. The villagers themselves are ambivalent about these poles and see them as strange to their environment. They could not explain the mythic scenes on the poles and ironically presented them as the kolkhoz chairman's (currently a businessman with a prosperous private business in the major cities of Lithuania) endeavor. As in the first village, marking the space with crosses was a more usual practice with a known purpose. Some crosses were built by priests, others by villagers to commemorate the dead of their family. Crosses in the village arose in the years of post-independence.

In Soviet times many villagers were employed in the kolkhoz or the forestry industry. Dissolution of the kolkhozes in the early 1990s and the contraction of the forestry industry

left many villagers without jobs. At present, as in the first village, many people are retired and unemployed. In summer much of the income for some families comes from gathering berries and mushrooms. Some work in the forestry industry, but few work outside the village because they have no transportation and cannot afford traveling.

The third village in which I conducted research is located in the central part of Lithuania, 70 km away from the second largest village. Historical sources mention the surroundings of the village in the 14th century and the landlord's estate in the middle of the 15th century. According to the subdistrict head (*seniūnas*), there are about 705 inhabitants, 336 men and 369 women in the village. District municipality internet pages as well as the subdistrict information booklet indicate that there are 745 inhabitants. According to the encyclopedia on the region, in 1902 there were 75 inhabitants in the village and 28 on the estate. In 1923 there were 20 inhabitants in the village and 72 on the estate. In 1959 there were 397 in the village, in 1970—503, in 1992—687 inhabitants. Unlike in the two previous villages, the largest village population increase was during the Soviet period.

The subdistrict head argued that the population of the subdistrict is older compared to the average of the district population. He reasoned that most distant villages of the district, including the village where I conducted the research, have older populations. Closer to the city of Kaunas the population of villages is younger. Most probably the young stay in those villages due to low housing prices and relatively low commuting costs. Farther from the city, costs of commuting (unless one is able to secure a good salary) are too high to afford traveling. However, in the village every morning there are several cars which leave for Kaunas, carrying several people who share travel costs. The closeness of the highway (5 km away from the village) is another reason why some people choose to travel to Kaunas.

In the village there is a brick church which was built in the mid 18th century, at the landlord's initiative. The village had a parson from 1985 to 1990. At present the church is run by a visiting priest. Religious festivals attract many people from outside the village.

The village school was founded in 1923. Until 1951 it was a primary school; until 1981 an elementary school. A new brick two-story primary school with a stadium was built in the late 1980s. At present there are about 120 children and 15 teachers.

In the subdistrict there are many large-holding farmers. About 10–12 farmers have 200 ha or larger farms. Three farmers who each have about 1000 ha live close to the village or in the village. They lease the land and hire villagers, especially for seasonal work. Some of the farmers have several full time workers.

The village had a working brickyard from 1896 to 1990. The brickyard was built by an estate landlord. The book on the region states that the landlord was a Pole, but loyal to Lithuania and was not involved in Polish politics. I heard people talking about the region as being Polish, but no one could explain this “Polishness” of the region without referring to the estate landlord and to some people of the oldest generation who spoke some Polish. According to the municipality data, in the whole subdistrict there are 4,780 (97.4%) Lithuanians, 59—Russians, 47—Poles, and 18—others. No data exist for the village separately.

Unlike the other two villages this village has a medical center (since 1954), a public library, a post-office, and some small industries, such as a sewing factory and an interior decoration enterprise. The sewing factory employed many women. The interior decoration enterprise hired only several men. Some people worked in the municipality subdistrict 7 km away from the village or in a city which is 30 km away. The Agriculture Institute in the subdistrict hires many people every summer for seasonal work. While in the first two villages mostly the retired and unemployed live, the people interviewed in this village were of various socio-economic statuses.

According to the subdistrict head, the largest village is divided into two parts, one, associated with the former kolkhoz, and the other, associated with the brickyard. The latter part is called Shanghai, because there are a lot of small shelters or stalls for animals built around the two-story block houses. In these houses live families whose members worked in the brickyard. Hiring of new workers by the brickyard brought new people to the village in Soviet times. New people also joined the kolkhoz. The kolkhoz built about 5 new houses

(*alytnamiai*) each year, 2–3 for new specialists to live in the village. Tractor or harvester drivers, an animal husbandry specialist (*žooteknikas*) were invited to the kolkhoz. At present there are about 40 houses in the village. The last house was built around 1989.

The three villages reflect some general developments in Lithuania. The migration flows from rural to urban and from urban to urban characteristic of the period prior to 1990 have now reversed to the migration flow from urban to rural (Ministry of Agriculture, 2003). In the post-1990 period some new families, most of whom were not able to survive in the city or town where they lived, joined the villages. Some of the newcomers lost their jobs due to the restructuring and privatization of industries. In the villages the newcomers survive on gardens, seasonal jobs, and benefits from the state. “Nobody is hungry in the village,” the village head’s (*visuomeninis seniūnas*) wife from the second largest village assured me. Many of the newcomers say that they would have never come to the village, if they could survive in a town or a city. From the older generation some arrived/returned to the village because it is easier to live in a village, if one is living just on small retirement benefits.

According to the subdistrict head from the largest village, because of newcomers the population in the third largest village remains stable. The newcomers also balance the aging population of the village while the birth rate has decreased constantly from the 1990s (with the exception of 2003). Approximately in the whole subdistrict (the village was part of it) the birth rate was 50 births and 70 deaths for 5000 people. This meant that about 20 people from urban areas joined the subdistrict every year. The newcomers in the largest village were mostly young families with several children.

Compared with the general population of Lithuania, a large part of the villagers interviewed were among the most vulnerable part of post-Soviet society: the retired who have had to survive on small state pensions, the unemployed—on state benefits or temporary low salary jobs, the employed in private industries and farms—on small salaries. A majority of the unemployed in rural as well as urban areas did not have professional education. However, many unemployed people with professional education indicated that skills gained in Soviet times are not in demand in the post-Soviet labor market.

1.1.2 The city of Kaunas

Kaunas is the second largest city of Lithuania, with a population of about 380,000.⁶ It has been a geographic, industrial, business, cultural, and educational center. The city is located at the crossroads of the country's two major highways.

Situated at the confluence of the two largest rivers of Lithuania, Kaunas has been one of the most important cities in the country's history. The settlement, which grew to become the city of Kaunas, was first mentioned by the chroniclers in 1361. In 1408, Magdeburg rights were granted to Kaunas by the privilege of Vytautas the Great. From 1920 to 1939, when Vilnius was part of Poland, Kaunas was the provisional capital of Lithuania.

In Soviet and post-Soviet times Kaunas was known for its ethnic homogeneity in contrast to multicultural Vilnius. At present the residents are 93.9% Lithuanians, 4.4% Russians, 0.4% Polish and 1.2% other ethnicity residents (The Department of Statistics, 2001). Kaunas is also known as one of the most pro-Lithuanian cities. One of the well-known public protests against Soviet rule took place in Kaunas in 1972, when 19-year-old Romas Kalanta self-immolated in the square in front of the Musical Theatre.

Belonging to a city is usually defined by being born in it. If a person lived most of his/her time in a city, but was born elsewhere, he/she usually refers to both places when asked where he/she is from. Most of those I interviewed in the city of Kaunas were born and had lived there for most of their lives.

⁶ Data provided by population census of 2001; Source: Lithuanian Development Agency and Kaunas County Governor's Administration. See <http://www.kaunasregion.com/local.industry.phtml>.

1.2 METHODOLOGY, DATA, AND BIASES

My research was carried out from April, 2003 to September, 2004 (with a break from December, 2003 through April, 2004). I also conducted preliminary dissertation research in the summers of 2001 and 2002 and follow-up research in the summer of 2005.

I have conducted multisited research (see Marcus 1998), traveling to villages and Kaunas many times, staying there for short periods of time. I also traveled to other cities, towns and villages to observe presidential candidates and people at various electoral campaign events during the period of elections. The interviewing of Parliament members and other politicians was carried out in Vilnius. Involvement with electoral campaign organizers and strategists also took place in Vilnius.

The study is based on unstructured interviews conducted in the three villages, Kaunas and some other cities. It also relies on semi-structured and unstructured interviews with Parliament members and other politicians, such as former parliamentarians or different party members as well as electoral campaign strategists and organizers. Informal interviews were carried out with some officials from the State Department for Election Analysis, public relations specialists, and members of academia.

I conducted participant observation in several settings. I worked with the presidential campaign organizing staff of one presidential candidate from May, 2004 to June, 2004. I was mostly involved in the program developing group. In addition to working in the campaign headquarters, I joined the candidate on various trips, at meetings, and events. I also joined people at the meetings with three other presidential and two parliamentary candidates in several cities, towns and villages. For a week I was involved with the electoral strategy planning group for a candidate who ran for reelection to the Parliament in Vilnius.

There were other occasions to observe the political field (not directly related to elections) in Vilnius and the Vilnius region. I observed and/or participated in events, such as the referendum for integration to the European Union (EU) (in May, 2003), joined the public and Parliament celebrations for joining the EU (in May, 2004), participated in the State day celebrations (in July, 2003 and July, 2004), the 10 year commemoration of the

withdrawal of the Russian army (in August, 2003), and other events. I also observed part of the process of the impeachment of the President of Lithuania, Rolandas Paksas (in 2003–2004) and attended various protest rallies. Monitoring media, studying archives, participating in press conferences and Parliament sessions informed my understanding of political communication in general. In the dissertation I limit myself to the analysis of the political field invoked at electoral contexts in the period of 2003 and 2004.

The period from April, 2003 to September, 2004 was marked by preparations for three elections: the presidential elections of 2004, the first elections to the European Union Parliament of 2004, and the parliamentary elections of 2004. The presidential elections and the elections to the EU Parliament took place during my stay in Lithuania. I started my research 4 months after the presidential elections of 2002. I interviewed people about former and coming elections, followed up their opinions during the electoral campaign periods and went with them to vote on election days.

The three villages were selected because I had contacts in each of them. These contacts helped me to find potential informants, introduced me to them, and provided information about the villages. None of the villages appeared to differ in important ways from other villages of Lithuania, with the exception of the smallest village, which was part of Poland from 1920 to 1939. In the smallest village people experienced independent Lithuania only from 1939 to 1940. Belonging to Poland provided for some differences between people of this and other villages to be mentioned in my dissertation. Observing media, traveling to other villages and towns yielded similar data of post-Soviet history to the one collected in my research sites.

I purposefully selected people who were older than 35, and, thus, had experience of Soviet Lithuania and post-Soviet Lithuania as adults. My selection was based on the observation that people younger than 35 years old related differently to social and political history as well as to the present. Consequently, they share different political subjectivities from the older generations.

The discussion relies on interviews with 179 people (including several life histories, about 180 hours of recording) in the villages and cities (mainly Kaunas). Interviews with 86

people (approximately 86 hours of interviewing) were conducted in the villages (6 of which were conducted in nearby towns because informants who owned land or worked in the villages and, thus, were part of the village life lived there). In the first village I interviewed 23 inhabitants. In the second largest village I interviewed 19 inhabitants, in the largest 38.

Sixty of all those interviewed in the villages did not have college education, 4 had some vocational training, 12 were professionals, such as teachers, engineers, agriculture or forestry specialists, etc. Ten people were professionals and had a high standing, e.g., one was a school director, the other a private business owner, the third the subdistrict administrator. Most of the so-called “professionals with high standing” had high positions during the Soviet period as well, i.e., they were kolkhoz chairmen, state farm chairmen, kolkhoz engineers or agronomists.

In the villages 14 of the interviewed were unemployed, 42 retired, 1 working after retirement, 2 unable to work because of disability, 2 seasonal workers, 25 employed (3 had private businesses, 1 was employed in a private business). Fourteen arrived in the villages in the post-Soviet period. Fifty-nine of all those interviewed were women, 27 were men. The average age of the interviewed was 58.4.

The discussion also relies on interviews with 82 people carried out in Kaunas and with 11 people carried out in other cities, Vilnius and Ignalina. People were interviewed in Vilnius and Ignalina because they were related to village communities; they either were born in the villages, or worked in the villages for a longer period of time. Since they lived in a city, I classified them together with the city informants. There was approximately 94 hours of interviewing carried out in the cities.

Twenty-seven of those interviewed in the cities had no college education, 9 had vocational training, 44 were professionals, 4 were professionals with high position, 5 were professionals with a Ph.D., 4 professionals with a Ph.D. and a high position. Sixty-one of the interviewed had a job, 4 were unemployed, 21 retired, 6 working after retirement, and one was not working because of a disability. Five of the interviewed had a private business, 13 were employed in private businesses. Among the interviewed in the cities the average informant age was 53 years. There were 56 women and 37 men.

Interviewing people in the largest village and the cities I tried to find informants of different age, socio-economic status, and a variety of personal histories. Among the interviewed there were Soviet-period industrial factory directors, former Communist Party (CP) members, political prisoners and/or deportees, farmers, workers, private business owners, professors, doctors, teachers, and engineers.

The questions given to villagers and city informants were similar. Unlike city informants, the villagers were asked about the village, which constituted the first part of questions in village communities. The other parts included questions about the liberation movement period, the experience of the post-Soviet period (which often diverted to discussions of personal experiences in Soviet times), and questions about the EU, elections, and voting. The questions about the liberation movement and personal experiences of social changes in Lithuania became the basis for understanding political subjectivities, as well as a source of information about attitudes towards politics. The questions about elections and voting usually produced short answers. The answers were not well articulated and often diverted people to considerations about more general issues. In Giddens's (1986) terms informants lacked discursive consciousness in these particular cases. For example, when asked "Why did you vote in the last elections for a particular candidate?," a person tended to respond with indefinite answers: "I think he is a good candidate," "I don't think there is a better choice," "I usually vote for him/her," "he is young," etc.⁷ Later in my research I tended to inquire about personal experiences of changes, informant's ideas about himself/herself, the state and society rather than elections themselves. Towards the end of my research I felt that after talking to a person for some time about social and political history, society, and the informant himself/herself, I could answer a question on how he/she voted even without asking the informant about it.

The questions which structured my research included open forms, such as "How did you see/experience the liberation movement in the late 1980s and early 1990s?" or "What was your experience of the post-Soviet period?" I tried to follow informants' knowledge in

⁷ A small minority who were members of particular parties voted for these parties and their candidates. Their voting was an expression of their membership.

my prompts. In many cases the open questions were acceptable to informants; they had their story to tell. In some cases informants wanted to know what exactly interested me. I responded that I wanted to get their general impression, to see understanding of post-independence time, of personal experiences of it. If that was not enough, I asked the person to tell about his/her job, whether there were any changes in requirements, relations among employers and employees, etc. This usually turned to some other experiential terrains that I asked him/her to elaborate on.

Soviet times became the unintentional reference point in most of the interviews. In the beginning of my research in the villages, the villagers themselves were comparing present social history to what was “then,” “in Soviet times,” “under the Russians.” Later in my research, when asked to make my questions more concrete, in some cases I pointed to Soviet times myself, asking an informant about his/her life in Soviet times and at present.

During the research in village communities and cities I interviewed almost twice as many women as men (115 women, and 64 men). In the first village most of the inhabitants were women. In other villages, visiting the oldest inhabitants to get information about villages meant that I was going to talk to women.⁸ Villagers themselves suggested that I speak to women in many cases. Several times my insistence on talking to men was approached with the response “all men in the village are drunk.” By seeking men I aimed to balance my approach. However, my (probably “gendered”) interest in informants’ personal experiences of social history was better met talking to women. Men tended to represent post-socialist history as “it really was.” Many men listed events with details excluding themselves from the narrative, while women tended to talk about how she/her family experienced post-socialism. Later in my dissertation I outline some of the gender differences. I approach social history and change with particular attention to women’s stories.

Interviews from villages were coded with NUD*IST. NUD*IST was especially helpful for analyzing particular themes. However, to see themes in the context I coded interviews from Kaunas on paper.

⁸ It is due to lower life expectancy for men.

I also conducted interviews with politicians in office; mainly Parliament members or political ideologues, Parliament committee (such as Education, Science and Culture Committee) members, radical and populist party leaders and other politicians. There were 26 Parliament members interviewed in 2003: 5 were members of the Homeland Union, the Lithuanian Conservatives fraction (3 of which were Homeland Union members, 2 were members of the Lithuanian Union of Political Prisoners and Deportees); 9 were members of the Parliament Social Democratic coalition, 7 were members of the Liberal and Centre fraction, 5 belonged to the Mixed group of the Parliament (2 among which were the Lithuanian Christian Democrats, 1 was a Lithuanian Freedom Union leader, 1 was a leader of the “Young Lithuania,” the New Nationalists and Political Prisoners Union, 1 was a leader of the Party of National Progress).

I have also conducted 17 interviews⁹ with other politicians: 4 were employed at the Education, Science and Culture Committee at the Parliament, 1 was the former Minister of Education, 1 was the former Prime Minister’s advisee for Culture Affairs, 4 were former Parliament members, 5 were leaders or members of the so-called radical and populist parties, 2 were party ideologues.

The interviews with Parliament members lasted from a half an hour to one hour and took place at the Parliament. Other politicians were interviewed from about 1 hour to 1.5 hours. Some interviews lasted several hours. These interviews formulated my general approach to political life in Lithuania. Some of them are included in the dissertation. However, they are not discussed in the dissertation separately because of my decision to focus more on voters rather than on both politicians and voters as I had initially planned.

My observations of post-Soviet history explored in village communities and Kaunas parallel some other research carried out in Eastern Europe (see, e.g., Hann 2002, Creed 2002, Verdery 2003, Kideckel, forthcoming, Ramonaitė 2005). Some responses to my

⁹ During the preliminary dissertation research in 2002 summer, I conducted 6 interviews, which are included in these numbers.

research by several professors and politicians in Lithuania who objected to some of the findings of my research encouraged me to carefully localize, contextualize and reflect upon the knowledge and social history I present in this dissertation. One mainstream party ideologue argued that he was unfamiliar with the discourse of my interviews (some of which he read) and that his party had little to say to people like some of my informants. He claimed that there are many prosperous villages and well-off villagers in some parts of Lithuania (e.g., Samogitia) who are “established capitalists” and successful at present. Thus, my study is not about the “established capitalists” of post-socialist transitions. In general, I must admit that any social history which could be explored by utilizing the categories of “prosperous village,” “well-off villagers,” and “established capitalists” remained obscure to me despite my intention to collect varying data.

Another response that I wish to mention, which is indicative of the limitations and particular situatedness of my research, was conveyed by an émigré doctor in Chicago. I gave a presentation at the annual conference of the Lithuanian Community on the village communities researched. In the presentation I talked about villagers’ experiences of the present as regression and their memories of the past as welfare and prosperity. After my talk the émigré doctor asked why I did not talk about deportees, the owners of large farms in the interwar period who were deported to Siberia, returned after Stalin’s death and work on their restituted “dear land” at present. “You must have talked to them... In Suvalkija [a region of Lithuania] there are many farmers who work on their land.” His angry voice suggested that the social history I presented had no right to exist. He did not deny the ideas I discussed, but he was embarrassed by my choice and focus. Like one professor in Kaunas, he considered my informants “unreliable narrators” who could not articulate the social history of Lithuania. The doctor’s comment was correct—many deportees do not to share many of the ideas I presented in the talk. However, I think my focus is relevant, while values and meanings shared by the “unreliable narrators” are useful in understanding the dynamics of post-Soviet electoral politics and political communication.

1.3 ON BEING NATIVE

During field research I tried to nurture some degree of distance from the observed and the learned, knowing of critiques of native anthropologists (see, e.g., Hernandez 1993, Stoll 1999, Fox 1991). However, I felt that knowing and having experienced some culture allowed establishing rapport with people easily and was helpful in understanding some of their sensibilities and relations to social history. I think I was accepted both as an insider (a Lithuanian) and an outsider (someone from outside the community). I did not find that the fact that I had been studying in the United States influenced the data I collected. While it raised some excitement when I was introduced as a student from the United States, there were multiple cases when people did not know this fact and told me similar stories.

C. Geertz argued that the “culture of people is an ensemble of texts, themselves ensembles, which the anthropologist strains to read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong” (Geertz 1973:452). I was part of these texts because of my Lithuanian background, and I read myself as well as others. Some of this reading is included in the dissertation.

1.4 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

In chapter 1 I discuss memories of socialism among village communities and some city residents, which reveal alternatives to generally accepted conceptualizations of socialism as well as to the rhetoric of the revolutions of 1989–1991 that were founded on strong criticism of socialism. Many people interviewed invoked socialism as a space and time of security, social welfare, prosperity, a sensible way of life, as well as a moral and just order. Conversely, the present was narrated in terms of decline, chaos, and regression. I argue that memories about the past are comments on the post-socialist changes and personal experiences of post-socialism. What is often labeled “nostalgia for socialism” are articulations of present-day marginalization.

Experiences of marginalization, knowledge of changing social history, physical and social environment as reflected in discussions of work, money, and milk are explored in chapter 2. The past very often was associated with full employment, “real” money, and good prices for milk. The predictability, security, and fullness of the past were contrasted to the changing, uncertain, and restricting present. In chapter 2 I illustrate how ideas about work, money and milk express changing values, meanings, social relations, individual accommodations and resistance, as well as how these ideas are addressed in political campaigns and marketing.

In chapter 3 I discuss alternative approaches to social history and contrasting political subjectivities from those discussed in chapters 1 and 2. I present articulations of Soviet-period social history as oppression by analyzing excerpts of life histories of two women of different generations, social standing, and experience. These two women’s factual presentations of Soviet and post-Soviet life were in many ways similar to the articulations of the past and present discussed in chapters 1 and 2. The significant difference was in articulating meanings of social history as well as assigning values to the known, observed, and/or experienced. I define “oppression” as an experience of foreignness of social history, which limits individual agency and which produces an individual as the other to the publicly imagined community through various techniques of constraint and discipline. In such a perspective, there is no general oppression of a society, only oppression in particular cases when the relationship between an individual and history is of perceived foreignness and constraint.

Chapter 4 introduces the idea of biographic social others and spaces of difference in Soviet constitution of “class” and late Soviet and post-Soviet “nation”-building projects. I develop a concept of biographic cleansing, i.e., techniques of exclusion and intolerance towards people with a particular biography, such as a deportee identified as a class enemy in the Soviet Union, or a Communist Party member in post-Soviet countries. This chapter explores how social difference is produced by state officials, in communities and social interactions as well as articulations and inactions of the stigmatized person. I further develop

the idea that experiences of social otherness are translated into social texts of opposition, such as the ones analyzed in chapters 1, 2, and 3.

In chapter 5 I argue that during the liberation period in 1989–1991 a specific cultural artifact—“nation-state” was produced redefining “nation” in the context of the Western tradition, i.e., binding it to the values of statehood, sovereignty, and national citizenship prohibited in Soviet times. I explore how “nation” was imagined in the late 1980s and the early 1990s and discuss why that imagination does not exist at present. I argue that the present negotiation of “liberation,” which questions the necessity of a nation having a sovereign state as important, is expressive of dissatisfactions with post-socialist social and moral orders, and also of sensibilities about subjectivities, values and authority that are ignored in post-socialist history.

I explore people’s relations to the state in chapter 6 by looking at people’s understanding/experience of authority and power. I argue that “cynicism” is the common structure of feeling embedded in perceptions and experiences of the state (cf. Žižek 1995, Navaro-Yashin 2002). It entails negativity, distance, and irony rather than resistance towards the state. Cynicism has an effect on the lives people live and the communication they carry out with the “state” whether in everyday conversations or at elections. Cynicism encapsulates criticism of the state officials, seeing them as self-interested, immoral, and unjust. It also manifests distrust of the authorities and difference between the people and the power elites. Cynicism derives from various contexts: experience of power as omnipresent, immutable, and threatening prevalent in the socialist period, beliefs in equality and loyalty to a collective which no longer inform social relations, mysterious post-socialist circulations of wealth from which people feel completely or partly excluded, experience of destatization (Verdery 1996) and of marginalization.

Chapter 7 analyzes examples of the two presidential campaigns of 2002 and 2004. Electoral campaigns are the competition over meanings and power to signify. The successful electoral campaign is a political spectacle which appeals to meanings, values, and passions people share. Political subjectivities and experiences of social history are transformed into votes. People vote for a candidate and ideas that are consistent with their experience and

knowledge. The Enlightenment notion that it is irrational to go against one's self-interest is correct, if self-interest is defined in terms of people's knowledge, not neoliberal economists' views. People vote their economic self-interest, if they identify with it (see Lakoff 2004). Voting is the interplay of social history, perception, and experience embodied in individuals which make politics discernible and votes legible. It is a meaningful action.

2.0 HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

The first time the name of Lithuania was mentioned was in the Quendlinburg annals in 1009 AD. According to the annals, Lithuanians were recognized as a distinct ethnic group among the Baltic peoples and resided in an area roughly conforming to present-day borders of Lithuania (Ashbourne 1999). The Lithuanians were the only Baltic tribe which in the first half of the 13th century created a state. The state developed in the space of the eastern border of Central Europe, which was not filled by any strong states, in between civilizations to the west and east of Lithuania (Kiaupa et al. 2000). A native chief, Mindaugas (Mindovg) who presided over the state, seeking peace with Germanic invaders, attempted to integrate his newly established realm into the West European political system. He converted to Latin Christianity and was crowned King (the first and the last king of Lithuania) on the authority of Pope Innocent IV (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:2). In 1263 Mindaugas was murdered by his rivals. The society returned to the pagan customs of their ancestors.

During the 14th century, the Lithuanian rulers Gediminas (Gedimyn), Algirdas (Olgerd), and Kęstutis (Kenstut) contained the assaults of the Teutonic Order and expanded eastward in the wake of the recession of Tatar power. Considerable East Slav territory was absorbed into Lithuania, making Lithuania a major power in Eastern Europe (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:2–3). The state, whose rulers and ethnic core maintained their pagan religion, became a battleground between Latin influences and the Orthodox traditions of the incorporated East Slav population. A resolution of this conflict came in 1386, when Great Prince Jogaila (Jagiello), pressed by continuing incursions of the Teutonic Order, sought Polish support. As a condition of his marriage to the heiress of Poland, Jadwyga, and his accession to the Polish throne, he agreed to baptize his pagan Lithuanian subjects into the Latin rite (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:3). In 1387 Jogaila (King Władysław II of Poland)

began the baptism of his pagan Lithuanian subjects as Christians of the Roman Rite. 1387 is the date of Lithuania's turn from paganism to Christianity. The people of Lithuania were the last pagans in Europe.

The rule of Jogaila's cousin Vytautas (Vitovt), as Viceroy according to theoretical West European designation, but as independent Great Prince in practice, reached the apogee of Lithuanian power. The realm of Vytautas's Lithuania stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea, from the outskirts of Moscow to Poland. In 1410 the combined armies of Poland and Lithuania defeated the Teutonic Order at Grünwald (Tannenberg). The Order was never able to recover, and thereafter ceased to be the threat to Lithuania that it had been for two centuries (see Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:3, Rowell et al. 2002). In some of historiography (e.g., Šapoka 1990) Vytautas's Lithuania is among the most glorious moments of history of Lithuania.

Nearly two hundred years of personal union with Poland, never clearly defined in the political sense, lasted until 1569 and had two long-term effects on the ethnic core of the Lithuanian state: the Christianization of the Lithuanians and the Polonization of the Lithuanian nobility (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:3).

The Union of Lublin of 1569 united Poland and Lithuania in an official Commonwealth with a single sovereign, a common legislative body, and a united foreign policy in an attempt to provide a defense against the expanding Russian state. Although about one third of the former territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was transferred to Poland, the rearrangement preserved Lithuania's independent identity (Packer and Furmonavičius 2000). The 17th and 18th centuries were marked by wars with Sweden and Russia which reduced the territory and sovereignty of the Commonwealth significantly. During the course of the three partitions of the Commonwealth (1772, 1793, and 1795), the Lithuanian state fell under Russian rule.

In the 19th century developments in Lithuania depended on who was tsar. The reigns of Paul I (1796–1801) and Alexander I (1801–1825) were periods of relaxation and there were even plans to revive the Lithuano-Polish Union as a united Kingdom of Poland under Russian protection or the Grand Duchy of Lithuania under Russian guardianship (see

Rowell et al. 2002). Later the policy toward Lithuania changed (with the exception of the years of Alexander II (1855–1881), the years of a thaw). The changed policy was called “removing the root causes of the country’s separation from Russia,” “depolonization,” or simply “restoring [Lithuania’s] Russian roots” (see Rowell et al. 2002, Aleksandravičius and Kulakauskas 1996). It was based on a theory that the Grand Duchy was essentially a Russian state before its union with Poland in 1386 and that only after the Union of Lublin (1569) the Poles destroyed those Russian roots by aiming to polonize the “Russian state of Lithuania” or “Western Rus” (see Rowell et al. 2002). The implementation of policy to restore “Russian roots” took various routes. The Russian language was introduced into all state institutions. Vilnius University, founded in 1579, was closed down in 1832. There was repression of the Catholic Church. After 1864 Russian primary schools were founded. The use of the Latin (Polish) alphabet was banned in Lithuanian texts (until 1905), which were to be printed in Cyrillic characters (see Subačius 2005). Lithuania was considered an “ahistoric nation” by the Russians and a historic province of Poland by the Poles (Aleksandravičius and Kulakauskas 1996). “Lithuania is completely a thing of the past,” wrote the poet Adam Mickiewicz in 1828 (cited in Rowell et al. 2002:17).

The various liberation attempts marked the late 18th and 19th centuries beginning with the Tadeusz Kościuszko uprising of 1794. Napoleon’s attempt to raise hopes for the restoration of the former Commonwealth of the Two Nations were celebrated in 2003 by reburying the Napoleon soldiers found during the construction work in Vilnius. The uprisings of 1830–1831 and 1863–1864 had the aim to liberate from Russian hegemony and to reestablish the Commonwealth. The insurgents as well as the Russian authorities promoted social causes to gain the support of local peasants (see Rowell et al. 2002, Aleksandravičius and Kulakauskas 1996).

Emancipation, with the right to limited landholding, came in 1861, along with the general abolition of serfdom throughout the Russian Empire (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983). The peasants of Lithuania’s *Užnemunė* region—the area southwest of the Nemunas River, which had belonged to Napoleon’s Grand Duchy of Warsaw—were freed during the first decade of the 19th century. Natives to this region, sons of better off peasant families

who studied at universities in Russia became the leaders of 19th century Lithuanian nationalism which epitomized the establishment of the Republic of Lithuania after World War I in 1918.

The nation of Lithuania as ethnosocial and ethnopolitical community formed on the basis of peasant culture. At the end of the 19th century the nobility of Lithuania were polonized and did not support Lithuanian national upheaval (Aleksandravičius and Kulakauskas 1996:232). They became foreigners in their own country and many fled to Poland after the establishment of the independence of Lithuania in 1918.

The Lithuanian language which became the primary marker of Lithuanian identity was a property of only 7.8% of people of cities. The predominant public languages were Russian and Polish. Lithuanian language, as well as Yiddish,¹⁰ often was a language of interpersonal communication between people who claimed this language as native. In other numbers, the population, whose language was Samogitian or Lithuanian, historiographically Lithuanians, constituted the following estates: 93.3% peasants, 3.9% townspeople, 2.5% nobility (Aleksandravičius and Kulakauskas 1996:233).

The Lithuanian national movement of the 19th century began with a desire to maintain the native language (Rowell et al. 2002). The illegal press had an important role and a book smuggler (*knygnešys*) who smuggled the books and newspapers in Latin script in the Lithuanian language from Prussia became a hero of Lithuanian national history. The illegal newspapers *Aušra* (The Dawn) and *Varpas* (The Bell) promoted a separate, Lithuanian, nationalist movement, disconnecting it from the aims of the Polish national movement and the tradition of the Two Nations (see Rowell et al. 2002). The resolutions of the Congress of 1905 sought autonomy, a centralized administration for the ethnic Lithuanian region of the Russian Empire, and the use of the Lithuanian language in administration (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983).

The establishment of Lithuania was the culmination of a particular national movement. It also was an outgrowth of the Russian revolutions, a by-product of World War

¹⁰ 42.1% of population of the cities held that their native language was Yiddish, 24%- Polish, 21.5%- one of the Slavic languages (Aleksandravičius and Kulakauskas 1996:232).

I, and a reflection of the twentieth century *Zeitgeist* of democracy and national self-determination (Senn 1959:221). Senn (1959) argues that no new state as small as Lithuania could have arisen, if the international situation had been different. There were three large neighbors each with its own ideas about Lithuania's future. The collapse of Russia, the defeat of Germany, and the exercise by the Entente of restraint on Poland were essential factors in Lithuania's birth (Senn 1959:229).

The independence period of 1918–1920 was marked by armed conflicts with Russia and Poland. After the military conflict with Poland, which sought to restore their state within the same borders of the Commonwealth of the Two Nations, Lithuania lost part of the territory to which it had pretensions, including its historic capital Vilnius in 1920. According to Rothschild (1998) unfulfilled territorial claims to Poland's Wilno, a city regarded as the Lithuanians' historic capital though they were but a small minority of the interwar population, together with anxiety lest Germany reclaim Lithuania's only port of Klaipėda (Memel), gave Lithuania's interwar politics a far more explicitly nationalistic tinge than was the case in Estonia and Latvia which had no territorial-revisionist pretensions of their own (Rothschild 1998).

The period of 1926 to Lithuania's incorporation into the Soviet Empire in 1940 was a time of authoritarian rule like in most of East Central Europe (see Okey 1986, Rothschild 1998). In the course of World War II, Lithuania as well as Latvia and Estonia lost their formal independent statehood, unlike the rest of East Central Europe. They were absorbed into the Soviet Union as constituent socialist republics in the summer of 1940. Lithuania's fate was then reconfirmed by the war's outcome (Rothschild 1998). Within the Soviet Union, the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic possessed Vilnius (Wilno). In Soviet historiography the Soviet Army was the liberator of Lithuania from Hitler's Germany and was responsible for returning Vilnius to Lithuania.

Soviet historiography declared that the class struggle in Lithuania had always taken precedence over national questions and that the "bourgeoisie" had always chosen their class interests over any considerations of national liberation (Senn 2002). It was asserted that the period of independence, 1918–1940, was notable only for the ruthless exploitation of the

toiling masses and for the stagnation of Lithuanian culture (see Senn 2002). President Antanas Smetona's authoritarian rule, 1926–1940, was represented as the triumph of fascism in Lithuania (Senn 2002). Once the Lithuanians had found their proper place in the Soviet system, “proletarian internationalism,” following the lead of their Russian brothers, would replace the narrow “bourgeois nationalism” of the past (see Senn 2002).¹¹

In terms of Soviet historiography, the change of the state system was effected by the People's Seimas (the Parliament) elected on democratic grounds. On July 29, 1940, the Seimas adopted a resolution on Lithuania's entrance into the Soviet Union (Kancevičius 1976:15–16). An “Extract from the Declaration of the People's Seimas Proclaiming Lithuania a Soviet Socialist Republic” of July 21, 1940 states:

The regime of Smetona [the President of Lithuania in 1926–1940], indifferent to the real interests of the people, pushed the Lithuanian internal and external policy into a hopeless impasse. The vital interests of the Lithuanian working people were sacrificed to the selfish interests of small groups of wealthy people and exploiters. The destiny of the working people of the cities and villages were: unemployment, uncertainty for the future, privations, and inequality of ethnic groups. For many years the people were oppressed by this reactionary regime. [...]

In these days the Lithuanian people expressed its will to abolish the political domination of landlords and capitalists forever, and also to form a real people's Government and with its own hands to begin the reorganization of the governmental structure of our country. The victory of the Union of the Working People of Lithuania is a historic turning point, granting to the working people all civic and political rights, guaranteeing a better future for them and future generations. [...]

The People's Seimas, expressing the unanimous will of the working people, proclaims that the Soviet system shall be introduced in Lithuania. [...]

The People's Seimas is firmly convinced that all inhabitants of Lithuania will rally around the Soviet Government to assure welfare, economic and cultural prosperity to give our country freedom and happiness, and to lead the country towards final victory of the people.

Long live the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic!” (cited in Kancevičius 1976:211).

¹¹ Presenting the Soviet-period historiography Senn specifically referred to Romas Šarmaitis essay *Some Questions of the History of the Lithuanian National Liberation Movement in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century* (1953) (see Senn 2002:24).

In émigré and post-Soviet historiography of Lithuania the events of 1940 and Soviet rule are considered to be an occupation. For example, Joseph Kajeckas, Charge d’Affaires a.i. of Lithuania in Washington, D.C. in the foreword to émigré Jack Stukas’s book “Awakening Lithuania” writes:

In 1940, after Lithuania had achieved an impressive record of accomplishments as a member of the 20th century family of free nations, she was viciously seized and subjugated by the Soviet Union, in a treacherous act of aggression that continues to the present day. The tragedy that has befallen Lithuania in the 20th century is a paradigm of everything that freedom-loving men must fear and fight against” (Stukas 1966:vii-viii).

In June, 1941 Lithuania faced the first mass deportations (see chapter 4). Between 1945 and 1953 there were 34 mass deportations of Lithuanian citizens to the depths of the Soviet Union (Rowell et al. 2002). The deportees were classified as the “enemies of people.” They included large holding farmers, the state sector employees of Lithuania, members of various parties and organizations as well as everyone who disagreed with communist ideology and opposed the Soviet state (Anušauskas et al. 2005, see also chapter 4).

“Forest Brothers” was the name by which the population called the anti-Soviet partisans in all Baltic countries. At peak size they involved 0.5 to 1% of the total population. This is comparable to the peak Viet Cong strength in South Vietnam (discounting the North Vietnamese supplements) of about 170,000 fighters and supply runners out of a population of 20 million (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:81). In nationalist narratives the post-war partisan battles are presented as struggles for independence (e.g., Klumbytė 2003). Misiunas and Taagepera argue that people went to the forests mainly when they could no longer take the insecurity of civilian life (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983). The first wave of forest brothers consisted of willing and unwilling German collaborators and draftees, later men avoiding the Soviet draft and Red Army deserters. The Soviet land redistribution and other social restructuring measures produced new waves, as did Soviet screening and deportation campaigns. The last major wave was to come during the 1949 farm-collectivization process (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:82). The last known trial of a partisan leader was held in Kėdainiai on May 6–8, 1963 (Vardys 1965:249).

Despite the career opportunities involved, only 0.3% of the Lithuanians had joined the CP after five years of continuous Soviet occupation. This rate was about 10 times less than the USSR average at that time (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:78). According to Misiunas and Taagepera (1983), by the early 1950s it was becoming evident that Soviet power was likely to stay and that career opportunities required party membership. Partisan activities, which had at times made such membership dangerous, were subsiding. Moral condemnation of collaboration with the enemy also became muted, as deportations silenced people. At Stalin's death in March 1953, total CP membership was 36,000 in Lithuania. Lithuanians formed 38% of the members, and the percentage later increased (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:81). In 1964, the Lithuanian party (2.5% of the republics population) was still smaller than the Soviet average. In 1965, Lithuanians made up 61.5% of the LCP; by 1968, the figure had grown to 66.2% (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:142).

Like other new Soviet states and Soviet satellites in East Central Europe, policies of collectivization, industrialization, and urbanization were carried out in Lithuania. Collectivization was the ultimate goal of agricultural planning (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983). Primarily an agricultural country, Lithuania was fully collectivized in the late 1940s and early 1950s (Anušauskas et al. 2005). Reconstruction and expansion of industry were among the Soviet priorities for a series of economic and political reasons. Network of roads, factory buildings, housing, and schools were to be used for industrialization purposes (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:104). The industrial proletariat was considered superior to the peasantry and was expected to be more supportive of the Soviet regime (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:104). From a colonial viewpoint, industrialization offered a way for settling large numbers of Russians among a reticent local population. As Latvia and Estonia were more industrialized and less resistant in the postwar period, they attracted more capital investment (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:104). In more agricultural Lithuania, the local rural labor pool seemed to supply most of the relatively modest increase in the industrial work force. New immigrants could hardly be attracted to the countryside, especially under conditions of continuing partisan resistance. The influx was hence largely limited to functionaries and the armed forces (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:108). Misiunas and

Taagepera conclude that at times such colonization seems to have become a goal in itself rather than a means of industrialization. In particular, it made little economic sense to deport Lithuanian farmers to Siberia, and then import Russian labor to the cities of Lithuania (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:104).

Within the USSR, the Baltic republics increasingly surpassed the other republics in per-capita national income. By 1968, Lithuania exceeded the Soviet average by 15%, Latvia by 42%, and Estonia by 44% (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:177–178). While USSR per-capita income increased 67% from 1958 to 1968, Estonia's and Latvia's went up by about 90%, and Lithuania's by 108%. During my research informants remembered that in Soviet times Lithuania was the most prosperous republic of the Soviet Union.

Despite their clear russification tendencies, the Soviet authorities did not remove the native language (Rowell et al. 2002). The schools of Lithuania became an instrument of training “Communistically educated people.”¹² The guidelines to this goal were polytechnism, collectivism, a materialistic world view, atheistic and antireligious ideas, proletarian internationalism, socialist patriotism, the friendship of Soviet peoples, love of the Socialist motherland, hate for the Kremlin's enemies, and Communist *принципиальность*¹³ (Vaitiekūnas 1965:179).

Under Soviet rule, in Lithuania, religion added a particular facet to resistance unlike in Latvia and Estonia. Catholic parishes represented a grass-roots institution encompassing the majority of the population (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:82). The Soviet threat to their existence in itself fostered resistance (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:82, see also Vignieri 1965). The *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*, which began publication in 1972 and was the well-known form of resistance, recorded the struggle for religious freedom (Senn 2002). The close identification of Catholicism with nationalism has persisted in Lithuania to the present day (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983:6–7).

In response to Mikhail Gorbachev's Perestroika (Reconstruction movement), Sąjūdis, the Movement for Perestroika in Lithuania was founded in 1988. Like in many other

¹² See Tarybinė Mokykla, No.12 (December, 1960), p. 3.

¹³ See Švietimas Tarybų Lietuvoje, p. 31; Liaudies Švietimas, p. 22; Tarybinė Mokykla, No.1 (January, 1958), p. 3; *ibid.*, No.1 (January, 1959), p. 8; *ibid.*, No.12 (December, 1960), pp. 26–27.

Eastern European states members of Sajūdis were intellectuals, i.e., representatives of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, members of the creative unions, well-known artists and writers. Almost half of the Sajūdis Initiative Group were members of the Communist Party (see, e.g., Senn 2002).

Sajūdis and the Lithuanian Communist Party (LCP) were the major forces in the liberation movement. Sajūdis with its more radical inclinations towards the liberation from the USSR and promotion of nationalist ideas soon became a symbol for the struggle for independence.¹⁴ Many people supported Sajūdis candidates in the first elections to the USSR's Congress of People's Deputies which ended in a victory for Sajūdis. Furthermore, the elections of 24 February 1990 to the Supreme Council of Lithuania secured the majority for Sajūdis candidates.¹⁵ The Supreme Council pronounced Lithuania an independent state on the 11th of March, 1990.¹⁶ However, until the unsuccessful Communist coup in Moscow on August 19–21, 1991, the independence of Lithuania was not internationally recognized.¹⁷ At the referendum of 9 February, 1991, three fourth of the citizens of Lithuania voted in favor of an independent democratic republic as the form of the Lithuanian state.

In 1992 Algirdas Brazauskas, the former First Secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party, organized the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party (LDDP), a successor of LCP, to an overwhelming victory in the elections to the Lithuanian Seimas (the

¹⁴ The more radical political force in Lithuania was the Lithuanian Freedom League (*Lietuvos Laisvės Lyga*). The league made clear its dedication to the principle of Lithuanian independence, “a free Lithuania in a confederation of European nations.” The realization of the various issues in the League’s program, it declared, “will create the bases to restore Lithuania’s sovereignty and independence” (Senn 2002:82–83). In the early days of Sajūdis, Vytautas Landsbergis, the leader of Sajūdis, had represented the absolute center in the group. In Sajūdis provisional program of June 13th, 1988 the assertion about political independence was not stated (Senn 2002:255). Sajūdis tended to conform to the discursive boundaries provided by Perestroika. Many conservative émigrés had doubts about Sajūdis (Senn 2002:255).

¹⁵ In the elections of 24th, February, 1990 (turnout 71.72%) and the repeated elections of 4th, 7th, 8th, 10th of March (turnout 66.4%) and 7th of April there were 101 seats out of 141 won by Sajūdis supported candidates (source: *Lietuvos Suvereniteto Atkūrimas 1988–1991 Metais*. 2000. Vilnius: Diemedžio leidykla).

¹⁶ Senn argues that Lithuanian “nationalism” of 1988–1989 had a broad democratic character (Senn 2002). According to him, ethnic conflict should be considered minimal throughout this period. In drawing up plans for citizenship, the Lithuanians adopted the so-called “zero option,” accepting any person resident and employed in the republic on a given day, as a citizen (Senn 2002).

¹⁷ Iceland was the first (February 11th, 1991) to recognize the Republic of Lithuania *de jure*. The United States recognized the Republic of Lithuania on the 2nd of September, 1991, the USSR on the 6th of September, 1991. On the 17th of September, 1991 Lithuania became a member of the United Nations.

Parliament). Brazauskas was elected President in 1993. Lithuania was the first country of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to return its former communists to power. To many outside observers, particularly in the Western Europe and the United States, the return of the LDDP and Brazauskas was a shocking return to the communist past, and the repetition of the “Lithuanian syndrome” in several other post-socialist states led to great concern about these societies’ commitments to change (see Abdelal 2002:464, see also Vardys and Sedaitis 1997).

In 1996 Lithuanians gave the majority to the Homeland Union, a successor of Sąjūdis. In 1997 Valdas Adamkus, the American Lithuanian, unaffiliated with any party, was elected to President’s office. In 2000, the former communist parties gained a majority again. In 2004 the majority was captured by the Labor Party founded in 2003 and led by the Russian-born Lithuanian citizen Viktor Uspaskich. Regardless of the leaders and parties in power, integration into NATO and the EU has been the major foreign policy goals of post-Soviet Lithuania. Lithuania became a member of NATO and the EU in 2004.

Reflecting on post-Soviet history Edvardas Gudavičius, a well-known historian, concluded that “we are the last pagans and the last serfs. This backwardness [*atsilikimas*] probably is the major reason of all troubles.”¹⁸ On a more optimistic note Gintaras Beresnevičius (2003), a prominent culture historian, suggests beginning building a new democratic empire which extends its influence towards the East, Ukraine, Belarus, and the Caucasus region.

¹⁸ See ELTA interview with E. Gudavičius “Visa Lietuvos istorija—elgetiška: Garsus istorikas visuomenės ydų ištakų siūlo ieškoti praeityje” (“All history of Lithuania is beggarly: The well-known historian suggests searching for origins of social vices in the past”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 03/29/2004.

3.0 CHAPTER 1: SOCIAL HISTORY, MEMORY, AND EXPERIENCE

A society is what it remembers; we are what we remember; I am what I remember; the self is a trick of memory (Wendt 1987:79).

Who said we didn't live well?
Like everyone else we ate, slept, and drank,
Lamented, laughed, and loved...
Who said we didn't live well?
(Samuel Volkov, a Russian poet reminiscing about socialism,
cited in Lankauskas, forthcoming).

Culture is supremely negotiable for professional culture experts, but for those whose identity depends upon a particular configuration this is not the case. Identity is not negotiable. Otherwise, it has no existence (Jonathan Friedman 1992:852).

Post-socialist political history in Eastern Europe has become increasingly defined by apparent paradoxes, such as voting for the ex-communist parties in the early 1990s, support for the populist and the radical right, or nostalgia for socialism. Lithuania, for example, was the first country to break away from the USSR by declaring independence in March, 1990. It was also the first country to vote for ex-communist parties in 1992. The former First Secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party A. Brazauskas was elected President. Most recently a leader of the so-called populist party of Liberal Democrats, Rolandas Paksas, was elected to President's office in 2003 only to be ousted from it in 2004 for violation of the

Constitution of Lithuania and breaking the President's oath. While the first presidential impeachment in Europe was approached by the political elites of Lithuania as "a successful test of democracy" that everyone assumed had been passed, the victories of Russian millionaire V. Uspaskich in the first elections to the European Parliament in June, 2004 as well as to the Lithuanian Parliament in October, 2004 brought discussions of populism back.

Post-socialist political history appeared paradoxical because of reliance on assumptions that socialism was "immoral," "imposed," "oppressive," etc., and that it was experienced as such by people subjected to socialist governments (cf. Yurchak 2003, 2006). Based on these assumptions, descriptions of the Soviet regime employed binary contrasts, such as "the Party vs. the people," "repression vs. freedom," "oppression vs. resistance," "truth vs. dissimulation," "official economy vs. second economy," "official culture vs. counter culture," "totalitarian language vs. people's language," "public self vs. private self" (Yurchak 2003). Notions of duplicity, deceitful behavior, a doubled and divided conscience (Kligman 1998), or of hidden transcripts (Scott 1990), i.e., resistance to domination, the "infrapolitics of the powerless,"¹⁹ were some of the conceptual tools developed and/or used to explain socialism. Such an approach to political history is built into Cold War rhetorics, dissident and intellectual critiques, such as those of Václav Havel in Czech Republic or V. Landsbergis in Lithuania, and ideologies of the liberation movement of the late 1980s and early 1990s.

In this chapter I discuss memories of socialism among village people and some city residents, which revealed alternatives to these generally accepted conceptualizations of socialism as well as to the rhetoric of the revolutions of 1989–1991, which were founded on strong criticism of socialism. Many people interviewed invoke socialism as a space and time of security, social welfare, prosperity, a sensible way of life, as well as a moral and just order. Conversely, the present is narrated in terms of decline, chaos, and regression. The memories are comments on the post-socialist changes and personal experiences of post-socialism. Dialectically, the past and the present, or socialism and post-socialism, are reproduced in all narratives.

¹⁹ Scott's term "hidden transcripts" in his own works is used for postcolonial politics.

In this chapter I claim that what is often labeled “nostalgia for socialism” is articulations of experienced marginalization and present-day subalternity. The narrative about the “better Soviet times” is a critique of post-socialist developments. It usually implies people’s dissatisfaction with everyday life rather than their political statements about the Soviet regime. The questions I raise about social history, memory and experience are essentially about the present. By focusing on the present, the arguments that memory displays the past fictitiously, selectively, and partially (as it does) lose their relevance, while memory (whatever it is) is the essential constitutive part of the individual’s *present* self and his/her *present* projections of social history (cf. Strathern and Stewart 2001).

3.1 THE BETTER TIMES

My first trip to the smallest village of the three studied was also my first encounter with the ideas of history often summarized in the idiom “it was better in Soviet times.” The “Soviet period” was invoked in most conversations about the present. People constantly compared the present to the socialist past assuring me that they had lived better “then.” Elena, the informant interviewed in the smallest village on my first day there, started her talk with the words: “the young maybe would like to return, but we, the retired... I, for example, would not like to return.” I asked whether she meant return to the city. She responded: “No, not to the city, to those [Soviet] times.” This dialogue showed that I was not part of the community of the common discourse²⁰ which prevailed in this village as well as in other villages and urban spaces.

My first informant was Ona, a 78 year old woman who lived in this village all her life. On one of our first meetings, I asked her to tell me about the village, the people, and their lives. Ona responded that everyone will tell me that it was “better under the Russians.” Later I learned that Ona was from a highly respected family in the village. Their house was a

²⁰ See Thomas Wolfe on discursive communities (Wolfe, Thomas C. 2000 *Cultures and Communities* in the *Anthropology of Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union. Annual Review of Anthropology* 29:195–216).

Lithuanian school during the time when the village was part of Poland. In this house they used to stage plays and read Lithuanian books. In the years of World War II, Ona's husband was a "forest brother," a partisan fighting for Lithuania against the Soviet powers. He returned home after an amnesty. Ona saw deportations of her neighbors. She also witnessed how the Soviet authorities burned two young men alive who had hidden from mobilization to the Soviet army. After the amnesty Ona's husband was forced to become a kolkhoz director. He resigned as soon as he was able to, becoming a kolkhoz worker. Ona worked on the poultry farm. When the liberation movement started in the late 1980s, her husband, sick and in bed was very happy and organized their family trips to Vilnius to support independence agendas. However, liberation, which was so important in her family life in the late 1980s, had little relevance for Ona at present. Ona argued that the time of post-independence was worse than the Soviet period. What such a position means is a guiding question of this chapter. Ona's and other informants' memories about the past are taken as the lens through which together with interlocutors I can look at the present.

The past becomes an important structuring principle in the context of social change. Like changes in personal lives that are often marked in society by rites of passage, change in "society's life" instigates perception of a symbolic difference between the past and the present. Outside official histories and ideologies, social change is reflected in personal and personalized stories. Personal accounts are collisions of structure and agency (Bourdieu 1977, Giddens 1984), reflections of habituses in flux, and interplays of change and form.

Experiencing post-socialism, people invoke the past and the present as different symbolic systems to understand change, to locate themselves in changing history and environment. Past and present are also invoked to make arguments about the state and politics, to consider morality and justice issues.

3.2 THE REGRESSIVE PRESENT

“Soviet times” marks a real and symbolic time and space invoked in informants’ stories about their lives “under the Russians,” “in Soviet times,” “then,” and/or “under the other state” (*prie anos valdžios*). People usually recollect the 1970s and 1980s, i.e., late socialism. “Post-Soviet times” refers to the “present,” the time “under Lithuania,” or “under this state” (*prie šitos valdžios*). The living conditions of many who thought that it was better earlier declined in the early, mid or even late 1990s. However, the Soviet/post-Soviet distinction was a symbolic boundary invoked in most conversations to classify personal experience and to narrate social history.

For many villagers the present emerges as regression, which is primarily a *physical destruction* of observable surroundings: ruined kolkhoz buildings, closed schools and culture centers, and terminated construction of the late 1980s. These are the landmarks of the early 1990s. Villagers will point to them and say:

They put so much money into the brick factory. Look now. It is like a ghost. People find stolen cars there. The factory is home to thieves. You know what it was? It was, listen, thousands of employees lived there and made a living. In the beginning we made little, then we earned a lot. Now nothing. Everything is destroyed.



Figure 1. The lumbermill in the largest village in 2003.

The ruined farms, lumber mills, and brick yards have social significance; very often they indicate the loss of jobs. Loss of jobs is one of the major themes of post-socialist life. Unemployed people feel unneeded, while in the Soviet period everyone had “one’s own place.” “It is good that I have a job” or “if I worked, it would be different” are oft-repeated phrases which indicate the importance of having or not having a job. Unemployment is thought to be related to many negative post-socialist developments, such as criminality, migration, injustice, immorality or alcoholism (see chapter 2).

Closed schools and culture centers imply disruptions in social practice; termination of celebrations, the end of meetings with poets, writers, painters, and other non-local well-

known people, the loss of local recreational groups, choirs, and dancing circles. In the past, the villagers had also been able to go to the opera and ballet in the capital city, Vilnius, as well as on tourist trips outside the country; e.g., to the Caucasus or Crimea. Now, in the words of a woman who was responsible for cultural programs in the late 1980s, “No one organizes such things. Even if someone did, a ticket to an opera... or somewhere else costs a lot. Nobody takes people anywhere anymore.”

The land is another sign of regression. Villagers claim that in Soviet times fields were sown. After the dissolution of the kolkhoz and agricultural partnerships in the early 1990s, most of the villagers cultivate only small plots. They lack the machinery to work on the restituted land. Furthermore, they say that farming today is not cost-effective. For villagers the horses that appear on small cultivated plots and the trees emerging from former fields are signs of “developing backwards.”

Villagers present some ironic (for them) inversions of their lives. A village sexton remembered that his relative from Russia asked to take her picture on a horse. “In Russia [in the Kaliningrad oblast] they looked with their eyes wide open in surprise [at the picture] [laughs]. Are you here on a horse? Well, she [the relative] said: “They [Lithuanians] work with horses there.” For Russians it was interesting,” concluded the sexton. The sexton argued that in Russia they work with tractors and other machines as they did in Soviet Lithuania.



Figure 2. Boleslovas on his way to mow grass. The smallest village, 2003.

Such memories contradicted memories about the Kaliningrad oblast and Lithuania of the Soviet period. Villagers remembered Kaliningrad as poor. Povilas from the second largest village recollected that once, on a trip to the Kaliningrad oblast, he observed what he considered famine there. His wife remembered other signs of the region’s “backwardness” compared to Lithuania: “There was a shepherd herding sheep. It looked so funny to us.” “And now it is the same [in the Kaliningrad oblast and Lithuania],” claimed Povilas. Adolfina from the same village also remembered the trip to the Kaliningrad oblast. She recalled that “nowhere could we find food. Something to eat that we would love... Fish was so salty... But they had dishes [in the shops]. We bought them.” Adolfina also recalled that it was dirty everywhere in Kaliningrad. Like Povilas, she thought that probably it is the same

there now. However, in Lithuania, according to Adolfina, cities are more beautiful. Unlike many others, a woman concluded that “It is more beautiful everywhere [in Lithuania].”

The present emerges as regression in talks about *social decline*. Social decline is observed in education. According to Stanislova, the teacher, in her late 50s, education (*mokslas*) is not valued by students anymore. Students graduate, go to Spain or somewhere else in search of work, get back, earn money on a farm as seasonal workers, spend that money for alcohol, and then maybe go abroad again. She invoked “darkness” to name the situation she encountered. Again the past and the present stood for significant differences:

Brighter people had grown up... they come from those Soviet times. [...] And the young? The young are already ours, grown in free Lithuania... they don't value education.

Social decline was also discussed by referring to the increased number of mentally retarded children at school. One teacher from the largest village claimed to have two of them in a class of thirteen children (another teacher was said to have three in a class). Valė, the teacher, argued that one girl comes from the family of a father who lost his health during the Afghanistan war (1979–1989) and a mother who is also sick. That family has four children. Her student was the smallest. However, another girl, according to Valė, is from a family which can but does not show any interest in their daughter's education. The teacher reasoned that poverty and alcoholism could account for the situation as well as instability and the constraints of social life. Both parents of the second girl are unemployed. They take temporary jobs. In Valė's opinion, when parents have no permanent jobs, all of life falls apart. Sometimes they start drinking and the children stay uncared for.

Social decline is also seen in high suicide rates. The article in *Lietuvos rytas*, the mainstream newspaper, of October 19, 2002 considered the World Health Organization (*Pasaulio sveikatos organizacija*) research data presenting Lithuania as leading in Europe in suicide rates (among Russia, Byelorussia, and Ukraine as well as 21 other states). The journalist asked whether “Lithuanians can be called a suicide nation” (the headlines of the issue). This was reflected among the villagers:

Sexton: It is said that Lithuania takes the first place in suicides. There are so many tragedies—some jump from a roof, others poison themselves, some get killed, some hang themselves.

Neringa: Why, do you think, it is like this?

Sexton: Well, those suicides. A person in a city, let's say, he comes to a dead end: it's either suicide, or ... What can he do? If there was a better situation, people maybe would live better. [...] Now we are so low [*žemai nusiritę*]. It's so hard."

The signs of social decline, more observable in the cities than the villages, are the homeless people, beggars, and begging children.

Look. Children are on the streets. In the morning, in the afternoon, you can see many children. They are not at school. What is happening? It is terrible. Look how they are dressed. They ask for [a few] cents for a bun. I do not give any coins, I buy them a bun [a city resident, a pensioner Zina].

Another sign of social decline is alcoholism. Villagers and some city residents refer to villages in general as "drowning in alcoholism." According to many villagers, "maybe earlier they did not drink less. But they had jobs. Maybe they drank on Fridays. And now—everyday..." Similarly to other men, Povilas, known not to refuse a drink, from the second largest village argued that "earlier there was no time to drink. You had to work. How will you drive a tractor drunk? How will you work? Maybe sometimes on Fridays or when we got paid. We used to meet and celebrate [*aplaistyti*]. [...] There was discipline, and the trade union watched. They came, if they found you drunk, you lost half of your pay. That's how it was." Povilas's wife who like Povilas was unemployed after the dissolution of the kolkhoz complained about him drinking too much; she also agreed that earlier Povilas drank less. Like everyone in the kolkhoz, according to her, he "had to work, and care for cattle at home."

Villagers also think that people are changed now. According to Bronė from the smallest village, there are so many bad people. She remembered that one girl from their village after her return from "America," i.e., the United States, argued that people are different there, "better." A woman, in her 70s, from the same village argued that "there is no unity among people, earlier people were better. [...] Now they are angry. They don't love each other, they envy each other. You want to talk to someone, but it is better not to try."

People are also presented as less cheerful and less happy, more disappointed, living in stress, and sad. Povilas remembered that they went to excursions with songs. An 80 year old woman from the largest village claimed that "it is sad in the village." There are no concerts,

cinema, or dances as before. In Soviet times a movie was shown every week. She claimed that in other villages even now concerts take place.

Informants also referred to emptiness in cities and villages. Earlier many gathered for potato harvest seasons. Children and grandchildren from the cities used to come.²¹ “The time was much more alive” [a city resident, a pensioner, born in the second largest village]. Cities are claimed to be empty in the evenings because people are afraid to go out. “Why go to a restaurant, if you may get robbed or beaten after you leave it,” wondered a businessman and a farmer from the largest village.

Informants’ stories are full of *personal regressions*. Many had to discontinue going to theaters, or on vacation, or exchanging visits with relatives and friends, even using a telephone. In the example cited below, Stanislova, a teacher, regrets that she cannot go to the theater or buy books. Her students do not go to the theater because parents are busy working or have no money for tickets. The changing social relations, the emphasis on work or money rather than what had been considered “culture,” are lamented. A Kaunas resident Zina, currently a pensioner claimed:

I like theater. I used to buy books. What kind of culture can we speak about now? Look to our youth. Sometimes I take children to the puppet play. Their moms do not take them. Grandmothers or nannies take some kids. One elderly woman was sitting beside me in the theater. She said: “A mother cannot take her child, she is busy, working.” The other woman said that she buys a ticket and takes her grandson. Otherwise the child would grow up seeing nothing.

The “regression” metaphor is partial and generalizes experiences and sensibilities of many in the villages and of some in cities. Meanings of “regression” convey increased isolation, poverty, insecurity, disorientation in a changing environment. The present acquires meanings of “regression” in relation to the past, remembered as a time of well-being.

²¹ See, Rogers, Douglas (2004) on labor and exchange relations.

3.3 PAST WELL-BEING AND PROSPERITY

Informants invoke socialism as a time of social well-being and personal prosperity. People claim that in the socialist past, everyone was able to travel (mostly within the former Soviet Union), to go on vacation every year (usually to a resort on the Baltic sea), and to spend some time each year at a health spa. The memories invoked are that everyone could get a job, even at an old age. People could have several jobs, if they wanted to. Children were at day care centers for almost no charge, secondary and college education was free. Medical care was free as well. Many lived in apartments owned by the state; and the cost of utilities was modest. Some villagers say that *then* they lacked nothing. Marija who arrived in the village two years ago because she could not subsist in a town argues:

Then, neither I, nor my children lacked anything. I could myself afford everything I wanted. We used to go with my husband to a restaurant or a bar. We could go with the children for a vacation. We used to go to a resort by the sea every summer. And now? Nothing. Now I have no money to go to the city to get the allowance for children. When I have to take a child to the doctor we ride a horse.

Late socialism is remembered as a time of prosperity, when cows and pigs were fed with bread, when even beggars had a job, when there were no homeless people, and you could buy a lot with the money you had: “People lived well [in the late 1970s and 1980s]. All beggars lived well. They had bread and money, and money was different [worth something].” “I remember one used to give bread to cows. A loaf of bread was 16 kopecks... The ruble was not the *litas* [LTL, the national currency of Lithuania]. For the milk of two cows I used to get about 700 rubles per month. Now I get only 29 cents per liter” [Algimantas, a 50 year old man from the smallest village].

Socialism may even be invoked as a time of progress, when a daily life was improving. Usually, after graduating from a school or a college, an individual was given a job. In many cases, he/she was provided with housing as well:

It was better then. You finish school, you get a job... We got an old apartment from the kolkhoz. We got a new one later. For free. It is hard to think that you could get anything for free now. Later we applied for a house... Nowadays, if you had to save money all your life to buy this house, it would not be enough [a farmer, in her 40s, from the largest village].

Some informants were also able to save some money themselves and to buy a house and/or a car:

We bought a house and we paid for it, then we bought furniture. Later, we bought a very nice new car—a Moskvich. And now what? Of course, everything is there, but... there is no money. In Russian times it was better. Oh, if those times came back, it would be different [said with a smile] [a pensioner, in her late 60s, from the second largest village].

The pensioners claimed that in the Soviet period they would have been provided with firewood for heating, they would not have had to worry about the price of medicine, high utility or telephone bills, and travel costs. A former teacher, a pensioner, in her 70s, claimed: “In Russian times, there was such a law that, if a teacher, living in a village, retires, compensation for electricity, heating has to be guaranteed to that teacher. Firewood had to be delivered until the end of the teacher’s life.”

3.4 MORAL CLAIMS AND MEANINGS OF JUSTICE

Memories of the past often carry moral overtones and concerns with justice. Invoking present insecurity and crime, people remember that they lived without locks on their doors, were not afraid of burglars, did not think or hear about murders. Many used to travel or go outside at night, if they needed to. Now “people get killed. Earlier, in Russian times, I don’t know, but maybe the laws were different. And now it is no big deal to kill a person. If you steal a chicken, you may spend more years in prison than with a case of murder. I don’t know...” [a 60 year old pensioner from the second largest village].

The discourse on present insecurity and crime is influenced by the media, which gives a lot of attention to criminal topics, and which is followed by informants as they themselves acknowledge. However, these are also the narratives of experience. The Vitkus family from the second largest village report that their cow was taken right from behind the house and was butchered on the field. One older man from the largest village was locked outside his apartment until burglars took what they wished. Bronè from the smallest village was once approached by the two young men and asked to give money, which she did not have and did

not give away. Milk cans, chickens, anything valued cannot be left outside at night; figuratively Bronė concluded that “if you leave them outside—they are not yours anymore.” She also said to go to sleep with one thought: “My God, I wish nobody comes and tortures me when I am asleep [laughs].” Another woman from the smallest village argued that:

People have no conscience now. Earlier we did not need locks on the doors. Nobody needed prisons or the police. And now? In the evening you have to make sure you don’t leave a bucket or a cart. They steal in the daytime also. I lost my milk cans from my yard.

In the city of Kaunas a couple of doctors remembered how one woman came to their house and asked for money for medicine for her ill daughter. The first time a doctor gave her money. When the woman came the second time, the doctors asked about the diagnosis of her daughter. The woman asked whether they were doctors and then fled away. Other stories included State Social Insurance Fund Board “employees.”²² A woman, in her 40s, visited the elderly people as a State Social Insurance Fund Board employee. She talked about updating their information and the possibility of raising their pensions. While in the apartment, she was able to find money and get away. Such criminality is “the norm already, it is not a surprise to anyone,” argued a village librarian.

The state was also approached as criminal in its different manifestations. The police were thought to be involved in smuggling and co-operation with criminals; state officials were expected to be corrupt at subdistrict or government level. Bronė argued that earlier “such crooks” complained that they are being liquidated [*naikinami*]. Now they are friends with the police.” State deception was seen in distributing kolkhoz wealth, restitution of rights to land and in other spaces of interaction between people and various levels of authorities often connected to the “state” in popular perceptions. Jadvyga M. from the largest village argued that she bought 20 a²³ by her house for 5 thousand rubles. Later she refused 3 ha of her inherited land in another village on the agreement that she will be able to take 3 ha by her house. The 20 a of land, which was bought previously, was included in the 3 ha plot Jadvyga’s family was assigned. These 5 thousand paid for the 20 a have disappeared,

²² See also “Aferistų slaptažodis—didesnės pensijos” (“The password of cheaters—higher pensions”). *Respublika/ Vakarų ekspresas*. 09/02/2005. No.203. P.5.

²³ 1 are (a) is 100 square meters; 1hectare (ha) is 10,000 square meters.

according to Jadvyga M. She recalled that she had receipts for buying the land, but “bureaucrats could not find the documents proving that. It means there is no land [that they bought].” Similar experiences invoke shifts between disappointment, even anger, and hopelessness. Jadvyga M. reiterated that “people are fooled, fooled in all ways. [...] They know that we won’t go anywhere to complain, because there is no place [an institution] to complain. They [bureaucrats, authorities, etc.] will always be right. [...] Everything is just to make things worse for people.”

Jadvyga M. argued that the police should work honestly, try to help, to make order. However, according to her, many work for their own benefit. Like the Parliament members, the policemen also know that they are not going to stay long in office. Jadvyga M. said that her brother argued that, if he was *valdžia* (state authority), he would do the same, first for himself, then for his relatives, then his term in office would end. According to Jadvyga’s brother, and some other informants, those who do not get or take (are not involved in corrupt dealings or the like), are angry. Similarly, some informants like Ramutė admitted not to be able to or not to know how to steal, which reminds me of a popular saying repeated in Soviet times “poor is stupid” (*kaip kvailas, taip ir biednas*) as well as of a “culture” of pilfering reiterated on many occasions by informants themselves:

I don’t have anything because I didn’t steal [*prisivogt neprisivogiau*]. We are common people... if we had more brains [*jei proto būtų buvę daugiau*], we could have made a haul [*būtume prisivogę*]. But we were not clever then... And now what? He [her husband] is without a job. I am without a job. He was a driver all his life... so we live in poverty.

Ideas of injustice and immorality very often are invoked to interpret unhabitual behavior or experience. Claims about justice and morality also imply a criticism of the observed outcomes of post-Soviet changes, such as increased social stratification and status shifts in the present:

I think about justice. If we have to tighten our belts, all of us have to do that. Not only those, so-called masses. Those who are in Vilnius [i.e., the political elite] they don’t tighten their belts. Not likely! When the Lithuanian Supreme Council dissolved [the members of the Council] got enormous compensations. Thousands and thousands. This was because they lost their job [said ironically]... Now they have allocated retirement benefits to signatories [signers of the Independence Act of 1990]. People resent this,... intellectuals get 300 LTL... When one pays

all the bills, there is not much left for food. I have an acquaintance in Jonava. She was an obstetrician all her life. She gets such a [small] pension that she has to choose between getting food and buying medicine. She said that she chose to eat. She doesn't see doctors and has no money for medicine [Elvyra, a doctor, in her early 60s, a Kaunas resident].

Customary hierarchical relations of the past, such as those between teachers, students, and parents or, as in the examples above, between intellectuals or professionals and others are phrased as common sense issues, the social values in terms of which people develop the moral criticisms of the present. For the informants, changes in behavior that divert from past hierarchies mean a retreat from what is moral. While new modes of interaction are familiar, they are unacceptable. One teacher lamented:

Earlier no child would think of telling his parents that a teacher is stupid. Now they say so. And parents agree to that. They even encourage their children to talk that way... Then you cannot say anything to a child. It's considered terrorism or something. If you comment on a student's behavior, he counts how many times you mention his name, and then complains that "the teacher is harassing me..." Earlier, even if a father was a drunk, he used to say: "I will show him" [meaning he will punish his child]. You had to calm him... Earlier a student understood what he or she did wrong.

Ideas about justice in some cases refer to official Soviet ideology according to which all people were equal, as one villager pointed out: "My son-in-law was an engineer. He used to get less than a laborer... There were no masters and we did not need them. People were equal, friends to each other... That was justice." Or:

She fell so low. She had college education. Now she is retired. She cannot subsist on what she gets. She sells apples, which she grows in her yard... It's good that she has those apples [said ironically]. My other friend, the architect, she doesn't have a yard. She would be eager to sell apples. It is so unjust. We have to tighten our belts. You see, actually we were all equal earlier. We did not have much, but... but there were a lot of social benefits. Education, daycare, spas, all was there [Elvyra, a Kaunas resident, a doctor].

In contrast to the injustices of the present, the past is imagined as the time of assured justice and available mechanisms to settle disputes:

Under the Russians there was a friendly court. If someone takes anything from you or insults you, you can bring a claim to that court. The court used to invite everyone, [then] consider, reprove, and lecture. Neighbors were reconciled. Now nothing... Now nothing. Courts are

unavailable. If an official says a few words, you have to pay 100–200 LTL [Jadvyga M., a retired woman from the largest village].

The present is narrated as a time of moral degradation. It appears in alcoholism, selfishness, crime, unwillingness to work or improper work, and debauchery. The past is claimed as either free/or almost free of it.

The earlier generation came from the countryside. It was a healthy peasant generation... it was a healthy country then. Without alcoholism [or] degradation... These people even Sniečkus [the long-term leader of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Lithuania]... they weren't so selfish, I think, as people are now... They are so self-serving. I remember when I was small we used to say "my word of honor." That meant everything, everyone had to trust you. And now... Does anyone remember what one promises?.. What I don't like is this invasion of American culture. Everyone goes after it. What I see in Russia [Russia is also affected by American culture]. Such debauchery... Lithuanians were modest [Elvyra, a doctor].

Justice and morality may be invoked in any context and articulations of regressions of the post-Soviet period. In many cases, by making justice and morality arguments people convey metacommentaries on experiences of changes as well as reiterate the values and meanings of the past. The terms of injustice, immorality, or disorder (discussed in the following section) are used to articulate the present by incorporating, even in a discontent tone, various changes in society, community, the state and personal lives.

3.5 SYMBOLIC SPACES OF ORDER

"Order" is a symbol often used to interpret the present and recall the past. People describe the present as "chaos." "Disorder," "disarray," and "destruction" are the other common symbols to articulate contemporary changes:

They did away with all cattle. Everything was wiped away. People were thrown into chaos. Destroyed, demolished, neither for the people, nor for those in power—for no-one... Everything is dismantled, windows are smashed, such disarray. No order [Alina from the second largest village, a former city resident].

Disorder refers to everything that is unusual, disliked, discordant, and confusing. In many cases what is confusing and unusual are unarticulated and inexperienced sets of relations or regulations brought about by post-socialist changes. Reforms in medicine, agriculture, and education are regarded as destructive, unnecessary, or absurd. For example, speaking about the reform in medicine, people refer to the new regulations regarding patients, doctors, and health benefits as irrational, disorderly, and wrong:

We used to have preventive medicine, everyone had to have check ups. Now tuberculosis is spreading. It is terrible. The rates of cancer cases are increasing. Nobody screens for that... The reform of medicine is an absurdity. Earlier [in socialism] everything was much better organized. The family doctor may know all the patients in a village, but not in a city. The family doctors in a city don't care about their patients, he/she cannot manage all the appointments. I had an appointment once, and the doctor didn't even look at me. He didn't care at all. Then I asked him to take my blood pressure. He said: "OK, I will do it." I said: "thank you, I do not need such a doctor" [Elvyra, a doctor].

"Order" as a symbol is open to various conceptualizations. People can consider it in terms of state reforms, as in the previous example, narrate personal histories, locate themselves in a changing social environment, and in some cases express political stances.

Ideas about order range from the very general, such as "I did not want that time to return. However, you know, there was order then," to specific concerns over present issues, such as unemployment, price changes, corruption, or bureaucracy:

It would be good, if people had jobs. Nobody would complain, if one was paid for cattle meat or milk properly. I am OK. I get a pension. I just cannot stand the officials [in the municipality]. You can find four officials in one room. They direct me from one to another. I cannot stand this. There is no order. And you cannot complain to anyone. All of them are corrupt. They find ways to show that they want money. Earlier under the Russians there were few officials in the neighborhood. Now they only drink coffee and take money from the people. I do not know what they do. They just sit and talk whenever you go there. There is no order. It is really disorder... Under the Russians everything was in place. You asked, you got [Stasé from the largest village].

Present disorder is a relational observation conceived in terms of past experiences that stand for orderliness:

There is too much freedom for people. It's thuggery around here. They kill and shoot each other. They cannot live together. They kill in order to feed at the trough... Probably too much democracy is harmful. Sometimes discipline would help [people]... Killings, prostitution, burglaries... where are our rulers? Yesterday it was reported that a son killed his parents. This is already happening [a man, in his 50s, from the second largest village].

Or:

Nobody gets punished for anything. You can kill someone, nobody cares. Nobody says anything, as if it has to be so. Earlier there was order. I don't know... it was stricter. You were punished for everything. And now nothing... [a woman, in her 60s, from the second largest village].

The multivocality of order/disorder is successfully exploited in election campaigns in Lithuania. Order was one of the major catchwords of the last presidential campaign (2003) in statements, such as "there will be order!" (see chapter 7). Many of the informants reported that they voted for Rolandas Paksas because he promised to establish order. In the campaigning and since, people have been able to relate their personal experiences of post-socialism and memories of the past to political rhetoric about order.

3.6 WHOSE "BETTER TIMES"?

The discourse of "better times" was shared by many villagers and some urban interlocutors. Some other urban informants never referred to the past as "better," and some, especially the younger ones, never compared the Soviet past to the present. However, many city informants noted at some point during the interviews that people in villages think that it was better during the Soviet period.

"Better times" is a generational discourse. By 1990, the Baltic population below age 50 had no experience of the independence period and little experience with Stalinism. For increasing numbers of people, the independence period was receding into a past beyond one's own date of birth (see Misiunas and Taagepera 1983). Thus, for many experience from the Soviet period, often mediated by the Soviet-period's values, comprised the only meaningful universe and common sense knowledge on the basis of which people fashioned

their identities and interpreted social histories. Consequently, people who lived most of their life in Soviet times, i.e., the ones in their 40s, and especially in their 50s and 60s, tended to utilize variations of the discourse of “better times.”

The younger generations, those who experienced the Soviet period as children or teenagers (the ones in their 20s and early 30s in 2003–2004), usually did not invoke Soviet times as the “better times” unless they recited their parents’ views. For them, the Soviet period was bound to school experiences and childhood memories usually colored in pleasant emotions having nothing to do with the symbolic power of the “times.”

The oldest generations (people in their late 70s and 80s), having some experience of pre-Soviet Lithuania, often remarked about the differences of the Soviet period as well as compared Soviet times with the first independence period of Lithuania. Their judgments about the Soviet period partly depended on how they lived during the first independence times as well as how they lived during the Soviet period. The oldest generation’s memories of the Soviet past were divided into sequences of the post-war period, life after the death of Stalin, and the late Soviet period (usually the 1970s or/and 1980s). The post-war times were remembered by invoking the partisan movement, deportations to Siberia, the founding of kolkhozes, work in the kolkhozes, tributes, taxes, low/no salaries, and hunger. The post-Stalinist period marked changes in personal lives usually referred in general terms: “it got better,” “easier,” etc. People were able to earn more, they did not face hunger, the partisan movement was suppressed, and deportations stopped. Only the late Soviet times were the “better times.”

3.7 POST-SOCIALIST SUBALTERNITY

Post-socialism produced new subalterns in Eastern Europe. Among the new subalterns the most visible are the populations of former industrial towns and rural areas (cf. Kideckel 2002, Hann 2002). In Lithuania the experience of subalternity correlates with the discourse of “better times” in the Soviet period. Most of the people cited and included in this chapter

were from the three villages as well as some people from Kaunas, such as pensioners, living on small pensions, unemployed factory workers, employed with small salary people, and people living on benefits.

In Soviet times, the rural population's status was connected to its role in the economy as well as the recognition deriving from this role. Villager income (their pay plus income from the private plots) in the late Soviet period in many cases was higher than the income of city inhabitants (cf. Humphrey 2002). In 1975, the private sector was producing 39% of Lithuania's total agricultural output despite the fact that the Soviet state's feelings toward private agriculture were negative in principle (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983). In the Soviet period measures were frequently made to make private farming inconvenient, for example, by pricing livestock feed higher than bread, which led to feeding bread and even macaroni to many private pigs and cows²⁴ (cf. Misiunas and Taagepera 1983). However, the importance of private farming in "feeding" the cities was realized and villagers recall "feeding the cities" (see Misiunas and Taagepera 1983).

The rural population's income allowed for accumulating savings, which instigated feelings of security. The production of the private sector was also used for exchange, which promoted social relations with other villagers as well as city inhabitants. Villagers' production provided city residents with scarce goods (like smoked ham), also with goods that the city residents otherwise had to buy from their small (in many cases) salaries. Thus, money earned from private plots, salaries and production was relevant to the social status of the villagers. As the following chapter shows, at present the private plots and rural employment do not yield similar benefits. Villagers lost their role in the economy as well as recognition deriving from this role.

A relevant, but more controversial and understudied issue (but see Kideckel, forthcoming, Verdery 1983) is the status of villagers and industrial workers stemming from the ideological support of the Soviet state. Images, such as the hammer and sickle, which marked public space by appearing on flags and statues and on the TV every time a person

²⁴ Informants referred to feeding bread to cows and pigs to illustrate Soviet time prosperity.

watched a Moscow Film Studio film²⁵ promoted the working class (peasants and workers) as the central figures of the Soviet state and the major protagonists of Soviet history.

In late socialism the rhetoric on industrial and agricultural progress lauding the workers' and the peasants' role, achievements and missions created the visibility of the "working class" as well as nourished the imagination of the possible and the fulfillment located in the future (cf. Kideckel, forthcoming). Socialism facilitated worker agency by its ideological emphasis on the creativity of labor, policies promoting worker professionalization, education, and cultural participation, the provision of steady and secure work, and subsidized food and housing as well as by promoting images of the worker-as-hero (Kideckel, forthcoming).

It is less clear how villagers and workers consumed discourses of privilege and recognition. Many sought opportunities to migrate from villages. However, some reiterations of Soviet ideology by informants in villages of Lithuania, such as claims that everything was for the common people, for the workers (Jadvyga N., a former kolkhoz party secretary) or endorsements of perceived equality show that some people subscribed at least in part to the ideology of the Soviet state. Estonian tractor drivers, mentioned in Kirss's (2004) study, also replicated Soviet-period ideologies. Like Lithuanian informants, women fashioned their lives as simple farm girls who had been lifted to the heights of the Soviet pyramid of power because of their "heroic work" in the fields (Lauristin 2004). For example, Elmine, a Russian-born female tractor driver from an Estonian kolkhoz, had been a celebrity, a symbolic figure who represented the core of Soviet ideology, the myth about the happiness of simple working people (Lauristin 2004:181). Lauristin claims that Elmine's life was formed as a replica of the system's values and officially communicated meanings. Elmine had a heroine role model of another woman tractorist, upon whom she patterned her actions. Elmine by the end of the 1980s wrote in the newspaper *Sakala*: "We believed in the future. We worked almost without pay in the name of our homeland. We sincerely believed that our work would help to achieve our ideals" (Otsman 1988:3, cited in Reinvelt 2004:174).

²⁵ The Studio logo was the image of a statue of a man holding a hammer and a woman holding a sickle with a triumphantly raised crossed arms.

Ten years later, Elmine spelled out that the ideals of her life had been shattered with the regaining of independence. Reinvelt (2004) concludes that “For many common workers the ending of the Soviet era brought with it the shattering of the ideals that had inspired them throughout their working lives, substituting them with the understanding of having lived their lives wrongly” (Reinvelt 2004:175). Reinvelt thinks that Soviet state “propaganda” about a happy tomorrow primarily infected young people. Elmine remembers that

We, the youth of the Soviet country of the time, believed in our leader. The press helped us greatly. All great things were connected with Stalin’s name.—It took superhuman effort and creative, self-forgetful work to take the backward, ruined, hungry and barefoot country to where it is today. All this had its appeal to young people. Our belief in the ideals of our country, in their honesty and purity knew no boundaries. We were positive that everything that was done was right. People went to death in the war with this belief, and it helped them to rebuild the country after the war [Ostman 1987:2, cited in Reinvelt 2004:176].

Not surprisingly, Elmine cannot exhibit her Hero’s Golden Star and Orders of Lenin any more. In Estonia, like in Lithuania, society “lives” with new heroes (and new subalterns). According to Elmine, she sold the Star and Orders of Lenin and bought a TV set and a power saw. “Otherwise we could not have got them” [Palli, Lepassalu 2000:13, cited in Reinvelt 2004:177].

The Soviet state may have secured some support for itself through policies of social welfare as well as through increased standards of living compared to the pre-World War II period. Verdery (1983) in her study of a Transylvanian village reports enthusiasm about improved standards of living and opportunities for employment and education in the 1970s. The most uniformly enthusiastic people often came from those who used to be among the village poor. Opinions illustrate the positive relations between a subject and a socialist state:

The state does a lot for us, and our leader Ceaușescu is for the people. No government here ever helped people before, you just did what you could on your own. Sometimes the collective farm doesn’t pay us our pensions, but we don’t really worry, because our government won’t just let us die.

Collectivization, now that’s another story. It was dreadful when they took away our land, and it’s a scandal how this farm works. But even so, things were never so good before as now. [...] Before, we peasants were dirty and poor, we worked like dogs all summer and then a hailstorm would come and destroy the whole crop in a second; we took all day to go to market to sell

eggs and a chicken for a little cash. Now a bus comes and you go to the factory and get your salary. Was that a good life? No, sir, it wasn't. Now we can get good jobs. If we want, we can send our kids all the way through university, if they're smart, and it hardly costs us anything. [...]

And believe me, back in the old days we didn't buy sugar by the kilogram as we do know, we bought it by the lump. Today everyone's a gentleman, everyone's dressed in fur, you don't see a poor person anywhere. I was a miserable sharecropper and my son is an engineer. That's really something²⁶ [Verdery 1983:33–34].

The workers and villagers lost ideological, economic, and social support after the dissolution of the Soviet state. Recently the various policies and ideologies of marginalization and othering have extended to low budgetary investments into regions outside the major cities and continuous support of large-holding farmers and large businesses. Othering is expressed in narratives about villages and little towns drowning in alcoholism (repeated by the informants themselves), women giving birth to children to get benefits on which they survive, and people avoiding work or relying on a questionable work ethic and dishonesty. Othering can even be observed in the media, which, like elsewhere in Eastern Europe, positively emphasizes new kinds of employment and related material culture. Advertisements portray middle-class professionals engaged in “clean” activities. They advertise high-tech products like cell phones and computers with little actual or symbolic connection to villagers or city residents who cannot afford such products (cf. Kideckel, forthcoming).

In Lithuania among the most prominent othering discourses are the ones invoking “two Lithuanias.” “Two Lithuanias” means that there exist two regions which diverge in their economic, social and political constitution and which emerged after the post-Soviet-period reforms and transformations. In the media and political discourse the inhabitants of the first region are often presented as rural, poor, unemployed or employed with a low salary, supporting populist and radical ideas, going on strikes, nostalgic for socialism and resentful towards the present. In Minkenberg's terms these people are *the losers of transition*

²⁶ In her footnotes Verdery remarks that the opinion cited is from the 1970s, before the food shortages and rationing of the early 1980s, which resulted from mismanagement and the global economic crisis and which provoked deep discontent among rural as well as urban Romanians (Verdery 1983:33).

(Minkenberg 2002). *The winners* are the ones thriving economically and enjoying transition, often living in the capital Vilnius or the other big city.

Some politicians deny that “two Lithuanias” exist; others reinforce the image by continuously reifying it²⁷ and urging to unite Lithuania. For example, the impeachment process of the former President Rolandas Paksas forced forward the idea that “Lithuania” is split into supporters of President Paksas and his opponents. The supporters are presented as poor, rural, and/or the most vulnerable part of the population, the “second Lithuania”²⁸ (see also chapter 7). Exploring this division, the post-impeachment presidential candidate of the 2004 elections Česlovas Juršėnas invited people to vote for him because he could be “the President who will reconcile Lithuania as well as secure stability and prosperity”²⁹ (see also chapter 7).

For villagers “two Lithuanias” do not mean *the losers* and *the winners* of transition, but the political elite or the “lords/masters” (*ponai*),³⁰ their environment and “people” (see chapter 6). According to a retired former kolkhoz employee:

I think that there is Lithuania and a small Lithuania. Lithuania is where the masters of Vilnius reside [the political elites], a small Lithuania—all the rest. Two Lithuanias. There and here are Lithuanians, but our Lithuanians are poor people.

Unintendedly the images of “two Lithuanias” produce class distinctions already “catalogued” by Soviet Lithuania. For example, in the “Extract from the Speech of Acting President of the Republic, Paleckis, at the First Session of the People’s Seimas” of July 21, 1940 it is claimed:

I would like to dwell on the situation which we have lived through so that we could better appraise the present situation and the prospects before us. Looking back into the past, to the period of our national renaissance, we see a clear-cut and constant struggle between the *two Lithuanias*—between the Lithuania of the landmasters and the Lithuania of peasant serfs, between the Lithuania of reactionary clericals and the Lithuania of progressive free thinkers,

²⁷ See, e.g., Gentvilas, Eugenijus “Po dvi Lietuvas—kiekviename kaime” (“Two Lithuanias in every village”). *Veidas*. 01/22/2004. No.4., Monkevičius, Algirdas “Supriešinimo miglas išsklaidyti gali žinių šviesa” (“The light of knowledge can diffuse the mist of polarization”). *Veidas*. 01/15/2004. No.3.

²⁸ See, e.g., Algimantas Šindeikis “Antroji dviejų Lietuvos dvikova” (“The second combat of two Lithuanias”). *Veidas*. 06/17/2004. No.25. P.12.

²⁹ Source: <http://www.jursenas.lt>. Accessed 27 June 2004.

³⁰ Sometimes the “masters” means “rich people” in general.

between the bourgeois and the proletarian Lithuania. All the stages of the nation's history are marked by the struggle between these *two Lithuanias* [Kancevičius 1976:189–190, emphasis added].

Like similar others in Eastern Europe villagers and others are best kept under wraps for fear that their otherness and decline will also tarnish and discomfort the passage to the future (Kideckel 2002). Such intentions are especially visible in the metaphors applied to these people, such as “sugar beets.” The name “sugar beets” emerged after the early 2000s strikes of sugar beet farmers in Suvalkija, the south region of Lithuania, and soon it was extended to include many of the resentful, the poor, the rural and other *others*. During the strikes the farmers blocked the highway connecting all Baltic countries to Poland. As one professor of political science explained—“our way to Europe.” Among the many responses to the strikes there was one worth special attention—a poster erected in Vilnius in 2003 stating “We are for Europe! The sugar beets are not going to stop us!”



Figure 3. The billboard advertising drinks. The above statement: “Using alcohol you risk your health, the family’s and society’s well-being.” The strawberry has a sign: “The sugar beets will not stop us!” The apple: “We are for Europe!” The lower statement: “Cider Cool Drink—a new advanced taste.” I thank Gediminas Vitkus and Reda Griškaitė for the photo. The photo was taken in Vilnius, June, 2003.

The socio-economic problems facing people from the regions and in the cities are addressed during electoral campaigns. Then, these people become unexpectedly visible, somehow exotic, but the beloved subjects of all candidates. Even if they are remembered during elections, most informants mentioned in this chapter through the excerpts of their

talk feel forgotten in general. Forgetting, exoticizing or othering distance these people from society in general and restrict their sense of agency with which they perceive their social history, themselves, and the future (see also Kideckel, forthcoming).

Subalternity derives from not having any social/cultural capital with which people could orient themselves in a changing environment. Those who had resources and abilities to adapt to changes were less likely to digress into considerations and generalizations about the better past (but see chapter 4). These people would include large-holding farmers, some of whom were kolkhoz or state farm directors, kolkhoz engineers, and other elites of the villages. Former high social standing does not necessarily imply present farmers' benefits from the dissolving farms (benefits varied from one case to another with almost no benefits in some cases) (cf. Lampland 2002). Despite farmers' links to privatization in the early 1990s, most of them had and used social relations and personal capabilities to adapt to the changing environment.

3.8 TRAJECTORIES OF POST-SOCIALIST DECLINE

Informants, even if they agreed that it was better “under the Russians,” in some cases qualified their conclusions by recalling some aspects of the Soviet-period life which did not fit their proposed framework of thought. A truck driver from a city remembered that there was irrational use of resources in Soviet times: “In Siberia if one cuts three trees, only one reaches the destination. Two rot.” Others remembered that “it was hard,” even if claiming that Soviet times were better compared to the present. Stasë from the largest village remembered that when she raised kids, she had constantly to run between work and her house: “I had a hard life. The salary was very small. Even if that ruble had a value [it did not mean much to her, she still had little money]. But we had a cow, a pig, somehow we survived. We built a house.”

Various facts of the past may be reflected upon to make an argument about the “better times.” For some building a house was an illustration of the Soviet time's progress

and prosperity, others, like the above cited Stasè, invoked building a house in a story of hardships. Thus, facts were integrated in one or the other social text dependent on the argument an individual tried to make. In all examples, memory was socially mediated, i.e., filtered through socially available texts and symbols, and connecting a person to communities of meanings.

In the communities studied most people were not making political statements about socialism. Positive memories about socialism in most cases did not become translated into political support for the “Soviet state.” They were translated into critiques of the present authorities. Sometimes these criticisms have been made by the politicians themselves, by appealing to memories of the past and imaginaries of the present (see chapter 7).

Trajectories of post-socialist regression are discontinuous; however, they are found throughout most of the post-socialist area. Vitebsky (2002) writes that in the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) of Even, among one of the Tungus-speaking peoples an apocalyptic vocabulary of despair, crisis, inertia and paralysis is very popular (cf. Ries 1997). Casual conversations are peppered with words like *raspad* (decline), *polnyy krakh* (total crash) or *konets sveta*, which conveniently means both the “end of the world” and the “end of light.” Questions like “Mummy, what did we use for light before we used candles?” “Electricity, my dear.” (Vitebsky 2002:181) are very reminiscent of villagers conversations about getting water from a well and using candles to save electricity in Lithuania (see chapter 2). Vitebsky claims that while the Soviet mystique has been demystified, the post-Soviet mystery has only deepened. “Why are people so unhappy now that they are ‘free’?” (Vitebsky 2002:181).

Kideckel (forthcoming) claims that in Romania socialist days—as contradictory as they were—are invoked by some workers as the best ever (cf. Humphrey 2002). Despite the misery of lives in late socialism, when workers compare socialist life to today, they focus on the security of the former and uncertainty of the latter. One 35 year old Făgăraș worker echoed socialist time in his sentiments and sounded very much like a villager in Lithuania:

In the first place, at that time you had an assured job. When you finished school you would make an application and within a week you’d be hired. You could live on your salary. You could buy furniture for your house. Then it was much less expensive to live. The people today who say that ‘the communists did bad’, well, maybe they did, but they certainly did good

things for young people. Also, they didn't allow divisions to be created between poor and wealthy people. If you happened to get too much, they would ask you 'hey, where did you get all that stuff?' But today on your salary you can't live from one day to the next. Now we have come to where we have to purchase second-hand clothing and in the time of Ceaușescu, there wasn't even such a thing. Everyone was able to buy new clothing of good quality³¹ (Kideckel, forthcoming).

Kideckel reports that people claim to have had quality life conditions under socialism, workers display appliances and other expensive housewares stating that "everything we have here was bought when Ceaușescu was in power." People claim to live in stress and uncertainty about the future, to experience job losses and job insecurity, a sense of betrayal, and alienation. Increased depression, suicide, heart disease, stroke and a general increase in rates of morbidity and mortality all characterize worker communities in post-socialist times (Kideckel, forthcoming, see also Skultans 1998).

Similar structures of feeling and thought seem to characterize other societies of change. Discussing nostalgia in China, Rofel argues that workers of the oldest generation has nowhere to turn in the current moment, no location from which to speak with any pride, thus, they "turn to their memories as the only thread that leaves a trace of more complex selves, of selves who belong in the nation as socialist subjects because they have spoken bitterness and, therefore, deserve recognition" (Rofel 1994:240).

³¹ See the next chapter on buying second-hand clothing in Lithuania.

4.0 CHAPTER 2: WORK, MONEY, AND MILK

Experiences of marginalization, knowledge of changing social history, physical and social environment were reflected in discussions of work, money, and milk. The past very often was associated with full employment, “real” money, and good prices for milk. The predictability, security, and fullness of the past were contrasted to the changing, uncertain, and restricting present. In this chapter I illustrate how ideas about work, money and milk express changing values, meanings, social relations and individual accommodations as well as resistance. Ideas also reflect emerging emotional regimes and encounters of social displacement. The alternative voices are the excerpts of dialogues going on in village communities or city spaces about meanings of the present social history. Experiences and knowledge of the present and the past in terms of work, money, and milk are constituted by and constitute social texts explored in the first and the following chapters.

4.1 WORK

4.1.1 The value of work

Work is the primary theme brought up in discussions about the past and the present in villages and city spaces. Informants considered how they lost jobs, how they could find a job, what jobs other people had, in the villages—how they could travel to a work place, if they got a job outside a village. Some informants claimed that it was better “then” because people had jobs, while others, even if they questioned the “goodness” of the past, often added “we had jobs then.” The usual response among villagers to the question of how they

see their life and environment as having changed during the post-liberation period was connected to issues about work. For example, Valė, the school teacher and wife of a large-holding farmer, argued that “The village looks sadder. In a sense that there are no jobs for people. [...] Earlier people had jobs. Maybe the salary was smaller, but a person was guaranteed that he would get something. Now most are unemployed.” A 70 year old former brickyard worker claimed that “It was good to live in the end [of the Soviet period]. There were enough jobs, everything. Even now some people say: it was so good then. There was work.”

The ones who disregarded freedom and disliked life “under Lithuania” pointed to unemployment as the major reason of their discontents. Jadvyga N., a former party secretary from the largest village, claimed that she knew that “it was not going to be better under the Lithuanians because people would have no jobs.” A retired 70 year old woman from the largest village, when asked whether it is important that Lithuania is free now, responded that:

Maybe for some... you see. Not for everyone. For most it is not important... They started so fast... People have no jobs... People are very worried about these jobs. I get a pension... I am not hungry, I can handle it.

Others inverted the meanings of freedom of the liberation movement (see chapter 5) saying that “you are free, you don’t have to *work*; you can do what you want;” “it’s real freedom—no *jobs*” (emphasis added).

Conversely, “coercion” was given a positive meaning. The fact that people were “forced to work,” “dragged to their work places,” etc. was conceived as a positive event in the past. Daiva, a school janitor, claimed that “earlier everyone knew that one is going to be under compulsion [the word used was *prievarta* “coercion,” “compulsion,” “constraint”]. You will be forced to sit [at work] and you will sit, you will get paid.” Bronė, a woman, in her early 70s, remembered that “under the Russians, when they were here, it was good that everyone had a job. If you were unemployed, you were forced to work. These alcoholics, as we call them today, were put to work by the state.” Jadvyga N. claimed that “if a drunk refused to go to work, he was forcefully taken there by militia.” Bronė argued: “and now, any person [unemployed], even with higher education, may become a drunk. Many fell into that trap.”

Social problems, such as alcoholism and crimes, were related to the fact that people had no jobs. People believed that unemployment led to burglaries, thefts, and killings. An older couple in their early 70s from the second largest village claimed that now that the young finish school, they cannot find jobs, thus, they have to steal: “What else can they do? It is understandable.” Another woman, in her late 60s, from the largest village wondered about orphans from the orphanage in a nearby town: “When they leave, maybe some will study for two three years. But there are no jobs. They will go out on the street. They will have to go to prison, to get something to eat...”

In villages people prefer having a low status job to being unemployed. Daiva, a school janitor, in her early 40s, and a former accountant, remembered how everyone wondered and ridiculed her when she took the job of a janitor. Her friends thought it was terrible. “How could she take such a job?” reflected Daiva upon others’ comments on her decision. Now she was very happy to have this job. The janitor’s job was even considered prestigious. “In our village it is important to have a job, it does not matter what kind of job you have. Any job is prestigious, because there are no jobs in the village,” the woman argued. Marija from the second largest village claimed that “earlier it was shameful for a child to say that one’s mother was a janitor.” She remembered children at school who used to ridicule someone in Russian—“мамка—уборщица!” (“mom—a janitor!”). Stressing the importance of having a job, Marija said that “Now I would go to clean city toilets [public restrooms] and I would not be ashamed, really.”

The examples of Daiva and Marija show that work is appreciated among villagers. Employed informants claimed that they are very happy to be employed. The unemployed, like Marija, argued that they would agree to do any kind of work. However, among informants there were some who could not stay at “any kind of work.” Milda, in her early 40s, acknowledged that after she lost her job at a helicopter factory in a city when it closed, she did not want to work at a tailor’s shop. She argued that she could not survive such hard work even a week. Later she and her husband who also lost his job as a militia man bought an old house in a village and moved there with their three children. Inga, another young divorced 30 year old woman from Kaunas, quit working at a tailor’s shop several times

because of the small salary and hard work. However, not finding any other jobs she returned. Visiting her after a year I saw how much effort she had put into adjusting to the situation. A newly discovered faith in God was part of her effort. Milda's and Inga's work experiences reveal the dialectics of women's resistance and accommodation. Both women resisted their situations by quitting their job. They accommodated to the situation; one by leaving the city, another by taking a job again and disciplining herself. Like women workers elsewhere (see, e.g., Constable (1997) on Filipina workers), Inga started to tolerate difficulties for the sake of her family, resigned herself to helplessness and passivity and changed herself to continue to work in a tailor's shop.

Losing jobs, subsisting on small salaries or pensions challenged previous imaginings of what family, neighbor, and friend relations are like. Many pensioners regretted that they could not help their children as they previously could (however, there were some adult children who, because they could not find a job, lived with their mothers and shared the small pensions their retired mothers received). Others mentioned that they could not throw big parties like before, or travel to visit friends or to family reunions. Such experiences affected what people thought about themselves; some felt unneeded, forgotten, and worthless. Ramuté, a former kolkhoz storage administrator, a 50 year old woman, claimed:

We lived well then, we had jobs. Everyone was needed somewhere. For example, I was an administrator [of a warehouse]. I worked for three years. I started to understand that work and I was a needed person. Now you are trash, not a person. If you don't work, who considers you a person?

Work was important to people's subjectivities, social standing, and their interpretation of social/political history. The remembered past structured understandings of the present. The practices, such as taking lower status jobs or refusing to work hard signaled domestication of change or/and resistance to it.

4.1.2 Relations and accommodations

Changing labor markets and work relations produced accommodations informed by tradition and change. Informants from the second largest village engage in the berry and

mushroom picking “industry.” These villagers claim that the village recovers only during a berry and mushroom season. The village has the highest percentage of unemployed people of all three villages and is surrounded by forests. People outside this village are also involved in this kind of “industry.” During the summer and early autumn some highways, which run through forested areas, such as the Vilnius—Kaunas or Vilnius—Marijampolė highways, are populated by people selling berries or mushrooms at the roadsides. In early summer they sell wild strawberries, later blueberries, in late summer—raspberries, cranberries and mushrooms.³² Some people leave their older children to sell berries and mushrooms. Some children take the initiative themselves and gather and sell berries or mushrooms to earn some money. Berry and mushroom picking has a long tradition in Lithuania, extending to most families. However, the tradition of gathering berries or mushrooms for sale on such a scale is largely “post-Soviet.”

The berry and mushroom picking “industry” extends to cities. Zina, a city resident, in her mid 50s, claimed that in the summer months she was able to earn the equivalent of another pension. She used to travel to the forests by bus early in the morning and come back late in the evening. Then she sold the berries at the market. Most of the gatherers choose to sell their products themselves while shops, which buy berries and mushrooms, pay about half of what one can get at the market or on the highway. Stopping on the highway is illegal. However, many ignore the rule and the authorities and participate in this economy.

Informants reflect on their employer’s accommodations to labor markets and an economy in flux. Many people complain that, even if you work, you agree to work for less “on paper,” while actually you get more “into your hands.” In this way, the employer has to pay less to the State Social Insurance Fund Board (*SoDra*). In some cases employers in cities pay the whole amount in cash without formally employing a worker. Then, the employee earns nothing for his or her retirement and is ineligible for health benefits.

The first time I heard the notion of “white money” (the opposite of the widely used “money in an envelope” (*pinigai vokeliuose*)) was during my interview with a designer, Dalius, at a café. Our interview was interrupted when a man came in, as I learned later for a “job

³² Berries and mushrooms are used for home consumption as well.

interview.” When I realized what was going on, I asked whether I had to leave them alone. They thought my presence did not matter. The young man, the only candidate to whom the job was offered, wondered about the job and the salary. The designer informed him about the job briefly, said that the co-workers are young and very nice, and that he, if decides to join them, he will get “white money.” The young man had another job with about the same salary, i.e., 1000 LTL “in hand,” 400 LTL “on paper.” Therefore, “white money” (1000 LTL in hand, but more “on paper”) became, as I observed, one of the major attractions for a young person to switch jobs. The interview lasted about 10 minutes, and the final agreement was not reached at that moment. Dalius, the designer, explained that the term “white money” was used because this money was legal (all taxed). It is “white, because ‘white’ is what is good, legal, and beautiful. The other money [earned illegally] is ‘black.’” Such “social coloring” of money in city spaces could be interpreted as a manifestation of more formalized work relations within a still flourishing informal “on paper/in hand” employment market.

Discontent about employment signaled the changed/ing work relations between employers and employees. On the farm “you have to work,” if employed in any enterprise, “you can make decent money, if you work very hard,” there “nobody counts hours.” “It is not like in the kolkhoz where you stay the hours you are required to be at work. You have to work” (a 70 year old pensioner from the largest village). At the tailor’s shop women were said to work like slaves, not to earn even 400 LTL (a retired school teacher). If you don’t like a job or a salary, you will be told to leave (a worker at a lumbermill by the smallest village). Ramutė described her summer on a farm:

I wanted to do some renovations inside the house [*padaryti remontą* usually means to paint walls, ceiling and floor or some other work inside a house]. I worked on a farm for three months. The farmer didn’t let me sit down for a minute. You could earn 15 LTL [per day] there. Eight hours. I fed 47 pigs. All by myself. Cleaned stables, made pig swill, brought water. There was a pump, but it takes energy. So why [use it; the farmer saved money this way, according to Ramutė]? It was better [to ask her] to bring two, four hundred liters of water. And then you have to give it to the pigs. [...] If you have a minute, then you peel potatoes, God forbid, you should sit down. Not a minute. [...] I fell down once with a cart of manure. It was hard. I lost 20 kilos [about 44 lb] in those three months. My clothes didn’t fit. However... how much did I earn, without free days? [...] I made those renovations. ...

Ramutė quit working when her own cow calved. She said she had no time to do all the work at home and on the farm. The farmer was adamant that she stay. I asked whether she would have stayed on the farm, if the farmer had paid more. Ramutė responded: “no.” She reasoned that “all my work was beginning [on her own small farm]. I had a garden... to weed... When I worked, I couldn’t do much around my own house. If I didn’t have my own cattle, I would have worked for the money I got.” Ramutė chose to follow practices she has been following for many years. Timing and the hard work on the farm prevented her from staying at the farmer’s. When asked if it was not worth working on a farm or somewhere else and having fewer cattle, Ramutė responded that she was “not used to that way of life.” I think she felt the risk and uncertainty implicit (for her) in my question. She asked rhetorically: “How could you have nothing yourself [no cattle, etc.]? You have to have something for yourself. If something goes wrong, I have no bread, but I have potatoes [from the garden]. I have carrots, a cabbage. If such a day dawns [when she cannot buy bread]. I go to the cellar, I have everything. And a cucumber and a tomato [said in a diminutive form].” Practices, like subsistence on a private plot, were grounded in Ramutė’s experience. They meant comforting certainty and survival.

Informants noted that many want to hire younger people. Algimantas, a man from the smallest village, argued that when he calls in response to an advertisement, the first question is “how old are you?” That is it, according to him. He is 50, thus, no one hires him. The retired claimed that the young have to work; the retired can survive on their pensions, even if they are small. Working after retirement was sometimes blamed for “not letting young people work.” A town resident, a pensioner, in his early 80s, maintained:

I thought they could fire me, I was a pensioner. It is a fact—a pensioner can live. That’s it. One gets a pension. It is more difficult, you won’t live prosperously, but you can survive. You will have bread. You don’t need much. It is most important that the young not hang around without work. Those who build our future. Now they keep those decrepit pensioners at work. And there are no jobs for the young.

The employers disregarded alcoholism and work ethics and argued for unemployment as a relative and situational issue. A village librarian argued that her friend, a farmer, contends that the hired workers do not work, if you do not sit on their tails. Several

large farmholders argued that actually there are no people to hire when a season comes. “No people” meant “no good people,” as one farmer formulated. “Good” meant responsible, working and not drinking.

The farmers develop strategies to adapt to the labor market in the villages. Petras, a former state farm director working a 300 ha farm, argued that one of his major employees (out of four permanently working on the farm) has to be given special care. Petras takes him every morning from his home, drives with him to the farm, then, after the work day, “delivers” him back to his “wife’s hands.” He goes with his employee to a shop, buys food, and gives him money only at the end of a month or when work ends. Petras said that he bought several cars for his employee. However, the employee crushed two of them in car accidents. According to Petras, he cannot drive, because on his way home he stops by the first house of his acquaintances and gets drunk. Now Petras has started to take him right from his home by going 12 km (7.5 miles) each day. This way Petras is guaranteed that he will have the employee at work. “I drive into their yard, honk, his wife opens the door, I get him into the car, and go to work. He finishes work, I bring him back, honk, his wife takes him... it means he will be at work tomorrow. Cigarettes, everything... I have to buy him. Everything, one hundred percent. Actually, he is not the only one. I have to take such measures with two...”

Employee drinking was a major problem for many employers. Petras claimed that:

The most important problem is people. Those who can they work. Those who cannot work for themselves they don’t work well for others. The problem is drinking. They get their pay, and then it is not predictable, when they will start drinking. Well, the combine driver, he is good, clever, and hard-working... but you don’t know when he will go on a binge. Last summer he drank for seven days. The combine waits, the sun shines, and... In a day we thresh 80, 000 tons of grain. It means we lose 40 000 LTL [per day, about \$15,000 at 2005 rates]. This is because the combine driver drinks. You understand how it is. You see, it is not all the time, but for some periods of time. They go on a binge, then sober up, start working, and then you don’t know when they will start drinking again... I cannot fire them, because I don’t have anyone to hire. The hard working people are already taken.

Similar stories circulate in the city. A couple of retired doctors said that they heard how one unemployed man came uninvited to a farmer’s house and asked for food. He was

asked to weed a field, and then the farmer promised to pay him and feed him. He got angry. One of the doctors commented:

He doesn't want to work. He wants to get by without working. He got a meatball with bread. No, he wanted a steak. Such impudence!... They feel like lords. They do what they want. There are many like that... they don't really want to work. Unemployed. But they all want to live very well. That's why they steal. [...] I don't know why. This generation... It has the understanding that you don't have to work. But you have to live very well.

The subdistrict head of the largest village argued that unemployment is a relative issue. According to his data, the number of people registered at the employment office is stable. The number for the village is approximately 42 (out of 750 inhabitants; 5.6%). Some of the registered drink, others work, if hired, some can work, only if supervised or "watched." Some of the registered are unwilling to take a job for a minimal salary, because their social benefits, which, in some cases equal a minimal salary, terminate. Usually the number of the registered unemployed strongly increases before the cold period. The registered can expect compensation for heating. The subdistrict head remembered that once in summer he put up a note by a shop that a subdistrict needed a worker who could mow and do household work. Most men in the village qualified for that. No one responded for two weeks. Another time a farmer was looking for seasonal workers. The administrator asked the postman to ask people whether anyone would be willing to work for the farmer. After several days three well-known drunks appeared willing to take the job.

The vice-director of a small interior decoration enterprise, located in the largest village, claimed that they, employers, "educate" their workers. They pay only at the end of the week. Earlier, on Mondays there were only two out of six workers left. Now they do not have that problem. Most of them are not even hung over on Mondays. The situation has improved since 1997 when the enterprise opened. Many were hired and fired. Once they needed a driver. They placed announcements that they were looking for a driver everywhere in the village. Ten men came. According to the vice-director, it was clear from the beginning that most of them would not be able to work, i.e., one could see that they were drunks. They barely decided to hire one of the ten and they had to fire him later.

Now there are six people from the village who work permanently at the interior decoration enterprise. The employers bring six more each morning from Kaunas. In general, the vice-director thought, the smartest leave the village. Some maybe are willing to work, but they cannot because of an alcohol problem. According to him, in a village labor is of lower quality. Many drink and cannot be trusted. He thought that the quality of village labor is 80% less than the quality of labor in a city. Thus, the fact that labor is cheaper does not make much difference. When asked how he could explain the lower quality of labor in the village, the vice-director responded that such are village traditions. Furthermore, the attitudes toward work derive from the kolkhoz times. The enterprise was established in the village not because of cheap labor as one could expect, but because the director of the enterprise could afford to buy the former kolkhoz pig barns. In the city of Kaunas, where the enterprise was located previously, they had to pay high rent.

Some of the villagers agreed that the unemployed could work, if they wished. Saulė, a school teacher, in her late 30s, argued that her father is always called upon during the season. Saulė's father is retired and never seeks a job himself:

He [Saulė's father] does not face unemployment. [...] There are so many young men who wander around village why? Can't they work? They can. They don't work. They don't need to work. [...] In those ten years of independence [actually thirteen] we raised an army of slackers [*lodoriai*]... 'They don't see the need to work [...] 'There is a way out. I don't want to believe that there are no jobs. Maybe there are no well-paid jobs... You can find a job, if you wish. Really. Anyone who works, puts in effort, such a person is welcome. [...] People don't work, don't study, don't do... There's something wrong with the person himself, if he cannot...

Saulė herself is very active at school. She is also enrolled in the master's degree program in Kaunas. She works diligently and thinks that "We choose our way. We know very well where we go, what we do, our life doesn't depend on the state. If I am here, it means I am not capable of anything else. If I was able, I would go somewhere else. But if I am here, it means, I have to work here." Saulė's thoughts contrasted with most villagers' talk about work. Not surprisingly, she was of the younger generation.

Some city residents claimed that they were able to secure their work even after bankruptcy or reconstruction of a factory or any other industry. The reason was that they

were “good” and “valued.” Regina stayed at her work even after the factory was liquidated. The former directors formed a small private firm with some of the workers of the factory. Regina was one of them. According to her:

You can get a job for a minimal salary. If one wants to work, one can get such a job. A better one... maybe not. Maybe it is hard to get a job according to one’s specialty. [...] Qualified workers, good specialists, they did not lose their jobs. There were firms established, even in a garage or somewhere else. They found a job. Those who were worse they lost their jobs and don’t have anything to grasp at. Many started to drink. [...] We have some who have gone abroad. There are some who have returned. We take them back. Many have lower education. Young people, eighteen, nineteen, twenty years old... They come to us, fill out an application. It is terrible to look at it. So many spelling mistakes... We pay no attention. Usually they work for a minimal pay. They think maybe they will go back abroad to earn more money. They don’t worry. We teach them to give them some kind of qualifications. I see there aren’t too many to choose from.

Zina, a retired city resident, assured me that, unlike her children in their 30s, she could always find a job. According to others who knew Zina, working hard and responsibly, she was always valued by her employers. Having a disability with no right to work, she was able to find all kinds of unofficial employment. Zina took care of children and cleaned houses. She also knitted clothes for sale (which became less and less popular because, according to Zina, many started to buy at second-hand stores). Zina gathered berries and engaged in all kinds of temporary home jobs, such as packing women’s hose for a private business. This allowed her to buy new furniture for her small two room and kitchen apartment in Kaunas, to renovate the apartment itself, and to install costly new windows to save energy during the cold period. Zina also helped her children, whom she jokingly called “racketeers” (*reketininkai*). According to Zina, she does not understand “what the state officials are thinking.” She gets 300 LTL. Her utility bills reach 350–400 LTL in winter. “How can I live? How do they count? I cannot understand that. [...] Clever men sit in the Parliament, *valdžioj* [in the government]. This is what I say: let’s say not to the President, but to those in the Parliament, let’s give them 300 LTL or 500 LTL. And no more from anywhere. Ask them to pay their bills, as we do, buy socks, medicine, and food. How?”

The farmer Petras, the subdistrict head, the interior decoration enterprise vice-director and teacher Saulė approached unemployment predominantly as an individual problem. Alcoholism, unwillingness to work and poor work ethics were among the major reasons named to account for work relations and unemployment. By reiterating these ideas Petras and others repeated the social text produced in Vilnius and other spaces on the new subalterns of post-socialism (see chapter 1). Furthermore, they positioned themselves outside such a community of marginalized. Their perceptions, subjectivities and successful experience in post-socialist times were essential for their outsidership to the predominant discursive community in the village.

Conversely, many others listed structural reasons, such as restructuring of job markets and changed work relations that they found hard to accommodate to. Among the interviewees there were some with secondary or specialized education who could not find another job and had no money/were too old to change their qualifications. There were others who were very willing to work, but were not hired because of “old” age (such as 40 or 50 years old). There were also many who worked hard for small salaries and in some cases had no social benefits and no health insurance. Limited education and age were among the major reasons for unemployment in the village. Individual initiative and work ethics mattered as well. However, the villages were certainly not split into alcoholics who say that everything is tragic and wrong, and industrious people, as the well-known philosopher A. Šliogeris inferred in a popular TV program “Spaudos klubas” on December 29, 2004 (Lithuanian Television, *LTV*). Experiences are multiple. Data is abundant on those who are willing to work, but cannot find any job.

Zina’s story shows that people who have no individual “problems” (to use Petras and others rationale) like alcoholism and poor work ethics feel/experience marginalization. Zina was taking risks by finding new jobs; she was employing her initiative and industriousness to earn another “pension” and make ends meet. Her lack of education, and older age for the current labor market (she was in her mid 50s), and her previous experience of work for many years in a factory made her ill-adapted to the changed economy. In the past she lived

in a three room co-operative apartment,³³ had a car, and new furniture. At present a similar situation does not inspire the feeling of living well. Having about the same, she feels like she has less. For Zina there is also no promise of prosperity in the future. Thus, Zina looks at the past to promote herself as a person and a society member. Her narratives are articulations of the “self” as a new “social” subject in a changing grammar of social history.

“Work” is so omnipresent not only because of actual unemployment, but also because of the prospect of being unemployed, and sensibilities related to money shortages and work relations. Many informants experience social displacement and insecurity. Social displacement is experienced by those who are unemployed or employed with a minimal pay, who are not paid “white money” and experience downward social mobility. People feel worthless, unneeded, and forgotten.

Insecurity is present in multiple spaces among both the employed and the unemployed. Informants report that they are not sure about their jobs and their future. Even if not affected personally, those who work, like Regina, have stories to tell about their friends, relatives or co-workers who could not survive on their small pensions, salaries, or unemployment benefits (if any); who have nothing to eat, got very sick, or even committed suicide. For example, the most striking story was told by Regina who remembered how one co-worker killed herself in front of the counter at the factory where workers received their pay in cash, when it was announced that the pay was delayed again. These intertwining social and personal trajectories create insecurity and longing for stability. According to Genovaite, a city resident, in her early 40s, employed the entire time since her graduation:

The most terrible thing in this epoch is instability, uncertainty about tomorrow. We live hand to mouth [*gyventi šia diena*]. [...] You are exploited by every employer and you are like a serf. If you don't like something, you are told that there is a line behind the door [of potential workers]. [...] Earlier [in Soviet times], if you don't like it here, the pay is too low, you can leave tomorrow. You can say what you like fearlessly, say what you don't like. You could choose and not be afraid of tomorrow. I knew that a salary would be paid on a particular day. If I spent all I have, I can borrow [from a neighbor]. I knew that I will repay tomorrow. Now

³³ A co-operative apartment (*kooperatinis butas*) was different from a state apartment (*valdiškas butas*). People had to pay for a co-operative apartment while state apartments were for free. Co-operative apartments were owned by co-operatives and usually were considered neater and tidier than state apartments.

it isn't like this. I work today, tomorrow I may be unemployed. And I don't know whether I will have this job. Maybe I will have no one to borrow from, nothing to eat. I have no savings, we live hand to mouth. [...] You try to think that everything is well, but sometimes thoughts come, what if something happens. If we had to take medicine every day, the prices of medicine are enormous. This uncertainty is so pressing.

Thus, even many who do not face unemployment and are not socially displaced become part of a discursive community of social displacement and insecurity by reiterating a social text on work. Empathy and proximity to the marginalized make informants susceptible to the politicians' rhetoric of "better life," "changes," securing of job places and higher pay.

Multiple work relations and various forms of accommodation to the labor market illustrate sensibilities about the present and the future. The older generations and people with limited education are the most disadvantaged. However, many others empathize with them and experience some insecurity, instability and uncertainty brought about by post-socialist changes. The intertwining social and personal trajectories create communities of common discourse. These communities articulate themselves as different "socials" (from the ones they were in socialism) in a changed grammar of social history. They incorporate meanings and values of post-socialism which reflect subjectivities of subalternity. Imaginings about work, essential to informants' identities and their understandings of social history, rest on the dialectical presence of the actual and the probable.

4.2 MONEY

4.2.1 Money shortages and food

Reflections on social history and the present were often centered on money. People calculated how much they earned or how big their pensions were, compared their income to the wages and pensions of others, considered possibilities of raises in salary or pensions,

agreed that they would live much better, if their incomes were higher, counted how much they spent, and what they were able or not able to buy.

Major calculations were carried out about food. In villages many used to buy only the staples, such as bread, barley, sugar, salt, flour, and the like. Ona, a woman, in her late 70s, from the smallest village, commented that she always buys bananas because she likes them very much. According to her, the shop on wheels, which comes to the village several days per week, brings bananas or oranges just for her, because no one else buys them. She felt she was living quite well:

I can live on my pension. I can live. Quite well. Even buy something for myself to eat. It is enough for me. I have food to eat... I don't need a pig, I don't need a cow... But when the children come, they usually bring something. But I have to have. They promised to buy a pig this year. I don't know how it will be. I told them [her children] that I want to have it. Then I have something to put on the table. Today I have this cheese, I have butter, I have honey, cucumbers. It is fine for me. I made tea for myself, I have milk, I have something warm, something cold. I don't have to buy anything... [...] What do I buy? I don't want meat, I don't eat it. I buy, I buy, when they come [the shop on the wheels], they bring me bananas and oranges. I like these fruits.

Calculations about food showed sensibilities about consumption and spending as well as the insecurity people who were surviving on small wages and pensions shared. Ramutė from the largest village claimed that she buys bananas only for her grandchildren, not for herself or the other grown-ups in the family. She also said she uses cooking oil rather than the animal fat that she produced at home, thinking that oil is healthier. It meant that they live in a “new way.” However, oil costs more. A former brick factory worker, in her 70s, argued that “now food is expensive. Well, but I am retired, I have gardens, I plant potatoes, and vegetables, that's how I live. I don't get dressed up. But I am not hungry [laughs].” A doctor from the largest village claimed that her acquaintance, a teacher from the largest village, does not buy sausages for her daughter. According to the doctor, even if her acquaintance's salary was low, she had money to buy sausage. By not buying them the teacher saved some money.

Buying and consuming food is an everyday process through which people experience post-Soviet changes. Some feel that “in the other times” they were fuller, because they had things to put on the table at parties, which seldom are given today. People were also able to

get their beloved hunter sausages (*medžiotojų dešrelės*) “from under the counter” (*iš po stalo*, i.e., using *blat* relations (see Ledeneva 1998)). It was the time, villagers reiterate, when “food was cheap and we had money.” At present people argue that food is more expensive. One can hear very often that “there are goods, but there is no money.” Villagers can rarely buy bananas or oranges, which only seldom were “thrown out” (*išmesdavo*, were set out for purchase) in Soviet times. Some would say (like one mainstream party ideologue, state council member and one of the mainstream party members) that now people can buy “sometimes” while earlier “they could not buy at all.” However, even if people do not experience physical hunger, even if they “sometimes” can buy bananas, subjectively they feel more “hungry” at present. The hunger they experience is socially constructed; the subject thinks of himself/herself not only what he/she actually consumes, but also what he or she could consume in a changing society with multiple venues and options.

Even when complaining about high prices, many agree that now “it is better with food.” “Earlier you had to stand in queues, and wait, there was no food” (a Kaunas resident, a pensioner). There was a time “when you could buy only pig heads” (Vincas and Genė, a family of pensioners, former city residents). A former shop manager from the largest village remembered that in the Soviet period “there were pig’s feet, hooves and all. To get sausages you had to have *blat*.” A professor from Vilnius figuratively remembered that “Earlier in a shop you could see a loaf of bread, two eggs, herring, but there were no sausages. I remember those times. Empty shops. If you got a good salary, you could buy anything that was in the shop.” A day care center teacher from the largest village recalled that earlier kids got tangerines very rarely. Then, “they did not know what to do with them, how to eat them.” In her opinion, children stayed healthy in general, only there was no food which was in short supply. “Now they *have* to have a banana, an orange, or a tangerine.”

Buying and consuming food in the Soviet period was translated by some into “denigration.” Vincas, a former city resident and a factory worker, argued that it was inhuman that “There was no choice—you took the bread you were given. Bread was not wrapped. In the last years there was not enough paper to wrap meat, so they tore apart boxes

which had contained meat and gave pieces of cardboard to people, if the customer had no bag of his own.”

Criticism about buying food (which could be extended to buying other goods like shoes mentioned much more infrequently) and experienced denigration contrasted with heroic stories of getting goods. The professor from Vilnius knew a relative who always had meat on the table (of which she was proud). The relative worked every third day at the airport. In the two free days left she traveled from one shop to another, stood in queues, and was able to find and buy meat. Various *blat* relations secured food for others. Thus, some were able to get food “under the counter,” while others were able to track sites where food was “thrown out” (*išmesdavo*) for customers to buy. The vernacular “thrown out” (also in Russian *выбросили*) implied spontaneity and unpredictability (however, the unpredictability itself was regular). It also implied accumulation and circulation of goods outside the regular shop system, many people had no venues to control. In any case, many had some control over acquiring food in Soviet time shortage economy. At present they have to control their desires. For village people as well as the unemployed and pensioners in the city, their competence rests on how much they are able to save not buying particular goods or buying them at the lowest possible price. Thus, after the Soviet period, the ways created to find food that was “thrown out” were redirected towards ways to find the least expensive food. Some present-day shops were invoked as “museums,” where people were unable to buy anything because of the high prices. They could only look at the displays.

The markets are responsive to people’s sensibilities about the past, consumption, and control of their desires. In the towns, one can observe shop names and advertisements which are variations of “cheap” or “inexpensive.”



Figure 4. A shop in Birštonas. Summer, 2004. The name of the shop “Pigiau grybo” refers to a popular saying, literally “cheaper than a mushroom,” which means “dirt cheap.”

Going to a shop one can buy “Trys kapeikos” rolls (“Three kopecks”). Three kopecks was the price for a roll in Soviet times. One can also buy “Tarybinės daktariška” (“Soviet daktariška”), “Tarybinės pieniškos” (“Soviet pieniškos”) and other kinds of “Soviet” sausages with a hammer and a sickle on the package.³⁴ The “Samsonas” Closed Joint Stock Company which produces the “Soviet” sausages was recognized for its production in 1999, 2001 and 2002. “Tarybinė daktariška” sausage won “The Product of Year 2001.” The company was also awarded diplomas for the wieners “Tarybinės pieniškos” recognized as

³⁴ Not all sausages have a hammer and a sickle on packages.

“The Product of Year 2001” and the “Tarybinis saliamis” sausage as “The Product of Year 2002.”³⁵

The name “Soviet” was important in the marketing of products. The name was defended in courts when another company the “Vilniaus mėsos kombinatas” (Vilnius Meat Packing plant) chose a similar sounding brand name “Tarnybinis” (“Official”).³⁶ Rimgailė Vaitkienė,³⁷ the director of marketing for the “Samsonas” company argued that the strategy for choosing the name “Soviet” rested on a “somewhat paradoxical characteristic.” She stated that in Soviet times sausages were made without meat substitutes (*mėsos pakaitalai*); therefore, they were more natural and more delicious. She also thought that this factor was much more important to the customers than the negative connotation of “Soviet.”

Many informants also argued that Soviet-period sausages were “without meat substitutes” as well as more delicious. However, this connection is arbitrary because many did not consume sausages “without meat substitutes.” The Soviet food situation began to stagnate in the 1970s when Leonid Brezhnev was the leader of the Communist Party. Food production and per capita consumption deteriorated over the decade.³⁸ All the Soviet republics were requested to economize on meat; therefore, various meat substitutes were used for sausages (Rimas Frizinskas, the Director for Commerce of “Samsonas,” personal communication) with the exception of the premium brand distributed in special stores for special citizens (like Communist Party officials, mothers with many children and other state favorites). Thus, only post-Soviet “Soviet” sausages are consumed without meat substitutes by many. By arguing for natural and delicious as a reason for choosing the name “Soviet,” the Director of Marketing, intentionally or not, depoliticized the name and appealed to those

³⁵ See: http://www.tm-lt.lt/main.php?action=main::article.show&article_id=564. Accessed on 02/17/2005.

³⁶ “Tarnybinis” (“Official”) is attractive as the name of a product because of its proximity to the name “Tarybinis” (“Soviet”). This proximity was the reason the company “Samsonas” sued the “Vilniaus mėsos kombinatas.” The Appeal Court of Lithuania forbade the “Vilniaus mėsos kombinatas” to use the name “Tarnybinis” (“Official”). “Vilniaus mėsos kombinatas” changed it to “Tradicinis” (“Traditional”).

³⁷ See: http://www.takas.lt/pr/archyvas/?st=1&msg_id=440. Accessed on 02/21/2005.

³⁸ National Food Review, Oct-Dec. 1989 by Kenneth Gray
http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m3284/is_n4_v12/ai_8274317/pg_3

for whom the name was political. Building on the ambiguity of “Soviet,” the company is successfully exploiting multiple meanings and attracting various consumers.

Entrepreneurs did not really choose something that is unambiguously “negative.” It is hard to believe that those who claim that Soviet times were “better,” would think of “Soviet” as a negative term. The company did not choose the name “sovietinis” (“Soviet”), a borrowing for “tarybinis.” “Sovietinis” has been often used to emphasize the foreignness of the past. The use of the borrowing “Soviet” has become popular and has coexisted with the widely prevalent strategy to purify the language from borrowings. During my fieldwork I heard people say that those who still use “tarybinis” show their allegiance to Soviet times. “Tarybinis” (“Soviet”) because of its ambiguity, polyvocality, the quality of being native, as well as a positive imagined connection to the past is a good symbol of a social text and prospective in economic markets.

Buying “Three kopecks” rolls “Soviet” sausages as well as other “old taste” goods indicates reassertions of identities (see also Buechler and Buechler 1999). Many buy anything “Soviet” because it is delicious, others because it is “without meat substitutes.” Without these qualities the name “Soviet” would not have guaranteed success on the markets. For many consumers buying “Soviet” sausages is also a way to imagine continuity with the social self and social history. It is a way to experience coherence, comfort of the known as well as to resist the tastes of the present.³⁹ However, to get a taste of the “new times” an individual can buy a bottle of “Euro” beer. “Euro” beer is the cheapest from the time of the referendum for Lithuania’s membership in the European Union (EU) in May, 2003. The fusion of low price, Europe, and alcohol shows the uneven ways “Europe” has to take to survive the symbolic markets of the new member states (see also chapter 7).

4.2.2 Surviving economies of abundance

Having or not having money invites many to reconsider their social standing and opportunities. An 80 year old inhabitant from the smallest village thinks that “Now, if you

³⁹ See also Buechler and Buechler (1999) on resistance of taste in post-socialist East Germany.

have money, you can do anything. If you don't—nothing. If you have money—you will be cured, stay in the hospital, see doctors. If not..." Similarly a doctor from Kaunas, whose father was hospitalized, figuratively argued that, if you do not pay to doctors and nurses directly, a patient is destined to rot.

In Soviet times money was secondary to social relations (cf. Berdahl 1999), which were venues to acquire social services and goods in economies of shortage (Kornai 1992). At present money increasingly becomes the primary means to acquire goods and services, which in their turn indicate a person's social status. A teacher from the largest village claimed that students put an emphasis on money as their primary value as well as a venue to become a valued member of society: "In the first to fourth grade, if you start to talk about life, they all shout in unison: 'there is no money.' They already know that there is no, no, no money... So they think I will be independent, rich, I will flee somewhere, I will dress, eat, entertain as a human... why should I care about the homeland? They don't hesitate to say that."

In the Soviet period people invented a variety of methods to survive the economy of shortages. Paradoxically, some have to survive among an abundance of choices and possibilities in post-Soviet times. For many it is surviving money shortages where transition yields an ambiguous mix of possibility and powerlessness, of desire and despair, of mass joblessness and hunger amidst the accumulation, by some, of great amounts of new wealth (cf. Sajo 1998, Comaroff and Comaroff 1998).

In socialism there was always a social realm wherein money circulated and corrupted—the sphere of the communist elites. The "little people" were excluded from, and in a sense protected from, this corrupting force by the fixed barriers of power and privilege (Ries 2001). In moving away from the logics of socialism where most people had few ways to amass capital or multiply their money without direct investment of labor, people must come to grips with the seemingly "magical" quality in the market system, where money begets money, goods accrue value through trade, familiar work practices have given way to mysterious forms of economic activity, and income discrepancies create utterly disparate, incommensurate worlds (Ries 2001). People experience the enrichment of others as well as

that they are pushed aside from the mysterious to them mechanisms of the market and the promise of prosperity (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 1998).

The new post-socialist methods for surviving economies of abundance are bound to control of desires and saving money.⁴⁰ In villages some do not use electricity, bring water from the well (to lower their bills), and subsist mainly on what is produced on the farm. Another post-Soviet invention is buying at so-called *skudurnai* (second-hand stores, the Lithuanian word *skudurnai* literally means a “place for rags” (low value, worn-out, torn clothing)). Many agree that “it is good that these *skudurnai* exist;” “if you could not buy there, you would have to wander around naked...;” “what would you wear?” (a family in their late 60s, the second large village). However, clothing bought at *skudurnai* stinks, “but you cannot buy at a store—it is so expensive” (a 40 year old farmer of a 100 ha farm, a woman from the largest village).

Ideas about *skudurnai* infer a change of social status. According to the librarian from the largest village, “earlier it was shortages, *blatas* (*blat* (see Ledeneva 1998)), but people did not make the rounds of those *skudurnai*. Even the poorest did not buy there. And now intellectuals wear used underwear [laughs]. Look,... really and all those rags...” The word *skudurnai* has a negative meaning. The names given to second-hand stores, such as “Clothing from the West” (“*Drabužiai iš Vakarų*”) or “Ladies’ fortune” (“*Ponių laimė*”), sound ironic. In Lithuania the “West” for many has a positive value (see chapter 5 and 7). However, in the case of *skudurnai*, people feel neither “ladies” nor “gentlemen,” nor “fortunate” to buy at the second-hand stores. They experience this as inescapability. Thus, involved into market economy by buying at the second-hand stores village people and other customers of *skudurnai* tend to see themselves more as “second-hand citizens” rather than valued new consumers, as one would expect in a developing market economy. Marija, formerly a worker at a factory, remembers:

I made good money. There were no *skudurnai*, well, there were these consignment stores [*komisai*]. But you didn’t even look in that direction. And now? Now it’s finished. Now you cannot buy a new item at a shop. [...] Usually those *skudurnai* save us. Otherwise you would

⁴⁰ See Bridger and Pine (1998) on surviving post-socialism and cultures of survival.

have nothing. And earlier you go to a store, from every salary you buy for yourself, for your children, and... and anything else.

Aldona from the second largest village assured me that she had not bought clothing at a store for 13 years (Lithuania had been independent for 13 years during the interview). Even when she buys clothing at *skudurnai* she buys the inexpensive ones, for one litas. A more extreme case was a man, in his late 50s, from the smallest village, a known drunk, and a former engineer in Vilnius who showed me the clothing in his wardrobe to prove that he had not bought any clothing since independence. His statement that all his clothing comes from Soviet times was a note of praise for the Soviet past.

Considerations about money emerge in other contexts. Some people cannot pay their bills on time. In Kaunas some of the informants had to sell larger apartments and buy smaller ones to be able to pay bills. In the villages people struggle with keeping the houses they have, which have to be heated during the long, about 7 month, cold period. Some live in cold, walking in their coats at home or heating only one room with electric stoves. Ramutė, an unemployed 50 year old woman from the largest village who takes seasonal jobs calculates:

We [she and her husband] pay for water. My son lives with us, they [the son's family] pay for electricity. [...] Six people, it's a lot of water. About four hundred litai [per year]. Last year I sold a pig, this year I will sell a bull, there will be money for water. [...] I always have debts. But they [probably someone who collects bills] already know me. That I don't have [money]. You get something, you earn... but you need everything. And bread, and sugar. The canning season will start [she makes preserves for home consumption]. [...] The biggest animals [income from them] are for water.

Arrival in the villages was often related to inability to pay bills in the city. Many newcomers to villages lost or sold their apartments and joined their relatives or bought a house in a village. Marija lived with her two small children and a husband in a small town. She remembered how it got harder and harder to pay their bills and to survive on the temporary jobs her husband used to take. The electricity was turned off. They started to use candles that the sexton, Marija's mother's husband made for them. "The ceiling was black. [...] The curtains were smoked up. In the summer—it dawns early, the sun sets late. Not bad. But in winter when you have to live with those candles. How can you be happy with

this free Lithuania, dear? In the dark. No TV.” Marija was happy that she decided to come to live with her mother and mother’s husband. Now they live in a small two room house. “The children get milk and eggs,” claimed Marija. It is easier for her family. “But to compare to those times [Soviet times], there’s no thing to say.”

Like considerations of work, calculations of money reflect experiences of insecurity. Insecurity may be projected into the future and generate different thoughts, such as ideas about land, keeping up a farm or a house. For example, a woman, in her late 60s, from the largest village argued that she was afraid she would have to give up her land, if taxes for the land increase:

My health does not allow working on the land. I rent it. I get grain for that. I bring grain home, you can count that only half of it [money for the grain] is left for me [because she pays for bringing the grain home]. You bring grain [said in the diminutive *grūdėlin*], you cook it for the cow and pigs, and that’s it. I heard that land is going to be very expensive. What can we do, we will have to return it [to the state]. [...] There is no hope. You can sell the land, but, can you imagine, you can get only two hundred litai per hectare. You give it away for free.

Some farmers are not sure whether they will be able to return loans they have from the banks, others complain to live in debt. A 100 ha farm owner, a woman, in her 40s, argues:

I don’t know... We always live in debt. From the spring on you accumulate debts. In the fall you pay them off. And then again, in the spring you start with debts. [...] You resign yourself to the idea—it’s fine as it is. But then, I don’t know, when you hear, how other people live, you know, I say, there are no words to describe this. I think, fine, we work from morning till night, we don’t drink, we don’t spend carelessly [*neišlaidanjam*]. There have been no terrible misfortunes. But we cannot make ends meet. We think everyday where to get money. [...] If you go to the village to borrow 50 LTL—nobody has any to lend. Everybody lives... I don’t know how they live.

The dreams invoked in conversations expressed a willingness to overcome present constraints by magically accumulating wealth, i.e., winning a million. Marija says: “I told my mom that, if I won a million [she laughs]... My mom said: ‘So what will you do with that million?’ I said I would buy a house somewhere close to the city. Closer to Kaunas, closer to a bigger city, where I could work. We all think about work, about finding a job. If we could find one in the nearby town [which was 7 km away from the village], maybe somehow we

could reach it by bicycle. But if it's in Kaunas? How can we get there?" Another woman, in her early 70s, from the largest village, also joked about her willingness to win a million: "I laugh now. I say, if I won a million, I would build a house in my native village. Without a million you cannot do anything." The ideas about winning a million were most probably inspired by the TV shows "Who will win a million?" or "Six zeros—one million" which generated imaginings about the possibility of rapid enrichment by amassing a fortune through a visible method of moving a magic wheel.

4.2.3 Money in the past

The past structured understanding of the present expressed in ideas about work as well as money. Many comparisons and calculations invoked the past when most informants had work and money. Some concluded that it was good under the Russians only because of money. The often repeated expression was a variation of "it was good under the Russians—we had money, and jobs."

Woman: It was good under the Russians. We had a ruble...

Man: We had jobs. We worked.

Woman: I have nothing now.

Man: We even earned well [a family in their early 50s from the second largest village].

Or:

Before Sąjūdis everybody was full up, dressed, and had a ruble. Where did those savings come from? People had savings. Some even twenty thousand. Not litas. The other money [rubles] was worth more [Elena, in her 60s, from the smallest village].

Savings were often invoked as proof that people were well off "then." The limited goods that people were able to exchange for money in the shortage economy were rarely remembered. Some claimed to save for their children, others for an apartment in a town or a city. The family in their 60s from the second largest village remembered selling two cows and depositing money in the bank. "We were sick, so we thought it is going to be for the funeral. That's how. And this money has disappeared." Savings, which for many informants was lost or devalued in the post-Soviet period, were remembered very often:

I still wait for that money, which should be returned. Rubles, I still wait. Maybe it will be returned. Maybe... We need it so much. Probably nobody will give them back. They [the state] wait and wait... Even if it is returned, it will have no value. In Russian times, for example, if you have three thousand, it was a lot [a woman, in her early 50s, from the second largest village].

It was argued that “earlier” money was different. For ten rubles one could buy something to eat: “a kilo of sausage. And oil, and sugar, and bread, and butter—anything you want. Just for ten rubles!” (a pensioner, in her 60s, from the smallest village). Now you can buy almost nothing for ten litai. “Just bread.” Comparisons of rubles to litai seemed meaningful to many informants, even if the value of currencies was different. Rubles, like many attributes of the past, acquired the symbolic value of the “better life.”

You get 100 rubles, so you can buy matches, and bread, and meat. Well, there were no wieners [*sosiskos*]. There wasn’t much meat, but in the village, you always slaughter animals. We did not face hunger. Now everything is there, but there is no money. You get those 300 LTL and you don’t know what to do with them. I leave [money] for this and that and then you sit the whole month [without money].

In the Soviet past many informants also claimed to earn more than at present. The brickyard workers earned from 200 to 300 rubles. The former excavator driver claimed to earn around 400 rubles. Tractor drivers’, forest workers’ wages were also high. The pensions were higher as well. A former brick yard factory worker remembers:

My pension was 270–280 [rubles]. When there were rubles you felt that you have money. Now I get 415 [LTL]. But earlier I could buy much more for those 280. Well... it is better not to think. If you have to buy medicine, you spend your monthly pension. For medicine. Medicine is very expensive. Once I went [to a pharmacy],... you need this and that, and that... I paid 100 LTL for medicine. And you have to pay for electricity, and for water... Then you buy firewood, so you have to pay for the firewood... Then you look what to eat, and finished—no more money. Almost nothing is left. Just like that. And earlier [in Soviet times] I used to get those 280... The ruble had its *own* value.

Wages in some factories in the city might have been low, however, some were able to increase their income in other ways, working according to the “work ethics” popular at the time. Alina who has lived in the second largest village already for six years remembers her heroic work stories:

I went to work at a factory. It was impossible to get a job at that factory. It was only a husband, a wife, and children [who worked there]. Relatives. To get there from the street for a common person was almost unimaginable. Really. They carried out tons... [they stole from the factory].

They asked me how much I had earned in my previous job. I used to get 800 [rubles] during the season. [...] My lowest salary was from 250 to 350 rubles, during winter 700–800. “Oh, well,” she [a woman who talked to Alina at the administration] said, “you are not going to earn that much here. The salary is about 70 or 80 rubles.” I said that I was not interested then. I won’t be able to provide for my family. She said: “Look at our women, their hairstyles”... [it was an indication about what kind of job it was]. [...] The first time, I remember, I got 48 rubles. That was my first salary. [...] Then we worked. I had medals and honors [for work]. I was never late. I was never absent. [...] I never saw what others did. [...] Nobody ever told me “you carry out too much” [take with her, steal]. When a chair came to say that “today is going to be *облава* [Russian *облава* means an “ambush,” i.e., the control to check on stealing]. No one takes anything!”, so I never took anything, that’s out of the question for me [*šventa*]. And women [*bobos*] liked to take risks. [...] It was in their blood. How will they come home and have nothing? And I did not need to. All my life [I did not take anything during *облава*]. It was enough for me.

Working at this job, Alina was able to travel to the Black Sea “every week, if I wished,” to buy good furniture, golden rings and chains [luxury items in Soviet times], and to eat good food. She lost her job during reconstruction of the factory, which was bought by foreign investors, seven years ago. Remembering her former job, Alina counted the wealth she had accumulated:

I gave a golden chain to my granddaughter when she started school. When there were other occasions, I gave golden rings to my granddaughters. And to my daughter. The ring was 18 grams. To everyone—to my daughter, to my daughter-in-law, to everyone, everyone. To a thirteen year old grandson I gave a fine chain. I still have another one with a golden cross... I thought I will give it to him for his sixteenth birthday, but then I decided to wait until the eighteenth. [...] All my children are provided for. [...] I say I lived very well. Even when the Russians were gone I lived well [she still had enough from those times]. I don’t complain.

Like ideas about work, talk about money, as in Alina’s case, invoke sensibilities about the decline of the informants’ social status and opportunities. It is another way to articulate

changes and think of accommodations. Invoking the past and their higher social standing, people resist marginalization in the present.

4.3 MILK

The private sector in villages, which produced dairy products and meat, was important in the economy of Soviet times (see chapter 1). Currently private production does not yield similar benefits and is not supported to the same extent by the state as previously (cf. Misiunas and Taagepera 1983). Informants reflect upon this in frequent talks about milk. According to Jadvyga M., a 60 year old woman from the largest village, “it is said that we praise the other times. Oh, well, you remember, you sell a liter of milk; you buy a loaf of bread. And now you need ten liters of milk to buy a loaf of bread. That’s the difference. We don’t have enough money...” Another pensioner from the smallest village claimed that “agriculture is all wealth and money, I think. We used to feed the city. And now it is hard in the village because milk is very cheap.”

Previously villagers were able to add to their salaries by raising cattle for milk and meat for home consumption and sale. Many notice that at present raising cattle either for milk or meat does not yield proper earnings. Jadvyga M. claimed:

Last year I did not deliver milk already. I thought I will raise three pigs [give milk to the pigs]. There was a lot of milk. When I bought pigs it was 3.5–4 LTL per kilo [for piglets]. In the fall, when I have to sell them, it is just 2.5 LTL per kilo. I calculated how much milk I needed for feeding pigs, how much I paid for them when I bought them, so it was only manure, which was left to me. I don’t count the work. Well, yes. We did not throw them away, we ate them. But I thought this way: I will give away two pigs, I will get about eight hundred. I will have enough for a casket already. And there is nothing. Today they [those who buy pigs], run around. They already give 4 LTL per kilo, but nobody has [pigs]. My neighbor she always had two, three or four. Even she does not have any. It was not worth having them, they were cheap.

Like work (in case of firing after restructuring of industries) or money (in case of lost savings), milk may stand for injustice, deception, humiliation and powerlessness of people at

present. Jadvyga M. remembered to bring milk to the delivery post in the spring of 2003. She took it there all the month, 350 liters. On the last day of the month at the delivery post she was informed that the milk she brought was third-rate. “Why did they say that on the last day? Maybe I would have sold the cow or I’d made it well. There was little money [she received little for the milk].” Jadvyga M. argued that the milk she delivered was poured into the same container with the best quality milk. Then she corrected herself that nobody in the village has the highest quality milk. The milk is either of a lower quality or of the lowest quality like hers. For lower quality milk people get 20 cents per liter, for the lowest, “it depends on their kindness... it is either fourteen, or sixteen cents. My daughter was paid one cent once.” The people who collect milk work together with those who determine the quality of the milk; “there isn’t a way to seek justice. Everybody needs money. So they deceive us,” concluded Jadvyga M.



Figure 5. Ona from the smallest village is milking a cow in summer, 2004. “The children are muttering against this cow. But me, well... I need that cow myself. So what... You know, I don’t want poor quality [*prastas*] milk.

Expectation that delivery of milk has to be subsidized and/or properly paid is informed by experiences in the Soviet period. According the demands of the new economy, many abandon the tradition of raising cattle for meat or milk for sale. However, some still deliver milk to milk delivery posts every morning. The largest village subdistrict head tried to convince his mother for three years that it was not worth keeping a cow. He told her to write down all the money she spends during haying season (trying to collect hay for the cow). It was 800 LTL. You had to sell 2.5 tons of milk to return 800 LTL, which was impossible. Jadvyga M. calculated:

You raise a calf. If it is less than 400 kilos, it is 90 ct per kilo. Can you imagine? Could you get meat for one litas [she rounds 90 ct to 1 LTL] at a store? 90 cents for keeping a calf one year. You pay 150 [LTL] when you buy, after a year you sell it for 300 LTL. Is it worth it? No, it is not. Nobody keeps calves. We slaughter them, eat them, and that is the end. There is no way out. I say, it is impossible to make money.

Some villagers also sell milk themselves by taking it to a nearby town or a city early in the morning. Living in Kaunas in a Soviet-style apartment building, I saw elderly people line up with empty jars (usually one liter glass jars) in the yard every morning. Milk sold in the yard cost 1 LTL per liter, while the cheapest milk in a shop in a plastic bag was about 1.40 LTL. One villager told me that he sells milk for 60 ct per liter in a nearby town. The milk buying price at milk delivery posts in villages was 29 ct per liter for the highest quality milk, which almost nobody was able to reach.

Having some cattle, proper income, a house and savings in the Soviet period one could feel well off. At present, a village livelihood and the income one could earn on a small farm has a very limited value. Having the same or almost the same as in the Soviet period people feel poor. However, their work on a farm and outside a farm is the same or even

harder. In search of answers, their attention turns very often towards the state (see chapter 6).

Excerpts of social texts along the themes of work, money and milk convey experiences/knowledge of changing social history and imaginings about the self and others. Articulation of changes illustrate emerging habitual practices, new social “forms,” such as discontinuing delivering milk in an economy which no longer supports the private sector to the same extent, or taking a janitor’s job which becomes prestigious in the presence of unemployment. Many other practices which discursively are resisted, such as buying cheap food and clothing at the second-hand stores, may become habitual. However, at present they illustrate individuals’ passages through change as well as sensibilities and perceptions arising while experiencing these passages.

The ideas about work, money, and milk are structured along the conceptual boundaries defined in the first chapter. Work, money, and milk in the past are related to security, prosperity, recognition, well-being, and higher social status. The present in terms of work, money, and milk points to accommodations, resistance to change, decrease of social status, and experiences of marginalization. The present experiences show diminished opportunities, restricted choices and other constraints. The present is articulated in different emotional discourse than the past, i.e., in idioms of deception, injustice, humiliation, powerlessness, insecurity and uncertainty. Reiterations of the past bring about reassertions of identity, a sense of comforting continuity, certainty, and coherence. Such experience and knowledge of social history and the self as “social” constitute social texts which reflect people’s political identities and are the basis for their political actions, namely, voting (see chapter 7).

5.0 CHAPTER 3: OPPRESSION AND FOREIGN SOCIAL HISTORY

The liberation movements throughout Eastern Europe derived much of their inspiration and power from “hidden transcripts” (Scott 1990) of the “oppressed,” the “power of the powerless” (Havel 1985), and “people without history” (cf. Wolf 1982). At present the histories of the “oppressed” are well known (e.g., Michnik 1985, Havel 1985, Vladislav 1986). They have been disseminated through school curricula, public events and discourses. A lot of scholarship is devoted to analysis of how people survived socialism (Hann 1993, Verdery 1996), some even laughing (Draculić 1992), and resisted/opposed socialist regimes (see, e.g., Watson 1994, Kubik 1994, Ash 1990). Fewer studies focus on answering the questions of *who* felt oppressed and *why* (but see, e.g., Berdahl 1999, Kligman 1998).

In this chapter I pursue the idea that the Soviet period was experienced as foreign and oppressive by those who constituted the opposition to the Soviet regime because of their background and social location. In many cases these people employed nationalist ideas to justify their convictions, belonging, and disloyalty. Like villagers in the post-Soviet present who accommodate and resist their marginalization, the “oppressed” of the Soviet period, negotiated and resisted subjection to social otherness after the incorporation of Lithuania in the USSR (see chapter 4). The Soviet state negated social status and loyalties, the values and meanings constitutive of some social subjects. It also implemented policies of nationalization, taxation, and collectivization, depriving some individuals of wealth, power and privilege. Deportations to Siberia and imprisonments were part of the Soviet projects of reclassification of society and its discipline.

The marginalized of the socialist and post-socialist periods were subjected to similar experiences of subalternity. However, they were different “cultural artifacts” and experienced different traditions of marginalization (the Soviet one being known especially

for its violent and totalitarian character, especially until Stalin's death). The different experiences of marginalization I generalize in the overarching metaphors of "regression" (in post-Soviet times, see chapter 1) and "oppression" (in Soviet times).

"Oppression" is a relative category, since individuals feel "oppressed" in different ways. I define it as an experience of foreignness of social history, which limits individual agency and which produces an individual as *the other* to publicly imagined society through various techniques of constraint and discipline. From such a perspective, there is no general oppression of society, only oppression in particular cases when the relationship between an individual and history is of perceived foreignness and constraint. An "oppressed" individual may report living in fear, pain, denigration, and duplicity, and feeling persecuted and controlled. The constraining "outside" may be presented in terms of absurdity, irrationality, destruction, and limits. Many of the "oppressed" in socialism did not constitute the open opposition, which allowed Havel to conclude that they "lived in the lie" (see Vladislav 1986). Their resistance was not "resistance" in the active, conscious, agentive sense of this word. Instead, it was "the resistance of crayons under tempera paint, or blobs of wax on dyed cloth: areas of negativity, of not-this-ness" (Dunn, forthcoming). Negativity was directed towards the emergent Soviet tradition of marginalization and developing regimes of common sense (cf. Gramsci 1985).

In the Soviet period the "oppressed" (unless they entered open opposition) were interstitial categories and experienced ongoing liminality (cf. Turner 1967, Douglas 1966, Carnegie 1996). They were uncategorized and, thus, anomalous and dangerous elements of society (cf. Douglas 1966). They were also "strangers," an element whose membership within the group involved both being outside it and confronting it (see Simmel 1971). The marking of the subjects from early childhood—making them wear October children pins with the picture of little Lenin in the middle of a red star or tying red pioneer scarves—was an endeavor in making social classification visible. *The others* were, as a woman called Juozapota to be introduced in this chapter claimed, pollutant elements of social order and subject to power and discipline of the Soviet state.

In this chapter I present articulations of Soviet-period social history as oppression by analyzing excerpts of the life histories of two women of different generations, social standing, and experience. These women's presentations of Soviet and post-Soviet life were in many ways similar to the articulation of the past and present discussed in the previous chapters. The significant difference was in the way in which women articulate meanings of social history and assign values to the known, observed, and/or experienced.

5.1 JUOZAPOTA

When I interviewed Juozapota, she was an 82 year old pensioner, the mother of four grown children. She had been a housewife for many years. After the death of her husband she worked briefly in a factory, but had to leave after being injured at work. She can hardly survive on a small pension of 228 LTL. The woman who directed me to Juozapota, told me to bring Juozapota something to eat. In that woman's words, even if you see crystal vases in Juozapota's room, which may create an impression that Juozapota is doing well, she is very poor. My contact gave me a signed paper which I took to the interview reading "Dear Juozapota, please accept this girl." The woman who told me about Juozapota also promised to mention to Juozapota that I was coming when she met her at the market. Juozapota could not afford a phone.

Juozapota lived on the first floor of an old Soviet-style apartment building in one of the poorest areas of Kaunas. She unlocked the door and opened it a little. I introduced myself and handed her the piece of paper. She already knew who I was and was expecting me. After letting me inside, she told me a story that once a woman came to her house and introduced herself as a State Social Insurance Fund Board employee. They talked for a while, then the "employee" asked for a passport, later for a cup of tea. She only took several sips and said that she did not feel well and had to use the bathroom. Juozapota remembered that she got suspicious when the woman was locked in the bathroom for quite a while. After coming out of the bathroom the woman left abruptly. She did not say anything more about

the increase of her pension (the reason why the woman came to see Juozapota). After some time Juozapota realized that her money, which she had hidden in the bathroom, had disappeared. From that time on, she never opens the door to a stranger.

So, I was in. In a small apartment. The room was dark because of many plants on the windowsill and on the floor by the window. As I had been told, there were crystal vases in a Soviet-style sideboard very popular in the 1980s, like the crystal vases themselves. Crystal vases were a sign of luxury in Soviet times, so the woman who directed me to Juozapota had been careful to draw my attention to those vases, indirectly asking me not to confuse the luxury of those times with the luxury of the present. However, the fact that Juozapota lived in a small one room and kitchen apartment (and she had raised her four children here) indicated the limited goods Juozapota had had in the Soviet period as well.

In the room there was a small table with chairs and a bed. A Lithuanian state emblem, a picture of one of the most known historical figures, the Grand Duke Vytautas, and several religious paintings decorated the walls. Juozapota was articulate and considerate in her talk. She did not hesitate to ask me forcefully and willingly what I thought about some topics. After talking about the Soviet period she was concerned why I asked about Soviet times, saying “so where were you during the Soviet period?” I wriggled out of this by saying that I was born in 1974 and I do not remember things well. “Didn’t your parents tell you?” she wondered. After the end of our talk, Juozapota wanted to listen to the tape—she was eager to hear whether she was talking comprehensibly enough. So, we listened to it.

Juozapota was born in 1922 in a rich family, of a county agriculturalist and a housewife. According to Juozapota, family friends were well-known public figures, all intellectuals. They lived in one of the major streets in the downtown of Kaunas, the provisional capital of Lithuania at that time. Her parents used to dress well. They had an elegant apartment with a fashionable living room in which one could find Persian carpets, tulle curtains, and mahogany furniture, the luxury signs of those times. Children were allowed to be in the living room only when guests were present.

There were times when you always took a hat off, if you met an old lady. Students always greeted people they met. Not like now. If an apple fell down, no one would pick it up, until the owner gave it to you. When farmers went to town, they put a broom on the door. No

keys... thefts never ever existed. People were decent and refined [*kultūringi*]. Until 1940. When Lithuania was occupied. Not only Lithuania, of course, Poland, and Germany, but we speak about ourselves. The Russians came. Oh my God, what started. There came a Russian. His last name was Goviertovas. He was very tall, with iron teeth [*geležiniai dantimis*] and glasses. An officer. The officer, unlike ours, looked like a beggar. He crossed our rooms and entered our living room. He said: “я здесь буду жить” [in Russian, “I will live here”]. In that room. My parents got scared: my God, such a charlatan, an occupant... now he will live in our best room. My mother started to cry... “Я завтра,” he said, “приду. Принесу и коечку любимую, железную” [in Russian, “I will come tomorrow. I will bring my good metal bed”]. There was no bed in that room. Only the armchairs and a sofa. Thus, *принесёт он свою коечку* [in Russian “he will bring his bed”]. My parents got worried, what can they do. Such a one, with well-worn boots, will come, will destroy our wooden floor. My parents agreed to take the furniture out at night, to save it. They removed paintings, carpets, and curtains, everything. When he came and saw that nothing was there, he started shooting. And swore, as we later learned, in Russian. He shouted. He took my father by his head and dragged him face down down the stairs. The stairs were wooden with metal corners. Like knives. He threw my father in the garden. My mother was screaming, and he did the same to her. Can you imagine, he beat him up [her father], tramped him with his feet [*sudaužyti, sutrypti*], because he took his own things. We fell at his feet [*pulti po kojų*] and begged him not to beat him. Those rags on his feet stank so terribly. We fell, all three children, my brother, my sister, and me, the youngest. We fell at his feet, we kissed his rags so that our parents would not be shot. Can you envision it? What for? That parents took their furniture out? They almost got killed. My mother started to suffer from nerves after that, she could not work, and she always moaned... she had headaches. A wet towel was always on her head out of fear. Well. What could we do? He came to live with us. He brought his *Ниночка* [Ninotchka⁴¹]. And we lived. She did not know how to prepare food, nothing... he brought this *Ниночка* at night. After that event he still came to live. Can you imagine? His *Ниночка* wrapped in a quilt coat [*vatinka*], worn-out boots... he brought her in hay from the railway station. He said: “я накрыл её соломой. Чтобы литовцы невидели. Вот какая девушка” [in Russian “I covered her with hay. So the Lithuanians would not see. That kind of girl”]. My mom taught her. He used to give a lot of money to my mom... and my mom used to take her to shops to buy her clothes. Because, I said, she looked terribly. After everything that happened. They lived for six months with us. Then they left.

⁴¹ A Russian girl's name in a diminutive form. The full name is *Нина*.

After the war Juozapota had to hide to avoid deportation. Her father died in the late 1940s. Many of her close relatives were killed or deported at that time. Her parents were on the list of deportees. Juozapota remembered that after Stalin's death, which was a turning point in many biographies, they did not need to hide. However, the threat followed her through all the Soviet period.

I lived with fear for fifty years. In the beginning, after my parents were hurt, I had dreams, I could not sleep, I jumped out of my bed. I had such hatred. [...] We celebrated the 16th of February [the independence day of Lithuania]. We did not have a flag then. We could have had it, but if you tried... under the Russians, if they would have found a flag during the search, you could probably get twenty-five years of prison. The entire world knows that. There is nothing more to say. We had three pieces: red, green, and yellow [the colors of the flag of Lithuania]. The pieces of cloth. On the 16th of February we used to put those pieces together on a plate and celebrate. We sang an hymn, "Mary, Mary," we knelt in this same apartment and celebrated the 16th of February. There were decent people with us. Now they all are dead. I am alone.

I am happy for independence, that I am free now. I live very hard. I have to admit that. But I am happy that I am free and that I don't have to be afraid to say a word. I am not afraid that someone will attack me outside, that they will take me, that they will search... I am not afraid of that anymore. Now I am very very happy. I got old. I have health problems. If I was younger, maybe I would work somewhere, maybe I would earn something, but now I cannot do anything. That's how it is.

Juozapota's experience of hardships was invoked in her considerations about the presidential candidates. She had a small pension because she had not worked long. However, she expected the pension to increase.

It increases little by little... Now it is two hundred twenty eight litas. Recently, twenty more litas were added. I pay twenty eight per week for medicine. [...] In winter I pay up to two hundred litas for heating. I live on water, grain, tea, and the cheapest bread... because you can buy nothing for this money.

Now I am happy, I voted for Adamkus [the President of Lithuania in 1998–2003, the presidential candidate at the time of the interview, an American Lithuanian]. He is a Western man, he won't make any obstacles and shortages for Lithuania. I was trembling, worried, I did not sleep, I had a fever, I was afraid that Prunskienė [another presidential candidate] will be

elected. She is for Russia, not for the West.⁴² Everyone knows that. I also heard today how Adamkus said: “the poor get small pensions, I will try to help them.” I live very poorly. And he said, “I will add [to the pension] so they will feel it.” So do you understand? And now what? What kind of pension is it? It is funny. He said: “I will give not symbolically, but that people will feel it. For the people to feel that they got a pension.” How much? He didn’t say. Now I am waiting for that moment.

The Soviet period was remembered as the time of injustice, immorality, destruction, atrocity, and oppression. It was a devastation on the people, the decent and innocent Lithuanian people for Juozapota:

In Soviet times it was like this. If you got into the Party, you lived well. I knew the Minister for Light Industry. He was a bastard. I knew him personally. In rags [*apiplyšes, apskurės*], nothing good was expected of him. He used to catch pigeons and steal buns from the shop. I tell you how it was. When the Soviet Union came, he became the Minister for Light Industry. Those who got into the Party, they didn’t work. Those who were not in the Party, their salary was sixty, seventy rubles. Why did people start stealing? Because they couldn’t make ends meet. Those who stole, they had everything. Good apartments, good furniture, but they were party members and thieves. They had things. Common people who were neither party members, nor thieves they were poor. Everyone lived in poverty. Those who worked in factories, they lived in poverty... they stole. Women went without underwear and put underwear on at work. Those who worked with socks, went to work bare foot. They put socks on at work. Sometimes two pairs. The ones who were able to steal, they stole. They got cars, apartments. [...] And people, how to say... some felt comfortable... they stole, accumulated some wealth... Education was free. And they were happy, it was OK for them. And spirit? Thousands of innocent people died. All the intellectuals were taken to Russia. They were shot, destroyed... and those who stayed here, more decent people, those who somehow escaped deportation they were placed in psychiatric hospitals. Driven insane. [...] The Soviet Union destroyed people. That’s how it was. There wasn’t anything good. People cried... with bloody tears. Cried terribly. Those who were clever, I would say on the right side [non-communists]. For many those on the left, it was OK. And look. Those milkmaids, they got high salaries, went to Moscow [as delegates for a Congress of the Communist Party]. A village woman, illiterate... They didn’t understand Russian. Snoozed during the sessions. And came back with

⁴² Prunskienė advocated good relations with Russia and the EU during the presidential campaign of 2004. Her involvement in a KGB scandal inspired many to associate her with the East and Russia (see chapter 7).

a document that she had been at the session. The Party praised her. Can you imagine what deception, what atrocity? It's terrible, terrible, terrible. So that's the Soviet period. Fifty years of it. And children. If they went to church... if someone found out that a child had been at the church, it was a disaster—the parents went to Siberia. Children had to be October children, then pioneers, the Komsomol youth... I was invited to join the Party. How could I refuse? It was impossible to refuse. I managed. [...] At the meeting at the Polytechnic Institute they were all party members except me. They spoke about promoting me,... you know, to increase the appetite. And I said: "I respect Lenin, respect Stalin, and the Party, however, I don't understand these things and I don't want to mislead people. [...] Let me learn, understand, then I will come on my own."

My youngest daughter was at school... In the tenth grade teachers started to press her. How was it that all the children were in the Komsomol, only my daughter was not. What could I do? And she [her daughter] said that my mom did not allow it, but she wanted to belong [to the Komsomol]. The teacher came to me and said: "dear lady, how can you? In my class all students are members, your daughter pollutes our class." [...] She started to give her lower grades. Started to terrorize her. I was in pain. My daughter cried constantly. She cried because of her grades: those who were worse students had better grades. What could I do?

There was a parent-teacher conference in the school hall which lasted for several hours. Parents and teachers were discussing various issues. Students performed a play. Juozapota created a poem while being there.

I thought I will save my child. I stood up and spoke:

Lenin came through Lithuania,
He stayed in Vilnius for long,
He left footprints for children to follow...
His step on the earth will never be lost.
His words were carved in the marble
Never to be forgotten by us.
Lenin's image so common, warm, and kind
He was loved by everyone for his truth.
He walked with an open coat, in a simple cap.
With grand ideas in his head,
And some wrinkles on his forehead.
He walked and created
For the Party to be free.

He revealed love and friendship

For the world in the truth to be.

The hall cheered. The class teacher came to me. She kissed me, gave me her hand, and held mine. Then my daughter got the grades she deserved. [...] My heart trembled, these words were foreign to me... Can you imagine what I had to do to save my child? I came home and cried. You see... everywhere was coercion. Nowhere anything good. I say, those who were bad they lived well and they miss those times. There are many who support the right... but there are those who wish those times to come back.

Juozapota welcomed *Sąjūdis* with deep support for the nationalist cause.

I hated the Soviet Union, I am of strong Lithuanian convictions and I strongly believe in God. I believe in Lithuania... those occupiers, I had to hide, I was violently hurt, suffered with my nerves, I once was in the hospital. I was under such a threat. When I started to hear that *Sąjūdis*, Landsbergis... how we waited. I was in bed covered with newspapers all the time. I slept and read again. *Sąjūdis*, *Sąjūdis*... What will it bring? When I heard the [national] anthem for the first time, I was in tears, I cried aloud.

Juozapota was involved in her own way in the liberation movement. She starved three days for Lithuania to be free, for Lithuanians in Lithuania, and for the disappearance of communists. When Brazauskas, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Lithuania, was elected President in 1992, Juozapota said that she “almost died.” She wondered what crazy people had elected Brazauskas, when everyone knew who he was. He returned the Cathedral, the Catholic church at the historic center of Vilnius, to Lithuanians. Juozapota asked how much power he had to have to do that. “How could people not understand who he was?” She also wondered how people could vote for Kazimiera Prunskienė, the first Prime Minister of Lithuania, a candidate in the presidential elections of 2004, qualified in the first round (Prunskienė lost in the second round to Valdas Adamkus). “Prunskienė was a KGB member,” argued Juozapota. Juozapota also wondered how people could support a Russian Victor Uspaskich, the Minister for Economics at the time of the interview. “Look what he does? ‘You Lithuanians, you don’t understand anything, I, a Russian, know more.’ He said this on the TV. [...] Why do we have to support him? We have many people of ours. If our people did something wrong—punish them. If someone does not know—educate him. Why these Russians, if we have suffered from them so much? Why do we need this Russian here?”

Juozapota thought that “bad things” were happening in Lithuania:

Now these elections to the Seimas. I think, I cannot confirm it, but according to my knowledge, the politics I follow, in the Seimas they are all thieves. Not Adamkus. Look. It is so quiet and peaceful, only castles are being built, the most expensive ones. Palanga [the resort of Lithuania by the Baltic Sea] is not enough [they go abroad for vacations]. They don't like cars, they want planes. Where does that money come from? [...] They are thieves. In my opinion, they are thieves.

Juozapota started to list names from the Prime Minister to the mayor of the city of Vilnius who, according to her, received bribes of several million. She gave her source—the newspaper *Laisvas laikraštis* (which specializes in discreditable articles, not the mainstream media) and asserted that she had the newspaper and could show it to me. In that newspaper the leader of the liberation movement, Vytautas Landsbergis, was also included in the list of the “guilty.” He was said to be a KGB agent. The fact that the Prime Minister had been bribed did not surprise Juozapota, I think, because she did not like former “communists.” The fact that she named Landsbergis a KGB agent surprised me. I have heard similar stories from others. However, Juozapota seemed to support the “right,” the representative of which was Landsbergis, unconditionally. While Landsbergis was the leader of the independence movement, which brought joy, happiness, and relief from fear to Juozapota, associating him with the KGB had to conflict Juozapota's view of social history. It actually did. After her talk about Landsbergis, I asked Juozapota “how is it with independence then?” She started to think out loud:

Look, nobody could go to other countries in Russian times, Landsbergis could. [...] He probably was forced to be in *Saugumas* [State Security]. It was hard to escape that. People were placed in prisons, in psychiatric hospitals. He is a musician. Maybe he thought that way: well, I will do this superficially, not from my heart. And when independence started, he opened his heart. How could he be a devoted and believing communist, an agent of State Security, and then join the movement for independence, go to church, go to confession, get absolution, wear a cross. How could it be? I think this way. What do you think?

I responded: “I don't know.” Juozapota said that she did not know as well, but she thought that way. While she did not change her opinion about Landsbergis completely, her confidence in him was shattered. She claimed that earlier she thought that he was a *real*

Lithuanian, a Catholic. His belonging to State Security made Landsbergis somehow less “real.” Juozapota also had written a poem to Landsbergis in the years of the liberation movement. Unlike the poem about Lenin, this one was written from her heart. After citing the poem praising Landsbergis, which ended in words, “Oh, Vytautai, the heart of the homeland,” Juozapota raised many questions: how could such things be published; what do those pictures with Landsbergis and the State Security Director mean; how can one speak about this, if it never took place; maybe he was forced; maybe he could not behave otherwise; maybe he converted now... She ended on a relaxed note: “he is gone now. He is not in Lithuania. He has a high position [Landsbergis was elected to the European Parliament in June, 2003]”. With Landsbergis gone there was no need to label him and place him in one category or another.

Juozapota understood the present in terms similar to those of many other informants in villages. When asked why the present was the way she described, she responded that, in her opinion, it was primarily the lack of state control.

In Lithuania bad things happen. Lithuania is set apart, deceived, lost, there is no order... There are so many misunderstandings, corruption. Many go unpunished. [...] In Lithuania it is very bad now. Look, masses of the unemployed. They want to eat. Get benefits. People are spoiled. [...] Villages are swept by alcoholism, I would not say everybody... there are some good villages. [...] There is little discipline. [...] I think the state is responsible. There is no discipline. No control. There is no state control. Nobody anywhere is controlled, everyone grabs for himself. Such bribes. Terrible frauds. High bills. People get those small pensions, they cannot pay utility bills. They were evicted because of debts. Why is one guilty, if one cannot pay bills? There were so many who worked all their lives, and saved... they worked all their lives. Where is control? In the police? In the medical care? There isn't anything. Fraud, theft, lying, and bribes. Corruption. [...] The state has to get involved in such events. [...] People are lost. Russians destroyed all nations wherever they were. [...] The Russian occupation lasted for 50 years. Now bellies naked, backs also... [...] They say it comes from abroad. Isn't there control abroad? What is happening in the world? Where is justice, who can show it, where is truth? Such things had to be controlled by the state and by the church. A person has to be afraid of God and control one's conscience, and one has to be afraid of the state. And then the justice will come. There will be a feeling that this is just, and this is not. I think so. Am I not right?

5.2 EGLÈ

Eglè is a 42 year old high school teacher. To add to her teacher's salary she works at a publishing house and teaches at a college. In her free time she writes books. Eglè was recommended to me by one of my friends. She was younger than many other informants, which I appreciated in an attempt to add different perspectives to my research. We met on Sunday at the high school where she worked. The school was empty and we spent over three hours there.

Eglè was divorced and had remarried. She lived in a two room and kitchen apartment. After remarrying she thought about setting a PhD, but then she had to choose “between another child and a PhD” Eglè had a master's degree in education. She was born in Siberia, but returned with her parents to Lithuania when she was small. Siberia was essential to her identity and, understanding this, she began by talking about the Siberian experiences of her family and relatives.

My parents were deportees. They were deported young. My mother was eighteen, after high school. She was taken alone, because others were not home. I cannot imagine what moral pressure it was. [...] My grandmother stayed with the youngest daughter. She was a well-off farmer. My grandfather passed away when she was 36 years old. She brought up her children alone, and paid debts for the land. When the children were big... deportations. My grandmother with the youngest daughter had to hide. No place, no money, no pension—they had nothing.

My father went with five brothers. He was the oldest. My grandmother was a teacher. She also was deported. My grandfather stayed behind because he was at work when others were taken. Later he went to State Security and asked to deport him to his family. And he was told that no one was going to organize an echelon for him. And he stayed. Later he sent them bacon (*lašinius*) for six years. Smoked bacon. It was a big support. Later he went there [to Siberia].

So that's my roots. Maybe because of that I've categorical opinions. When we were growing up we knew what can be discussed at home, and what outside the home. I was a pioneer, a member of the Komsomol, a pioneer council head, and the Komsomol secretary, but this was... there is such a good Russian word—*ноказыха* [“façade”]. You know that you have to do that way and that's how it is. My father said: “join the Komsomol Youth without thinking.” He was not allowed to enter the PhD program two or three times. He finished extramural

studies. He defended his dissertation written in his free time. There were many obstacles. Thus, I say, my roots are of a Lithuanian nationalist. And then we knew that there is the anthem of Lithuania, that there is the flag, and that you cannot talk about that openly. My mother's brother's children, my uncle's who spent fifteen years in a labor camp children, were forbidden to think about the Komsomol. He did not have anything to lose... His children were strong nationalists at school. On the 16th of February they wore white shirts and ties. That day you were not allowed to be at school in white shirts. It was in the mid 1970s. They [uncle's family] had prohibited books. We knew that Lithuania, as a state, is the ultimate value. It was not likely that independence would come. I thought how it could be... At school you are told one thing, at home the other. I thought maybe they [parents, relatives] don't understand something... there was doubt.

We knew well how it was and that it couldn't have been any worse. When these rebirths started [the liberation movement], I was not involved a lot, because my daughter was born in 1988 and she was small at that time. But I followed events, wrote diaries, cut articles from newspapers, spent days and nights by the TV. I am not a common case, my girlfriends tease me about my fierceness. But this is my nature, and maybe experience as well.

I was in Siberia twice. With my father in 1985. Then I went with my uncle who was in a labor camp to bring back bones [remains of the deceased in Siberia]. None of us died. Everyone was of such an age that they were neither small, nor old. Of great strength. Everybody came back. I went as a journalist. [...] We, deportees' children have different attitudes. Until this day we attend all kind of meetings. Deportee reburials, reburials of remains. Consecrations of crosses. I think there are not too many of us. I don't know why. Maybe some parents, how to say... saving their children did not tell them much.

The Soviet period was described in terms of resistance, duplicity, absurdity, masquerade, shortages, complicity and self-discipline. The different generations, according to Eglė, were characterized by different "belonging" to social history. Her generation was a lost one.

I remember we celebrated St. John's day [the 24th of June]. It was some... how to say... some kind of resistance. It does not appear that you resist, but you do something. Sometimes on family holidays we sang the Lithuanian anthem at home silently... "oh, it is just a song." Nobody said otherwise. The words are so beautiful, so why not. [...] And now how to say. You see, the major problem is that we saw a masquerade. Most of us were pioneers, October children, stood in all the lines, carried posters with Lenin, on the 1st of May, participated in demonstrations. But we knew that there was a double life. You pretend to be a pioneer, a

Komsomol member, October child, and at home you know that you will behave differently. I don't know, we didn't understand the scale of how people were constrained.

To get toilet paper people waited for an hour in queues. There were more circuses. Before Easter there were no eggs. If you didn't buy eggs two weeks ahead, you were not going to get them. In the market some old ladies had eggs. Intentionally. They used to say—the stupid state—it does that on purpose to arouse resistance. What will happen, if a candle is lit on All Saints Day? Will the state collapse? [...] It was such an absurdity, that you have nothing to say there. Thus, the ones who remember, I think, they are different politically. The others are the ones who had an easier life, who didn't have to start from zero or didn't return with one piece of luggage from Siberia, who got a state-assigned apartment, a state salary, using which one went to Palanga every year. Or even to some kind of the Caucasus, on vacation paid by the employer. They thought that it was very well. Because they don't have so much now.

Now it is not good for the older generation, but for those who finish schools and have good heads on their shoulders. They can go abroad, come back... With a specialty, knowledge they can work and earn four to five thousand which is very good in our situation. To live, to live well. The generation in their 40s is a lost one. Or the like. It is lost in the sense that they cannot adapt to the new life. They don't have any initiative. Earlier the state gave them everything. If a husband divorced his wife, the Party Committee settled everything. Showed the place to be. Because in that society there were no divorces. If someone had an affair, a wife could inform the Party Committee—all was set. Because a Soviet person could not get divorced [i.e., divorce was disapproved of].

I have a friend. She is also from deportees. She was deported with her parents when she was two years old. She is a Lithuanian, a real nationalist [*nacionalistė*], but she says, “it was better” [in Soviet times]. Why? She came back from Siberia. What could she study? Russian. The salaries in Soviet times were not big, but because there were very small payments for heating, all other utilities, people were doing better financially. They lived from a pension and even helped their children, although the pension was sixty rubles. She didn't complain until there were enough students. She welcomed the rebirth. Then the number of students decreased. The state offered an opportunity to change her specialization. To study to be an elementary school teacher or any other language teacher. She was an excellent teacher. With a pedagogical talent. And she said: “I am not going to change my specialty.” She didn't use the opportunity. She could have had more lessons, would have earned more and lived better. Now she blames the state for not having enough lessons. [...] She had a chance. But she is of a Soviet upbringing in the sense that she has no initiative. I would say that this is the major difference between the young and my generation or older. The people of the present know that they are

responsible for themselves. The current youth also has such an American quality—self-presentation. I am the best, I know the best. They present themselves as very prized. And then [in the Soviet period] modesty was a virtue. [...] If from childhood you are told, you can do anything, then, you think, you can do everything. But if you are told to keep silent, not to be assertive, to wait for others to say something. And that you also had no responsibility for your life. In my generation and the older one. Someone had to think for you, where you will work. Someone had to think for you how you will live. This probably hurt people most.

My parents were professors, but we had nothing. If you wanted a bicycle, you saved three years. If you wanted shoes, there was no money. You went to the theater with your class; if you didn't want to wear the uniform, you got a re sewn mom's dress. That's my poor childhood. Earlier there were no *skudurynai* [the second-hand stores], which save everyone at present. [...] We did not live badly. My father could get all kinds of shortage goods later. He even brought some oranges sometimes. When he went to Moscow, he brought all kinds of sweets... it seemed that we were close to the lords [*ponai*]. But you cannot compare this with the real lords.

I was a happy child. I didn't develop any anger [toward Soviet history]. I saw how much my parents and all my uncles, aunts, cousins were hurt. [...] I moved in all kinds of circles, I could go wherever I wanted. We did not have abundance, but maybe we lived well because of our attitude. I don't feel hurt [at present] because I felt well [in Soviet times].

Eglė described the present as the time of hardships for some, but the age of opportunities for others. The ones who are nostalgic about the Soviet past, according to Eglė, do not take into account the moral discomfort others experienced and felt in the Soviet period.

Pensioners live in hardship now. The structure that was in place is destroyed, and you cannot create something overnight. [...] My father was a Minister. Knowing his organizational abilities, he could have made order. My God, he talked so much about everything... How many resources are in Lithuania, how much money one could make developing business in Lithuania. They had created a Lithuanian tractor, which was several times cheaper than imported. Maybe someone put obstacles. I later asked him, he was a year or a year and a half in the office, how many ideas could he put in practice. His own, because he had many. Knowing that he creates homes and workshops on an empty ground. Without wheeling and dealing, without stealing, simply because of his organizational abilities. He said that maybe five percent, that it was impossible. People were very limited and laws ineffective. He said that the Conservatives had to be imprisoned only because they destroyed people's trust. Concerning

the saying that it was better in Soviet times... I think... after fifty years of destruction, you can hardly say when it will come back to normal. Maybe after fifty years.

My life has improved a lot. I worked about ten years before the liberation movement. Now the possibilities are very different. You can do more. Earlier it was convenient for the mediocrities. They could not think on their own, what they got, they had. They got a six square meter room in Šventoji [for vacations in the resort by the Baltic Sea] and then they thought that this is an apex, that everything is in place. Now they cannot go to Šventoji. So they are very unhappy. And the young are not informed how bad it was. Not financially, we were not hungry. And we had something to wear, all alike. Then it was not discernible that you were rich, or you were poor. There were some differences, but not so visible like now. And probably the biggest difference was that we had more or less everything, and now we cannot have this and this and that. However, many don't evaluate the moral discomfort [in Soviet times].

Eglė remembered how once she was taken to the KGB headquarters.

I was excited, I was eighteen years old, life lay before me [*jūra iki kelio*]... what will happen? Maybe I will have to identify a dead body, maybe?... They took me there and kept me for the whole day. Until 5 p.m. Until the end of the workday. I laughed for three hours... ha-ha-ha-ha. I did not see any problems. They interrogated me about everything, from Adam and Eve—everything. I could not understand why. I knew nothing, nor had I done something. Illegal. I knew it is better not to do anything, because you will get in trouble. [...] Parents were afraid enough [and were cautious]. And then... I sit there ... they ask this, and that... how do I like my work in the company, how much I earn, whether I am happy... I could not understand what they wanted from me. What was happening. It was 1978 or 1979. They behaved well. They offered me to use the bathroom, asked whether I wanted anything... I did not want anything. Then they asked how my parents met each other, what they say about the Soviet regime. I answered smartly: they are very happy, if they were not deported, they would have not met each other. [...] I understood where they were heading. After about three or four hours they showed me a piece of paper... from afar. It was a stencil... and sprayed on a glass with aerosol paint... a proclamation. I read only a part: “Brothers and sisters Lithuanians, the red dragon has his head up again...” And something else. [...]

Later we decided at home that they followed us. While the two other children [her uncle's who was in a labor camp children] studied and lived with us... They said they found the proclamation in our stairwell behind the mailboxes. I said then: don't be naïve; if I made it, why would I keep it in my stairwell, behind my mailbox? [laughs] I knew I was known. It was the additional reminder... be aware of where you live. [...] They told me to come back in

three days. My cousin said: “dress in red.” We laughed. Red scarf, red shoes, I had a red purse... I was told to think who had done that. In other words, they suggested that I be an informant. [...] It ended this way. In those seven or eight hours I got on their nerves... I laughed, giggled, didn’t go to the bathroom, didn’t eat or drink. Then he said: “you disturb us.” I said that they disturbed me, because I was paid by the hour. I was furious. Then he said that they have methods to make everybody sing. Maybe nothing would have happened, but for some maybe it is enough, that kind of pressure and they get scared.

The descriptions of the political history of post-Soviet Lithuania were not very different from other portrayals of events. For example, Eglė claimed that “In regard to the kolkhozes. I remember how they were supposedly destroyed. Kolkhozes had the right to distribute goods. According to shares, contributions, and something else. Nobody controlled that. There was a policy, but no normal implementation. To put it roughly. Directors and party secretaries grabbed for themselves, there was nothing left for people. [...] With regard to the kolkhozes, I remember very well that in kolkhozes life was good.” Political history was reflected discussing political images of prominent political figures, Eglė took into account their party membership, their past belonging to the CP; she was also aware of the corrupt dealings of politicians and discussed their commitment to a national cause. She also noticed that other people may think differently.

Brazauskas... when he was a Soviet Union Communist Party secretary... he had to be at least a KGB colonel. According to the position he had. All the people from that past, they had to be KGB agents, they had to work with them because of their positions. [...] If I think about foreign policy, Landsbergis is the wisest. I am a Conservative party member. I joined the party in 1992. [...]

Yesterday I bought a newspaper. It is called *Laisvas laikraštis*.⁴³ The headlines were in big letters: “The President of mafia.” There was a portrait of Adamkus [the new elected President of Lithuania at the time of the interview], behind him—Zuokas [the mayor of Vilnius]. Of course everything is made up out of whole cloth. Brazauskas was also blamed for giving away energy [enterprises]. Everything is made up. [...]

People don’t like those who are smarter than themselves. That’s their nature. The grey mass... it is incapable... incapable of understanding Landsbergis’s intellect. And he is disliked. [...] Landsbergis is such... of gentlemen’s pedigree [*ponu padermės*]. With a small beard, an

⁴³ Among all other informants there were only few who also mentioned this newspaper.

aristocrat... they were always evil, because they oppressed working people, right? [...] Brazauskas, my God, a handsome man, he shows how he scythes grass, a real farmer. With a Soviet-style *маячка* [in Russian, a “sleeveless undershirt”], an undershirt. The father of a family, a farmer, a real Lithuanian. Strong, tough. There is so much of this. I don’t now maybe three quarters. Why Paksas [the President in 2003–2004, ousted in 2004] is so good? For the elder ladies he is a child. He is a son; he is the one... who could save us. All his cruises with a motorcycle show energy. Well, Adamkus... for the villagers he is too intelligent... for those common villagers. [...]

The village now is swept by alcoholism, the word “villager” has a negative connotation. [...] Now they are called “sugar beets” [*runkeliai*]. There are bright people, but there are many alcoholics, this is a tragedy. [...] Adamkus is an old man for them, he does not know how to plant potatoes, and in general he is an American. [...] I respect Česlovas Juršėnas [a Seimas chairman, a presidential candidate in 2004, a former Communist Party member]. He stayed the way he was. He was honest. He did not change his skin. Well, Brazauskas started to cross himself in church, well... well, why does he do this? If you are not a believer, that’s who you are. I always admire Juršėnas, because he never changed his skin. Let him be a fox, a red one, whatever, but he is honest. And this is nice. [...] Uspaskichas [the Russian-born leader of the Labor Party]. [...] It is nice that he learned Lithuanian. Maybe he is a smart businessman. However, I don’t believe that there is nobody behind him. I am afraid to say something... I don’t have competence there, but just a suspicion. What did he lack? Prestige? Money?

When my father took such a position [he was a Minister], he did it out of patriotism. He was honest... he neither stole, nor built houses out of this... [...] My father, he is very angry about the administering of Lithuanian economy. [...] He says: “I am happy I will not live to see the breakdown, because laws are established to obstruct the development of the Lithuanian economy.” And we can draw conclusions why this is so. Really, intellect is destroyed. All those deportations, basically, intellectuals were deported. Teachers, engineers and the like... everybody was put down. When the new generation emerged it was put down again. Starting from the time of the rebellions [in the 19th century].

“Americanization” and Russian times were invoked again in defining the present in Eglė’s concluding thoughts:

You could resist oppression. Now I have no doubts that we will become Americanized completely. After a hundred years or so. Maybe some exotics will stay. [...] I think all those ethnic collectives [in Soviet times] were supported to show that there was freedom. That everything was possible as well as those Song festivals. Songs about the Party and homeland

[the USSR] inspired psychological revolt, of course. There was a sack on your head. But you could not say that nothing was happening. [...] I remember I was working on my master's thesis on vocation camp reconstruction in Palanga. [...] I started my work without thinking. Without thinking that one could write otherwise [she remarked that she was 25 years old at that time]. That every individual has a right to recreation [the Soviet-style rhetoric]. Then I explained what a vocation camp is and so on. I remember how my opponent teased me... Well, not teased. He looked at it and said: "it is a poor [i.e., pitiable] Soviet product."

Maybe our young will be gratified with all those... soon. All that chewing gum and those things. My younger kid just watches cartoons, all they do is brainwash them. All that generation... their heads are washed with all those digimons, *šmikimons* [a made up word to generalize similar cartoon characters]. Sometimes you can see a nice cartoon... such as "Greyneck" ["Pilkakaklė"] [a Russian cartoon] who did not fly with others... He cried, he [her son] was small and sensitive. It was so beautiful, but sad. [...] These [Soviet times] cartoons are not interesting now; nobody kills anybody, no blood, no shooting. I think pushing [*kėšyti*] those [post-Soviet] cartoons is one of the worst things.

Sometimes it is asked when it was better: now or under the Russians. People say: of course under the Russians—we had all our teeth, and the girls were nicer to us [laughs]. It is nostalgia like the nostalgia for childhood or youth. Those who did not experience these terrible deportations... everything was quite good to them. You were young, you had enough to eat, you had a job, a state apartment... what else? Once my aunt came [from the United States]... well... when Americans started to arrive... [...] She said you are so happy that you don't know how poor you are. My mother's sister felt deadly insulted. She said: "how could she? Well... I couldn't say that we lack anything—we have an apartment, a gas stove, a refrigerator, a washer, a TV, what else do we need?" She was insulted. She had not seen better vacations than ones in Šventoji recreational houses.

People couldn't imagine that there could be something better. Everybody had about the same. Why did people take pictures by the shops when they went abroad? Now we have the same shops here. Nobody faints. But if you know of a shop where there are only some packages of pasta and a bottle of milk butter [like in Soviet times]... I remember how we used to go abroad... and take pictures by the bananas [she laughs]. That's how it is. When you don't know about the "better." [...] Why did we need that iron curtain? I don't know. [...] I think it was closed so we wouldn't know... wouldn't move... Well, we couldn't move. We could travel inside the Soviet Union... now I cannot go to a European country by plane... my pockets are not deep enough. [...] I went [to Italy] alone without children, alone... With children, our family cannot afford this. On the other hand, if you travel to Italy by bus, it may

be cheaper than to Palanga. But my ankles swelled from sitting there. I could not do it one more time.

Then again, the prices are such that, if you have several jobs, you can really allow yourself... [...] I know many who are nostalgic about the Soviet past. There were paid vacations. My uncle's, the one's who was in a labor camp, wife was made a hero [*pirmūne*] in the kolkhoz. Because the kolkhoz needed a milkmaid hero. They brought milk from all the villages, poured it into her cans and the kolkhoz had a hero. [...] Then she used to get paid vacations. To Samarkands [sic], the Caucasuses [sic], all of Central Asia, she went everywhere. Free travels. But how many were like her? [...] I think, it was an injustice, justice had to emerge. I think maybe after a hundred, two hundred years [there will be justice], that I will not live to see...

5.3 SELF AND HISTORY

5.3.1 Defining stories

The defining moment of Juozapota's story was her experience of meeting the Russian officer and her experience of violence. Interactions with the Russian officer in idioms of humiliation and violence were meaningful (cf. Blok 2000). Before the violent encounters, by taking out their furniture, her parents aimed to negotiate the anticipated situation and relations and to resist possible redefinition of their personal space and rights to it. Upon finding an empty room, the officer performed terror, which redefined the power relations and established his authority. His violence was an act of classification (cf. Leach 1965, cited in Herzfeld 1992:29), since it produced the boundary between friends and enemies (see also Herzfeld 1992). It was a means of transforming the social environment and dramatizing the importance of key social relations (cf. Riches 1986). It was a route of social advancement and a tactical pre-emption, i.e., securing practical advantage over one's opponents in the short term through forestalling their activities (Riches 1986:5). Juozapota fell at the officer's feet to

recognize his authority and power. What followed was resignation and suppression of Juozapota's values and meanings as well as her selfhood. A sign of resignation in Juozapota's story was her mother, suffering with her nerves, with "a wet towel always on her head out of fear." Resignation and suppression of one's possible actions entailed opposition, the position and emotion underlying the rest of Juozapota's narrative. In the story on violence Juozapota emerges as a victim and a sufferer.

Violence classified Juozapota and her family as social others. The identity of otherness was later reproduced and reified in situations like her daughter's experience at school. Giving lower grades was an act of marking disloyal subjects of the Soviet state, forming the boundaries between the insiders and the outsiders. Juozapota experienced this as injustice, humiliation, and threat. Her religious identity, belonging to the community of believers, despite little reflection on it in her narrative, must also have reinforced her social otherness.

Juozapota's description of the Russian officer and his lover serves to dehumanize them, set them apart from ordinary people and remove them from the moral community. The encounter with the officer starts with his exotic image (very tall, with iron teeth and glasses, stinking) and emphasis on his foreignness (looked like a beggar not "like ours"). The six months of living together with a Russian couple is covered in a few lines: Juozapota's mother taught the Russian girl, took her to shops and bought clothing for the money the officer gave her. The girl was a passive figure from the very beginning when Juozapota claimed that she was brought to her home covered in hay, wrapped in a quilt coat with worn-out boots. Like the officer, the girl is exotic and foreign. The Russian couple constitutes an opposition to the habitual and the familiar; in the narrative—to the refined relations, established gender roles (like knowing how to cook and most probably being married), a clean and luxurious apartment.

A similar "self"-defining story, which underlies Eglė's talk, is implicit in her discourse on deportations. Ideas about deportations are fragmented and variable and told more through the integrated voices of others which become essential in Eglė's articulations of the self and her understanding of social history. In her genealogical projections, Eglė

remembered the appropriation of her grandmother's with difficulty paid-off land during collectivization, her grandmother's and aunt's hiding from deportation, deportations of her kin, fear of deportation among others, and her family's poverty after their return from Siberia. The suffering of her family and relatives was also her suffering and part of her selfhood. Like most deportees, including her parents and relatives, Eglè was a social other, a dangerous outsider to the Soviet publicly-imagined community and the Soviet state (see chapter 4).

The social otherness to which both women were subjected meant that they were/could be deprived of some privileges as well as excluded from resources, such as wealth, knowledge, and power (see chapter 4). Juozapota experienced a decrease in social status. Being from a well-off family of intellectuals, in the Soviet period she had to live in a small apartment. After the death of her husband, she started to work at a factory. Juozapota recollects the hardships and poverty of her life in the Soviet period, which contrasts with the luxury of her pre-Soviet past. Eglè recollects the poverty of her childhood as part of her experience of a deportee identity. Others "who did not have to start from zero or did not return with one piece of luggage from Siberia, who got state assigned apartments, a state salary [...] had an easier life."

Eglè's otherness was also reified by the Soviet state in encounters with the KGB, when she was reminded where she lived and that her family, according to Eglè, was being observed. Self-discipline and control as well as restricted agency must have been signs of her social location. Unlike in Juozapota's story where the Russian officer (and later Russians) represented power which structured the possible field of her actions (cf. Foucault 1984, Wolf 1990), Eglè experienced invisible, depersonalized, and diffused power and authority emerging in the form of KGB agents, in requests to sing songs about the Party and homeland (the USSR), or silencing her voice when singing the national anthem. However, her active involvement in the communist youth organizations allowed suppressing otherness, even if she never totally escaped it.

Experiences of otherness enforced imagining social history as foreign. Foreignness was inherent in meanings, such as deception, coercion, destruction, the absurd, threat and

persecution, and control (both women). Juozapota emphasized the immoral character of the time, atrocities, and oppression. Eglè spoke of masquerade, constraint, and circus. She also invoked moral discomfort. For Eglè, Soviet times appeared less threatening and oppressive. Such relationship derives from her different experience. Unlike Juozapota, Eglè did not experience violence; she was born 9 years after Stalin's death, the period of relaxation of totalitarian undertakings of the Soviet state. The less oppressive relationship between Eglè and Soviet-period history also stems from her more accommodating stances towards developments like pioneer or Komsomol organizations. Eglè saw her involvement as incompatible with her "deportee" identity. However, for her this was the only legitimate way to self-expression, allowing for some public recognition and social involvement.

5.3.2 Political self

Foreignness of social history very often was generalized to events, such as celebrations of the communist youth organizations, requirements to sing particular songs, standing in lines for food, absence of eggs before Easter, or milkmaids going to Moscow to participate in the Congress of the Communist Party. Social history of Soviet times was translated as "political" by approaching an event or interactions as expressions of power. Juozapota's and Eglè's recollections were about experiences of power and authority as well as resistance to it. For example, the celebration of St. John's day was understood as an act of resistance. The festival is an old tradition, a pagan and, later, a Catholic festival. However, for many it is not a religious event. St. John's day is popularly known for the longest day of the year (the 24th of June). Hardly anyone celebrating St. John's day at present thinks about resistance to any power. There is no power conceived which might threaten the "national body" of society by preventing it from following its rituals of self-assertion and self-worship, such as celebration of old festivals in the Soviet period. However, in Eglè's and Juozapota's narratives, invisible powers, often in the form of the Soviet state, were behind celebrations of St. John's day as well as the lines for food, empty eggs shelves, and "false" heroes like milkmaids. Imagining these powers was also an undertaking in redefining social bodies of individuals as political

ones. Thus, standing in line was an experience of oppression to be resisted. In the very similar notes the stories on buying at the second-hand clothing stores, *skudurynai*, (see chapter 2) are experiences of regression, which are also resisted invoking the post-socialist state (see chapter 6). The second-hand stores can be experienced as sites of production of political bodies (by covering them in often colorful “rags”) for the present.

Socialist consumer appetites were stimulated by insisting that under socialism the standard of living would constantly improve and that consumption is a “right” (Verdery 1996:28). Capitalism repeatedly renders desire concrete and specific, and offers specific—if ever-changing—goods to satisfy it, while socialism aroused desire *without* focalizing it, and kept it alive by deprivation (Borneman 1990:17–18, cited in Verdery 1996:28). However, while some experienced socialist consumerism as humiliation and destruction of dignity (see Verdery 1996:55–56), others built their social status and dignity in heroic scavenging and using *blat* (see Ledeneva 1998, Berdahl 1999). Eglė and Juozapota were among the former.

The difference in memories of the past among Eglė, Juozapota and others discussed in the first two chapters emerge from selection of specific events to illustrate arguments about “oppression” or “better times.” Most informants remembered the past in terms of shortages, social benefits, paid vacations, travel within the USSR, and small utility bills. However, Zina, Marija, Povilas, Vitkai, Jadvyga N. and Jadvyga M. (chapter 1 and 2), invoked these facts as illustrations of their better economic situation in the Soviet period and as examples of regression of the social and personal present. Conversely, Juozapota and Eglė invoked the same ideas to illustrate oppression in the past and their experiences of foreign social history.

The same facts like the improvement of one’s everyday life acquire different meanings because of different structuring frameworks to which interpretations of the facts are subordinated. Saving for a bicycle for three years, having no money for shoes, wearing a mother’s altered dress when going to the theater with classmates, communicated childhood poverty. However, arguments about some later time indicated that compared to others, Eglė’s family lived well. They even had scarce goods like oranges. The *poor* childhood was about Soviet times and *deportations*. Life’s improvements resulted from her family’s successful

accommodation, not from any kind of socialist progress. For some people, whom I mentioned in chapter 1, improvement of everyday life was translated into a narrative of progress. They did not invoke poverty speaking about Soviet times. Genealogy of events, such as graduation from school, getting a job, an apartment, etc. or saving money and later buying a house or a car, illustrated progress in the “better times.”

Eglè’s narrative represents seeming contradictions. She speaks about psychological revolt, moral discomfort, and self-discipline and had already arrived in the beginning of her narrative at the conclusion that it could not have been worse. Nevertheless, Eglè also claims not to feel hurt because she was well-adjusted in Soviet times. The presence of different registers like being resistant and being adjusted/not being hurt, derives from Eglè being well-versed in versions of Soviet social history, experienced as complying, accommodating, and negotiating practices of the time. From one perspective, different registers stem from ideological multivocality embodied in Eglè’s experience (duplicitous, according to her) and her failure, as the author and as the social subject, to produce a coherent narrative of opposition. Actually, the assertion that she “felt well” emerges (which in the beginning seems to contradict the previous claims about the Soviet period) when the “political self” is suppressed and the history embodied in Eglè’s experience is preempted of political readings of the “social.” Furthermore, the “political” is also suppressed, when thinking of “political” as in Komsomol meetings, which become simply social engagements, a form of self-expression rather than participation in political organization, representing the Soviet state ideology. Imagining Komsomol meetings as social undertakings, Eglè most probably wished to disassociate herself from the political meanings of that organization. Thus, paradoxically, to a reader of her story, Komsomol meetings become an apolitical site of involvement, while food lines or St. John’s day are spaces for political expression.

Conversely, Juozapota does produce a coherent narrative of the political past and the self. Considering that some people felt comfortable and happy in Soviet times, Juozapota asks aloud could they not think of the thousands of people who died, all the intellectuals who were taken to Russia, the deportations, destruction, psychiatric hospitals, people crying

with bloody tears?² However, probably most of the so-called “happy” ones⁴⁴ disapproved of deportation and similar practices and did not refer to them in their arguments about “better times.” Their “immorality” was a “failure” to translate Soviet social history into political idioms, such as narratives of oppression, embedded in Juozapota’s life story.

5.3.3 Duplicious self

Eglė’s experience of different selves, such as a deportee and an active Komsomol member, were experienced as duplicity and doubt. Eglė claimed to be divided between the home and the public sphere. Like many she probably was perfect in the “bilingualism” of social experience in many cases. The fact that she had doubts about discourse in private family space illustrated her perception of incommensurability of the two idioms (presented at home and at school) as well as her longing for commensurable “worlds.”

Eglė and others like her who subscribed to a more accommodating stance toward Soviet-period history experienced duplicity. Duplicity meant that several social texts contradictory to the informant interconnect in the informant’s knowledge. The privileging of the one, articulated at home, underlying her deportee identity was notable. However, Eglė reproduced the other social texts, heard at school and at Komsomol meetings. She supported official social history as her own involuntary masterplan (cf. Havel 1985). Insiderness to Soviet history was sometimes a new encounter for Eglė herself as in the case of writing her master’s degree thesis in Soviet-style rhetoric (“every individual has a right to recreation”). The following excerpt about Eglė’s deportee uncle shows how different social texts informed Eglė’s understanding. One assertion stems from perceptions and experiences of self as an outsider to Soviet-period history. It led Eglė to agree with her uncle about stealing from the kolkhoz. The other statement derives from insiderness to the Soviet-period everyday and approval of pioneer values instigating disagreement about stealing:

⁴⁴ Only one person of all the informants approved of the deportations. While there were people who did not mention deportations, there were many who mentioned them in various registers of disapproval.

He [Eglé's uncle] worked on a dairy farm. His wife was a dairymaid. They used to feed their own livestock with forage from the farm. They used to go to the kolkhoz gardens to pick apples for themselves. I was a pioneer and we were taught that stealing is wrong. I was very honest; I used to tell him that this is not right. I objected and told him that one cannot steal because it is against God's testimony [I said it this way because I knew he was religious]. He said: "The Soviet state has stolen much more from me. I am just returning its debt to myself." Formally, he was right.⁴⁵

Juozapota did not experience duplicity; her narrative was full of negation and clear opposition. Juozapota never joined the Party herself, even if she was indirectly promised some recognition (and, thus, escape of some otherness). She did not let her children join the Komsomol organization. When her daughter was "terrorized" at school because she was not a member of the Komsomol, Juozapota created a poem about Lenin and "saved" her child. After reciting the poem, Juozapota cried because of the tension that emerged from her experience of duplicity. However, she was successful in refusing to follow the imposed rules of the Soviet-period school order (her daughter did not join the Komsomol). Nevertheless, by citing a poem about Lenin, she replicated that order. Unlike Eglé's narrative, such replications never became part of her formulation of a self, which could have led to experiencing of a self as duplicitous.

Duplicity is a quality of various social/political interactions and is not unique to socialist subjectivities. It is *relational* (as emerging in Eglé's interactions with younger generations in the post-Soviet spaces) and *situational* (like Juozapota's citing a poem about Lenin at school). At present Eglé does not have to hide her subjectivity of a deportee and to control social texts associated with it. However, there are not many spaces where she can assert herself as a deportee (see also chapter 5). According to her, a deportee identity makes her different. In post-Soviet spaces Eglé might have been suppressing her deportee identity (and, possibly, experience duplicity) on some occasions and could have searched for other communication patterns. Among such patterns was her new way of explaining to her

⁴⁵ Eglé's statement "He said: 'The Soviet state has stolen much more from me. I am just returning myself its debt.' Formally, he was right" does not make opposition to the Soviet state explicit. I interpret it as opposition to the Soviet state, relying on the broader context of her ideas in the conversation, especially on her tendency to imagine similar social events as "political."

girlfriends why she likes Landsbergis, the leader of the liberation movement. While many of her friends dislike him, she persuades her friends that she is in love with him and likes him as a man. There is, she joked, nothing else she can do. Her friends nod their heads, some respond “a strange taste,” but accept her argument. Actually, Eglė is fond, in her words, of his intellect, of him, in my opinion, being an embodiment, a symbol of a social text she also inhabits. The social text is also constitutive of his charisma for Eglė despite her friends’ presentations of him as uncharismatic. Similar situations support an idea that charisma is a predominantly cultural artifact rather than simply “a special magnetic charm or appeal” or “a personal magic of leadership arousing special popular loyalty or enthusiasm for a public figure.”⁴⁶

Post-Soviet outsidership, as experienced by Eglė, is bound to Soviet-era experience, which makes her feel different from younger generations. Eglė considers herself dissimilar from her students because she is of “the Soviet upbringing,”⁴⁷ a socialist subject foreign in some present contexts. She is, to her mind, a lost generation in the sense that she cannot adapt to the new life which requires qualities like entrepreneurship, assertiveness, initiative, mobility, confidence and responsibility. According to Eglė, in Soviet times modesty was a virtue. Initiative and responsibility were suppressed under ideological frames for action as well as there was dependence on “someone’s decisions.” Thus, the post-Soviet period provided spaces to “resolve” some duplicities while creating others.

As in the Soviet period, in post-Soviet times some events and developments become “political” because of their arbitrary association with the Soviet past and one of the major actors of that past—Russia and Russians. For example, the fondness for Russian pop music is interpreted as the victim’s love for their torturers (see also chapter 5).⁴⁸ Thus, many subjectivities linked to the past, unless they are about oppression, have to be negated to feel oneself a legitimate subject and an insider in post-Soviet history.

⁴⁶ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary. Tenth Edition. 2000. Springfield, Massachusetts, U.S.A.: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated.

⁴⁷ In Eglė’s narrative the words “the Soviet upbringing” were directed towards her friend, not herself.

⁴⁸ See L. Donskis “Aukos meilė budeliui, arba už ką lietuviai taip myli Rusiją?” (“Victim’s love for the torturer or why Lithuanians love Russia so much”). Klaipėda. 02/28/2005. Cited from DELFI, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/index.php?id=6138259>. Accessed on 03/12/2005.

Eglė's experience of outsidership, embodied in some relations and practices, was an experience of change (see also chapter 1). In case of disliked cartoons, the change was articulated as "Americanization." Foreignness attached to "Americanization" shows one's distance from particular developments in the present and Eglė's disapproval of new values. The feelings of estrangement brought by change were similar to the ones experienced by many other informants. The difference was in Eglė's interpretation of a changing environment ("Americanization" rather than "regression"). Her interpretation shows her different location in changing social history, her different political subjectivity as well as her belonging to the community of the other social text.

5.3.4 National self

The liberation movement derived much of its legitimacy from memories of oppression (cf. Kubik 1994). Nationalist discourse, promoted during the liberation movement, connected Soviet-period social lives of the "oppressed" to the sagas about the nation. The disloyal subject of the socialist past officially became a hero for/of the post-socialist present. The former "home"-bounded identities were assigned significance, recognition, and respect. For many, the independence of Lithuania was an escape from marginality, duplicity, otherness, and life in interstitial spaces.

Memories, like Eglė's or Juozapota's, were given public and homogenizing form in official discourses. Multivocality of experiences was suppressed by including experiences of terror, suffering, loss and victimization and excluding contradictory discourses. Eglė claimed that Siberia was "like a paradise. Nature was beautiful, parents were young and in love. Winters cold, but not humid. People cured their lung diseases. There was food, forests were full of mushrooms. Black and red currents were the size of a cherry." In Siberia Eglė's mother had a relatively easy life. She was deported after graduation from high school, thus, she worked as an accountant. Her father was deported after World War II, the time known as "milder" in respect to deportations (Grunskis 1996). Eglė acknowledged that nobody died in her family. Her immediate family seems not to have shared the suffering described in

stories of deportations (see, e.g., Grinkevičiūtė 1997). However, Eglė connected herself to the saga of suffering as a deportee. This connection was important in including herself within the community of the “oppressed” and within the official history.

The present for both women is bound to reassertion of a national self in public idioms of post-socialist nationalist ideology. Nationalist ideology informs their memories and readings of post/socialist developments. Eglė and Juozapota approach the Soviet period as occupation by a foreign power; the people as subjected to oppression and resisting it. The difficulties of post-socialist transition are bound to 50 years of life “under the Soviets.” The West, Lithuania, Lithuanians *and* Russians, Russia, the KGB, communists are construed as oppositions. In many spaces, like at home reading newspapers, writing diaries, collecting articles or going to Siberia, women engaged in self-nationalization (Jean-Klein 2001) by fashioning themselves into nationalized subjects, using distinctive narrative actions and embodied practices woven into everyday life. Nationalist ideology determined their voting. Both Eglė and Juozapota favored candidates who represented the “West,” resistance, and liberation.

The “nation” is a compelling formulation of the self even in the dramatic and extraordinary sites like the graveyards of the dead in Siberia where Eglė went as a journalist. According to Verdery (1999), the dead are good political symbols because they cannot speak for themselves; they are ambiguous, multivocal and polysemic and, therefore, open to different readings (Verdery 1999). The dead come with curriculum vitae and lend themselves to analogy with one’s own biography (cf. Verdery 1999). Thus, the dead are part of the community to which people, like Eglė, felt themselves belonging because of their experience and knowledge. The political life of the dead, i.e., moving across new borders and signifying the new social, moral, political and economic order of post-Soviet Lithuania, rearrangement of history, space and identity (see Verdery 1999, Gal 1991), were integral to rituals of re-identification and production of a political self in terms of new ideologies of the post-Soviet present.

5.3.5 Post-socialist present

Eglė and Juozapota cannot enjoy many of the privileges of the post-Soviet present. Eglė claims not to be able to go abroad with her family; Juozapota does not always have food on her table. Eglė had to struggle in several jobs to make ends meet. Her mention of *skudurynai* (second-hand clothing stores) meant that probably she also had to readjust her lifestyle and experience some change in social standing in post-Soviet times (see chapter 2 on *skudurynai*).

Money, like for other people (chapter 2), signaled Juozapota's and Eglė's similar experiences of invisible powers of neoliberal capitalism (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 1998). Juozapota calculated how much she gets and spends (for medicine, utilities), what is her pension, and repeated several times that the presidential candidate promised to increase it. She wondered about the expensive houses of others and the bribing of state officials. Eglė remembered shortages of money in the past and the invisible differences between the poor and the rich. She reflected on changes in a similar note as many others: "We had pretty much everything, now we cannot have this and that."

The experiences and perceptions mentioned invite the women to criticize the present. The present Juozapota described in words, such as "bad things are happening," there is no order, Lithuania is set apart, lost and deceived. Juozapota also mentioned poverty, criminality, unemployment, alcoholism, debt, corruption, and fraud. Eglė spoke about destroyed kolkhozes, hardships, alcoholism, irrational governance, and corruption. Juozapota also approached the present as regression. Whatever the criticism, discontent towards the present is not carried out in terms of the "better" past. Moreover, the foreign past explains developments (and regressions) of the present. Juozapota considers the present to be regression from *pre*-Soviet Lithuania. She spoke of young people not taking their hats off in front of an old lady, of people not decent and refined. Criminality was also a regression from the pre-Soviet past. Juozapota claimed that in the pre-Soviet period people did not need keys and there "never ever were thefts." The year of 1940 was a symbolic

turning point, which, according to Juozapota, changed everything.⁴⁹ Eglè remarked that the present situation was an outcome of “fifty years of destruction.”

For Eglè and Juozapota the value of freedom came before any hardships of present life. The women could have been susceptible to the rhetoric of those who spoke the language of power, order, and control in political fields only if it did not invalidate their understanding of freedom and social history told largely in nationalist idioms. Therefore, in electoral campaigns associating some candidates with Russia, KGB or communists will invoke the frame (see Lakoff 2004) of the oppression in the past and will tend to divert the attention of individuals who employ social texts like those used by Juozapota and Eglè, to other candidates.

Experience of violence and deportations defined women’s relationship with Soviet history as social others. Dialectically, social otherness enforced the imagining of social history as foreign. Foreignness was attached to many social events and developments (like standing in food lines) by considering them “political,” i.e. expressions of power and authority of (very often) the Soviet state. “Political” events were sites of resistance and, thus, expressions of the political self. On the other hand, some “political” engagements like Komsomol meetings became purely “social” allowing a subject (Eglè) to see it as a site for self-expression.

The foreignness of the social history of the Soviet period and the experience of social otherness were articulated in the social text of oppression. In Soviet times this text was suppressed in official spaces like school, where other texts were common, and reiterated at home. Production of several, self-contradictory social texts was an experience of duplicity, a consciousness of a doubled and divided self. One self which was the embodiment of the social text of oppression was definitive of one’s identity, while the other self was approached as an accommodation to Soviet history and often denied.

⁴⁹ Many villagers and some urban residents introduced in chapter 1, claimed not to need keys and not to experience theft in Soviet times. The symbolic turning point was the years of the liberation movement.

The social text of oppression that united both women and that was used to present their autobiographical accounts was integral to post-socialist history. It provided the “oppressed” of the past with leveling interpretations of their social otherness by resolving their marginality into heroism and by making them legitimate subjects of present social and political history.

6.0 CHAPTER 4: SYMBOLIC IDENTITIES, SOCIAL OTHERNESS, AND TEXTS
OF OPPOSITION⁵⁰

All the time a tiny thread of curse winds around you. I did not do anything to be born in Siberia. I was not guilty, I was not a hero. [...] Then someone tries to convince you that you are either damned or a winner or somehow different. I am not different. There is no difference. The difference is imposed on me. [...] My home in Siberia is a myth. I can not have it. I have always to fight through my memory to be there. Through all the ideologies. And to say to myself: it is not what the state claims, not what communities claim, not what my relatives disagree about. It is the way I experienced it [Vytautas].

For the other remains to be discovered (Tzvetan Todorov *The Conquest of America* 1999:247).

⁵⁰ This chapter primarily derives from interviews with former Communist Party members and deportees. Among the Communist Party members there were: 13 politicians (most of them from Vilnius, former Parliament members as well as those in office), 7 people from Kaunas, and 10 people from villages. Among the deportees there were: 2 politicians (the Parliament members from Vilnius), 8 people from Kaunas and 6 people from villages. Discussion in this chapter is also informed by other interviews with people who talked about former Communist Party members (or communists) and deportees. In regard to knowledge about deportees, many, even if they were not deported, knew a deported relative or spoke about a deported family member, and could connect in one way or another to texts about deportations and deportees. The knowledge about the former Communist Party members by non-Communist Party members is also presented in this chapter. Unlike discourse on deportees, considerations about communists were more fragmented and less frequent. The other sources of data include deportees' and Party members' memoirs, some literary books, media coverage and observations of public events.

Social otherness (see, e.g., Todorov 1999) manifests categories of difference to which an individual becomes subjected because of his/her ethnicity, class, race, and national belonging, or, as argued in this chapter, biography. Spaces of difference emerge due to the unequal distribution of privileges and the exclusion of some individuals from resources, such as wealth, knowledge, and power. Experiences of spaces of difference are negative; they are encounters of intolerance, feelings of estrangement, or powerlessness. Repeated experiences of social otherness in a society or community inform the subjectivities of those who are othered. Social otherness is a symbolic construction of difference, and an ascribed identity which an individual may contest, as exemplified in the epigraph to this chapter.

This chapter analyzes devising of biographic social others and spaces of difference in Soviet constitution of “class” and late Soviet and post-Soviet “nation”-building projects. I argue that the primary ground for social classification and exclusion in the Soviet and post-Soviet state supported projects of social otherness was biographic differences, i.e., embodied dispositions which were congruent or conflicting with ideologically supported styles of conduct and modes of personhood. By excluding and not tolerating people with biographic differences the post/Soviet state through its agents was variously involved in biographic cleansing, i.e., discipline and punishment of biographic social others.

This chapter looks at the production and experience of difference associated with the categories of “deportee” and “communist.” The essential biographic fact that allowed an individual to be classified as a “deportee” was that a person was deported by administrative order of the USSR from his/her place of residence in Lithuania, and under coercion resettled and employed in special settlements elsewhere, most often Siberia, as determined by the Soviet state (see Grunskis 1996), or else had been born into a family of deportees. In the case of a “communist,” the essential biographic facts were membership in the Communist Party and participation in production of communist ideology, leadership in CP organizations or belonging to the CP political elite. The Soviet state used the ideology of “class enemies” to define the “deportee” as a disloyal and socially dangerous subject. A “communist” as the “social other” was a disloyal and dangerous subject in a late Soviet and post-Soviet society. A “communist” emerged as opposed and threatening to the nation, the

independence of the state and the projects of liberal democracy. Labeling someone a “deportee” in the Soviet period or a “communist” in the post-Soviet period was an act of negative classification, of subalternization as well as of defining and (re)enforcing social boundaries. State supported discourses (actions) on social otherness and social others were recirculated in communities, personal interactions and articulations/inactions of the stigmatized person.

In this chapter I further develop the idea that experiences of social otherness are translated into social texts of opposition, such as texts of “oppression” (see chapter 3) or texts of “better times” (see chapter 1). In social texts of opposition informants communicate negativity towards society, state or nation. This negativity is communicated in themes of foreignness to social history and society. It is expressed in overlapping feelings of estrangement, insecurity, discontent, uncertainty, anxiety, sadness, ambiguity and concern. The negativity is a backbone of a narrated genealogy of social history and the self as a stigmatized social subject (social other). It is a structuring feeling built into various stories people tell about themselves and to themselves. The semantic difference of social texts of opposition depends on people’s experience of different regimes of social otherness and available ideologies of interpretation, like post-Soviet nationalism in the case of deportees.

6.1 ASCRIBING DIFFERENCE IN THE SOVIET STATE

The Soviet-period projects of “class” constitution were undertakings in social classification. They marked differences and rationalized the hierarchies of power, knowledge, privilege and wealth. Like racism in colonial settings (see Stoler 2000), Soviet “classism,” i.e., the ideology and technology of exclusion along imagined “class” boundaries, justified engagements in “normalization” of society which had to be defended against itself, against the dangers that were born in its own body (see Foucault 1990:142, cited in Stoler 2000:79). This classification often led to physical segregation.

Undertakings in social classification were explicit in many government orders. For example, Order No. 0012231, signed on October 11, 1939, by the USSR Internal Affairs Commissioner L. Beria, introduced the doctrine for regulating populations of annexed countries. The Order specified which group of people, based on their social origin and situation, had to be eliminated: members of non-communist organizations, prison officers, policemen, landlords, industrialists, employees of governmental institutions, army officers, immigrants from Poland, repatriates of Germany, and their families.⁵¹ These were the internal enemies and social others to the new imagined Soviet state and society (cf. Anušauskas et al. 2005).

Social distance from/foreignness to the Soviet society of individuals to be deported was explicit in many decisions regulating deportations. For example, the decision of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) (*VKP(b) CK*) and the USSR Council of People's Commissars (*LKT*), Absolutely Secret Order No. 1299–526, dated May 16, 1941, was called “On *socially foreign* element eviction from Baltic republics, West Ukraine, West Belarus and Moldova.” The directive of May 19, 1941, was called “On *dangerous anti-Soviet* and criminal and *socially dangerous* element eviction” (Grunskis 1996:27, emphasis added). People arrested for deportation were informed that, by a decision of the USSR government, their families, because they were “*socially dangerous*,” will be deported to other regions of the USSR (Grunskis 1996:32, emphasis added).

⁵¹ According to the Center for Research of Genocide and Resistance of Citizens of Lithuania, in 1940–1958 every third citizen became a victim of Soviet terror. There were 131,000 deported (44,000 families (Grunskis 1996)), 200,100 imprisoned, 20,000 (partisans) killed, 5,000 (civilians) killed, over 1,000 were sentenced to death. 490,000 people were repatriated because of terror and possible repressions. Together with Nazi occupation and victims of the war (245,000), Lithuania lost more than 1,091,000 citizens. See: <http://www.genocid.lt>. See also Anušauskas, Arvydas Sovietinis Genocidas ir jo Padariniai. <http://www.genocid.lt/GRTD/Tremtis/arvydas1.htm>. Page renewed on 01/06/2002. Accessed on 10/03/2004.

Several Lithuanian scholars conclude that destruction of the political, academic, cultural, military, and economic elite in Lithuania was “genocide of the nation” (see, e.g., Tyla 2002). Grunskis (1996) claims that deportations were also part of a strategy to change the ethnic constitution of Lithuania. Grunskis (1996) also notes that, in addition to ideological and political reasons for deportations, there were economic reasons, as well. The USSR economy needed a labor force, especially in the remote, uninhabited or scarcely inhabited regions like Siberia, the Far East and North. The deportees from the USSR and the occupied territories had to become a cheap, labor force without rights and were expected to populate and reclaim distant regions of the USSR (see also Introduction part “Historical contexts”). In this chapter I argue that deportations were intrinsic to “class” projects without employing the category of “nation.”

Foreignness to the imagined Soviet socialist society was indicated in many categories designed to rationalize purification of society—such as “enemies of people” (*liaudies priešai*), “betrayers of the homeland [i.e., USSR]” (*Tėrynės išdavikai*), “bourgeois nationalists” (*buržuaziniai nacionalistai*), “kulaks” (*buožės*), “terrorists” (*teroristai*), “saboteurs” (*diversantai*), “socially dangerous elements because of their past” (*socialiai pavojingi elementai dėl savo praeities*), and “anti-Soviet element” (*antisovietinis elementas*). Non-political deportees were simply called “deportees” (*tremtiniai*) (Šerėnas 1997, Kuprytė 1999), a category later generalized to many others who were deported.

The major deportations were carried out in 1941, 1948, 1949, and 1951. The last deportations took place in 1952–1953. Dependent on the year, the social strata being deported were different. For example, by 1947, many district, subdistrict or municipality officers (“people’s enemies”) as well as many partisans (“bandits”) had already been deported. In that year, the list of potential deportees was extended to include farmers (“kulaks”) who were accused of supporting partisans. Actually, the deportations were related to the founding of the kolkhozes (Grunskis 1996, Anušauskas et al. 2005).

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, the state of independent Lithuania disregarded the ideological sensitivities of the Soviet state. In order to identify survivors of deportations and purges, most of the categories mentioned were subsumed under “deportees” and/or “political prisoners.” New categories simplified political and social communication about the past in new ideological paradigms and left the variation of Soviet times to scholarly books and research centers. Thus, some who may have been defined as “kulaks” in the 1940s and 1950s emerge as “deportees” in this chapter following people identifications as well as post-Soviet official discourses.

After Stalin’s death in 1953, many deportees were allowed to return to Lithuania. Permission to return did not mean that ideology directed towards “deportees” had changed. What changed were the technologies of control and discipline. In places of deportation like Siberia discipline increased the forces of bodies in economic terms of utility and diminished these same forces in political terms of obedience (cf. Foucault 1995). Upon the return of deportees to Lithuania, their economic potential was often disregarded, while obedience was

strictly enforced, exploiting more nuanced discipline and control technologies than the ones used in labor camps and places of deportation. Deportees were controlled and disciplined by redirecting them to the periphery—by preventing them from residing in major cities. They were also prohibited from participation in ideologically informed fields where they could influence knowledge production (such as culture, education, etc.). Most deportees were denied legal status of residence and full citizenship (see Senn 2002). As a result, they faced problems with housing, employment, and education. There were limited possibilities of regaining their former social status, of getting a job according to the qualifications they had before deportation (see Kuprytė 1999). Furthermore, the Soviet state, although not recognizing hereditary wealth, applied hereditary criteria of guilt (see Misiunas and Taagepera 1983). Some children of deportees were not allowed to study at universities, to start a career, and to go abroad. The data suggest that children of deportees were less controlled and did not experience the same exclusions as their parents did.

It was hard to transgress the ascribed subjectivity of the “other,” as encompassed in the category of “deportee.” One could negotiate “otherness” by cooperating with the “regime.” However, even in the case of high officials of the Soviet state, the fact that an individual had a deportee relative was a “mark” on the person’s biography and subjected him (usually “him”) to repeated re-examination of his actions and to reminders of a possibly divided belonging. An individual constantly had to prove his loyalty and commitment to the Soviet state in order to maintain his position (see memoirs in, e.g., Kazakevičius and Mališauskas 2003).

Control and discipline were effective in excluding deportees from knowledge and power, and in depriving them of visibility, mobility, recognition, and privilege. In the late Soviet period docile bodies of deportees were often ignored as not dangerous. They were living signs of the effectiveness of state power and successful imposition of constraints, prohibitions and obligations. Resistant bodies were continuously controlled, disciplined, and punished. Soviet state classism was intrinsic to the reproduction of spaces of difference and deportees as social others. It reinforced/ascribed difference to individuals who did not

necessarily share the subjectivity of the “other” and opposition towards the society and the Soviet state at the beginning of the Soviet period.

6.2 DEPORTEE STORIES OF RETURN AND THEIR EXPERIENCE OF DIFFERENCE

The stories of return from sites of deportation articulate experiences of displacement, estrangement, and difference. Vilkaitis [the son of the pre-war Rector of the Agricultural Academy of Lithuania, a writer and a forestry official], in his speech on June 8, 1989 at the Agricultural Academy of Lithuania, noted that the official authorities did not meet deportees with flowers. According to Vilkaitis, many Stalinists were happy when a former citizen, unable to register and find a job, had to return to Siberia (Vilkaitis 1999). Kreivėnas writes that after his return home, neighbors were reluctant to talk to him “because they were afraid of the KGB” (Kreivėnas 1981). Kazimieras Skebėra (1990), in his collection of memoirs of deportation, recalls that Juozas Večkys, returned home like “a foreigner, like a thief” at night. Similarly, Vieda Skultans (1998), in *The Testimony of Lives* in post-Soviet Latvia, provides the story of Solveiga, a young musician who fled from Kalpashevo without a passport or documents. In Riga “Everyone was scared of Solveiga. It was difficult to find anyone to [give her a place to] stay. [...] Solveiga could not stay more than a couple of nights in any place” (Skultans 1998:64).

Deportees encountered their subalternity and even “criminality” in moving across the changed social landscape, now informed by different values and meanings. In a Soviet socialist state known for its relative absence of homelessness and by the benefits of full employment and free education, deportees after their return often were denied residential registration, jobs and education because of their past. Absence of registration at a permanent address was a criminal act which could lead to a couple of years in prison camps (Hojdestrand 2000). Thus, some deportees lived in hiding, illegally. Being unregistered, they could not get a job. In Skultans’s (1998) book on Latvia, Jānis tells that he was promised

work. However, because he was not registered, he could not work. So he waited for the work and the registration.⁵² In Jānis' words, "It turned to be very peculiar. One could be registered if one had work and one was taken on to work if one was registered. It was neither one thing nor the other."

And so I said there is a vacancy and I would like the job. Would he be willing to accept me. And I said, I said that, that that—I *have a past*, that I've been in the legion and so on. But then he said quite sensibly that they needed educated people in the country too. [...] And he accepted me at that time. [...] I worked there for four years. And then there were all sorts of troubles. The so-called attestation took place. And then anyone who *had any sort of past* was sifted out. And then my brother and I, we were both sacked [cited in Skultans 1998:77, emphasis added].

Deportees were often not allowed to study at the university, such a privilege being reserved for loyal citizens of the Soviet state (see Skebēra 1990). Eglē (see chapter 3) remembered that her father, because he was a deportee, was not allowed to start a PhD program. Similarly, her mother was not accepted to the Institute of Medicine until she met "a rector who defended deportees. He accepted her to his Institute," but only to the night school (*i vakarinė*).

Informants recollect intolerance in the community to which they had belonged or hoped to belong to after their return. According to a doctor, in his early 60s, "most of deportees suffered after their return to Lithuania. They came back home and were discriminated against even more than in Siberia. They were told to disappear even by neighbors who were beneficiaries of their requisitioned property." Eglē remembers that her grandfather was forced to rent a small room in the estate that he had earlier owned and was constantly insulted by the new inhabitants:

I don't understand how my grandfather could bear seeing how lazy and poor people lived in his house. He felt so dishonored. These people who were allowed to live in his house after he was deported used to tell him after his return: 'you see, you worked and worked, we did nothing, and we have the same.' My grandfather used to go to his former garden to cut trees

⁵² People who were not born in a city could not easily get registered in that city also, even if they were not deportees.

[because the new inhabitants did not take care of them]. Those people insulted him: ‘it’s not yours, go away.’

Experience of intolerance extended to spaces outside one’s community. Kreivėnas (1981), a deportee, in his memoir writes that he was willing to depart to the United States where his family lived. To get birth and wedding certificates he went to the regional office where such certificates could be issued. He listed the reason why the documents were needed—to travel to the United States. The woman employee took the old book in search of the entry about his marriage. There it was stated that he, Jonas Kreivėnas, a police chief of a precinct, married O. Jankauskaite. She dropped the book and started yelling: “You are Smetona’s bloodthirsty hound [*Smetonos šuo ir kraugerys*] [Smetona was the President of Independent Lithuania]! Leave my office! I will show you America in Siberia!” (Kreivėnas 1981:255). Later Kreivėnas learned that the brothers of the woman from the office were *учредители* (*stribai*) (“destroyers,” NKVD⁵³ groups of armed supporters called “defenders of the people” (*liaudies gynėjai*) against the resistance movement in the 1940s) and died in a fight against partisans; her family was killed as well. Thus, socially, because of their experiences Kreivėnas and the woman were antithetical subjects of history. They produced themselves as such in excerpts of different texts, one of deportations (Kreivėnas, see also below), the other in official versions of Soviet-period history (see Introduction part “Historical contexts”), which were acted out in the regional office.

The stories of return questioned and reified Soviet authorities’ imaginings of “social others.” When asked why his family was deported, Aloyzas from the smallest village responded: “we were enemies. We opposed the Soviet authorities, we were against the kolkhozes, and we disregarded the orders of these authorities...” Aloyzas did not join the Soviet army. According to him, this was a minor crime—10 years of labor camp in Siberia. “Those who fought against the Soviets got twenty-five years.” His wife joined the conversation by juxtaposing two grammars of sociality—Polish and Soviet—and articulating the arbitrariness of the ascribed identities that villagers lived with: “under the Poles [Polish rule] nobody punished you for living well. People were rich. If you were poor, you were

⁵³ The National Commissariat for Internal Affairs.

considered stupid by the Polish. They appreciated everyone who lived well. The Soviets placed those who were rich in prisons, deported them to Siberia. If you lived well—you were an enemy. Everyone had to be poor. Then you were an insider. A Soviet.”

One’s identity as a “deportee” was easier to hide in the city than in village communities where everyone knew each other. Kreivėnas writes that upon his return to Lithuania, he was willing to stay in the cities of Kaunas and Vilnius, because “in larger cities you can more easily hide your past of Siberia and deportation” (Kreivėnas 1981:217). Elena returned to her native village and faced confrontations with neighbors. According to the villagers, Elena was a former informant for partisans in the forest. Elena herself never admitted her role in the resistance movement during the 1940s. She said that when she was sixteen, she used to go to visit her relatives—partisans who hid in the forest. She denied that she had anything to do with the killing of a neighbor, a supporter of Soviet authorities. The neighbor had been killed by the partisans for collaborating with the Soviet authorities. Elena, according to her neighbors, had informed the partisans about his presence. As a result, at sixteen she was imprisoned, tortured, sent to labor camps in Siberia and released after ten years, only to find out that in 1948, the year she was sent to Siberia, she had been pronounced innocent because of lack of evidence. After her return to her native village she was called a thug by some neighbors:

When we came back there were people who called us thugs. Even now some call us bandits [Soviet authorities also called partisans “bandits”]. There are clever people, but there are also some bastards. [...] Those who do the talking, they were thugs themselves [supported the Soviet state forces]. [...] So even now we have to suffer. But they don’t know what they do... You cannot do anything about this. People think this way. I was in prison, in a labor camp, I didn’t steal anything, and I starved. I didn’t do anything wrong to anyone. I try to forgive people.

Many of those who returned after some time accommodated themselves by getting a job in a city, joining kolkhozes or working at the state farms in villages. Elena’s story illustrates a compromised accommodation to Soviet social history. She lived according to some conventions of Soviet society; however, she did not believe in anything like “communism:”

Then I was young. I worked in the kolkhoz. I was not afraid to work hard. It was good in the kolkhoz. I could earn a lot. They gave us land. As people say, I had bread and everything else. But there wasn't such freedom like now. If you had said a word, something wrong, you could have been forced to leave [the kolkhoz]. Now you are free... if you don't like something, you can say so. Now you are more free...and... I could go to church [in Soviet times], nobody said anything, nobody... then I went, and I go now. But children. They had to join the Komsomol, if they wanted to go to college. In their hearts they didn't believe in anything like communism. I don't see anything wrong that they joined. It was a necessity. Nobody was deported for that anywhere.

As Elena's example shows, different accommodations did not mean dissolution of earlier deportation-bound subjectivities. Conversely, alternative subjectivities were incorporated into various hierarchies of selves.

Accommodation yielded recognition, confidence and some access, especially in the late Soviet times, to privileges (such as permission to buy a car or a subsidized vacation [*kelialapis*] to a resort or a health spa). However, Communist Party membership, which would have provided venues for career, mobility, and wealth, most often was inaccessible to former deportees. Some deportees were able to become "insiders" by collaborating with the KGB (see, e.g., Grinkevičiūtė 1997:186) or by going through purification rituals, such as serving in the Soviet army. Vytautas, cited in the epigraph, who was born in Siberia and returned to Lithuania when he was 6 year old remembered that after having served in the Soviet Army, he was no longer questioned about having been born in Siberia. The military passport that he acquired meant that he was, in his words, "absolutely loyal to the Soviet state;" his "existent and non-existent sins were forgiven."

6.3 OTHER SPACES OF DIFFERENCE

In addition to deportees, there were other individuals, such as religious believers, who experienced social otherness in the Soviet-period society. Albertas, an active Catholic, remembers that he was invited to join the CP several times. One time he agreed but, after discussing it with his family, he changed his mind. He reasoned that, if he joined the Party,

then he could not even be buried by a priest. His director was angry. The director said to Albertas that, if he survives the pressure at work, then he can stay. That year, Albertas got 21 warnings: “They threatened to fire me. If there was any problem, I was always to blame. They did not fire me because I was a good specialist.” The pressure created fear and conformity. It was subjection to difference which Albertas acknowledged himself by not joining the Party. Albertas recollects that in the army he voluntarily joined the Komsomol because he could not stand the denigrating experience of difference: “I was out of patience—everyone went to meetings; I had to go to sweep the street. When I came back, I destroyed the membership card.” Not allowed to seek higher education because of his Catholicism, Albertas would teach docility and discipline to his children. His children were not to be/appear “different.” He used to tell them “join the Komsomol, join it. It’s important that there be no obstacles to your future.”

Difference stemming from religious identity was perceived in interactions with communist ideologues who were well-versed in various techniques of discipline. Julija, a retired teacher, in her 70s, from the largest village, remembered that after her graduation in the 1950s she worked in Lapės, a small town near Kaunas. There was another teacher, in Julija’s words, a “fanatical communist.” This teacher used to fight for atheism. Dressed in a red coat she followed children to church. During the sermon she used to stand in the middle of the church and take notes. Julija laughed: “After several visits like that, those zealous biddies [*davatkos*] rose up. They shoved her around in the women’s part of the church. And hit her with their rosaries.” Later, the communist teacher falsified lists of students. She was afraid that the school would be closed, if authorities found out that there were not enough students. Julija recalls: “I was afraid to tell anyone. She was a communist, I was not. [...] When authorities from the Board of Education [*Švietimo skyrius*] found out [about the false lists], she accused me of falsifying documents. She got a strict documented reprimand, and I got a reprimand, too.”

Depending on contexts, situations and people spaces varied in regard to difference religious people experienced. When Julija moved to the largest village, in her opinion, she did not experience any confrontations because of religion. Her students went to church.

According to Julija, the director of the school was a good woman. None of the teachers informed the authorities about church attendance of students or teachers. Stanislova, a CP member and the director of the school where Julija worked, remembered that even at the courses, where teachers were taught atheism, teachers were told “not to hurt the feelings of the believers.” Stanislova claimed that nobody instructed her to go to church and observe the students. She remembered that teachers were instructed to include atheist education in their classes and to organize atheistic events and celebrations in order to attract believers to their side. The director argued: “nobody clearly demanded that anyone worship [Soviet, communist] leaders. Some people wanted to please the authorities; therefore, they competed over who had more portraits of the communist leaders on the walls.” When Stanislova became director of the school, she did not get any special secret instructions, which she expected, such as “how to watch emotions and reactions of co-workers, what to do, what to observe... Actually nobody talked to me about that.... Nobody asked for a report on those issues.”

Presence of conflict in Julija’s experience at the beginning of her career with the “fanatical communist” reified boundaries between believers and communists. Absence of conflict in the second example from the largest village did not mean that the boundaries between the believers and communists or others were non-existent and that believers were tolerated. Ignorance and non-interference signaled accommodation of, usually, the believers, such as an effective production of one’s self as a docile body redirecting it from the church of a village to other sites of worship. Julija did not go to church in any of the places she worked. She went to Kaunas or elsewhere where nobody knew her. “You had to hide,” remembered Julija.

The believers had to suppress their religious identity in official spaces, experience duplicity and anxiety. Albina, a librarian, remembered how a young man used to come to the library and observe her. She was in her 50s then. She thought that he was a KGB officer. Once he unexpectedly asked: “Are you a Catholic?” Taken by surprise, she responded: “Yes.” Albina remembered that fear overwhelmed her. She thought that it was a terrible thing to be a Catholic and to work in the Children’s Library. She reasoned that probably

after that she was put on the “list” as a “Catholic.” The encounter with a probably real KGB officer shows awareness of difference she experienced because of her Catholicism. Consequent self-exclusion and self-discipline, such as never talking to unfamiliar people, such as that KGB officer, reified her difference. Her suspicion of others produced a negative emotional relation to the “social.” This relation implied insecurity, anxiety, uncertainty, and concern. Organizing atheistic exhibitions was an exercise in forgetting her religious self and/or experience of duplicity. Albina recollects: “I was a Catholic, but I never told that to anyone. Nobody can destroy faith very simply. If you have it, you have it.”

Unlike deportees, whose passports showed their birth place and, their “citizenship of otherness,” believers like Albina could conceal their religious subjectivities by employing techniques of self-control and self-discipline. However, deportees in some cases were also successful in concealing their deportee identities. Some of the families never told their descendants about the deportations, trying to protect them from social and political stigmatization as well as self-identification as “other.” It was something to be forgotten and to be negated in order to survive Soviet-period history, a conscious self-exclusion from dangerous belonging and knowledge.

Spaces of difference involved not only deportees and believers, but also other (potential) others. Intellectuals were forced to resign their imaginations, if they conflicted with the imaginations supported by the Soviet state and communist ideology, or had to accommodate by developing strategies like writing in the Aesopian language. Social personae like homeless people, homosexuals, criminals, and people with physical or mental disabilities were also subjected to social otherness. Lina’s husband, a talented actor, stayed at a psychiatric hospital (*psichiatrine*) to avoid serving in the Soviet Army. He studied all the symptoms of schizophrenia, acted them out and was accepted in the hospital. Lina argued:

He suffered in the hospital more than others suffered in the Army. [...] It’s not so much that he himself suffered... [...] he saw what was going on there. In the *Soviet* psychiatric hospital [*durnynas*]. He doesn’t want to talk about that even today, he never talks about that. He just says that what he saw there was horrible. [...] He left the psychiatric hospital with a diagnosis that he was crazy [*jis gavo durniaus bilieta*] [emphasis in original].

Lina's husband's decision to play a psychiatric case was a miscalculation in the sense that it did not prevent him from the experience of "Soviet state racism."⁵⁴ Like the Nazi state, the Soviet state depended on the medical police that "assure[d] the silent hygiene of an ordered society" (Foucault 1990:66, cited in Stoler 2000:72). Like deportees and believers, the sick, the mad, and the deviant were designated as "class enemies" and targeted for elimination or re-education. However, a certified insane person, an achievement worth the Oscar for the best actor in the Soviet movie of reality, did not miss recognition by the Soviet producers. Lina's husband after "healing" was invited to play at the Communist Party as its honored member.

Experiences of social otherness are bound to displacement, estrangement, exclusion, intolerance, and foreignness. They are signs of embodied humiliation, threat, conformity, closure, discontent, uncertainty, and insecurity. Experiences of difference generate negative emotional relations to social history, community, state, and even self. This is reflected in texts of opposition produced in relation to dominant versions of history. The "better times" discourse (chapter 1) is subjugated knowledge of the "social others" of post-Soviet social history; the discourse on "oppression" (chapter 3) is oppositional history to the Soviet dominant knowledge regimes.⁵⁵ These texts coexist with other texts of opposition; they are never complete and always changing. The texts are always situated in relation to other texts, they inhabit multiple voices and emerge in particularized forms. Narrating opposition, "social others" resist their marginalization, negotiate and negate their subjection to social otherness.

⁵⁴ See A. Stoler's discussion of Foucault in *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*. Durham and London: Duke University Press. 2000:71–72.

⁵⁵ See Stoler's discussion of Foucault and use of concepts like "subjugated knowledge" and "oppositional history" in postcolonial contexts in *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*. Durham and London: Duke University Press. 2000:62–63.

6.4 CLASSISM AND BIOGRAPHIC CLEANSING

In the Soviet period social stratification conceptualized in “class” terms was not entirely a product of inequalities (though it entailed them), such as the economic, according to Marx’s notion of “class,” or status, according to Weber’s “class” concept. The primary ground for social classification and exclusion was biographic differences, i.e., embodied dispositions which were congruent or conflicting with dominant styles of conduct and modes of personhood. The categories mentioned above which labeled “enemies,” such as “betrayers of the homeland,” “bourgeois nationalists,” “saboteurs,” “socially dangerous elements because of their past” refer first of all to a biographic fact like sabotaging, betraying, believing in different ideals, having a past, incompatible with the vision of new history, etc. Even a category like “kulaks,” which implied a different economic status and different relations to means of production in Marx’s terms, in many cases was applied to small holding or even poor peasants (see Grunskis 1996). A “deportee” may have signified all the biographic facts mentioned. Very often a “deportee” like other “enemies” was imagined as opposed to the Soviet state. Thus, by excluding and not tolerating various “enemies,” the Soviet state was primarily involved in biographic cleansing rather than the genocide of a nation⁵⁶ or class racism (see Foucault (1990), cited in Stoler 2000:71). In many cases biographic cleansing intersected with “class” or “nation” lines, but was not primarily defined by them.

The Soviet state through its various agents like school teachers or CP Committee secretaries engaged in controlling and producing biographies. These undertakings reached into the details of everyone’s lives. At schools teachers had the power to educate students how to live their lives by evaluating their behavior every month⁵⁷ and writing characterizations (*charakteristikos*), i.e., biographies of the students from a perspective of ideologically versed inscribers. These characterizations were an opening or a closure for a

⁵⁶ See, e.g., Tyla, A. 2002 *Lietuvos Išlikimo Kelias*.
<http://www.genocid.lt/GRTD/Tremtis/antanas.htm>. Page renewed on 01/16/2002. Accessed on 10/03/2004.

⁵⁷ Some informants report that in the late 1970s and early 1980s, behavior was evaluated every term. In the mid and late 1980s it was evaluated every month. I have no data for the 1960s and earlier periods.

student's career. Unlike educational practices like monitoring behavior by rewards like candy from a "treasure chest,"⁵⁸ in Soviet Lithuania disliked behavior at most schools was controlled by punishment. Rather than getting or not getting candy, it was being or not being punished. Punishments varied from physical discipline (officially disapproved of, but, nevertheless, practiced) like twisting a student's ear to moral training like lecturing about one's wrong deeds in front of the class.

Biographical disciplining and punishments continued into individuals' adult lives. Some like Albertas, mentioned above, were classified as "others" and punished with warnings and threats of firing. Becoming an "other" was a threatening opportunity explicit in Albina's concern about being placed on a "list" as a "Catholic" or in former communists' claims that they joined the Party because, otherwise, they would be "marked" forever (see the discussion below). Hiding a deportee or a Catholic identity was conscious biographical self-disciplining which made part of one's biography invisible. Invisibility was often rewarded with authorities' disinterest in a subject's social life.

People who inherited specific biographic facts like birth in Siberia were subjected to special observations and discipline. Grinkevičiūtė (1997), a former deportee, in her memoirs written in the Soviet period remembered various "punishments" for her "delinquent" behavior. As a doctor in a small town she was not assigned a car to go to see patients while veterinarians and animal husbandry specialists (*žooteknikai*) used kolkhoz motorcycles "to see animals." Awards for good work for which she was recommended were declined by the party committee. Disrespectful articles in a local newspaper were directed at discrediting and insulting her. Finally, she was instructed to resign from her work. Grinkevičiūtė writes that officials from the Party Committee disliked the fact that she took a day off because of the reburial of her mother. Grinkevičiūtė's mother was buried in a cellar in her aunt's house. She died in 1950 in Lithuania after escaping from the place of deportation and hiding for several months.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ I observed this in the United States.

⁵⁹ Grinkevičiūtė was afraid to bury her mother in a cemetery in 1950 because this would have drawn authority attention and exposed her and others who hid and helped her to danger. Shortly after the death of her mother, Grinkevičiūtė was discovered, retried, sent to prison, and then back into exile.

Reburial was a public and offensive act. It was living one's life not according to Party scenarios. Grinkevičiūtė writes: "The Party indicated clearly that, if I want to live and work in Lithuania, I have to forget everything, don't risk talking about the past, and that I have to forget my own parents, as if I had never had them." In response to reburial the Party reproduced its own interpretations published in the local newspaper. It was also involved in a campaign of firing Grinkevičiūtė, even if there were no administrative violations for which they could have fired her officially. That was a struggle over the interpretation of social history. It was an act of reclassification of social subjects into those acceptable and those delinquent. It was also the authorities' attempt to rewrite Grinkevičiūtė's biography in terms of Party ideology; an endeavor to make the visible invisible, the known unknown and marginal by translating the act of reburial as strange, criminal, and dangerous. It was the drama of an individual whose conduct brought risk to the body social. An individual had to be disciplined and punished by the official history acknowledging biographers to restore the imagined moral order of things.

Why did party members, communists and others resort to classism and become technicians of discipline in the instances mentioned? One answer could be that their actions *were* informed by an ideology of difference which relied on a biographical conception of "class." The "class" of social others were embodiments of difference, habituses of alternative dispositions which threatened the boundaries of the imagined Soviet society. It is likely that many former communists and some others *did not* believe in communist ideals. Observation of dangerous moods and devious biographies among people was not a conscious intention to control communist ideology, but to preserve one's well-being secured by that ideology. Technicians of discipline *did* believe in the rules according to which Soviet society and the state developed. To restore the rules in case of threat they resorted to the language of class warfare and invoked communist ideology to establish grounds for legitimacy and authority of their actions. Violence or discipline towards the deviant others was a way to reestablish the world spinning around Soviet moral values, property and work relations, notions of justice and rights. Similarly, in colonial contexts like the 19th century Indies (see Stoler 2000), it was through technologies of control that some claimed their

hegemony, their privileged position, their certified knowledge and jurisdiction over the manner of living, over the civilities, conduct and competencies that prescribe “how to live” (cf. Stoler 2000:83).

In the Soviet period biography-bound punishments and disciplines were not irrational totalitarian exercises of power. They were meaningful and subtle crafting of a state and society. Furthermore, reproductions of ideological idioms and grammars of difference was not empty sloganeering. Alexei Yurchak (2003) asserts that a unanimous raising of hands in an affirmative gesture at a Soviet Komsomol meeting was to its participants usually an act of recognition of how one must behave in a given ritualistic context in order to reproduce one’s status as social actor rather than as an act conveying a “literal” meaning. In this sense, Yurchak interprets, the raised hand was a positive response to the question, “are you the kind of social actor who understands and acts according to the rules of the current ritual, with its connection to the larger system of power relations and previous contexts of this type?” (Yurchak 2003:485–486). Thus, to analyze this act only for its truth conditions—as “real” support or “dissimulation” of support is to miss the point (Yurchak 2003:486). Party meetings, unanimous voting, demonstrations and public acts of denunciation like denigrating articles in local newspapers were not simply for show. They were performances in the strictest sense; i.e. ways in which social beings were constituted and visions of social history reproduced.

Social others also provided explanations of various “wrongs” in society. As Lampland (forthcoming) shows in case of sabotage in village communities in the 1950s in Hungary, social explanations in terms of class warfare bore a close resemblance to what anthropologists would call “magical thinking.” Magical thinking, as Evans-Pritchard made clear in his study of the Azande (1937), provides a theory of causation for existential questions: why does something happen at this time to this person in this way? In many places, the only reasonable explanation for otherwise unexplainable events is social: someone must be responsible (Lampland, forthcoming). In this view, Lampland argues, people can cause things to happen, even though the degree of conscious manipulation or active intention is an open question. One need not be committed to causing harm to inflict harm.

“Magical thinking is founded on the proposition that justice is a social product. If events are out of kilter, skewed by the untoward influence of suspicious motives, society must restore their proper balance to maintain its own legitimacy and the smooth functioning of a moral world” (Lampland, forthcoming). Deportees, like witches, were meaningful “others.” They could have been brought onto the stage of social interaction when the balance of power was threatened. Accusations of witchcraft made causes of anomalous situations visible. Punishments were restorations of imagined order, of righting wrongs, and restoring justice to the truly righteous. They targeted sensibilities of people and taught them proper ways of thinking and behaving (cf. Lampland, forthcoming).

Soviet classism was an act of colonizing which enforced hierarchical relations between a colony and a metropole. A colony in Soviet colonialism was not a territorial unit of an interwar state of Lithuania, or the imagined nation as implied in the studies on postcolonialism in the former USSR (Carey and Raciborski 2004, cf. Moore, forthcoming), but rather a community of marginals or social others. Ideological management of conduct and biographic disciplining was fundamental to the Soviet type colonial order of things. By identifying marginal members of the body politic, “colonists” mapped the boundaries of the Soviet state and society. Like racism in Western colonies (see, e.g., Stoler 2000), classism prescribed suitable behavior and located how identity has to be tied to notions of being. Prescriptions of behavior served to secure and delineate the authentic, first-class citizens of the Soviet empire.

6.5 THE FIRST-CLASS CITIZENS OF THE SOVIET STATE

Different privileges, resources and knowledge were restricted to the authentic and first-class citizens of the Soviet state; in some cases, exclusively to members of the Communist Party. The former CP members, especially the ones who had higher official standing, are presented by non-communists as a stratum of the “privileged.” A 40 year old artist argued that “the elite, communists, lived in luxury, they had saunas, yachts, cars, mansions in resorts, caviar,

could go to special shops, and so on. It wasn't so visible. There were fences with dogs around their houses." According to a professor, in her late 30s, "if you were a party secretary, you were like a god. If you chose to be a party member, you selected a life which is safer and more acceptable. It meant you were not going to have any problems."

The privileges of party members ranged from easier access to free apartments, a good job, perhaps a car or a promotion at work, to the liberties and rights that the Soviet state never bestowed on its "common citizens." Juozas, a former state farm director, remembered that when he applied for a job in a village, the administrator asked him if he was a party member. His party membership had secured him the position of a chief agriculturalist.

Mobility outside the USSR was also a privilege of the first-class citizens. Mykolas, vice-president of a large factory in Soviet times, a former sailor in the USSR army, remembered:

I never had any problems. Never. I was in the capitalist countries. Trips were not a problem. I did not work with state secrets, therefore, I knew that I would be able to go abroad anytime. I had a sailor's passport and I could go.

Juozas's wife also recalled her trips and argued that in post-Soviet times she does not live much differently from the Soviet period. At the time of interview, she had a very high standing as chief accountant in a large private company. However, she claimed that "it was better in Soviet times," because she had enjoyed "the same with little effort:"

We lived well. Egypt, Turkey, the Dominican Republic, Sri Lanka. So what. Now I can travel as well, but I am so tired that I do not see anything, if I go. Not like in Soviet times. In Soviet times I was not concerned about anything. I used to get everything I needed. You know people and you get what you want. It did not cost much. Food... now you have a variety. Fruits all year around. So what? We had our own apples almost the whole year. What else do you need?

There were special shops and special hospitals for higher officials in the CP and for KGB members. Different clothing marked the bodies of the "privileged," identifying the "communists" or, most probably in exceptional cases,⁶⁰ the "KGB." Rita, an engineer, in her early 60s, remembered that at her work place there was a Russian from Leningrad.

⁶⁰ KGB agents could not disclose their identities.

According to Rita, she was a “real KGB.” The head of the division indirectly informed Rita not to talk about some issues when the woman was present. This woman had a mirror on a windowsill and could see everyone who came in and who talked on the phone. Rita recalled that:

she could not even keep her mouth shut about dresses or a coat she bought in special stores. Dresses we could never buy [because the access to the special shops was restricted]. In an Internal Affairs Ministry shop. She wanted to boast about that. From the way how our head of the division behaved with her it was clear that she had a high standing. She could even do nothing, she could just chat with others, and she got a good salary. We knew who she was. [...] When Sajūdis started, I came one day from a meeting and said that Sajūdis has a list of all KGB members of our Institute. The next day she was absent. She was hospitalized in an Internal Affairs Ministry hospital. For a check up. She had believed what I said. There weren't any such lists.

Rita also remembered that the “privileged” were able to shop in the special food stores: “They ate chicken and chocolate. At some point in time for common people there were only tails and hooves left.” In a popular rhymed saying of Soviet times: there was “no bread, no meat, just red flags” (*nei duonytės, nei mėsytės, tik raudonos vėliavytės*; nouns are in diminutive). However, the first-class citizens apparently did not have to survive the same economies of shortages (cf. Kornai 1992) others were subjected to.

None of the former CP members with whom I talked or whose memoirs I read admitted that they belonged to the class of the privileged. When asked what he thinks about “castles” people invoke in association with the former communists, Mykolas responded that “Nobody had castles. A vice-president of the Executive Committee had an apartment [...] a four or five room apartment. And now? They build houses. [...] I don't know about the bureaucrats of the republic, but city [bureaucrats]... nobody had houses [in Soviet times].” Mykolas's wife added: “Trips were something we strived for. And we did not acquire any property. Like others who build houses... Nothing like that. Well, we have a house in a dacha⁶¹ ... a poor one.” In the eyes of some neighbors, their dacha house was neither “poor,” nor “lavish.” Mykolas's wife probably measured their property by the imagined

⁶¹ She used a Lithuanian term “sodo namelis.”

horizons of wealth which could be accumulated at *present*. On the other hand, her emphasis on “having little” was a leveling rhetoric very popular in the present memories on the Soviet-period “equalities” (see chapter 2). People employ such rhetoric to refer to society in the Soviet past, when “everyone had about the same.” However, for many the stratum of the first-class citizens, not recognized by Mykolas and his wife, is an often omitted exception.

6.6 BELONGING TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Joining the Communist Party was often perceived as a pragmatic choice by non-communists as well as many communists. Rolandas, an art expert and former physicist, in his mid 40s, joined the Party because he wanted never to have any problems. According to him, “if you refused after you were invited to join the Party you were marked forever.” Rolandas argued that the communist gatherings and committees had been a theater, a lie. He had even been considered for a secretary position in the labor union party, but the position was not offered to him. He thinks that they found out that one of his uncles was a deportee. A 32 year old doctor remembered that his grandfather joined the Party at the age of 60 for only one reason—he wanted to establish a health research center. One had to have resources and power in order to accomplish that. The doctor himself joined the Komsomol because at high school the military teacher had told him and his male classmates that, if they did not join, they “would have to serve the army in the Polar bear country [in the North of Russia].” Similarly, Linas asserted that “in Soviet times you could not accomplish anything unless you were a Communist Party member.” His father, a “Moscow News” correspondent in New York, would have never achieved his position, if he had not been in the Communist Party. Even if his father was a communist, he, a child at the time, had to stay in Lithuania with his aunt as a guarantee, in Linas’s mind, “that their family would not emigrate.” Later Linas visited his family in the United States and went on a trip to Chicago, Washington and other cities. He recalled that they were followed by CIA officers and were subject to other regimes of discipline. They had to travel only according to approved maps. For everything else a

special permit was needed. Another informant, an engineer, in his early 50s, who had joined the communists “because of money” and his desire to make a career, remembered some other pragmatic choices:

One of our directors was forced to retire, but no one wanted a different director. So we decided to make him a communist. He filled out an application. Then there were some old communists who used to give questions. The major question was ‘why do you want to join the Party?’ Our director said straightforwardly that because it is required to stay at work. He had either to join or retire. ‘I want to be a director, the salary is 60 rubles higher.’ [...] They wrote in the protocol the answer which had to be given according to party ideology [not the director’s actual response].

Some people joined the Communist Party because they believed in communism. When I asked Jadvyga N., a former kolkhoz party secretary of the largest village, whether she believed in communism, she responded that she had been young and her employers had insisted that she join the Party. She joined at 18. However, later she believed in communism “because it was an order for the working class.” She hated those who “had turned their coats upside down” in the post-Soviet period and had accommodated to the new order while she respected those who had not done so. Jadvyga N. acknowledged that she was a “real communist.” She expressed her commitment to the communist ideals by citing Lenin and comparing Lenin’s ideas to the Bible. Her citing of the Bible was an attempt to speak in the post-Soviet vocabulary, to make communication possible in the environment no longer informed by communist ideas:

Everything had to be for the common people. According to Lenin’s orders, according to the Bible—everything was for the people. Lenin taught that, even if you are hungry, you have to give something to a neighbor. That was his politics. Like in the Bible. God’s testimony says that you cannot steal, same as in the Communist Party orders.

Juozas, the former state farm director cited above, also presented himself as a “real communist.” He used to work for low salaries, inspired by communist ideals. However, joining the Party had been more of a pragmatic calculation than an idealistic undertaking. He needed an apartment that was available only to party members at the Institute where he worked. His wife joined the Communist Party because she believed in communism. Nobody

invited or pressed her in any way. She did not think about her career, but liked the social engagements that party membership provided.

Unlike Jadvyga N., Juozas or Juozas's wife, some younger informants presented their belief in communism as a delusion. Ginta, a 38 year old high school teacher of Lithuanian language and literature, remembered that in Soviet times Soviet Lithuania was the only known version of "reality" until told otherwise by her friend, a religious person. Ginta argued:

I had a *naïve* belief [in Soviet ideology]. I was an idealist. I really was an idealist. I was a Komsomol secretary at school. Later, when I worked in a publishing office, I was at the Komsomol Committee of the Lenin district. It was common sense [to be there] [...] My father was a party member, a high official. [...] I've never heard in my family that we were occupied. I did not hear such a word ["occupation"]. Later my classmate. She was from a religious family. We always argued. She tried to prove that I was wrong and that Lithuania was occupied. [...] The fact of the independence of Lithuania, of statehood, was a surprise to me [emphasis added].

Many informants claimed that the "real communists" constituted a very small minority in Soviet society. A retired doctor, a vice-president of the Medical Academy, later a member of the Supreme Council (*Aukščiausia Taryba*) of independent Lithuania, corrected his wife during the interview when she named them "communists:" "we were party members. There were very few communists and many party members." However, his wife, a doctor herself, did not hesitate to identify herself with the communists who, according to her, also were "Lithuanians and patriots."

Former CP members constituted a "hierarchical community" of the "privileged," ranging from the nomenclature and State Security officials sharing all kinds of privileges to workers in a factory who had to "stand in line" (be on a list), for 10 years or more, to get a car and an apartment and who could be promoted with an increase in their salaries. Zigmas, a Kaunas resident, in his late 40s, remembered his discussion about the privileges with the head of his laboratory. The possibility to stay on the bottom of the party hierarchy (because he did not have the college education needed to get to the top) was not enticing. Zigmas viewed the Party as a domain of other class interests. He was willing to avoid the visibility that party membership guaranteed:

I knew that there had to be two workers and one white-collar employee. Because it was a workers' party. [...] I asked then what will the Party give to me. What? I told him [the head of the laboratory] you have one white-collar employee for the Party and you need two workers. That's the case [that is the reason for inviting him to join the Party]. [...] What will you give me? An apartment? I have it without the Party. They even wanted to take it away, but didn't succeed. I got an apartment. A car? I have no money. And I don't need it. What else will you give me? What will be my benefits? "We will make you a supervisor" [Zigmas paraphrased the head of the laboratory]. What supervisor? Why do I need that? "Your salary will increase by twenty rubles" [Zigmas cited the head of the laboratory]. I don't need those twenty rubles. For getting in trouble with people. I am quiet, in the corner, like a mouse. I spend my time happily there. [...] What career will I make? A supervisor? I was OK the way I was. I do my work and that's it. [...] I am not a careerist.

Even if one's belonging to the Communist Party derived from pragmatic calculations, participation in CP networks assured privileging recognition (cf. Glaeser, forthcoming). According to Glaeser (forthcoming), recognition well used is, thus, like money well invested—it can feed on itself, creating a self-amplifying belief-consolidating effect (Glaeser, forthcoming). It is likely that recognition enforced accommodating stances and positive associations with Soviet social history. Alignments with history were strengthened by liberties and rights, social and physical mobility, privileged consumption, knowledge, and wealth. These were signs of different experience from social others of Soviet times as well as of alternative subjectivities articulated in different social texts.

6.7 LATE SOVIET AND POST-SOVIET INVERSIONS

Theories of nationalism tend to emphasize homogenizing effects, such as transcendence of individual and local differences, uniting all citizens in a single unitary identity (see Herzfeld 1992). Homogenization produces an imagined community (Anderson 1982) conceived along ethnic (see Smootha 1990) or national lines (see Borneman 1993). The liberation movement of the late 1980s and early 1990s in Lithuania not only fashioned individuals into one "nation," but also produced differences within the imagined "nation." In the liberation

movement, “nation” tended to exclude the social stratum of former CP members (especially the former KGB and the nomenclature) who shared citizenship as well as ethnicity, i.e., relations to a “nation” (see Hobsbawm 1990), with protagonists of nationalism.

Like Soviet classism, liberation movement nationalism was a class act (cf. Williams 1989). Post-Soviet social classifications, like the Soviet ones, were also undertakings in biographic cleansing, exclusion of a biographic class of ideologically disloyal and dangerous members of the *post-Soviet* state and society. In the late 1980s and early 1990s Soviet-period boundaries between social strata were recreated by rearticulating spaces of difference and inverting images of “communists” and social others. The resulting co-existence in a “nation” was a matter of competition between different social groups, manifesting the negative definition of tolerance as passive non-interference, and premised more on the lack of ability of either group to completely overcome the other than on valorization of pluralism that democracy is expected to entail (see Hayden 2000).

In the liberation movement, the moral sanctity, integrity, and innocence of particular collectives and individuals, including deportees, was declared. The disloyal subject of the Soviet state, a “deportee” was elevated to the status of a sufferer for the “nation.” Memories of the deported were given symbolic importance and national relevance. These memories were recorded in the narratives on suffering, oppression, victimization, and resistance. Suffering under the “communists” became a major claim, entitling one to the right to be heard in social and political spheres. “Nation” was to be revived through the memory of the silenced, the ones who had moral power to speak for it.⁶²

The liberation movement produced texts for identification (see chapter 5). The “Party,” the “Soviet state,” the “Soviets,” and even the “Russians” were constituted as the “others” of new history. They were “occupiers,” guilty and responsible for “historical injustice.” There were “pure Lithuanians” who were not associated with the CP and “others,” to be rejected in the new time. Such differentiation yielded a continuous dialogue about individuals’ relations with the CP and the KGB, carried out until the present.

⁶² I discussed those issues in “Ethnographic Note on *Nation*: Narratives and Symbols of the Early Post-socialist Nationalism in Lithuania.” *Dialectical Anthropology*. 2003. Vol.27. No.3–4. P.279–295.

During the liberation movement and later there were multiple public/official initiatives to reinforce the new visions and divisions of history. For example, according to *Tiesa* of September 11, “whereas in 1987 just 80 deportees had been rehabilitated, in the first half of 1988, 208 had been restored to full citizenship. On September 22nd, the government made a major concession: the Council of Ministers annulled the 1949 and 1951 decrees of deportation, ruling that the deportations carried out in conformity with those decrees were illegal and baseless” (Senn 2002:157–158). All the victims of the mass deportations of 1949 and 1951 were accordingly rehabilitated and restored to the full rights of Soviet citizens. They also became eligible for possible compensation for their losses (Senn 2002:158).

The post-Soviet state assigned some privileges to the new legitimate subjects. “Deportees” (together with political prisoners, resistance movement participants and volunteer soldiers) get a state pension as “individuals who had suffered,” they have full health care and enjoy reduced fares for public transportation. There is a program for the return of political prisoners and deportees to Lithuania (2002–2007). According to this program, the people and their families who were deported during the years of occupation have to be given resident status and helped to socially integrate in Lithuania. They can acquire housing on easy terms.⁶³

Compared to the privileges for “communists,” especially for the nomenclature in the Soviet period, the distribution of privileges to deportees are minor. However, according to Vytautas, a professor, in his early 40s, “in Lithuania there exists a discourse that deportees are privileged; and that we can have some kind of privileges like higher retirement benefits, exceptional rights to study and seek a career.” The privileges have symbolic significance by excluding some and recognizing others. In poor village communities, these privileges were interpreted as unjust, because some villagers felt unfairly eliminated from the community of the visible and respected:

Now only deportees and [political] prisoners... they have good pensions, they can travel for free, get medical care for free... How about us? Are we dog's children? Are we not martyrs? We were tortured as well, like them [deportees]. They suffered in Russia, we here. Did we

⁶³ See Čekutis, Ričardas “Kelionė Atgal Virsta Nežinia” (“A trip back turns into uncertainty”). *Atgimimas* 09/3–9/2004. No.31 (808).

suffer less? Who gave food to those who came here? To those who were in forests and those who were searching for the ones in forest. They did not have their own [food]. They never asked for it. They came and you had to give. You could starve, but you had to give them [the oldest inhabitant of a village, in her late 80s].

Some informants negotiate or oppose the inverted identities they are expected to embody. Vytautas claims that he refrained from applying for any privileges available to deportees. He did not join any political or social movement uniting deportees. He also aims to avoid all possible talks about his birth place so as not to be categorized as one or the other. Whenever he says that he was born in Siberia, he feels that others, in his words, “totally reidentify him.” To some, it means that he is among those “who ask for money, cry, or assert their political rights to state governance;” to others, he is “an insider, but then they start wondering why he is not a member of their party, that maybe he is a traitor or some kind of a villain.” Vytautas, emphasizing the different associations attached to the category of “deportees” in Soviet (“guilty,” “damned”) and post-Soviet Lithuania (a “hero,” a “winner”), argued that his experience cannot be generalized in either way (see the epigraph).

For many others, a “deportee” is a compelling formulation of self, and “nation” is a looking glass where informants see themselves, the past, and the present (see also chapter 3). The genealogies and biographies of deportees even become inscribed in the physical environment. Uršulė, a former deportee from the second largest village, organized the erection of a monument where the following rhymed words were engraved:

People were killed and homes were destroyed without mercy here. The nest of the cozy family was broken. This monument will witness the sorrowful fate of the Jonaičiai [her family name], and of all Lithuania.⁶⁴

Proliferation of discourse on deportations and on deportees is notable in many spaces. Unlike in Soviet times when many tried to hide their “deportee” identity, people identify as “deportees,” even if they are not deportees according to official definitions. In a conversation in the second largest village, a man, in his early 60s, argued that his wife could have applied for status as a “deportee” because she suffered from the Soviet authorities who

⁶⁴ In Lithuanian: “Čia be gailėsčio žmonės, sodybas kapojo, išdraskė lizdelį šeimynos jaukios. Paliudys smūtkelė mus skaudžią dalį Jonaičių, visos Lietuvos.” The names are changed.

had destroyed her parents' house in search of partisans. The man addressed his wife: "you could have gotten something [some benefits], but you didn't apply. They [the Soviet authorities] assumed that you were helping bandits [i.e., resistance forces]... But this was not true." Ramūnas, a former CP member, claimed that practically all his relatives were deported to Siberia. His father somehow avoided deportations by hiding. He named himself a "deportee" because, even if he was not in Siberia, he had to grow up outside their home. Giving assurances of his family's foreignness to "communists," the informant claimed that his father always swore at the communists "in terrible words."

Many deportees experienced social and political change of the late 1980s and early 1990s as restoration of justice; they expressed support for the nationalist movement, did not question the value of freedom, and were much less critical of the post-Soviet developments of the state than many others. A former deportee, a teacher and parliament member of the first Parliament of Lithuania, asserted that during the movement for independence, she had the feeling that now everything is "right." She remembered how she used to go to Sąjūdis meetings, where the party members were also present; how they, deportees, political prisoners and others, had come with well-worn shoes and that the party members had been shining in their suits and polished shoes. This was the point in my research where the idea of this chapter about social otherness came to mind.

6.8 POST-SOVIET SPACES OF DIFFERENCE

The process of institutionalization of difference bound to the "communist" past has been marked by various, often unfinished, initiatives and lacked the totalitarian commitment of the Soviet state. In 1992 the bill unofficially called the Desovietization Law⁶⁵ considered the CP as a structure of the occupational state which organized repressions.⁶⁶ According to this bill, communist organizations and the KGB embodied the occupational totalitarian regime

⁶⁵ The law was not passed.

⁶⁶ "Desovietizacija: Lietuvos Respublikos Aukščiausieji Tarybai." *Lietuvos aidas*. 02/04/1992. No.23.P.3.

and were dangerous to restoration of the state. KGB officials, agents and various other cooperators as well as the highest officials of the communist organizations had to be restricted from holding office in state institutions and enterprises, educational institutions, Lithuanian Radio and Television, the State Bank, transportation and other enterprises.⁶⁷

There were some other attempts to label the CP as foreign and criminal as well as to exclude the specific strata of the CP members from power. In December, 1998, the Chairman of the Parliament, V. Landsbergis, registered the project of the law,⁶⁸ according to which all former Lithuanian CP Central Committee employees, from directors to instructors, had to be forbidden to work in the Seimas, President's office, the government, courts, army and educational institutions (see Lapeikis et al. 1999:254). According to this Declaration the "communist totalitarian regime of the USSR [...] was criminal [*nusikalstamas*] in its executants' actions and aims including spiritual and physical destruction, genocide and war crimes."⁶⁹ The major political actor of the Soviet Lithuania "USSR CP—Lithuanian CP Central Committee, used special privileges and is morally and politically responsible for the losses, grievances and wrongs experienced by people and the nation in Lithuania occupied by the USSR."⁷⁰

Some considerations in the Parliament of the laws emphasized relatedness and the common responsibility of the CP and the Soviet State Security organizations. For example, on June 18, 1998, considering the bill on Evaluation of the USSR State Security and Intelligence as well as on the activities of Soviet Union CP organization secretaries, university lecturers of Marxism-Leninism and USSR judges and persecutors, V. Čepas claimed that the CP ideologically produced repressions and terror while the KGB implemented Communist ideologies.⁷¹

⁶⁷ See "Projektas. Lietuvos Respublikos laikinasis įstatymas. Dėl kai kurių apribojimų užimti pareigas valstybinėje tarnyboje." *Lietuvos aidas*. 03/06/1992. No.46. P.8.

⁶⁸ See "Declaration on the assessment of communism and former structures of the communist occupation regime" by V. Landsbergis. The Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania. December 10, 1998. <http://www.lrs.lt>.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ See, e.g., talk by V. Čepas at the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania considering the bill No.P-1212(2)A on June 18, 1998. www.lrs.lt.

Soviet State Security Committee employees, such as the KGB members who deliberately and secretly collaborated with the KGB or other State Security organs⁷² were addressed in the so-called Lustration bills and laws in the early 1990s⁷³ as well as in 1998, 1999, and 2005. Membership in the KGB was described as participation in a criminal institution loyal to the USSR. For example, “Law on the assessment of the USSR State Security Committee (NKVD, NKGB, MGB, KGB) and the current activities of the staff members of this organization” of July 16, 1998 (No. VIII-858) defined the USSR State Security Committee as “a criminal organization which has committed war crimes, genocide, acts of repression, terror and political persecution in the Republic of Lithuania occupied by the USSR.” Like the Desovietization Law, the law “On assessment of the USSR State Security Committee...” limited activities of the staff members of the State Security Committee.⁷⁴

Like Soviet-period undertakings, post-Soviet projects targeted a specific class of individuals with similar biographies. The essential biographic fact was an individual’s membership in the CP *and* participation in production of communist ideology, leadership in

⁷² See, e.g., “Law on the assessment of the USSR State Security Committee (NKVD, NKGB, MGB, KGB) and the current activities of the staff members of this organization.” July, 16, 1998, No. VIII-858.; “Law on registering, confession, entry into records and protection of persons who have admitted to secret collaboration with special services of the former USSR.” November 23, 1999. No. VIII-1436.; The Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania. <http://www.lrs.lt>.

⁷³ As early as June 13, 1988 the Social Commission of Sąjūdis,⁷³ headed by Bronius Genzelis, a philosopher at Vilnius University, targeted specific strata of the CP members—the nomenclature and proposed to end the privileges of the Soviet bureaucratic elite (Senn 2002:77). In 1991 the law on revision of parliamentary mandates stated that parliamentarians who deliberately cooperated with foreign secret services had to resign from office if more than half of voters at the electoral district expressed their distrust. According to this law, parliamentarian V. Čepaitis, a close co-worker of V. Landsbergis and an active member of Sąjūdis, was accused of being a KGB agent and lost his mandate. Parliamentarians K. Prunskienė, V. Beriozovas and J. Minkevičius were also charged with cooperation with the KGB.

⁷⁴ The staff members “may not work as state officers or employees in institutions of state authority and administration, local government and national security, at the Department of State Security, the police, the prosecutor’s office, courts, in the diplomatic service, at the Customs, the State Control and other state institutions exercising control and supervision, as lawyers and notaries, at banks and other credit institutions, at strategic economic objects, security agencies (structures), other agencies (structures) providing detective services, in the communications sector, as teachers and tutors at educational institutions, also as heads of said institutions, nor may they be engaged in work (hold a post) involving possession of fire arms.” Article 3 listed “Exemptions from the Application of the Limitations.” See “Law on the assessment of the USSR State Security Committee (NKVD, NKGB, MGB, KGB) and the current activities of the staff members of this organization” of July 16, 1998 (No. VIII-858). The Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, <http://www.lrs.lt>.

CP organizations or belonging to the CP political elite. Membership in the Soviet State Security was also a basis for exclusion. According to some bills/laws individuals who could be described by the mentioned biographic facts had to be excluded from fields of knowledge production and, in all bills, laws, decrees, or declarations, deprived of power. Social reclassification was intrinsic to articulations of new boundaries of society, nation, and the state as well as to building new power and authority networks.

Except the laws concerning the USSR State Security employees, other initiatives were not institutionalized. Unlike in the case of “deportees” (see Anušauskas et al. 2005), there was no institutional grounds to exclude individuals from power and knowledge and to deprive them of privileges or recognition based on their membership in the CP. In respect to former CP members technologies of control and discipline were also undeveloped or were fragmentary, situational, and particular. A “communist” as a meaningful symbol prevailed in popular communication usually about political elites and among those who consider an individuals’ past in the Communist Party meaningful.

Like in the case of “deportees,” the laws, bills and regulations which targeted strata of former CP members and the KGB assumed the disloyalty of certain individuals to the post-Soviet state. Unlike the Soviet state fashioning of its disloyal citizens, the government of independent Lithuania secured some privileges for the CP members and the KGB. The government committed to secure social, political and civil rights of employed and retired USSR State Security officers, soldiers as well as other employees and their family members living in Lithuania.⁷⁵ The post-Soviet state agents also engaged in communication with its imagined unruly citizens carried out in public spaces, the Parliament as well as in various Courts including the European Court of Human Rights.⁷⁶ Similar negotiations of identity were unimaginable in the Soviet period. Furthermore, unlike the Soviet projects of ascribed

⁷⁵ See the report “On mutual obligations of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the KGB of the USSR.” Vilnius, August 23, 1991. In: *Lietuvos aidas*, August 27, 1991. No.172. P.2.

⁷⁶ Lithuania lost a lawsuit where two lawyers argued that they were wrongly fired from jobs in the private sector under the law regulating rights of former KGB employees. The European Court of Human Rights established a violation of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. See ELTA report “Įstatymuose nebeliks buvusių KGB darbuotojų teises varžančių nuostatų.” April 8, 2005. Source: www.delfi.lt. Accessed on 04/08/2005. See also The European Court of Human Rights, Council of Europe, <http://www.coe.int>.

identities which left little space for transgression of otherness, the post-Soviet Lustration laws were directed at purifying (Latin “lustratio” means “purification, sacrifice of something to resolve one’s guilt”) individuals and limiting the activities of the KGB or others for only a specific period of time (five or ten years).

The state agents promulgating Desovietization and Lustration laws articulated the laws in the language of democratization. According to proponents of related bills revision of eligibility of former active “collaborators” with the Communist regime was “a necessity for democratic renewal.”⁷⁷ Some reviewers of Lustration laws concluded that “democratization first of all meant de-communi[st]ization.”⁷⁸ The appreciated political subject who emerged in post-Soviet political regimes of personhood was free from KGB connections and willfully resigned his communist past (see the discussion below) as well as loyal to the post-Soviet nation-state.

6.9 MEMORIES AND EXPERIENCES OF OTHERNESS IN THE LATE SOVIET AND POST-SOVIET PERIOD

Most of the stories about experiences of otherness primarily invoke the late 1980s and early 1990s. A former CP member, a parliamentarian, remembers that at meetings held during the electoral campaign to the Parliament in 1992, many people were very angry at her and her colleagues: “They looked at us with such hatred; it looked like, if they had a gun, they would have shot us. [...] Just because we were communists.” She also recalled that in 1992 when the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party (LDDP) won elections, they had not known whether they would be allowed to enter the Parliament. There were even people who had

⁷⁷ See “Declaration on the assessment of communism and former structures of the communist occupation regime” by V. Landsbergis. The Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania. December 10, 1998. <http://www.lrs.lt>.

⁷⁸ See A. Umbrasaitė “Ar rekalinga liustracijos revizija?” *XXI amžiaus* supplement *Atodangos*. 02/25/2005. No.21.

refused to sit at the same table with her. “Before the elections some promised to kill us. It was stressful.”

The LDDP Council Chronicle (Lapeikis et al. 1999) reports many insults, violence, and difficulties LDDP members faced in the early 1990s. In the entry for the 18th of April, 1991 Brazauskas, the leader of the LDDP, presented his opinion on “personnel clearing” (*kadrų valymo*) politics. He named examples, when competent employees had been dismissed, in his opinion, without any reason. According to Brazauskas, this happens when judgments are based not on an employee’s competence, objective recommendations, or ability to work, but when one has political goals—that are to persecute former CP members (Lapeikis et al. 1999:63–64). Petras Navikas, a long-term Chair of the Soviet Industry Department and later a post-Soviet state finance Vice-Minister and Director of the State Revenue Department, writes in his memoirs that they [the Soviet state officials] had bad luck in the years of the Rebirth of Lithuania. “The critique was harsh, people were inspired to hate us. We had to go to meetings to explain our decisions to people, but no one was willing to listen to us” (Navikas 2003:84–85). Navikas remembers that the people employed at the Industry Department were forced to leave. The only reason he names was the new authorities. He reflects, “I closed that page of my life with pain. It seems that we worked honestly. In the country we had achieved a lot of good things. And we were told to leave because we had worked” (Navikas 2003:86).

Former party members opposed the “magical thinking” of the leaders who emerged during the liberation movement. On the 4th of May, 1991, the Left Faction of the Supreme Council, which included many former CP members, accepted a petition: “We think, that “witch hunting,” the constant search for enemies of the nation are unbearable and can not be tolerated any longer. Recently even Radio Free Europe noticed that soon in Lithuania there are going to be more enemies than inhabitants. We also protest against the use of force against the deputy Česlovas Juršėnas. Force was used at an official event—a Sąjūdis meeting on the 27th of April. [Signed by] V. Beriozovas, B. Genzelis, A. Ražauskas, P. Papovas, J. Minkevičius” (Lapeikis et al. 1999:66). Similar arguments were attempts to expose and object to intolerance. “Witch hunting” redefined endeavors of purifying a society as violent and

unreasonable. The former communists emerged in this rhetoric as innocent objects of malevolent forces.

A former party member has even become a subject of literary consideration, appearing as a tragicomic persona in the Jonas Avyžius's novel, "Everything passes" ("Viskas praeina"). A well-known Lithuanian writer and winner of the most prestigious (in the Soviet period) Lenin prize, J. Avyžius writes about an imagined member of the communist nomenclature, Medardas Kalnaitis who had not refused his past identity as many had to accommodate himself within new history, but had silently locked himself in his inner considerations of the present. The narrator begins the story with a description of how Kalnaitis meets his former chief who was dressed in high-class special clothing and shoes; how Kalnaitis observes candidates from Sąjūdis at a meeting, how he remembers the words of the Communist Internationale. According to the narrator, the words of the Communist Internationale were wiped out by the new epoch. However, they fit the present well: "[he] who was nothing, will be everything..." (Avyžius 2003:8). Dishonored by his son and wife because of his past, Kalnaitis experiences fear, isolation, and denigration. His son, a former KGB agent, passionately involved in Sąjūdis, thinks of himself as a real victim crucified by the Soviet epoch. The son is afraid that his KGB past will not let him seek a new career. The drama of social identities is unfinished because the author passed away. However, it is clear that all personae, whatever the role they play, because of their Soviet biographies are deemed to fail after the triumph of post-Soviet history.

The post-Soviet or post-socialist biographic cleansing was carried out in other Eastern European states. Glaeser in his forthcoming book "Political Epistemologies" argues that a decade after the fall of socialism, unmasking somebody's Stasi connections is still the most sensationalist aspect of working through the socialist past. Employers have the right to check East German job candidates for Stasi connections; they also have the right to refuse employment, if such a connection is established. Schuster, one of the informants, a former Stasi officer and a Berliner, reflected on how former Stasi officers and former secret informants were treated: as pariahs, as criminals. His son-in-law, a radio officer working for Stasi, had been dismissed for his Stasi past. He himself felt cheated out of his rightful

pension because Stasi officers do in fact receive less than other former GDR state employees (Glaeser, forthcoming).

“Biographies” of buildings and public spaces have been rewritten with the same fervor as biographies of people. In East Germany, the public sector, including city services, such as parks, streets and sanitation, have made it a point to present themselves as “Stasi-free” (Glaeser, forthcoming). The tourist signs pointing to the *Rotes Rathaus*, the “Red City Hall,” were replaced with signs pointing to the “Berlin City Hall.” Schuster, cited above, pointed out that the building was not nicknamed “red” because it was East Berlin’s communist town hall, but because it is made of bricks and has been known as “Red City Hall” from well before the war. Glaeser commented that “All of this is for him just a sign of rabid anticommunism, a hatred for anything associated with the GDR” (Glaeser, forthcoming).

6.10 OUTLIVING “COMMUNIST” OTHERNESS

The CP of Lithuania was redefined within new ideologies of the late 1980s and the early 1990s. In 1989 it separated from the Soviet Union CP. In 1990 it was renamed the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party (*LDDP*). Consequently, in the entry of August 31, 1991 of the LDDP Council Chronicle, it was possible to argue that “Our Party in 1989 assessed and condemned the past of the Soviet Union Communist Party (*TSKP*), broke from it, and went together with the nation” (Lapeikis et al. 1999:77). In the entry for the 4th of January, 1992, “About guilt and regrets, pharisees and betrayals,” it was argued that the LDDP cannot be responsible for the former Lithuanian division of the Soviet Union Communist Party. Correspondingly, in the media it was claimed that “The communists of today cannot be blamed for mistakes of that time and those communists from whose actions and ideology they have dissociated themselves” (*Tiesa*, July, 1990 in Lapeikis et al. 1999:37). In the late 1980s and early 1990s, many CP members abandoned their party membership through various purification rituals, such as public burning of party membership cards. It was the

correct strategy for surviving post-Soviet spaces of difference bound to “communist” identity.

The difference to which so-called communists were subjected was negotiated by inventing various strategies of re-identification. The two prominent strategies were: reinterpretation of the “communist” past in nationalist idioms; and, association with the moral communities of the post-Soviet period. Both strategies aimed to (re)produce an individual’s past as compatible with the legitimate narratives of post-Soviet times. For example, it was claimed that communists, even the First Secretary Antanas Sniečkus, a long-term leader of Soviet Lithuania (1941–1974), were patriots and worked for Lithuania (Kazakevičius, Mališauskas 2003). As a result, it was argued, one could observe a well-developed economy and industry (or one of the best developed in the USSR) in Lithuania and survival of the Lithuanian nation with over 80% ethnic Lithuanians (as opposed to Latvia and Estonia with huge Russian minorities) (see Kazakevičius, Mališauskas 2003). Another common way to speak about one’s own and former communists’ past was to emphasize that former communists were joining the Party only for a career, that they also suffered from the regime and had to make compromises for their own, their family’s, and in some cases the nation’s benefit. Such claims underlined belonging to a community of the same social text of “oppression” and, thus, moral togetherness with social others of the past.

Many other rearticulations of identities were variations of communication about one’s relation to the newly imagined nation as well as about belonging to moral communities. For example, a school teacher and professor claimed that she joined the Communist Party in response to another professor’s invitation that Lithuanian intellectuals were needed to lead Lithuania. Otherwise, the Russians would be the party members and take leadership positions. The informant asserted that she had lived in the Soviet absurdity, disagreed with communist ideology, but joined the Party out of concern for the well-being of the nation. In this case joining the Communist Party was an act of patriotism, directed towards a common, i.e., the nation’s, good, which was consistent with the ideals of the post-Soviet period.

Despite different strategies of re-identification and association, in political and public spaces of communication, a “communist” has been imagined as “foreign” to post-socialist

history.⁷⁹ Like elsewhere in Eastern Europe, “communist” is dissociated from “national” and “nation” (cf. Urban 1994:733). To be a “communist” is to be a harm-inflicting alien to national developments and the national state. In such contexts, the ultimate responsibility for the crimes and the damage done belongs not to the nation itself but to those who had forcibly imposed it: another nation, Russia (Urban 1994:733), and those who cooperated with the alien power and, thus, became alienated from the nation. Construction of a “Lithuanian communist” has never found its solid ground in post-socialist public spaces of Lithuania. The two terms actually continue to be antithetical in political imaginations, “Lithuania” is associated with the “West,” “democracy,” “future,” “civilization,” while “communists” with the “East,” “totalitarianism,” “barbarism,” and the “past.” As a result many former communists who assert purity and belonging to a nation as “communists” are deemed to fail.

Rearticulations of identities integrated contestations of post-Soviet reclassifications and biographic cleansing. A professor and parliamentarian disagreed that communists can be classified as impure social strata of a “nation” and, thus, dangerous (cf. Douglas 1966):

How could they say that all communists have bloody hands and they [individuals who did not belong to the Communist Party] are clean? [...] Some people thought that communist ideology was criminal. [...] I remember how American Lithuanians used to teach us. I was very angry because they accused us of collaborating with the Soviets. Once I understood. They [American Lithuanians] fled. My mother stayed. She worked there, I studied Lithuanian language and literature at the university, and I learned Lithuanian being a Samogitian [the Samogitian is a dialect and a name of a historic ethnic group in Lithuania]. [...] Here comes someone who speaks broken Lithuanian, humiliates me, calls me a collaborator. It is comic. [...] Once I told everything to a Lithuanian American Community vice-president. He knew that I was in the LDDP, a former communist, that my father was in a labor camp, that he died after he got back because he lost his health there. He was very surprised to hear what I said. He never thought about communists from such a perspective.

Rearticulations of self coexist with subjectivities informed by Soviet-period values and ideas. The former CP members who did not hold power in the post-Soviet period were

⁷⁹ Many villagers from the second largest and largest village and some urban residents do not think that the “foreignness” of “communists” matters.

often critical of post-socialist developments. In their arguments about post-socialist mismanagement, incompetence and the irresponsibility of political leaders, selfishness and poor work ethics of bureaucrats, the past repeatedly was called upon to illustrate moral order, sensible social relations, work for the common good, and commitment to collective values. Mykolas, a former communist and a vice-president of a large enterprise in Soviet times, identified himself at the beginning of the interview as an “unredeemable red” (*raudonas stagnatorius*) and argued:

If compared with the present bureaucrats, [...] our people were wonderful [*auksiniai*]. There were higher requirements. [...] And they worked. [...] Nobody observed Lenin’s principles, *we* started to use them [in independent Lithuania]. When independent Lithuania was being founded, one of Lenin’s major principles was fulfilled. [Now] the state could be governed by a janitor. [...] It is a shame that those who came [to power] made the state go down [*dėl kurių mūsų valstybei prasčiau*]. Those who felt disadvantaged came [to power]. They had no abilities for leadership. Inexperience and ignorance. Such fools [*balamutai*]... All they know is how to talk [*kai liežuviu malti*] [emphasis in original].

According to Mykolas, the “unredeemable reds” worked for Lithuania which was the wealthiest republic of the USSR. At present he saw many mistakes made in economics that he considered to be a “crime against the state:”

Did you come here through Šančiai [a neighborhood of Kaunas]? Isn’t it a crime what you see there? Destroyed barracks. Nobody is guilty. [...] Where is that wealth? Such wealth. Billions. Destroyed. From an economist perspective, they are criminals and must go to jail. People lived normally [*įmoniškai gyveno*], so they were expelled. People could live there, you could let them in for free. So I say. Maybe the [Soviet] state did not observe Leninist principles. *We do* now. In this independent [state]. God forbid, if an individual gets anything for free [emphasis in original].

Mykolas argued that the present can be defined by a poor work ethics. You cannot find people in their work places. According to him, there is no discipline, no responsibility. Conversely, in the socialist past “many were idealists in their blood.” They were committed to the institution they worked for. By bribing, “carrying things, blankets in bags [to bribe others],” he was able to provide all supplies for the enterprise he worked for. In Mykolas’s opinion, this was not much different from the present, when big money is used for bribing, and certainly, not less patriotic.

Former CP members themselves and/or those who have been subjected to social otherness in post-Soviet history apply the same strategy of othering to their opponents. Thus, in political competition the language of “social others” has become a common idiom used by different parties. Juozas’s wife who joined the Party because of a belief in communism argued that Landsbergis, the most prominent leader of Sąjūdis and one of the major designers of the post-Soviet social otherness himself, had been a KGB member. She supported her arguments by using nationalist rhetoric:

Agricultural politics... it’s a crime against Lithuania. OK, independence is independence. [...] For example, they did not want to trade with Russia. It [not trading with Russia] was the ruin of Lithuania. Deliberate destruction. At this point I believe that Landsbergis was a KGB member.

In strategies of othering, the guilt of a “communist past” may be constructed as inheritable. Regina, a parliamentarian, actively involved in the movement for the independence of Lithuania and a member of the Lithuanian Conservatives (Homeland Union), never was a CP member. However, she said that she has been repeatedly discredited because of her father who was a high CP official in Soviet Lithuania. Her mother left her father before Regina was born when she realized that he was in the Communist Party. Regina’s mother lived in poverty with four children. According to Regina, she even refused her father’s support for the children in order to avoid political revenge and to save her children. Regina’s father, whom Regina saw twice, lived in luxury in the center of the capital city. His friends were the highest Soviet state officials; he was honored with a national funeral when he passed away. Regina remembered:

I made a statement that despite who is in power my position will always depend on ideals my mother taught me to follow. This was in 1991. [...] Because of my father they [former CP members] kept persecuting me. Even in the Parliament they used to give me questions. The right politicians did not question. They had the moral power to question. Questioned those in the left [the ex-communists]. The right had the moral right to discredit me, but deportees and political prisoners were always on my side. I was being discredited for my father’s communist ideas... discredited by the communist side. I even had to go to Strasbourg to defend myself. Because of a father whom I did not know even when I was born.

In spring 2005, the judge of the Constitutional Law Toma Birmontienė was entrusted this position only after a second voting in the Parliament. Among the reasons for distrust were also T. Birmontienė's father who served in the NKVD.⁸⁰ Moreover, consideration was given to the glorification of the Soviet militia in Birmontienė's dissertation, defended in 1989. The Liberal Democrat Party accused Birmontienė of loyalty to the USSR and Soviet ideology. According to Petras Gražulis, a parliamentarian, the candidacy of Birmontienė was a slap at Lithuania and its freedom fighters.⁸¹

In Lithuania recent history continues to be informed by various rituals of naming "communists" and the "KGB." At the opening of the memorial for victims of the KGB at Tuskulėnai, Vilnius, in November, 2004, Brazauskas could not deliver his speech of commemoration undisturbed because of denigrating remarks from the crowd. The shouts were inspired by Brazauskas's biography of Soviet times. They were meant to make explicit the incongruence (to some) of the meanings—a former "communist" was not expected to deliver a speech of commemoration of KGB victims, because "communists" were "victimizers." It was the wrong role Brazauskas played on the political field according to the political imaginations of his critics. In an interview with Lithuanian Television⁸² Brazauskas argued that the role he played was correct: "All my life I have been followed by these kinds of shouts. It is just not clear why, why am I a scoundrel and a criminal. My family were also sitting on their bags, ready and waiting to be deported." Brazauskas aimed to associate himself with the moral community of deportees and to reclaim power and authority. He was speaking about his family past in the vocabulary of the present. As in the cases of unanimous voting at the CP meetings discussed above, what was important in this situation was not the semantics of his argument, but the position that he understands and respects present rituals of signification like the commemoration of KGB victims and is willing to play according to the rules of the present political games.

⁸⁰ The National Commissariat for Internal Affairs. Groups of armed supporters called "defenders of people" (*liaudies gynėjai*) against the resistance movement in the 1940s.

⁸¹ See Aleknaitė, Kristina "Libdėmai pakišo koją T. Birmontienėi tapti KT teisėja." 03/15/2005. 14:44. www.delfi.lt. Accessed on 03/14/2005.

⁸² The reportage on Tuskulėnų kapavietė on the Lithuanian Television, "Panorama," November 2, 2004.

In public political spaces “KGB” has been a more visible symbolic identity than “communist.” In 2004–2005 several political leaders and parliament members were accused of relations with the KGB among which the most notable were Antanas Valionis, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Arvydas Pocius, the Director of the State Security Department (both were KGB reserve officers). Many, including Artūras Paulauskas, the Chairman of the Parliament, and Mečys Laurinkus, the former State Security Director, acknowledged that Valionis and Pocius have been loyal to the Republic of Lithuania. The Parliamentary Commission, after revising of Valionis and Pocius case, concluded that the former positions related to the KGB do not constitute a threat to national security. However, some doubted whether the Foreign Affairs Minister and the State Security Director can stay in office. The Congress of the Union of Political Prisoners and Deportees in spring, 2005 accepted the declaration which requested the former KGB reserve officers and agents to resign their positions and to apologize publicly for hiding their relations with the KGB. At the Congress R. Kupčinskas argued that “patriotic powers have to resist the running reoccupation by the Kremlin. We were too forgiving to communists and the KGB reserve. Resistance, resistance, and once more resistance.”⁸³ At the Parliament the member of Parliament Gražulis started a hunger strike requesting the KGB reserve officers to resign their positions as well as insisting to make KGB member lists public. Some journalists also warned about the threat and invoked disrespect to those who “died in the forests, rotted in labor camps and were tortured to death in KGB cellars.”⁸⁴ The Liberal Democrat Party asked the President of Lithuania to recall Valionis and Pocius and to restore belief in moral politics.⁸⁵ Others pointed out that the KGB reserve officers were considered loyal citizens by the USSR.⁸⁶ According to Bronius Genzelis, the KGB reserve included the trusted and the “reliable.” Genzelis interpreted Valionis’ and Pocius’ membership in the KGB reserve in

⁸³ Cited in Karaliūnas, Arūnas “Tremtiniai regi likusių valstybės priešų.” *Lietuvos rytas*. 04/11/2005. No.82. P.3.

⁸⁴ See Dabašinskas, Ginas “Negera nuojauta.” Weekly *Laikas*. 03/29/2005. 09:05. www.delfi.lt. Accessed on 03/29/2005.

⁸⁵ See Barkauskaitė, Orinta “E. Klumbys prisijungė prie badaujančio P. Gražulio.” 03/29/2005. 10:24. www.delfi.lt. Accessed on 03/29/2005.

⁸⁶ See interview with historian A. Anušauskas in www.delfi.lt. Aleknaitė, Kristina “A. Valionio ir A. Pociaus praeitis kai kuriems šalies vadovams buvo naujiena.” 01/07/2005. 10:33. Accessed on 01/07/2005.

1988 and 1989 as evidence of their “unreliability to Lithuania.” According to Genzelis “the biographies of both politicians makes one worry.”⁸⁷ Solitary voices, such as Jursėnas’s, the Vice Chairman of the Parliament, suggested appreciating people based on their input in strengthening the independence of Lithuania without considerations of their pasts.⁸⁸

The KGB case reproduced meanings of loyalty, danger, threat and respect. In considerations mentioned there were rearticulated social and political boundaries, moral modes of conduct and selfhood, and imaginary symbolic histories—a foreign Soviet past and a national post-Soviet present—as well as geographies—Russia and the former USSR and Lithuania. The case showed that an acceptable and tolerably individual has to have a particular political persona and to “carry” a specific biography congruent with political imaginations of post-Soviet spaces.

The production of social otherness in post-Soviet history did not reach the scope of the projects of the Soviet period. Furthermore, it affected mainly the former nomenclature, especially those who aimed to gain or retain political power in post-Soviet times. Like elsewhere in Eastern Europe, the successor parties of the Lithuanian Communist Party secured the majority in the Parliament in several elections (in 1992 and 2000). The secretary of the Central Committee of the CP of the Soviet Republic of Lithuania, Brazauskas became the first President of Lithuania. The communication about otherness of “communists” to society by political opponents of the reformed Communist Party was not appealing to most voters. However, throughout post-socialist history, one’s past as a CP member, Party or State Security official has always been a mark or a “tail” (*šleifas, uodega*) in the post-Soviet jargon, that follows one and is remembered in case of political competition (see chapter 7). The symbol “communist” still informs some political imaginations. In Kaunas, during the presidential campaign of 2004, some posters for Jursėnas, a former CP member and the presidential candidate from the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party, were marked in black: a “Communist.” The “KGB” prevails as a more “viable” symbolic identity than “communist” because it refers to unseen forces, hidden powers, and secret undertakings. The

⁸⁷ Aleknaitė, Kristina “A. Valionio ir A. Pociaus praeitis kai kuriems šalies vadovams buvo naujiena.” www.delfi.lt. 01/07/2005. 10:33. Accessed on 01/07/2005.

⁸⁸ “KGB šmėklos vėl audrina šalies politikų protus.” *Lietuvos rytas*. 01/11/2005. No.8. P.4.

“communists” and the “KGB” are usually produced in opposition to the Soviet-period others, usually “deportees.”

The post-socialist discourse about “communists” or “KGB” include meanings of criminality, distrust, and foreignness. The social others of post-Soviet history were in some cases deprived of status, employment, some rights, and privileges. Especially in the late 1980s and early 1990s they were subjected to spaces of difference and experienced humiliation, threat, uncertainty, discontent, and insecurity. Many former CP members or KGB members lost their authority and power. However, many were able to outlive otherness as well as to preserve power and influence over institutional crafting of symbolic identities and, thus, their own social selves.

6.11 TRANSLATIONS: EXPERIENCE AND TEXTS

Social texts of opposition communicate experiences of social otherness and reflect upon subjectivities of social others. These texts convey different registers of negativity directed at social history, community, nation, state and even self. Deportees and other others of the Soviet past (see also chapter 3) tend to connect to and reproduce in their individualized stories the text of “oppression.” Their dialogues in most cases express the experience of difference and withdrawal from foreign sociality and history. The former CP members, depending on whether they identify as social others in post-Soviet history, develop a text of opposition which expresses foreignness to *post*-Soviet social history. In a few of the excerpts of texts of opposition quoted in this chapter, the former CP members tend to speak of the failures of the state, nation, and society and to present the socialist past in the idioms of moral order, sensible social relations, and work directed towards common goals and informed by collective values.

The social text which makes meanings of social lives of difference in the past or present will be performed in voting for a candidate or a party, who/which is not constructed negatively in the text. Thus, deportees tend not to vote for candidates who symbolize the

past of “oppression,” someone connected to ideas of “communism,” “KGB,” “Russia” and “Russians.” Ex-communist parties and former “communists” will not be rewarded in voting decisions of deportees. Former CP members, again, depending on their position in the Communist Party in the past and identification with party ideology as well as their non/existing identity of social others (the higher position, the closer identification, the most likely), will vote (or not) against candidates/parties, engaging in their othering and producing negative spaces of otherness and negative symbols of “communists.”

Another example of a text of opposition was a text of “better times” discussed in chapter 1. This social text gives meaning to many villagers and some urban residents’ lives of difference at present. The experience of difference which is translated into texts of “better times” is an outcome of post-Soviet social classification carried out through privatization, property restitution, and liberalization rather than more direct engagement with “political” and “biographical” like in Soviet “class” and post-Soviet “nation”-building endeavors discussed in this chapter. The text of “better times” will be performed in voting for a candidate or a party, who/which would provide a vision of resolving subjectivities and present experiences of otherness and, certainly, who will not engage in further othering (see chapter 7).

Knowing the stories people tell about themselves, community, and social history allows for a discussion of voting as a meaningful action or an enactment of a social text and meanings built into that text. In the following two chapters I inquire into how different social texts embody divergent ideals about nation and liberation (chapter 5) and the state (chapter 6). Chapter 7 will discuss social texts and voting in presidential electoral campaigns of 2002 and 2004.

6.12 CONCLUSIONS

The Soviet state informed by “class” ideology produced social otherness: spaces of difference to which individuals were subjected because of their particular biographies. The

“deportee,” an example of a “social other” in the Soviet period, was constituted as a socially dangerous and disloyal subject of a Soviet state and society. People, assigned “deportee” identity were excluded from participation in ideologically informed fields of knowledge, such as education and culture. They were deprived of visibility, social and physical mobility, and privilege. Employing classism, i.e., technology and ideology of exclusion along imagined “class” boundaries, the Soviet state engaged in biographic cleansing, i.e., discipline and punishment of those who lived their lives not according to Soviet-period scenarios. Individuals who were subjected to social otherness and ascribed identities of social others compromised, accommodated, resisted, openly supported or negated Soviet history and experience. In communities social others experienced support as well as ignorance, intolerance and exclusion. Experience of social otherness was articulated in a text of opposition, usually one of “oppression.”

Post-Soviet state projects of social classification, informed by nationalism, engaged in reordering the social classification of the Soviet period and reproduced new insiders and outsiders/others for post-Soviet-period history. The identities of “deportees” and “communists” were inverted. The social others of Soviet times were redefined as a moral community. They gained visibility, respect, and recognition by the restoration of their rights, assignment of privileges and elevation to the status of “heroes.” On the other hand, “communists,” CP members and the first-class citizens of the Soviet state were deprived of their privileged status and were reproduced as enemies of the “nation,” disloyal and socially dangerous subjects of the new projects of a democratic state. Boundaries between social strata were reproduced into the post-Soviet period. The resulting co-existence in a “nation” was a matter of competition between different social groups, manifesting a negative definition of tolerance as passive non-interference.

Post-Soviet-period otherness was a porous construction, while the major engineers of post-Soviet history lacked political power and social support to enforce their visions, such as the passing of “Desovietization” laws. The new state also did not appropriate technologies with the totalitarian fervor of the Soviet state. Furthermore, the former CP members,

potential “social others,” abandoned/renegotiated their identity as “communists” by connecting to legitimacy narratives of post-socialism, gaining power and social support.

The Communist Party has been banned in Lithuania since 1991. “Communists” cannot be defined anymore as members of the Communist Party. None of the former CP members refers to himself/herself as a “communist” now. However, as a cultural form having symbolic significance, “communist” and its offspring “KGB” exist in present social and, especially, political communication; it is continually appropriated in social conflicts and political campaigns.

7.0 CHAPTER 5: NATION AND LIBERATION

You are beautiful, my dear homeland,
A country, where heroes sleep in graves:
You are beautiful in the blueness of your sky!
Dear: you went through so many hardships and sufferings.⁸⁹
(A national song, “Dear Lithuania” (1920) by Maironis).

Tie, Homeland, me inside you,
Like a song is tied in a throat by death,
The way, a night ties an evening,
And you answer me: “I am your freedom!”⁹⁰
 (“Freedom,” performer Eurika Masytė, a popular song of the liberation movement).

Unlike studies that explore how nations are imagined (see Anderson 1983) or invented where they do not exist (see Hroch 1990), I ask why nations do not exist, if they were

⁸⁹ Graži tu, mano brangi tėvyne,
Šalis, kur miega kapuos didvyriai:
Graži tu savo dangaus mėlyne!
Brangi: tiek vargo, kančių patyrei. (“Lietuva brangi,” Maironis, 1920).
My translation.

⁹⁰ Tai uždaryk mane, Tėvyne, savyje,
Kaip giesmę gerklėje mirtis uždaro,
Taip, kaip uždaro vakarą naktis,
O tu man atsakai: “Aš—tavo laisvė!” (Atlikėja Eurika Masytė, “Laisvė”). My translation.

already imagined. I explore this question by discussing memories of the liberation period of the late 1980s and early 1990s and people's ideas about "liberation" and "nation."

During the liberation period a specific cultural artifact—"nation-state" was produced redefining "nation" in the context of the Western tradition, i.e., binding it to the values of statehood, sovereignty, and national citizenship prohibited in Soviet times. According to John Kelly and Martha Kaplan (2001) such nations have to be seen as properties of humanity, but "like land tenures, properties made by contracts, properties constituted not by nature but in histories of culture, and renewed in the rituals and routines of actual institutions of representation" (Kelly and Kaplan 2001:200). In 1990 many people presumably supported the contract of a "nation-state" by extensively voting for Sąjūdis' candidates whose major aim in the electoral campaign was the independence of Lithuania.⁹¹ The contract was apparently also supported during the referendum for the independence of the Republic of Lithuania on February 9th, 1991. At the referendum 90.24% of all participants voted "for" independence (6.54% voted "against," the voter turnout was 84.74%), which was 76.46% of all voters.⁹² As the liberation period rhetoric indicates, the reimagined "nation" was even a value people were willing to die for. However, at present in intellectual discourse, the media and other spaces there is a sense of looming indifference towards the major values of the liberation period including the nation's liberation, popularly referred to as "freedom." Addressing this "indifference," I argue that the present challenging of "liberation"/ "freedom," which questions the necessity of a nation having a sovereign state as important, is expressive of dissatisfactions with post-socialist social and moral orders, and also of sensibilities about subjectivities, values and authority that are marginalized in post-socialist history. Problematizing "liberation" and "nation" documents experiences of change and the continued prevalence of socialist period identifications, such as belonging in a "nation" conceived as horizontal solidarity, ethnic relationship, disconnected from values of statehood and sovereignty. I also claim that the questioning of

⁹¹ See the Sąjūdis electoral program in *Atgimimas*. 02/02–09/1990. No.5. P.4–5. See also *Atgimimas*. 02/02–09/1990. No.5. P.6.

⁹² See the European Committee pages at <http://www.euro.lt/showtopitems.php?TopMenuID=98&LangID=6>. Accessed on 07/11/2005.

“liberation” is a dispute over representation, i.e., over recognition of people with particular visions of social/political history and senses of personhood precluded by the post-socialist official histories and mainstream politics.

Support to the “nation-state” during the liberation period derived from specific interests and expectations and depended on the individual’s experiences of socialist history. Retrospectively, I cannot answer how national subjects were produced during the liberation movement and how/why these national subjects failed to fashion themselves in terms of liberation period ideals later. The data suggest that in the late 1980s and early 1990s the liberation movement *was* successful in making disparate social and cultural worlds commensurate with the social ideas and economic imaginations and created discourse with which different people could identify (cf. Povinelli 2001).

In this chapter I discuss “nation” and “liberation” as primarily revealed in the spaces of social interaction, identification and feeling rather than aspects of the political and symbolic/ideological order. I am interested in individual relationships to nationalist ideals which are produced in dialectical/dialogical process of incorporating knowledge about “nation” and “liberation” and reproducing it in terms of personal experience. Invoking nationalism in the discussion of liberation movement texts I follow Verdery’s understanding of nationalism as “the political utilization of the symbol nation through discourse and political activity, as well as the sentiment that draws people into responding to this symbol’s use” (Verdery 1993:38).⁹³ “Liberation” refers to the values of statehood, sovereignty and independence from the USSR.

⁹³ This understanding of nationalism differs from studies in political science, which focus more on mass mobilization (e.g., Burg 1996), nationalism and the state (e.g., Gellner 1983), nationalism as a form of politics, as a political doctrine or political ideology (e.g., Breuilly 1982, Griffin 1999).

7.1 SOCIAL TEXTS OF THE LIBERATION MOVEMENT⁹⁴

In Lithuania the fall of socialism started in the late 1980s and was epitomized in the Sąjūdis movement and the proclamation of independence in 1990. The liberation movement produced new symbolic regimes of identification which justified the politics of that time and legitimated new relations of power and authority. The new post-socialist elites delegitimated the socialist period and socialist identities in order to establish themselves as rightful players in the new post-socialist states as well as to further economic and political reforms (cf. Tismaneanu 1998).

The master symbols of the liberation movement were “nation” and “liberation.”⁹⁵ Ideologies which employed the symbol “nation” differed from the Soviet-period utilizations of “nation” in attempts to link “nation” to “state” using the supposed norm of European democracy of self-determination. “Liberation” marked the process through which the “nation-state” had to emerge. The rebirth of the nation was envisioned to go along with the economic, political and cultural reorganization of the state and had to follow “Western” ideals (e.g., constitutional democracy, civil society, and Christian values). “Nation” in Lithuania was redefined in the context of the Western tradition of “nation-states.”

The leaders of the liberation movement promoted a new history which negated Soviet-period official versions that emphasized the “nation’s” or “people’s” brotherly coexistence within the USSR. It denied Lithuania’s voluntary integration into the USSR in 1940 and defined the period of the Soviet Republic of Lithuania as an occupation. The new version of history derived its power from unofficial pasts and the memories of the silenced. These pasts and memories reproduced history of the Soviet period in terms of oppression

⁹⁴ This section, “Social texts of the liberation movement,” interprets discourses of the leading newspapers of the liberation period (1988–1991): *Komjaunimo tiesa*, *Lietuvos rytas*, *Atgimimas*, *Lietuvos aidas*, and *Respublika*. In this part I also use the data from my article “Ethnographic Note on *Nation*: Narratives and Symbols of the Early Post-Socialist Nationalism in Lithuania.” *Dialectical Anthropology*. 2003. Vol.27. No.3–4. P.279–295.

⁹⁵ “Nation” and “liberation” were differently promoted by various actors. The idea of the independence of Lithuania was first publicly voiced by the Lithuanian Freedom Union on August 23rd, 1987 at the meeting by Adomas Mickevičius’s statue in Vilnius. Sąjūdis and LCP members had different opinions about independence as the liberation movement progressed (see Senn 2002).

and resistance. As in other post-socialist (see Verdery 1996) and postcolonial contexts (see Kelly and Kaplan 2001), suffering and victimhood were the popular rhetorical figures of the new tradition in imagining “nation.”⁹⁶

The liberation movement accumulated and recirculated new moral capital, i.e., a capital rooted in defining certain values as correct and upholding them (Verdery 1996:106), which had special currency in all of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Actions of Sajūdis’ representatives were the moral ones in defense of a nation as a moral community. As in Russia the innocence of the relatively powerless was a form of moral power (cf. Ries 1997). The language of morality produced a moral “us” and a morally inferior “them” (see Herzfeld 1997, Moore 1993) and located “them” within an inferior spatial and historical order, such as the symbolic space of the “East” (cf. Bakić-Hayden and Hayden 1992, Said 1995, Todorova 1994, Wolff 1994). “They” were thought of in association with tyranny and uncivilized actions that did not manifest Christian moral or human values. Attributing moral significance to political ideas was a way to sacralize them and remove from the category of the debatable (see Moore 1993).

“Soviets” and “Soviet state” became “others” who exercised illegitimate authority and power, damaging national consciousness, destroying the nation in the economical, political, cultural and spiritual sense.⁹⁷ The “Soviets” were shown to be “occupiers,” guilty for the suffering and misfortunes of the Lithuanians.⁹⁸ The “Soviet state” was narrated as an evil, totalitarian, uncivilized, immoral and inhuman empire.⁹⁹ The attribute of “Soviet” was also associated with injustice, demoralization, dehumanization, conformity, disorder, toadyism,

⁹⁶ Victimization and suffering narratives are popular across Eastern Europe. Poland appears in Polish historical works as the “Christ of nations,” whom the nations around it unjustly crucified; generations of Czechs have been raised with the image of their nation as martyr. Hungary’s and Romania’s historians have presented their nations as suffering for the salvation of Western civilization (see Verdery 1996). Kelly and Kaplan (2001) argue that in postcolonial contexts (in Fiji or Hawaii) mobilization of suffering and victimhood was grounds for political and social rights in the post-World War II nation-building era.

⁹⁷ See, e.g., Pečeliūnienė, L. “Iš tikrųjų, kodėl puolame komunistus?” (“Why do we attack communists?”). *Lietuvis aidas*. 06/06/1990. No.11. P.3.; Lankauskas, R. “Kartūs sovietinio palikimo vaisiai” (“The bitter taste of the Soviet heritage”). *Lietuvis aidas*. 09/28/1991. No.196. P.4.

⁹⁸ According to popular narratives of that time, the history of Lithuanian economic and political development would have paralleled that of the Scandinavian countries, if not for the Soviet annexation.

⁹⁹ See, for example, Juozaitis, A. “Laisvė arba ideologijos mirtis” (“Freedom or the death of ideology”). *Komjaunimo tiesa*. 12/19/1989. No.240. P.2.

bureaucracy, lying, hatred, power, violence, vandalism, coercion, misinformation, provocation, brutality, and insidiousness.¹⁰⁰ Even the same categories that were thought to be properties of the “West” and the “Soviet state” like “bureaucracy” were presented differently. Soviet bureaucracy was ideological, unqualified, undeveloped, and brutal, while Western bureaucracy was civilized; it was progressive, qualified, and effective.¹⁰¹ Most failures of national politics after the establishment of independence were seen as due to a “Soviet consciousness,” “the damaging impact of Soviet rule” and impossible to transcend in less than ten years, until a new generation will mature.

Like elsewhere in Eastern Europe the “West” became one of the most significant symbolic spaces of identity (cf. Schöpflin and Wood 1989). The “West” and “Europe,” where the “nation” was imaginatively relocated, were linked to democracy, freedom, civilization, morality and spirituality, legitimacy, Christianity, humaneness, and truth.¹⁰² “Europe” and the “West” were something to be achieved. It was claimed that Lithuanians have to “develop an understanding that Lithuania is a European state and Lithuanians are Europeans.”¹⁰³ On the other hand, many discourses included Lithuania in Europe. The comparison of Vilnius with Athens (there is still a newspaper titled “Northern Athens,” (“Šiaurės Atėnai”)), searching for the center of Europe in the geography of Lithuania can be considered to be the strategies that defined Lithuania as a European state.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ See Klumbytė, Neringa “Ethnographic Note on *Nation*: Narratives and Symbols of the Early Post-Socialist Nationalism in Lithuania.” *Dialectical Anthropology*. 2003. Vol.27. No.3–4. P.279–295.

¹⁰¹ Juozaitis, A. “Sąjūdis po rinkimų” (“Sąjūdis after elections”). *Komjaunimo tiesa*. 12/06/1989. No.231. P.1–2.

¹⁰² See, for example, Juozaitis, A. “Laisvė arba ideologijos mirtis” (“Freedom or the death of ideology”). *Komjaunimo tiesa*. 12/19/1989. No.240. P.2.; Pavilionis, R. “Europos Forumo Lietuvoje gairės” (“The marks of the European Forum in Lithuania”). *Komjaunimo tiesa*. 12/09/1989. No.234. P.1–2.

¹⁰³ Pavilionis, R.. Interview by S. Urbonavičiūtė “Lietuvos—Europoje: yra ir bus” (“Lithuania in Europe: in present and in future”). *Komjaunimo tiesa*. 12/09/1989. No.234. P.1.

¹⁰⁴ The appropriation of the “East” and the “West” varies in different nationalisms. In Romania, Hungary, Russia the “West” was associated with material and technological advancement, civilization, liberal democracy (see Gal 1991). In Georgia history embodied resistance to alien tyranny as the “East” and situating the nation as the “West” (Jones 1994). The symbolic geography expressed by the “East” and the “West” was part of Yugoslav cultural politics in the early 1990s (see Bakić-Hayden and Hayden 1992). Later discourses about the “East” and the “West” were included in the rhetoric of nationalist conflicts. In *nihonjinron*, the Japanese ideology of Japanese culture and identity (see, e.g., Yoshino 1992), the “West” appears as a cultural category defined by such characteristics as rationality, individualism, materialism, heterogeneity, etc. In Japan the “West” is opposed as well as absorbed by domesticating the “foreign” (see Ivy 1995, Befu 1993).

Most Lithuanian narratives presented the liberation period as a state of transition. The prevailing discourses on transition corresponded to conventional transitology paradigms, which presume passing from one stage to another (see Burawoy and Verdery 1998). Lithuania was to pass from the Soviet system to the Western or European one, from totalitarianism to democracy, and from despotism to civilization. The new stage was thought of as a new epoch, the transition itself was seen as the way (the hard way, the way to freedom, to Europe). There was a tendency to see Soviet times as a historical parenthesis, i.e., a deviation from the “normal” historical period as revealed, for example, by the rhetoric of the “lost years.” In 1990, Vytautas Kubilius, the well-known intellectual, stated that “it must be remembered that in Lithuania there was no political life for 50 years.”¹⁰⁵ Acting for independence and establishment of the state were viewed as the only possible ways out of such non-existence as well as contemporary problems.

Like other nationalisms, nationalism of the liberation movement in Lithuania communicated “nation” and “national identity” through the symbols related to kinship terms which helped to introduce national discourses in the more familiar terms of local experience and forced one to act in defense of what is familiar and natural (see Herzfeld 1997, Anderson 1983). For example, it was claimed that “Lithuania is not going to forget its *sons*,”¹⁰⁶ that “the earth gave shelter to the most faithful *children* of Lithuania,”¹⁰⁷ that the memorial is dedicated to those who died, for “all our *sisters*’ and *brothers*’ freedom and independence,”¹⁰⁸ or that collaborators with the Soviets (*kolaborantai*) know the taste of the “*blood* of Lithuania.”¹⁰⁹ Many discourses referring to “nation” or “Lithuania” attributed

¹⁰⁵ Kubilius, V. Interview by Žemaitytė, A. “Nepriklausomybės šviesos pakerėti” (“Fascinated by the light of independence”). *Atgimimas*. 02/21–28/1990. No.8. P.12.

¹⁰⁶ Editorial. *Atgimimas*. 01/1991. No.2. P.1.

¹⁰⁷ The editorial by Liutkevičiūtė, I. “Atsisveikinimas—kaip priesaika” (“Farewell like an oath”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 01/17/1991. No.8. P.1.

¹⁰⁸ Zaikauskas, V. Commentary on the February 16th meeting in Kaunas. *Atgimimas*. 02/21–28/1990. No.8. P.2.

¹⁰⁹ Ganusauskas, E. “Koks Lietuvos kraujo skonis?” (“What is the taste of Lithuania’s blood”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 01/17/1991. No.8. P.2.

human qualities to them. For example, N. Michailovas writes: “personally, I have never seen Lithuania so calm, healthy, persistent and resolute in its attempts to achieve its aims.”¹¹⁰

Nationalism develops a particular political aesthetics which is essential to imagining a nation as well as to developing political love for it. As the first quote of the epigraph illustrates, “homeland,” one of the major nationalist symbols, can be *beautiful*, beautiful like the blueness of the sky. The cited song “Dear Lithuania” is a national song, often sung together (or instead of) the national anthem. In the verses not included in the epigraph the poet Maironis, an important national figure himself, writes about pretty valleys of streaming rivers, hills green with forests, the thinking dark river Nevėžis, wonderful white mansions in green gardens, churches shining with the strength of love and prayer, as well as the joy one feels on hearing the familiar sounds of singing birds, seeing the setting sun, and feeling the calmness of the evening. In these lines, the homeland communicates sensual information and is physically bound to the individual. Physicality becomes a means for aesthetic contemplation and it is an emotional detour of imagination in producing the “self” in terms of the “homeland.” Such imagination, introduced in political contexts, acquires political meanings. Political love as expressed in a willingness to die for one’s homeland (or nation) can be understood as action in terms of what is familiar and natural (cf. Herzfeld 1997) as well as of what is physically related, identifiable and aesthetic.

The nationalism of the liberation movement aimed to transcend individual and local differences, uniting all people in a single unitary identity (cf. Herzfeld 1992). It aimed to transform fatality into continuity, contingency into meaning, since nations “loom out of an immemorial past” and “glide into a limitless future” (cf. Anderson 1983). Nationalism was an ontology, a doctrine about the essence of reality (see Kapferer 1988), and ideology of social identities. It produced the imagined community of a “nation-state,” defined in terms of the Western tradition of “nation-states” (see Hobsbawm 1990, Anderson 1983, Kelly and Kaplan 2001). While popular support of the liberation movement in the late 1980s and early 1990s in most Eastern European and former Soviet Union states cannot be questioned,

¹¹⁰ Michailovas, N. “Nacionalinis klausimas ir... nacionalizmo kvapas” (“The national question and... the breath of nationalism”). *Komjaunimo tiesa*. 09/12/1989. No.175. P.2.

among most of the informants interviewed in 2003–2004 “nation” was not imagined in the liberation movement social texts, which invited me to ask how *they* experienced the liberation period, what they think about it as well as about the values of “freedom” (“liberation”) and “nation.”

7.2 (DIS)CONNECTIONS: LIBERATION, NATION, AND SELF

Right after the deadly confrontation between the Soviet Army forces and unarmed citizens in Vilnius on the 13th of January, 1991, I was visiting a family in a town near the largest village which became the object of my study 12 years later. A mother of three small children preparing lunch told me that her husband was in Vilnius by the TV station the night when the Soviet forces attacked the station. He returned home safely. She said she would have been proud (*būtų didžiavusis*), if her husband had died for the homeland (*už Tėvynę*), not meaninglessly.¹¹¹ Being a teenager at the time, I reacted first with surprise, and later with admiration. My admiration was indicative of an emerging belief about a meaningful death for the homeland. Like many others at that time I was being produced as a national subject with particular ideas about homeland, nation, state, and self.

Post-socialist history can hardly be interpreted to have produced subjectivities that were in the making in the early 1990s in the sites I researched. 12 years later, during my research, nobody talked about meaningful death for the homeland, nation or freedom. People questioned the leaders’ commitment to liberation period ideals, expressed disappointment, speculated what went wrong and rearticulated “nation” and “liberation.”

¹¹¹ Some pictures in the newspapers of 1990–1991 and books covering the liberation period invoke death for freedom. For example, the picture by R. Šuika records the protest action of July 31st, 1991. The woman has a poster stating “Freedom, you [enemies] will not be able to shoot us down! LCP bandits!” Source: *Lietuvos aidas*. 08/01/1991. No.150. P.1. The picture by Z. Nekrošius records one of the meetings of the liberation period. Some people hold the poster: “Freedom, you are more precious than life.” Source: *Atgimimas*. 03/21–28/1990. No.12. P.1. In the picture by A. Žižiūnas people address international audiences by holding posters in English and Russian during M. Gorbachev’s visit on 01/11/1990. One poster states: “Freedom, you are more precious than life.” Source: Šlekys, J. 1991 *Atgimimo Balsai*. Vilnius: Vyturyš. The picture which records a meeting after the deadly events of January 13, 1991 documents the statement: “We will die, but we will become free.” Source: *Lietuvos Aidas*. 01/19/1991. No.13. P.2.

Moreover, very recently different questions, antithetical to the rhetoric of the liberation movement, such as “Is independence still a value?”¹¹² or “Why do many Lithuanians think that the Soviet period was the best in history of Lithuania”¹¹³ or even “Why do Lithuanians love Russia?”¹¹⁴ were being asked in the mainstream and leading media sites.

Alfred Erich Senn argues that the “hard realities of life—inflation, corruption, economic crises—have dampened spirits, but there is still an underlying consensus that independence was essential” (Senn 2002:18). Senn’s impression is not confirmed by multiple surveys, media presentations, and discussions of voting which express concerns that independence may not be essential for many people. For example, in the Lithuanian Television program “Spaudos klubas” (“Press club”) edition “Is independence still a value?” moderator Audrius Siaurusevičius presented the data of the “Omni laikas” survey, according to which more than one third of the population of Lithuania (34%) thought that the worst period in history of Lithuania was the previous 15 years of independence. The answer to the question posed during the survey—“Which period of history of Lithuania was the least successful to Lithuania?”¹¹⁵—was understood by the program moderator and by most participants as the answer about the *independence* of Lithuania.¹¹⁶ The moderator asked whether the results should be viewed as a misunderstanding of history and as a dangerous tendency. The program was an examination of a part of the national body which was the “other:” the sick (alcoholics in villages were mentioned), the poor, the non-educated, the

¹¹² See LTV program “Spaudos klubas,” 12/29/2004, “Ar nepriklausomybė dar yra vertybė?” http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/www_misc.spaudos_klubas. Accessed on 05/05/2005.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ See L. Donskis “Aukos meilė budeliui, arba už ką lietuviai taip myli Rusiją?” (“The victim’s love for his torturer, or why do Lithuanians love Russia so much?”). *Klaipėda*. 02/28/2005. Cited from DELFI, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/index.php?id=6138259>. Accessed on 03/12/2005.

¹¹⁵ In Lithuanian the question is: “Kaip manote, kuris Lietuvos istorijos laikotarpis buvo nesėkmingiausias Lietuvai?” During the program the participant of the program, the well-known philosopher A. Šliogeris, questioned the survey and said that the results of the survey do not represent the opinions of the majority in Lithuania. V. Savukynas, the editor of “Omni laikas” responded that the survey was representative and people who think that the period of independence was the worst in the history of Lithuania were between 40–60 year old, little educated, living in rural areas or a town, which is a center of a district, and relatively poor. See LTV program “Spaudos klubas,” 12/29/2004, “Ar nepriklausomybė dar yra vertybė?” (“Is independence still a value?”). http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/www_misc.spaudos_klubas. Accessed on 05/05/2005.

¹¹⁶ Lionginas Šepetys decisively argued that people, answering the question, responded about their concerns, rather than independence.

elderly, voting populist (thus, dangerous) and having a false consciousness about history of the “nation.” These people were thought not to value independence. In a sense the program was an attempt to articulate the anomie of [the other part of] society and to create a language to speak about it. In the end, the program left a feeling that an individual saying that the independence period was the worst for Lithuania, was even more exotic, anomalous, and illegible than he/she was at the beginning of the discussion.

Some other explorations of the body national were more successful in articulating the anomie of a part of society. For instance, addressing nostalgia for Russian culture, popularly assumed to be indicative of opposition to the post-socialist nation-state of Lithuania, Leonidas Donskis, a well-known philosopher, argued that nostalgia indicates Lithuanians’ love for Russia which is a victim’s love for the torturer. “Culture,” which Lithuanians were nostalgic about, meant so-called Russian pop music and films¹¹⁷ and even Russian swear words.

The investigations of the national body in these examples relied on special data. In the program on independence, the 30% who thought that the Soviet period was the worst in the history of Lithuania as well as the 26% who thought that the other periods were the worst are mentioned only in introducing the survey. In the second example, the multiple presence of American and European music, films, and swear words as well as very popular Latin American soap operas seem not to distort the picture of love for Russia. Those who listen to the present Russian pop music, i.e., the younger generation, hardly experienced any “torture” from the metaphorical torturer “Russia” in Soviet times, as they were too young to experience it.¹¹⁸ However, they stand for the “collective experience” of some others as well as for collective “love.” In the first example, answers about history are translated into an objection to independence.¹¹⁹ My data suggest that dislike of the post-socialist period, the 15 years of independence, does not directly translate into objection to independence, but rather it is dissatisfaction with post-socialist developments and the social locations people inhabit

¹¹⁷ Donskis talks about the special type of films—“černuchos,” i.e., particular action, often violent, movies.

¹¹⁸ I argue to the contrary that those who experienced “torture,” to use Donskis’s vocabulary, are least likely to “love Russia” (see chapter 3).

¹¹⁹ L. Šepetys, one of the participants in the program, made a similar point.

(see the discussion below). In both examples contingent and dynamic “social” is translated into definite “political.” Unintentionally, intellectuals create spaces of their own conceived “danger” by producing “political” where it (in most cases) does not exist,¹²⁰ as well as creating ideas that they then aim to negate. By voicing such questions publicly and providing metaphors, like “victim’s love,” intellectuals articulate images and make them available for public consumption.

Such questions in the media or intellectual thought genealogically are traceable to liberation period social texts which established the essentiality of independence and the foreignness of Russia. The issues covered articulate (dis)connections among liberation, statehood, nation, and people. Such (dis)connections emerging from the memories of the liberation period are the object of the two following sections.

7.3 REMEMBERING THE LIBERATION PERIOD: FROM SUPPORT TO DISAPPOINTMENT

Recalling the liberation period, many informants did not remember details of events. People often remembered the return of the Cathedral in the center of Vilnius (a museum during socialist times) to the religious community, which was sometimes phrased “Brazauskas [the First Secretary of the CP of Lithuania in 1988] returned the Cathedral to the people.¹²¹” They also remembered the historic event *Baltijos kelias* (the Baltic Way¹²²), guarding the TV, radio stations or the Parliament. Some informants invoked solidarity among people at that time, when many shared food with others, or prepared food for those who were on

¹²⁰ I mean it does not exist as “political” for people whose actions and beliefs were addressed in the examples analyzed.

¹²¹ Senn (2002) discusses the return of the Cathedral as the decision of a coterie of the party and the government—A. Brazauskas, V. Sakalauskas, V. Astrauskas, and L. Šepetys. A. Brazauskas was the one who delivered the message about returning the Cathedral to people publicly (see Senn 2002:232–233).

¹²² On August 23rd, 1989 a human chain of about 2 million people called *Baltijos kelias* (the Baltic Way) linked hands in one continuous chain and connected all capitals of the Baltic countries of the USSR (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia). The “Baltic Way” was a protest action against the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact of 1939 according to which the Baltic states became part of the USSR.

voluntary duty at a strategic object. Others said that they watched TV or listened to the radio all the time. Several informants remembered reading newspapers almost the whole day. Those who did not get involved in any events of 1988–1991 explained why they were absent from the stage of changing history: they were sick or had to take care of their sick parents, several remembered that their child was born at that time. Only a few stated that they were intimidated, and, therefore, did not participate. A fifty year old seasonal worker from the largest village recalled: “I did not participate anywhere. We were home. Oh my God, we listened to the radio, [we wondered] what is going to happen. They said such things! You could have gone to prison for that...” Certainly, there were others who were not interested in the liberation movement and did not get involved in it in any sense.

For most informants the period of the liberation movement was an emotionally intense experience. It was a time of unrestrained enthusiasm, euphoria, hope, danger, unity, happiness, and joy. Albina, a Catholic and a librarian, a Kaunas resident, in her early 70s, described it this way:

I was like crazy. They all were like crazy. We ran around with those flags... Not me so much... well, it was very important to get back the flag [to get permission to use the tricolor flag of the interwar Lithuania publicly], but we were sick with independence as well [wished for independence]. It was a great event [the liberation movement]. The only such event in our lifetime... hard to understand. Like a river overflowed. Everything rose to the surface. It was incredible. For some it was like a war. All those meetings. [...] I was so interested in the media. Freedom to know. I read newspapers probably six hours a day. [...] They all wrote about astonishing events. It is hard to tell everything, you have to experience it.

Memories of enthusiasm reflect understanding of the liberation movement in terms of the nationalist ideology of that time. In the testimonies of the events of January 13, 1991 in “Lietuva 1991.01.13: dokumentai, liudijimai, atgarsiai,” collected after the January events, it is claimed that people were chanting (*skanduoti*) “Lithuania” and “freedom” at the time when tanks moved on people and even when they saw people dying and being injured by bullets. When asked during interviews why people went to guard the TV towers and radio stations, several villagers responded (however, without present enthusiasm for the liberation period) that they “wanted Lithuania”, “free Lithuania” (Pijus, the village head (*visuomeninis*

seniūnas)). Then, in the early 1990s, nationalist rhetorical figures like “free Lithuania” must have signified a particular understanding of what free Lithuania might be.

Understanding of the liberation movement ideals can partly be reconstructed from ideas about past expectations among which the most popular was the hope for a “better life.” In most cases a “better life” meant economic and social well-being. Vitkai from the second largest village remembered that everyone was expecting a “better life,” a “very good life.” Marija’s husband Žygimantas, in his late 30s, the father of two small children who had come to the village with his family two years ago because of hardships they experienced in town claimed that he “expected a better life. Better than it was. It was good, we wanted more...” When asked what a better life would be like, he pointed out that freedom was the only advantage of the post-Soviet period, however, he did not see any other “good.” Povilas from the second largest village remembered that people were willing to tighten their belts and mow with scythes for a better life. However, Povilas sighed “we mow with scythes for thirteen years already... and nothing got better.” Julija, a retired teacher, remembered that during the liberation movement people cried from happiness. She also thought that it was going to be better and easier:

I thought it was going to be different. Earlier [in Soviet times] I used to get 63 rubles. And had to live [a meager life]. I thought it was going to be easier. But it did not become easier... We all expected, expected a lot, well, it turned out the other way. And now it’s painful somehow... some get higher pensions, but mine was always small.

Expectations of the “better life” invoked “economic imaginations” (cf. Williamson 2002) which possibly absorbed people into a Lithuanian type “DM-Nationalismus¹²³” during the liberation period (Habermas 1990, see also Borneman 1993, Habermas 2001). Such imaginations were articulated and recirculated in political fields. For example, in Sąjūdis’ electoral program of 1990 the major slogan declared:

“NORMAL LIFE TO INDEPENDENT LITHUANIA!

¹²³ “Deutschmark Nationalismus.”

DEMOCRACY, INDEPENDENCE AND WELL-BEING ARE
INSEPARABLE!”

Explanations why expectations were not met and the liberation movement promises were not fulfilled derived from various social texts. Some maintained that independence period promises were not fulfilled because the former communists came to power, others pointed out the incompetence of the new political leaders. In congruence with liberation movement rhetoric some claimed that it was 50 years of Soviet rule which had destroyed existing potential, work ethics, and good habits. Some informants argued that people’s selfishness, stealing, and appropriation ruined all hope for the future. The doctor, in his late 50s, reasoned that thievery was the major problem:

The most important problem—I don’t know whether our elites understand this or not. Whether our major leader—Landsbergis, understands this or not. You cannot disappoint people like that. [...] We did not overcome the Soviet system. No, we cannot overcome it. Not yet. [...] Greed and thievery [*gobšumas ir vagystės*] govern Lithuania.

Invoking globally circulating discourses on “terrorism,” the doctor continued:

Neither Russian... nor American... or some kind of Arab intelligence, well, you know... terrorists. Only one problem... which every Lithuanian has... [it is] thievery. If you get rid of that, everything is going to be in order. Lithuania will be like America [the United States].

More often greediness and thievery were attributed to the political elites than to people or “Lithuanians.” The state in its various personalized forms, such as “mafia,” “clan,” or “lords” (see chapter 6), was thought to inflict harm on Lithuania, to deceive the nation or the people, and to corrupt independence. Invoking reasons unavailable in the discursive market in Lithuania in 1988–1991 (thus, explicitly present-informed readings of the liberation movement) one seventy-year-old woman argued that she did not go to events organized by Sąjūdis because “the ones who were willing to make millions joined the movement. [...] They deceived people and now they are pleased.” Elvyra, a doctor from Kaunas, argued that the political elites betrayed people and the common cause:

They [political elites] close their eyes before the common people. [...] They see only themselves. Now those who organized Sąjūdis, the signatories [of the Act for the Independence of Lithuania] require high pensions. On TV one said that they were there at the

most dangerous moment. They were not alone [the people were with them]. They were in warm rooms, while thousands were outside [in the winter time]. Thousands surrounded the building [the Parliament building], no one [the enemy] could get through the mass of people.

Another woman, in her late 40s, claimed that she used to run to collect signatures to promote Sąjūdis, but now she was disappointed. She objectified her disappointment by talking about the elites who want to profit from serving in the Seimas:

Everything seemed so beautiful, so... almost like communism in the other times. And now... I am disappointed. Totally disappointed. I don't even go voting. I know that nothing good will happen. What is going on in the Seimas? What is going on? They watch only themselves. They stay in the Seimas to secure good pensions for themselves. [...] Unbelievable...

Some argued that the state was recaptured by other elites and that “nothing has changed:”

We did not go anywhere [to meetings, etc.], but we celebrated with everyone. Something had to happen, something had to happen... You know... Something. The Russians were forced to leave, the army was gone... Well... Now everyone is disappointed. The same ones who were in power earlier, they are in power now. Nothing is changed [a 73 year old pensioner from the largest village, a woman].

Memories of the liberation movement variously reiterated the differences between the political elites and the people and reproduced existing hierarchies. Valius, a village sexton, in his 50s, claimed that he helped *them*, i.e., the political authorities, when he guarded the radio station: “You know when we had to be, we were there, to protect the radio station. I was two nights there. When those Russians wanted to take it over. Well, when it was necessary, I helped them. I have nothing against it. If it was needed now, I would help them again.” On another occasion Valius claimed that he helped Landsbergis, but he would have to think, if Brazauskas [former President and the Prime Minister] asked for help. Valius's reluctance indicated distrust of the current leaders and their political endeavors resonating in other informants' discourse.

As in the examples cited above, other recollections of the liberation period were mediated by the experiences of post-socialism. Adolfina remembered how she was standing by the TV tower and the Parliament. She started to cry when she remembered the deadly night of the 13th of January, 1991. “Well,” the woman said, “it is better now, I think so...” In

a regretful tone, she said that she “waited for Lithuania... but for a little bit different [Lithuania]. I expected it to be different.” When I asked what she had expected, the woman responded: “A more just one. More just.” A family from Kaunas in their early 60s expressed their disappointment with liberation period ideals by articulating disapproval of changed social and moral orders:

Anelė [Albertas’s wife]: Everyone believed strongly [in liberation movement ideals]. [People thought] that it was going to be better. That it will be beautiful and clean... Later bad things started to appear. How to say... If that selfishness had not emerged... The ideas were very good. We loved our homeland [*Tėvynė*]. Later the homeland sort of degenerated...

Albertas: People were unified. Before independence. Later sores opened [*labai daug negerovų atsirado*]. Earlier you loved to meet a person at night. Now, if you meet one, you don’t know what to do. To hide or what. You don’t know how [one will behave]...

Anelė: Once he was almost beaten up.

Albertas: Three young guys. Recently, maybe half a year ago. I saw them coming straight at me... I moved to the other side. I heard one saying: “if that old geezer [*senis*] had not moved, I would have beaten him up [*nuskytų*]. [...] Lithuanians were united, no differences. And then it started... that materialism. Some emerged as rich. Others as poor. It is so painful that most people live poorly... even those who work... common people, they work honestly. They can hardly make ends meet.

Memories of the liberation period reveal that many people supported liberation, even if they did not participate directly in events of the liberation movement. Most people also connected to its values like freedom, Lithuania, and nation(-state). Values and symbols apparently were the means to think, as illustrated in recollections of expectations of better times rather than a means to think certain things. At present “liberation” is a means to discuss post-socialist changes, like changes in moral and social orders which in some cases resulted in marginalization. Knowledge about nation and liberation is incorporated into various post-socialist texts which reflect particular subjectivities and social locations.

7.4 MEMORY AND EXPERIENCE OF SOCIALISM

The informants' relation to the liberation period depended on their individual experience and identity in the Soviet period. Genadijus, a Russian-born militiaman who lost his job in the early 1990s as, according to him, a “non-national cadre,” said that liberation period events were a “circus.” Unlike others, he refused to accommodate to the newly framed history and claimed that everything was staged. Genadijus argued against the discourse of mass patriotism, devotion, and voluntary defense of strategic objects, thus, against people's commitment to “liberation:”

We saw that circus. [...] When they talk on the TV, everything seems beautiful and interesting. [...] However, those [who guarded the telephone company, which he could observe from his apartment balcony] were drinking all the time. They got alcohol and money [to guard the telephone company].¹²⁴

Milda, Genadijus's wife, a Lithuanian herself, agreed with her husband's opinion that it was a “circus.” She claimed that she was scared to death during that turbulent time of the late 1980s and early 1990s. She asserted that at rallies people used to call on the Russians to “go home,” to leave for Russia. Her son who carried a Russian last name, was asked at the beginning of the school year why he did not “go home,” i.e., to Russia.

The freedom of Lithuania, or any other nationalist ideals promoted by Sajūdis were also irrelevant to Jadvyga N., the party secretary from the largest village, in her late 50s. By speaking about social injustice, social and economic insecurity at present she reiterated the “better times” (the better Soviet times) discourse:

Jadvyga N.: O.K. Russians were occupiers, but which occupier built factories and roads for us? [...] The occupier wasn't so threatening as many say now. I always used to say, it is not going to be good under the Lithuanians, then [in Soviet times] we had jobs. [...] I was responsible as a party secretary if a worker [*darbo žmogus*] had any concerns. I had to offer subsidized trips to resorts or health spas, there had to be everything for the working class. [...] We used to go to the Caucasus, Crimea, etc. [...] In Soviet times people lived very well. [...] Now you can live

¹²⁴ Several of the informants in the second largest village remembered being paid for guarding the radio station close to the village. Pijus, a village head, remembered that he used to get five rubles for a 24 hour stay. However, those who were paid did not think that pay for their service compromised their patriotism.

the way you want. Now young girls are hookers. Can you imagine that? We were young, I was young, we used to study, we graduated, got jobs. And now? [...] What does this system give to the young? Can a poor village kid ever finish college [like in Soviet times]? [...] The Soviet system had many advantages. You can say what you want. Many advantages.

Neringa: How about the freedom of Lithuania?

Jadvyga N.: What is the difference, if it is free or not.

Membership in the Communist Party did not mean that an individual developed opposition to nationalist values. Some former CP members' claims provide evidence that in the Soviet-period subjectivities were produced in terms of both communist and nationalist ideologies (cf. Verdery 1991), whose co-existence is negated in post-socialist public discourse. Nationalist ideology helped former CP members to relate to liberation period nationalism. Mykolas, the vice-president of a large enterprise in Soviet times and a CP member, argued:

I think 90% of us, Lithuanians, welcomed the declaration of independence. Whatever we were, but we were Lithuanians in our souls [*kokie ten bebuvom, bet visi dūšioj buvo lietuviai*]. It is wrong that now some are called sugar beets [*runkeliai*] and others not. [...] Freedom is one of the major individual needs. There is national identity, a national state...[...] You want to be yourself. In your own state. It does not matter how it was, but we thought that we were Lithuanians, that there is a Lithuania.

Many informants who were former CP members were actively involved in the liberation movement.¹²⁵ Egidijus, a former chief engineer in the largest village, in his early 50s, participated in many events. He also thought that it was going to be “better.” Like many others he remembered how people were united, shared food and clothing. According to him, a short time changed everything dramatically. “We became materialists, we started to measure everything by money. This is not good. This is wrong.” Rolandas, an art expert and former physicist, in his mid 40s, also participated in many liberation movement events. When asked why he did, he responded that because of herd mentality (*bandos instinkto*), patriotism, which “was important then.”

Many deportees, political prisoners, dissidents, and others who experienced the Soviet period as oppression (see chapters 3 and 4) were the most enthusiastic about the

¹²⁵ See Senn (2002) for discussion of involvement of the former CP members in Sąjūdis.

liberation movement. They were also least likely to express disappointment with the present. Even if expressed, disappointment was not articulated in nationalist rhetoric; the ideals of independence, nation, Lithuania were not questioned (see chapter 3). The liberation movement gave a social cause and historical significance to their biographies of, in many cases, imprisonment, persecutions and/or deportation as well as experiences of social otherness in Soviet times. As argued in chapter 4, liberation also granted them visibility, recognition, and respect. A woman, a deportee, in her early 70s, argued:

How could one not wait for Lithuania, oh my God [said in a diminutive form *dievulėlian*]... it looks like everything terrible has passed. [...] During Sąjūdis it was terrible. My son... I could not keep him home. We all went to Kaunas to defend [the strategic objects, such as the Parliament, the TV and radio stations, etc.]...

In the villages the older inhabitants' memories of the first independence instigated indifference and skepticism towards the liberation movement events. Memories of the hardships of childhood and remembered poverty in the interwar period prevented them from expecting "anything good of Lithuania." Pranė asserted that she "was not happy about Lithuania, because I knew it is wrong. I grew up under that Lithuania. I knew that then children could not go to school, nothing..." Vitkus from the second largest village, in his early 60s, recalled that his mother used to say that then also (like in his opinion now) "lice bit (*utėlės graužė*). Then people wore bast shoes (*vyžas*). Now it is the same in the village. Well. Now we have shoes, but one cannot always get those foreign shoes [he referred to the shoes people get at the second-hand stores]." Aldona remembered that when she was going to vote for a "free Lithuania," she was warned against it by her older neighbor. The neighbor said that "you don't know what Lithuania was like. We know... It was very hard then. If a farmer had a forest, horses, land, he had to pay high taxes. Under Smetona [the President of interwar Lithuania in 1919–1920 and 1926–1940] nobody lived well. One could earn five litas harvesting hay the whole day. That's all. We lived well [said ironically]. It is a fairy tale that they lived well."

Pranė, the oldest inhabitant from the second largest village, rendered her vision of the past of the interwar Lithuania:

There wasn't anything good, dear. It is only that it was Lithuania, that the name was precious. For common people there wasn't anything good. We worked, we experienced hardships [*mes vargom*]. My father passed away, there were a bunch of us [children] left. I was eight years old when I started to earn my bread [*išėjau sau duonelės užsidirbti*]. I herded pigs at farmers' with my feet cracked and bleeding [*Pas ūkininkus ganiau kiaules, vargau... kojėlėm sutrūkusiom, keruvinom*]. Like other children. There were no social benefits [*niekas tų pašalpų nedavė*], nobody could get education [*niekas į tuos mokslus nėjo*]... We are uneducated. I don't remember any good deeds under Smetona, nothing was better. Those who had, they had. Those who had land, they were farmers. [...] You have to know what a shepherd's bed was like. There was a wide bench by the door, by the wall. If you got a poor quality [*prastą*] pillow, that was it. You had to sleep huddled up [*susirietęs*]. That's your bed. You did not have a better one. Nobody made you delicious pancakes nor delicious porridges. [...] The sun was rising and you were in the field already with the herd.

Pranė's sad and poetic story is very reminiscent of literary works which were part of the school curriculum in Soviet times, such as Juozas Baltušis's "Sold summers" ("Parduotos vasaros"). Depictions of childhood poverty and serving at others' farms were part of Soviet times ideological narratives about exploitation of the poor by the rich in interwar Lithuania. Pranė's like some others' experience resonated with the Soviet time texts of exploitation and drew to them for ideas and images by reproducing them into the present.

Voices questioning "liberation" and liberation period ideals emerge from post-socialist spaces of social otherness and from resistance to post-socialist history which delegitimizes socialist identities and lived experiences. Connections to the liberation movement depend on Soviet-period subjectivities reproduced into post-socialist history. Various social others of the Soviet period, like the deportees, were among the most enthusiastic about the liberation period. Even if their social status decreased in post-Soviet times, they rarely questioned nationalist values. Most former CP members also welcomed the liberation movement. However, as the following discussion shows, some of them could not imagine a "nation" which denied them social status, power, and authority. There were also others who were indifferent or opposed to the liberation either because of memories and experiences of poverty in pre-war World War II independent Lithuania or because of

dispositions connected to being a Russian militiaman, negatively addressed by the symbolic regimes of the liberation period.

Many who were enthusiastically involved in liberation period events disassociate from liberation period ideals in various registers of disappointment. Social texts, such as the ones promoted during the liberation period, may successfully integrate people into an imagined community, but later cease to provide ideas for articulations of social history and self as a social subject. The disappointed and those opposed to independence in the late 1980s and early 1990s emerge as a community of common discourse. However, they are not necessarily a community of common values. The disappointed may still think that liberation was essential (*à la* Senn [2002]), while those opposed to liberation may not share such essentialism. The latter constituted the minority among informants.

(Dis)connections between liberation, nation(-state), and people emerge not only in memories of the liberation period, but also in discussions of post-socialist official history of past oppression and present freedom. In the following section I argue that conceptions about present freedom and past oppression are dependent on subjectivities and lived social histories.

7.5 REARTICULATIONS: LIBERATION, NATION, AND SELF

7.5.1 Particular freedom

In chapter 3 I argued that Soviet-period social history was experienced as foreign and oppressive by those who constituted the opposition to the Soviet regime because of their background and social location. In many cases these people employed nationalist ideas to justify their stances. They rarely challenged or negotiated ideals including “liberation” and “nation.” I defined “oppression” as a relative category as individuals felt “oppressed” in different ways. It was the experience of foreignness of social history which limited individual agency and which produced an individual as the other through various agents employing

techniques of constraint and discipline. From my perspective, there is no general oppression of a society, only oppression in particular cases, when the relationship between an individual and history is perceived as being one of foreignness and constraint.

Informants who did not perceive Soviet-period social history as foreign and oppressive usually presented it in common sense idioms. Common sense is not a neutral body of knowledge (Geertz 1983). According to Gramsci, common sense is the sedimented body of knowledge and beliefs about the world and how to act in it (Gramsci 1971:503 cited in Linger 1993, Woost 1993). In the case of the informants to be cited, it was a belief in particular rules according to which the Soviet-period society developed and articulated itself. Like in Wolfgang Becker's film "Good Bye Lenin!" (2003) these rules were a basis for people's meaningful existence.

In "Good Bye Lenin!" the protagonist Christiane Kerner suffers a heart attack and falls into an eight-month coma. During her unconscious period, the Berlin Wall falls. The doctor puts Alex, Christiane's son, under strict orders not to cause her any excitement whatsoever. Alex understands that the fall of socialism may be threatening to his mother since she was a dedicated communist. Alex engages in the restoration of socialism by collecting old jars from garbage to satisfy his mother's craving for pickles, producing TV reports about the socialist GDR, furnishing the apartment with things from GDR times, and wearing old clothes. Inconsistencies are explained in socialist idioms—"Coca Cola" becomes the "sozialistisches Getränk" (socialist drink), since the original flavor of Coca Cola, as confirmed by the "international scientists" in the fictive news, was developed in the 1950s in laboratories of the GDR. This explains the Coca Cola advertising Christiane observes outside her window. To justify foreign cars, things, and people, Alex and his friend produce a TV report on West Germans striving to live in East Germany in search of the good life they did not have in their capitalist country. At the end of the film the narrator Alex claims to have produced a country that never existed. The GDR he created for his mother was the GDR he would have liked to have lived in.

The film is a parody of socialism and socialist subjectivity. However, Christiane is the only one who is happy and peaceful while others are exiles in their own country. The former

first German astronaut Sigmund Jähn, the idol of Alex's youth, is a taxi driver. His neighbor Ganske complains that "they betrayed us and sold us out," "for that we worked for 40 years." The doctor remembers that in socialism they all were valued people. The narrator Alex comments that "heroes of work became unemployed" and "everything she [his mother] believed dissolved into air in a few months." Life was deprived of meaning and value. Being able to prolong the socialist common sense, Alex saves his mother's recognition as an honored socialist society member, the value of her interests, the significance of everyday life and work. Christiane's commitment and passion for society's progress remain meaningful. Alex's actions are guided by existentialist reasoning (see Frankl 1984)—the failure to find meaning and a sense of responsibility in existence may deprive his mother of existence.

During the interviews invocations of less fully conscious, transparent realms of thought—the experientially insistent world of common sense—were claims for power, authority and legitimacy as well as for the recognition of past-informed selfhood, values, entitlements, and moral dispositions which were challenged and even denied by a *post-socialist* society of common sense and post-socialist national history. During my research, informants who invoked socialism as common sense history claimed not to have experienced any oppression in the Soviet period.¹²⁶ Violeta, in her early 50s, from a town near the largest village, a former CP member with a high standing in Soviet times (and at present), disputed others' notions of oppression:

I didn't feel any opposition... I don't know, nothing embarrassed me. Maybe because there weren't some kind of deportees in my family who were against... my grandmother was, for example, a sharecropper's daughter [*kumečio dukatė*]. A sharecropper's daughter, illiterate. She couldn't read or write. My mother, she had four diplomas, she had a PhD, was an associate professor [*docentė*]. How could an illiterate person who used to do the laundry for Jewish

¹²⁶ In some cases informants who invoked the Soviet past as common sense relations used metaphors of "lie," "absurdity," and "constraint" speaking about particular events or processes. However, these events or processes were not selected to speak about their relation to social history and they were not indicative of generalized negativity towards it. For example, Mykolas, the former vice-president of a large enterprise in Kaunas and a former CP member, now the manager of an insurance company, a Kaunas resident in his early 70s, claimed that he did not feel any constraints in the Soviet times. He asserted that "you did not have to talk things which you were not expected to talk about," but he did not interpret this as a fact of oppression.

people, worked at the mill... [...] And she could let her children go to college. If not for the Soviet government [*tarybą valdžią*]... who would my mother be today, or I?

Violeta did not even think that there was an occupation. As evidence Violeta, like Jadvyga N. cited above, invoked cracks in the roads, which only now have started to be filled (*pradėjo kelių duobes užglaistyti*). In an ironic tone she pointed out that these roads were made by “occupiers.”

Virtually any commodity, event, or process can function as evidence for oppression or the absence of it and can serve as a medium for objectifying the oppressed nation or for rendering any other images of society. Thus, the cracks in the roads indicate the lack of concern of the present “state” or the elites, while the building of roads is a sign of care, concern, interest, and thoughtfulness which are the opposite to what “occupation” popularly implies. Similarly, learning Russian at school, writing dissertations in Russian, Russian as the language of administration, officials and neighbors from Russia, Russian taxi drivers in Vilnius, Russian movies at the cinemas and Russian programs on the TV could become signs of russification or, on the other hand, simply designate common sense relations and occurrences. When asked to respond to ideas about russification, Juozas, a former director of an Institute and a CP member, argued that there was “neither russification, nor the KGB.”¹²⁷ He remembered a phone call in the late 1980s when somebody called and said that Juozas had to know that the person on the phone, a KGB officer, was responsible for him. This was only once in his lifetime and he did not pay any attention. Juozas told me: “You know. I have not seen him. Well, I said. It’s fine. Be responsible for me. So what?” Violeta, Juozas’s wife, argued:

Russification... You had to write your dissertation in Russian. There were more textbooks in Russian, well, for more serious work. Well, but wait. Compare Lithuania and Russia. It is no doubt, they had a great pool of scholars, all the potential, I think. Well, not all, but much greater. What’s the difference—now English is everywhere.

Egidijus, a former chief engineer of the kolkhoz of the largest village, also disputed ideas of russification. He argued that one had to know Russian. “There were Russians;

¹²⁷ The KGB was invoked not accidentally. In post-Soviet history russification and the KGB belong to the same “species” by classifying them together as, usually, evidence of oppression.

Russian was the language of communication between Lithuanians and Russians in Lithuania and outside it.” According to Egidijus, now “we learn English. You can also question that. Artificially [*dirbtinai*] you can speak whatever you want, but... Certainly it is good to know several languages.” Egidijus, like Juozas and Violeta, articulated Soviet-period interactions as common sense relations.

The socialist society of common sense tends not to share other subtexts of oppression, such as oppression of religion, prohibitions to celebrate national holidays or cultural events like Christmas, Easter, or St. John’s day. Violeta and Juozas argued that in the Soviet period people could celebrate Christmas and Easter. Furthermore, they questioned the ideas about religious oppression:

Juozas: Now they say that people were not allowed to celebrate Christmas and Easter.

Violeta: Everyone celebrated.

Juozas: Nonsense. Why do they talk that way? Everybody... dyed ... eggs ...

Violeta: And took to work, with all the directors... listen, they used to drink, celebrate...

Juozas: Why say that you had to hide... nonsense.

Violeta: Nobody hid anything.

Juozas: My mother was a teacher. Nobody hid away, always, you know, celebrations were not special, because there was not much to put on the table. Well.. you sit and have a Christmas Eve dinner, some herring... neighbors come, you know. Or alone... but nobody hid away. [...] Only if someone of ours [like coworkers] informed, if they were angry at someone, they could... you know, Lithuanians are like that... informed...

Violeta: Intrigues... If there was a complaint that a director celebrates something or the like... You had to respond. All [people] were the same, but you had to respond. There were cases when you were called... on the carpet [*pakviestas ant kilimo*]. [...] And in regard to religion, I, for example, how to say it, my grandmother also was a free thinker [*laisvamane*]. Me too... nobody insisted [that she go to church], and I did not miss [religion].

Juozas: We gathered on the second day of Christmas or the second day of Easter. I never punished anyone [employees] for not coming to work on that day. No-one. I didn’t even give it a thought... We used to celebrate on those days at work. There wasn’t any serious work on those days. You had to answer phone calls. It wasn’t that you could leave. You [just had to] listen, listen [if the telephone rings]... [...]

Juožas: Now they say that the practice of religion was restricted. God knows.¹²⁸ I cannot say anything—I have not experienced that. I remember in my village there used to come old ladies [*bobikės*], and they used to say: “Director, we have to go to church.” I used to give them a van, and they went to church... The church [in “his” village] was closed. A small village. Now it is open. On the other hand, we rebuilt that church.

The district authorities helped us... [...] There was an inspector. He wrote that the church is an unrelated object [to the construction work carried out in the village]. I told him, it’s for our people. He hid his notebook then.

Juožas’s words about having to answer phone calls on the second day of Christmas or Easter as well as dissuading the inspector from recording the church as a “foreign” object confirm that rules constraining behavior (from others’ point of view) were present. However, Juožas approached the rules differently from the others who invoked the same rules to prove their arguments about oppression. For Juožas these rules were the habitual ways of communication over which he had authority because of his position as the director of an Institute and as a member of the CP. Furthermore, contrary to what Juožas seems to indicate, it is likely that religious events, conflicting with officially supported ideology, were not celebrated openly because they challenged official ideology and state authority. As representatives of the state and as interested sides in the continuity of official articulations and rules of social history on which their social standing rested, people like Juožas could hardly celebrate Christmas as a religious ritual or, for example, go to church. It might have been a cultural event deprived of its religious and nationalist readings and still celebrated behind closed doors. Juožas’s assertions about the possibility to celebrate Christmas in Soviet times is a way to reclaim authority at present, to produce his subjectivity congruent with official versions of present history as well as to restore legitimacy for the Soviet-period past and for socialist identities.

For others, the celebration of Christmas was a collision of different moral worlds, defined by conflicting knowledge and power relations. Unlike Juožas, for Algirdas, an engineer from Kaunas, in his 40s, born outside Lithuania in a deportee family, religious celebrations were acts of disloyalty. It was disloyalty (or opposition) first of all which was a

¹²⁸ The words used were “Perkūnas žino.” Perkūnas is the Thunder god, one of the three most important gods in Lithuanian mythology. “Perkūnas žino” like “God knows” is an idiom.

basis for cognitive dissonance, i.e., the experience of contradiction between official ideology and practice, such as was embedded in Algirdas's experience:

Christmas was celebrated, but nobody had to know about that. Because my father was a professor, my mother also worked at the Institute, if somebody found out, you can be fired immediately... You had to be cautious. I remember, if there was a party... at home... if someone tried to tell a political anecdote, my father changed the topic in order not to talk politics at home when there were many people. You never know who may hear...

The independence period did not produce the understanding that there exists a general liberation of society. As in the case of oppression, freedom was always particular and individually imagined. Some informants questioned freedom by presenting discrepancies between official texts on liberation and their personal experiences. Stanislova, the former director of the school in the largest village and a teacher at present argued that she felt free in Soviet times, when she could go to the theater as many times as she wanted, go to a restaurant with her friends, exchange visits, and travel:

How to understand freedom?... If you hang a national emblem and a flag, are you free? Do you live in free Lithuania then? I wasn't persecuted... maybe some were... persecuted and repressed. They may have a different opinion. I didn't see any kind of oppression. Now if you go to a shop, you have to leave [because you cannot afford to buy anything]. There is no freedom for me now...

Similarly, Daiva, a school janitor from the largest village, argued that independence did not bring liberation from anything. According to her, Lithuania is not free. She reasoned that one cannot say anything freely. "It is as it was. For example, at work... you cannot say anything that can be disliked... [...] You cannot express all your opinions. You have to behave as you are told... Earlier? All the time it was like that. Earlier we were even less afraid to say what we think..."

Marija, a former city resident, an unemployed young mother of four children doubted the value of freedom because of the economic difficulties her family experienced:

I do not care whether Lithuania is free or not, if it is so difficult to make a living. [...] It is free and there is nothing to eat, no money, no jobs. [...] I did not experience any harm or injustice under the Russians. Nothing. I lived much better then and I would be happy, if that time came back.

For others the period of independence brought freedom and the possibility to author their own lives and inventions. Unlike Marija from the second largest village who claimed that she does not care about freedom, “if it is so difficult to make a living,” Saulius, a well-known historian, in his late 40s, argued in response to people like Marija that for him “freedom of speech is much more important than the quality of food.” Talking about the Soviet period he remembered that he had lived in a hermetic structure with several other intellectuals whom he trusted. He recalled that he had suffered from feelings of hopelessness, impossibility, nihilism, and desperation. In Soviet times, Saulius was critical of Soviet-period history in his lectures at the university until the KGB found out. Later, with several other historians and students he created an affinity group where members could talk as they wished. Saulius argued that studying history had been compensation, because he could “live” in another century.

Thinking about liberation, I asked Rytis, my acquaintance, a historian, in his mid 40s, from Vilnius, what independence gave to him. Taking my question as a joke (it has to be treated as a joke for subscribers to post-socialist common sense), he send me a list of twelve items. The first four were: (1) “I can speak and write freely what I want;” (2) “I can do that in the language I choose;” (3) “I don’t feel denigrated by the physical presence of foreigners [*svetimųjų*] as well as by their psychological violence: in the streets there are no foreign soldiers, there also are no militiamen in foreign uniforms;” (4) “I regained dignity as an individual [*kaip žmogus*] and as a professional, because Russian language specialists as well as lecturers of the Soviet Union Communist Party history are not being paid more for the same work than others.”¹²⁹ For historians Rytis and Saulius liberation gave freedom of speech and recognition of them as authors owning intellectual property. In Soviet times an author was a link between a product and the socialist state, which controlled an author’s production (see Grama 2005). There was a focus on the product and its social(ist) function at the expense of the author (see Grama 2005). Post-socialist (intellectual) property regimes provided

¹²⁹ He also spoke about freedom to travel, awareness that no one can persecute him, that nobody tries to force him to join any party or any other political organization, also about the absence of “Soviet propaganda” on the TV, etc., that the state of Lithuania is a reality, that he can drink good coffee in a café as opposed to coffee mixed with laundry detergent in the Soviet times, and that taxi drivers try to speak in Lithuanian in Vilnius.

recognition of an author and authorship, and gave venues to accumulate various kinds of symbolic, economic, or political capital, circulation of which in socialism was owned, hoarded, and controlled by the state (cf. Grama 2005). Thus, for historians Rytis and Saulius the post-socialist period was liberating and empowering, while for people like Marija, Stanislova, and Daiva it was constraining and marginalizing. For historians or women, freedom was conceived in the context of their experiences of post/socialist histories.

Socialist common sense tended to question the liberation movement and post-socialist period interpretations of the Soviet period as oppression. Consequently, those holding such views negotiated the post-socialist notions of liberation/freedom in an attempt to reclaim power and authority and to reassert legitimacy for the social and moral orders of the Soviet period. Like oppression, freedom was always particular, ranging from regaining power and recognition based on intellectual property to negative experience of liberation as constraints of everyday life. Liberation is individually imagined at present—some reject “freedom” because it contradicts or is meaningless in respect to their experience of, in many cases, post-socialist marginalization. Informants by invoking liberation in terms of a particular text position themselves within the meaningful universe of the “social” and reproduce themselves as particular social subjects of post-socialist history.

Spaces of negative relationships to “liberation” cover the disappointment with post-socialist developments of those who supported the liberation movement, continuing opposition to “liberation” by those who did not support liberation, and questioning of “freedom” by people who think of socialism as common sense history and who in most cases also supported liberation. The negativity may be articulated by strong supporters of national ideals, as the following section shows; or by people indifferent to “nation” and “liberation,” like many of the villagers discussed in the last section. The negative relation to “liberation” is the site of plural voices and multiple dialogues with agents of post-socialist political history. What is common among these various “communities” is the non-existent imagination of a “nation-state.” Absence of such an imagination partly accounts for negativity to “liberation,” because, as I claimed earlier, “liberation” was constitutive of the

new imagination of the “nation(-state).” To imagine a community of a “nation(-state)” would mean to share a specific historic consciousness (including support for liberation, which is part of the master narratives of post-socialist history) and to have a particular sense of a national self, congruent with liberation period modes of selfhood (like fashioning oneself in terms of post-socialist national ideals not shared by most informants¹³⁰). Most of the people I mentioned in this chapter belong to the community of the other imagination—a “nation” without a “state.”

7.5.2 Nation-ness (*tautiškumas*)

“Nation” among its multiple meanings is also a relation known as ethnicity, in which the nation supposedly comprises all those of common language, history, or broader cultural identity (cf. Hobsbawm 1990). Such a relation was conceptualized by German nationalists (see Brubaker 1992) who spearheaded by a literary middle class defined the nation in cultural terms around the conception of the Volk developed by Herder and the German romanticists. Since German nationalist sentiment developed before political unification of the nation in 1871, the nation was not conceived in political terms nor tied to the abstract idea of citizenship. Instead, nationalists conceived the prepolitical nation as an organic, cultural, linguistic, and racial community, as a *Volksgemeinschaft*¹³¹ (see Brubaker 1992). Similar conceptions of a “nation” have prevailed in Lithuania where historical opportunities to develop “nation” as a political symbol inseparable from the “state” and the values of “sovereignty” and “citizenship” have been variously interrupted.¹³²

Understanding of “nation” not linked to the “state” underlies claims in previously cited ideas, such as that during post-socialism “Lithuania” or the “nation” was captured by the political elites, or social interactions, such as helping the political elites during the

¹³⁰ For alternative examples see chapter 3.

¹³¹ On the other hand, Brubaker approaches nationality as grounded in political and cultural geography (see Brubaker 1992).

¹³² But see, e.g., Aleksandravičius, Egidijus and Antanas Kulakauskas 1996 *Carų Valdžioje: XIX amžiaus Lietuva*. Vilnius: Baltos Lankos; Lopata, Raimundas 1996 *Lietuvos valstybingumo raida 1914–1918 metais. Lietuvių atgimimo istorijos studijos*. Vilnius: Mintis.

liberation movement to further the elites' project of independence. In these claims, "nation" tends to be associated with "people" while the "state" and the political elites emerge as the opposition to "nation." The conception of "nation" not linked to the state does not explain all the range of social interaction, feeling and identification. However, it helps to understand a very visible tendency to dissociate "nation" from "state," and gives grounds to claim that questioning of liberation is not problematizing common national (horizontal) belonging.

Nation is disconnected from the state in conceptualizations of *tautiškumas* (nationness).¹³³ *Tautiškumas* is usually a relation of a subject to a nation without a state and one of the major ideologies about a "nation" in Lithuania. *Tautiškumas* tends to be defined as dispositions of a particular "nation," as an ethos, a specific culture, a language, and traditions, or even genetic information of a particular community. Jūratė, a professor from Kaunas, in her early 50s, described *tautiškumas* as a deep knowledge of a "nation," of our origins, and spirit, also as visible and invisible codes expressed in communication. *Tautiškumas* is also often perceived as preservation of traditions and the cultural/historical heritage. Thinking about *tautiškumas* Saulė, the teacher from the largest village, argued that she has established a museum. Together with her students she preserves old things, collects examples of folklore, visits the graves of insurgents of 1863, of book carriers (smugglers)¹³⁴ (*knygnešiai*), and of secret teachers¹³⁵ (*daraktoriai*), and plans to write a history of the village.

The major ideology of the nation, *tautiškumas*, is defined continuously with Soviet-period ideologies of nation. In the Soviet-period political notions of a "nation," i.e., notions which linked nation to statehood, sovereignty, and national citizenship, were prohibited.

¹³³ There is abundant literature on *tautiškumas* in Lithuania (e.g., Subačius 1999, Grigas 2001, Dumčius 2000). In this part of the chapter I reconstruct *tautiškumas* from collected interviews from predominantly the city of Kaunas (on the villages and "nation" see the last section of the chapter). During the interviews I did not ask about *tautiškumas*. Ideas about *tautiškumas* usually emerged remembering the liberation movement or invoking "nation" in general. Ideas about *tautiškumas* may coexist with belonging to a community of a "nation-state."

¹³⁴ Book carriers, who smuggled the forbidden Lithuanian books in Latin alphabet into Lithuania, are considered to be national heroes in Lithuania. They smuggled books printed outside Lithuania to Lithuania during the ban of print in Latin characters in 1864–1904. Russian authorities perceived the ban of print in Latin as the ban of the Polish alphabet and aimed to distract people of Lithuania from Polish influence (see Subačius 2005). They introduced the Cyrillic and legally printed ca. 60 Lithuanian books in the Cyrillic alphabet in forty years of prohibition (see Subačius 2005).

¹³⁵ Teachers of secret schools during the ban of Lithuanian print in 1864–1904.

However, imagination of a “nation” as a realm of cultural traditions, such as folklore, was allowed and even reinforced (cf. Creed 2004, see also Verdery 1991, Rausing 2004). Independence brought freedom to re/invent all kinds of traditions associated with “nation.” Paradoxically, many people conceive the post-socialist period as one of regression from patriotism and *tautiškumas*. Soviet times are approached as the period of deeper *tautiškumas* and more prominent patriotism. Some informants even refuse to share post-socialist “nation” as inauthentic. Authenticity is, thus, equated with the transmission through time of known traditions, familiar ways to worship and imagine the nation as well as habitual objectifications of “culture” and usual associations of “culture” with “nation.” Thus, new holidays, which emerged on the social landscape during post-socialism, are interpreted as violations of common ways to imagine and celebrate “nation.” Saulė, a teacher, presented herself as a patriot, unlike her students who celebrate Halloween and Valentine’s Day. She mentioned that on Valentine’s Day the students even stick hearts on the gravestones of partisans of Lithuania. Interestingly, both practices—visiting partisan gravestones and celebrating Valentine’s Day—are *post*-socialist. However, the former is based on sign substitution (visiting gravestones of heroes is a known practice), while the latter could count as an invention which departs considerably from the habitual practices related to sites under consideration (cf. Hanson 1989). Thus, while visiting gravestones of partisans was interpreted as an act of patriotism and an exercise in *tautiškumas*, sticking hearts on the gravestones on Valentine’s Day was not only an unpatriotic action, but also an illegitimate action (defined outside the realm of tradition) in a sacred site of commemorating (and re/producing) “nation.”

Ideas about degeneration of the “nation” or disappearance of *tautiškumas* are usually signs that people find hard to accommodate to various changes. Irena, a Kaunas resident, was among those who strongly supported the liberation movement. She regretted that liberation brought degradation of *tautiškumas*. To her mind, in Soviet times people were more nationalistic (*tautiškesni*), especially teachers who used to take children to historic sites. Now, according to her, they take students to the circus. Similarly, a Lithuanian language and literature teacher from the largest village argued that *tautiškumas* is disappearing. “Authors

[who were part of the school curriculum] are changed [...] the classics [Lithuanian] are not taught anymore.” She argued that “our patriotism is disappearing as well as knowledge about our nation [...] how can a child be a patriot, if he does not know his writers?” Thus, domestication of the foreign (see Ivy 1995, Befu 1993) or localization of the global (see Friedman 1992), like sticking hearts on the partisan graves, coexist with resistance to new ideas and practices expressive of “nation” and interpretation of these ideas and practices in various registers of regression from “authentic.”

Informants observed regression of *tautiškumas* and threat to the “nation” invoking language and migration. Irena regretted that in “free Lithuania” people will speak English and that the young people will disappear. Signs in English on the shops, supermarkets, also advertisements in the newspapers, some use of English words by the young as well as English songs on the radio make social space for some disorienting and foreign. For many informants, to be a Lithuanian is to speak Lithuanian. Aloyzas, a man, in his early 70s, from a town nearby the smallest village, a native of the village himself, argued:

I agree you have to know [different] languages. The more you know, the better. It’s a compliment. But it is a shame not to know your own language. [...] Now they don’t know their own language, but teach English to small children. Why such subservience [*pataikavimas*] and showing off. On the TV there is too much English. They sing in English. Why? Many people don’t understand it. It is the same as swearing.

Aesthetics of “nation” and patriotism was articulated in the context of Aloyzas’s experience:

There are so many Lithuanian songs. Beautiful songs. Especially the older ones. Post-war songs. Pre-war songs. These songs are so beautiful. I think everyone should have an understanding about the roots of the nation, about the past, and to think about the present. Not like now. [...] The nation may die out quickly this way.

Under the Russians, they thought [about Russian] that it is the enemy language. Looked suspiciously. And this... earlier [in Soviet times] people were more patriotic. [...] If you are a Lithuanian, you have to speak Lithuanian.

Some considerations about “nation” and *tautiškumas* express sensibilities about the “state.” For example, Aloyzas argued that in interwar Lithuania there were many patriots, which is why so many joined the resistance forces when the Soviet Union occupied

Lithuania. Aloyzas also thought that present developments—criminality, prostitution, disrespect of parents—are signs of degeneration of the nation. He also remembered how people used to sing patriotic songs in Vilnius in 1945 by the Gate of Dawn (*prie Aušros Vartų*); how one of his acquaintances who grew up in an orphanage used to say “my homeland—my mother Lithuania.” Then, according to Aloyzas, there was “real patriotism. People were against the Poles¹³⁶... strongly. There were real Lithuanians in our village. Not like Lithuanians now.”

The examples indicate that “nation” among its multiple meanings is also a horizontal solidarity, a positive interrelationship between people, and a symbol usually dissociated from the “state.” During the liberation movement “nation” as an ethnic community was among the shared meanings which helped many people to connect to nationalist discourses and, likely, to imagine this community as a “nation-state” through liberation. Imagination of the “nation” as an ethnic community and horizontal solidarity may have helped to dissociate from nationalist ideologies when they ceased to provide meaningful interpretations of the lived social history and appealing images for the future, as well as to see “liberation” as threatening to embodied subjectivities and everyday lives. It is revealing that questioning of “liberation” is not problematizing national belonging and the “nation.” Unlike discussions in literature on nationalism where “nation” has fulfillment in a sovereign state (see, e.g., Anderson 1983, cf. Borneman 1993), the data from villages and the city of Kaunas suggest that statehood, sovereignty, and citizenship, the values of liberal democracies, are not the necessary disposition for coexistence in a “nation” (see also Hobsbawm 1992).

“Nation” no longer mediates the relation between subjects and the state as it did during the period of liberation. In this context the liberation movement did not produce a new sense of belonging to a “nation-state” and a new “national subject.” Thus, disregard of the 15 years of history of independence discussed in intellectuals’ discussions at the beginning of this chapter are primarily expressive of individuals’ “false consciousness” about the “nation-state” to which liberation (sovereignty) is essential and intellectuals’ “false consciousness” about “nation-state” as an omnipresent imagination.

¹³⁶ The village was part of Poland in 1920–1939.

7.5.3 Village spaces

In village communities positive memories about socialism in most cases did not become translated into political support of the “Soviet state” (chapter 1). They were instead expressive of critiques of post-socialist developments. However, absence of political support of the “Soviet state” did not indicate present support of the post-socialist nation-state. Among many who spoke positively about the socialist period there was a significant indifference toward the nationalist values and the “nationality” of the state (see chapter 6). Furthermore, there was a remarkable disregard and distrust of the imagined “state” (see chapter 6).

In villages, “nation” as in the ideology of *tautiškumas* tended to be imagined as an ethnic community. However, unlike in urban spaces, in ethnically homogeneous village communities “nation” was a very indistinct subject of knowledge. “Nation” and “liberation” were rarely invoked unless informants were deportees or dissidents or unless I asked informants directly to respond to question like “is it important that Lithuania is free” or “how to describe what Lithuanians are.” My second question, which was the first that I started asking in order to arrive at some knowledge about “nation,” was met with great uneasiness to the extent that one woman suggested to me to consult the history books. To give the question about freedom of Lithuania was a better strategy and seemed to be more compatible with villagers’ ways of thinking and, thus, more congruent with my approach to how the research had to be conducted. However, it also yielded little knowledge about villagers’ perceptions of “nation” and “liberation.” When asked whether it is important that Lithuania is free,¹³⁷ many villagers answered my question speaking about personal problems and reiterating social regressions. For example, Ona said that “We waited for Lithuania so much. Everyone waited. But when it came, we did not become happier. Because pensions got lower.” Ona argued that she does not live as badly as some others. Unlike some others who claimed that they “want the Russians back,” she did not question “independence.”

¹³⁷ I asked this question when it was not clear what an informant thinks about “freedom,” “independence,” and “nation.” This question was most frequently given to people who spoke in terms of better socialist times and post-socialism as regression.

Another woman, in her late 70s, responded that she does not like present-day Lithuania, because “there are no middle class people. Either you are rich, or poor.” Julija, a teacher from the largest village, thought that “maybe it would be OK, if the elites would bring order. [...] For Lithuania it is worse, and worse and worse. If not this, then that...” Julija also was disappointed because the kolkhozes were destroyed, many people lost their jobs and “became like serfs.” A man, in his early 80s, responded to the question about free Lithuania: “you do what you want, you steal, you beat up others...” Marijona, the wife of the village head, argued that people wanted freedom, however, one has to know how to use freedom. She asserted that “On the other hand, under the Soviets the youth had to work; they had to finish school. It was different. Now there is freedom, but it takes people in the wrong direction. Especially the young: there are so many crimes...”

“Nation” was rarely invoked in memories of other periods, such as World War II or the post-war resistance movement and collectivization. In villages of Lithuania people most often recall that in the postwar period “some came at night, the others during the day” [partisans and the NKVD]. In the old cemetery of one village the graves of the “ones” and the “others” are side by side. The difference is in the inscription on the gravestones. Those gravestones which are on the graves of supporters of the Soviet forces have the note “died at the hand of bourgeois nationalists” (*Žuvusiam nuo buržuazinių nacionalistų rankos*). The gravestones on the graves of partisans who joined resistance forces are marked with the words “died tragically” (*Tragiškai žuvęs*). Both notes address the non-existing Soviet state and are congruent with the portrayals of official history in the Soviet period.

Frances Pine argues that the narratives about the war in villages of Poland were different from the war stories of the cities and that the stories of villagers were notable by the relative absence of political grand narratives (Pine 2002:165). Similarly to villagers in Lithuania, in Poland people remembered that “The Germans came during the day, and when we heard that they were coming we hurried to the forest with the cow and hid till it was safe. Then we’d go home, and someone would come and say ‘the partisans are coming’, so we’d take the cow back to the forest, and hide again through the night.” The most vivid account of this which Pine has recounted for one village ended poignantly “We never knew what was

happening, and we were always afraid” (Pine 2002:164). Pine argues that village stories “are all in different ways about insiders and outsiders, us and them, ourselves and strangers” (Pine 2002:165). In Podhale village, the dangerous stranger is a constantly looming and encroaching presence. An enemy presence is rarely clearly identified, nor is a situation read as a meeting with an enemy, or placed within the context of a wider political, national or international conflict. Pine argues that “the situations are understood from a totally local perspective, and outside places and political events are remapped so that local place becomes the centre of the story, and the stranger/outsider take their identity only from their lack of relation to that place and those people” (Pine 2002:166). As in villages of Lithuania, in Podhale there is little or no sense of nation, of the nation in Europe, or of Europe as an entity, spatial, historical, political, or cultural. Furthermore, in villages in Lithuania there is little sense of liberation and of global political and symbolic spaces like the Soviet Union, Russia, or the European Union.¹³⁸

Ideas of “nation,” “Lithuania,” and “liberation” had more currency in the smallest village community in the eastern part of Lithuania which during the years of the first independence of Lithuania in 1918–1939 was part of Poland. Thus, while people in other villages share memories about their poor childhood in interwar Lithuania, villagers in the smallest village read their poverty as an outcome of being under Polish rule. Pre-World War II Lithuania is remembered as a prosperous country from which people used to smuggle white salt and lighters. Purity, taste, light and technology stand for the imagined “reality” people experienced as children, tasting white salt and trying lighters. This reality is contrasted with their present experience “under Lithuania.” While many think that it was “better to live under the Russians,” they think of the present Lithuania as “unreal,” “corrupted by the elites” or “communists” (see chapter 6). Lithuania is continuously reproduced as a fantasy in the way it was produced “under the Poles,” “under the Germans,” and “under the Russians.” It is reproduced in the textual idioms which emerged because of the different

¹³⁸ Some recent anthropological analysis of ideological multiplicity in Polynesian nation imagining expresses concern that the idea of the nation itself is only weakly developed, particularly in rural areas of these countries (Philips 2004:244). However, as some studies show in ethnically heterogeneous contexts and in response to state sponsored nationalism like in socialist Romania awareness about “nation” was present in villages (see Verdery 1983, Kideckel 1993).

socio-political context of the village as well as because of perceptions of the boundaries between ethnic groups.

The liberation period did not produce the lasting “imagined community” (Anderson 1983) of a “nation-state” among many informants mentioned in this chapter. Rather, it produced “represented communities” (absent from this chapter) in which the legal, ritual, and electoral processes of post-socialism appeal to particular parts of the population (cf. Kelly and Kaplan 2001). These “represented communities” share consistent visions with the liberation movement texts about “nation,” state,” and “liberation.” A “national citizen” with a definite sort of historical consciousness and sense of a self belongs to a “represented community.” However, there are multiple “unrepresented communities” which also have a particular sense of historical consciousness and of a self. Like many villagers, or advocates of socialist common sense, these people negotiate and question official versions of history by rearticulating them in idioms congruent with their own experience of the past and by claiming recognition, authority, and legitimacy. While these people can be identified as an anomalous part of a national body because they question liberation, they often claim legitimacy employing the logic of the same symbols, i.e., ideas about nation, state, and liberation. Such ongoing and plural articulations of “nation” and “liberation,” the continuing struggle for meanings, are definitive of many post-socialist nationalisms and post-nationalist contexts and is common in times of historical changes (cf. Strathern and Steward 2001). They document the ongoing renegotiations of the social contract on the “nation-state” of the late 1980s and early 1990s.

8.0 CHAPTER 6: AUTHORITY, POWER AND THE POST-SOCIALIST STATE

Though Ioan was politically irrelevant, it was politics that sealed his fate. As rationing took hold in the early 1980s and work requirements and consumption regulations became more stringent, Ioan again took to acting out his drunken rage. One night he railed at length at state, party, and Ceaușescu without realizing that two security officials were in the bar. When someone warned him of their presence, he ran out in panic. Though repercussions were hardly likely, he hanged himself that night (David Kideckel *The Solitude of Collectivism* 1993:162)

Menenius: ... you slander

The helms o'th'state, who care for you like fathers,
When you curse them as enemies.

First citizen: Care for us? True indeed! They ne'er
cared for us yet. Suffer us to famish, and their store-
houses crammed with grain; make edicts for usury,
to support usurers; repeal daily any wholesome act
established against the rich, and provide more piercing
statutes daily to chain up and retrain the poor. If the
wars eat us not up, they will; and there's all the love
they bear us (William Shakespeare *Coriolanus* Act I, Scene I,
1966:56¹³⁹).

¹³⁹ Cited in Mathew Horsman and Andrew Marshall 1994 "After the Nation-State: Citizens, Tribalism and the New World Disorder." London: HarperCollinsPublishers.

However one labels the state—a “mask” by Abrams, an “abstraction” invoking Marx, a “fetish” by Taussig, or a “fantasy” following Lacan (see Navaro-Yashin 2002:186), the state appears to be an insurmountable presence in individuals’ lives.¹⁴⁰ I explore the state’s presence by looking at people’s understanding/experience of authority and power. I argue that “cynicism” is the common structure of feeling embedded in perceptions and experiences of the state (cf. Žižek 1995, Navaro-Yashin 2002). It entails negativity, distance, and irony, rather than resistance towards the state. Cynicism has an effect on the lives people live and the communication they carry out with the “state” whether in everyday conversations or at elections (see chapter 7). Cynicism encapsulates criticism of the state officials, seeing them as self-interested, immoral, and unjust. It also manifests distrust of authorities and difference between the people and the power elites. Cynicism derives from various contexts: the experience of power as omnipresent, immutable, and threatening prevalent in the socialist period, beliefs in equality and loyalty to a collective which no longer inform social relations, mysterious post-socialist circulations of wealth from which people feel completely or partly excluded, experience of destatization (Verdery 1996) and subalternity (see chapter 1).

In this chapter the “state” (*valdžia*¹⁴¹) refers to the political authorities. In several instances the “state” (*valstybė*¹⁴²) refers to a country governed by a political community. The term “political imagination” is borrowed from C. Humphrey to refer to “the swirling diversity of other, more open, multi-sited and creative opinions and ideas [in addition to discourses of leaders] produced by all sorts of people” (Humphrey 2002:259–260). “Power” is the ability “to structure the possible field of action of others” (Foucault 1984:428) and to

¹⁴⁰ See Gupta (1995) for the state’s presence in everyday life in India and Navaro-Yashin (2002) in Turkey.

¹⁴¹ *Valdžia* is a Lithuanian term used by many informants. It means: (1) right or power to subject to one’s will; political rule; (2) the state, government (colloquial); (3) agency with a higher power; (4) a ruling person/people (figuratively). *Modern Dictionary of the Lithuanian Language*. 2000. Keinys, S. et al., ed. Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas. (*Dabartinis Lietuvių kalbos žodynas*. 2000. Vyr. Red. St. Keinys. Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas).

¹⁴² *Valstybė* means: (1) an organized political community having the highest power; (2) a country governed by such a community. See *Modern Dictionary of the Lithuanian Language*. 2000. Keinys, S. et al., ed. Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas. (*Dabartinis Lietuvių kalbos žodynas*. 2000. Vyr. Red. St. Keinys. Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas).

carve out significance (Wolf 1990, Mintz 1985). “Authority” is an individual or a group of individuals, as in the term “elites” or “state officials,” having the power to structure the possible field of action of others. “Authority” stands for power itself.

8.1 POWER, AUTHORITY, AND MORAL DISCIPLINING

Drawing on the vignettes from my fieldnotes, I present several personal experiences of power and authority in post-socialist contexts. Two of these vignettes are primarily explorations of myself as a subject involved in production and consumption of post-socialist power and authority.

8.1.1 May, 2004. Kaunas. On a bus.

I was on a bus deep in my own thoughts. The bus was going down Vydūno Avenue, it passed “Telekomas,” the phone company. Suddenly my attention was grabbed by an ad on the back of another bus in front of me. On one side of the ad there was a smiling policeman with his arms crossed. Below the image was a question, “are you afraid of anything?..” I couldn’t understand the other side of the ad well. The bus turned and disappeared from my sight. It seemed that they were advertising the Internet, but I was not sure. I regretted that I did not have my camera with me and that I had looked too long at the policeman trying to figure out why he was in the ad. Everything lasted about a minute. I hoped that I would see the ad again, but I didn’t, and I never met anybody else who had seen it.

Advertisements provide good data because advertisers appeal to common knowledge. In this case, I think, the common knowledge was the experience/understanding of authority which could be invoked by the image of a policeman and the question “are you afraid of anything?” A smiling policeman, not a very common image, was a means to attract the observer’s attention and astonishment. Thus, an individual would notice the advertisement,

would be surprised by the juxtaposition of a smiling policeman and the question about one's anxieties, and then probably learn how to overcome his/her anxieties by studying the second part of the advertisement. However, at least in my case my attention was fixed on the policeman and I even failed to understand what was being advertised. Seeing the policeman and the question "are you afraid of anything?" created all kinds of associations. I thought it was absurd to place an image with a policeman and such a question on an advertisement because, my thoughts flew ahead, one should not be afraid of a policeman. In post-socialist public spaces, presumably informed by the rule of law, a policeman should not be staring at you with the question whether you are afraid of anything. His smile was friendly, but it also could be understood as ironic because of the question about anxieties and because a "smile" is "privatized" in post-socialist times—it is primarily observable in private spaces, such as private restaurants. I understood the question as an attempt to invoke anxieties of authority that were prevalent in Soviet times. Then anxieties were fostered by a specific understanding of power as immutable, unpredictable, and threatening. It was reinforced by the official state-sponsored culture of seriousness, to borrow Mikhail Bakhtin's (1981) terminology. A monopoly on power belonged to the party-state, "all-powerful, pervasive, and coercive, with violence against the citizen always a possibility" (Verdery 1996:219). As humorist Jaroslav Hašek wrote in the essay "Mister Inflexible" about a traveler on a train to Prague and a tax collector, people may have felt guilty, even if they had not done anything wrong: "This glance [of a tax collector] pierced the soul in such a way that even a person who had nothing to declare felt guilty somehow."¹⁴³ Reinterpreting Kideckel's (1993) example cited in the epigraph, understanding/experience of power as threatening may have sealed an individual's fate, as it did in the case of Ioan who hanged himself, even if repercussions were hardly likely. Similar power may have been invested in authorities, such as policemen. Therefore, the advertisement appeared to me as an example of an improper way to construct a public and post-socialist space.

¹⁴³ See Hašek, Jaroslav "Ponas Nepalenkiamasis." *Šluota*. 12/23/1983. P.12.

8.1.2 August, 2004. Kaunas. At Elena's.

Today I visited Elena. We talked about this and that. And then she started to tell me how she got the apartment she lived in.

After her marriage Elena and Andrius, her husband, lived in Švėkšna. Later they moved to Tauragė because Andrius got a job there—after the war [World War II] engineers were employed to rebuild cities. Then they lived in Šilutė and looked for a possibility to move to Kaunas. Fortunately, in Kaunas construction of a hydroelectric power station was started and Andrius got a job there. They moved to a very small apartment near Kaunas. Elena tried to get an apartment in Kaunas, but, as she remembered, no one was willing to deal with her. As I understood it, she appealed to the Executive Committee (*Vykdomasis Komitetas*¹⁴⁴). Then she went to Vilnius several times. At first, in Vilnius, nobody was willing to deal with her. But one day at the reception desk she was connected over the phone to, according to Elena, some kind of a responsible secretary. She told the secretary over the phone that she could not go home and tell her four children that she “had been to Rome and did not see the Pope.” This helped. Elena was received.

Elena put all kinds of documents on the secretary's table. She also had a document saying that Andrius had tuberculosis. She thought it might help her somehow. The secretary did not raise her head and kept writing until Elena finished explaining her situation. When the secretary raised her head, Elena asked her what she was supposed to tell her students [Elena was a school teacher], if asked, where she lives. It is said, she recalled telling the secretary, that the Soviet state provides for teachers, and that students can ask how the state provides for me. What will I have to tell to my students?... Elena said that before her visits there were some kind of ideologues at school and they spoke about provisions for teachers. They were the source of her ideas. After these words the secretary dropped her pen and asked where Elena had worked under the Germans [Lithuania was occupied by Nazi Germany during World War II]. Elena responded that she did not work at that time. The secretary asked then where her husband had worked. She told her. Apparently, they were

¹⁴⁴ The major state executive institution of a city.

“clean” since both did not work for the Germans, the “enemies” of the Soviet state. Then the secretary called the Executive Committee in Kaunas and asked why Elena’s family had not been assigned an apartment. She was told that they had to stand in line, that Andrius has been working in Kaunas for a short period of time, that he needed to work there for five years or so before he could get in line. They got the apartment with two small rooms and a very small kitchen close to the center of Kaunas. Elena lives there now.

Elena’s story about multiple attempts to reach authority has a ritual significance. She was engaged in a formal and non-daily routine behavior and believed in a power which had to change her life. She compared going to Vilnius and meeting the secretary to going to Rome and meeting the Pope. It was a “big moment” (see Turner 1967) of her life. The analogy with Rome and the Pope might have come to her mind because she was a Catholic. Telling the secretary that she wanted to see her as the “Pope” might have meant recognition of the secretary’s authority, but might also have carried possible danger because it was a religious analogy disapproved of by the Soviet state. The comparison certainly attracted the secretary’s attention because it was unexpected and unusual, like the smile on the policeman’s face and the question about anxieties in the previous example. The significance of Elena’s appeal was also accumulated in multiple and persistent attempts to reach authority, about which the secretary was aware.

The ritual significance of actions derives from Elena’s understanding of the complicatedness of her endeavor, or in the framework of my interpretation—her encounter with power (personified in the authority of the secretary) which Elena had to outwit, manipulate, please and make benevolent. Her bringing all kinds of documents shows that the situation was not predictable and clearly articulated and that it was not clear how/whether the authority can be influenced. Immutability of power was reinforced by the multiple refusals to accept her in Kaunas and later in Vilnius. These refusals reaffirmed Elena’s powerlessness. They might have discouraged Elena from trying to reach the authority, and influenced her to internalize passivity and submissiveness.

Power differences were reaffirmed in several situations in the story. Traveling many times to Vilnius can be interpreted as extraction of time (Verdery 1996) with those in power being able to control and devalue the time of the others. The secretary's indifference to Elena's situation also communicated the powerlessness and insignificance of her as a subject. The power of authority was also reaffirmed when the secretary called the Executive Committee in Kaunas. The call secured the apartment; it was the manifestation of personalized power.¹⁴⁵

Elena was able to influence the power which was the secretary's ability to "structure the possible field of action of others" (Foucault 1984:428) and to hinder the immutability of power. The turning point was her questioning of the state's authority by referring to the state's role to provide for its citizens as well as her inquiry about the social contract between the state and its people. By invoking her students Elena reminded the secretary about the ideological role she was supposed to play in society, while the state's role was to provide for teachers. It was an appeal to the ideology of a relationship between the state and its citizens as well as to the morality intrinsic to this relationship.

In this example I chose to emphasize unequal power relations in order to illustrate how power may have been experienced by an individual, consequently producing submissiveness, passivity, and even anxiety. Elena's story could be interpreted as one of successful resistance and heroic subversion of power and authority. However, in Elena's eyes her experience was neither a case of resistance, nor a case of heroism against malevolent power and authority. It was situational, relational, and individual dialogue in the Bakhtinian sense (1981) with the subject informed by belief and disbelief in state ideology, manipulation/outwitting and sincerity, rebelliousness and submissiveness. In the context of the social theory which relies on distinctions between dominant and dominated classes (see, e.g., Scott 1990, Willis 1977) or intellectual thought which divides the powerful and powerless (e.g., Havel 1985), Elena was a hybrid subject.

¹⁴⁵ On personalized power see Humphrey (2002).

8.1.3 Summer, 2003. Vilnius. The Embassy of Romania.

I had to get a visa to go to a conference on post-socialist Eastern Europe in Romania. Outside of the Embassy I had to ring a bell. Somebody responded in Russian and told me to wait. So I waited. There came another person, a businessman who was going to Romania, and not the first time. The two of us waited together. I was getting uneasy about being outside the door for about 20 minutes and started to wonder whether I had understood the message about waiting in the right way. The businessman said that probably I understood it well. Finally, the door opened and I got in, leaving the businessman behind.

A woman employee gave me forms to be filled out. After filling out the forms, I returned them to the same woman who passed them to a counselor sitting by another table. The counselor invited me to sit in front of him. He spoke perfect Russian. He was strict and somehow reminded me of Soviet time bureaucrats. I relaxed, observing and wondering about their behavior, serious faces, and attentiveness to their work, as the counselor went over my application form. He stopped at the line that stated “FATHER,” which was empty. He asked why I did not write my father’s name. I responded that he was deceased a long time ago (actually I was not sure whether I had to put the name or not, so I left the space blank). Here his voice unexpectedly rose up and he started to tell me that despite the fact that he is deceased I have a father. The “lecture,” in a strict educating tone, lasted a few minutes, and like Hašek’s traveler mentioned above, I started to feel guilty. I got anxious, tried to justify my behavior, but was constantly interrupted until I was finally allowed to write down my father’s name. I was constrained for the rest of the time until the counselor finished checking my application form and I was told to leave the room. Now I waited for 15 or more minutes not knowing whether I would get a visa or not. The businessman was in by this time, filling out an application form. Relaxed and carefree. He probably knew that no spaces are to be left blank. I was observing him when the woman came and handed me my passport. With a visa. I smiled to myself: “I have already experienced a piece of Romania!”

Research fieldwork is always fieldwork of one's self (cf. Rabinow 1977). In the Embassy of Romania, the strict, reprimanding and moralizing counselor's tone reminded me of similar styles of communication at schools, shops and other spaces in my childhood and adolescence in Lithuania. While in Soviet Lithuania it was the prevalent tone in many spaces signaling authority and power defining those spaces, in respect to this particular speaking tone, post-socialist spaces are much more fragmented and constantly challenged and redefined by alternative modes of communication. During my fieldwork I did encounter similar ways of talking as the one at the Embassy at Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania in Vilnius (the person who checks ID cards "gave me a lecture" about my improper behavior of taking a computer to the library without declaring it in advance), Vilnius University (where the coat room attendant told people reprovingly to hurry because it was 5 o'clock while actually it was 4:53, there were 7 minutes left until closing), Lithuanian Airlines (where a flight attendant asked to bring another [the second] bun again responded reprovingly and in a moralizing tone [however, smiling like the policeman on the advertisement] she stated that "this is not a restaurant"). I also remember a story told by my friend how in the early 1990s an Italian linguist ordered a meal at a pizzeria and waited about half an hour to get an almost cold dish. When he asked the waitress in Lithuanian why she did not bring it earlier when it was still hot, she responded that "this is not America!" For a short moment the Italian was confused, then spontaneously reacted: "of course it is not America, it's Europe!" In these examples authority can be tracked in the slightest modulations of tone. Thus, the reprimanding, moralizing and strict tone signifies authority, even if accompanied by a "post-socialist" smile. In case of state employees it is also state authority and state power invested in an individual.

As in the example with Elena, the performance of authority at the Embassy of Romania structured interaction there. Interaction was informed by codes of conduct, such as recognition of hierarchy, the unquestioned power of the state official, the moralizing and strict tone of the state official and the subject's submissiveness. My apologetic and submissive response was an expected behavior unlike probably my attempt to explain why I left the space blank which was a pretension towards a dialogue and towards equality in

power relations. The counselor interrupted me not because he did not pay respect to me as a client, as the situation did not require respect, and the relation of a professional and client in his codes of conduct. He interrupted me because I did not pay him respect by, most likely, not finding out in the beginning what to do about the unclear parts of the application as well as rationalizing my behavior. The counselor was an agent of a Parent-state, usually associated with socialism (see Verdery 1996), whose moral obligation was to educate its children. Such a state posits moral ties linking subjects to the state (Verdery 1994) which are the basis for moralizing tone in the spaces discussed. As in socialism, post-socialist subjects in these examples, are not presumed to be politically active, they are presumed to be grateful recipients—like small children in a family—of benefits (in my case a visa) that their rulers decide upon for them (see Verdery on socialism, 1994:228). This produces dependency, rather than the agency cultivated by citizenship or the solidarity of ethno-nationalism (see Verdery 1994:228).

Dependency, gratefulness, respect, and submissiveness were key to the above mentioned encounters in the library, at the university, on the plane and at a restaurant. In general the behavior of the waitress and others was a request to recognize authority by submissively agreeing to be disciplined. However, it was probably not that the owner of a private restaurant expected waitresses to discipline clients by reproducing power relations of a dominant—a restaurant employee and a dominated—a client and by expecting clients to eat almost cold dishes without complaining. It is more likely that the waitress enacted other understandings of power and authority, parallel to the counselor's understanding. Post-socialist rearticulations of authority also produced other hybrid forms like the smiling flight attendant moralizing about the subject's proper conduct and place in a hierarchy.

Perceptions of power as immutable, unpredictable, omnipresent, threatening and invested in authority who could personally interpret it and use it partly explains the overarching pessimism and complaining recorded in the chapters. This pessimism is exemplified in the anecdote about a Soviet pessimist and a Soviet optimist in the epigraph to Yurchak's article on power, pretense, and the anecdote (1997):

What is the difference between a Soviet pessimist and a Soviet optimist?

A Soviet pessimist thinks that things can't possibly get any worse, but a Soviet optimist thinks that they will.

Post-socialist anecdotes also record similar pessimism and also fatalism:

Here come G. W. Bush, the Queen of England and Adamkus [the President of Lithuania] to God, and they each ask how long they have to wait until their countries have no problems. Bush is told—40 years, the Queen of England—50 years, Adamkus—I will not live to see it [God will not live to see it].

Anthropologist Romas Vaštokas¹⁴⁶ remarked that in the United States or Canada there prevails a mechanistic approach according to which individuals have power to manage their lives and social world. In Lithuania, however, the explanation for everything is *likimas* (“destiny”). “Destiny” entails the powerlessness of the subject and the power of the authority. In this context authority can influence an individual’s life and it is expected, imagined, assumed to exert various influences, not the contrary. Thus, the well-known words by John F. Kennedy—“ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country,” which, according to Landsbergis, one of the major political figures of post-Soviet history of Lithuania, are “a genial phrase very appropriate to present-day Lithuanians”¹⁴⁷ can be rendered meaningless for many who seek, as Humphrey remarked, order not *in* themselves, but *for* themselves, that is, “from powers [*власти*]¹⁴⁸ conceived as above; and, therefore, if the local polity does not provide order, they seek it from higher levels, culminating in the symbolic reification of an ultimate power” (Humphrey 2002:29).

Under socialism, submissiveness, passivity and acknowledgement of authority coexisted within other relations to power. According to Yurchak (1997) the relation of a normal subject to authority was pretense and misrecognition. A normal subject was the one “who had learned from experience that he or she could lead a “normal” enough life—safe, self-manageable, enjoyable—away from the official sphere, provided he/she took no active interest in it, i.e., did not get too involved in it either as a supporter or a critic” (Yurchak

¹⁴⁶ Personal communication, summer, 2005, Vilnius.

¹⁴⁷ See Landsbergis, Vytautas “Lietuva—serganti mama.” www.delfi.lt. 09/13/2005. 10:39.

¹⁴⁸ In the plural *власти* refers to the “authorities,” and with the epithet Soviet (*советская власть*) it refers to the Soviet regime (see Humphrey 2002:28).

1997:164). A “normal” subject experienced “official ideological representation of social reality as largely false and at the same time as immutable and omnipresent” (Yurchak 1997:162). He simulated support while not being interested in power and manipulating it to lead their “normal” lives (see Yurchak 1997).¹⁴⁹

8.2 IMAGINING THE POST-SOCIALIST “STATE”

8.2.1 Wealth, collective, and equality

In post-socialism wealth has made power visible. By addressing wealth, informants attempted to understand the circulation of power, re/emergence of hierarchies and authority regimes, and changes in social relations. Wealth was indexical of the transgression of the values of equality and loyalty to the collective which informed social relations in socialism. It was also a sign of corruption, immorality, unaccountability and self-interest of authorities. Perceptions and experiences of authority and power were embedded in cynicism, which was the prevailing emotional relation of a subject to the “state.” Cynicism penetrated criticism of authorities, portrayals and images of the “state,” and understandings of power and politics.

Among the largely invisible methods of accumulating wealth and amassing a fortune in post-socialism, taking a state office is an acknowledged venue to prosperity. Expressed in the popular idiom as “getting to the trough,” a state position means that one gets connected to the various venues of wealth, power, and prestige. According to most people, “state officials do nothing” and observe only their own and their family interests. Daiva, a former accountant now employed as a janitor at a village school, claimed that parliamentarians:

created a very good life for themselves. They have cars, apartments... They do not have to pay for anything. They live well. Plus they have much property and land. Up to the chin. That’s

¹⁴⁹ There were also other strategies such as *blat* relations (see Ledeneva 1998) aimed at influencing authorities, ridicule (see, e.g., Kideckel (1993:99)), multiple collaborations (cf. Havel 1985), open resistance (see, e.g., Anušauskas et al. 2005), etc.

why they go to the Parliament. They know that they will live well and their children will benefit from that.

In considering giving their vote to a politician, people may think of the size of a politician's family, with the attitude that the whole family is going to benefit from the office. During the presidential elections of 2004, several people remarked that they were not going to vote for Prunskienė, leader of the Union of Farmers' Party and New Democratic Party (*VNDP*), because she has three children and seven grandchildren. When I was confused about what such responses meant, Ona from the smallest village explained that Adamkus will cost less to the state (*valstybei*) because he already has all privileges as a former President, and because he has no children who could benefit from his position. In several other conversations the fact that Adamkus was an "American" (Adamkus emigrated from Lithuania in 1944, from 1949 he lived in the U.S.A.) was also important because "Americans," in general, are considered to be rich, and having no need to line their pockets in Lithuania.

Knowledge about the prosperity of the elites derives to a large extent from the media. People respond to newspaper articles and radio/TV news. During the period of my research, news about increasing rents for the Independence Act signatories or coverage about the "Rambynas" cheese factory and the salary of the director there were very often commented upon. Motiejus from the largest village suggested that "The director of the "Rambynas" cheese factory gets 300,000 [litai]. Look, in my opinion, he should get 10,000 per month. And the other would go to people who deliver milk." Stasė from the same village also remembered hearing on TV about the "Rambynas" cheese factory director's salary. She asked why, then, they give people only 20–30 cents for a liter of milk. "Where is their conscience? Wouldn't 100,000 be enough? Why it is 300,000? People say God will punish him."

Responding to media accounts, people speculated about the private businesses the former Parliament or government members have, about politicians' houses (popularly called "castles"), about any other property they obtain, about restitution of their rights to land, other exclusive rights, such as rights to big loans, also the vacations the politicians take, restaurants they visit, and parties they attend. Expressing sensibilities about consumption

and spending (chapter 2), informants often wondered how much it costs for politicians to live their “expensive” lives. Nijolė, a history teacher of a high school in Kaunas who claimed to belong to the “middle class” gave a portrait of one party member who was accused of corruption, with some other politicians, by the Special Investigation Service of the Republic of Lithuania (*Specialiuju Tyrimu Tarnyba*):

Nobody believes him. I will tell you one thing. He was a teaching fellow at Vilnius University. Then he was writing a dissertation and lived in a dormitory. [...] And then we hear that he has a house. [...] You cannot build a house from the salary of a teaching fellow in Lithuania. Even if you have a PhD and even if you are an associate professor. My husband’s coworker worked in Africa, the other was in the United States for several years. When they came back, they bought unfinished houses. Parents have to support you or you have to get money from somewhere, not from the salary of a teaching fellow. It’s an absurdity. His parents are villagers. They didn’t earn anything to build him a house in Vilnius. You also have to have in mind *where* the house was built [in Vilnius houses are more expensive than elsewhere in Lithuania]. [...] So, how then?... That’s how these big houses are built around Vilnius. From tainted money.

Claims about dishonesty and corruption usually imply a general moral condemnation rather than an accusation of illegality (cf. Humphrey 2002:177). However, considerations of various “illegalities” as well as criminality (see discussion below) also occur. For example, Ruzgys, a large-holding farmer and a businessman, argued that in the early 1990s “the state provided conditions for illegal privatization.” By *illegal* he meant that many people were excluded from the process, they “privatized among themselves and shared the money they got.” The popular saying is that there was not *privatizacija* (privatizing), but *prichvatizacija* (appropriation), where *prichvat*—is the stem of the Russian *прива́тумъ* “take, capture, appropriate.” The farmer argued that “those who are rich now... they started with privatization. It was not fair. There is a reason why people say *prichvatizacija*.”¹⁵⁰

Informants speak of accumulation of “millions” during privatization, and about deception and stealing. People invoked the dissolution of kolkhozes, when ordinary people were assigned “crippled cows,” while kolkhoz leaders appropriated everything else. They also

¹⁵⁰ See, e.g., Verdery (1996, 2003), Wedel (2001, 2002), Stark (1992), Humphrey (2002), Stark and Bruszt (1998) for discussions of privatization in the former USSR and Eastern Europe.

often remembered the distribution of vouchers. Many argued that they did not know how to use vouchers and sold their vouchers at a low price.

Unequal distribution of rights was stressed in assertions about land privatization. Nijolė claimed that the political elites cannot complete the reform of land restitution. “It is because they share land among themselves. They keep searching in archives, maybe it does not belong to you, maybe to somebody else, maybe some kind of a gentleman (*ponas*) can appropriate it. Especially by the sea, or by the lakes, in beautiful places. That’s the situation.” Zita, a housewife, in her late 40s, from Kaunas, argued that her family situation was special and that they were told that only a separate law would solve the case. Zita disappointedly asserted that, if a law was needed for a Parliament member, it would certainly be passed and he would receive compensation [for the property which could not be restituted in her case]. [...] My grandparents bought that land, it was their property and they paid off loans for it. It was theirs. It is so painful. Others take what they want and as much as they want,” claimed Zita, having in mind the Parliament members. According to her, “during privatization there was extensive corruption. [...] There was no justice. No justice... in free Lithuania.” Other informants also thought that the elites promote and establish laws which guarantee their rights and exclude other people:

Yesterday on TV they showed an interview with a Parliament member. He said: “As a Parliament member I can help myself, how could it be different?” However, we [people] cannot establish the rights to our land. [...] We do not have all the documents. But the political elites can [in any case] [a retired woman].

People consider wealth to be limited, possibly drawing on the Soviet period experience of accumulating scarce goods and of usually their rationed distribution because of which they were being able to buy only 1 kilogram of oranges when oranges emerged in the stores. During the research period the enrichment of some was believed to produce the poverty of others. Pranė, the eldest woman of the second largest village, claimed that “they [the political elites] have millions. [...] They can raise their salaries so much because they take from the people. Nobody else gives them anything. And it is still not enough. They take money from beggars.” Zigmas, a power plant worker from Kaunas, wondered about the income declaration of Landsbergis, the Sąjūdis leader and a long-term Conservative Party

leader and currently a EU Parliament member. Zigmas wondered how Landsbergis could have made 19 million litai in five years. He assumed that decently one cannot accumulate such money and concluded with the rhetorical question “how can people live well, if every politician makes ten million?”

Understanding wealth as limited, people greet various spending actions of the state officials with cynicism and suspicion. The new cars for government officials, new furniture for the President’s office, renovation of the Parliament halls, hiring of new security usually are noted and reprovably commented. In conversations informants (mostly women) criticized the renovation of the President’s residence kitchen. According to a housewife from Kaunas, in her late 40s, “it should be strict. Ready [for every President’s family to live]. Another woman shouldn’t come and redo the kitchen again. You come and go. It’s not for your whole life. For several years. I hated when she [President Paksas’s wife] started to redo the kitchen.” On the other hand, saving is always popular. President Adamkus was praised by several people for his decision to spend less money than was initially planned for the inaugural ceremony.

In dialogues about the state officials people touch upon visible stratification and usually also the invisible powers which led to it. Making judgments and assigning values they give supremacy to equality and collective solidarity. According to Humphrey (2002), the preeminence of equality as a value in Russia derives from Soviet-period values and ideologies. In Soviet Russia “equality” was symbolically transformed and fed into the communitarian morality (Humphrey 2001:342). Furthermore, there was equality of many in poverty which included the quality of sacredness (Shcherbinins 1996, discussed in Humphrey 2001:342). The value of equality was co-opted by the early Soviet elite and had resonance in multiple spaces of the Soviet Union, including Lithuania in mid as well as late Soviet times.

In Lithuania, beliefs that people are equally entitled to the rights, privileges, and resources of society most likely also derive from nationalism of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Nationalist leaders advanced economic arguments resonating in informants’ memories for expectations of a “better life” (see chapter 5). As an ideology about a collective

(in which it parallels socialism) comparable to kinship and religion (see Anderson 1983, Schneider 1968, Herzfeld 1997), nationalism was used by the liberation movement leaders to promise well-being for the newly imagined nation and nationals (see chapter 5). Ideas about equality in postcolonial contexts give beliefs of equality wider resonance. For example, Verkaaik (2001) reports that in Pakistan Muhajirs, a term used in Pakistan for those whose families migrated from India in the years after independence in 1947, believe that the Pakistani state is a creation for *all* South Asian Muslims, however, it is captured by one ethnic group—the Punjabis. Thus, equality is a “commodity” of global flows of political discourse.

The value of loyalty to the collective also informs ideas about the state officials. According to Humphrey in the Soviet Union by the 1930s the word *коллектив* (collective) was used to “express the character of the whole USSR and whole Party” (Humphrey 2001:343). The collective was a stable group of colleagues, united by labor and a common goal. According to Kharkhordin (1999), the Soviet version of the idea went beyond that of any old co-operative. It nurtured the meaning that by joining together the members gain a kind of immortality. Each member was to feel responsible for the whole, and purges were the means to create a collective revolutionary body. In the Soviet period this vision of the collective was established in relation to working collectivities in Russia (Kharkhordin 1999).

In Soviet Lithuania an individual also had meaning primarily in terms of a collective or social group, such as a *kolkhoz* community, factory work groups, or kindergarten collectives. In the early 1990s people clung to the collective not only for immediate economic benefits, but also because it was the only site for organizing the local economy as a whole, it was “somewhere to go to,” and membership still implied rights, even if these were hazy and disputed (see also Humphrey 2001:348). The vice-director of the interior decoration enterprise in the largest village remembered how people used to come every morning for several months and stand by the closed doors of the kolkhoz expecting work. While for the vice-director it was a meaningless undertaking, for the workers it was a meaningful action; accomplishing it they could connect to social life in terms of work, security, and rights.

As Hannah Arendt (2004) notes growing equality can give rise to opposite processes, such as social discrimination and exclusion. In Soviet contexts, ideologically promulgated egalitarianism and “state-dictated homogeneity” (Humphrey 2002:188) coexisted with hierarchically articulated inequality. A collective internal inequality was accepted, for the collective engendered certain characteristic ranking practices simultaneously proclaiming a certain equality (Humphrey 2001:344). Ranking within the collective was “reinforced throughout the Soviet period by education policies emphasizing modernization and technical knowledge, such that the individual who recognized her own progress by virtue of her training simultaneously acknowledged the rightfulness of benefit distinctions on this basis in social groups” (Humphrey 2001:344). As a result parallel “political emotions” could be identified: disapproval of those who undermined the collective, on which people’s lives rested, and admiration of those who exposed the repressive character of collective, of required loyalty and restrictive commitment (see Humphrey 2001).

In post-socialist spaces, undermining the collective is commonly disapproved of; many people long for dependence on the collective and loyalty which was the underlying criterion of inclusion in the collective. Thus, the new practices of exclusion (such as non-usefulness at work) are not understood well (see Humphrey 2001:347). The retreat of loyalty and collective dependence are observed as disintegration of sociability, emergence of materialism (*sumaterialėjimas*) and, in general, decay of social relations.¹⁵¹

8.2.2 Reclaiming dependence

Informants claimed that the elites are alienated from the “people;” they do not represent and understand the “people” and do not recognize the problems “common people” have. Juozas, a former director of an Institute and a CP member, argued that “the state does not know people’s concerns. They don’t want to know.” Petras, a large-holding farmer, in his 50s, pointed out that “the elites live a different life, they have different benefits, higher salaries, exclusive privileges... transport, apartments, hotels.” According to Albertas, a

¹⁵¹ See ethnographic examples in chapter 4.

Kaunas resident, the state officials should “pay more attention to the common worker [*darbo žmogui*]. Not to themselves, but to others... They have enough already. They should let common people earn money.” Nijolė, a high school teacher, maintained that “the elites care about their wealth, their salaries, their vacations... I tell you, if a doctor earns six hundred [litas], if a teacher earns six hundred [litas], this is not normal in the state. That’s why all intellectuals leave [the country]. They don’t see any other way out. They have to live and raise their children.”

Sensibilities about representation emerge in protest actions. Kotryna, a retired factory worker, in her early 60s, from Kaunas, remembered how she participated in the action the “The Beggars’ Ball” (“*Ubagų*¹⁵² *balius*”) organized by Vytautas Šustauskas, the leader of the Lithuanian Freedom Union, Kaunas mayor in 2000 and a Parliament member in 2000–2004, often titled the “King of the Beggars” and/or a windbag politician (*bačkos politikas*). Kotryna and Šustauskas traveled with other people to Vilnius where they joined the “Ball of Vienna in Vilnius” (“*Vienos pokylis Vilniuje*”),¹⁵³ the annual charity ball of the elites. Šustauskas’s action was a protest against the rich, fetishization of wealth and conspicuous spending that the “Ball of Vienna in Vilnius” symbolized for him and his followers. The fact that it was a charity action was downplayed. Kotryna recalled:

He [Šustauskas] organized the ball of the poor. [...] When we came to Vilnius... it was a tragedy. We saw how nicely dressed Adamkus and Adamkienė [the presidential couple] walked onto the stage, Landsbergis, everybody. And we, our delegation... [was not allowed] There were three lines of policemen. Poor Šustauskas was not allowed in.

Kotryna was not going to Vilnius to protest. She thought that she could participate in the “Ball of Vienna in Vilnius” and remembered to take a dress, a hat and shoes for the ball. Kotryna recollected:

We went to the ball, but found ourselves at a demonstration. Later a musician came, we danced on the street, and nobody [the police] intimidated us. [...] After that his authority [Šustauskas] rose in our eyes. When the police stopped us coming from Vilnius [...] and

¹⁵² The term “ubagas” means: 1) a beggar; 2) a cripple; 3) a poor person; 4) a helper of a priest. See: *The Dictionary for the Lithuanian Language*. www.lkz.lt.

¹⁵³ “The Ball of Vienna in Vilnius” is a charity action started in 1999. See: <http://www.vienos-pokylis.com/index.php>.

wanted to arrest Šustauskas, people from all the buses, there were seven buses, pushed the police cars into a ditch.

Kotryna continued with pathos and, I think, with an attempt to impress me with her knowledge of how “things should be.” She reasoned:

They [the political elites] do not represent our nation as they should. They should represent a lower stratum, a poor stratum... [...] Take, for example, heating. They don't give a damn. It is important that *they* live well and have warm houses. People are suffering in hospitals, day care centers, unheated homes... that load of care is not lifted. They watch only their interests. Integrating to the European Union they should represent a lower stratum, the retired, and a higher stratum, scholars, doctors... They should think of all the people of Lithuania.

Asking for recognition and representation is reaching out for the familiar state of before which provided security and benefits for people like Kotryna. In so doing people recreate the role for the state (see also Verdery 1996). Reaching out for restatization (Verdery 1996) materializes in protests against reforms and against the circulation of wealth. In addition to cynicism directed at the state officials, protests also express desires for well-articulated authority and rules as well as expectations of state intervention and regulation.

Appeals to authority are often delivered in moralizing rhetoric which links state and subject with ties of mutual dependency, responsibility, respect, and loyalty. Thus, socialism produced not only a moralizing state in the form of various authorities, like the counselor at the Embassy mentioned above, but also moralizing subjects, dependent, powerless and simulating respect and recognition as well as capitalizing on the ideology of provision or welfare. A moralizing subject very often addresses the state through the media. For example, in the article “Why does the government [*valdžia*] of Lithuania denigrate [*tyčiojasi*] its citizens?”¹⁵⁴ a single mother of two students complained about her salary, which was not enough for the major needs of a family. She wrote that she bought a computer a year ago and later the required programs. According to the knowledge she had from different state institutions, such as the Tax Inspectorate (*Mokesčių inspekcija*), she had to be compensated for the computer and the programs. However, she complained, recently she found out that part of the expenses were not going to be covered because the Ministry for Finance and the Tax

¹⁵⁴ See Mendelienė, Daiva “Kodėl Lietuvos valdžia tyčiojasi iš savo piliečių?” *Lietuvos rytas*. 02/04/2005. No.29. P.4.

Inspectorate changed the regulations. The woman claimed to have borrowed the money she expected to receive back as compensation. Moreover, she stated that, even if she sold the already used computer, she would get only part of the money back. Her sons “because of the painful denigration by the state officials (*valdžios*) will suffer great moral harm.” The woman writes: “My sons, when they learned about this slap [in the face], were very disappointed. They will have to give away the computer which they need for their studies so much. They stated that they are not going to live in a state where citizens are deceived so impudently [*akiplėšiška*], and will leave it when they have the chance.” In a similar way, the other article “The habit of government [*valdžios įprotis*—to promise, and then to poke fun at people [*išsityčioti*]]”¹⁵⁵ wrote about the government’s promise to raise pensions of the people who became disabled on January 13th, 1991 when Soviet troops attacked the TV tower, as well of families of the deceased. However, pensions were not increased. One of the participants of the January 13th events argued that the decision of the Parliament not to raise the pensions was very disappointing. He argued that people need money for medicine, not for anything else.

Articulated in the vocabulary of “major needs,” such as a computer for studies, the moralizing subject in the first example promised to punish the state by leaving it, to break the existing loyalty and solidarity. The subject also fashioned herself as a victim who was tortured by state officials by variously humiliating her and even “physically” (the slap of the state) abusing her sons. People who address the state in this way make their powerlessness and dependence on the “state” and authority explicit. As argued above, they seek order *for* themselves, not *in* themselves, from authority invested with power above them. They also aim to reclaim their dependence and the “state’s” role guaranteeing this dependence.

Among the multiple other ways of becoming visible in the eyes of the “state” prominent are struggles to reconstitute the gaze over their own bodies (cf. Dunn, forthcoming, Petryna 2002). People aim to get diseases attached to their names in order to qualify for state subsidies. A certified sick body becomes a way to communicate individual concerns as well as a medium to interact with the “state.” One informant, in his 40s, told the

¹⁵⁵ See “Valdžios įprotis—pažadėti, o po to išsityčioti.” *Lietuvos rytas*. 12/20/2004. No.295. P.2.

story how he was able to make his mother “unable to take care of herself” by using his connections and money to get false diagnoses for her ills. As “unable to take care of herself,” his mother qualified for hospital care and sanatoriums (for acceptance to which he also had to use connections and money) and became eligible for benefits which allowed the son to cope with the burdens of care.

Reclaiming “dependency” on the state coexists with alternative accommodations. Some explore new possibilities by establishing small enterprises, engaging in agriculture or vocational training. Saulė, a 40 year old teacher from the largest village, got enrolled in a new program at the university to make herself more competitive in the job market. Unlike many others, she felt that “her life does not depend on the state [the term used was *valstybė*, not *valdžia*]. We choose our way and know well where we go, what we do, the state has nothing to do with that. If I am here [a teacher at school], it means that I am not good for anything else. If I was able to, I could go somewhere else.”

8.2.3 The relationship of difference and distrust

Some pollution beliefs illustrate that the political elites and people exist as separate categories. To cross from one group to another is to become dehumanized, exposed to power and danger, to get polluted (cf. Douglas 1984):

There was one man. He used to arrive here when the movement for independence started. He was such a poor guy, in cheap clothes, very sincere. He promised to do everything. Now he works for the state. He has a castle, a huge house. His brother works for him, a sister also... He has a lot. And village people? We do not see them, they don't come. Nobody cares [Jadvyga M., a retired woman, a former kolkhoz worker].

Corresponding to others' ideas, Egidijus, in his 50s, from the largest village, claimed that the state (*valdžia*) is something dirty. Egidijus, a CP member in Soviet times, argued that he will never join any party because they drag out all the muck and because politics is dirty. Similar attitudes towards the state were also recorded by a Kaunas resident, in his mid 70s, in an ironic letter complimenting his son on the son's habilitation. The letter said that, if he were alive, the grandfather would be happy for his grandson who was awarded a habilitation

PhD degree (*Habilituoto daktaro laipsnė*) and who brought honor to the family, and had not done something stupid like joining the Seimas. Ona, a retired pensioner from the smallest village, said she would never wish that her son become a Parliament member. She reasoned that “in a state office you cannot be a human being [*žmogus*].” Similar cynical attitudes have been recorded in Turkey (see Navaro-Yashin 2002). Navaro-Yashin’s informant Saniye thought that “Being a statesman is for the liars, for the tricksters, for those who are out for self-interest, for money, for fame. That’s not for me!” (Navaro-Yashin 2002:170). For Saniye, power was about looting resources that were meant for the people, or about striking it rich after occupying a seat in a state office for some time (Navaro-Yashin 2002:170).

Saulius, a historian and a professor from Kaunas, claimed that hatred and spite for the state (*valdžiai*) are omnipresent. However, according to him, they coexist with high popularity among students of the law school and the disciplines directly related to power and state positions. Saulius’s view was reaffirmed by Raminta who was a recent graduate from high school. Raminta applied to various departments at several universities to study law or “anything else to earn good money.” According to Saulius, *valdžia* is evil and strange, but one of the best ways to live well.

The relationship of difference between the state and the subject is circulated by the media, intellectuals and politicians. Headlines, editorials and leading articles of the mainstream newspapers, such as *Lietuvos rytas*, often structure the state in a similar way as the people mentioned above. Vytautas Radžvilas, an associate professor at Vilnius University and a visible public figure in his essay “Feast by the trough” invoked Plato’s state and its opposition—the pig state. Radžvilas commented that “Obviously such a [pig] state exists not only in the imagination of this theorist. We have at least one real example. It is Lithuania.” He critiqued parliamentarians for moral and intellectual decay, illiteracy in “all senses of the term,” and incompetence. Radžvilas argued that for Parliament members “The Parliament is the place where they come not to work, but to stuff their pockets by taking advantage of their position.”¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁶ See V. Radžvilas “Šėlsmas prie lovio.” www.delfi.lt. Elta news. 01/21/2005. 12:25.

In a recent “bestseller¹⁵⁷” on the state “The Ship of Fools” Vytautas Petkevičius, a well-known writer, active Sąjūdis participant and a Parliament member in 1992–1996, writes that the major aim has been achieved—there is no state (*valstybės*) which could defend people and everyone struggles only for oneself (Petkevičius 2003:9). The state (*valdžia*) betrayed its people one more time: at various points in time it has been Polonized, Russified, Americanized, and now Europeanized (Petkevičius 2003:13). He calls Prime Minister Brazauskas corrupt and discusses politicians’ relations with the KGB, thus, defining them as betrayers of the nation-state. According to the author, Lithuania is under the rule of one party—the Party of the Crooks (*sukčių partija*)—with many names (Petkevičius 2003:299). Petkevičius, like other politicians, intellectuals or villagers, in his cynical commentaries about the “state” does not compromise about statism (cf. Navaro-Yashin 2002). Even if he does not take it seriously and keep an ironic distance, he is still worshiping the state (cf. Žižek 1995).

Most post-socialist and postcolonial societies are noteworthy for citizens’ distrust, and, thus, lack part of the social capital which is the key to making democracy, at least as perceived by Putnam (1993), work. Giordano and Kostova (2002) claim that in Bulgaria “Negative opinions of the power elite, depicted as a distant and alien clique run by string-pulling lawyers, are widespread.” As in Lithuania, in Bulgaria one can hear that “politicians are all alike; you can’t trust them” (Giordano and Kostova 2002). Verkaaik (2001) claims that in Pakistan “Muhajirs have grown deeply disappointed with and distrustful of the state. [...] The state has been captured by social groups who, through secret and invisible means, hold on their particularistic sense of loyalty and use state power to enhance their self-interests” (Verkaaik 2001:364).

¹⁵⁷ The book was called a “bestseller” in the media. See, e.g., Aldona Svirbutavičiūtė ““Durnių laivo” autoriui gresia dar dvi bylos” (“The author of “Durnių Laivas” will face two more lawsuits”). *Lietuvos žinios*. 05/21/2004. No.116. P.1. <http://www.press.lt/cgi-bin/Article.asp?Lang=L&ID=568707>. I bought the book at the library of the Parliament and was told by the sales clerk I was lucky to get one of the last copies because the book was popular. One parliamentarian assured me that 50% of what was written was true. During the research several informants mentioned the book as an authoritative source. The book also became known because of several lawsuits for libel including libel against V. Landsbergis-Žemkalnis, the father of V. Landsbergis.

Distrust as part of cynicism towards the state underlies commentaries on all kind of projects of the elites. During my research the most prominent project was joining the EU. Many people approached joining the EU as an elite project which was expected to primarily benefit the elites themselves. A recently retired pensioner, a 63 year old man, was afraid that because of the corrupt elites, the promises bound to the EU will not be delivered. He claimed that “there is no honesty among the elites. Maybe just among some... On the other hand, there are a lot of honest people [not the elites]. [...] On the radio they announced that someone was willing to seize funds from the EU... Well, you see, it is hard to accept this. I don’t want much from the state. I get a pension, it is enough for me what I have...” Others also thought that money flows which were discussed during the referendum campaign will not reach people. A woman, in her late 60s, thought that “nothing good will happen... nothing. You can see that they all have their mouth open like ravens. They already have appropriated a lot. There was some money for agriculture allocated, it has disappeared somewhere.”

Algimantas, in his 50s, a funeral home employee, similarly distrusted the political elites and argued that “The referendum [for joining the EU] was throwing dust in everyone’s eyes. Everything was agreed upon, decided and ordered in advance [he was referring to the signing of the Accession Treaty in Athens on 16 April 2003 by Prime Minister A. Brazauskas and the Minister for Foreign Affairs A. Valionis]. Everything was settled and signed.”

Juožas and Violeta, a family from a town near the largest village, former CP members with high standing, compared Moscow and Brussels:

Violeta: Well, is it free [Lithuania]? Well, they used to take hams to Moscow, now they gratify Brussels.

Juožas: Well, but if you take ham...

Violeta: You got everything. We got houses... five room houses... [Juožas as an Institute director was able to successfully bargain with “Moscow” over building of houses for employees].

Juožas: They used to build a house [*abitynamą*] and invite people to work: “Come to work—you will get a house in a year.” And they did. [...] Moscow respected Lithuanians. If they get—they will not make it disappear.

Violeta: And that dependence. I don't know... But now, when you see, all this, Jesus Christ! Now... I say I think of the EU as a swear-word. Because bureaucrats cover their crimes or plans, or fraud [*aferyas*] under the "EU" [She meant that they cover their plans by arguing that these are the EU requirements].

In their cynical commentaries about the "state" and state officials people express concerns about the new circulations of wealth and power from which they usually feel excluded. Cynicism derives from the informants' experience of poverty, marginalization, and insecurity (see chapter 1, 2). It is also motivated by beliefs in values, such as equality and solidarity to the collective, which no longer inform social relations as they did in Soviet times. In dialogue with the "state" informants try to restore the role of the state as the provider and the moral relationship between state and subject. Their commentaries illustrate their passivity and the suppression of their agency which is indicative of beliefs in the omnipresence and the immutability of "post-socialist" power.

8.3 THE GRAMMAR OF DIFFERENCE AND METAPHORICAL PORTRAITS OF STATE AUTHORITIES

The difference between the state officials and the people is articulated in the symbols of the "lords," the "mafia," the "clan," and the "communists."¹⁵⁸ These symbols have no stable boundaries, they invoke the same field of ideas about state, community and self. Symbols may be alternatively used, referring to different issues, such as class differences between the political elites and the people, the arbitrariness of political actions, and the immorality and impunity of the authorities. However, the "lords" tend to underline perceived class differences. By invoking the "mafia" and the "clan," people stress the arbitrariness of political actions as well as the impunity of the authorities. Social networks that connect the

¹⁵⁸ The negative images of the post-socialist political elites prevail in theoretical accounts on the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Ilya Prizel (2002), following Alexander Motyl, speaks about a corrupt elite which cannibalizes society in Ukraine. Katherine Verdery (1996) and Caroline Humphrey (2002) invoke feudalism and a class of *entrepratchiks*, i.e., political capitalists (Verdery 1996:33) who took advantage of the transition to solidify their role as new capitalists. Images of swindlers, pyramid schemes, mafia-states, elites-clans also are used in other discussions (Sampson 1998, Verdery 1996, Wedel 2001, 2000, Ries 2002).

elites are most often articulated in “clan” symbolism, non-commitment to the national cause in notions of the “communists.” The symbols are bound to arguments about wealth, power and morality. They are expressions of cynicism toward state officials. Use of these symbols is not restricted to the communicative space of the villages and the city of Kaunas, but they are also used in political and academic discourse, media coverage, and the internet.

8.3.1 The “lords”

The images of the “lords” (*ponas*,¹⁵⁹ plural *ponai*), very popular in post-socialist political imaginations, were common in socialism and in pre-socialist times. “Lord” signified hierarchical differences whether it was differences between peasants and Russian state officials, peasants and the gentry of 19th century Lithuania, “class” differences among peasants themselves, or ideological and often economic differences between people and the party elites in the Soviet period.

In the 19th century the term “lord” can be found in proclamations or various reports. A “lord” was either the landlord of an estate in Lithuania or a Russian state employee¹⁶⁰ (see Aleksandravičius and Kulakauskas 1996:134). In Soviet times the images of the “lords” (*ponai*) were part of the literature on relations of exploitation. Literary images of the “lords”/ “masters”/ “gentlemen” (*ponai*) resonated with images of the “kulaks.” For example, Juozas Baltušis in “Sold Summers” (“*Parduotos vasaros*”) (1977), a novel about prewar Lithuania, writes about a boy taken to serve other people. Sitting in the sled of his new master, the boy thought that “thank God, I will have a nice master at least this time; he will not count my

¹⁵⁹ According to *The Dictionary for the Lithuanian Language* “ponas” means: 1) a person of a privileged estate, a rich person, a nobleman, an owner; a master; someone who does not do physical work, an officer; 2) the God; 3) a word for addressing men [such as “Sir”]; 4) a slacker, lazy-bone, loafer (*dykūnas, lengvaduonis, išlepelis*). See www.lkz.lt.

¹⁶⁰ For example, historians E. Aleksandravičius and A. Kulakauskas in their account of the 19th century include a proclamation (*atsiškankimas*) by the leaders of the revolt of 1831. The proclamation promises peasants freedom from serfdom and invites them not to obey the Russian *lords*, but to help the Poles to get rid of the Russians; to help the homeland and the *lords* (Aleksandravičius and Kulakauskas 1996:134, emphasis added). According to historians, Russian authorities also claimed to be willing to improve the situation of peasants, only, as it is argued in General Dembinskis’s report to Gelgaudas: “part of the demands for the *lords*, the *lords* redirect to the peasants, therefore, the peasants are unsupportive towards our cause” (Aleksandravičius and Kulakauskas 1996:134, emphasis added).

food, there will be no yelling and pressure like last year” (Baltušis 1977:131). However, upon arrival at the master’s home, the master realizes that another person has been hired and orders the boy to go home at night in the wintertime, which suggests that the “good master” the boy imagined does not exist.

The history books written in the socialist period also described pre-socialist social relations in terms of class warfare and used the image of “lords.” For example, Jučas et al. (1988) claim that in the second half of the 18th century a nobleman could not beat, kill, sell or exchange a free person. “Being cruel with free people, he lost them because they went to other estates, to “better” lords [*išeidavo pas “geresnį” poną*]” (Jučas et al. 1988:88).

Romualdas Granauskas’s (1988) book “Life under the Maple” illustrates that community leaders, like a kolkhoz director, or party leaders,¹⁶¹ like the party secretary, were also called the “lords.” Grandmother Kairienė asks her grandson Darius:

Kairienė: Dareli [the diminutive of Darius], I look at you, I look... Well, will I understand before I die why you drink?...

He took a second shot [of vodka] and responded:

Darius: I feel happier!

Kairienė: Oh, why do you need this kind of happiness? You have a young wife, the building of your house is nearing its end, and you can start a garden,—a good job, you earn a lot... You have so much happiness from all of this!

Darius: What kind of happiness is it to work? You come back tired as a dog... Day after day it is the same and the same! Like a serf!

Kairienė: Everybody who works the earth is a serf. But if you serve it [the earth], you will be a master [*ponas*]!

Darius: A master!... The kolkhoz director, the agronomist, the party secretary—they are the lords [*ponai*]! And me?” [Granauskas 1988:77, my translation].

Some Soviet-period literary views of the state officials are very similar to post-socialist reflections on state officials as the “lords.” For example, Baltušis (1977) imagines three men’s discussion of the government of pre-Soviet times:

Where did you see a government [*valdžią*] which did not want your skin?! It does not matter what you elect—they all want your skin!

¹⁶¹ See also Grinkevičiūtė (1997) for usage of the “lords” to name CP leaders and members.

[...]

- The government [*valdžia*] wants to live, but I want to live, too. And what have you now? [...] Don't praise those priests. If they stay in power, they will want your last pair of pants! I'll tell you,—intervened the third person.—The priests were in power already, they are sated, maybe they will appropriate less? If you let the other party to the trough, everything will start from the beginning [Baltušis 1977:170, my translation].

In post-socialist discourse the “lords” used for authorities is a negative image which underlines class/hierarchical differences between the people and the elites, as in pre-Soviet and Soviet times. Jadvyga N., a former party secretary, gave a description of privatization in the early 1990s by naming the wealthy elites—the “lords:”

During the transition those who were smart they made business. Privatization was a good business. The lords emerged out of nowhere. They bought vouchers from the elderly for a low price. The elderly got nothing. And they privatized factories. So they bought those vouchers from the poor people. [...] They used the opportunity that the government officials were changing. They used privatization and appropriated capital. Now they are the lords, the upper class. And those who were used to working honestly, they did not know how to steal and appropriate, so they stayed... poor.

The body is an important part of political imaginations about the “lords.” The visibly shrinking post-socialist bodies of many people, a process influenced by changed consumption and physical self-imagining as well as by poverty, are contrasted with the full bodies of the political elites. The bodies of politicians are signs of the full life they are thought to enjoy as a result of being in office. According to Ona, a retired woman from the smallest village: “their snouts get larger and larger after they get into Parliament.” Ramunė, a large-holding farmer, a woman, in her early 40s, also noted: “Do you see how politicians look? [...] They sweat, their faces are fat.” Eglė from Kaunas remarked that Paksas [the President in 2003–2004] is young and handsome. She thought that it was very important that he was slim, because “all the lords have to be [fat]... and then they are approached with suspicion.” Eglė invoked the genealogy of the socialist period “lords” by classifying their stout bodies: “Sakalauskas, the Prime Minister, Brazauskas, the CP secretary, who else... Then you know that this is a lord. And a lord is automatically bad. If he is slim, handsome, slender, skinny, it looks as if everything is all right.”

Ideas about the stout bodies of politicians as signs of prosperity and abundance in the context of sensibilities about consumption and spending, insecurity surviving on small amounts of money and relative hunger (see chapter 2) circulate elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Kideckel (forthcoming) writes that one unemployed truck driver, linking Ceaușescu, Romania's globalized strictures, the current government, and perceptions of famine and death said:

Ceaușescu brought people closer to God. We miss him. Then we had bread, fat back [slănină], meat. Now... the word hope does not even exist anymore. [...] We believed him [Constantinescu] when he came here and said that we should economize with our household budgets, but what good did that do us? Look at Constantinescu and you can see what has happened in the country. Before he came into office he was thin, but his face is fat now and shows how he eats from our suffering. If we had enough money, we would take [him] to court and charge him with genocide... Those with large stomachs, with salaries of 50–60 million lei a month, should try for just a bit to live like we do. They should be three days without food, or raise their children the way we are forced to.

8.3.2 The “mafia” and the “clan”

The term “mafia” conjures up the arbitrariness of political action and the impunity of the ruling class. Verdery argues that mafia is a symbol to label new power. It is like the party-state, all-powerful, pervasive, and coercive (Verdery 1996:219). “Mafia” refers to those who are seen as invisibly, conspiratorially, and effectively mastering social resources and power to the detriment of the people (see Ries 1997). Verdery (1996) points out that, “Talk of mafia is like talk of witchcraft. [It is] a way of attributing difficult social problems to malevolent and unseen forces” (Verdery 1996:220). With the label “mafia,” one pronounces guilt and suggests that they are under the spell of sinister powers.

In theory, the “mafia” is commonly perceived as ethno-centric, conspiratorial, monolithic organized crime (cf. Rawlinson 1998).¹⁶² The meaning of the “mafia” as

¹⁶² Yakov Gilinskiy (1998) claims that in a broad sense the term “mafia” serves as a synonym for any kind of structural association dedicated to the pursuit of crime in an organized, professional and full-time capacity. In a narrower sense, the term refers to criminal organizations akin to the originating example in

organized crime was rare in informants' discussions of state officials. Only in some cases were political elites thought to work together with criminals. A former deportee, a pensioner thought that "they work together [with criminals]." The man remembered that one Parliament member who was elected in a nearby electoral district tried to fight against illegal trade and smuggling. Because of that his father was stabbed almost to death. Ruzgys, a large-holding farmer and a businessman, in his late 50s, from the largest village, thought that in the early and mid 1990s "The government was together with the bandits. There is no other explanation. They allowed the robbery of common decent citizen. [...] Millionaires and multimillionaires emerged with the help of the elites—those who were in the oil business, they could not get in there, if they had no connections to the state." To support similar ideas informants could draw on facts like the conclusion by the Central Electoral Committee of the Republic of Lithuania according to which 77 politicians were prohibited from participation in the municipal elections of 2003 because of previous convictions.¹⁶³

Ries (1997) reports that during Perestroika people in Russia tended to invoke different "mafias," such as criminals, indecent businessmen, and racketeers.¹⁶⁴ However, the state, government or politicians were the "real mafia." In Lithuania ideas of the "state" as the "real mafia" were not very common and were used predominantly by men. Rolandas, a Kaunas resident, in his early 40s, named Prime Minister Brazauskas as the "real mafia" and "Corleone" invoking the main mafia character of Mario Puzo's (1970) "The Godfather." Rolandas used the image talking about the increase of prices after joining the EU. In May, 2004, right after joining the EU, many including the media speculated that prices rose because of cartel agreements. Prime Minister Brazauskas discussed the price increase with the representatives of the enterprise "Vilniaus Prekyba" who agreed to lower prices;

Sicily, characterized by a high degree of organization and hierarchy and by a regular resort to the use of force for attaining its goals. In ordinary Russian usage, the word "mafia" remains synonymous with political power rather than with traditional organized crime in the Western sense (cf. Coulloudon 1997).

¹⁶³ The politicians mentioned were convicted for various crimes and tried to conceal this fact. 22 previously convicted politicians were in the Liberal Democratic Party whose leader was Rolandas Paksas, the President of Lithuania in 2003. See "Conviction destroys political career" (*"Politinę karjerą griaua teistumas"*). *Kauno diena* 12/04/2002. No.281. P.1.

¹⁶⁴ On the image of the "mafia" in Eastern Europe see also Sampson (1998), Humphrey (2002), Verdery (1996); on the "clan" and the "mafia" in Russia see Wedel (1998).

representatives of some other enterprises responded that they would follow “Vilniaus Prekyba’s” actions to match the competition. In this action Brazauskas was asserting his and the state’s control, power, and authority. By addressing prices he was reaching into the daily lives and dinner tables of many people. Rolandas claimed that it is unbelievable that any business could refuse profit. According to him, Brazauskas probably had an agreement with the businessmen to increase prices and then made an agreement to “lower” them. To Rolandas’s mind, it was all an advertising campaign for Brazauskas and his party.

Similarly, in the mainstream daily *Lietuvos rytas*, readers commented that the “Prime Minister is the real mafia of Lithuania.” An anonymous commentator thought that “Being in power is promoting one’s corrupt interests, giving criminal orders and privileging one’s business.”¹⁶⁵ In the weekly *Veidas* Dalia Juzukevičiūtė (2003) cited some young people who think that there are no different mafias. Money and glory unite different people into *the* mafia. They know each other, their children study at the same schools. According to the people cited, that is why you see the daughter of the President [the former President Rolandas Paksas] celebrating her birthday with the daughter of one of the major powers of the criminal world; “It is natural and common” (Juzukevičiūtė 2003).

Like the “mafia,” the “clan” refers to corrupt dealings, injustice and unaccountability. By invoking the “clan” one tends to emphasize networks that bind people together and to multiply the “state” into hierarchical groups of common interests. Martinkonis, a professor of economics temporarily residing in the largest village, thought:

Look, there are three or four lawsuits, right? Against judges, land developers and diplomats. Do you know how it ends? This is the end. I guarantee it. They will find some clerks, punish them. That will be it. [...] The new President needs to put his own people in some places to write off some of his corrupt deals. Maybe it is wrong, but that’s my opinion.¹⁶⁶

Voldemaras, an engineer from the city of Kaunas, in his early 50s, asserted:

¹⁶⁵ See *Lietuvos rytas*. 07/24/2003. The commentaries for “Laiko ženklai.” Jo (212.122.68.140)-2003/07/24. 12:03:10. At: <http://www.lrytas.lt>.

¹⁶⁶ The symbol of “clan” also extends to professional groups, usually to lawyers and doctors. See, e.g., “Pagrindinis reformos stabdys—medikų klanas” (“The major reform barrier—the health care clan”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 11/07/2002. No.258. P.4. Kairys, Stanislovas “Ar tikrai Lietuva—visiška ašarų pakalnė” (“Is Lithuania really a complete vale of tears”). *Algimimas*. 09/29/2004. 10:46. www.delfi.lt.

There are clans. Courts, commissions for privatization, enterprise managers... they are all involved. The commissions don't see that the price of an enterprise became lower after the reconstruction. That's how a state-owned company is being prepared for privatization... Nothing has changed. There are clans as before [in the Soviet period]. The state officials bless such privatization because they have their stake in it.

Ideas about the “state” as the “clan” are used by politicians themselves. The Liberal Democrats, the party of ousted President Paksas, in a campaign commercial on the radio announced that the corrupt clan denied the nation's will;¹⁶⁷ the invitation to vote for the Liberal Democrats in the elections for the EU Parliament was directed at gaining support from the voters for President Paksas.

In Lithuania, Russia or even South Africa historical conditions yield an ambiguous mix of possibility and powerlessness, of desire and despair, of mass joblessness and hunger amidst the accumulation, by some, of great amounts of new wealth (cf. Sajo 1998). On the one hand, people experience the enrichment of others, on the other, they are left aside from the mysterious to them mechanisms of the market and the promise of prosperity. In South Africa these mechanisms of the market have become the object of jealousy and envy and evil dealings; it is thought that arcane forces are intervening in the production of value, diverting its flow for selfish purposes (Comaroff and Comaroff 1998). Among the people the “mafia” explains the enrichment of some, the corruption of the state, ambiguous transitions, and personal deprivation. Symbolic mafias, like witches, may be said to transform political/social processes into comprehensible human motives, tie translocal processes to local events, translate translocal discourses into local vocabularies of cause and effect (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 1998).

¹⁶⁷ The argument that President was elected by the nation was used to discredit initiatives for impeachment. The Parliament, the Constitutional Court, and other institutions were blamed for not following the nation's will. The Radio of Lithuania. The 1st Program. June, 2004.

8.3.3 The “communists”

The image of the “communists” was another symbol used to label the authorities cynically. It invoked parallels with the past “communists” and often embedded opposition between the nation, people, and officials or the state. “Communists,” like other symbols, engendered opinions about social order, the state, the nation, justice, and morality.

The symbol of the “communists”¹⁶⁸ was most often invoked to name ex-communist party members. Kęstas, a doctor from Kaunas claimed that socialdemocrats are the offspring of the Soviet communist nomenclature, “only the name is different. The same faces. Instead of the communist “International” they sing the national anthem. Their politics is also the same.” Similarly, Bronė, a villager, in her early 70s, a former dressmaker, argued that “there are the same communists in power. As earlier. They are the lords [*ponai*].” Invoking the popular “foreignness” of the “communists” to the nation and Lithuania, Bronė said not to vote for the “communists,” but “for the parties which are for Lithuania” (see also chapter 5). Another doctor from Kaunas, in his early 60s, felt ashamed for propagating Sąjūdis ideals, because it brought communism to the post-socialist elites:

I am betrayed, I can’t do anything anymore. I feel bad. It’s like the Soviet way. We made a circle and returned to the same system. The parties can do everything. The Parliament can do everything. They are not accountable and not punishable. They live well. They have all the capital... earlier we used to say about the nomenclature—they live in communism. They could have done anything. It’s about the same now. I lost my patriotism.

The former CP members are thought to act in a particular way because of their past. A CP member may be thought to care about people, but very rarely about Lithuania. Conversely, to be corrupt, self-serving, and unjust is compatible with the image of a “communist:”

Everyone dislikes the Prime Minister [Brazauskas]. I do not know why he is still in power. It’s not enough for him. He was a communist, always working for himself. As people say, you cannot change your skin [a retired woman].

¹⁶⁸ The image of the “communists” was most popular in the smallest village community in the eastern part of Lithuania which during the years of the first independence of Lithuania was part of Poland.

The statements that “Lithuania is ruled by the communists” or that “there is no real Lithuania yet because people in the government are the same ones [i.e., the communists]” delegitimize the political present. When asked how it would be, if Lithuania was “real,” one villager gave a commentary based on expectations of more equality and well-being for poor people. The symbols of the “communists” and the “lords” were invoked to talk about the same issues:

If it was Lithuanian [*lietuviška*], everything should be different. The poor people should be more valued. There are the lords who drive cars followed by the other cars. And a poor person has nothing. Why doesn’t anybody pay any attention to him? If it is Lithuania, it should be Lithuanian [Pranė, the oldest inhabitant of the second largest village].

Another woman from the smallest village pointed out that “it is going to be joyful and good when there is a real Lithuania.” Such statements emphasize the otherness of the elites not only to the people, but also to the national body of “Lithuania.”

“Communists” and the “clan” may have a similar meaning, of a distinct group of people engaging in certain wrong actions and related in certain ways. For example, Bronė argued that the “communists” do not let anyone work. They want to control everything. She voted for Paksas during the presidential elections of 2003 because he looked so decisive and knowing. However, she had doubts whether they [the communists] would let him work.¹⁶⁹ The woman claimed that:

there are people who are educated and bright, but probably they are not allowed to get in the way. [...] These parties torture people. They steal and deceive... Even in the village—there are the same people, the ones who held an office under the Russians, they have it now. They help each other to stay in power, these communists.

The “communist” like the “mafia” or the “lords” may denote everyone associated with the “state.” Landsbergis, the leader of Sąjūdis, a person who very often is a symbol for the independence movement as well as for the opposition to communism, was also linked to “communists” during the research. A 52 year old unemployed woman claimed that “Landsbergis taught communism. At the university or a technical school. [...] He was not allowed to join the Party [the CP] because his father was a deportee.”

¹⁶⁹ The interview was conducted before the impeachment of President Paksas, in July, 2003.

8.4 CONCLUSIONS

As in socialism, in post-socialist spaces people experience the omnipresence and immutability of power, which is reflected in their ideas and feelings of exclusion from the circulation of wealth, distribution of rights, privileges, and resources. In socialism an individual may have felt cynical towards the “state” because of its manifold presence in everyday life through the organization of work, regulation of collective life, or distribution of entitlements. The retreat of the state (or what Verdery (1996) called “destatization”) from individual life is the dissolution of the former presence. It is not, however, the dissolution of the state. The “state” is present in the circulation of wealth and policies of privatization, agriculture, education, medical care which affect individual lives. Imaginings of the post-socialist “state” are articulations of this presence. They are attempts to understand power and strategizing to influence the state by joining protest actions or becoming “sick” to get benefits. The rhetoric of these strategies is grounded in moral arguments about welfare and accountability. Reclaiming dependence on the state is not only informed by socialist subjectivities. It is a post-socialist hybrid practice which derives its rationale from different times and spaces. The cynical and strategizing subject in a small village of Lithuania is also a global citizen while he or she participates in globally circulating discourse on the state, authority and power. Like Chileans (see Paley 2001), Pakistanis (see Verkaaik 2001), Turks (see Navaro-Yashin 2002), or Russians (see Ries 1997) an informant in Lithuania will express his/her cynicism by criticizing the state officials as self-interested, immoral, unjust, thus, not to be trusted, and by articulating the “state” as a polluting and malevolent realm of power. Like Russians or Turks he/she may label this power residing in the authorities as “mafia” and, thus, exploit the “transnational” image of the “mafia-state” uncommon in socialist Lithuania. He will also think of the officials as the “lords,” invoking a pre-Soviet image existing within national boundaries, but giving it a specific post-socialist tinge by naming the wealthy and the powerful.

9.0 CHAPTER 7: VOTING AS MEANINGFUL ACTION

Why G.W. Bush?

Because of three Gs: God, gays, and guns.

(A worker, in his late 40s, 2004, Chicago).

Well, dear people, I was here not so long ago. I would like to ask you: has anything changed?

People: Noooo...

Maybe you started to live better?

People: Worsee...

(From a meeting of V. Uspaskich, a leader of the Labor Party, with residents of Alytus, during the electoral campaign for the EU parliament, June 8, 2004).

A Journalist: It means that for 40 years Moses guided the Jews in the desert with a purpose, he waited for the generation which remembered serfdom to die out so the new state could be created by children of those born in freedom.

Adamkus: Absolutely right. I regret that few people understood and understand this truth of the Holy Scripture. It says what we are living through today.

(From Audrius Bačiulis's interview with President V. Adamkus, March, 11, 2004).¹⁷⁰

¹⁷⁰ See "V. Adamkus neabejoja, kad teisingumas ir demokratija nugalės" ("V. Adamkus is confident that justice and democracy will win"). *Veidas*. 03/11/2004. In the interview Adamkus was speaking about the younger generation. He argued that "the integration of this [young] generation into state life will solve many present day problems." Then, Audrius Bačiulis, a journalist, asked him the question about Moses.

To understand voting I explored how people perceive themselves as social subjects, how they relate to social and political history, what values and meanings inform social interactions and are reflected in personal experiences. The discussion of memory, social history and experience in chapters 1 and 2 described communities of meaning or communities of particular social texts which remembered the present as a “regression” from the “better” Soviet past. The social text on “regression” and “better times” in the Soviet period embedded experiences of change and in many cases of marginalization. In these texts people reflected upon changing regimes of personhood, social, economic and political developments. They produced themselves as the dispossessed and turned towards an imagined past of socialist well-being to reclaim values and personal dignity.

The social texts on “regression” and the “better” Soviet past may coexist with the texts on “oppression” in the Soviet period. Understanding of the Soviet period as “better” and “oppressive” was not conflicting to some informants. If they thought about the Soviet period as “oppressive,” by “better” times they meant social guarantees, their higher personal economic and social status than in the post-Soviet period as well as everyday predictability and stability. “Oppression” was an experience of foreignness of social history, which limited an individual’s agency and which produced an individual as the “other” to the officially imagined community (chapter 3). Therefore, some people who claimed to experience oppression never agreed that there can be anything “better” about Soviet times. The particular relation to the past reflected different political subjectivities.

Negative relations to social history expressed in the texts of Soviet “oppression” and post-Soviet “regression” derive from experiences of social otherness. In chapter 4 I argued that the social others of Soviet times, such as the deportees and Catholics, more often invoked socialist history as “oppression” than former CP members (especially self-identified communists) who were the major protagonists of socialism. In post-socialism in many cases identities were inverted producing “communists” as the “others” of post-socialist social and political history while elevating “deportees” and other Soviet “others” to the status of moral subjects and heroes. The former communists despite their endurance in power structures in

post-socialism are subject to symbolic marginalization for their “communist” (in recent years more often “KGB”-related) identities. The former communists often invoke “common sense” to speak about Soviet times. In the ideology of “common sense” they embed the authority, power, and status that they had under socialism. Their longing for the past is different from that of the villagers. Villagers often attempt to reclaim dependence on the state which guaranteed their entitlements, benefits, and security. The former CP members are nostalgic about the state which guaranteed their power and rights, including power to fashion values and meanings.

I also explored political subjectivities by analyzing a subject’s relation to nation and state (chapters 5 and 6). In chapter 5 on “Nation and Liberation” I argued that the text of discontent with “independence” and “liberation” derives from dissatisfaction with post-socialist changes and social as well as personal histories. In post-socialism the “nation-state” as a political community which was in the making in the late 1980s and early 1990s was not produced as a primary imagination, uniting many people. Congruently with Soviet-period identifications, many people feel they belong to the “nation” as an ethnic community.

I explored the subject’s relation to the state by looking at people’s understanding/experience of authority and power. I argued that “cynicism” is the common structure of feeling embedded in perceptions and experiences of the “state.” It entails negativity, distance, and irony rather than resistance towards the state. Cynicism encapsulates criticism of state officials, seeing them as self-interested, immoral, and unjust. It also manifests distrust of authorities and underscores the difference between the people and the power elites. Cynicism has an effect on the lives people live and the communication they carry out with the “state” whether in everyday conversations or at elections.

Voting enacts meanings and values embedded in people’s experience and subjectivities. It is a projection of subjectivities and selves, passions and knowledge. People were consistent in their voting preferences. Their votes for the independence of Lithuania during the referendum in 1991, and their later votes for the ex-communist parties in 1992, which were reappraised in public spaces, intellectual thought and social theory as a threat to sovereignty and democracy. In both cases people voted for their imagined well-being and

a better future. For them “independence” was meaningful in the beginning, to imagine new lives, and became irrelevant later (see chapter 5). Abrupt changes, like voting for different ideas and candidates which people did not vote for previously, usually are lived and narrated as important life turning points. In this the world of politics resembles “the worlds of religion, of folk myth, and perhaps of dreams” (Edelman 1975:3).

It is the interplay of social history, perception, and experience embodied in individuals which makes politics discernible and votes legible. Studies of voting behavior usually do not explain *why* people vote in a particular way. Even if studies provide socio-economic (see, e.g., Braun 1997, Ramet 1999), socio-cultural (e.g., Minkenberg 2001, Betz 1993, Inglehart 1990), and psychological explanations (see, e.g., McLaughlin 1996, Howard 2000, Jackman and Volpert 1996) they usually do not answer *how* particular socio-economic, socio-cultural circumstances, or psychological conditions are translated into votes. In this dissertation I aimed to address the questions of why people vote in one way or another and how social history is experienced and translated into votes. In the previous chapters I explored experiences of post-socialism and political subjectivities. This chapter is meant to show how particular experiences and subjectivities discussed in chapters 1–6 turn into votes and how politicians create a successful political spectacle.

9.1 THE 1ST SCENARIO. THE SECOND ROUND OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS OF 2002

9.1.1 Political drama of 2002

My research started a few months after the victory of Rolandas Paksas in the presidential elections of 2002. On one of the days in the smallest village, having two bottles of beer in a bag, I was going to see Levonas. It was one of the few occasions when I took beer rather than chocolate as a small “thank you” gift for an interviewee. Levonas’s house was deteriorating. Broken door windows, paint peeling off the house, very old furniture inside—

a table, two chairs, a closet for clothes, and a bed. On the wall there were portraits of Levonas's parents, industrious farmers in the Soviet period. The sun was shining through the dirty windows. It made the thick dust in the air visible.

Levonas was born in this village. He lived in Vilnius for twenty years where he worked as an engineer until his early retirement after the closing of the factory. He could not pay off the bills of his Vilnius apartment and sold it to pay for his only daughter's studies at the Law school. After selling the apartment, Levonas moved to his parents' house in the village. Levonas was too young to get a state pension. His income came from temporary jobs at a town nearby. Usually he was hired as a construction worker for 15 LTL a day, for which he could buy a loaf of bread, a kilo of the cheapest frankfurters, a bar of butter, one liter of milk, a package of flour, and a bottle of oil or something else. Two cows, a car, bicycles, the washing machine, the saw and other things that he inherited were sold. One villager said that everything that could be sold is gone, drunk away. Everything that I saw in the house was, according to Levonas, "from Soviet times," including clothing and shoes in the closet. The skinny, dusty young black cat was "post-Soviet." He was named after the new President Rolandas Paksas, because "their eyes looked the same." Levonas noticed this similarity on the campaign flyer. He voted for Paksas, "not for that American [Adamkus]... because this old man [Adamkus was 76] is not going to accomplish anything... Paksas also will not be able to [accomplish anything]." Levonas remembered that Paksas promised a lot, that he was a pilot and landed everywhere with his helicopter. Like many others, Levonas claimed that "everyone promises, but nobody does anything, because swindlers are in power."

During the electoral campaign Rolandas Paksas, twice the mayor of Vilnius, twice the Prime Minister, expressed his willingness to be president also for two terms.¹⁷¹ He received 54.71% of votes and defeated President Valdas Adamkus who collected 45.29% of the votes.¹⁷² Paksas's electoral campaign was well-organized and well-financed. Social scientists and many journalists claimed that good organization and millions poured into the campaign

¹⁷¹ See Pekarskaitė, Jadvyga "R. Pakso siekis—dvi Prezidento kadencijos" ("R. Paksas's aim—two terms in the president's office"). *Lietuvos rytas*. 12/16/2002. No.291. P.2.

¹⁷² The Central Electoral Committee. <http://www.vrk.lt/2002/Prezidentas/rezultatai/reza.htm-14+2.htm>.

accounted for Paksas's victory. The elections inspired discussions of electoral technologies and political marketing, and the public learned that "Paksas was created"¹⁷³ rather than "real." Paksas's campaign was labeled aggressive,¹⁷⁴ energetic, and using "black technologies."¹⁷⁵ People were thought to be deceived by Paksas's promises, to be naïve in believing his slogans, vulnerable to campaign shows like landing at meetings with voters in a helicopter, or susceptible to subliminal shots in the TV commercials.

Voters for Paksas were usually assumed to be the people of the second Lithuania (see chapter 1), poor, protesting, the Lithuania of losers and the disappointed.¹⁷⁶ According to one journalist, voters for Paksas were people "unable with their mind and their work to find a place in Lithuania," "willing to be happy doing nothing."¹⁷⁷ Some sociologists interpreted preferences for youth, energy, and resoluteness as well as for changes as "emotional decisions."¹⁷⁸ They argued that "people did not rely on their beliefs, but rather made spontaneous decisions and that a large part of population does not have strong opinions."¹⁷⁹

Interpretations of voting results referred to people like Levonas. He was poor and disappointed. However, like many other informants who voted for Paksas, he was willing to work to earn proper money. Levonas was not making spontaneous emotional decisions. He was also not deceived by the promises, nor did he believe that Paksas would bring real changes. Nor was he hypnotized by the subliminal shots in the TV commercials, since he

¹⁷³ See, e.g., Pečeliūnienė, Lina "Išsirinkome padangių erelį" ("We have elected an eagle soaring to the skies"). *Valstiečių laikraštis*. 01/07/2003. No.2. P.8.

¹⁷⁴ See, e.g., V. Radžvilas's opinion about Paksas's campaign. Bruveris, Vytautas "Antrojo turo išvakarėse—rėmėjų paieška" ("The search for financial supporters before the second round"). *Respublika*. 12/28/2002. No.299. P.2.

¹⁷⁵ See, e.g., Pečeliūnienė, Lina "Išsirinkome padangių erelį" ("We have elected an eagle soaring to the skies"). *Valstiečių laikraštis*. 01/07/2003. No.2. P.8.

¹⁷⁶ See, e.g., Bruveris, Vytautas "Antrojo turo išvakarėse—rėmėjų paieška" ("The search for financial supporters before the second round"). *Respublika*. 12/28/2002. No.299. P.2. Only few commented that people who voted for Paksas were not the losers, pessimists, or the disappointed. In the TV broadcast *Spaudos Klubas* such opinion was expressed by Romas Mačiūnas, the director of the Baltijos Research. See *Spaudos Klubas*. 02/12/2003. "Lithuania after elections. Myths, stereotypes, and reality." http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/www_misc.spaudos_klubas.

¹⁷⁷ Pečeliūnienė, Lina "Išsirinkome padangių erelį" ("We have elected an eagle soaring to the skies"). *Valstiečių laikraštis*. 01/07/2003. No.2. P.8.

¹⁷⁸ See also A. Liubinaičius's discussion with V. Vareikis "Kodėl R. Paksas, o ne V. Adamkus?" ("Why R. Paksas, not V. Adamkus?"). TV "Balticum." The broadcast "Rezonansas." 01/09/2003.

¹⁷⁹ See Lithuanian Television broadcast *Spaudos Klubas*. 02/12/2003. "Lithuania after elections. Myths, stereotypes, and reality." http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/www_misc.spaudos_klubas.

had no TV for the political hypnosis shows. Levonas voted for an insider (rather than Adamkus, whom he called the “American”), for the power and authority which was manifested in meaningful texts that resonated with Levonas’s knowledge, experience, and sensibilities. Levonas’s voting was the performance of subjectivity and social history, marginalized in official spaces. Examining it from those official spaces, Levonas’s vote was a protest vote since it opposed ideologies and hegemonies which informed those spaces. However, Levonas, like many other people, did not feel or think that he was protesting. For Levonas, naming him a “protestor” or a “sugar beet” was just another act of marginalization.

The key to the success of the electoral campaign of 2002 was Paksas’s communication of ideas and values in terms of social texts which many people shared. It recognized social histories and subjectivities marginalized in many official spaces (see chapter 1 and 2). It also tactically addressed passions (see Bailey 1983) towards post-socialist history common to people of various experiences (see chapters 1, 2, and 3). Moreover, the campaign, promoting Paksas as the young and firmly determined candidate, communicated power and authority and an ability to bring changes. The major slogan of Paksas’s electoral program, “The future is being created now” (“Ateitis kuriama dabar”) was “democracy for the individual, freedom for business, dictatorship for the mafia.” Paksas called his program “the Program of people’s expectations” (“Žmonių lūkesčių programa”).¹⁸⁰ The essence of the program was respect for people and restoration of trust in the future and the self. In his New Year’s address to the people, Paksas claimed that he was waiting for victory, “The victory over poverty, untruth, and disappointment.”¹⁸¹ Paksas stated that his “aim is the better life of people, a just, safe, and wealthy Lithuania.”¹⁸²

Respect for the individual was defined in Paksas’s campaign as “the basis for Paksas’s victory.”¹⁸³ Such rhetoric appealed to people who were searching for dignity, pride, and

¹⁸⁰ See Žigienė, Valentina “Pristatė žmonių lūkesčių programą” (“Introduced the program of people’s expectations”). *Panėvėžio balsas*. 12/16/2002. No.289. P.3.

¹⁸¹ In Lithuanian “Pergalės prieš skurdą, netiesą ir neviltį.” See *Lietuvos rytas*. 12/20/2002. No.295. P.8.

¹⁸² See Paksas’s political advertising “Lietuvos žmonės nori permainų ir tvarkos” (“People of Lithuania want changes and order”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 01/03/2003. No.1. P.8.

¹⁸³ In Lithuanian “Pagarba žmogui—mūsų laimėjimo pagrindas.” See political advertising by Valatkevičius, Rimvydas “Pagarba žmogui rinkimų pažadų šlapdriboje” (“Respect for the individual in the hail

respect by invoking the “better Soviet times.” It also appealed to people who were cynical towards the post-socialist state (see chapter 6). It addressed sensibilities about equality and collectivity, moral relationship, and expectations of dependency shared by poor villagers as well as protesting people on the streets (see chapter 6). Respect also meant returning value to what was devalued by post-socialism. For example, one Paksas campaign ad addressed people’s concerns about milk, the value of which had so diminished that, according to villagers, it was better to pour it on the ground rather than take it to the milk delivery station (see also chapter 2). In the ad where milk is poured on the ground Paksas argued that he “will not allow mockery of the village people. It is important to return value to all that is created by their hands.”

Paksas’s campaign appealed to and affirmed experiences and knowledge about various post-socialist developments, such as emigration, drug addiction, criminality, corruption, tax policies, education, medical care, and state bureaucracy. In his political advertising he targeted various strata and various experiences of post-socialism. Appealing to sensibilities about corruption and injustice (see chapters 1 and 2), Paksas argued that corruption prevails, with Lithuania being among the most corrupt states in the world.¹⁸⁴ In his ad on criminality it was communicated that people should not find their cars with windows smashed and radios stolen, a popular crime in Lithuania, because “everyone who committed a crime, will know that he/she will be punished.” Like Vitkus, a 60 year old pensioner from the second largest village (see chapter 1) who thought that “if you steal a chicken, you may spend more years in prison than in the case of murder,” Paksas claimed that “in our system a person who stole a chicken from his neighbors to feed his hungry children, is put, roughly speaking in prison, while those who steal millions from the country cover themselves with collective responsibility, walk free and even teach others how to

storm of electoral promises”). *Respublika*. 12/18/2002. No.292. P.5. See also the program of the Liberal Democrats for the municipality elections of 2002. The major slogan was “To return respect to an individual is the core of my program, the reason for the victory” (“Gražinti pagarbą žmogui—tai yra mano programos esmė, mano pergalės pagrindas”). *Kauno diena*. 12/05/2002. No.282. P.16.

¹⁸⁴ See the discussion of the Vilnius University seminar presentations, BNS and *Lietuvos rytas* information, “Į Prezidentūrą—ir populizmu išgrįstu keliu” (“Taking the populist way—to the president’s office”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 12/20/2002. No.295. P.4.

live.”¹⁸⁵ In the TV debates Paksas mentioned that Rudolph Giuliani, the New York mayor in 1994–2001, argued that there is no small crime, that small crime leads to big crimes. Every crime has to be solved.¹⁸⁶ This resonated with people’s experiences of crimes and their fears of becoming the victims of crime (see chapter 1 and 3). Democracy, Paksas argued, had to be a “strictly established order, where *everyone* [emphasis in original] follows the law, including the President, the Ministers, the Prime Minister, and the people. Finally, [...] the mafia, they also are forced to follow the law.”¹⁸⁷

Ideas about children, their future and parents’ role as providers were addressed in a poster with a young girl washing dishes, most likely she was a migrant from Lithuania in some foreign country. Paksas argued that “Everyone who wants to study has to have a real possibility to study at a college [*aukštojoje mokykloje*].”¹⁸⁸ In other posters Paksas appealed to sensibilities about health, money and work (see chapter 2). In a poster with a shabby hospital room, it was argued that “Every sick person has to have access to quality medical care and medicine.”¹⁸⁹ Connecting to the discourse by doctors themselves, Paksas claimed that the situation is not normal when health care institutions are blamed and persecuted for a job well done, but praised for funds saved at the expense of an individual’s health and life.¹⁹⁰ According to Paksas’s campaign, to change corrupt health care politicians you need a strong political will, which he certainly had.¹⁹¹

Responding to many small business entrepreneurs’ concerns, Paksas’s political advertising stated that “today the businessmen of Lithuania are forced to avoid paying taxes dishonestly, and feel almost like criminals, if they want to continue with their businesses and have at least a minimal profit. It is necessary to cut taxes and give more freedom to

¹⁸⁵ See the final debates between Paksas and Adamkus. LNK television. *Žodžio laisvė*. 01/02/2003.

¹⁸⁶ See the electoral advertising broadcast “Presidential elections.” Lithuanian Television. 01/02/2003.

¹⁸⁷ See the final debates between Paksas and Adamkus. LNK television. *Žodžio laisvė*. 01/02/2003.

¹⁸⁸ See, e.g., the ad in *Lietuvos rytas*. 12/06/2002. No.283. P.16.

¹⁸⁹ See, e.g., the ad in *Lietuvos rytas*. 11/30/2002. No.278. P.13.

¹⁹⁰ See Paksas’s political advertising, Rolandas Paksas “Kam naudingas pleištas tarp pacientų ir medikų” (“Why do we need a wedge between patients and doctors”). *Respublika*. 11/12/2002. No.261. P.6.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

business.”¹⁹² The question on the major campaign ads asked: “Do you want this to continue for five more years?” The political advertising also invited people to “Vote for change” (*BALSUOKITE UŽ PERMAINAS*) and stated that “Order will come. Rolandas Paksas” (*Tvarka bus. Rolandas Paksas*).

In the political advertising there were reproduced anxieties, insecurities, and pessimism that were shared by many people of various social statuses and experiences, whether poor villagers or city intellectuals. Anxieties about becoming the victim of crime, or losing a job, sensibilities about money and buying things and services, insecurity about the one’s own and one’s children’s social and physical future were successfully addressed in Paksas’s campaign. In his general address to the people Paksas claimed that “the guilty must answer according to the law. Nobody has to steal or waste your money. People have to have a job, if they want to, they have to have the possibility to study, if they want to. You do not have to be afraid to get sick or old.”

Paksas promised change and order, the major words appearing on most of his campaign posters. “Changes” and “order”¹⁹³ are good political symbols to which many people can connect with their particular experiences and knowledge (see chapter 1). Images of various disorders, which resonated with articulations of social history as regression (chapter 1), challenged Adamkus’s positions about continuity and the stability of state politics.¹⁹⁴ In 2002 Adamkus’s major slogan was “For the President, For a certain tomorrow!” (“Už Prezidentą, Už patikimą rytdieną!”). In his campaign it was claimed that the “major traits of President V. Adamkus are commitment to democracy, predictable

¹⁹² See, e.g., the ad in *Lietuvos rytas*. 12/16/2002. No.291. P.3.

¹⁹³ “Order” was used in other candidates’ electoral rhetoric. For example, Algimantas Matulevičius, a candidate in the presidential elections of 2002, used the slogan “Work, Order, Responsibility!” Kazys Bobelis, another presidential candidate, used the slogan “For order and justice in the state!” See “Sostinė išmarginę politikų plakatai vilniečiams kelia šypsenas” (“Residents smile at the posters of politicians in the capital”). *Lietuvos rytas/ Sostinė*. 12/14/2002. No.290. P.11.

¹⁹⁴ See, e.g., The Adamkus’s campaign ad in *Lietuvos rytas*. 01/03/2003. No.1. P.5. Adamkus also argued that there has to be important changes made in various spheres. For example, he claimed that legal processes have to be more effective and transparent. Transparency is needed in health care and pharmaceuticals. The state allocates millions which are not used effectively. Education has to be accessible to everyone. See the interview with Valdas Adamkus, Pečeliūnienė, Lina “Valdas Adamkus: Didžiuojuosi Lietuvos žmonėmis” (“Valdas Adamkus: I am proud of the people of Lithuania”). *Valstiečių laikraštis*. 12/17/2002. No.101. P.1, 8.

political behavior, established relationships with political parties and other state structures. In other words, political parties which support V. Adamkus, associate him with political stability.”¹⁹⁵ According to Paksas, stability would mean continuous emigration, surviving on small pensions, corruption, and impunity of the state bureaucrats. Paksas argued that, if “people are satisfied with the present situation when the young go abroad, when you can hardly survive on a pension, rather than live a normal life [*kai galima tik egzistuoti, o ne gyventi*], when higher education becomes only [the privilege] of the rich, when corruption and bureaucrats [*valdininkai*] prosper,—you need to vote for stability. But if people want to live normal lives [*kaip žmonės*], be able to let their children study and not think what to put on the table tomorrow, you have to vote for change.”¹⁹⁶ Unlike Adamkus, Paksas provided content for the metaphors of “stability” and “change” in the language of the everyday experience of many people.

Reaffirming people’s feelings and perspectives towards social history, community, nation, the state, and the self, Paksas’s campaign spoke to the prevalent pessimism (see chapter 1, 2, and 6). Pessimism communicated similarity and nativeness of the candidate. Adamkus’s relatively optimistic tone, in many cases, communicated foreignness. For example, unlike Paksas’s strategy to recognize people’s marginalization and the responsibility of the state which was meaningful to many informants, Adamkus encouraged initiative and industriousness which people could not imagine in their situations and with the resources and opportunities they had. Unlike Paksas who claimed to have power to bring change *to* the people, Adamkus invited people to find powers *in themselves* and to change (see also chapter 6). At the Family Farmers’ Congress, Adamkus “urged farmers to adjust to the time requirements more quickly.”¹⁹⁷ He argued that farmers have to reorient themselves, the faster, the better.¹⁹⁸ Adamkus also invited Ukmergė region officials to strengthen self-

¹⁹⁵ See Dineika, Laurynas “Kodėl įtakingiausios politinės partijos pasitiki Valdu Adamkumi?” (“Why the most influential parties trust Valdas Adamkus?”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 01/03/2003. No.1. P.4.

¹⁹⁶ The interview with Paksas. Digrytė, Eglė “R. Paksas nenori “Williams” palaikiusių paramos” (“Paksas does not want any help from the supporters of “Williams””). *Respublika*. 12/24/2002. No.297. P.3. See also the final debates between Paksas and Adamkus. LNK television. *Žodžio laisvė*. 01/02/2003.

¹⁹⁷ See Sasnauskas, Valdas “Lietuvos šeimos ūkininkai—permainų kelyje” (“Family farmers of Lithuania—in transition”). *Valstiečių laikraštis*. 12/10/2002. No.99. P.5.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

government, not to wait for money from the Vilnius bureaucrats, but manage things independently.¹⁹⁹ In Želva, when an old woman observed that the village was becoming deserted, Adamkus responded that the “villages [*kaimas*] which exist at present are not going to survive. However, it does not mean that everything will vanish. There is a possibility to preserve the Lithuanian village—to found a small business.”²⁰⁰ In Balninkai Adamkus emphasized that the initiative of village people is essential for great accomplishments, for escaping misery, poverty, and trouble.²⁰¹ In an interview for *Valstiečių laikraštis* (*The Farmers’ Newspaper*), Adamkus claimed to be “proud of the people of Lithuania,” “I am very happy when I see initiative by people. Especially in villages. They start on bare ground. [...] [they] know what they want, take risks, take loans. [...] Obviously, there are people who cannot take initiative. But even their life is getting better. Most important is that people want to change their present life, overcome present-day difficulties. Everything depends on the people—we will have the Lithuania we want to have.”²⁰²

Optimism for the future, encouraging people to be responsible for their lives, to take initiative and be creative, communicated the difference and foreignness of Adamkus and his agenda since it did not resonate with the pessimism and understanding of current developments people shared. It created space for Paksas’s team to claim that Adamkus did not understand people’s concerns and lives. Adamkus’s lack of understanding of people’s concerns was repeatedly invoked by many informants during my interviews when they discussed the electoral campaigns of 2002 and 2004. Paksas claimed to know people’s problems. His knowledge was validated not only by his rhetoric, but also by his actions in reaching out to people in various villages, towns, and cities of Lithuania. Paksas met thousands of people, and, in his words, shook their hands and looked into their eyes. “You

¹⁹⁹ See Jastramskienė, Loreta “Prezidentas siūlė ukmergiškiams stiprinti savivaldą” (“President suggested Ukmergė residents to strengthen self-governance”). *Valstiečių laikraštis*. 12/14/2002. No.100. P.8.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ See Šaknys, Bernardas “V. Adamkus: “Per kaimo bendruomenę—į gerovę!” ” (“V. Adamkus: “From village community to welfare!” ”). *Valstiečių laikraštis*. 11/16/2002. No.92. P.1, 4.

²⁰² See the interview with Valdas Adamkus, Lina Pečeliūnienė “Valdas Adamkus: Didžiuojuosi Lietuvos žmonėmis” (“Valdas Adamkus: I am proud of the people of Lithuania”). *Valstiečių laikraštis*. 12/17/2002. No.101. P.1, 8.

said,” Paksas remembered, “that injustice and poverty has not decreased.”²⁰³ Paksas’s gaze reached out to many people and became commodified, as in the leaflets and flyers people had, or even embodied, as in the case of Levonas’s cat Paksas.

Paksas’s campaign invoked the moral relationship between the state and people (see chapter 6). The state was expected to be positively present in people’s lives by giving proper pensions, assuring medical care, law and order, and entitling people to various benefits. Paksas argued that the ruble deposits, compensation for land, termination of “prichvatization” (see chapter 6) are the problems which have to be addressed first. “I know how and what resources the state can use to resolve grievances [*atitaisyti skriaudas*]. Unfortunately, we cannot resolve [grievances] for everyone—it hurts when you think that many people who suffered through occupation, deportation and labor camps did not live to retrieve their bank deposits and their land in a free Lithuania.”²⁰⁴ His campaign brought back the state congruent with people’s imaginations, and promised the state’s presence in the future.

Activity and determination are essential to any political campaign and to the image of a leader (Егорова-Гантман and Минтусов 2002, Edelman 1964). Paksas argued that he is not afraid of responsibility.²⁰⁵ He had power, the political will and was determined and committed to bringing about change. His campaign advisor Dalia Kutraitė admitted that, “if you are a state leader, you are responsible for everything. People are disappointed with the new form of democracy where responsibility is diluted. [...] I believe first of all people believed that Paksas is not afraid to be personally responsible.”²⁰⁶ The TV commercials conveyed “masculinity, energy, intellect, power, resolution, Rolandas Paksas—the President you need.” Landing in a helicopter to meet with people, riding a motorcycle or manning and flying a plane below the bridges of cities were rites signifying the leader’s power.

²⁰³ See the electoral advertising broadcast “Presidential elections.” Lithuanian Television. 01/02/2003.

²⁰⁴ See the Paksas campaign article “Lietuvos žmonės nori permainų ir tvarkos” (“People of Lithuania want changes and order”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 01/03/2003. No.1. P.8.

²⁰⁵ See, e.g., the Paksas campaign program.

²⁰⁶ Kutraitė, Dalia Lithuanian Television. 01/05/2003. The broadcast after the second round of elections.

9.1.2 Politics of hope and belief

Paksas claimed to have power not only to return value, recognition, honor, respect, and dignity, but also hope and belief. In the mainstream newspapers Paksas political advertising carried the note “I will return hope and belief.” The campaign film about Rolandas Paksas also ended with the note “I trust. Rolandas Paksas.”²⁰⁷ At the municipality elections, which took place at the same time as the presidential elections of 2002, Paksas’s party of the Liberal Democrats argued on tones as the Paksas presidential campaign:

I believe that I will return hope and belief in the family, the state, and the future.

I believe that responsibility is the supreme law of the state.

I believe that a strong President and order in the state will create a rich and secure Lithuania.

I believe that the state will guarantee its future by creating possibilities for young people to study, work and earn [money].

I believe that by taking care of pensioners the state will honor the people who created it.

I believe that the state has to care about the physical and the spiritual [*dvasinė*] health of an individual.

I believe that we will overcome impunity, the major reason for criminality.

I believe that Lithuania must remain a country of safe nuclear power.

I believe that Lithuania will enrich the world and the world will enrich Lithuania.²⁰⁸

Rolandas Paksas

Politics of hope and belief are central to many political campaigns. For example, the themes of hope, change, and the economy were elements of the Clinton political myth (McLeod 1999). Clinton’s rhetoric “bridged the gap between the hopes of middle Americans for change and their difficult economic plight” (McLeod 1999:363). Edelman argues that the “evocation of a hopeful future in a population beset by poverty and unemployment was the secret of Roosevelt’s rhetorical success” (Edelman 1975:8). Like change and order, hope and belief are good political metaphors to capture various experiences. They are among the most

²⁰⁷ The film (2002) about Paksas by Lina Svaranskytė was aired on the LNK television.

²⁰⁸ See the program of the Liberal Democrats “To return respect to the individual is the core of my program, the reason for the victory” (“Gražinti pagarbą žmogui—tai yra mano programos esmė, mano pergalės pagrindas”). *Kauno diena*. 12/05/2002. No.282. P.16.

popular passions which have a global political career and provide a route to power (cf. Bailey 1983).

The politics of hope and belief was reinforced by images of youth and future. These images were used in campaign discourses and were invested in Paksas's character. In Vilnius there was a huge poster with a young man holding a small child in his arms. The note on the poster was: "The President. The future is close." It was not clear whether the "President" referred to the small child, to an unknown young man, or to none of them. It was the "future" and "youth" which were associated with the "President" and which evoked Paksas rather than Adamkus. To anticipate the possible reasoning that youth implies incompetence and lack of experience, Paksas connected himself to the "global" genealogy of male heroes (cf. Verdery 1996):

At 37 William Shakespeare wrote "Hamlet," at 41 Christopher Columbus discovered America, at 37 Albert Einstein created the theory of relativity, at 43 John F. Kennedy became the President of the United States. There is a time to work, there is a time to think work over. Rolandas Paksas is coming to work.

Paksas's team and his supporters' ideas about giving a way for the younger generation²⁰⁹ communicated that Adamkus is too old to be President. The article supporting Paksas argued: "The President is responsible not only for foreign policy, he is also the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. Who is better for this position—Rolandas Paksas, determined and young, or Valdas Adamkus who served as a translator [in the unit of the anti-Soviet forces] forty years ago?"²¹⁰ The dichotomy of youth and old age was very beneficial to Paksas. Many people considered Adamkus's old age. The elderly compared him to themselves. Juozas thought that, if Adamkus is healthy and energetic at 76, it "means that he did not work seriously earlier." Age did not matter much for the supporters of Adamkus. Adolfina from the second largest village said to vote for Adamkus despite his age, because

²⁰⁹ See, e.g., Valevičius, Vytautas "Valdas Adamkus: pažadai ir darbai" ("Valdas Adamkus: promises and work done"). *Respublika*. 12/31/2002. No.301. P.6. Adamkus addressed the question about his old age in electoral advertising article "Prezidentas V. Adamkus kviečia žmones balsuoti už geresnę šalies ateitį" ("The President V. Adamkus invites people to vote for a better future of the country"). *Lietuvos rytas*. 01/03/2003. No.1. P.7.

²¹⁰ See Valevičius, Vytautas "Valdas Adamkus: pažadai ir darbai" ("Valdas Adamkus: promises and work done"). *Respublika*. 12/31/2002. No.301. P.6.

“maybe Paksas is good, [...] but we know Adamkus... What do I know about Paksas?.. his fists clenched, resolute, and all...”

9.1.3 Politics of outsidersness

Part of the media and the major political parties presented Paksas as an outsider to the state and the political elites. The outsidersness was communicated as a negative difference. However, people perceived it positively, as Paksas’s outsidersness to corrupt and immoral state officials. His resignation from the position of mayor of Vilnius and the Prime Minister’s position was communicated by his opponents as his inability to work with colleagues, to find solutions in critical situations, unwillingness to compromise, unpredictability, instability, avoidance of responsibility,²¹¹ and unreliability.²¹² Paksas’s team presented the facts of his resignation as determination, observance of the nation’s good rather than his own self-interest, refusal of power for a moral cause as well as opposition to the elites.²¹³ Paksas’s service as Prime Minister with Adamkus’s support and recommendation and as Adamkus’s advisor after his resignation of the Prime Minister’s

²¹¹ See Dineika, Laurynas “Kodėl įtakingiausios politinės partijos pasitiki Valdu Adamkumi?” (“Why the most influential parties trust Valdas Adamkus?”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 01/03/2003. No.1. P.4. See also Simonaitis, Edvardas “Vadovavimas valstybei—tai nuolatinių kompromisų paieška” (“Leading the state is a constant search for compromises”). *Panevėžio balsas*. 12/28/2002. No.297. P.3.

²¹² G. Kirkilas, one of the leaders of the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party, said that Paksas is “unreliable.” See Bruveris, Vytautas “Antrojo turo išvakarėse—rėmėjų paieška” (“The search for financial supporters before the second round”). *Respublika*. 12/28/2002. No.299. P.2.

²¹³ Paksas’s opposition to the state and the political establishment was reinforced in various campaign strategies. Paksas was presented as a Samogitian, a member of a historic ethnic and language community in Lithuania. Like the Samogitians Paksas was said to be resolute, determined, persistent, actively pursuing his goal, and reliable. See Paulius Rimeikis’s interview with Stasys Kasperavičius, President of the Samogitian Association. “Žemaičiai nebijo globalizacijos” (“The Samogitians are not afraid of globalization”). *Respublika*. 12/09/2002. No.284. P.26. Responding to the contest “Who is afraid of Rolandas Paksas?,” Algimantas Gaudutis, a history teacher from Panevėžys, answered the question: “the politicians in power at present. To be precise, the politicians under power. They are controlled by the criminal world, which bribed and made our state dependent on the “elite.” It allows for concluding that the top stratum of the mafia is afraid of R. Paksas. [...] They are all afraid of change.” See Gaudutis, Algimantas “Konkursui “Kas bijo Rolando Pakso?”” (“For a competition “Who is afraid of Rolandas Paksas?””). *Respublika*. 12/31/2002. No.301. P.7. See also Paksas campaign article “Kas ir kodėl bijo Rolando Pakso?” (“Who and why is afraid of Rolandas Paksas?”). *Kauno diena*. 01/03/2003. No.1. P.16.

office were used by Paksas's team to communicate Adamkus's trust in Paksas and approval of Paksas's actions.

Like Paksas, Adamkus's image was structured outside the "state" by reinforcing his image as a moral politician. Adamkus's moral image was communicated emphasizing honesty, responsibility, tolerance, decency, dignity, and elegance.²¹⁴ The image of a moral politician and the status of an American Lithuanian was the important political capital which contributed to Adamkus's victory in the presidential elections of 1997. As a person who lived many years outside Lithuania,²¹⁵ for which Adamkus was included into the Guinness world records (2000 millennium edition) as the "President to have spent the least time in his country," he was expected to be outside the polluting realm of politics and wealth.

People remember Adamkus as a "good person," "neither a thief, nor a liar like everyone else of ours." Genė and Vincas from the largest village thought that it is also very important that Adamkus saw "the other culture, the other order." Ramunė, a farmer from the largest village, remembered voting for Adamkus because she thought that "the foreigner will bring order." In the first presidential elections of 1992, some voted for K. Lozoraitis, another "foreigner," because, like Adamkus in 1997, he was "an American, rich, he wouldn't need money..." (Povilas from the second largest village). The media reported similar perspectives. For example, Juozas Pociūnas from Petronių village, Ukmergė region, wrote to the newspaper *Valstiečių laikraštis*, that Adamkus had not stolen anything, he had not been bound to financial, political groups. He had not gone abroad using tax payers' money. He knows foreign languages well. According to Pociūnas, Adamkus's "education and intellect brings honor to Lithuania."²¹⁶

Some people, even if they did not challenge the moral image of Adamkus, claimed that Adamkus is unable to understand their problems because "he has not been part of our culture." Jadvyga N., the former party secretary, like Levonas, voted for Paksas because

²¹⁴ The TV commercials were shown during the concert of support for Adamkus. See LNK television. 01/03/2003. 8.15 p.m. "Dainos Prezidentui—dainos geresnei Lietuvos ateičiai" ("Songs for President—songs for the better future of Lithuania").

²¹⁵ Adamkus fled from Lithuania to Germany in 1944. In 1949 he emigrated to the United States.

²¹⁶ See Pociūnas, Juozas "Valstybėje, kaip ūkyje, reikia išmanančio šeimininko" ("In the state, like on the farm, you need an experienced master"). *Valstiečių Laikraštis*. 11/23/2002. No.94. P.7.

Adamkus “you know, he is an American, he does not understand our problems. He does not understand our Lithuania.” Violeta, in her early 50s, a former CP member with high standing in Soviet times (and at present), reflected upon others benevolence towards Americans by articulating her opposition:

he was an American that’s why he got the position [one of the Ministers of Lithuania]. They think, if you are an American, so you are like a God. O my God, my God... I don’t know. I was neither a nationalist, nor a racist, but, well, I think, I will become one in my old days. Against Americans. Against Americans and present bureaucrats.

In the elections of 2002, Paksas’s campaign recirculated the positive image of Adamkus’s moral outsidership to mean passivity, non-interference, and, as people claimed, unfamiliarity with people’s concerns. In this context Paksas’s outsidership was positive: he was outside corruption, clan politics, and mafia dealings. Adamkus’s outsidership became negative: it was non-interference, giving way for to corrupt elites to prosper and misbehave. Such image of Adamkus also contrasted with the image of the active and determined leader Paksas.

Adamkus’s inability to positively influence political life in the state was exemplified in the process of privatization of “Mažeikių Nafta,”²¹⁷ the oil refinery. The Lithuanian Government, “Mažeikių Nafta,” and American company “Williams International” signed an agreement, under which “Williams International” became a 33-percent owner and operator of “Mažeikių Nafta” in 1999. Paksas, Prime Minister during the privatization of “Mažeikių Nafta,” claimed to resign from his post because he was unwilling to sign an agreement which was unfavorable to Lithuania. According to Mečys Laurinkus, the director of State Security, the “coming of “Williams” to Lithuania was an attempt to reduce dependency on the enterprises of Russia. This was the only reason to make concessions.”²¹⁸ In 2002 the Russian oil company YUKOS acquired a stake from “Williams International” and associated rights in “Mažeikių Nafta,” assuming all rights and obligations of “Williams International” under the

²¹⁷ See, e.g., the final debates between Paksas and Adamkus. LNK television. *Žodžio laisvė*. 01/02/2003.

²¹⁸ See Laurinkus, Mečys “Kaltinimų baimė trukdo priimti sprendimus” (“The fear of accusations disrupt decision making”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 09/19/2002. No.217.

1999 agreements with the Lithuanian Government, including operator rights”²¹⁹ and making the political decision of 1999 to reduce dependency on Russian companies void. According to the Parliamentary Commission which investigated the privatization of “Mažeikių Nafta,” President Adamkus had an active role in “politically influencing the major decisions” during the process of privatization, thus, influencing an unfavorable privatization.²²⁰ The case of “Mažeikių Nafta” promoted Paksas’s image as the leader who possessed qualities Adamkus lacked who made successful decisions in contrast to the mistakes of Adamkus and who, when he resigned, was the victim of obstacles placed there by adversaries or enemies (cf. Edelman 1988).

An outsider to the “state” is expected to act as an equalizing force, negating contradictions, effacing distinctions, restoring a mystical social unity and well-being, and undoing existing hierarchies. Among the many candidates in the first round of the presidential elections of 2002 an important outsider was V. Šerėnas, the fourth among the 17 candidates (he gained 7.75% of votes). Šerėnas has a TV program of political satire “Dvyračio žinios,” which builds its popularity largely by criticizing the state and politicians. The votes for Šerėnas embraced cynicism towards state officials (see chapter 6), and, as the following citation illustrates, ideas about the value of the past. Jūratė, a professor from Kaunas, recalled choosing a “joker” (*juokdarį*) (she never used the candidate’s real name during the interview):

We were raised differently. We have different relations [to surroundings and people]. That’s why this nostalgia for the past exists. [...] I think many intellectuals chose a joker in the elections. I don’t know the other candidates. Maybe they did not know how to present themselves... all that money, advertising... where from? We don’t believe. We don’t have a developed capitalism that could allow one to run for office. It’s painful when they say that we have the leaders we deserve.

When I asked why Jūratė voted for the “joker,” she responded: “You know from the fairy tales that a “joker” [like a fool] is the smartest [she laughed].” Like the ritual clown

²¹⁹ See <http://www.nafta.lt>.

²²⁰ See the discussion of the Parliamentary Commission conclusions on privatization of “Mažeikių nafta.” Danilevičiūtė, Vida “ “Williams” valios vykdytojams bausmės negresia” (“There will be no punishment for fulfilling “Williams’s” will”). *Respublika*. 06/03/2004. No.127. P.1,3.

among the pueblo-dwelling Indians of the southwestern United States who had both comic functions and others that were more serious, not the least of which were social control and the management of some important ceremonial events (Hall 1997:132), the Lithuanian “joker” was a combination much like that of the trickster who may be a vulgar comedian and comic character as well as a social transformer. The “joker” was an outsider capable of mediating between Jūratė and political and social life. He had the power to see underneath things and to laugh at them. His irony communicated disapproval of the state officials and their actions. Political rites and leaders were transformed into satirical subjects, deserving no respect and serious consideration. The “joker’s” irony resonated with Jūratė’s cynicism towards the state.

Another notable outsider, whose Labor Party, founded in 2003, gained the majority in the elections to the European Parliament of 2004²²¹ and the elections to the Parliament of 2004,²²² was Russian-born Viktor Uspaskich. Uspaskich arrived in Lithuania in 1985, became a citizen of Lithuania in the early 1990s and made an impressive career there, becoming a pickle magnate and a millionaire. One of his campaign strategies was defining himself and his party in opposition to the existing parties. Uspaskich’s Russianness, even if perceived as “foreignness,” was not an issue that would prevent many people from giving their vote for him or his party. In one of the meetings with people in Panevėžys, Uspaskich was given a question: “Why do you think that a Russian can make Lithuania happy?” Uspaskich responded: “Because a Lithuanian did not do this.”²²³ Uspaskich’s phrase was cheered in the audience because communication was about the state rather than the nation. The ethnicity of the state for many in the audience was irrelevant, even if most in the audience considered themselves Lithuanian (see chapter 5). During my research many informants argued that

²²¹ The Labor Party in the elections to the European Parliament 2004 won 30.16% votes. This is 5 seats at the EU Parliament out of 13 for Lithuania.

²²² The Labor Party in the elections to the Parliament in 2004 won 27.66%. This is 39 seats out of 141.

²²³ *Panevėžio rytas*. 05/06/2004. No.103. See also the Conclusions of the Commission “About parliamentarian Viktor Uspaskich’s statements.” The Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania. 05/31/2004. No.101-I-25.

http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/dba_intra.W3_VIEWER.ViewDoc?p_int_tekst_id=34273&p_int_tv_id=339&p_org=0.

Russians are sincere, душа²²⁴ (soul) people, honest, “they have nothing and need nothing. If there is fish and oil in the store, they are very happy” (Jadvyga M. from the largest village). Like the laughter in Panevėžys, these images were criticism for Lithuanians who were imagined as thieves, jealous and dishonest, “expecting all the time for the neighbor’s cow to die. That’s the mentality” [a driver, about 40 year old man]. It was part of a greater criticism aimed at the state and embracing social/political history (see chapters 1, 2 and 6).

Attitudes towards outsiders reflected people’s identities. Those who invoked nationalist ideals to speak of themselves (see chapter 3) doubted Uspaskich and his agenda. Genovaitė from Kaunas wondered “how could a simple welder have become a millionaire? He must have been involved in the black market.” Anelė, a Kaunas resident, wanted to believe that he was not going to do anything wrong to Lithuania. Her husband Albertas tried to find facts to disprove his doubts about Uspaskich. He noted that “the people of Kėdainiai [the city where Uspaskich lives] are very happy with him because he helps them personally, always. On the TV, on the broadcast “Bėdų turgus” it was announced that he bought an apartment for one woman with children and asked that it be kept quiet. They found out about it only later.” Anelė remembered that “in Russia he built a church. Well,... it is good work. People will go to pray.” Karilė, a Kaunas resident, in her 30s, claimed not to like “the fact that he is not a Lithuanian. I don’t believe that a non-Lithuanian can do anything good for Lithuania. [...] I don’t trust him.”

On 5 January 2003 Rolandas Paksas was elected to the office of President of the Republic in second-round voting. He took the oath and assumed the duties of the President on 26 February 2003. After impeachment proceedings, however, he was removed from office on 6 April 2004. Paksas was impeached for violation of the Constitution of Lithuania and for breaking the President’s oath. He violated the Constitution and broke the oath by unlawfully granting Jurijus Borisovas, Paksas’s financial supporter during the electoral campaign, citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania; by not ensuring the protection of state secrets and letting Borisovas know that in his regard institutions of law and order were

²²⁴ See Pesmen, Dale (2000) *Russia and Soul* about the explorations of the Russian dusha.

conducting investigations and tapping his telephone conversations; as well as by not coordinating public and private interests.²²⁵

During the impeachment process and after it, Paksas was continually considered to be outside of the corrupt elites. As Edelman argued, in “politics it almost always remains possible for a person to believe what his social and psychological needs make him want to believe, as is evident from every set of responses to controversial political developments” (Edelman 1975:12). Many supporters of Paksas thought that the elites did not let him work or disliked him. People accepted and agreed with some accusations, such as that Paksas had no right to give the citizenship of Lithuania to J. Borisovas, a Russian businessman, because of Borisovas’s financial support to the presidential campaign. However, then Paksas was often presented as the one who is no more corrupt than others. The legal cases, such as a case on corruption in privatizing land, which included Parliament and Government members²²⁶ and which received a lot of media attention, were seen as the accomplishments of Paksas and as the beginning of changes he promised. Regina from Kaunas argued that during the impeachment:

People had various opinions. Some thought that Paksas would have made order... and that there was a conspiracy against him. That he was hurt, but actually he was an angel. Those who supported him thought this way. That Paksas wanted good, but was kicked out.

Neringa: What do you think?

Regina: Well, I don’t know, when I saw that clairvoyant²²⁷ [*aiškiaregė*]... she is one. The second, when he got that million [from J. Borisovas, one of the financial supporters]... it did

²²⁵ See the Conclusion by the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Lithuania (March 31, 2004) at: <http://www3.lrs.lt/cgi-bin/preps2?Condition1=229756&Condition2=> or <http://www.lrkt.lt/dokumentai/2004/c040331.htm> (“On the compliance of actions of President Rolandas Paksas of the Republic of Lithuania against whom an impeachment case has been instituted with the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania”). See the impeachment process transcript at the Parliament of Lithuania webpage (April 6, 2004): <http://www3.lrs.lt/cgi-bin/preps2?Condition1=230143&Condition2=>.

²²⁶ See, e.g., the discussion by Čekutis, Ričardas ““Apsivalymo” proceso grimasos” (“Grimaces of the “cleansing” process”). *Atgimimas*. 01/09–15/2004. No.1(778). http://www.atgimimas.lt/ssi.php?id=1073633506&which=1&f_text=. Accessed on 12/30/2005. See also BNS information “P. Gražulis ragina V. Junoką paskelbti visų parlamentarų žemgrobų sąrašus” (“P. Gražulis urges V. Junokas to announce lists of parliamentarians who appropriated land”). www.omni.lt. 03/16/2004. 1:22 p.m. Accessed on 04/16/2004.

²²⁷ In the media L. Lolišvili, a Georgian and a so-called clairvoyant (or sorceress) and a close friend of Paksas, was said to have a strong influence on Paksas. See the discussion of books about L. Lolišvili by Andrius Navickas and Arūnas Peškaitis “Lena Lolišvili—Lietuvos politikų šventoji” (“Lena Lolišvili—a saint

not make me trust him more. I think he is not suitable, not suitable for foreign policy. Well, I don't know, I thought he wasn't fit to be president.

Regina voted for Adamkus in the elections of 2002. Impeachment of Paksas solidified her opinion that Adamkus was the right choice. She thought that Adamkus was good for “foreign policy because he knew [foreign] languages, was diplomatic and had something others lacked—elegance. [...] He was not young, but maybe if he was elected [in 2002] there would emerge somebody else [to replace him].”

There were also people who agreed that they felt shame because they voted for Paksas and did not realize who he was. However, the prevalence of positive ideas and feelings about Paksas after the impeachment illustrate that financing, energy, and publicity, thought to be the major forces in giving Paksas victory in the presidential elections of 2002 are not the only means to produce signification. Having power and media support, the Parliament was able to resignify Paksas as the violator of the democratic regime, law and order, and as a corrupt politician transgressing private and public boundaries. However, it did not produce a shared text among the people who voted for Paksas. The official images of the impeachment process and the hegemonic discourse were shared predominantly among those informants who did not vote for Paksas anyway. Many others, as mentioned, resignified Paksas in terms of shared social texts about the corrupt state and state officials including or excluding Paksas from them. The data on impeachment as well as voting conforms to Lakoff's findings that “people think in terms of frames and metaphors, i.e., conceptual structures. The frames are in the synapses of our brains, physically present in the form of neural circuitry. When the facts don't fit the frames, the frames are kept and the facts ignored” (Lakoff 2004:730). “The ideas have to be in place in people's brains before the sound bite can make any sense” (Lakoff 2004:105). Lakoff argues that in the United States a huge number of people still believe that Saddam Hussein was behind September 11 in spite of the report by the 9/11 Commission. According to him, people believe this because it fits their understanding of the world and because they have a frame and they only accept facts that fit that frame (Lakoff 2004:18). In the context of Lakoff's reasoning, one

of the politicians of Lithuania”). *Ekstra*. 05/12–18/2003. No.19 (232). See <http://www.lrytas.lt/ekstra/archyvas/2003/0512/>. Accessed on 12/30/2005.

can conclude that the political mainstream in Lithuania lacks the power and capacity to produce frames (or social texts in my vocabulary) which can make sense to many people and which make sense in regard to people's experience and subjectivities. It is indicative of the new nation-state's failure "to produce convincing fantasies of the commensurability of its citizens" (Holston and Appadurai 1996:202, cited in Berdahl 2001). Rather than creating new convincing fantasies, the political mainstream incorporates so-called populism into its own body in order to win more votes. Paksas's agenda was reprised by Adamkus and Prunskienė in the presidential elections of 2004 (see the discussion below).

The criticism of Paksas's campaign carried out by Adamkus's supporters and the media ranged from identifying aggressive and disgraceful powers to associating him with Moscow interests and supporters of terrorists. J. Borisovas's enterprise "Avia Baltika," which gave 1 million litas to Paksas's campaign, was said to sell helicopters to "Sudan, the patron of terrorists."²²⁸ Paksas's campaign was also claimed to be designed by the Moscow public relation company "Al Max."²²⁹ Unlike Paksas's destabilizing power, Adamkus guaranteed solidarity (*santarvė*), "because he had no interests. He was not working for anybody,"²³⁰ Paksas was seen as "bought," since "the owner of money is the owner of a bought thing [i.e., Paksas]."²³¹ Political scientists argued that Adamkus's electoral program did not carry empty promises, unlike Paksas's campaign.²³² Paksas's promises were reapproached as extending beyond the competence of the President,²³³ whose primary field of involvement, according to the Constitution of Lithuania, is foreign policy.

Paksas's power and party symbolism were associated with fascism. A State Security officer during our interview conveyed that the eagle used in the Paksas's campaign reminded him of the eagle of Hitler's Luftwaffe. Paksas claimed that it was the ancient Roman eagle (*Senovės Romėnų erelis*). Paksas was also compared to radical and populist leaders, or

²²⁸ See Pečeliūnienė, Lina "Išsirinkome padangių erelį" ("We have elected an eagle soaring to the skies"). *Valstiečių laikraštis*. 01/07/2003. No.2. P.8.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Beresnevičius, Gintaras *Respublika*. 11/28/2002. No.275. P.6.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² See comments by A. Krupavičius. Lithuanian Television. 01/05/2003. The broadcast after the second round of elections.

²³³ Ibid.

protagonists of the integrationist politics (see Holmes 2000) in Western Europe, such as Jörg Haider and Jean-Marie Le Pen.²³⁴ The global political economy of terrorism, fascism, communism, and democracy was doubtfully meaningful to many informants and they did not respond to Adamkus's final address on the last day of the campaign in which he argued that we "have to confront aggressive and disgraceful power. It raises concern about the future of our state. [...] Everyone for whom our democracy, freedom and welfare is important come [to elections]. [...] I am sure that the nation and its freedom cannot be bought for several million of uncertain origin."

According to Adamkus's campaign organizers the defeat was due to lower financing and lower visibility. Ona Volungevičiūtė, the chief organizer of the campaign, argued that Paksas paid ten times more for TV ads than Adamkus.²³⁵ She also thought that many people might have voted for those who gave something "material," i.e., gifts. The fact that the working President did not have time to travel as much as the opponents did was another reason for losing the election.²³⁶ One of Adamkus's major mistakes was considered to be his reliance on his popularity, authority and major accomplishments like paving the way to NATO and the EU. I argued that elections were a semantic and symbolic competition (cf. Почепцов 2000) and it was a semantic defeat that Adamkus faced.

The final debates were colored by Paksas's anecdote: a car was going on a narrow road. On one side of the road there is a young girl, on the other an old woman. The driving instructor asks the driver, what you will do, if you are unable to pass between the women. Many students responded that you have to run over the old woman because she has lived her life. The instructor responded—you have to stop, not run over people.²³⁷ The anecdote was used to illustrate that Paksas was not going to take from some people and give to the

²³⁴ See Digrytė, Eglė "R. Paksas nenori "Williams" palaikusių paramos" ("Paksas does not want help from the supporters of "Williams" "). *Respublika*. 12/24/2002. No.297. P.3.

²³⁵ Paksas's media coverage was 2–3 times higher than Adamkus's, according to the discussion of "Sic Gallup Media" survey in "Lapkričio 20 d. Lietuvos spaudos apžvalga" ("Lithuanian media coverage, November 20th"). *Kauno diena*. 11/20/2003. 07:48:46. Source: www.omni.lt.

²³⁶ Ramunės Sakalauskaitės interview with Ona Volungevičiūtė, the chair of Adamkus electoral campaign. "Neiškovota pergalė nėra pralaimėjimas" ("The lost victory is not a defeat"). *Lietuvos rytas*. 01/08/2003. No.5. P.3.

²³⁷ See the final debates between Paksas and Adamkus. LNK television. *Žodžio laisvė*. 01/02/2003.

others. Paksas's anecdote resonated with some villagers' thoughts that the state is waiting for the old people to die out. It also resonated with talks that the old generation is "sovietized," "longing for the torturer" (see chapter 5), "voting populist" (see chapter 1), and expectations that only the younger generation, born in freedom, will create the "modern state" (see the epigraph). This is the ideology of subalternity directed at the Soviet generation utilized in Paksas's campaign to create his political spectacle. It is also the hegemony of the present, reflecting new powers, new values, for which people did not vote. They voted for the present congruent to the tradition of socialism, which was symbolically relevant for their post-socialist selves. They also voted for a future congruent with their experience and knowledge of post-socialism.

9.2 THE 2ND SCENARIO. THE SECOND ROUND OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS OF 2004

9.2.1 Meeting people

On June, 2004 I was going back to Vilnius from the town of Biržai in the north of Lithuania where I was at Kazimiera Prunskienė's, the woman candidate at the presidential elections of 2004, meeting with Biržai residents. I was with some other people in a car of a so-called *dušmanas* (plural *dušmanai*), a man, in his early 40s whose name I never learned. *Dušmanas*, a term absent from the major Lithuanian language dictionaries and databases but well-known in Lithuania, means an illegal driver who gives a ride to people traveling from one place (usually a city) to another. They charge people less than bus station drivers and usually recruit people in bus stations or at the major bus stops by approaching them personally. *Dušmanas* usually implies full time employment. Several years ago *dušmanai* legalized their business. Now you can meet a former *dušmanas* by the major entrance to the bus station in Vilnius or Kaunas loudly pronouncing city names—their points of destination. However, the illegal business of *dušmanai* coexists with its legal forms.

A parallel “private” business exists in the bus stations. Some bus drivers, especially those who drive minibuses which make no stops between Vilnius and Kaunas, give no tickets to some people and often charge them a few litas less. Like in many other spaces, “private” business prospers within the public (or even private) sector (see also Wedel 1998, 2001). Like political spaces, post-socialist economies are primarily informed by categories of difference, such as “state” and “people” rather than “private” and “public.” People themselves refuse to take tickets and comfort drivers on the poor conditions of business and life.

As a professor from Šiauliai explained, *dušmanas* is a person who illegally carries goods from Pakistan to Afghanistan. According to him this word was introduced by people who served in the Soviet Army. *Dušmanai* belonged to the category of the excluded and deprived, they usually were “Asian” and “dirty.” The present usage of *dušmanas* has the meanings of “illegality,” “violation of driving rules,” and “speeding.” A historian from Vilnius argued that *dušmanas* is an Afghanistan partisan. He claimed that *dušmanai* referred to bandits, dishonest activists; however, people of Lithuania sympathized with them because they were “freedom fighters.” To the historian’s mind, at present *dušmanai* are cheaters, however, people sympathize with them because they help them to save some money.

Dušmanas, whom I got to know, had his private clients. He benefited mostly from individual orders, such as picking up people at the airport in Vilnius and taking them to Riga or Tallinn. He also spent a lot of time commuting between towns and cities. He had several apartments in different cities and stayed in one or the other depending on his location at the end of the day. *Dušmanas* buckled up a seat belt when he spotted a police car on the highway. He commented that the police want to teach him to ride buckled up. The highway was a different space for *dušmanas* from travelers like myself. It was populated with the policemen whose behavior he knew and whom he most likely bribed to stay in business. *Dušmanas* argued that, if there were different laws and higher salaries, the police would behave differently. He sympathized with the policemen who were disadvantaged by the “system” and with whom he constituted a moral community against the higher corrupt and immoral authority or the “state.”

What kind of a subject was *dušmanas*? It looked like he was a successful entrepreneur, an example of a businessman in the unplanned market economy (cf. Wedel 1992), neither a real vagabond (Bauman 1998), nor a cosmopolitan (see Friedman 2001) in the globalized world. Since he had money, property, private business, was mobile and successful, he was not a “loser” of the transition. However, he lacked the status of a real businessman defined in the terms and values of the post-socialist neoliberal state, as well as social and legal recognition. Like Levonas who had the cat Paksas, he voted for the so-called populist Paksas in the elections of 2002. In the elections of 2004 he voted for Prunskienė, a supporter of Paksas during the impeachment process and a candidate not supported by the mainstream parties in her bid for President’s office.

Dušmanas won two bottles of brandy from his friends because he was right about Prunskienė’s success in the first round. He was sure that Prunskienė would win the second round. Prunskienė’s opponent, the former President Valdas Adamkus, seemed to have little popularity in Biržai, if *dušmanas* were to be believed. He thought that young and stupid people in the cities vote for Adamkus. However, he knew no one who voted or was going to vote for Adamkus among his friends and acquaintances. He wondered how Adamkus got elected last time, in 1997.

Dušmanas did not learn about my research. It was one of those situations when you do not think of doing research in the beginning and do not ask for consent as suggested by the code of ethics of the American Anthropological Association (see Bernard 2000:184–190). However, it was one of those situations where you can check the validity of the ideas you have collected by informing people about your identity, your research, as well as asking for their consent. In this situation the space was outside my research sites and my identity was different, I was just a student going from Biržai to Vilnius who had participated in a meeting with Prunskienė for no particular reason. Maybe *dušmanas* assumed that I was a supporter. Knowing his and many others’ cynicism towards state officials, he might have thought that I was just curious. To my satisfaction the ideas *dušmanas* exchanged with me were very similar to those I had heard in village communities and in Kaunas.

The meeting with Prunskienė took place in a large culture hall. Most of the people were elderly, probably pensioners.²³⁸ When Prunskienė's team arrived and started to distribute campaign books and pamphlets, many got very enthusiastic about getting a book. The pictures and pamphlets they acquired were necessary for their self-expression and thinking about their lives, necessities, losses, and future. During the meeting Prunskienė emphasized that she understands the "West" as the EU and the U.S.A. She remembered that in Soviet times the employed people had purchasing power which allowed them to live quite well. Now the average pension is 3.5 times lower the average salary. Prunskienė argued that the major problems are the social sphere, which has to be addressed by the President, the Government, and the Seimas. She talked about the low salaries of teachers, doctors, and pensioners. She promoted a socially sensitive state policy. Prunskienė addressed the politics of agriculture, questions of the nuclear industry and regional politics. She supported cheap energy which Lithuania could produce on its own in opposition to the mainstream political agenda anticipating closure of the Ignalina Nuclear Power plant in accordance with EU requirements.

²³⁸ See Ramonaitė (2005) on the elderly as the most politically active part of population.



Figure 6. Erecting a campaign poster for Kazimiera Prunskienė, a presidential candidate, in Kaunas. 2004.

The questions given to Prunskienė expressed concerns about shortages of money, low benefits, insecurity about one's own and one's children's future, marginalization and stratification, low salaries and unemployment, the lavish lives politicians afford and the high salaries of bureaucrats, lost ruble savings, unfinished land restitution, and low milk prices. People asked: will there continue to be the elite and the sugar beets (*runkeliai*, see chapter 1)? Why are doctors devalued, why are their salaries so low, what will we do, if the doctors leave for other countries? How does Prunskienė think a family should live, if a single mother with three children gets a small salary and 100 litas for each child? When will the state begin the right pension politics? Why does my pension become lower, if I get benefits because my husband is deceased? Those who work, get money; what should an unemployed person do, if he cannot find a job, since he gets the unemployment benefits only for six months? What have teachers, doctors, workers, specialists, state sector workers done wrong that they get

salaries as small as pensions? One man asked about Prunskienė's honeymoon after her second marriage about 10 years ago. Did she go to Australia? Prunskienė responded that there was no such a thing as a honeymoon at that time. "I was at the World Lithuanian Congress, we opened two government representative houses"... Then suddenly an old woman stood up, interrupting the discussion, and started complaining about her life... She did not stop even when asked to stop... This certainly was not the rule actors in political ritual like the meeting with a presidential candidate had to follow (cf. Bailey 1970). It brought confusion; one of the members of Prunskienė's team left the stage and talked to the woman in person.

In the other meetings which I attended with other political leaders and candidates the questions were similar. In August, 2004, in a town near the largest village, at a meeting with V. Muntianas, the candidate of the Labor Party to the Seimas, mayor of Kėdainiai and a close associate of V. Uspaskich, people asked about ruble savings, as one man, in his 60s, put: "when will the state return their debt to the people?" One woman claimed that she sold a house, put 25 thousand rubles in a bank and lost everything. A former student asked about education. After his graduation, he was unwilling to work for 600 LTL per month and was unemployed. He argued that the employers are looking for someone with experience. Jadvyga N., a former party secretary from the largest village, commented that, if you are experienced, you are too old to be hired. A man asked why bureaucrats get higher salaries than other people. One woman said that people think that Uspaskich is another thief. She asked this, as if expecting Muntianas to deny what she said. Another woman stood up and said that in the Seimas there is so much garbage that probably no one will be able to clean that place up. One man wondered why some get millions for milk while the people are paid so little.²³⁹

²³⁹ In media coverage of the elections of 2002 similar themes prevailed. It is reported that during a meeting with candidates in the first and the second round of elections people asked about the return of their ruble deposits, law and order, corruption and health care which could be accessible to everyone, the high salaries of politicians and low pensions. In Vosiliškis village people complained that children have to go to school several kilometers, the youth do not have anywhere to spend their free time because the municipality does not finance events at the culture house. See Ivaškevičiūtė, Kristina "Iš Prezidentūros—į atokiausius kaimus" ("From the presidential headquarters to the most distant villages"). *Lietuvos rytas*. 12/11/2002.

Meeting with Prunskienė and with other politicians was the political ritual that provided for the expression of social relationships and the rearticulation of hierarchies (cf. McLeod 1999). The low salary was seen as the devaluation of people and their work, people invoked the moral relationship between the state and its citizens (see chapter 6) as in the questions above about the guilt of doctors or the state's debt to people. The politicians were associated with the state and she/he was seen as personally responsible for the lives people lead. The questions communicated experiences of injustice and denigration, and were expressive of anxieties, insecurities, and concerns about the present and the future.

9.2.2 The West vs. the East

In the political field Valdas Adamkus was the former President who “brought” Lithuania to the West and the EU and lost the elections of 2002 to Rolandas Paksas. Kazimiera Prunskienė was the first Prime Minister of Lithuania called the Amber Lady (Gintarinė Ledi) which genealogically included her into the scarce political community of Ladies, like M. Thatcher, the Iron Lady. She was also a leader of the Farmers' and New Democracy Union (*Valstiečių ir Naujosios Demokratijos Sąjunga*), an advocate of Europe and Russia oriented politics, an exonerated KGB member, whose KGB pseudonym Šatrija,²⁴⁰ deriving from Lithuanian mythology, was not forgotten by many people. The facts that Prunskienė was the signatory of the Independence Act of Lithuania or that she was awarded the Minerva Prize for political activity reestablishing independence²⁴¹ were never mentioned by informants.

No.287. P.2. See also Sabalytė, Elvyra “Seimo vadovas rinkėjus viliojo dovanomis” (“The Chairman of Seimas attracted people with gifts”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 12/16/2002. No.291. P.2.

For discussion of voting preferences at presidential and parliamentary elections before 2002 see Degutis (1995, 1997, 2000) and Ališauskienė (1998).

²⁴⁰ In Lithuania there is Šatrija's Hill, a historic mound. The legends and stories variously explain how Šatrija's Hill came into being and why it was named “Šatrija.” Part of those legends claim that it was a common meeting place of witches, and that because of witches' actions the Hill was named “Šatrija.” One of the well-known writers of the Lithuanian literature of the 19th century had the pseudonym “Šatrijos Ragana” (The Witch of Šatrija). Because of the associations of Šatrija's Hill with witches and because of the writer's pseudonym, people often referred to Prunskienė's KGB pseudonym as “Šatrijos Ragana” (The Witch of Šatrija) rather than “Šatrija” (the real KGB pseudonym).

²⁴¹ See www.prunskiene.lt. Accessed on June/2004.



Figure 7. The meeting organized by Sąjūdis to support Adamkus by the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania and by the Parliament of Lithuania. Vilnius. 06/25/2004. The poster says: “Adamkus to the presidential headquarters!... Prunskienė to Šatrijos Hill...”

Adamkus won 51.89%:46.66%, collecting 72,867 votes more than Prunskienė.²⁴² His major electoral slogans were “I will be equally just to everyone” (*Visiems lygiai teisingas*),²⁴³ “European well-being for every house!,” “For Lithuania without forgotten people!” It was the reprisal of his agenda of 2002 with the greater emphasis on what Adamkus’s team called “forgotten people.”

²⁴² See The Central Electoral Committee of the Republic of Lithuania.
http://www.vrk.lt/rinkimai/2004/prezidentas/rezultatai/rez_1_19_2.htm. Accessed on 01/02/2006.

²⁴³ See, e.g., *Lietuvos rytas*. 06/10/2004. No.133.

Adamkus claimed to have achieved the goals of his last term—Lithuania had become a member of NATO and the EU. The present goal was to use the advantages of membership and become a European welfare state by using EU assistance and funds. Adamkus claimed that the opportunities of membership have to be felt by every family and that “European money has to be directed to establish new job places rather than to build mansions.”²⁴⁴

Prunskienė signified the “past,” the “East,” and “instability,” in Adamkus’s campaign. Her promotion of friendly relations with Russia was structured as the interruption of Lithuania’s pro-Western and pro-future commitment. If Prunskienė is elected, there will emerge space for Russian interests to flourish, argued Adamkus’s team.²⁴⁵ The families of the victims of January 13th, 1991, dissidents and representatives of the academic community signed a memorandum which proclaimed that Prunskienė cannot be trusted by the state of Lithuania. They argued that Prunskienė suggested postponing the proclamation of the independence of Lithuania for two years during her visit in Washington in May, 1990 and that she had relations with the KGB.²⁴⁶

In 1992 the Supreme Court of Lithuania recognized that Prunskienė had deliberately given a promise to collaborate with the KGB. Prunskienė denied her collaboration. Before the presidential elections of 2002 she appealed to the Vilnius District Court requesting to renew the case.²⁴⁷ Prunskienė argued that she never betrayed “her country and its interests. I did everything for Lithuania’s independence following my beliefs, knowledge, and my heart. [...] I have never been and I will never be pro-Russian or pro-American. My land is

²⁴⁴ See “Europos gerovė turi ateiti į kiekvienus namus: Nesitraukiantis iš rinkimų V. Adamkus žada būti vienijančiu moraliniu autoritetu” (“European well-being has to come for every house: V. Adamkus stays at elections and promises to be a uniting moral authority”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 05/26/2004. No.120.

²⁴⁵ See the electoral campaign program “Respublikos Prezidento rinkimai” (“The elections of the President of the Republic”). Lithuanian Television. 06/23/2004.

²⁴⁶ Prunskienė denied this information. See *Lietuvos rytas*. 06/18/2004. No.140. P.4.

²⁴⁷ See BNS information “VRK prašys teismo nubausti rinkimuose dalyvaujančią ekspremjerę” (“The CEC [Central Electoral Committee] will ask the Court to punish the presidential candidate, the former Prime Minister”). *Kauno diena*. 12/07/2002. No.284. P.2. See also BNS information “Prunskienė—be šleifo” (“Prunskienė without a past”). *Kauno diena*. 12/18/2002. No.293. P.2.

Lithuania, you, dear people, your work, achievements, hopes, and future are the most important for me.”²⁴⁸

Political advertising for Prunskienė stated that she planned to be a “European President of Lithuania” as well as the defender of European values in Lithuania.²⁴⁹ She promoted close relations with European, especially German politicians,²⁵⁰ and argued for balanced relations between neighbors in the East and in the West.²⁵¹ Prunskienė’s team also argued against the pro-Americanism of Adamkus. Prunskienė opposed Lithuania’s participation in the “occupation of Iraq.” Our country, it was argued in Prunskienė’s campaign webpage, has to have an independent foreign policy rather than become a state of the United States.²⁵²

The geopolitical reasoning distinct to Prunskienė’s campaign, which divided the West into Europe/the EU and America/the U.S.A., and produced the image of a European Lithuania vs. Lithuania as a state of the United States, had little resonance among people. In Lithuania the symbolic geography of socialism and the liberation movement which divided regions into two categories of the East (mainly Russia) and the West (Western Europe, Europe, and the United States) is still viable (see chapter 5). The tendency is to orientalize the East and to populate it with enemies (see chapter 5, see also Todorova 1994, Bakić-Hayden 1995). The West, most often perceived as “Europe” after joining the EU, stands for quality, prosperity, the future, and modernity. People travel there in search of a better life

²⁴⁸ The campaign newspaper “Už Kazimierą Prunskienę!” (“For Kazimiera Prunskienė!”). P.1. Distributed in Biržai, at Prunskienė’s meeting with Biržai residents at the culture house, 06/21/2004.

The words in Lithuanian: “Niekada ir niekur neišdaviau savo valstybės ir jos interesų. Dariau viską, ką leido mano įsitikinimai ir protas, ką liepė mano širdis, kad Lietuva būtų laisva. [...] Aš žinau mūsų krašto žmonių skaudžiausias problemas ir rasiu būdus, kaip jas išspręsti. Niekada nebuvau ir nebūsiu nei prorusiška, nei proamerikietiška—mano žemė yra Lietuva, man svarbiausia—Jūs, gerbiami žmonės, Jūsų darbai, pasiekimai, viltys ir ateitis.”

²⁴⁹ Mogenienė, Laima “Kokio vadovo reikia Lietuvai?” (“What leader does Lithuania need?”). The campaign newspaper “Už Kazimierą Prunskienę!” (“For Kazimiera Prunskienė!”). P.3. Distributed in Biržai, at Prunskienė’s meeting with Biržai residents at the culture house, 06/21/2004. See also Česnienė, Loreta “Kazimiera Prunskienė: žinau, kuo mane “muš” ” (“Kazimiera Prunskienė: I know how I will be “hit.” ”). *Respublika*. 06/15/2004. No.137. P.2.

²⁵⁰ See www.prunskiene.lt. Accessed on 06/20/2004.

²⁵¹ Semėnas, Saulius “Profesorė akcentuoja gerą kaimynystę” (“The professor emphasizes good neighborhood”). *Vėidas*. 06/10/2004. P.34–35.

²⁵² See www.prunskiene.lt. Accessed on 06/20/2004.

and economic prosperity. In Lithuania one can have a “European smile” by going to the dentist.²⁵³ One can get “European windows” by buying the windows of the company “Lanlita” (on the ad it is stated that the price is “Lithuanian”). One can also choose “European medicine” and experience professional, competent services, and qualified attention at the private medicine center “Kardiolita.” They have the best specialists, modern equipment, good care conditions and culture, all kinds of facilities, telephone, cable TV, and the patients do not have to wait in line.²⁵⁴ However, high quality means high price. “Europe” becomes the experience of people with “European” wages as well. These people can go to the expensive stores in the shopping mall “Europe” in Vilnius. The others can vote for the New Union (Social Liberals) at the elections to the EU Parliament which promise “European pensions and salaries.”²⁵⁵ In this context the “European well-being” promoted in Adamkus’s campaign was meaningful while “European Lithuania” and “Lithuania as the state of the U.S.A.” advertised in Prunskienė’s campaign was an ambiguous value.

That there still exist different geopolitical imaginations is reaffirmed by public opinion surveys. For example, according to the Market and Opinion Research Center “Vilmorus Ltd.” among respondents who think that Russia is a modern state 58% vote for the Social Democrats (the ex-communist party), 60% of voters for the Lithuanian Conservatives (the opposition to ex-communist parties) thought that Russia still has imperial aims.²⁵⁶ Thus, people like Eglė (see chapter 3) prefer candidates symbolically related to the West. In Eglė’s case, the “East” signified her family’s painful experience in Siberia and Eglė’s experience of otherness in socialist Lithuania. Eglė did not vote for Prunskienė because of Prunskienė’s symbolic relation to the East, Russia and the KGB. For many

²⁵³ “Dėl europinės šypsenos—į stomatologo kėdę.” (“For the European smile—to the dentist”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 05/21/2004. No.116. P.1.

²⁵⁴ See “Europietiška medicina Lietuvoje” (“The European Medicine in Lithuania”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 04/17/2004. No.88 P.15.

²⁵⁵ In the advertisement of the New Union on the TV it was claimed: “Lithuanians will come back, because there will be well paid jobs at home. Working in Europe we will seek for European pensions and salaries for a Lithuanian.” The elections to the European Parliament, June, 2004.

²⁵⁶ See BNS information “Dauguma gyventojų mano, kad Rusija jau nepavoja” (“Most residents think that Russia is not dangerous anymore”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 12/04/2002. No.281. P.4.

others, Prunskienė's belonging did not matter and they even denied that she collaborated with the KGB.

People who voted for Prunskienė were associated with the East; they were “orientalistic/orientalized variations on the theme” post-socialist Lithuania (cf. Bakić-Hayden and Hayden 1992) promoted by the political mainstream. Like Paksas, Prunskienė was said to receive “protest votes,” the votes of the second Lithuania or the “sugar beets”²⁵⁷ looking to the past. Historian Česlovas Laurinavičius commented that “Valdas Adamkus stands for the achievements of 14 years of independent Lithuania and for the geopolitical orientation achieved in those years. Kazimira [Kazimiera] Prunskienė represents those unhappy with this new period of history. Behind her there is the Paksas's-phenomenon.”²⁵⁸ In the mainstream newspaper *Lietuvos rytas* the victory of Valdas Adamkus was related to people's willingness to live in a politically and economically stable Lithuania,²⁵⁹ creating a modern state, and giving priority to the West.²⁶⁰ Lithuania was seen as returning to the community of the states recognizing Western democratic values.²⁶¹ At the press conference after the elections, Adamkus declared that people had to choose between the East and the West and that many chose the West, i.e., voted for him. He commented that this decision means that many look to the future and that “Lithuania takes and is going to take the democratic way.”²⁶² Similarly, political scientists argued that Adamkus's victory means a “strengthening of the pro-Western orientation.”²⁶³

²⁵⁷ Spurga, Saulius “Prezidentinis eurofutbolas” (“Presidential eurofootball”). *OMNI laikas*. 06/14/2004. 12:00:39. www.omni.lt.

²⁵⁸ Laurinavičius, Česlovas “Antrasis turas parodys, kokia bus Lietuva” (“The second round will show what Lithuania we will have”). *OMNI laikas*. 06/14/2004. 12:01:27. www.omni.lt.

²⁵⁹ See the editorial “Sugrįžimas—po 16 audringų mėnesių: Lietuvos prezidento postą vėl užims buvęs šalies vadovas V. Adamkus” (“The return after 16 turbulent months: The former President V. Adamkus will take the office of the President of Lithuania”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 06/28/2004. No.147. P.1.

²⁶⁰ See Sotvarienė, Ramunė “Po nuopolio—vėl sėkmingas Prezidentūros rūmų šturmas” (“After the downfall—the successful rush at the presidential headquarters again”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 06/28/2004. No.147. P.3.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² See ELTA news “V. Adamkus: Lietuvos žmonės pasirinko Vakarus” (“V. Adamkus: People of Lithuania chose the West”). 06/28/2004. 12:22:44. www.omni.lt.

²⁶³ See ELTA news “Politologai komentuoja rinkimų rezultatus” (“Political scientists comment on election results”). www.lrt.lt. Cited by the OMNI laikas, www.omni.lt. 06/28/2004. 10:21:20.

9.2.3 Restoring social cohesion and order

Reconciliation and social cohesion was another prominent theme in the elections of 2004. Česlovas Juršėnas's, the candidate who lost in the first round, slogan was "Peace and Well-being." Adamkus's program stated that the major task for today is the reconciliation of Lithuanian people, not dividing them into urban and rural residents, the elite and all the rest.²⁶⁴ Adamkus, having in mind his predecessor Paksas, argued that "society is divided, the authority of the presidential institution is completely ruined and people's trust in state authorities [*valdžia*] has decreased."²⁶⁵ Adamkus insisted on being a moral authority which could unite people presumably divided by his predecessor.²⁶⁶ In the "President Valdas Adamkus's pledge to a citizen of Lithuania" (*Prezidento Valdo Adamkaus priesaika Lietuvos žmogui*), which was a campaign flyer signed by Adamkus and expected to be signed by a voter, Adamkus claimed to have never broken the President's oath. The flyer was a reference to Paksas who was impeached for breaking the President's oath and for violating the Constitution of Lithuania. In the flyer Adamkus invited people to create prosperity and trust in Lithuania.

Prunskienė was presented by her team as the better uniting force, because she did not prioritize among village, town, city people and the Vilnius elite.²⁶⁷ In her webpage it was claimed that all people of Lithuania are equal. There is no Lithuania of the supporters of Paksas, ignorant "sugar beets," losers, and others, the lords.²⁶⁸ Prunskienė argued: "I will try

²⁶⁴ Adamkus political advertising. June, 2004. www.adamkus.lt. Accessed on 07/01/2004.

²⁶⁵ See "Europos gerovė turi ateiti į kiekvienus namus: Nesitraukiantis iš rinkimų V. Adamkus žada būti vienijančiu moraliniu autoritetu" ("European well-being has to come for every house: V. Adamkus stays at the elections and promises to be a uniting moral authority"). *Lietuvos rytas*. 05/26/2004. No.120.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Karbauskis, Ramūnas "Mūsų visų prezidentė" ("President of us all"). The campaign newspaper "Už Kazimierą Prunskienę!" ("For Kazimiera Prunskienė!"). P.6. Distributed in Biržai, at Prunskienė's meeting with Biržai residents at the culture house, 06/21/2004.

²⁶⁸ See "Keliom Lietuvom prezidentas?" ("A President—for how many Lithuanias?"). www.prunskiene.lt.

to hear everyone who experienced injustice. I will put all my efforts to prevent old people from feeling like social outcasts. They have to have the place they earned.”²⁶⁹

Reprising the image of Adamkus created in Paksas’s campaign, Prunskienė emphasized Adamkus’s outsidership to people and his elitism. Prunskienė claimed that she would not turn away from social problems, unlike Adamkus who “probably did this when he said that salaries and pensions are the matter of the government.”²⁷⁰ She argued her advantage over President Adamkus—in her knowledge of many spheres including social matters, economics, science, education, and culture.²⁷¹ Prunskienė emphasized her insidership by saying that Adamkus’s experience had not been connected as closely with Lithuania as hers.

Prunskienė’s team also emphasized her simplicity, caring, honesty, sensitivity, and understanding of the Lithuanian people’s hard life.²⁷² Having been born in a village, Prunskienė was presented as close to village life. Ramūnas Karbauskis, a parliamentarian and a farmer, claimed that Professor Kazimiera Prunskienė is from a peasant family and that she had hard life experience; her everyday work does not lead her to distance herself from

²⁶⁹ The campaign newspaper “Už Kazimierą Prunskienę!” (“For Kazimiera Prunskienė!”). P.1. Distributed in Biržai, at Prunskienė’s meeting with Biržai residents at the culture house, 06/21/2004.

The words in Lithuanian: “Stengsiuosi išgirsti kiekvieną, kurio gyvenimą palietė neteisybė. Visomis išgalėmis sieksiu, kad senas žmogus nesijaustų ištumtas iš visuomenės, o turėtų joje savo užtarnautą vietą.”

²⁷⁰ See Česnienė, Loreta “Kazimiera Prunskienė: žinau, kuo mane “muš” ” (“Kazimiera Prunskienė: I know how I will be “hit” ”). *Respublika*. 06/15/2004. No.137. P.2. See also Mogenienė, Laima “Kokio vadovo reikia Lietuvai?” (“What leader does Lithuania need?”). The campaign newspaper “Už Kazimierą Prunskienę!” (“For Kazimiera Prunskienė!”). P.3. Distributed in Biržai, at Prunskienė’s meeting with Biržai residents at the culture house, 06/21/2004.

²⁷¹ See Česnienė, Loreta “Kazimiera Prunskienė: žinau, kuo mane “muš” ” (“Kazimiera Prunskienė: I know how I will be “hit” ”). *Respublika*. 06/15/2004. No.137. P.2.

²⁷² Bobelis, Kazys “Kazimiera Prunskienė puikiai atstovavo Lietuvai mūsų Nepriklausomybės pradžioje, jos veikla Respublikos prezidentės pareigose bus naudingiausia šaliai ir dabar!” (“Kazimiera Prunskienė was an excellent representative for Lithuania at the beginning of independence, her work as President will be the most advantageous for the country now!”). *Respublika*. 06/23/2004. P.16. See also Jančorienė, Meilė “Laiškas kolegoms” (“A letter to the colleagues”). *Respublika*. 06/25/2004. P.19.

people's everyday concerns²⁷³ and that she “understood the tragic condition of our nation's social life.”²⁷⁴

The Adamkus's campaign appropriated the symbol of “disorder” successfully to refer to Paksas as well as to Prunskienė. In a poster which showed how people are caught in a wind while expecting Paksas's arrival, it was proclaimed “No to turmoil and chaos!” In political advertising Prunskienė was associated with lawlessness, polarization [of society], hatred, dishonor, and the past. The ad reminded of the events of January, 1991, when Prunskienė's government raised food prices by 300%²⁷⁵ and reached out to the experiences of hardships of the transition in terms of money and food. It was a moment remembered by many informants: “In the morning I went to the shop and there was little I could buy with my monthly salary” (a man, in his mid 40s, from Vilnius).

9.2.4 Politics of suffering and care

Adamkus, like Paksas, capitalized on social issues, problems, people's anxieties and misfortunes. He emphasized social problems and argued that, if he was entrusted President's office, he will “orient the state [*valstybę*] to decrease poverty.”²⁷⁶ Using the language of suffering, need and care²⁷⁷ he increasingly tried to reach out to those who are in need of

²⁷³ Karbauskis, Ramūnas “Mūsų visų prezidentė” (“President of us all”). The campaign newspaper “Už Kazimierą Prunskienę!” (“For Kazimiera Prunskienė!”). P.6. Distributed in Biržai, at Prunskienė's meeting with Biržai residents at the culture house, 06/21/2004.

²⁷⁴ Bobelis, Kazys “Kazimiera Prunskienė puikiai atstovavo Lietuvai mūsų Nepriklausomybės pradžioje, jos veikla Respublikos prezidentės pareigose bus naudingiausia šaliai ir dabar!” (“Kazimiera Prunskienė was an excellent representative for Lithuania in the beginning of independence, her work as President will be the most advantageous for the country now!”). *Respublika*. 06/23/2004. P.16.

²⁷⁵ See, e.g., *Lietuvos rytas*. 06/23/2004. No.144. P.7.

²⁷⁶ See “Europos gerovė turi ateiti į kiekvienus namus: Nesitraukiantis iš rinkimų V. Adamkus žada būti vienijančiu moraliniu autoritetu” (“European well-being has to come for every house: V. Adamkus stays at elections and promises to be a uniting moral authority”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 05/26/2004. No.120. See also Valdas Adamkus's webpage www.adamkus.lt. Vladimiras Laučius interview with Adamkus. “V. Adamkus piktinasi menku valdžios dėmesiu savižudybių prevencijai” (“V. Adamkus expresses his resentment about the state's lack of attention to suicide prevention”).

²⁷⁷ See the campaign article, the interview with Valdas Adamkus's wife, Alma Adamkienė “Alma Adamkienė savo gyvenimą aukoja vaikams” (“Alma Adamkienė sacrifices her life for children”). *Respublika*. 06/25/2004. P.12.

assistance, living in poverty, unemployed, and in trouble.²⁷⁸ Adamkus's campaign action "The Blossom of Hope" (*Vilties žiedas*) paralleled Paksas's strategy to reach the disappointed and dispossessed. According to Adamkus, "The Blossom of Hope" was directed to strengthen the hope that people's lives may improve. The former President visited socially, demographically and economically vulnerable regions and families. He went to Didžiasalis, a small town in the Ignalina region known for high unemployment, crime, alcoholism, and truant children.²⁷⁹ In the media his visit was portrayed as his first encounter with poverty. The headlines of an article covering Adamkus's visit stated that "Adamkus encountered poverty for the first time: Finally he saw the real life of people of Lithuania and was perplexed by people's neediness and despair in Didžiasalis."²⁸⁰ The article described how a 56 year old former factory worker Tamara Frolova asked the President how people can live, if they do not get a pension and have no job; "How can we survive? You tell us that we should live, if we can, if not, should we stick our heads into the noose?"²⁸¹ For Adamkus to be a "discoverer of poverty" in 2004 was a better symbolic position than to be the "President not interested in people's concerns" in 2002. His "discovery" did resonate in informants' discussions. However, Adamkus's "discovery of poverty" usually was invoked by those who did not vote for him to illustrate his distance from people's lives.

Part of the Adamkus campaign action "The Blossom of Hope" was a trip to Kupiškis, a town known for its high suicide rate. He visited a family where the father was deceased, the mother committed suicide, and the three small children were growing up with their grandparents.²⁸² He also went to the Rokiškis region, known for demographic changes,

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ See also "Adamkus hits provinces leading polls, while Paksas's fate unclear." *The Baltic Times*. 05/20/2004. http://www.baltictimes.com/art.php?art_id=10090.

²⁸⁰ See Verbienė, Irma "Adamkus pirmą kartą pamatė skurdą: Pagaliau su realiu Lietuvos žmonių gyvenimu susidūrusį kandidatą į prezidentus pribloškė Didžiasalio gyventojų nepritekliai ir neviltis." *Lietuvos žinios*. 05/18/2004. No.113. P.3.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² According to the article covering Adamkus's visit in 2001, in the Kupiškis region 8.53 people out of 10,000 committed suicides. The average for Lithuania is 4.41 for 10,000 inhabitants. See "Maršrute—savižudžių kraštas" ("The way goes to the suicide region"). *Lietuvos rytas*. 05/20/2004. No.115. P.2.

such as emigration of young people and decrease in birth rates.²⁸³ Adamkus visited the drug addicts in the Center for Dependence Diseases in Vilnius.²⁸⁴ Furthermore, in the campaign headquarters Adamkus's team organized meetings with various socially disadvantaged groups, such as the disabled or mothers with many children. Most important was to get media coverage of these events and to establish a presence as a caring and interested President in the imagination of others.

9.2.5 Political innocence

Children as a political symbol were used in Adamkus's and other candidates' campaigns. Campaign posters pictured candidates among children, and in various trips the candidates visited schools and talked to children (see figure 8).

²⁸³ See Bartasevičius, Valdas "Svarbu ir valstybės žvilgsnis, ir žmogiška atjauta" ("State concern and human empathy are equally important"). *Lietuvos rytas*. 06/19/2004. No.141. P.7.

²⁸⁴ See "V. Adamkus šurpo nuo narkomanų istorijų" ("V. Adamkus was moved by the drug addict stories"). *Lietuvos rytas*. 06/05/2004. No.129. P.2.



Figure 8. Adamkus's visit to a school in Šepeta village, the Kupiškis region. May, 2004.

Children symbolically represent the future to which a candidate connects, escaping the present. Children also surround a candidate with an aura of innocence, common to spaces associated with childhood (see Grant 2001). The polluting realm of politics injected with innocence is transformed to invoke positive associations. For Adamkus, showing himself among children or the youth was also a strategy to associate himself with energy and vitality. Strongly criticized for his old age, the then seventy-seven-year-old Adamkus was represented as very active, determined, and full of life.²⁸⁵

²⁸⁵ Adamkus's wife also is represented as "sacrificing her life for [other] children" and supporting rural schools. See political advertising "Alma Adamkienė sacrifices her life for children." See *Respublika*. 06/25/2004. P.12.

Prunskienė was depicted with her granddaughter Augustė who even wrote a book “My grandmother Kazimiera” for her grandmother electoral campaign of 2002.²⁸⁶



Figure 9. The calendar with K. Prunskienė and her granddaughter. On the calendar there are the words “With best wishes. Prunskienė.”

²⁸⁶ In the elections of 2004 Prunskienė used campaign materials of the presidential elections of 2002.



Figure 10. A book *My grandmother Kazimiera* by Augustė.

“Children,” born and unborn, were the most successfully exploited political symbols in the campaign for the referendum for Lithuania’s membership in the EU in 2003. The campaign built its success largely by promoting children and the future. In the context of the largely meaningless “EU” and “Europe” (cf. Verdery 1996, Vitkus 2002), “children” and “future” became meaningful symbols for political action for various people.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁷ In 1996 Verdery argued that “Europe” was relatively uninteresting to many in the Romanian electorate, that ““Europe” is an urban intellectuals’ conceit; they have not done enough to translate it positively into the life terms of everyone else. Romania’s entry into the “civilized” world is important in the self-conception of intellectuals, for whom culture and civilization are of the essences but these have rather little import for the daily existence of many villagers, for instance, either toiling with rudimentary equipment on tiny patches of land or commuting long hours to work in distant factories. What have Europe and civil society to do with this? For village residents, the defenders of “Europe” have not managed to constitute its symbols as meaningful objects of political action” (Verdery 1996:127).



Figure 11. The agitation poster for the European Union. “The Referendum. The mandatory referendum for membership on accession of the Republic of Lithuania to the European Union. May 10–11, 2003.”

In 2003 during my research before and after the referendum, when asked about the EU, many responded that they were not sure what it is or how people will live after joining the EU. For those whose identity was not informed by values of the West, Adamkus’s pro-Western and pro-EU accomplishments on which he relied so much in the 2002 and 2004 elections, mattered little. Even if Adamkus paved Lithuania’s way to Europe, he did not produce meaningful texts about it to which people could connect with their experience and knowledge. Povilas from the second largest village claimed that Adamkus “did not care

about agriculture. He cared only about NATO and the EU. So, we are in the EU now. So what?”

Many people approached membership in the EU as an elite project which was expected to benefit primarily the elites themselves. Informants also disputed the elites’ commitment to the national cause (see chapter 5). Some saw the EU as “just another union” and compared it to the USSR. Some people also argued that joining the EU was losing sovereignty. Some, like Genė and Vincas, considered that in the EU it is going to be “better” because people can travel, get a job outside Lithuania, and maybe get higher salaries. However, people themselves did not expect to travel, get a job, or a higher salary. These expectations were bound to their children and grandchildren. Many voted for the future of their children responding to the campaign rhetoric which asked people to vote for the EU so as “not to be ashamed before their children [later].”²⁸⁸

9.2.6 The end of political drama of 2004

The leadership in the electoral campaign clearly belonged to Valdas Adamkus. Prunskienė’s campaign was the least financed of the five candidates who participated in the elections of 2004. Furthermore, there was little negative information about Adamkus in the media, while Prunskienė was challenged because of her geopolitically related opinions, her support for the impeached President Rolandas Paksas,²⁸⁹ the blurred boundaries of her private and public interests,²⁹⁰ her concern with the criminal case of R. Mažylis, implying that

²⁸⁸ “Lietuva šį rytą prabudo Europos Sąjungoje: Prieš tardami “taip” ES, žmonės ilgai bandė šalies valdžios ir Europos kantrybę” (“This morning Lithuania woke up in the European Union: Before saying “yes” people long tried the patience of the state and Europe”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 05/12/2003. No.108. P.1. See also Prezidento Pakso kreipimasis (The address by President Paksas). *Lietuvos rytas*. 05/08/2003. No.105. P.8.

²⁸⁹ See Česnienė, Loreta “Kandidatės viltis—pašalintas prezidentas: K. Prunskienė įsitikinusi, jog per rinkimus ją paremtų dauguma R. Pakso šalininkų” (“The hope of the candidate—the impeached President: K. Prunskienė believes that R. Paksas voters will support her during elections”). *Respublika*. 05/31/2004. No.124. P.1,2.

²⁹⁰ See, e.g., “Užklausta apie verslą kandidatė nutraukė pokalbį” (“When asked about her business, the candidate refused to continue the interview”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 06/19/2004. No.141. P.7.

Prunskienė was willing to help him using her authority,²⁹¹ “exploitation” of a woman on her private farm and avoiding hiring the woman legally as well as paying taxes.²⁹² According to the article in *Lietuvos rytas*, “On the politician’s farm the hired woman suffered like a slave,” the hired worker complained about Prunskienė’s demands, reproaches, and disrespect.²⁹³ In the continuation of the article it was argued that the hired woman was paid little, she had to take care of Prunskienė’s sick mother day and night, she also had to work in the field and the garden as well as be responsible for serving arriving guests.²⁹⁴

The article addressed sensibilities about social stratification and changing relations of work (see chapter 2, 6). However, even if a candidate helped people, as Prunskienė did by sponsoring Christmas gifts in the elections of 2002, she could not escape the cynical observation of her as the “state.” In the article “The candidate’s presents made people cry” J. Vitkauskienė writes that some children cried, others were hit in the face by flying candies during the meeting with Kazimiera Prunskienė, the presidential candidate in winter, 2002 by the Christmas tree in Biržai where gifts were given out to children. The journalist writes that the real thing in all this “political supposedly Christmas fiesta was the wonderful Christmas tree presented by a resident of Biržai.” The tree has grown in the yard. People talked,

²⁹¹ See “Byloje—K. Prunskienės ir V. Junoko pėdos: Šios savaitės įvykiai privertė STT pareigūną atskleisti skandalingus faktus” (“The case [shows] the tracks of K. Prunskienė’s and V. Junokas’s influence: the officer of the Special Investigation Services reveals scandalous facts”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 06/25/2004. No.145. P.1, 6.

²⁹² See Kiliulienė, Jūratė “Politikės sodyboje samdinė kentė vergės dalią” (“On the politician’s farm the hired woman suffered like a slave”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 06/19/2004. No.141. A Saturday issue *Gyvenimo būdas*. No.25. P.1. See also Kiliulienė, Jūratė and Jurgita Vitkauskienė “Darbdavė samdinei pinigų mokėjo nelegaliai: Nesudariusiai sutarties ir apgaudinėjusi valstybę K. Prunskienei gresia bauda” (“The employer paid money illegally: K. Prunskienė faces penalty for not signing an agreement and for cheating the state”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 06/22/2004. No.143. P.1,2.

²⁹³ See Kiliulienė, Jūratė “Politikės sodyboje samdinė kentė vergės dalią” (“In the politician’s farm the hired woman suffered like a slave”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 06/19/2004. No.141. A Saturday issue *Gyvenimo būdas*. No.25. P.1.

²⁹⁴ See Kiliulienė, Jūratė and Jurgita Vitkauskienė “Darbdavė samdinei pinigų mokėjo nelegaliai: Nesudariusiai sutarties ir apgaudinėjusi valstybę K. Prunskienei gresia bauda” (“The employer paid money illegally: K. Prunskienė faces penalty for not signing the agreement and for cheating the state”). *Lietuvos rytas*. 06/22/2004. No.143. P.1,2.

according to the journalist, that “the Christmas tree is so beautiful that it could have stayed without the decorations bought and praised by the politicians.”²⁹⁵

Semantically and symbolically the elections of 2004 were not very much different from the elections of 2002. The important difference was the East/West distinction which was the major plot line of the political drama. Those who saw the symbolic division of the East and the West meaningful, like Juozapota and Eglė (see chapter 3), cast their votes for Adamkus. In the elections of 2002, some of these people voted for Paksas. The process of impeachment, during which one Kaunas resident claimed to be afraid to turn on the microwave because it may deliver news about Paksas, like the TV or radio, made many people wish for political quiescence. Thus, stability, unsuccessfully promoted during the electoral campaign of 2002 by Adamkus, became meaningful in 2004. People claimed to vote for Adamkus because Prunskienė may face Paksas’s career, i.e., “will be not allowed to work.” Jolanta, a doctor, in her 30s, and a Kaunas resident, thought that “no one would have talked to Prunskienė, as they did not talk to Paksas.” Prunskienė’s loss was attributed to low advertisement and financing, limited support of the parties, unfavorable influence of the media and the better organization of Adamkus’s staff.²⁹⁶ I also believe that some did not vote for Prunskienė because of the patriarchal imagery which underlies both ethnonational and citizen nations, where collective entities are nurtured and midwived by the heroic deeds and sacrifices of men (see Verdery 1996:73–74). Prunskienė’s “deviant” woman’s status was already recorded, as was mentioned, by the patriarchal Soviet KGB. Unlike men, most of whom had various pseudonyms which were masculine names, Prunskienė had the pseudonym Šatrija, the name of a historic mound and a legendary witch meeting place. As mentioned, she was remembered as Šatrijos Ragana (Šatrijos Witch) or Šatrija by the voters in 2004. Her name embedded sinister (feminine) powers the patriarchal post/socialist state had to name and control.

²⁹⁵ See Vitkauskienė, Jurgita “Kandidatės dovanos pravirkdė vaikus” (“The candidate’s presents made children cry”). *Panevėžio rytas*. 12/16/2002. No.291. P.7.

²⁹⁶ See ELTA news “Kokios K. Prunskienės pralaimėjimo priežastys?” (“What are the reasons for K. Prunskienė’s defeat?”). OMNI laikas. 06/28/2004. 05:07:21, www.omni.lt.

9.3 CONCLUSIONS

Every electoral campaign is a semantic and symbolic competition. Paksas's 2002 campaign was successful because in addition to good organization and financing he was able to stage a meaningful political spectacle which appealed to people's experiences and knowledge of social history, as well as their perceptions of themselves. Paksas's campaign successfully addressed people's concerns, anxieties, insecurities, and general negativity as well as criticism about the state officials and post-socialist developments. Politics of respect, hope and belief, change and order were well-employed to achieve victory. Paksas's pessimism, shared by many people, communicated his nativeness. Adamkus's optimism for the future, encouraging people to be responsible, initiative, and creative, communicated difference and foreignness. In the campaign of 2002 Adamkus failed to translate his goals, such as furthering integration into the EU, into comprehensible local vocabularies. Adamkus's image as a moral leader was recirculated in Paksas's campaign to mean passivity and inability to make change. Paksas's image communicated the responsibility and power Adamkus presumably lacked.

In the campaign of 2004 Adamkus's victory largely depended on the successful choice of a major plot line—the East vs. the West, his more visible and better articulated concern with “common people,” as well as promises of political quiescence which became meaningful after the impeachment of Paksas. Adamkus's campaign was preoccupied with what was called a “populist” agenda in Paksas' campaign (since the President's involvement is primarily with foreign policy)—everyday life and social problems, such as unemployment or poverty.

Neither Paksas, nor Prunskienė collected protest votes, unless “protest” is perceived as negativity towards the state/political mainstream and social/political history. People voted for the meaningful agenda rather than against the political establishment. Furthermore, as the discussion in chapter 6 showed, people of various social statuses and backgrounds are critical of the political establishment and the post-socialist “state” despite their voting. Thus, negativity or cynicism towards the post-socialist history/state is much

more widespread than reflected in the votes for so-called populists. To call the voters for Paksas and Prunskienė “protesters” or “losers” (or “sugar beets” in the popular vocabulary in Lithuania) is to engage in their marginalization.

10.0 CONCLUSIONS

Scholarship on post-socialist Europe often rests on assumptions that socialism was “immoral,” “oppressive” and experienced as such by people (see Yurchak 2006). In the dissertation I claim that its immorality and oppression varied, from some villagers and party members who claimed not to have been oppressed to some deportees who were anxious about threatening Soviet powers even in the privacy of their homes. Furthermore, I argue that the Soviet period produced hybrid identities with people being both loyal and disloyal to Soviet-period rules and ideologies. The questions which interest me are how various identities have been produced and what it means for various people to have lived under socialism. I look at socialism as a site of people’s emotions, experiences and ideas and the ways in which the social becomes the political and in which the customary political is depoliticized and invested with meanings.

Nostalgia is not trivial, inconsequential, or simple “mereness” (cf. Berdahl 1999, Herzfeld 1997). It is a way of political communication, rearticulation of self, social and political history. Post-socialist nostalgia is a cultural artifact. I see nostalgia not only as a property of particular groups, such as poor villagers who claimed to live better in Soviet times, but as a relation to social and political history of many people who lived in Soviet times. Nostalgia does not presuppose coherent imaginaries of Soviet times. It is dialogic, multiple and varied, and variously political.

Unlike scholars who focus on the dominant and the dominated and on class politics (Willis 1977, Scott 1990), I look at the individual biography as an important site of state interest, and discuss how an individual is subjected to social otherness and regimes of difference by the state and in the community as well as how he/she experiences himself/herself as a social other to publicly produced social/political history. Opposition is

negativity (cf. Dunn, forthcoming) towards the state, community, and even self. It is an experienced foreignness to social history, a feeling embedded in action and subjectivity.

Negativity towards social and political history materializes in cynicism towards the state. Cynicism is a structure of feeling (Žižek 1995) common in post-socialist and postcolonial contexts. Cynicism can be identified in Meiji Japan (Karlin 2002), in Shakespeare's works, and in the global politics of neoliberalism. By exploring cynicism, analysis transcends the socialist/pot-socialist dichotomy which often informs studies of post-socialism.

In regard to nationalism and nationalist sentiment, I argue that nationalism does not produce lasting "imagined communities" (Anderson 1983). Communities can be imagined in historically constrained ways (Hanson 1989), however, they also cease to exist as a common imagination. Nationalist unity, promoted and existing during the nationalist upheavals, can evolve in competing nationalisms (cf. Karlin 2002). In Lithuania the "nation" which united people in an "imagined community" in the late 1980s and early 1990s, survived in fragmented spaces afterwards.

In this dissertation I also argue that ideas and ideologies are articulated in the context of individuals' experience. While the argument is not new in social theory, scholars generally engage it in respect to social groups or classes (see, e.g., Bourdieu 1984). I claim that the individual biography is an important site of scholarly interest. Integrating biography in social analysis, I am able to address some apparent contradictions and paradoxes in social theory, such as voting for nationalist ideals but a few years later for ex-communist parties. In both cases, people voted for their imagined social and individual future, not for contradictory ideals.

Exploring the rise of the populist and the radical right, political scientists tend to speak about the losers of transition and explain the success of the ex-communist, radical and populist parties and politicians in terms of the politics of resentment, or protest voting (see, e.g., Minkenberg 2002, Betz 1994). These studies do not answer what subjectivities have been produced during post-socialism, and why/how they are articulated in particular dialogues among politicians and the people. By addressing these dialogues and exploring political

subjectivities, I aimed to arrive at some understanding of how people relate to political history, political campaigns and actions, and, ultimately, how they vote. I argued that voting is the interplay of social history, perception, and experience embodied in individuals which make politics discernible and votes legible. Voting is a meaningful action. The conceptual medium to understand subjectivities and experiences was primarily “social texts,” narratives about history, community and self containing particular meanings, values, and beliefs. I approached elections as textual performances, semantic and symbolic competitions and voting as enactment of social texts.

The social text of socialism as the “better times” was indicative of some people’s post-socialist experiences of change and marginalization. The text reflected their negativity towards post-socialist values, meanings, and changed regimes of personhood to which they had to accommodate. By claiming Soviet times to be the “better” ones, people made comments about socialist social and individual life rather than about the Soviet political regime. Discourse on the “better” Soviet times was also a critique of the present. Invocations of the past in terms of prosperity and welfare were ideological positioning towards the present. People aspired to restore their dignity, pride, and respect as well as to reclaim the value of moral orders which had defined their lives.

This “better times” discourse was prominent among workers and peasants who lost ideological, economic, and social support after the dissolution of the Soviet state and who lacked social and cultural capital to adapt to changed circumstances. It was also a property of the older generations who lived most of their lifetime in Soviet Lithuania. Younger generations (people in their late 30s or 40s) and others who were not vulnerable socio-economically shared the text of the past as “better times” because they empathized with the marginalized or/and felt insecure and uncertain about the present and the future.

The text of the past as “better times” constitutes an oppositional history to the officially supported histories of socialism and post-socialism and delegitimizes the post-socialist political present. People who invoke socialist history in this “better times” discourse are marginalized politically, since they are seen as protest voters who vote for “communists” and “populists.”

The social text of Soviet-time “oppression” was shared by people who constituted the opposition to the Soviet regime because of their background and social location. These people were subjected to classism, a Soviet technology and ideology of exclusion along imagined “class” boundaries, by “biographic cleansing,” i.e., discipline and punishment of those who had not lived according to Soviet-period scenarios. Classism was the ideology of reclassification and rearticulation of Soviet society which produced hierarchies of power, knowledge, privilege, and wealth. Many deportees, believers, and other Soviet “others” were at the bottom of the Soviet social hierarchy, unlike the first-class citizens of the Soviet state, the devoted Communist Party members. The former Communist Party members who lost their power and entitlements and/or who experienced ideological marginalization in post-Soviet times remember the socialist past in common sense idioms and reclaim power, authority and legitimacy by criticizing the present.

The text of “oppression” was indicative of the social otherness some people experienced in Soviet times. Present political history, which has promoted “oppression” as a hegemonic discourse, provides visibility, prestige, and recognition to Soviet-time “social others.” The Soviet-time “oppressed” became legitimate subjects and major protagonists of Soviet history. For them “nation” often is a compelling formulation of self.

The social text on the “better” Soviet past may coexist with the text on “oppression” in the Soviet period. If people think about the Soviet period as “oppressive,” by “better” times they mean social guarantees, their higher personal economic and social status than in the post-Soviet period as well as everyday predictability. Some people who claimed to experience oppression never agreed that there can be anything “better” about Soviet times. The past was even used to explain the “regressions” at present.

The texts of opposition, such as the texts of the “better times” in the post-Soviet period or “oppression” in the Soviet period, often arise because of experiences of social otherness or marginalization. Social texts of opposition reflect negativity, which is the backbone of a narrated genealogy of the self as a stigmatized social subject (social other). Negativity is a structuring feeling built into various stories people tell about themselves and to themselves. Opposition is expressed in overlapping feelings of insecurity, discontent,

uncertainty, anxiety, sadness, ambiguity and concern. It reflects displacement, estrangement, exclusion, intolerance, foreignness, and powerlessness. The semantic difference of social texts of opposition depends on people's experience of different regimes of social otherness and available ideologies of interpretation, like post-Soviet nationalism.

The social texts reveal individuals' relations to the past, which stand for different political subjectivities. They also document values shared by people, such as "nation," "liberation," and the "state."

The social texts questioning "liberation"/ "freedom," which question the necessity of a nation having a sovereign state, are expressive of dissatisfactions with post-socialist social and moral orders, and also of sensibilities about subjectivities, values and authority, challenged in the post-socialist period. Questioning of "liberation" was also a dispute over representation, i.e., over recognition of communities who share oppositional histories. A negative relationship to "liberation" included disappointment with post-socialism of people who supported the liberation movement in the late 1980s and the early 1990s, continuing opposition to "liberation" by individuals who did not support liberation, and questioning of "freedom" by people who thought of socialism as common sense or "better times" history and who in most cases also supported liberation. Negativity was articulated by strong supporters of national ideals and by people indifferent/opposed to "liberation." The non-existent imagination of a "nation-state" was common to most informants who questioned "liberation." Absence of such an imagination partly accounted for negativity to "liberation," because "liberation" was constitutive of the new imagination of the "nation(-state)." To imagine the community of the "nation(-state)" would mean to share a specific historic consciousness (including support for liberation, which is part of the master narratives of post-socialist history) and to have a particular sense of a national self congruent with the liberation period modes of selfhood (like fashioning oneself in terms of post-socialist national ideals not shared by most informants). Many people conceived "nation" as horizontal solidarity and ethnic relationship.

The texts on the "state" reflected cynicism and entailed negativity, distance, and irony, rather than resistance towards the state. Cynicism encapsulated criticism of the state

officials, seeing them as self-interested, immoral, and unjust. It also manifested distrust of the authorities and difference between the people and the power elites. Cynicism derives from various contexts: the experience of power as omnipresent, immutable, and threatening prevalent in the socialist period and reproduced in post-socialism, beliefs in equality and loyalty to a collective which no longer inform social relations, mysterious post-socialist circulations of wealth from which many people feel excluded, experience of destitution and subalternity.

During elections, candidates who are seen as standing for voters' experience of difference and/or marginalization are voted against. In the presidential elections of 2004, Prunskienė, the (exonerated) KGB member associated with the "East" and Russia, was not supported by voters who shared the text of "oppression." Meaningful appeals to people's political subjectivities and knowledge about social/political history as well as comprehensible translations of political aims and visions into local vocabularies are rewarded. In the presidential elections of 2002, R. Paksas's campaign was a successful political spectacle because he addressed people with oppositional histories, appealed to their sensibilities, feelings, and understandings, as well as promised them respect, recognition, power and privilege. The successful political competition accounts for common values, such as negativity towards the state. Adamkus's moral authority and identity as a "foreigner," Paksas's outsidership to the mainstream political elite, Uspaskich's "Russianness" and the "Šerėnas-trickster" were politically profitable images.

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