

PART **I**

THE DEVELOPMENT OF
MULTICULTURALISM FROM
THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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1.1. TRACES OF MULTIETHNICITY IN ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

1.1.1. The Hellenistic cultural period under Alexander the Great of Macedon

Although Alexander the Great of Macedon (*Mégas Aléxandros*, 356–323 BC), seeking revenge for the burning of Athens, ruined the palace of King Darius III of Persia after becoming the ruler of Persia, he recognized Persians as a society equal to the conquerors rather than an enslaved nation. As Alexander the Great of Macedon claimed, in order to ensure stability in Persia which was controlled by the Empire, the customs and traditions of the two nations – i.e., Macedonians (Greeks) as the conquerors and Persians as the conquered – had to unify in a common cultural space. Nevertheless, during that period the process of formation of the unified state was viewed as a merger of two ruling authorities where the Greek (Macedonian) culture dominated. Thus, Alexander married the oldest daughter of the defeated King Darius III of Persia – Stateira. Meanwhile, his generals took part in special wedding festivals and married representatives of the Persian nobility.⁶ Moreover, Alexander promoted mixed marriages of soldiers in his army with residents of the conquered lands. While imposing the Macedonian (Greek) culture on the conquered territories, Alexander the Great at the same time allowed local customs and traditions, which helped him teach the local youth about the Macedonian phalanx principles and the military art and enabled foreigners to serve in his army. Moreover, he entrusted the administration of residential areas to representatives of the local community (Bosworth, 1994). After conquering Egypt and further expanding the Macedonian culture, Alexander the Great preserved the local customs and religion, conformed to the state and government system, and even adopted the tradition of ascension of the Pharaoh to the throne. After the warrior Ptolemy took over the Egyptian leadership upon the death of Alexander the Great, the Greeks themselves integrated into the Egyptian society, recognizing most of the local customs. Such a fusion of the Macedonian (Greek) culture with the culture of the defeated nation is known in contemporary historical and political science as a unique phenomenon of the Hellenistic cultural period (Bosworth, 1994). One of the founders of modern India, D. Nehru (Jawaharlal Nehru, 1889–1964), in his assessment of Alexander the Great's campaigns to India, observes that, due to the close relationship between the Hindus and the Greeks, the culture of both nations was strengthened (1996). Nevertheless, after entering into the land of Israel, Alexander the Great acted in a different way, as the Jews were only allowed to exercise the freedom of religion, which soon caused dissatisfaction of the local inhabitants.⁷

⁶ For instance, in 324 BC by order of Alexander, Ptolemyian (367–283 BC) married the Persian princess Atakam.

⁷ At the same time, Nehru (1996), while describing the behaviour of Alexander the Great, notes that his frequent acts of barbarism, for example, destroying entire cities and killing their inhabitants, cause abomination and indignation.

1.1.2. Traces of multiculturalism in the Roman Empire

The history of the Roman Empire (*Imperium Romanum*, 27–395 BC) vividly exemplifies the early stage of development of multiculturalism as a social phenomenon. At the time of its high point, the Roman Empire asserted dominance over vast geographic areas (from England in the north to Morocco in the south and Iraq in the east), and ruled a great number of various nations and tribes with different religious beliefs and customs, providing home to nearly 70 million people at the beginning of the new era.

Despite the might and dominance of the Romans in the world, they relied on foreigners and slaves, thus pursuing the Greek Hellenistic policy. Moreover, it is known that the Romans were tolerant of different religious beliefs, equally allowing all religions to exist. Such an attitude to a diverse society helped the Roman Empire to start the initial formation of a multicultural society. The Roman consul and historian Publius Cornelius Tacitus (54–56 to 117 AD) provides a lot of valuable data. Thus, when Tacitus describes the history of civil wars in the Roman Empire, he refers to cases of thousands of gladiators taking part in war campaigns (Tacitus, 1972, p. 60). Local inhabitants, allies, and foreigners mixed in the army; therefore, the Roman army was multilingual and soldiers had different customs (p. 90).

The period of the Roman Empire which lasted for 207 years between 27 BC and 180 AD is known as a period of relative peace, and is recognized as *Pax Romana* (The Roman Peace) in historiography, or sometimes *Pax Augusta* (The Augustan Peace). English historian Edward Gibbon (1737–1794), in his analysis of this period of the Roman Empire, noted that the established Roman government united the fiercest barbarians who at that time used the common language. The arts developed, families grew noticeably, the greatness of the cities was celebrated, and the country was decorated as in the flourishing of a huge garden; everything proceeded as a long festival of peace, which many people enjoyed, forgetting their ancient arguments (Gibbon, 2013; Gill, 2018). This can undoubtedly be seen as the cornerstone of the cultural diversity of this society.

In contrast to the Hellenistic historical period, the Roman Empire developed a political system that not only strived for the Latinization of local rulers and their relatives, but also pursued full assimilation of the defeated nations, thus exerting great social and cultural influence on the conquered lands. With time, both the capital of the empire and the majority of other cities developed into cosmopolitan areas where the majority of the population comprised immigrants from different parts of the empire, thus creating the necessity for these dwellers to communicate in one common language, i.e., Latin. At the same time, as the Renaissance epoch philosopher, historian, politician, and diplomat Nikolas Machiavelli (It. Niccolò di Bernardo dei Machiavelli, 1469–1527,) points out that new languages formed

on the outskirts of the Roman Empire (Machiavelli, 1973, p. 17),⁸ and as the local barbarian languages mixed with the Roman language the group of modern Romance languages was formed. This is why, today, Romance languages are spread throughout areas of the former Roman Empire (France, Spain), and not only in Italy. Despite the fact that Latin was spread throughout the empire, Tacitus was quite critical towards the establishment of foreigners in Roman society, as he believed that this contributed to the gradual destruction of ancestral traditions and the decline of morals among the youth due to foreign activities such as gymnastics and exercise, laziness, or the pleasures of shameless love (Machiavelli, 1973, p. 206). Unfortunately, Tacitus' fears were confirmed throughout the development of the history of the Roman Empire, as its sad fate was predisposed not only by relentless wars against external enemies – barbarians⁹ – but also by plentiful internal issues, including huge wealth inequalities between different social strata, poor awareness of residents' ethnic diversity, and the fact that the imperial ruling caste did not pay due attention to this factor. On the other hand, the fight against barbarians was accompanied by the recession of some areas and the emergence of others, such as Florence, Pisa, Milan, etc., which are now centres of the development of multiculturalism.

1.1.3. Germanic and Jewish cultural diversity

In his description of the traditions of Germanic tribes,¹⁰ Tacitus noted that there was no such cordial and welcoming people as the Germanic. In their view, denying shelter to a traveller was a wrongdoing. Everyone, within their possibilities, provided visitors with well-prepared meals. When the food was finished, the host became the visitor's company, and they were welcomed to visit other houses where they were treated with the same courtesy and respect. According to tradition, when the person left, they were presented with something that they had requested (Tacitus, 1972, p. 17).¹¹ On the position of slaves, who were largely foreigners, Tacitus remarked that the Germans did not treat them in the same way that the Romans do: they did not keep them in the household and did not ascribe any duties to them. Every slave was in charge of their own household. Instead, the landlord levied a tax in the form of grain, livestock, and clothing. Beating a slave or forcing them to perform hard labour

⁸ Machiavelli, in his book *History of Florentine (Istorie Florentine)*, consistently describes the history of the Roman Empire.

⁹ This is how Machiavelli evaluates this period of the Roman Empire: the emperor [Feodosius – authors' note], under pressure from various sides, tried to reduce the number of his enemies, and therefore began to conclude agreements with francs, with vandals, however, this increased the barbarians' power, extended their influence and weakened the empire (translated by the authors from *История Флоренции* (Machiavelli, 1973, p. 13).

¹⁰ Germanic peoples (Lat. *germani*) are Indo-European tribes that were formed in the Northern Europe and are distinguished by speaking Germanic languages (Encyclopædia Britannica, n.d.-a).

¹¹ Caesar (*Gallie Wars*, 1869) also mentions the Germanic peoples' generosity and friendliness, which was not customary of Romans.

was extremely uncommon (Tacitus, 1972, p. 19).

According to some historical accounts, the impact of war is not the only reason why one nation adopted the customs of another nation. For instance, even though the Jews attempted to distinguish themselves from neighbouring nations by circumcising boys and accepting into their society only those who showed allegiance and professed their religion, they also borrowed practices from other cultures. An example of this is the Jewish practice of burying the bodies of the deceased family members in the ground, whilst other tribes burned them, which was adopted from Egyptians (Tacitus, 1972, p. 129).

1.1.4. A brief history of multiculturalism in Great Britain

According to British historian Healey (2014), the modern British¹² are a nation of migrants, as migration from other countries to this country is not uncommon. Celtic tribes (Britons) migrated from Rein over the English Channel to present-day England circa 800–700 BC, and were the main inhabitants of Britain until the 5th century BC. When the Romans conquered Britain in the 1st century AD, locals continually opposed the strategy of cultural assimilation (Latinization) pursued by the Roman authorities. The invasion of the British Isles by Anglo-Saxons, who arrived from North-West Europe (four Germanic tribes: Angles, Saxons, Frisians, and Jutes)¹³ in 350–550 and pursued the Roman policy of cultural annihilation of local inhabitants, forced some Britons to move to Wales, Scotland and to continental Brittany (Jackson & Zé Amvela, 2012, p. 26). Next, the Vikings invaded Britain several times between 800 and 900 AD and colonized eastern Britain after a period of time (p. 42). Despite the fact that Vikings¹⁴ are frequently depicted as barbarians who robbed monasteries for gold and silver, the majority of them were traders who were able to establish a large marketing network and settle down in some conquered coastlines. Numerous Vikings lived in their individual estates. Supposedly this happened due to the Vikings' unique lifestyle: unlike the Anglo-Saxons, the Vikings valued sanitation and personal hygienic practices, thus they had baths at least on Saturdays if not more often. Because of such a lifestyle, the Vikings had little contact with the local inhabitants and even had a poor image among the latter, but their personal hygiene practices spread to other parts of the country through time (Encyclopædia Britannica, n.d.-b).

According to recent archaeological findings, Anglo-Saxons were far more peaceful than

¹² Healey (2014) uses the term *British* to refer to all descendants of Germanic tribes, including the English, Welsh, Scottish, Korn, Manx, and partially Irish.

¹³ Indeed, Machiavelli (1973) claims that, in order to protect themselves from the barbarians, the British invited Angles who initially defended the locals, but later drove them to Brittany (p. 14).

¹⁴ In 793, the first reliably documented attack by the Vikings on Lindisfarne Island, England, took place (Encyclopædia Britannica, n.d.-b).

they were portrayed in the past, although pre-modern Britain, as J. Healey (2014) points out, was immensely cosmopolitan. This was determined by the fact that the locals considered their native lands (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland) as culturally and linguistically distinct. As a consequence, until as late as the early 19th century, people commonly referred to their native “country” as the whole region or county, such as Sussex, Essex, Yorkshire, or Lancashire (Healey, 2014).

Voltaire (1694–1778), one of the most prominent French enlightenment philosophers, noted that at his time England was characterised by having sixty different religions (Anglicans, Catholics, Baptists, Quakers, and so on), which he saw as one of the country’s major assets. According to Healey (2014), Britain was a cultural sponge that absorbed practically everything from all around the world even before the modern era. Multiculturalism in the United Kingdom is not a product of the 20th century; it has a long and rich history.

1.2. CONTEMPORARY TRENDS OF MULTICULTURALISM IN THE WORLD

A reflexive glance at the foundations of multiculturalism reveals that this process has long been associated with progress, dating back to ancient civilizations. Thus, it is not a novel phenomenon attributable to the modern era, with its main characteristics being the interfusion of diverse cultures, values, practices, and religious beliefs. However, the breadth, complexity, and pace of development of this phenomenon in recent times make it unique.

At the end of World War II, it was realized that Nazi and similar regimes could ruin the possibility of humanity to follow the path of continuous development. Therefore, the United Nations adopted its Charter, in which Articles 1 and 55 formulated the fundamental principle that the solution of “international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character” should be paired with the implementation of international cooperation in the development and promotion of “universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion” (Jungtinių Tautų Chartija [UN Charter], 1945). The declarations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in this Charter can reasonably be seen as the origins of the concept of modern-day multiculturalism.

A significant step in the perception of multiculturalism was the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights adopted by the United Nations on 19 December 1966, which states that “in those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other

members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language” (Article 27).

Growing migration flows and increasing globalization are widely acknowledged as the primary drivers of the current development of multiculturalism. For instance, as per United Nations estimates, between 1990 and 2015, the number of international migrants seeking to find employment, reconnect families, study, purchase immovable property abroad, flee persecution and violence, etc., increased by 1.55 times in Europe alone, reaching more than 76 million individuals, which means that every seventh European resident is an immigrant (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, n.d.-a). According to a 2009 UNESCO report on multiculturalism, the demand for greater links between communities that come from diverse cultures is growing as a result of current globalization (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2013, p. 7).

The multiculturalism movement began in Canada and Australia in the early 1980s, and eventually extended to the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and other European countries (Parekh, 1999). Nations with established principles of multicultural cohabitation not only benefit from linguistic diversity, but also exhibit a greater awareness of other cultures’ legacy among the local population, which boosts the country’s economy and competitiveness as well as the development of international relations (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2013, p. 7). Multiculturalism is now strongly linked to policies of identity, diversity, and tolerance.

1.2.1. Multiculturalism in Canada

Canada was created as a country on the basis of migration in the late 15th century after the French and English colonized parts of North America inhabited by indigenous peoples. Nevertheless, until the second half of the 20th century, the country’s unity was threatened by the separatist movement in Quebec, a francophone province.¹⁵ As a consequence, the government had to recognize the racial, ethno-cultural, and religious diversity of the entire country’s population in order to develop reasonable solutions to ensure the cohabitation of ethnic minorities. Canada was the first country in the world to introduce the notion of multiculturalism into public discourse and to launch multiculturalism policy in the 1970s, after nearly 500 years of persistent attempts to entrench on the world map.

On 8 October 1971, the Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau presented the document

¹⁵ The driving force behind the separatist movement in Quebec was the strive to preserve the French language, since it ensured that future generations would preserve their francophone identity and culture in a province dominated by the French (Kymlicka & Patten, 2003).

“Canada’s Multicultural Policy” in the country’s Parliament, which outlined the objectives of the new policy.¹⁶ By signing this document, the Canadian government acknowledged that all Canadians (Arabic, Chinese, German, Irish, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Scottish, Spanish, Ukrainian, and others – bringing the total number to more than 200 ethnicities) had equal rights to integrate into society and engage fully in deciding cultural, economic, social, and political issues.¹⁷ Furthermore, this document was drawn up in response to the government’s policy of assimilation of the multinational society. The slogan of the Canadian social policy, which was intended to modify perceptions of minorities, was “integration without assimilation”, while multiculturalism became a policy agenda directed at harmonizing relations between Canada’s ethnocultural minorities and the major English and French-speaking population groups (Statistics Canada, 2001).¹⁸ The new practice aimed at representing the mosaic nature of all cultures in Canada, which developed over time as part of the state social policy,¹⁹ while recognizing diverse lifestyles of ethnic groups, their right to pursue education in their ethnocultural groups, to have ethnic educational programs, to read and write in their native language, to practice their religion, etc. Meanwhile, Canada’s multicultural attitude accepts personal freedom to choose cultural values – people cannot be compelled to comply with the cultural norms of another ethnic group and they cannot be forced to adhere to the values of their own ethnicity. In essence, multiculturalism policy aims to foster tolerance (patience) toward others, as reflected in the coexistence of various cultures, their mutual enrichment, and development in the interests of the whole country’s population. Ever since, multiculturalism has been referred to as cultural pluralism.

Currently, the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, enacted in 1985, addresses the issue of multiculturalism in Canada. The law stipulates that Canadian society recognizes and supports policies that ensure and promote the following:

- recognition of cultural and ethnic diversity in order to resemble the cultural heritage of all society groups;
- recognition of multiculturalism as a key aspect of Canada’s heritage and identity, providing indispensable resources for the country’s future development;
- equal and full engagement of each member and whole communities of varied backgrounds in the development of Canada, while also establishing conditions necessary

¹⁶ Library and Archives Canada. Canada. Parliament. House of Commons. Debates, 28th Parliament, 3rd Session, Volume 8 (8 October 1971): 8545–8548, Appendix, 8580–8585; *Canadian Multiculturalism* (n.d.).

¹⁷ *Canadian Multiculturalism* (n.d.).

¹⁸ As Shara Wayland (1997) states, the Canadian government’s focus on the social value of multiculturalism is defined as “incitement of ideology of multiculturalism” with the aim to draw public attention and promote the development of Canada’s national identity.

¹⁹ The idea of the mosaic nature of Canadian society’s cultures was initially proposed in 1938 by a Canadian scientist J. M. Gibbon in his book *The Canadian Mosaic* (1938) as an alternative to the American melting pot approach.

for the society to promote the removal of any barriers to such involvement;

- recognition of communities that have members of the same origin, their historic significance for the development of Canada and the right to facilitate their development;
- equal legal rights and protection thereof for all individuals as well as recognition and appreciation of their cultural diversity;
- assistance to Canada's social, cultural, economic, and political institutions in acting with tolerance and respect in light of the country's multicultural nature;
- empathy and flexibility while interacting with people of various backgrounds and cultures;
- expression of diverse cultures in Canadian society;
- the use of other languages alongside English and French while securing and promoting the status and use of Canada's official languages;
- recognition that the development of multiculturalism in Canada must consistent with national priorities of official language use.

With its multiculturalism policy, Canada continues to draw large numbers of immigrants. Since the beginning of the 21st century, over 250,000 foreigners have immigrated to Canada to live or seek refuge, making up 0.7% of all Canadians, according to statistics from the Research and Evaluation Branch of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2012).

1.2.2. Multiculturalism in Australia

Australia, a state that has existed for less than three centuries,²⁰ is the most remote state from the nations that have contributed to shaping the modern world. It began as a British colony populated by convicts, but by the second half of the 20th century it was one of the wealthiest states in the world in terms of living standards. Despite the fact that, after World War II, "White Australia" viewed only European, particularly Anglo-Saxon, immigration as not posing any threats to society, Australia became the new place of residence of over 5.5 million immigrants from more than 150 states during the next 70 years. Table 1 presents the birthplaces of Australia's overseas-born population as of the last two censuses in 2011 and 2016.

²⁰ Captain Arthur Phillip and the First Fleet, 11 ships and roughly 1,350 persons, arrived in Botany Bay between 18 and 20 January 1788, and established the first British colony in Australia. Yet, as this region appeared to be not suitable for colonization, they sailed north to Port Jackson on 26 January 1788, settling at Camp Cove, which the Cadigal people referred to as "cadi" (Derricourt, 2008).

Table 1. Top 10 birthplaces of Australia's overseas-born population

2011 Census			2016 Census		
Birthplace	No.	%	Birthplace	No.	%
1. United Kingdom	1,101,081	20.8	1. United Kingdom	1,087,756	17.7
2. New Zealand	483,398	9.1	2. New Zealand	518,462	8.4
3. China	318,969	6.0	3. China	509,558	8.3
4. India	295,362	5.6	4. India	455,385	7.4
5. Italy	185,402	3.5	5. Philippines	232,391	3.8
6. Vietnam	185,039	3.5	6. Vietnam	219,351	3.6
7. Philippines	171,233	3.2	7. Italy	174,042	2.8
8. South Africa	145,683	2.8	8. South Africa	162,450	2.6
9. Malaysia	116,196	2.2	9. Malaysia	138,363	2.2
10. Germany	108,002	2.0	10. Sri Lanka	109,850	1.8

Source: Simon-Davies & McGann (2018, p. 8).

As shown in Table 1, only the two countries which contribute the greatest numbers of migrants that move to Australia are related to the cultural and linguistic heritage of the country, while the rest of the states with the largest flows of migrants account for the widest variety of cultures and languages. Currently, the most frequently spoken languages used by migrants in Australia in their daily life are: Arabic, Cantonese, Greek, Italian, Korean, Macedonian, Mandarin, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese. This could be due to the fact that, as the polls reveal, 20% of the Australian population speak a language other than English in the home environment, mainly because they are not competent in English (Access and Equity Inquiry Panel, 2012).

The country's economic growth in the 1960s and the following decades resulted in a much more tolerant attitude of the nation toward not only white foreigners, but also newcomers of other ethnicities and races, which in turn resulted in massive immigration of foreign nationals. Presently, around 40% of the Australian population is comprised of first- and second-generation immigrants, predominantly English and Irish, as well as Greeks, Germans, Italians, Lebanese, and Scandinavians, who came in the 1970s, and Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Malay, Vietnamese, and other foreign citizens, who arrived in 1980s, soon followed by more immigrants from the former Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. In recent years, some African and Middle Eastern nations have become new sources of immigration to Australia. At the moment, more than 21.5 million individuals live in Australia, who are descendants of more than 300 different nations and speak more than 260 different languages²¹

²¹ According to the "Inquiry into the Responsiveness of Australian Government Services to Australia's Culturally and Lin-

(Access and Equity Inquiry Panel, 2012). More than 50% of the population are Anglo-Saxons, while indigenous Australian peoples make up only slightly above 1% of the population (National Multicultural Advisory Council, 1997).

Only half a century ago, the Australian government pursued an immigration policy that was focused on assimilation, which posed significant challenges to newcomers. To prevent the formation of isolated ethnic communities, the government frequently provided immigrants with accommodation and employment together with Australians. Simultaneously, the issue of acquisition of the English language was brought up, as English language proficiency was one of the major requirements for obtaining Australian citizenship.

The approach toward immigrants has changed since 1973, when Minister of Immigration Al Grassby published a reference paper called “A Multi-Cultural Society for the Future”. Since then, the concept of multiculturalism has penetrated into official political discourse in Australia, and immigrant communities have formed national ethnic minority organisations with the primary goal of preserving their heritage, culture, and language.²² The Australian Parliament passed an act in 1979 which set up the Institute of Multicultural Affairs (AIMA) to ensure cultural awareness and promote social cohesion, tolerance, and acceptance.

As a consequence of these reforms, a broad national program of multicultural policy implementation (The National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia) was launched in 1989. This policy *provided all residents of the country with legal guarantees of freedom of cultural expression, equal access to social services, and entrenched liability for discrimination. Ever since, access to information and equal opportunities, including the right to take part in decision-making, have been incorporated into the context of the country's social policy* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003).

The following aspects of the state multiculturalism agenda were included in the national program:

1. Cultural identity, which means that all Australians, within explicitly prescribed limits, have a right to express and share their cultural heritage, including language and religion;
2. Social justice, which means that all Australians enjoy an equal right to equality and opportunities regardless of colour, ethnicity, language, gender, religion, culture, or place of birth;
3. Economic efficiency, which means that, regardless of their ethnicity, all Australians have the opportunity to develop, enhance, and successfully employ their skills and abilities.

guistically Diverse Population” of 2012, linguistic diversity of this kind contributed greatly to the development of the country (Access and Equity Inquiry Panel, 2012).

²² Prof. Jerzy Zubrzycki (1920–2009) from Krakow (Poland), the “founding father” of Australia’s official policies on multiculturalism, was the chairperson of the Social Patterns Committee of the Immigration Advisory Council (Zubrzycki, 2003).

The multiculturalism policy is implemented in everyday practice through a variety of initiatives, strategies and community activities, including:

- measures that promote recognition of skills and expertise that migrants acquired abroad;
- initiatives aimed at enhancing inter-community relations so that cultural diversity and social cohesion can coexist;
- strategies that enhance accessibility and justice to help in removing barriers that occur between migrants and locals as a result of differences in cultures, languages, and prejudices;
- legislative initiatives for establishing specialized broadcasting services under the control of an independent corporation;
- programmes that provide migrants with wider access to learning the English language.

Successful implementation of multiculturalism policy in Australia is determined by the active engagement of foreigners in decision-making regarding state affairs and their ability to live their lives independently and maintain their culture and traditions.

After bringing the subject of multiculturalism to the level of government policy a few decades ago, Australia and Canada are now regarded as among the most welcoming countries for foreign immigrants.

1.2.3. Multiculturalism in Great Britain

The history of multiculturalism in Great Britain begins in the 8th and 9th centuries BC, but this phenomenon has been developed most successfully in present times. During the last two centuries, Great Britain has seen numerous massive flows of immigration for a number of reasons.

One of these flows is known as Commonwealth immigration, which drastically increased in the 1950s. The overwhelming majority of Commonwealth immigrants arrived to the UK from current or former colonies, particularly from such countries as Bangladesh, the Caribbean, Hong Kong, India, Kenya, Pakistan, and South Africa (Hansen, 2000). The main reason for this type of migration was economic well-being (House of Commons Debates, 2003).

New legislation, such as the Commonwealth Immigrants Acts of 1962 and 1968, was introduced to address huge flows of Commonwealth immigrants and provided for a number of limitations on the newly-arrived, such as finding employment prior to their arrival or having specific competences or connections with the UK by ancestry or birth (The National Archives, n.d.). Interestingly, in a manner dissimilar to Australia and Canada, the United Kingdom has not passed any official legislation on multiculturalism.

The second influx of migrants came as a result of different types of refugees and asylum seekers. In the 1950s, Britain experienced several flows of migration of Jews, who were fleeing persecution in Germany; Ukrainians and the Polish in the aftermath of World War II; Indians after their state achieved independence in 1947; Somalis fleeing civil war in 1980s and 1990s, etc.

In present times, the population of the United Kingdom is still increasing, while migration is once again the primary cause of this growth. Free movement of people, as one of the four freedoms of the European Union, accounted for the largest flows of immigrants to the UK in 2004 from Central and Eastern Europe, Cyprus and Malta (Doward & Rogers, 2010).

According to Max Farrar (2012), the concept of multiculturalism was brought into the official discourse of Britain in 1960s “in the context of the introduction of practical policies for the elimination of racial discrimination couched in terms of a philosophy of the social integration of ethnic minorities”. Farrar (2012) states that multiculturalism was viewed as a positive phenomenon in terms of the existence of different cultures as constituent elements of society.

Nonetheless, the experience of ethnic minority groups who resided in major cities in the UK had a significant effect on perceptions of multiculturalism as a public policy, which was often received with a fairly negative attitude (Singh, 2003). Despite this, Singh (2003) argues that there were positive experiences of the “most racist” place in the UK in the 1970s becoming “a leading case of European civic multiculturalism”, namely Leicester. The author maintains that “political commitment to multiculturalism as a policy is a critical variable in shaping change” (Singh, 2003).

Taylor-Gooby and Waite (2014) state that “the United Kingdom is often considered a leader in multiculturalism” and consider multiculturalism to be “developing in a more pragmatic direction” that focuses on the interaction and dialogue between different cultural and traditional perceptions instead of the interventions of authorities. Farrar (2012) also believes that dialogue between various cultural groups should be given priority.

Even though “multiculturalism in the UK has succeeded in fostering a sense of belonging among minorities” (Manning, 2011), some segments of the population have not been provided with due care and attention, while management of the migrant population has been neglected.

The Multiculturalism Policy Index indicates that the United Kingdom is one of the three most multicultural countries in Europe, and has reached a score of 5.5 points in comparison with Finland (score of 6) and Sweden (score of 7) (Tolley, 2016).

The Multiculturalism Policy Index overviews areas such as affirmation, school curriculum, media, exemptions, dual citizenship, funding ethnic groups, bilingual education, and affirmative action in the period from the 1980s to the 2010s (see Table 2).

Table 2. Multiculturalism Policy Index in the United Kingdom

Year	Areas of evaluation in the Multiculturalism Policy Index								
	Affirmation	School curriculum	Media	Exemptions	Dual citizenship	Funding ethnic groups	Bilingual education	Affirmative action	Affirmative action
1980	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0.5	2.5
2000	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0.5	5.5
2010	0	0.5	1	1	1	1	0	1	5.5

Source: based on Tolley (2016).

The United Kingdom scored zero in the area of constitutional, legislative or parliamentary affirmation of multiculturalism, because multiculturalism has not been formally entrenched in any form of legislation in the country. In legal discourse, the concept of multiculturalism is often replaced by the concepts of cohesion and integration. One could not claim that nothing has been done to address this issue, however. Some strategies aimed at dealing with inequality have been introduced, such as “Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society” in 2005, which focused on promoting race equality and community cohesion, and “Tackling Race Inequalities” in 2009, which was of a consultative nature. The Department for Communities and Local Government is one of the most important government entities with responsibilities concerning multiculturalism, and is in charge of “building cohesion” and “tackling anti-social behaviour and extremism”. One more institution which is responsible for dealing with issues of discrimination, equality and human rights is the Equality and Human Rights Commission established in 2007 (Tolley, 2016).

According to the Multiculturalism Policy Index, multiculturalism has been implemented to some extent in the UK school curriculum. Even though the question of multiculturalism education has been discussed since the 1970s, it was not until the 1990s that multiculturalism was integrated into local curricula alongside the implementation of multiculturalism or anti-racism policies. Though students who learn English as a foreign language can receive assistance for this activity, the UK does not subsidise bilingual education or training in native languages (Tolley, 2016).

The UK has coped very well with the issue of integrating the aspect of ethnic representation/sensitivity into the agenda of media licensing and public media in general.

Even though before the 1980s the issue of ethnic representation did not get due coverage in the media, during the next three decades conditions improved greatly. Support has been provided to broadcast media content in ethnic minority languages, and several ethnic-minority media organisations have been set up. The Communications Act 2003 provided for the Office of Communications to assume responsibility for ensuring due attention and care to different ethnic communities and people who reside in different parts of the UK. Furthermore, the BBC, a public service broadcaster in the United Kingdom, provides services to meet the needs of a diverse ethnic and religious audience to represent the country's cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity while also educating the public about other people's traditions, customs and languages (Tolley, 2016).

Moreover, to avoid indirect discrimination, the UK has also granted exemptions from dress codes for foreigners (either by statute law or court rulings), such as the right to wear a long beard, the hijab or a turban (Tolley, 2016).

Another extremely successful dimension of evaluation of the Multiculturalism Policy Index is the right of the UK citizens to have dual, or even multiple, citizenship. Individuals who have obtained British citizenship are permitted to retain any other citizenship they previously held, and vice versa – UK nationals are permitted to retain their British citizenship if they acquire citizenship in another country (Tolley, 2016).

The United Kingdom also supports ethnic group organisations and activities that meet certain criteria, such as advancing race equality and providing redress (Tolley, 2016). In conclusion, since 1980s the UK has introduced a number of anti-discrimination and positive action measures to protect disadvantaged immigrant groups (Tolley, 2016, p. 114).

1.3. TOWARDS MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY IN LITHUANIA

1.3.1. The early historic period in the development of Lithuania

The first international mention is an extremely important event in the history of every nation. The name of Lithuania (Lituae) was first mentioned in a historic document on 9 March 1009 – the annals written in Latin in the Quedlinburg Emperor's Monastery (Picture 1, Lat. *Saxonicae Annales Quedlinburgenses*, Ger. *Quedlinburger Annalen*), with a record of the death of the Archbishop and the monk St. Bruno (also known as Boniface), on the Russian²³ and Lithuanian border (Gudavičius, 1999). However, St. Bruno's mission to the

²³ There are two interpretations of this record in the Annals of Quedlinburg – the majority of researchers believe that the word *Rusciae* used in annals refers to Kievan Rus, whereas opponents (mainly German researchers) claim that the word *Rusciae* (Rus) in the discusses extract of the annals was due to erroneously spelled name *Prusciae* (Prussia) (Kvedlinburgo analai, 2007). The document itself has remained only in one of the transcripts of the 16th century stored in Dresden, the Saxon State

territory of Lithuania in 1009 remains a key moment in history, as after that Lithuania was not mentioned on the political map of Europe for almost 200 years.

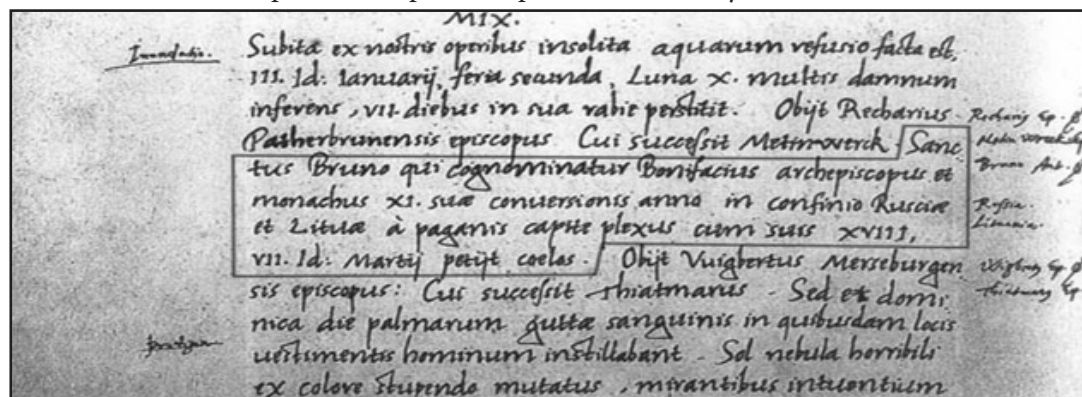


Figure 2. Lithuania mentioned in the text of the Annals of Quedlinburg, 1009: “*Sanctus Bruno qui cognominatur Bonifacius archiepiscopus et monachus XI. suae conuersionis anno in confinio Rusciae et Lituae a paganis capite plexus cum suis XVIII, VII. Id. Martij petijt coelos.*”

In his work *Germania*, Roman historian Publius Cornelius Tacitus (1972, p. 29–30) describes the tribes to the north of the Roman Empire and is one of first to mention the Aesti (*Aestiorum gentes*), the neighbours of the Germans. The author writes that on the right bank of the sea, the Mare Suebicum (now called the Baltic Sea), there is the Aesti tribe,²⁴ whose customs and clothes are the same as of Suevians (*Suebi*)²⁵; however, their language is closer to the British language (Figure 2).²⁶

In 1936, famous Lithuanian historian Adolfas Šapoka described the emergence of the Lithuanian ethnos in his book *History of Lithuania*, and noted that every nation usually has its own different culture, and if there is a change somewhere within nations, then there is a clear cultural change there. Archaeologists have not found cultural changes in our country, nor do the historic sources indicate the change of nations – therefore, the origin of Aesti is Lithuanian (Šapoka, 1988, p. 18).

Historical records of the ancient Balts (Proto-Balts) can be found in the later written sources of the Roman Empire (Vaitekūnas, 2006, p. 32). For example, in the 6th century AD the Aesti are mentioned by Flavius Aurelius Cassiodorus – the Secretary of Theoderic the

and University Library (Kvedlinburgo analai, 2007, p. 376).

²⁴ In fact, Tacitus was wrong to attribute the Balts (*Aesti*) to the Germanic tribes (*Suebi*).

²⁵ Suevians (Lat. *Suevi*) were an old Germanic nation (or a group of tribes) which lived along the Baltic sea, between Wisla/Elbe and the Rhine, around 0 AD.

²⁶ Tacitus was wrong to think that the lands of the Aesti were much closer to Britain, and he underestimated the importance of the language as the most peculiar feature in identifying the Aesti ethnic affiliation. E.g., E. Jovaiša (2014, p. 222) notes that the Baltic languages belong to the oldest Indo-European languages. The Germanic languages, compared to the Baltic, are 1,500 years younger.

Great, king of the Ostrogoths – who notes that in around 525 AD the king of the Ostrogoths was visited in Rome by the Aesti who came with gifts of amber (p. 32). This fact clearly shows that the ancient Balts, due to high demand for amber in Rome during that time, made serious efforts to take advantage of favourable conditions for establishing trade relations with Rome, and thus attempted to escape from the peripheral zone. Unfortunately, after the collapse of the Roman Empire and the Ostrogoth state, the situation changed and amber became unpopular. Therefore, not only trade, but also the established relationships ceased to exist for a long time.

Due to the development of such historical events, the area of the Baltic Sea inhabited by the Baltic tribes was considered to be the periphery of Europe, where, according to Baranauskas (2000), tribes often had a distinct culture and were characterised as closed societies with pagan customs. Therefore, for several centuries this territory remained isolated from the civilized world.



Figure 3. The tribe of Estins marked on the territory of Lithuania (Manesson Mallet's map, 1685).

A new period of cultural uplift began only in the 19th century, and was distinguished by the cohabitation of several ethnos (Curonian, German, Lithuanian, Polish, and Russian) in adjoining territories. Mixed, bilingual families were often created in Lithuanian-inhabited areas. According to recent research, during this time frame, new forms of communities (urban

prototypes) were established – e.g., in Palanga, where people from different ethnic groups lived in wooden houses and were involved in trade and craftsmanship including smithery, pottery, and the production of utensils (Kiaupa et al., 1995). Nonetheless, the nature of these emerging urban prototypes was primarily agrarian as the communities that resided there were not strong. Therefore, in terms of culture, purpose, and urbanization, settlements in Lithuania during that time rarely matched the neighbouring cities of Riga and Gdansk, which had already gained Magdeburg, or self-government, privileges.

As the Baltic tribes developed in a monocultural environment, despite steady advancement, the Baltic tribes were Europe's last pagans, and their communities were marked by cultural isolation and lagging behind the rest of the world for centuries. Therefore, the Catholic Church put serious efforts into attempting to christen these tribes. The church became more active, especially after the neighbouring Polish nation was christened in the late 10th century.

1.3.2. From monoethnicity to multiculturalism – formation and development of the State of Lithuania

Whatever the echoes of the history of Lithuania, it can be firmly claimed that the Baltic background of the country and centuries-long traditions allow the second millennium of its history to be discussed with greater specificity. In fact, it is estimated that in 1009 around 170,000 people inhabited Lithuania (100% Lithuanians), and the population density was 2 people per 1 km². In 1260, the population increased to 300,000, and its density was 2.8 people per 1 km², whereas non-Lithuanians accounted for one in ten members of the entire population (Vaitekūnas, 2006, pp. 42–43). Naturally, given such population density in the territory of Lithuania, only small rural settlements (5–10 houses) were created and rural communities developed in a monocultural environment based on ethnic isolation.

At the turn of the second millennium, the development of Baltic ethnicity was gradually finalised on the basis of individual communities and even tribes (blood connection), which contributed to the emergence of new economic and social conditions with centralized power and borders of the state of Lithuania.²⁷ At the same time, the national identity of the present Lithuanian nation was formed, and Dukes and the institutional units of the Grand Duke of Lithuania (for example, the Council and the Chancellery) appeared in the lands governed by the tribes. These became the centre of state life, with the exclusive rights of the ruler (e.g., the

²⁷ In those times, the territory between Nemunas and Neris was often called the “Lithuanian land”. However, during the rule of King Mindaugas, other territories of residence of Lithuanians were attributed to the Lithuanian lands (Eidintas et al., 2013, pp. 13–14).

right to punish a subject, to condemn to death, to inherit power, military affairs, etc.) in place and the collection of taxes from subjects (such as for crops, fur, beavers, honey, other goods from fields and forests, as well as work obligations, such as the construction of castles, etc.).

In the 11th century, Lithuania had to withstand frequently exerted pressure from the neighbouring Kievan Rus. Meanwhile, Lithuania established political and commercial ties with this neighbour, which provided the basis for the cultural impact of Kievan Rus. Due to these connections, in the early 12th century numerous loanwords entered Lithuanian from the Old Russian language, such as, through the Orthodox religion, the concepts of: *kreščeniene* (christening); *božnica* (church); *bašnia* (tower); *bojarin* (nobleman); and *polnij* (full), which implies that at that time the impact of the Western languages on Lithuanian was insignificant. On the other hand, Lithuanian words also had an impact in Slavic lands, e.g., *svirnas* (*sviren*), *kluonas* (*klunia*), *skilandis* (*skilond*), etc.²⁸ However, because the Lithuanian written language did not exist in the 12th–13th centuries, the elite of Lithuania started to lose their original national Lithuanian characteristics as a result of coexisting and speaking with people from the Kievan Rus. As the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) expanded to eastern Slavic regions, according to historian A. Šapoka (1988, p. 155), Lithuanians did not affect the discovered state and social order of the Russian lands, but this had some effect on Lithuania itself; indeed, Lithuanians borrowed some forms of government from the Russians, even including the title of Grand Duke itself. At that time, the internal written communication was mainly in the Old Russian language²⁹ with the Cyrillic alphabet.³⁰ Apart from Old Russian, other foreign languages were used for international correspondence, such as German (Livonian and Prussian), Czech, and Arabic; but official diplomatic correspondence was usually drafted in Latin by monks.³¹ It is believed that the use of Old Russian and other

²⁸ In the old Lithuanian language, one can find a number of archaic words that are no longer familiar to us, which trace back to Pro-Indo-European, such as *ašva* (mare), *vetušas* (old), *nepuotis* (grandchild), *avynas* (uncle), *priesakis* (enemy), *penukšlas* (penas, food), *apyppenai* (poisons), *keltuva* (cattle), *pekus* (herd, livestock) (Šaltiniai, n.d.).

²⁹ The old Ruthenian language, as a clerical language, retained its role until the 17th century, when it was replaced by the Polish language.

³⁰ The first publication written in Lithuanian was Martynas Mažvydas' book *The Simple Words of Catechismus. The Art of Reading, Writing and Hymns* (shortened to as *Catechismysa/Catechism*), which consisted of 79 pages and was published in Königsberg (Prussia, current Kaliningrad, Russia) on 8 January 1547. Only two copies of this book have remained and are kept at the Vilnius and Toruń (Poland) University libraries. Unfortunately, as A. Eidintas and his colleagues (2013, p. 58) point out, the society of the GDL at that time was not ready for a Lithuanian-language book.

³¹ All documents of state significance (privileges, all three Statutes of Lithuania, chronicles, acts of confirmation of nobility and various land transactions, wills, court records, etc.) written in the Duke's Chancellery (office) in Trakai, Vilnius, Smolensk, Polock, Minsk, Grodno, Kiev, Chernihiv and other towns once belonging to the GDL and the received letters were collected and archived as stationery books that entered the historical chronicles under the name of the Lithuanian Metric and are to be regarded as the main source of the historical and cultural heritage of the GDL. The Lithuanian Metric consists of over 600 handwritten books and was formed from the late 14th century up to 1795. Currently, the Lithuanian Literature and Folklore Institute in Vilnius holds only copies of the Metric Books, because in 1795, after the 3rd division of Poland and Lithuania, the 29th edition of the Latin alphabet book and some original books were handed over to Radvilos archive in the Main Archives of Old Documents in Warsaw (Poland), and other books were kept in Moscow, the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts.

mentioned languages in official state documents is related to the arrival of Christian missionaries in Lithuania, not only from the Russian Orthodox Church of Kievan Rus, but also from Catholic lands (Bernardinai.lt, 2015). The first arrival of Orthodox missionaries saw them begin to promote their cultural values and beliefs in the Lithuanian environment, thus gradually establishing themselves among the Lithuania rulers. In that period, as A. Šapoka notes, from the national and religious perspectives the entire state was divided into two parts: the pagan Lithuanian, or true Lithuanian; and the Russian Orthodox. Each of these parts had a distinct way of living (Šapoka, 1988, p. 155).

The GDL was established in the 12th–13th centuries as a feudal state and included the ethnic Lithuanian lands and the neighbouring Slavic and Baltic duchies. The formation of the GDL was also conditioned by the increasing Lithuanian military power at the end of the 12th century as a counterweight to the growing threat from the Moscow Rus due to its expansion policy. Mindaugas (1200–1263), the Grand Duke of Lithuania, became the first ruler of the consolidated lands of Lithuania in 1236, was baptised as a Catholic in 1251 together with his servants, and was crowned as the first and only King of Lithuania in 1253 (presumably on 6 July)³² in Naugardukas – the first capital of the GDL. Pope Innocent IV signed a bulla on 17 July 1251 in Milan whereby he acknowledged Lithuania as a Catholic Kingdom, while at the same time Lithuania became a sovereign subject within European politics. The efforts of Grand Duke Mindaugas to open Lithuania to Europe of that time introduced it to the arena of European history and culture, which, according to historian Prof. Eduardas Gudavičius, was important as at that time almost nobody was aware of the existence of Lithuania and, until baptism and crowning, Lithuania was a land appreciated by no one (Vaižgauskaitė, 2006).³³

At the same time, it is known that Christianity suffered considerable difficulties in establishing itself in the land of Lithuania. By 1260, Mindaugas, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, returned to the Lithuanian traditional religion, and the expansion of Christianity in the territory of Lithuania was suspended for more than a century. There were many reasons for this. According to Gudavičius, everyday life in Lithuania did not change – the diseased were still burnt, and Christianity was imposed in a violent way as it was strongly opposed by Samogitians (Vaižgauskaitė, 2006). There were no massive baptismal ceremonies, and people accepted Christianity the way they understood it and the way it was convenient to them. The pagan faith and gods did not disappear – only the Christian god moved above them in

³² The exact date and place of the King Mindaugas' coronation are not known, as no historical sources mention the fact of 6 July, and the documentation related to the coronation was prepared not in Lithuania, but partly in Rome and Riga (Livonia). According to some Lithuanian archaeologists and architectural historians, the coronation of Mindaugas took place in the first Christian temple in Vilnius.

³³ Mindaugas managed not only to be baptized, but also to create an independent state, while due to the prevailing attitudes in the Christian world at that time neither Prussians, Latvians, Estonians, nor Finns managed to do this.

the hierarchy. The rulers also adhered to the Christian dogmas only formally, thus the way of life or the faith of people did not change, which encouraged contemporary chroniclers to state that the christening of Mindaugas was delusive (Venclova, 2019, p. 80). For Lithuanians, Christianity in the 13th century was alien, and many centuries had to pass before people accepted this faith (Vaižgauskaitė, 2006). However, taking into consideration all of the hindrances due to the vivid pagan customs in the consciousness of Lithuania of that time, the emergence of the Christian faith was an important step in the development of a new cultural tradition in Lithuania, which served as the cornerstone on the way of a young state towards civilized Europe with its greatest cultural achievements.³⁴

In spite of the fact that in the Middle Ages the Lithuanian ethnic area did not share a common border with Poland,³⁵ initial, but not always friendly, contact between Lithuanians and Poles was observed in 1209–1211 when the Lithuanians initiated military campaigns into Polish lands and the forced displacement of the local people to Lithuania.³⁶ Lithuanians often took women into captivity for housekeeping and childcare (Baronas, 2013). The consequences of Lithuanian invasions into the territory of Poland are related to the beginning of the arrival of individual Poles to Lithuania. At that time, communication with people in captivity and the Poles freely arriving in Lithuania encouraged Lithuanians to learn to speak Polish (Baronas, 2013). As the Polish community grew larger in the territory of Lithuania, there was a need to take care of the Polish people's faith; therefore, Gediminas, the Grand Duke of Lithuania (c. 1275–1341), invited Franciscans who spoke Polish, including some native Poles among them.

The process of laying the foundations of the Lithuanian state and its growing population resulted in the need to look for certain forms of state governance, and the cohabitation of different ethnic groups became apparent. Thus, in this initial period of state formation, the Grand Dukes of Lithuania exercised prerogative rights to guarantee freedom of trade to merchants from both East and West. This provided for favourable conditions for Dukes to establish cities, such as, Vilnius, Kaunas, and Trakai, where merchants mainly from Germany and Rus' settled. In the 13th century, Lithuania had already traded with Riga, Venice and even the Middle East. Foreigners were guaranteed freedom of conscience and were allowed to have their prayer houses and practice their rituals.

In 1322 Gediminas, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, in response to the proposal of Pope John XXII to accept Christianity, sent a letter in which he said that we have our Franciscan and Dominican brothers, and granted them full freedom to baptize, give sermons and

³⁴ In our times, the crowning of Mindaugas as the King of Lithuania on 6 July has been proclaimed a public holiday of the Republic of Lithuania since 1990.

³⁵ In the early 12th century, Lithuania and Poland were separated by the lands of Jotvingis.

³⁶ Such attacks with the abduction of people lasted until 1376, when the last major Lithuanian military campaign to Poland took place.

perform other sacred rituals (Gediminas, n.d.). In his correspondence with Pope John XXII, Grand Duke Gediminas proclaimed his willingness to convert to Catholicism and establish a Catholic Archdiocese, noting that three churches had already been established in Vilnius and Naugardukas (Gediminas, n.d., 25 January 1323). At the same time, Gediminas established an Orthodox metropolis. However, his wish to be baptized was not implemented at that time because of offenses committed by German knights and the opposition of Orthodox feudal lords and Samogitians, but this misfortune did not decrease his intention to pursue the policy of bringing Lithuania closer to European civilization.

Thus, on 25 January 1323, Grand Duke Gediminas sent a letter from the capital of Lithuania, Vilnius,³⁷ to citizens of Bremen, Köln, Liubek, Magdeburg, Zund, and other cities on the way to the Christians in Rome with an invitation to come freely to Lithuania, attain some land, and become merchants exempt from taxes and duties:

*To all Christians spread all over the world, men and women, ... to every person of good will we open our land, possessions, and the entire kingdom. ... To knights, squires, merchants, doctors, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, cobblers, furriers, millers, shopkeepers and any other craftsmen – to all these mentioned people we wish to assign land to each one according to his position. Those farmers who want to come, shall farm our land without any tax. Merchants can arrive and depart freely, without any charges and duties, without any obstacles at all. ... If knights and squires wish to stay, I will grant them income and possessions, as appropriate (Gediminas, n.d.).*³⁸

In terms of modern times, this address of Lithuania's ruler to Europeans reveals that the Grand Duke Gediminas realised that in order to create a young state in Europe at the time, it was important to adopt a novel approach towards the priorities of national political and economic growth. In today's context, Lithuania's ruler opened the door to the European world for new skills and competences to be brought into the country, while also proclaiming that one of the state's priorities was the creation of a multicultural society.

Under the rule of Gediminas, Lithuania expanded its territory significantly to become the largest state in Europe, with a territory of up to 350,000 square miles that incorporated some of the Slavic lands (including the current territory of Belarus and Ukraine and parts of Poland and Russia) due to conquests or successful marriage diplomacy (often through the marriages of his daughters). The population of Lithuania consisted of 700,000 people, 53% of which were Lithuanians and 47% Slavic nationalities (Byelorussians, Poles, Russians, and Ukrainians; Pakštas, 1968).³⁹ In addition, Lithuanians were not able to enforce the use their

³⁷ Moreover, in this letter Vilnius is mentioned as the capital of Lithuania, therefore this date is traditionally regarded as the date of the founding of Vilnius, although the city (settlement) is likely to have existed in the time of King Mindaugas. Unfortunately, at that time Vilnius was a pagan city and had not yet participated in the Renaissance movement of the new culture in Europe.

³⁸ Duke Gediminas addressed a letter of a similar content on 26 May 1323 to the people of Rostock, Greifswald, Szczecin, and Gotland.

³⁹ Historian A. Šapoka (1988, p. 165) notes that in the early 14th century the population of the real Lithuania was around

native language, customs or religious convictions on other nations in the new parts of the GDL, as paganism was not competitive enough with the Orthodox religion that had introduced administrative structures and written language much earlier, particularly in monasteries. Moreover, when Lithuanian rule in the lands of the Rus' began, the dukes of Lithuania who had become local to those territories frequently switched to the Orthodox faith – for instance, the oldest son of Mindaugas, Vaišelga (1223–1267), converted to the Orthodox faith in 1245. Unfortunately, it is known that rulers of Baltic origin, after accepting Orthodoxy, rapidly became Russified. From the ethnic and cultural point of view, Lithuania became more and more dual-faceted in this period, as it was founded on the basis of the Baltic ethnos but its peripheral and expanding territory, dominated by the Slavic element, soon became larger than the country's nucleus. Although the state's political and economic centres, Trakai and Vilnius, remained in Lithuanian lands, the territory of ethnic Lithuania eventually shrunk to as little as 10% of the country's territory. These facts demonstrate Lithuania's nominal power in connection to new regions; on the other hand, they promoted tolerance for people of various denominations, which became a significant prerequisite for fostering tolerance in a multi-national society in the future.

French historian J. H. Schnitzler (1802–1871) describes Lithuania's achievements under the rule of the Grand Duke Gediminas in the following way: at the beginning of the 14th century, Gediminas brought Lithuania among powerful states, out of which it soon became the first in the whole of the North, including Russia, which suffered from the Mongol yoke, and Poland, where the honourable reign of Kazimierz the Great came to an end. The power of Lithuanians was beneficial for Christianity, as they became a serious obstruction for Mongols on the way to the West (Vaitekūnas, 2006, p. 48). The entrenchment of Lithuania on the European political map made Gediminas refer to himself as *Gediminne Deigratia Letphanorum Ruthenorumquerex, princeps et dux Semigallie* (Gediminas, by grace of God the King of Lithuania and Ruthenia, the Duke and Ruler of Samogitia) (*Senoji Lietuvos literatūra*, 1996).

Although there is no record of what effect Gediminas' message to European citizens had on the number of foreigners who arrived in Lithuania, the dates and circumstances under which the Jews, the two Turkic communities (Tatars and Karaites, who are among the oldest Turkic tribes with regard to the language and ethnogenesis) and some other nationalities settled in Lithuania are well documented.

As the new socio-economic environment created conditions for the increase of the population of Lithuania, until there were no urban-type settlements, Lithuania could only be classified as a mononational state with a predominance of economic and cultural isolation of society. In the 13th century, a social stratum of large landowners emerged in Lithuania,

and part of the peasantry became subordinate to it. All of the abovementioned changes not only led to a new stage in the social structure of Lithuanian society, but it is also especially relevant that this manifested in the economic life of the country, primarily in agriculture and in the development of crafts, such as smithery, art and leather working in the emerging towns. Although there had been a long history of natural economy and the exchange of produce in Lithuania, money was used in that period, which promoted international trade and the development of cultural exchanges. As Prof. S. Vaitekūnas (2006, p. 39) notes, from the point of view of the development of the economy, Lithuania did not lag behind neighbouring countries. The lifestyle of the country's nobles in the 14th century was similar to the European one, yet the common life of people was much different from the advanced West. Tomas Venclova (2018, p. 135) notes that the country was behind the real Europe – in its art and literature, craft shops and merchants' guilds, law, monasteries, and the chronicles written therein.

Great political and cultural influence in the history of Lithuania was exerted by the baptismal process of Lithuanians, which started in 1387 on the initiative of the King of Poland, the Grand Duke of Lithuania Jogaila (1348–1434),⁴⁰ and the Grand Duke of Lithuania Vytautas (1350–1430),⁴¹ whereby paganism as an ethnic faith with its customs, gods and worshipping of the sun, the moon, trees, fire, etc. was replaced by Christianity under Catholic rituals. After baptism, Catholicism officially became the state religion of Lithuania. First, the nobility and peasants of Vilnius and its surroundings were baptized. At the same time, those who converted to Catholicism were taught the truths of the Christian faith. Due to all of this, two years later, Pope Urban VI recognised the GDL as a Christian state. From that moment on, it was the Lithuanian state that became the guardian of the Catholic world in the East.

On the occasion of christening, nobles of Lithuania, in exchange for the obligation to go to military service, were given the privilege of freely managing their premises and did not have to obtain the consent of the ruler when marrying off their daughters. With the entrance of Christianity into Lithuania, cultural isolation, which had previously dominated the country, gradually disappeared, and the development of the country's culture was set in the direction of Europeanization, which was already considered one of the most important trends in the development of the state. At the same time, a culture of writing was introduced in Lithuania.⁴²

⁴⁰ In fact, the christening of Jogaila was agreed upon in the Kreva Castle in 1385 during negotiations between Jogaila and the Polish noblemen as a condition for him to marry Jadvyga – the successor of the Polish throne and to improve the relations between both countries. Christening of the country's inhabitants was one of the terms. On this basis, in 1386 the Kreva Union was made between the Polish Kingdom and the GDL, which provided for closer co-operation; however, both states retained their national administration and the written language, legislation, the treasury with their own money and army. On the other hand, some Polish specialists, e.g., S. Mackiewicz (1975, p. 93), believe that under the Kreva Union Jogaila had to join the state of Lithuania with Poland (see Stankevič, 2012, p. 876). Different evaluations of historical documents regarding the use of the Latin language in the contract still require additional discussions of Lithuanian and Polish specialists.

⁴¹ The Grand Duke of Lithuania, Vytautas, entered the history of Lithuania under the name of Vytautas the Great for his merits in creating the state.

⁴² As Lithuanians were pagans, they did not have their own writing, thus after the baptism the writing culture in its initial

As the authors of the book *History of Lithuania* (Lith. *Lietuvos istorija*) note, after 1387, when Lithuania's political elite passed from paganism to Catholicism, the cultural balance between the Catholic state nucleus and the Orthodox periphery became equal (Eidintas et al., 2013, p. 44). The political elite began to acquire the status of the cultural elite because the Orthodox lost their civilizational advantage. Monks and clergy from the Czech Republic, Poland,⁴³ and the German lands arrived in Lithuania for a long time, even for permanent living. It is also known that areas along Nevėžis, separating the Aukštaitian region from the Samogitian region, were settled by Polish noblemen committed to defending Lithuania from the attacks of German orders. Foreigners also came to the cities of the GDL. For example, it is known that in the early days of Jogaila's rule, the German merchant Hanulon was appointed as the governor of Vilnius (Šapoka, 1988, p. 156), and from the middle of the 15th century German Hanseatic merchants visited Kėdainiai. Due to this, Kėdainiai became an important centre for regional trade, economic development and multicultural life (Kėdainių turizmo ir verslo informacijos centras, n.d.).⁴⁴ The spirit of Europeanisation in Lithuania was noted in many spheres of activity, which prompted Vytautas to establish a state office to create a body of professional diplomats who had knowledge on the cross-border relations that prevailed in Europe.



The Old Town of Kėdainiai



The historic centre of Kėdainiai

stage was formed in the state primarily by using Latin and Russian languages and such languages of Christian countries as Polish, German, Greek. In addition, the Tartar language was long used in the state office (Venclova, 2018, p. 167). At that time, paper was not yet produced in Lithuania, so parchment and paper imported from Italy, Germany and France was used for correspondence in the ruler's office. Paper production in the Eastern European region was first started in Poland in 1491 (Krakow), whereas in the territory of the GDL this did not happen until 1524 in Vilnius, according to an act issued by King Sigismund the Elder (1467–1548). There is no doubt that paper production in Lithuania marked an important civilizational breakthrough, as it was directly related to the development of writing and book printing, which at the same time contributed to the cognition of literature, history and culture of other countries (Ragauskas, 2014).

⁴³ After the introduction of Christianity in Lithuania, the dioceses of Vilnius and Žemaičiai were established, but the majority of priests in the first chapels and built churches consisted of clergy who came from Poland, who, unfortunately, did not care about the Lithuanian language (Z. Zinkevičius, as cited in Kuzmickas, 2015). Only later, did Lithuanian priests begin to preach in churches.

⁴⁴ Kėdainiai was first mentioned in written sources in 1372 as a fishermen's settlement in the Livonian Chronicle by H. von Wartberge, a chronicler of the Livonian Order. In 1590 Kėdainiai acquired the rights of Magdeburg.

During the period of christening Lithuania did not yet have its own written language, so there were no Lithuanian schools established. In order to enculture the country, the first steps in that direction were made. For example, after establishment of the Vilnius Bishopric in 1387, the first school of the Vilnius Cathedral was opened, followed by more schools founded by the monasteries and parish churches, where church choralists and clerks were prepared based on Latin books of religious and moral content. Later, Lithuanians began to study at the University of Krakow (Poland) and laid the foundation for the Lithuanian intelligentsia. In the first half of 16th century, eleven Catholic and six Protestant schools were functioning. At the same time, cultural convergence with Poland began, followed by the process of Polonization of this part of the population of Lithuania (Šapoka, 1988, p. 157).

Upon the introduction of Christianity, many pagan customs, such as the concept of death and burial rites (e.g., pagan ritual of burning the corpse), changed; the church legally began to spread the ideas of one god, natural sin and the redemption of Christ. On the other hand, since Lithuania accepted Christianity relatively late, previous folk culture based on peasant traditions was rich in signs of archaic elements remaining from the times of paganism. These are also visible in the customs of present-day Catholic celebrations – for example, since ancient times, not only Lithuania, but also many other European countries have celebrated *Shrovetide*, during which winter is forced out from the yard and spring is invited; *Midsummer Day*,⁴⁵ which people still believe infuses herbs with magical powers and intensifies their healing properties; or the *Assumption of Mary*, a feast which ancestral Lithuanians dedicated to sacred rituals in honour of the grand Goddess Lada, sacrificing part of the fruits of newly harvested crops. In general, Western co-cultural traditions were definitively taken up by Lithuanians only in the 16th century.

From the year 1387, the cities of Lithuania were gradually granted Magdeburg self-government rights, which allowed urban communities to regulate themselves independently in electing their city councillors, which in turn protected them from the pressures of politically and economically powerful nobles. In addition, the granting of Magdeburg self-government rights to the cities of the GDL was a positive contribution to the proclamation of the state of Lithuania at the international level (Delfi, 2014a). The growing number of foreign people in Lithuania was also related to the state policy pursued by Duke Vytautas the Great – in order to revive the country's economic life, foreigners were accommodated in lands untouched by the local population. They were also encouraged to perform construction work (to build castles and towns) and to develop trade. The Orthodox nobility was also affected by the changes in

⁴⁵ Midsummer festival, which is often associated with the solstice, search for the fern flower, witches, fortune-telling and the like, is also popular in the customs of other countries as well, e.g., Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Denmark, and even Portugal and Brazil.

the state, thus in 1434 the Grand Duke of Lithuania Žygimantas Kęstutaitis granted to them the same privileges as to the Catholic noblemen. In this way, the privileges formulated by Duke Gediminas in 1323 began to be implemented in the life of the state.

Although the Jews (Ashkenazi) have settled in the territory of present-day Lithuania since the 14th century, the first Jews are believed to have arrived in the territory of the future GDL in the late 11th century as a result of their movement from German-speaking southeast areas of Europe (Germany, Silesia or Bohemia) and seeking asylum due to the unfavourable conditions during the period of the Crusades (Rosenthal, 1904). Originally, they moved to Poland and the lands populated by Eastern Slavic ethnic groups (in Byelorussia), and from there they reached the ethnic territory of Lithuania. They are first mentioned in the written sources of the GDL in 1388, when Vytautas the Great granted the privilege of Brest (contemporary Belarus) to the oldest Jewish community in the Duchy, and after a year, the same privilege was given to Jews based in Gardin (Žydai Lietuvoje, 2021b). Later, Vytautas the Great extended the privileges to all Jewish communities who lived in the territory of the Duchy. These privileges regulated the relations between the Lithuanian people and the Jewish minority; these documents entrenched the Jewish right to: establish a self-governance institution (*kahal*); freely profess Judaism; perform rituals and observe the customs of their own nation; build and maintain synagogues (wooden or masonry, but not higher than the churches built); and set up separate cemeteries, which has historically been recognized as a major feature of existence of the Jewish community. The granted privileges prohibited the devastation of synagogues and cemeteries and ensured protection of the Jews from undesirable Christian interference and violence.⁴⁶ In addition, these privileges provided for the conditions of Jewish economic activity, set the rates of community tax and duties, and defined Jewish residential areas in the city. Under these privileges, Jews were free, and in criminal cases they were entitled to be tried by representatives directly appointed by the Grand Duke. In cases of minor crimes, the jurisdiction of local officers prevailed; the Jews were tried on an equal footing with the nobles and other free residents. In addition, the religious court (*beit din*), which consisted of several (at least three) experts of *halacha*, continued to operate as it had since ancient times in every major Jewish community.⁴⁷ Such a trial based on *halacha* was able to solve all cases of the members of the Jewish community – including property, family,

⁴⁶ In the Jewish language, the word *synagogue* means a prayer house, as well as the community hall for prayer and Torah studies, and sometimes the seat of the community council (*kahal*). In fact, one of the conditions for the establishment of the Jewish religious community was the requirement to establish *minjan* in the synagogue (worship can only take place with the participation of ten male homeowners), which is why single Jewish settlers belonged to the nearest community with self-governing institutions (Urbaitytė, 2021).

⁴⁷ *Halacha* are religious laws derived from the Bible, which define the Jewish lifestyle. Halacha govern holidays and weekdays, prayers in the synagogue and family relationships, education and economic activity, birth, death, and every moment of Jewish life (Žydai Lietuvoje, 2021a).

even criminal cases. When Jews settled across the country in the 17th century, a Jewish-elected Seimas was established to represent the community against state power and to elect a tax collector authorized throughout the country (Šapoka, 1988, p. 243). In total, the Grand Dukes of the GDL provided the Jews with around 10 universal privileges, and in 1646 King Wladyslaw Vaza granted the last of them. This privilege established the Jewish *universal freedoms*, which remained unchanged until the late 18th century (Žydai Lietuvoje, 2021c).

Despite the fact that, in Lithuania, the Jews were officially protected by the privileges against violence, plunder or destruction of their property, this did not become a precondition for their integration into local society. It should be noted that most of the privileges granted to the Jews by Vytautas were unusual in the Christian environment, thus eventually they created conditions for the Jewish community to flourish. On the other hand, it is known that in some periods, as in the whole of Europe at that time, Jews experienced inequality and even harm. For example, in 1495 the Jewish Community of Lithuania was directly offended by the Grand Duke Alexander (1461–1506) when he, for unclear reasons, required all Jews to leave the territory of Lithuania; in fact, the exile lasted only 18 years, after which Jews were allowed to return (Venclova, 2018, p. 187). Due to the resistance of the population, Lithuania also applied the common European practice of forcing the Jews to live only in certain neighbourhoods within the cities, called ghettos, and wear special dresses and yellow caps (Šapoka, 1988, p. 242),⁴⁸ as very often city dwellers did not want to allow potential competitors to settle in their territory. There were various reasons for this. The development of the society of the former GDL was based on a rather regulative strata (with specific rights, duties, and limits on activity), meanwhile, the Jews did not belong to either the townspeople, the peasants, or the noblemen – in fact, they were a separate ethno-confessional stratum⁴⁹ directly responsible to the Grand Duke of Lithuania (Urbaitytė, 2021). Moreover, the Jews themselves did not show any willingness to integrate into local societies due to their specific ways of life (e.g., the Jews do not eat pork, Saturday is a day off because they go to the synagogue), which the local communities found difficulty in accepting – thus, there were obstacles to their integration into society. The Jewish community only fully settled in Vilnius in the 16th–17th centuries. The late settlement of Jews in the capital of the country is explained by the so-called *privilegia de non tolerandis Judaeis* granted to city dwellers in 1527 (Žydai Lietuvoje, 2021c).

It is believed that in the late 16th century, around 15,000 Jews lived in the GDL. A more

⁴⁸ It must be admitted that settlement in Lithuania in the history of the Jewish nation was yet another case of the continuing practice of driving the Jews out of society in different countries.

⁴⁹ Jews as a separate group formed on an ethno-confessional basis are not only characteristic of Lithuania, because in many other countries the Jewish diaspora developed over the centuries as an ethnic and denominational union with strong internal solidarity based on religious principles. That has helped the Jews to remain unified though scattered throughout many countries.

intense settlement of Jews in Lithuania was observed only in the late 17th and early 18th century, when the owners of small towns (e.g., Kėdainiai) sought to revitalize their economic life having been affected by demographic losses and various political crises by inviting Jews to settle in these areas under favourable conditions (Žydai Lietuvoje, 2021b). By the end of the 18th century, the Jewish population in Lithuania was around 250,000. Although Jews actively settled in many parts of Lithuania, most lived in Vilnius, which contained around half of the Jewish population (Venclova, 2018, p. 292). Most Jews were involved in trade, including alcohol, crafts and transportation – thus, most of them were rather well off. Such activities made it easier for Jews to adapt to the local environment and to pay the taxes imposed, which was a significant impetus for the Lithuanian economy. Jews were frequently designated agents of the nobility and administered their estates. However, Jews were often seen as competitors, which resulted in intolerance and even outbursts of anger among other groups of the population.

Despite instances of intolerance against Jews by the local people, it can be noted that in the second half of the 18th century the settlement of the Jews in Lithuania was organized in the same way as in some other western European countries, e.g., in France and the Netherlands. As a result, the Jews identified themselves with Lithuania and referred to it as “Lite”, meanwhile referring to themselves as “Litvaks” (Eidintas et al., 2013, p. 15).

Another significant stage in formation of the cultural diversity of society in Lithuania was the arrival of Tatars and Karaites. The first records of the Tartars,⁵⁰ who were Muslims, in the territory of the GDL date back to the times of the Duke Gediminas (around 1275–1341), when they, as mercenaries, participated in the war with crusaders (Strykowski, 1846, pp. 356–368; Jakubauskas et al., 2012, p. 5; Kručinskis, pp. 17–18, as cited in Lukoševičiūtė, 2014, p. 175). In 1397, the Tartars were taken into captivity after the campaign of the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Vytautas, over the Don River. They were subsequently settled in surroundings of Vilnius and Trakai (the former capital of Lithuania), and, despite their position, were entrusted to serve Vytautas. It is known that Vytautas granted lands to Tatars, guaranteed freedom of religion, and at the same time allowed them to build prayer houses – mosques.⁵¹ Quite soon, a considerable number of Tartar warriors were engaged in crafts, trade, agriculture, and transportation (Jakubauskas et al., 2012, pp. 10, 13). From the 16th century, schools were open for studies of the Koran in mosques and in larger Tatar-inhabited areas. Such privileges granted by the Dukes helped the majority of Tartars to become familiar with the

⁵⁰ Lithuanian Tatars are descendants of the Turkic tribes who lived in Central Asia and North China in the 6th–8th centuries.

⁵¹ The Tatars built a total of 60 mosques in the territory of the GDL, 24 of which are situated in the territory of present-day Lithuania.

alien Lithuanian environment fairly quickly, and part of them formed a local feudal stratum.⁵² The arrival of Tartars to Lithuania was not a short-term process and – as Prof. Jakubauskas (2012, p. 5), the chairman of the Union of Lithuanian Tartar Communities, notes – when the whole of Europe was armed against the Muslims, the wise rulers of Lithuania with love and hospitality invited Tartars to their lands, who, under various unfavourable conditions, were forced from their homeland and voluntarily resided in Lithuania. Historical documents reveal that in the 15th and 17th centuries, Lithuanian rulers entrusted Tatars with the duties of clerks, translators and diplomats, as they were able to perform their assigned functions responsibly in the Arabic language.⁵³ Due to this, the Tartar language had been used for a long time in the state office (Venclova, 2018, p. 167). When the Tartars came to Lithuania they brought their own cultural traditions, but only in the 15th century did they form as a separate national group. Since then, Tatars have been recognized as an independent ethnos of Lithuania and have not been subject to assimilation. It is noteworthy that the Lithuanian Tatar community often preserved the hierarchical relations that were historically formed in their former homeland (Jakubauskas et al., 2012, p. 10).



Trakai Castle

Unfortunately, at the beginning of the 17th century, the Lithuanian Tartar community was also affected by religious disagreements between the Catholics and Reformants. As it was forbidden to build new mosques and to restore existing ones, some Tartar women were charged with witchcraft (Vaitekūnas, 2006, p. 345). In fact, the prohibition period lasted for a

⁵² According to Prof. Jakubauskas et al. (2012, p. 10), due to the Muslim faith confessed by Tartars, the Tatars did not receive political privileges granted to noblemen and the right to elect legislature and the king.

⁵³ As Prof. Vaitekūnas (2006) notes, the Lithuanian Tatar community sought to enlighten and educate their younger generation and thus send them to the Arab countries to learn the Arabic language and writing (p. 344).

relatively short time, and in the 1780s all previous privileges were returned to the Lithuanian Tatars. As we see, Tartars became an integral part of GDL history and culture.

In addition, more than six centuries ago, another Turkic group, the Karaites, settled in Lithuania. This group (comprising around 380 young Karaite men and women) was presumably gradually brought from Crimea by the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Vytautas (1392–1397), and was accommodated in the capital Trakai. For their loyalty and courage, the rulers of Lithuania appointed them to be personal guards and guards of the Trakai castle, entrusted them with the duties of translators and mediators, and due to their skills in medicine allowed them to cure people. Later, Karaites also settled in other regions of Lithuania and formed local communities (Biržai, Naujamiestis, Pasvalys, Panevėžys), but Trakai, according to ruler's privileges, has always been the administrative and spiritual centre of their community, which the Karaites themselves viewed with time not only as a birthplace, but also as a homeland. Karaites enjoyed self-government rights and were directly subordinated to the elected Trakai governor, who had administrative and legal power. In turn, the governor was directly responsible only to the ruler of Lithuania (*Lietuvos karaimai*, n.d.). The Karaites soon became integrated into the Lithuanian environment of that period, but due to the principles of internal community life which had been formed through centuries, they managed to keep their customs, religion and language intact. For centuries, the inhabitants of this part of Lithuania have not lost their ethnic, cultural and confessional ties with the Crimean and other Karaim-populated areas.

At the end of the 15th century, the first Roma people, whose native land is north-eastern India, settled in the territory of Lithuania. Their native language is associated with the Indian language group, and it is believed that the Roma people came to the territory of ethnic Lithuania from Poland through Gudia.⁵⁴ After settling in Lithuania, the Roma people called themselves the Lithuanian Roma (*litovska roma*), and from the very moment of their arrival attributed themselves to Catholics. In fact, it has not been observed that they are practicing Catholics, for they are still famous for pagan rites and witchcraft. In 1501, the Roma community in Lithuania, similarly to other national communities, received the privilege of Alexander (1461–1506), the king of Poland and the ruler of Lithuania, according to which they were granted freedom of movement throughout the territory of the state, and their leaders (*voivodes*) were given the right to resolve all community issues.

The Roma people were great singers, smiths (metal working), animal trainers, and craftsmen. However, the Roma people have often been regarded as a national group without a permanent place of residence, with a poorly developed administrative structure and no

⁵⁴ The historic homeland of the Roma is Northwest India and their native language is associated with the Indian language group.

education system. Due to their behaviours, including begging, animal theft, etc., the Roma provoked negative government decisions, which often resulted in repressions.

At the end of the rule of Vytautas the Great, the territory of the GDL extended over 930,000 km², containing almost 2.5 million people. This was composed of 590,000 Lithuanians, 500,000 Byelorussians, 840,000 Ukrainians, 450,000 Russians, and 100,000 Tatars (Pakštas, 1968, p. 452).⁵⁵ Despite the fact that in the time of Vytautas the state apparatus was formed in Lithuania on the model of the neighbouring Poland (the Council, Chancellery), cities grew large (e.g., Vilnius, Trakai, Kaunas) and castles and churches were built, the population density remained low for a long time and it is estimated that it was 3–4 times lower than in Poland.⁵⁶

Increasing national diversity was consistently marked by the new challenges of co-existence, which were to be addressed by the young state. It is obvious that from the initial conception of the state, Lithuania's cultural landscape was formed on the foundation of various nations with diverse cultural and religious traditions, but its geographical location factually determined its peripheral position, therefore, according to some experts it was characterised by distinct peripheral culture (Ališauskas et al., 2001).

From 16th century, the spread of the Polish spoken and written language and lifestyle in Lithuania was related not so much to economic and social as to cultural and ideological processes (Baronas, 2013). At that time, the linguistic situation in the country depended heavily on the indifferent attitude of the great Lithuanian feudal lords towards their native language, which clearly illustrates the linguistic loss of national identity prevalent within the aristocracy of Lithuanian origin. Prof. B. Kuzmickas (2015) draws attention to the fact that Lithuanian feudalists actively participated in drafting and publishing Polish books, they spoke Polish themselves and did not show any desire to contribute to the drafting of Lithuanian publications. In fact, the nobility often raised the question of re-establishing the use of their native language in state affairs; thus, as Šapoka (1988, p. 250) notes, by the mid-16th century the Polish language was not officially used. At the same time, there were demands to abandon the written language of the Byelorussians (Ruthenians), as it was similar to the language spoken by the biggest enemy of Lithuania – Moscow (p. 250). Although the nobility of Lithuania belonged to the same stratum as the Polish nobility, they did not have the same rights and privileges, thus they fought for a long time for equality, which was one of the main reasons why on 1 July 1569 Lithuania joined Poland in the union of Lublin. In

⁵⁵ The given figures are approximate, because up to 1489 the GDL did not have a population census (Vaitekūnas, 2006, p. 68). Demographer Baris Urlanis estimated that about 5 million people lived in the GDL around 1500 (cited in Velcova, 2019, p. 176), but this figure is still debatable.

⁵⁶ This gap was in particular apparent in the devastated eastern parts of Tartar territories.

addition, the formation of the union with Poland was stimulated by the changed situation in the east of Lithuania, as the wars with Moscow of the late 15th–early 16th centuries turned into a struggle for Livonia, when it became apparent that it would be difficult for Lithuania to stand up against Moscow and therefore it needed Poland’s help. After the union of Lublin was signed, Lithuania became an integral part of a united state referred to as the Republic of the Two Nations (RTN).⁵⁷ The general prerogative of the state was the Seimas, the common foreign policy, and, since 1580, the common coin system. Regardless of its reduced sovereignty, Lithuania managed to preserve the structure of executive power, the state seal, and its own treasury, army and judicial system.

After the formation of the common state in Lithuania, Lithuanian, Ruthenian, Polish and Latin linguistic cultural models continued to coexist in the official environment.⁵⁸ Although the GDL in the early 16th century transitioned towards the use of the Polish language in the main areas of life, it should be noted that in the long run Lithuanian society managed to maintain a national outlook and self-identification.⁵⁹ In addition, the formation of a unified state was beneficial for Lithuania because Western culture penetrated through Poland and, as noted by Venclova, was not always harmful to Lithuanians. On the contrary, it brought many positive fruits, such as the baroque architecture of Vilnius, which is a wonderful piece of Lithuanian heritage (Venclova, 2018, p. 219). Table 3 presents the religions, languages and alphabets of the main ethnic groups residing in the territory of the GDL, which reveal the multicultural nature of the Lithuanian state. On the other hand, it should be noted that in the State Chancellery, the Ruthenian language was mostly used only as a technical tool.⁶⁰

Table 3. Religions, languages and alphabets of the main ethnic groups of the GDL

Ethnic groups	Religions (confessions)	Traditional written languages	Alphabets
Lithuanians	Christians (Catholics and Protestants)	Latin, Polish and Lithuanian	Latin
		Ruthenian	Cyrillic

⁵⁷ The RTN was established on the proposal of the Lithuanian delegation, and nations at that time recognized the nobles of Lithuania and Poland. Meanwhile, ordinary people in the state had no civil rights. The UNESCO International Advisory Committee (IAC) decided to add the Lublin Union Act to the International Register of World Memory. The joint application for entry of this Union into the register was submitted in May 2016 by Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine and Belarus (UNESCO Lietuvos Nacionalinė komisija, 2017).

⁵⁸ Pakštas (1968, p. 457) states that in 1572 the territory of the GDL reached about 320,000 km² and was inhabited by 1.71 million people. The territory inhabited by Lithuanians amounted to 99,000 km² with 780,000 people; Byelorussians and Ukrainians – 221,000 km² with 735,000 people. In addition, 105,000 Jewish people, 35,000 Russians, 35,000 Polish and 20,000 Tartars, Karaites, Gypsies, Germans and other nationalities lived in the country (Vaitekūnas, 2006, p. 55).

⁵⁹ The Polish historian J. H. Lasko agrees that the individual themselves has to decide on their national identity; therefore, a Lithuanian is one who has the self-interest and courage to express their Lithuanian nationality (Dąbrowski, 2011, p. 59).

⁶⁰ Ruthenian (Gudian) writing common in ancient Lithuania can be traced back to the writing traditions of Orthodox monasteries.

Ruthenians	Christians (Orthodox, Uniats, Protestants, and Catholics)	Ruthenian and Church Slavonic	Cyrillic
		Polish and Latin	Latin
Tatars	Muslims	Ruthenian and Polish	Arabic
Jews	Jews	Hebrew and Yiddish	Hebrew
Karaites	Karaites	Hebrew and Karaites	Hebrew
Russian Old Believers	Christians (Old Believers)	Church Slavonic	Cyrillic

Source: Temčinas (2009, p. 60).

The establishment of the traditions of various cultures in the Lithuanian state was significantly influenced by the Reformation of Roman Catholic Church dogmas, which started in Germany in 1517 and were based on 95 theses by Martin Luther, including a protest against corruption at the top of the Catholic Church and the need for parishioners to listen to the liturgy in their mother tongue. The new spiritual movement (Protestantism) reached Lithuania in the 1540s through the university communities of Prussia and Poland. The Reformation movement in Lithuania, whose leaders were the most influential nobles of the GDL – the well-known political figures of the state Mikalojus Radvila Juodasis (1515–1565)⁶¹ and Mikalojus Radvila Rudasis (1512–1584) – became more active at the beginning of the 1560s. At that time, evangelical Lutheran communities were operating in Vilnius (since 1552) and Kaunas (since 1558), and the first evangelical Lutheran church opened its doors in 1555 in Vilnius and in 1577 in Kaunas. At the same time, educational, health care and eldercare facilities as well as orphanages were established. It is known that not only boys, but also girls could study at Evangelical schools, and believers from other denominations were also serviced in the shelters for a symbolic fee (Vilniaus evangelikų liuteronų bažnyčia, 2011).

Lithuanian Protestants joined discussions on church reform in other countries, and were later accompanied by representatives of other confessions (Jesuits and Uniates⁶²). The Lithuanian

⁶¹ Mikołaj Krzysztof Radziwiłł the Black, attributed to the intellectuals of Renaissance, took care of intellectual and cultural progress in Lithuania, and collaborated with the leader of the Reformation in Western Europe, Calvin, and other followers. Thanks to him, the printing house was first established in the territory of the GDL. He was recognized as the most dangerous actor by the Roman Catholic Church and was therefore included in the general list of prohibited readers in the category of all works (opera omnia) (see the exhibition “The First Banned Writer in Lithuania” at M. Mažvydas Library, <http://reformacija500.lt/2017/08/29/paroda-pirmasis-uzdraustas-lietuvos-autorius-m-mazvydo-bibliotekoje/#more-2275>).

⁶² The Uniates of the GDL, who in 1596 entered into the Union of Brest with the Roman Catholic Church, from 1608 until 1827 possessed the Church of Holy Trinity in Vilnius, the Basilian Monastery, and in 1749 established the Holy Trinity Monastery in Bazilionai (Šiauliai district). Monks of the Monastery of Holy Trinity in Vilnius were organized on the example of Catholic monks, especially in close co-operation with Jesuits. In 1795, in the territory of the GDL Uniates had 30 general education schools, 95 monasteries (84 for men, 11 for women), with 14 schools for boys and a boarding school for girls. In 1827–1839 the tsarist government abolished all the Uniate monasteries and handed them over to the Orthodox, abolished the Uniate schools and dismantled ecclesiastical provinces, and Uniate monks were forced to convert to the Orthodox faith, otherwise they were threatened with exile to Siberia. At that time, the Holy Trinity Church was used as a prison, with one of the most famous prisoners being Adam Mickiewicz (15min, 2014).

Orthodox congregation was also invited to take active part in the discussion, and to develop and publish their ideas. During the aforementioned period, the tendencies of Western culture began to become more and more visible in Lithuania, which encouraged city inhabitants to speak in other languages as well. In addition to this, trade and craft centres in cities and personal freedoms and rights to property ownership acquired by urban citizens gave further impetus to the process of cultural expression.

In 1627, an active member of the Reformation in Lithuania, Duke Krzysztof Radziwiłł II (1585–1640), granted foreigners the privilege of free entry to Kėdainiai, which he owned. Thus, in the early 17th century, due to various reasons (fleeing from persecution, search for new markets, etc.), the first Scots settled in Lithuania under the privilege of Duke Krzysztof Radziwiłł II. It is known that the Scots were trying to maintain their community, but it was quite usual for wealthy Scottish merchants to marry daughters of local Calvins, and thus integrate into the social life of the city (Ragauskas, 2019).⁶³

In the times of the Reformation, there was a large Jewish community in Kėdainiai, which lived there with some limitations (e.g., they could not receive shelter in all places of the city) but played an important role in developing the city's economic life.⁶⁴ After their settlement in the city, the Jewish community had its own cemetery,⁶⁵ and in 1655 a synagogue with a hospital and a ritual bath was built in the city. The liberal approach of the authorities to other nations and the opportunity to create the necessary infrastructure formed a serious basis for the Jews to arrive in Kėdainiai. As a result, after the late 17th century their community doubled for eight consecutive decades, reaching over 120 families with 500 people. During that period, the Jewish community in Kėdainiai was known as the most prominent Jewish religious and cultural centre throughout the whole the GDL⁶⁶ (Kėdainių turizmo ir verslo informacijos centras, n.d.).

In Kėdainiai, a lot of attention was paid to education of people – e.g., a Latin gymnasium was opened where pupils learned from the textbook of the teacher Amos Kamensky, of Czech origin. There were two Calvin churches in the city and the townspeople learned Lithuanian in

⁶³ Up to 300 Scots are believed to have lived in Kėdainiai in the 17th–18th centuries, which is equal to the number of Scots in the Norwegian city of Bergen. Thus, Kėdainiai is considered to be one of the leading cities throughout the Baltic Sea and even the Scandinavian region in this respect. The Scots contributed significantly to the prosperity of Kėdainiai in the mid-17th century. Since the early 18th century, as a result of the Catholic entrenchment in Kėdainiai, epidemic, and starvation, the Scots began to retreat from the city, mainly to Klaipėda and Königsberg (Ragauskas, 2019).

⁶⁴ Kėdainiai Jews mainly relied on the production of vodka, handicrafts, trade in strong liquors in pubs and similar places, as well as money-lending practices; however, there were goldsmiths and carvers, tinsmiths and painters, tailors and representatives of other professions among the Jews (Kėdainiai, n.d.).

⁶⁵ Despite the fact that many famous people had been buried in the Jewish cemetery for centuries, this cemetery was completely abandoned in Soviet times.

⁶⁶ Even in the 18th century, after the peak of the Reformation, Kėdainiai remained an important city of tolerance in Lithuania, e.g., Elijah Ben Solomon Zalman (1720–1797) and Mosheben Simon Margolis (1710–1771) lived there for some time (Kėdainių turizmo ir verslo informacijos centras, n.d.).

elite groups (Venclova, 2018, p. 255).

Among the residents of Kėdainiai were Catholics (Lithuanians and the Polish), Evangelical Reformants (the Scottish), Evangelical Lutherans (German), Arians,⁶⁷ Judaists (Jews), and Orthodox Christians (Russians).⁶⁸ In the 17th century, according to its national identity, multilingualism, and tolerance for people of different cultures and religious confessions, Kėdainiai was one of the most multicultural cities throughout the GDL. An interesting historical fact surrounds princess Mariya (1625–1661), the daughter of Vasily Lupu, ruler of Moldova, who became the wife of the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Jonušas II Radvila. In 1652, she settled in her husband's estate in Kėdainiai and soon became known as the patron saint of Orthodox churches and monasteries (Ragauskienė, 2017, p. 634).

As Prof. A. Piročkinas notes, the Reformation opened the way for the Lithuanian written language (Stanaitienė, 2017). Although the new religious movement in Lithuania was closely associated with the development of the Lithuanian language, nationality and statehood, it lasted only around a century, as already in the first half of the 17th century a negative attitude towards the expression of national feelings had intensified in Lithuania. At that time, unlike in Central and Western Europe, where the Reformation of the church was based on the premise that it is necessary to use local (popular) languages, the Polish language had penetrated into Lithuanian and even Russian-speaking Protestants in the GDL since the beginning of the Reformation movement (Liedke, 2004). Thus, Protestantism, which laid the foundation for the development of the Lithuanian written language, later also contributed to upholding the Polish element in the state.

Although in some European countries since the onset of the Reformation movement the Catholic Church had seriously opposed the Inquisition (e.g., the torture and murder of people in England and Spain in accordance with the decisions of the Inquisition), there was no such body in the territory of the GDL, as most of the nobility had already been converted to Protestantism by that time. To fight the ideas of Martin Luther and his followers in Lithuania, the Catholic Church hierarchy in Lithuania settled representatives of the Jesuit Order in 1569. The Catholic Church, with the arrival of Jesuits to Lithuania, set itself the goal of saving the faith with the help of science and study. Through Catholic studies it was hoped to counterbalance the increasing activity of Protestant schools, as in the 16th century Lithuania had no higher educational institutions with an established Catholic world outlook. In 1570, on the initiative of the Jesuit Order, a Jesuit College was set up in Vilnius, where

⁶⁷ In the 16th century Aryans functioned in Lithuania as one of the directions of the Reformation (alongside the Evangelical Lutherans and Evangelical Reformats), but in 1562 Aryans separated from the Reformation and called themselves the Lithuanian Brothers. After 1565 they formed an independent Church (Arijonai, 2001).

⁶⁸ The settled Orthodox monks started the Russian community in the city.

following the example of other European countries the priority was given to studies in the field of humanities (Lat. *studia humaniora*), i.e. grammar, poetry and rhetoric. The first Jesuits who arrived to Vilnius from Portugal, Germany, Spain, and Masuria realized that they needed to learn Lithuanian in order to spread the Catholic faith in Lithuanian society. When the Jesuit College started its activities, in the same year, some Lithuanians became Jesuits and performed the functions of “assistants to the brothers” (Lat. *fratrescoadiutores*). From 1616–1655, in the same way as in Vilnius, the Kražiai Jesuit college, the second in Lithuania, was established, with three compulsory classes. In order to provide the right conditions for studies, both lecturers and students in each college could use library services (Ulčinaitė, 2007, pp. 46, 53, 54).

During their first ten years of settlement in Lithuania, Jesuits were well aware of the fact that people of different nationalities lived within Vilnius, Lithuania, and its neighbours, whom Jesuits could teach and enculture (Bumblauskas et. al., 2004, p. 22). Thus, due to the efforts of local noblemen and Catholic Church hierarchs as a counterbalance to the Reformation, on 1 April 1579, Vilnius Jesuit College was reorganized into Vilnius Academy and University of the Society of Jesus (Lat. *Academia et Universitas Vilnensis Societatis Jesu*), under the privilege issued by the King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania Stephen Bator. Half a year later, Pope Gregory XIII issued a papal bull confirming the reorganisation of the college into a university.⁶⁹ Vilnius University was declared the Grand School of the GDL and was guaranteed all academic freedoms, legal immunity and other privileges, with unique traditions of missionaries, poets, rhetoricians and logicians, similar to Krakow University.



Central building of Vilnius
University



University Alumni Yard

⁶⁹ In Eastern Europe, prior to Vilnius, universities were operating only in Prague, Krakow, Pecs, Budapest, Bratislava and Königsberg.



Vilnius University's St. Johns' Church

Among the privileges granted, Vilnius University was entitled to grant bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees in theology, metaphysics, physics and logic. After the opening of Vilnius University, the community promoted a culture of dialogue and dispute, but one of the most important aspects of the university's activity was its contribution to preserving the Lithuanian language, its consolidation in public life, and the publication of the first Lithuanian books.⁷⁰ On the other hand, as Prof. Kuzmickas notes, the Lithuanian language did not receive at least modest recognition in the activities of Vilnius University, and there was not a single department dedicated to the Lithuanian language. Such a linguistic situation in Lithuania was determined by the established use of the Polish language in public life, and the attitude of the Lithuanian high nobility and the clergy that the language of culture and science should be Polish, not Lithuanian (Kuzmickas, 2015).

Despite its Catholic nature, since the very beginning Vilnius University promoted dialogue, the exchange of ideas, and tolerance towards students of various confessions, and shared best practices of coexistence of different cultures, thus seeking to attract people of different confessions not only from the GDL (Lithuanians, Ruthenians, Polish) but also from abroad (Scottish, Germans, Irish, English, Swedish, Portuguese, Hungarians, etc.). Some examples include a polemical treatise – *Tren, or the Cry of the Eastern Church* – which criticised

⁷⁰ The Catholic clergy drafted important works not only from a religious but also from a linguistic point of view (M. Daukša's *Catechism*, 1595, *Postilla Catholica*, 1599; K. Sirvydas's *Polish-Latin-Lithuanian dictionary*, 1620, etc.), and laid the foundations of the Lithuanian written language.

Catholicism, published in 1610 in Vilnius by a student of Vilnius University. One of the most well-read men in Europe at that time, an Orthodox Church activist (later – a Uniate) who was born in Ukraine, was archbishop Meletius Smotrickis (**Smotryč**, 1578–1633), who also published the first Slavic grammar guide – *Grammar of the Correct Slavic Syntagmatics* – in 1619 in Vievis (Vienuolynai.lt, n.d.). M. Smotrickis' *Slavic Grammar* was reprinted in Vilnius, and soon went beyond the boundaries of the GDL. For 200 years *Slavic Grammar* was used as the basis of the science of Slavic languages. This had a huge impact on other grammars of the Russian language and was used as the basis for the development of Russian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Serbian, and other Slavic systematised grammars. In this way, the University was pursuing the Jesuit wishes expressed during the establishment of the University for tolerance towards people of different nationalities living in the neighbourhood, and the idea that it was necessary to found a university rather than a simple school was justified (Bumblauskas et al., 2004, p. 22).

A remarkable contribution to the cultural heritage of the capital of Lithuania was made by the founder of the late baroque school – architect Johann Christoph Glaubitz (born in Silesia, 1700–1767), who made Vilnius Baroque an independent trend from European Baroque. On the invitation of the Lutherans, Glaubitz settled in Vilnius in 1737 after the city was destroyed by fire and soon received orders from the Lutheran and Catholic communities for the new construction of cult buildings and the renovation of the existing ones. Glaubitz was also hired by Uniates, Orthodoxy and Jews, and the Magistrate of the City. Over time, Glaubitz undertook activities in many towns of the GDL. In essence, it can be argued that Glaubitz left the present Old Town of Vilnius for future generations.



The Basilian Gate



The Church of St. Catherine

The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul

In the capital of the GDL, Vilnius, the peaceful coexistence of traditions of various cultures, different ethnicities and religious communities evolved over the centuries. For example, one of the most famous people of the GDL, the great humanist and Russian-born public figure Francis Skorina (*Franciscus Skorina*, 1485/1490–1551), who studied in Italy, lived in Vilnius in the 16th century. There he opened a printing house and published his first books – *Apaštalas* (*The Apostle*) and *Mažoji kelionių knygutė* (*The Little Travel Book*) – which in 1525 were published in the old spoken Belarusian vernacular language. The books published by Skorina gave impetus to the publishing tradition throughout the GDL.

For the Jewish world, the capital of Lithuania was the “North Jerusalem” (*Jerušalaim de Lita*), and the city for several centuries was referred to as the Jewish Cultural Centre of Northern Europe. At that time, street names such as *Zydowska Mytnia* (17th century) and *Zydowska* (18th century) appeared in Vilnius. Vilnius was made famous by Vilniaus Gaon Ben Solomon of Zalmaneselius (ben Šlomo Zalmanelijahu, 1720–1797), who is still regarded as one of the most prominent personalities in Jewish history. Although Vilna Gaon lived an ascetic life, he wrote around 70 religious and other works.⁷¹ It is believed that due to Elijah ben Solomon Zalman, Lithuanian Jews (Litvaks) are valued for their rationality, education and knowledge of Judaism traditions (Venclova, 2018). Vilnius, along with Amsterdam,

⁷¹ When the Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu visited Vilnius in February 2019, he proposed to move the grave of Vilna Gaon (the word *gaon* means genius) to Jerusalem, but due to its special significance for Lithuania, it was decided to leave the grave of Gaon in Vilnius. At the same time, in Lithuania, to commemorate the 300th anniversary of his birth, the Lithuanian Seimas adopted a resolution to proclaim 2020 to be the year of the Grand Lithuanian Rabbi Gaon in Vilnius.

London, Warsaw, Lviv, Thessaloniki, Istanbul, Tunisia, and Baghdad, was justifiably regarded as the top among ten Jewish international cultural centres in the late 18th and early 19th centuries (Eidintas et al., 2013).

At the same time, Orthodox schools were established at monasteries to provide religious studies, one of them situated in Vilnius. The Uniate religious community also took care of education, e.g., in Vilnius, the Uniate had a priesthood seminary funded by the Pope.

In 1697, after the so-called law on equalization of rights (Lat. *coaequatio iurium*), was adopted, the Russian language, which was used as the written language of Lithuania, was replaced by Polish, which had a huge impact on the development of the country's society. First of all, the aristocracy and middle-class nobility were influenced in the direction of polonocentrism (Sliesoriūnas, 1997).⁷² At the same time, loanwords from Polish (polonisms) were introduced into the Lithuanian language. Lithuanians took over such words as *papier* (paper), *cappuccino* (hood), *herbata* (tea) and many more from Polish. It is believed that the number of loanwords from Polish could have amounted to several hundred; however, the spread of this language was influenced by the poor standardization of the Lithuanian language, insufficient vocabulary, and the use of several dialects. In addition, one of the reasons for the expansion of the Polish language might have been the desire of the Lithuanian nobility to consider themselves representatives of a larger "family", such as the Polish nobility. Over time, communication in the Lithuanian language continued to decline (Venclova, 2018, pp. 201, 289). On the other hand, due to the great efforts of prominent Lithuanian humanists and writers such as Mikalojus Daukša (1527/1538–1613), Konstantinas Sirvydas (1579–1631) and others, such currently used words as *amžinybė* (eternity), *įstatymas* (law), *kareivis* (soldier), *laisvė* (freedom), *mokytojas* (teacher), *nuodėmė* (sin), *pranašas* (prophet), *taisyklė* (rule), *tarnas* (servant), *valanda* (hour), *viltis* (hope), *virtuvė* (kitchen) were added to the Lithuania lexicon (Venclova, 2018, p. 290).

Despite the fact that the development of the Polish element in the Lithuanian society was promoted by the integration processes in public life, new trends in language development did not engage the larger layers of lower-class nobility and most of the peasants in this process. In addition, it is known that for a long time Lithuanian retained the status of a spoken language in the old ethnic territory and was also used in state affairs (Venclova, 2018, pp. 201, 219). Due to the introduction of the Polish language into public discourse, by the beginning of the 19th century many dwellers of Lithuanian cities and towns spoke Polish, although they may have been Lithuanian by origin.⁷³ As Baranauskas (2012) notes, culturally in the late 18th

⁷² Such a historical interpretation of the RTN is also supported by the well-known representatives of Polish culture J. Giedroyc and J. Mieroszewski (see Stankevič, 2012, p. 880).

⁷³ Although almost all Lithuanian nobility spoke only Polish, most of them considered themselves Lithuanian and represented

century, Lithuania looked like a Polish province. Any major issue with somewhat important individuals could be discussed only in the Polish language. Lithuanian-speaking Lithuania came to the brink of extinction. The cultural transformation of the country was especially noticeable in eastern Lithuania, in the Kėdainiai and Kaunas areas (Baranauskas, 2012). It should be noted that not all specialists supported the fact of forced polonization of the Lithuanian society. According to Prof. A. Bumblauskas, the Polish language was legalized by demands of the Lithuanian nobility itself, it was the choice of the Lithuanian society, not polonization. Formation of the Lithuanian written language therefore naturally became stagnant (Eidintas et al., 2013, p. 75).

It should be noted at this point that the Lithuanian society was almost illiterate, and even the nobility were poorly educated, because education, as noted by Šapoka (1988, p. 400), was more based on ancient wisdom, which was completely unsuitable for life. In such an environment, the religious dependence of the people and the common historical past were first and foremost seen as part of co-existence, thus the spread of the Polish language among Lithuanians was natural and non-coercive.

On 3 May 1791, the Sejm of Poland and Lithuania, after several years of deliberations, approved the constitution of the united state, written in accordance with the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen adopted during the French Revolution (1789). This was the first in Europe and the second in the world after the written constitution of the USA of 1783. For the first time, the nation was recognized not only as noblemen but also as citizens with civil rights, and the state was announced to be obliged to provide assistance to peasants in their relations with nobles. As city dwellers became part of the nation, they became equal to the nobles and eligible to perform administrative, judicial and military duties, and through their delegates were able to actively engage in the establishment of the new governance regime. Under the Constitution, Catholicism was declared the state religion and all religious confessions in the RTN were guaranteed freedom of religion. At that time, 74 towns in the territory administered by Lithuania received municipal rights and coats of arms (Venclova, 2018, p. 306). Constitutional reforms created conditions for the social and political development of society in Lithuania, meanwhile providing new opportunities for the Lithuanian ethnic culture. Although the Constitution of 3 May received considerable resistance among the Lithuanian nobility, as Venclova points out, the Lithuanian-speaking culture found a new space and possibilities to develop (p. 308). For instance, the constitution of 1791 was also translated into the Lithuanian language (Eidintas et al., 2013, p. 94). The statehood of Lithuania did not disappear, as there had to be the same number of ministers

and officials both in Poland and Lithuania, and the treasury of Lithuania remained under its own control; therefore, it can be said that relations between Lithuania and Poland developed on an equal basis.

The First Lithuanian Statute (1529)⁷⁴ played an important role in the process of democracy and tolerance towards multi-ethnicity, as in the wake of the waves of reformation in Europe the Statute as a legal act was devoted not only to Catholics but also to the orthodox nobility. The national identity and religion of non-Christian communities (Jews, Karaites and Tatars) were tolerated in accordance with the privileges granted in the late 14th century by the grand dukes, and therefore equal rights recognized under the Statute were not directly allocated to them by the Constitution. However, with the adoption of the Constitution, the Jewish community experienced difficulties as it could not enjoy the rights and privileges of the townspeople, thus they did not become citizens.

As Russia, Prussia and Austro-Hungary conducted aggressive foreign policy towards neighbouring countries in the 18th century, the GDL saw its last century of existence on the European political map and suffered the loss of statehood. GDL formally ceased to exist after the Constitution of the RTN was adopted in 1791, whereas in practice it dissolved in 1795, when the RTN was eventually partitioned by the neighbouring powers of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, following suppression of the uprising of national liberation in 1794, also referred to by the people as General Tadas Kosciuskan.⁷⁵ The most important document of Lithuanian rebels lead by General J. Jasinskis was the Act of Rebellion of the Lithuanian Nation proclaimed in Vilnius on 24 April 1794, which declared peasants' right to individual freedom among other goals. Undoubtedly, the recognition of the peasants of Lithuania as free people under the act was another important step in the further development of the concept of multiculturalism in the state. Rebels published proclamations and political poems in Polish and Lithuanian, thus seeking to awaken people's national self-awareness (Čižiūnas, 2015, pp. 36–41). Jews and Tartars participated in the uprising of 1794 together with the Poles and Lithuanians, which is regarded as one of the signs of mature statehood.

Summing up the preconditions for the co-existence of different cultures during the period of the establishment and formation of Lithuania, we can clearly see that this historical period was the most favourable for the process of development of multi-ethnic tolerance and multiculturalism. Starting from the establishment of the Lithuanian state in the 11th

⁷⁴ In total, from 1529 to 1840 in Lithuania there were three sets of legal documents, created in 1529, 1566 and 1588, that laid the foundations of the country's legal system.

⁷⁵ A GDL citizen, General Tadeusz Kościuszko, was active until 1794 in the US Independence struggles, was nominated as the leader of the RTN rebellion. The rebellion covered a larger territory of the RTN, however, the Russian and Prussian troops suppressed the uprising, and Kościuszko was captured and detained for two years in Petropavlovsk Prison (Russia). He then went to the USA, later to France, and finally to Switzerland, where he died in 1817.

century, the inhabitants of the state had to encounter other lesser-known nations, languages, religions and cultures, and seek ways to coexist with them in order to create a successful state. The Grand Dukes of Lithuania played a very important role in this process, as they guaranteed freedoms of trade, conscience and religion to foreigners. Grand Duke of Lithuania Gediminas was the first to open the doors to the development of a multicultural society and realized that competent traders, craftsmen, and farmers from other countries could create additional economic and political value to the state. In the process of expanding the territory of Lithuania, under the rule of Gediminas, there was a need for tolerance towards people of different faiths. Gediminas expressed his desire to establish the Catholic Archdiocese, while at the same time creating an Orthodox metropolis. After the Grand Dukes of Lithuania Jogaila and Vytautas baptized Lithuania, which prior to that was dominated by cultural isolation, it started developing in the direction of Europeanization. Vytautas the Great, in essence, continued the policy pursued by Gediminas. During his rule Lithuania granted refuge to Jews (Ashkenazis) who fled from persecution during the period of the Crusades, giving them numerous privileges, including personal and religious freedoms. Privileges were granted to representatives of other nations as well, such as the Tartars, Karaites, and Roma, which enabled these nations to integrate into the new environment. After the establishment of closer relations with Poland, the country experienced cultural transformation in the direction of Polonization.

1.3.3. Lithuanian multiculturalism during the rule of the Russian Empire (1795–1918)

In 1795, after the third partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth between Russia, Prussia and Austro-Hungary, Lithuania fell under the rule of the Russian Empire,⁷⁶ and on the basis of the Russian administrative division, the country's territory was divided into two, and later into three provinces. Although the new authorities did not abolish local self-government, the legal order of Russia was introduced everywhere.⁷⁷ After the Napoleonic wars, under the Slavophil idea that the lands of the GDL had always been under the influence of the Russian culture, the Polish language used prior to that was replaced by the Russian language. The Russian language had to become the language to be used at schools as well; however, the efforts of the new government to establish Russian-teaching schools were not

⁷⁶ One of the main arguments that Lithuania should not exist was the public attitude of the Russian Tsarina government that the state of Lithuania used to be purely Russian and therefore had to belong to the tsars as the rulers of all Russia (Šapoka, 1988, p. 475).

⁷⁷ In fact, after the death of the Tsarina Ekaterina II in 1796, her successor, Pavel I, returned the old Statute to Lithuania, which functioned until 1840.

successful, as there were only a few Russian-teaching schools in Lithuania in the early 19th century. As Šapoka (1988, p. 455) notes, despite the efforts of the Russian government, until the very beginning of the intense Russification after the uprising of 1863, Russian schools in Lithuania had no greater significance.

The nobility of Lithuania did not accept the loss of the former GDL, and therefore made every possible effort to restore it, especially during the Napoleonic Wars and the uprisings of 1830–1831 and 1863–1864. Participants of the rebellion, who were people of diverse nations (Poles, Lithuanians, Byelorussians, Jewish, Tatars, and Karaites) and of different social strata – nobles, peasants, Catholic clergy, city dwellers, liberal-minded students – claimed the restoration of the RTN and the abolition of serfdom.⁷⁸

Not only Poles and Lithuanians participated in the rebellion, but also Byelorussians, Jews, Tartars and Karaites. There were many reasons for such a resistance being composed of different ethnic groups. For example, the tsarist government did not recognize the Byelorussians as an independent nation; therefore, it made efforts to assimilate them, expropriated the property of the Uniate church and transferred it to the Orthodox, and finally banned the mentioning of the name of Belarus and named the region as the Northwest region of the Russian Empire. Although Tartars (at least the nobility) enjoyed more privileges than other national communities, they fought the Russian army in battles (Vaitekūnas, 2006, pp. 347, 366).

The tsarist administration soon noticed the emerging threat to the whole empire; therefore, the official use of the name of Lithuania after the uprising of 1831 was forbidden – it, as well as Gudia, was replaced by the name “Northwest Territory” or simply “Western Russia”, and the lands of the GDL were officially considered as originally Russian lands (Eidintas et al., 2013, pp. 106, 113). In 1832, Vilnius University was closed down, which had a huge negative impact on Vilnius as a centre of science and culture at the European level.⁷⁹ During the 19th century the Russian authorities organized the publication of several dozen different official and private Russian-language newspapers and magazines, thus seeking to expand the use of the Russian language within Lithuanian society (Bulotas, 1992). Therefore, participants of both rebellions were united by resistance to the Russification of society, the idea of the preservation of national identity, and the church. In addition, prayer books were written in Russian scripts (Cyrillic), which allegedly sought to remedy the damage done by Lithuanians to the Russian people over five centuries. At the same time in 1864, the tsarist government banned the Lithuanian press from printing in Latin characters. Lithuanian publications were

⁷⁸ The rebellion in Lithuania began in spring of 1831.

⁷⁹ Currently, Vilnius University is a signatory of the Magna Carta of European Universities, belongs to the European University Alliance ARQUS, and participates in international university associations.

not allowed to be printed nor distributed, thus learning to read and write in Lithuanian was done in secret so that the tsarist repressive apparatus (gendarmes, police) and administrative bodies would not notice it.⁸⁰ If publications in Lithuanian were found, this was considered smuggling and everyone related risked being punished. Therefore, the tsarist authorities wanted to transform the country's cultural identity and attitude.⁸¹ Despite the fact that the Tsar's governors persistently persecuted, imprisoned and exiled people, as a response to the prohibitions imposed by the tsarist authorities the book smugglers' movement,⁸² which is characteristic of Lithuania only, was created. Book smugglers illegally brought into Lithuania publications printed in East Prussia which were distributed by almost 6,000 book smugglers in the lands of Lithuania. Upon arrest and conviction, book smugglers were sent to exile in Siberia and confined for a period from one to five years (Kaluškevičius & Misius, 2004).

In the aforementioned period, the national cultural movement of ethnic Lithuanians began. The opposition to the Russification of the society used the power of the word – during 1834–1840 they published the newspaper *Kurier Litewski* in the Polish language, and published a separate supplement in the Russian language with the name *Litovskij vestnik*.⁸³ In addition, in 1862–1863 in Lithuania the word of the rebels was disseminated in the Belarusian language newspaper *Muzyckaja prauda* (Bulotas, 1992). In the aforementioned period, the national cultural movement of ethnical Lithuanians began. In 1864, rebels published several issues of the newspaper *Žinia apie Lenkų vainą su Maskoliais* in Lithuanian (Bulotas 1992. p. 23-38).

After the suppression of the 1831 rebellion, the tsarist government altered its official position with respect to the Catholic Church, presented accusations towards the latter of supporting the insurgents, closed numerous Catholic churches and monasteries, and took away its land. In 1839, after the Uniate Church was liquidated, Uniates were forcibly returned to the Russian Orthodox Church (Eidintas et al., 2013, pp. 106, 113). In this way, from 1832 to 1893, 46 Catholic monasteries were closed down; however, the total number of monasteries which were closed in Lithuania prior to that including Jesuits and Uniates reached 352. By all these measures, the tsarist authorities aimed to increase the dominance of the Russian Orthodox Church in Lithuania and use it as an instrument for the Russification of the society,

⁸⁰ The ban of Lithuanian press lasted 40 years until 1904, when the Lithuanian press in Latin letters was treated in the same way as other publications.

⁸¹ As Vaitekūnas (2006, p. 90) notes, such imperial efforts were determined by the desire to speed up the process of Russification of the Baltic nations, to integrate them economically and culturally and to make them a permanent part of the Russian Empire.

⁸² In 2004, UNESCO evaluated book-smuggling in Lithuania as a world-wide unique practice of transportation of press (Is-torija, 2013). Book smugglers had to hide the press in firewood, hay, and even coffins.

⁸³ The first newspaper in Lithuania was *Kurier Litewski* (1760–1763); its release ceased after the second division of Poland and Lithuania (Bulotas, 1992).

by establishing 100 new Orthodox churches (Krasauskas, 1968, p. 143). By decision of the tsarist government, in 1840 the Statute of Lithuania ceased to exist, the legal system and the judicial system was replaced by that of the Russian Empire, and small towns lost the self-government which had been guaranteed by the Statute of Lithuania. The tsarist government did the same with the Jewish community (*kahal*), which, by 1840 had enjoyed the right of self-government – later, the Jews were banned from engaging in agriculture, and restrictions on settlement were introduced.⁸⁴ Throughout the entire period of the rule of the Russian Empire, exceptions were made only to Jews who changed their traditional religion to Orthodoxy, as well as to merchants of the first guild (Gribowski, 1912, p. 40, as cited in Vaitekūnas, 2006, p. 332).

In addition, representatives of the authorities, repressive organs, officers and landowners, and even ordinary citizens of Russia were settled in Lithuania from various territories of the Russian Empire, many of whom were supposed to accelerate the loss of the national identity of the local population of Lithuania. Prof. Vaitekūnas (2006, p. 87) presents the following demographic structure of the population in the 19th century: out of 154,500 residents in Vilnius, arrivals from different parts of the Russian Empire made up 52.8 percent; more than 70,900 arrivals settled in Kaunas and made up 63.1 percent of local population.

In 1861, after the abolition of serfdom in Russia, peasants were also freed from serfdom in Lithuania, and this layer of society became conditionally free people. The second half of the 19th century was marked by the emergence of industry, communication networks and other businesses, which encouraged the movement of peasants from rural areas to cities. Therefore, when peasants started to move to cities, they brought features of the cultural life traditionally characteristic of Lithuanians. This process was accelerated by the emergence of scientific and teaching centres in the Lithuanian language, which facilitated the formation of the new generation of educated Lithuanian people in the cities and the expansion of the use of the Lithuanian language in various spheres of life.

Thus, the abolition of serfdom in Russia gave rise to a genuine change in Lithuanian society, with a distinguished level of national intelligentsia. For example, Jonas Basanavičius (1851–1927), a doctor and a scientist, edited such a prominent paper as *Aušra* (*Auszra*, 1883–1886), which was the first professional monthly political journal published in East Prussia (Ragainė and Tilžė) and focused on politics, literature and Lithuanian history. The magazine was dedicated to readers of Czarist Lithuania and to those Russian cities where Lithuanian intellectuals lived. More than 70 authors co-operated with the publication, and its circulation

⁸⁴ The Jewish community experienced Russian vandalism on 24 July 1794, when after the Russian Army occupied Vilnius, Jewish assets were expropriated, three houses of worship were burned down, and hundreds of people were killed (Vaitekūnas, 2006, p. 330).

reached 1,000 copies (Bulotas 1992. pp. 23–38). In 1889, the journal *Varpas* (1889–1905), which was published and edited by doctor and publicist Vincas Kudirka, promoted ideas of freedom and democracy, criticised the tsarist authorities, and facilitated the formation of the common Lithuanian literary language (1889–1905). From 1890 to 1905, the newspaper *Ūkininkas* (*The Farmer*) was published, and from 1901 to 1903 the popular newspaper *Naujienos* (*The News*). In 1904, the first Lithuanian liberal daily newspaper *Vilniaus žinios* (*Vilnius News*) appeared in Vilnius and circulated until 1909. In total, during 1865–1904, about 130 Lithuanian periodicals were printed in Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, Byelorussian and Hebrew. Vilnius was the main Lithuanian publishing centre until World War I. Thus, in 1912 there were 23 Lithuanian periodicals in Vilnius (Bulotas, 1992).

On the other hand, as Baranauskas (2012) notes, the emergence of Lithuanian-speaking Lithuania was an unpleasant surprise for the Polish part of the Lithuanian nobility. The Lithuanian press reinforced the distrust of Lithuanians who rejected the Polish language; the Polonised regions of Lithuania began a struggle for the Lithuanian or Polish masses, which sometimes even resulted in fights in churches. Supporters of Polonised Lithuania were not willing to surrender easily, despite the fact that they no longer had the prospect of prevailing in the major ethnic regions of Lithuania. The concept of the unity of the two nations had already disappeared from the majority of pragmatic minds in Lithuania. At that time, the idea of the RTN was ultimately discarded in the minds of many pragmatically minded Polonised Lithuanians. The time for choosing Polish, Lithuanian, or Byelorussian nationality came (Baranauskas, 2012). As a consequence, the brightest Lithuanian thinkers, who formed the concept of contemporary Lithuania, encountered a great problem – in the south-eastern parts of ethnic Lithuania in the early 20th century, the Lithuanian language was superseded by the Polish and Byelorussian languages. In fact, part of the aristocracy in the Polonised regions of Lithuania viewed themselves as “Litvinai” or “Old Lithuanians”; however, the great majority integrated into Polish culture and considered Lithuania a constituent part of Poland (Eidintas et al., 2013, p. 16).

In Lithuania during the 20th century, only around 15 percent of people lived in cities: 162,500 in Vilnius; 71,000 in Kaunas, half of whom were Jews (Žukauskienė, 2014, p. 201); 16,000 in Šiauliai; and 15,000 in Panevėžys (Rubavičius, 2013, p. 113). Although in the smaller towns Lithuanians made up 66.4 percent of the population at that time, in general in cities Lithuanians slightly exceeded 57 percent (p. 116). However, this period is characterised by the transition from rural communities with closed cultural expression to a more urban open-type culture, which was already characterised by the development of national culture on the basis of multiculturalism.

Summarizing the preconditions for the development of a multicultural environment in the period when the Lithuanian state was part of the Russian Empire, it is notable that an intensive process of Russification of society began, which included prohibitions on the Lithuanian press and even the use of the name of Lithuania. This process also affected the freedoms of religion, as many Catholic churches and monasteries were closed down. Not only Lithuanian towns, but also the Jewish community was deprived of the rights of self-government. Nevertheless, the tsarist authorities failed to completely transform the cultural and ethnic identity of the nation. After the abolition of serfdom, Lithuanian society was transformed as to have a distinct layer of national intelligentsia which published works in the Lithuanian language, promoted ideas of liberal democracy and criticized the tsarist regime.

1.3.4. Expression of various cultures in Lithuania during the Inter-War Period (1918–1940)

World War I (28 July 1914–11 November 1918) and its outcomes resulted in a major change in the geopolitical situation in Europe, which created favourable conditions for Lithuanians to regain the independence lost in 1795. On 18–22 September 1917, a conference of Lithuanians was held in Vilnius, during which a decision was made to analyse the issues of announcement of the statehood of Lithuania. The preparation of the conference aimed to ensure the participation of representatives of all strata, currents and parties, but only Lithuanians, or those who attributed themselves to Lithuanians, could participate. One of the major issues to be addressed at the conference was to safeguard cultural rights for all ethnic minorities living in a newly re-established state. On 16 February 1918, the Act of Lithuanian Independence⁸⁵ was adopted in Vilnius. Since the very beginning of the restoration of the state, the Lithuanian authorities faced serious challenges. These lay in resolving issues of the formation of state institutions, agricultural reform and the restoration of other forms of economic activity, identification of the structure of the population and protection of their property, issues of public literacy, ensuring territorial integrity, establishing international relations, and many others. On 2 November 1918, the Provisional Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania was adopted on the example of Western countries. Article 22 of this Constitution states that all State citizens, regardless of their sex, nationality, religion, and social position, are equal before the law; there are no privileges for social positions. On the other hand, at the initial stage of existence of the independent Lithuania and during the entire interwar period, the situation of Lithuanians and national minorities was marked not only by the revival of the

⁸⁵ The original draft of the February 16th Act of Independence of Lithuania with the signatures of signatories was found on 29 March 2017 in the political archive of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Berlin.

historical and cultural heritage of the GDL, but also by the effects of the rule of the Russian Empire over 120 years (1795–1914), as well as the consequences of World War I (1914–1918). Despite the fact that in Lithuania people of different ethnicities lived for several centuries, in the long run favourable conditions for the use of the Polish language in state institutions of the GDL were formed. As a result, at the beginning of the 19th century, cities were dominated by Polish (Kiaupa, 2007, p. 38). As a result of coercive measures of the czarist government in the 19th and 20th centuries, the Russian language was also widely used in all spheres of life.

Rural people who lived in the ethnographic territories of Lithuania preserved the Lithuanian language; therefore, these Lithuanian inhabitants were traditionally oriented towards the so-called rural culture, with features of a folk mentality. The use of the Lithuanian language in the everyday lives of rural people helped to maintain the traditions of the nation that had been formed over the centuries. Nevertheless, the orientation of rural communities towards the expression of the national identity of their own area, or even of the national identity of the region, concealed serious problems of cultural isolation, which at the same time made it more difficult to communicate and cooperate with other ethnic groups in Lithuania. Prof. V. Rubavičius (2014, p. 47), in his evaluation of the Lithuanian society during that period, notes that the people of Lithuania were not fully capable of becoming consumers of civilizational goods associated with the press and the dissemination of cultural events. In order to escape this situation, since the proclamation of Lithuania's independence, the above-mentioned problems were raised by nationally-oriented intellectuals who submitted proposals to the government to open a Lithuanian university oriented towards democratic values prevalent in Europe and to establish a network of higher education in the state. On this basis, the first institution of higher education named University of Lithuania began its work on 24 March 1922 in Kaunas.⁸⁶

After the permanent Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania was adopted on 1 August 1922, proper care for the labour and dignity of people was ensured. The new Constitution paid special attention to securing specific rights of national minorities. Thus, Article 73, within the legal framework, guaranteed national minorities the right to autonomously manage their national cultural affairs – education, charity, mutual assistance – and to elect representative bodies in accordance with the procedure prescribed by law to organize these matters, whereas Article 74 of the Constitution secured the right to use state and municipal support provided for education and charity. On this basis, the Department of Semitic Languages was established at the University of Lithuania in Kaunas. The Department soon became a cultural hub for various Jewish organisations and developed publishing activities

⁸⁶ Marking the 500th anniversary of the death of the Grand Duke of Lithuania Vytautas the Great in 1930, the Lithuanian university was granted the title Vytautas Magnus University (VMU).

of a wide range of books and periodicals. Article 6 of the 1922 Constitution legalized the use of local languages alongside the state Lithuanian language. At that time, there were ministers (without portfolios) for Jewish and Byelorussian affairs in the government. Moreover, in the interwar period, representatives of various ethnic groups were involved in the government process; for example, Jews participated in the work of the Lithuanian Parliament (Seimas) either as a faction (from 3 to 7 members) or within a coalition with the Polish. The situation was similar in self-government; for example, for a long time Jews comprised between 22 and 33 percent of the total number of deputies in the Council of Kaunas, which was the capital at that time (Urbaitytė, 2007).

In 1929, 165 newspapers and magazines, including periodical scientific and statistical publications and various newsletters, were published in Lithuania (excluding the Vilnius region, which belonged to Poland at that time). They were published in other languages, as well: 136 newspapers were in Lithuanian, 13 – in German, 6 – in Polish, 3 – in Russian, 6 – in Jewish, 1 – in Esperanto. In 1930, with the increase of Lithuanian newspapers, the total number of periodicals grew to 172 (Bulotas 1992. pp. 23–38).

Various national minorities made unrestricted use of the rights guaranteed by the Constitution for almost two decades. The largest national minority in the interwar period was Jews; therefore, in the interwar period there was a Jewish cultural centre functioning in the provisional capital, six gymnasiums which taught in Hebrew or Yiddish (including one in Lithuanian), primary schools, children's homes and kindergartens, charities, health care organisations, Jewish banks, gyms and a stadium of the sports union Makabi, an active Rabbinical union, meetings of Kahal representatives, etc. The interwar period was a period of active religious life for the Jewish community – at that time, 50 synagogues were operating in various Lithuanian cities and towns. Close contacts with compatriots living in other countries, including a number of famous personalities, were established. Before World War I in Kaunas there was a Jewish newspaper published in Russian, meanwhile in 1918–1940 six Jewish daily newspapers were circulated in Kaunas, e.g., *Idi Di Idiše Štime* (*The Voice of the Jews*) (1918–1940), *Folksblat* (*The National Newspaper*, 1929–1940), etc., and some of these had separate evening publications. In addition to the aforementioned daily newspapers, various weekly and monthly newspapers and magazines for family, leisure, etc., were published in the Hebrew language.

Representatives of the youngest Jewish generation of Kaunas in the inter-war period,

such as artist and sculptor Nechemija Arbitblatas,⁸⁷ philosopher Emmanuel Levinas,⁸⁸ and poet Lea Goldberg,⁸⁹ were widely acknowledged all over the world. In Utena, a small town in Lithuania, in 1921 famous cardiologist Baruch Lac (Bernard Lown, n.d.) was born. Before the war he left for the United States with his parents, and in 1985 became a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, was renowned as one of the leaders in the movement International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (<http://www.ippnw.org/milestones.html>), and was a member of many other international organisations.

As specialist on the Jewish community in Lithuania Dr. J. Verbickienė (Delfi, 2014b) observes, during the interwar period the Jewish community was interested in representing itself as useful to Lithuanian society, as living here for a long time, and as identifying their future with Lithuania.

Russians who lived in Kaunas (a large part of them were Old Believers) also created charity, cultural and educational associations, and had primary schools and a private gymnasium. In addition, a significant contribution to the well-being of Kaunas and the whole country was made by famous Russian intellectuals who emigrated to Lithuania from Soviet Russia, such as a philosopher and professor of University of Kaunas Leo Karsavin,⁹⁰ historian Ivan Lappo, painter Mstislav Dobuzhinsky, educator Aleksandr Timinskis, etc., who after emigration from Soviet Russia related their lives with Lithuania. Most of the well-known foreigners of that time were honoured for their merits in Lithuania with high state awards.

However, it must be acknowledged that the role of ethnic communities was important to the revived country, and important steps were taken towards the preservation of their historical and cultural heritage, but not all national communities were given equal attention. For example, A. Naudžiūnienė (2014, p. 88) presents information that, during that period, textbooks on history, geography and ethnography paid more attention to larger national communities (Jews, Poles, Russians) in comparison with illiterate and often poor ethnic groups (e.g., Karaites). The author also presents the number of times national communities were mentioned in textbooks: Jews were mentioned 15 times, Poles were mentioned 14

⁸⁷ Nicolai Arbitblatas, a world renowned portraitist, who all his life introduced himself as a Lithuanian, created his works in the same studio with Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse. In 1932, Arbitblatas established the first private art gallery in the Baltic States in Kaunas. His works are exhibited in the museums of modern art in Paris and New York, as well as in the museums of Lausanne, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and other museums around the world (Meškauskaitė, 2013).

⁸⁸ Emmanuel Levinas was recognized for publishing the book *Totality and Infinity*. In 1961, he became an honorary professor of the Sorbonne University.

⁸⁹ L. Goldberg, next to many literary prizes, in the 1970s was awarded one of the most prestigious state awards of Israel, the Israel Award, and is recognized as a classic of Jewish literature.

⁹⁰ Prof. L. Karsavin was deported from Soviet Russia without the right to return for his opposition to Bolshevism in the summer of 1922 together with other Russian intellectuals. He came to Lithuania in 1927. In 1940–1949 he lived in Vilnius, and for a long time he was a professor at Vilnius University. He spoke out against Stalinism in public. In 1949 he was arrested by Soviet security service and in 1950 was imprisoned in the Abeze camp (Komi, Russia), where he died on 20 July 1952.

times, Germans and Tatars – 13, Byelorussians and Russians – 12, whereas Karaites – only twice (Naudžiūnienė, 2014, p. 89). The reasons for this might be various, but the analysis of the stereotypes that were widespread among part of the Lithuanian society of the interwar period reveals that the majority of Lithuanians believed that Jews were oriented towards money, Poles – towards appropriation of Lithuania, Russians – uncivilized, and Germans – arrogant (p. 93).⁹¹ On the other hand, it is possible to find a different opinion towards minorities of Lithuania in literature; e.g., in the 1938 geography textbook, it is noted that the people of other nations are interested in living together, most of them know Lithuanian, and have become very close to Lithuania (Šinkūnas, 1938, p. 33, as cited in Naudžiūnienė, 2014, p. 93) or that Russians are open, sensitive and sincere (Baronienė, 1937, p. 83, as cited in Naudžiūnienė, 2014, p. 97), or that the Polish have an agile mind and cheerful disposition (Baronienė, 1937, p. 82, as cited in Naudžiūnienė, 2014, p. 97). The Karaites evaluate that era differently: for six centuries in Lithuania Karaites were able to preserve their native language, which belongs to the Turkic language family, and the Trakai community was very lively in the interwar period; the Karaite language sounded in every house, street, and *kenesa*, and a school of the Karaim language was functioning and amateur theatre performances were held (Kobeckaitė, 2014, p. 155). It can also be noted that by 1940, 150 Karaites lived in Panevėžys and developed their cultural activities by organizing performances and publishing the magazine *Onarmach* (*Progress*). *Kenesa*, in Panevėžys, was in the centre of this culture, and the government allocated 2,400 Litas for its reconstruction (Voruta, 2010).

Tatars evaluate that period in a similar way. According to the rights and freedoms established by the Constitution, Tatars were able to choose both civil procedures or religious marriages for wedding ceremonies. Often, Tatars, while adhering to their traditions, combined them with the Christian customs of the local people (Kručinskis, as cited in Lukoševičiūtė, 2014, p. 181). In the interwar period, the Lithuanian Tatar community embraced three Muslim parishes, and a new mosque was built in Kaunas in 1930.

According to the data of the first census in 1923, almost 2.03 million people lived in the re-established state. The majority of the population were Lithuanians (83.9 percent), Jews made up 7.6%, Poles – 3.2%, Russians – 2.5%, Germans – 1.4%, and Latvians – 0.7%; however, the national composition of the urban population was fundamentally different. For example, in the provisional capital of Lithuania, Kaunas, out of 92,500 residents the Lithuanian community amounted to 54,500 (58.9%), Jewish – 25,000 (27%), other nationalities (Polish, German, Russian, etc.) – 13,000 (14.1%). At the time of the census, the most Lithuanian city was Šiauliai, with 21,000 residents, out of which Lithuanians comprised about 15,000 (71.4%)

⁹¹ A. Naudžiūnienė (2014) believes that the stereotypes present in the interwar textbooks still exist today (p. 93).

and the Jewish community – 5,500, or every fourth inhabitant of the city. In Panevėžys, out of 19,000 residents Lithuanians comprised slightly more than 10,000 (52.6%), and the Jewish community was almost equal to 7,700, or 36.8% (*Lietuvos gyventojai*, 1926). Unfortunately, many cities did not have an initial focus on the formation of developed industry; therefore, rural residents were not encouraged to move to cities. Some authors point out that at the beginning of the 1930s, peasants in Lithuania, because of their low diligence, remained in agriculture, as they had long been used to having very little, and because cities did not have enough jobs (Pakštas, 1991, p. 42). The national structure of the urban population was greatly determined by the poor literacy of Lithuanians – every third person over the age of 10 years was illiterate (p. 42), and so it also made little sense for rural people to change their place of residence by moving to cities and gaining new professional skills and wider social experience there.

Low literacy and willingness to stay in agriculture (as recently as 1939, even 77% of all employed people were engaged in agriculture (Vaitiekūnas, 2006, p. 130) led to the fact that Lithuania had long been a typical agrarian country and a poorly urbanized state. The data of the first census show that the development of the Lithuanian national element as the main national community was quite chaotic and even problematic; therefore, education had to become a priority of the state policy – as Rubavičius (2013, p. 117) observed, it was important for Lithuania to establish universal literacy.

President of Lithuania Smetona (1874–1944), in his book *A. Smetonos pasakyta parašyta* (As A. Smetona Said and Wrote), clearly defined the position of the state – that in Lithuania, national minorities are not alien, but they are citizens; not foreigners, but people of other nations (Smetona, 1992, p. 329), thus entrenching in the state the important position of multicultural heritage that had developed over the centuries: that all Lithuanian people, albeit different, are not alien. This otherness in the interwar period is manifested through the use of the mother tongue of the national communities and the fostering of their cultural identity. In fact, after regaining the Vilnius region on 10 October 1939, it was possible to hear different opinions among Lithuanian society about Polish people who lived in this country. For example, Prime Minister A. Merkys, after statements in the press in 1939 that the Poles had to go back to where they arrived from, also supported similar ideas because, in his opinion, the Poles of the Vilnius region were “aliens” and therefore they had nothing in common with neither Lithuania nor the Lithuanian nation (Pocevičius, 2018, pp. 31–32). As a result, prior to the Soviet Union invasion of Lithuania on 14 June 1940, 5,200 Poles and Jews of the Vilnius region were transferred to other areas of Lithuania (pp. 31–32). On the other hand, the transfer of foreign nationals who lived in Lithuania to another residential area was

an isolated episode in the history of the state.

As we can see, the interwar period in Lithuanian state politics can be reasonably evaluated as having obvious signs of a society that represents different cultures and provides for the active involvement of ethnic groups in the life of the state. All in all, the overview of the centuries-long co-existence of different ethnic groups with Lithuanians reveals that, during this period, the multicultural image of the Lithuanian was melded with and shaded by the colours of national communities including the possibility to freely use their native language and observe national customs, draw up educational programs that meet their national needs, etc. Other nations in Lithuania could freely enjoy the political and civil freedoms and rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, while ethnic groups were legally attributed to traditional ethnic groups of Lithuania.

From the late 1940s, the development of Lithuania was marked by instability in society. The people of Lithuania suffered from the German occupation of the Klaipėda region in the spring of 1939, the Soviet Union occupation of the country in 1940, the Nazi occupation in the period of World War II and the almost complete destruction of the Jewish community, as well as post-war events with another Soviet occupation. All changes in life experienced during these 50 years seriously hindered the chances of Lithuania to implement its plans to develop multiculturalism of the society independently and purposefully.

1.3.5. The destruction of Lithuanian multicultural heritage in the period of fascist Germany (1941–1944) and Soviet “Internationalism” (1940–1941, 1944–1990)

In the 20th century, within a span of 50 years all spheres of life in Lithuania were subjected to the effects of totalitarian regimes imposed three times (1940–1941, 1941–1944, and 1944–1990) by the communist USSR and Nazi Germany. During these periods, the system of economic, social and cultural life created during the years of independence was destroyed, human ethnic and religious identity was destroyed on grounds of “scientific justification”, and society was forced to forget the historical path of the state of Lithuania. It is difficult to find a clear answer to the rhetorical question of what would have happened had Lithuania not experienced the decades-long experiments of these occupying regimes, with their norms of public morality, individual loyalty, courage and self-esteem – even physical testing. Unfortunately, the facts of the recent past reveal the perception of where we are and what we can expect in the future.

Prof. Vaitekūnas (2006, pp. 137–138, 358) draws attention to the fact that in 1938–1939 Nazi Germany, promoting anti-Semitic and chauvinist ideas for the restoration of the Great Reich, prompted a considerable segment of the population of the German-speaking

part of the Klaipėda region to surrender to Nazi ideology, while at the same time the moral values of the local people of Lithuanian, Jewish, Byelorussian, Russian, Romanian and other nationalities were depreciated. Lithuanian society reacted differently to Nazi propaganda, which became one of the reasons for German military units to enter Lithuania on 22 March 1939 and occupy the allegedly historically owned Klaipėda region. The activities of cultural associations, the press and schools were restrained and persecution of people based on their race began. Additional taxes were imposed on residents of the Klaipėda region, as well as work obligations (Vaitekūnas, 2006, p. 147). According to Nazi doctrine, residents of the occupied territories who supported the Nazi regime were supposed to be assimilated, while others were physically destroyed with the help of local collaborators.

During the occupation by Fascist Germany (1941–1944), the Jewish community of Lithuania suffered the most. During the first days of occupation, the Nazis and their local collaborators⁹² organized ruthless pogroms and massacres in Kaunas and Gargždai. Jews were ordered to wear distinctive signs, including the Star of David. Dwellings and synagogues were destroyed, and Jewish property was expropriated on a large scale. As early as 1941 mass arrests and shootings of Jews throughout the territory of Lithuania started in the middle of July in more than 200 locations. In the autumn of 1941, there were no more Jews in smaller areas of Lithuania, and Jews in Vilnius, Kaunas and Šiauliai were told to move and stay permanently in closed urban areas, so-called “ghettos”. Simultaneously, Jewish cultural heritage was destroyed.⁹³ By the end of World War II, out of around 215,000 Jews who lived in Lithuania before the war and made up around 7% of the country’s population, only 25,000 survived (Vaitekūnas, 2006, p. 148). According to the Lithuanian cultural historian Dr. V. Davoliūtė, as a result, the Jewish community – as it used to be prior to the World War II, i.e., having a clear variety of cultural, social, and political life – did not exist any longer. In a way, we can say that the Jews disappeared from the public space (Elenbergienė, 2017).⁹⁴ On the other hand, to pay tribute to the historical truth, it is important to note that many Lithuanians, at risk to their lives, hid Jews and thus saved them from imminent death.⁹⁵

⁹² Local collaborators formed the Lithuanian police battalions and, as Venclova (2018, p. 166) notes, Lithuanians collaborating with the Nazis made a historic gesture by reversing the privileges granted to the Jews by Grand Duke Vytautas.

⁹³ E.g., the Yiddish Institute of Science (YIVO) was the largest Yiddish research centre in the world, and had accumulated lots of Eastern European Jewish documents, literature, history, culture, and folklore works in Vilnius from 1925 to the beginning of the war. The Institute became the pride of the Jews. It was destroyed during the World War II, and its cultural heritage was almost lost (Petrikaitė, 2005, p. 38). The preserved part of YIVO heritage is now kept in the Litvaks A. Suckeveris and Š. Kačerginskis collection in New York (*Rupeikaitė, 2010*).

⁹⁴ It should be noted that the Nazis, together with their local assistants, carried out extermination of the Jewish people not only in Lithuania, but also in Poland, Latvia, Czechoslovakia, France, the Balkans, Germany itself, etc., thus after the end of the war the genocide of the Jewish nation, also referred to as Shoah (Heb. הַשׂוּאָה, HaShoah “catastrophe”) or the Holocaust (Gr. Ὀλόκαυστος, *holókaustos*, from *hólos* “whole” + *kaustós* “burnt out”) was acknowledged.

⁹⁵ Since 1963 the State of Israel awards citizens of other countries who rescued Jews by granting them the name of “Righteous among the Nations”. According to the data of the World Holocaust Memorial Center (Yad Vashem) on 1 January 2019, 891 Lithuanian citizens were on the list of the righteous. This list is constantly being updated. Several trees were planted in the

During the Nazi occupation, similarly to the Jewish community, the Lithuanian Roma people suffered greatly, as around one thousand Roma people who lived in Lithuania were deported abroad for forced labour (Tautinių mažumų departamentas prie LR Vyriausybės, n.d.-a), and a similar number were physically destroyed (Bubnys, 1998, p. 227).⁹⁶

The Soviet Union, led by the dictator Joseph Stalin, behaved in a similar way, as it declared communist slogans about the “brotherhood of nations” and “bright tomorrow” among the various layers of people, primarily the working class. The Soviets succeeded in disuniting the Lithuanian society according to class and national principles (e.g., the Jews heard the fate of their fellow citizens in Germany), thus they had to choose between two states governed by dictators. On 21 July 1940, in a turbulent environment for the Soviets, they managed to impose an occupation regime on Lithuania with the supposedly voluntary accession of Lithuania to the composition of the Soviet Union by using the army and well-known representatives of left-wing intellectuals who collaborated with communists from the Soviet Union as a tool for intimidation.

The Soviet government linked the imposition of the Soviet regime with the intensive introduction of the ideology of “Soviet internationalism” into society. At that time, such long-used terms as “ethnicity” or “ethnic groups” disappeared from the documents of state institutions and public discourse; at the same time, the new government ideologues equated them to the manifestations of “nationalism” because they did not meet the concept of “Soviet nations” (Marcinkevičius, 2012, p. 53).⁹⁷

Freedom of conscience faced a similar fate. Thus, Article 96 of the Soviet Constitution of 1940 guaranteed freedom to the performance of religious cults, while at the same time, the authorities, on the basis of the atheistic materialist ideology and propaganda apparatus, soon abused this freedom. One of the first steps taken by the new government was the ban on religious marriages and the transition to civil registration of marriages. Out of 48 Catholic churches and monasteries, by the end of the summer of 1948, 22 were closed, and during the Soviet times 30 Catholic churches and monasteries were closed in Vilnius, 12 – in Kaunas, 2 – in Panevėžys, and 2 – in Šiauliai. Prayer houses were closed as they were supposedly “abandoned by the hosts”, “due to the inability to maintain the architectural monument”,

Jerusalem grove in honour of the people who rescued Lithuanian Jews (Lietuvos žydų genocido atminimo diena, https://day.lt/straipsniai/zydu_genocido_diena).

⁹⁶ Today, under the auspices of the Department of National Minorities, research to commemorate the victims of the genocide is carried out by the Roma Community Center (established on 19 July 2001) with the help of other non-governmental organisations established by the Roma community. Since 2004, August 2 is the date to commemorate the Roma Genocide Day in Lithuania, while June 27 was added to the list of Lithuanian Remembrance Days by the decision of the Lithuanian Seimas since 2019, and has become universally recognized.

⁹⁷ As A. Marcinkevičius (2012) notes, issues of “ethnicity” or “ethnic groups” in the Soviet era were examined only in official documents and were tolerated only as the form of remains of the “socialist nations” until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 (pp. 53, 59).

or “due to the inability to pay taxes because of lack of visitors”, etc. (Pocevičius, 2018, p. 147; Čepaitienė, 2002, pp. 32, 33). Other religious denominations of Lithuania such as Jews, Protestants, Muslims, Karaites suffered a similar sad fate. Due to the loyalty shown to the Soviet government, similar prohibitions almost did not affect the Orthodox and the Old Believers’ churches. Thus, in the 1960s there were more Orthodox churches and monasteries functioning in Vilnius than Catholic ones (Pocevičius, 2018, p. 189).

During the initial Soviet era, the property of most churches was nationalized, and as a result it was quickly seized or destroyed and economic organisations were often established in churches. The buildings of churches were also converted into warehouses, dormitories, exhibitions, galleries, concerts and cinema halls, and even an atheism museum. Since 1948, the churches that were left to believers were ordered by the government to sign a contract and lease the land which used to belong to the church before expropriation by the same authorities (Religinių bendruomenių “sutartys”, 1976). At the same time, the celebration of Christmas was banned, whereas Shrove Tuesday and Easter were turned into secular winter and spring holidays. Nevertheless, despite the ban, traditional religious festivals were celebrated among family members, relatives and friends. However, the activists of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, who opposed the restrictions imposed on the freedom of confession, from 1972 to 1988 regularly issued the publications *Kronika* (*Chronicles*) (81 issues) and *Aušra* (*The Dawn*) (35 issues), which described the contemporary Lithuanian struggle against the Soviet system.

At the same time, historical cemeteries were also destroyed for “social needs”.⁹⁸ For example, in Vilnius in 1958 the Government closed Vilnius Lutheran Cemetery which had existed since the 19th century and where people of different nationalities were buried (inscriptions in Latin, Polish, German, French, Russian and Byelorussian were found on demolished tombstones).⁹⁹ Similarly, the Calvinist cemetery was demolished in Vilnius, and a Soviet monument was erected in its place. Barbaric destruction processes overwhelmed Lithuania.

Culture in Lithuania, due to the ideological norms of the 1940 Constitution, could only be developed insofar as it served the development and consolidation of the Soviet system; at the same time, national associations with their distinct cultural heritage and needs are not mentioned in this document. Despite the fact that Article 101 of the Constitution provided for the granting of shelter rights to foreign nationals, this right was only used for those persecuted for the protection of working people or scientific activities, or in the fight for national liberation.

⁹⁸ This period of Lithuanian cultural history has a specific name: the “Culture of the Bulldozer Era”.

⁹⁹ In the course of destruction of the cemetery, its territory was used for the construction of the Vilnius Registrar’s Office (Palace of Marriage) and the Trade Union (Urbonaitė-Vainienė, 2015).

The Kremlin authorities, in pursuit of their “Soviet internationalism” experiment, sought to better integrate Lithuania into the Soviet Union; thus, from 1945 to 1953, around 130,000 Russians, Byelorussians, Tatars, Uzbeks, Kyrgyz and some other nationals were dispatched to Lithuania who, as a rule, were immediately provided with work and living space.¹⁰⁰ Forced arrival of immigrants from other regions of the Soviet Union under the “planned order” to Lithuania was constantly implemented throughout the Soviet period, i.e., up to the restoration of independence of Lithuania in 1990. As a result, the number of Lithuanian residents increased by an average of 8,000 each year due to arrivals from elsewhere (Vaitekūnas, 2006, p. 273). The transfer of Russian-speaking people to Lithuania and the introduction of bilingualism in the 1980s brought real risks to the Lithuanian language and the development of national culture.¹⁰¹

Nonetheless, for most of the “planned” immigrants from other Soviet republics, Lithuania was a foreign land, and the Lithuanian language and national cultural heritage were incomprehensible to them and were of little interest; therefore, the Russian language quickly became the main language of communication.¹⁰² The cultural dogmas of the Soviet ideology were introduced into the society (e.g., “the Russian is a senior brother”,¹⁰³ “Soviet nation”, “Soviet way of life”, “socialist realism and patriotism”, etc.), and the local authorities that collaborated with the Kremlin also encouraged this.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, according to A. Marcinkevičius (2012), Russians in Soviet Lithuania cannot be perceived as Russians in independent Lithuania. Soviet immigrants began to dominate in their number not only among other Russians, but also sought to impose the Soviet ideology at the expense of identity fostered up to 1940. This led to the departure of some Russian old-timers to the West, who were *a priori* incompatible with the Soviet regime according to class and ideological attributes (members of intellectuals, clergy, members of non-governmental organisations, etc.). Another part of these old-timers, due to their active participation in the social life

¹⁰⁰ According to the data of the general population census in 1989, Armenians, Azerbaijanis, Georgians, Moldavians, Estonians, Karelians, Chuvashes, Mordvians, Bashkirs, Grasslands, Comes, Udmurts, Osetheins, Spades, and people of other nationalities settled in Lithuania during the Soviet period for various reasons (e.g., work, family, studies, military service, etc.) (Statistikos departamentas prie LR vyriausybės, 1991).

¹⁰¹ The results of the sociological research carried out in 1992 showed that only 41% of Vilnius residents were born in Vilnius, while 43% lived in the capital for less than 15 years, many of whom came from outside the regions of Lithuania (Pocevičius, 2018, p. 46; Plumpienė, 1992, p. 2).

¹⁰² According to the data of the general population census in 1989, the Russian language was indicated as the second “native” language by 52.2% of Lithuanians and 61% of Poles. At that time, Lithuanian and Russian bilingualism was a reality (Vaišeta, n.d.).

¹⁰³ The dogma that Russians are “the elder brothers” was also advocated by the book *Thoughts about the Elder Brother* by J. Paleckis, which was published in 1959, where the author attempted to imprint the idea that the Russian nation is the first among the equal Soviet nations.

¹⁰⁴ For instance, the newly arrived Muslim inhabitants from the Muslim Soviet Union regions to Lithuania, who grew up in the Soviet environment, where, according to H. Kobeckaitė (2014, p. 156), not a word could be mentioned about having national organisations, everything was concentrated in Moscow and Leningrad.

of interwar Lithuania or their acquired social status, became victims of repression and deportation (Marcinkevičius, 2012, p. 63).

Gedvilas, who was responsible for Lithuania's internal affairs, announced the Soviet-style changes in the system of education even before the new 1940/1941 school year: We are having the largest social revolution (...). This revolution makes us re-evaluate all values. What was noble and respected yesterday seems to be ignoble and worthless today; what was beautiful yesterday is distasteful today. Everything has changed (Mackevičius, 2015).

From the very first school year of the Soviet period, pupils in Lithuanian schools had to study the Russian language and literature and the history and constitution of the Soviet Union (Mackevičius, 2015). In fact, comparison of this Soviet policy of Russification with the cultural policy pursued by Tsarist Russia, shows that under Soviet rule Lithuanian and Polish¹⁰⁵ schools were not closed, publishing of Lithuanian books and the press was not banned, and paperwork in institutions was handled, as a rule, in both languages; however, the development of national culture was allowed only within the framework of Communist ideology (Mackevičius, 2015). In this way, the communist government of Lithuania, adapting to the Soviet conditions, according to Dr. Nerija Putinaitė, created "Soviet Lithuanianism", which did not deny the idea of the nation as such and promoted Lithuanian nationhood as a value (Antanavičius, 2019). The Soviet authorities realized that nationhood in the territories of national formations was an important factor and it was impossible to destroy it in one attempt (Antanavičius, 2019).

In spite of all the destructions and restrictions imposed by the Soviet government, the Lithuanian nationally-minded cultural community made efforts during the Soviet era to preserve the cultural heritage of Lithuanian and national communities. For example, in the 1950s, a specialized archive of musical folklore was started, which consisted of various funds, ranging from Lithuanian poetic and musical texts to photography and other museum exhibits. At the same time, samples of Latvia, Byelorussia, Poland, Russia and other nations' musical folklore were collected from Lithuania and abroad (see Information database of Lithuanian musical folklore and dialects, <http://folkloras.mch.mii.lt>).

Revival of the folklore movement played an important role in the preservation of the elements of national culture, which from the late 19th century was historically inseparable from the theatre, where ethnic music was often played in secret performances with folk songs and dances. Taking into account the fact that since 1924 a tradition of mass folk songs of all regions of Lithuania had been formed, the Soviet Lithuanian government allowed this festival to be revived from 1946, whereas from 1950 it allowed national song festivals for folk dance

¹⁰⁵ In fact, in 1946 the number of Polish schools in the Vilnius region decreased significantly due to the shortage of teachers (Pocevičius, 2018, p. 35).

groups to be organized (Apanavičius et al., 2015, pp. 19, 21).¹⁰⁶ Although mass events of this kind were used by the Soviet Lithuanian government as a political and cultural tool of the society, it must be acknowledged that in the society, especially among young people, these festivals formed the perception of what Lithuanianness was, and Lithuanian folk songs and dance traditions were accepted quite positively. Song festivals were seen by the authorities as a great success for the authorities themselves, and since then the tradition of organizing them on a regular basis has continued.¹⁰⁷ Since 1955, the folklore and traditions Lithuanian Poles have been presented by the Polish ensemble of songs and dance “Wilia” founded on the initiative of Polish school graduates.¹⁰⁸

In spite of various government restrictions, the year 1968 is to be considered a period of rising folk ensembles in Lithuania, when the revival of traditional authentic music started. In 1986, there were 782 folklore ensembles in Lithuania, in 1987 their number increased to 901 – 771 functioned in small towns and villages, and 130 in towns (Apanavičius et al., 2015, p. 23).

During the Soviet time, Kremlin propaganda literature flooded bookshops according to the established quota, while books and art albums of Western authors experienced a huge deficit and could be acquired with less restrictions only by senior nomenclature officers, while ordinary people did not always use legal ways to purchase them. In accordance with the requirements imposed during the Soviet period from 1946–1955, only 103 books of 64 Western writers were translated and published in the Lithuanian language (Venclova, 1983). *Since the middle of the 1960s, with the beginning of the relative political and cultural “revival” in the Soviet Union, over the next decade, 307 fiction books of 186 Western writers were published (Venclova, 1983). However, in the 1970s, after the revival period ended, the volume of publication Western literature decreased again. In the 1990s, when Soviet Union leader M. Gorbachev initiated “perestroika”, the publication of Western literature revived once again (see Table 4).*

¹⁰⁶ The massive performance of folk songs by collective choirs began in 1924 during the first song festival, whereas Lithuanian folk dances began in mass events in 1937 (Apanavičius et al., 2015).

¹⁰⁷ Song festivals became a significant factor in the restoration of Lithuania’s independence; therefore, considering the popularity of this event among the public, the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania on 20 November 2007 passed the Law on Song Festivals (Lietuvos Respublikos dainų švenčių įstatymas, 2007). Moreover, since 2003 UNESCO has recognized the tradition and symbolism of song festivals as a cultural heritage masterpiece, whereas in 2008 song festivals were included in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (Semėnaitė, 2014). Nowadays, song festivals are held every 4–5 years with the participation of about 40,000 singers, dancers and musicians dressed in national costumes of not only Lithuanian but also Lithuanian national communities.

¹⁰⁸ The ensemble Wilia has been actively involved in the cultural life of Lithuania, and has received various awards from Lithuania and Poland. During its history, the ensemble has performed more than 1,500 times in various regions of Lithuania, Poland, Latvia, Germany, the Czech Republic, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Greece, and Macedonia (<http://www.wilia.lt/index.php/lt/>).

Table 4. *Publication of Western authors in Lithuania in 1966–1985*

	1966–1970	1971–1975	1976–1980	1981–1985
Number of published books by <i>Western writers</i>	219	164	135	172

Source: Streikus (2011).

In the Soviet times, due to lack of entertainment, the population did not have a wide choice in dealing with leisure issues. At that time, there were only two television channels in Lithuania – Lithuanian and Moscow. Local TV and radio often retransmitted programs from Moscow with propaganda speeches of the party leaders. Even though television had some entertainment programs, Soviet films about war and sacrifice, propagating Soviet patriotism and internationalism, dominated. Nevertheless, people managed to overcome channel interference and find Western radio stations – Free Europe, Liberty, and Voice of America information programs about the situation in the Soviet Union, which for many people in Lithuania became a refuge in the formation of independent thinking.

There was a greater chance of seeing a movie or performance; although if censorship-controlled western movies or performances were on, it was extremely difficult to purchase tickets because of huge queues. For example, to buy tickets to one of the most famous musicals in the history of cinema, “The Sound of Music” (1965), people had to queue until midnight. Other performances also attracted great attention, e.g., a musical performance “Man of La Mancha” (directed by H. Vancevičius adapted from M. de Servantes and D. Wasserman), etc. Plays by Lithuanian authors were also popular. For example, the play “Mammoth Hunt” (directed by J. Jurašas), adapted from the playwright K. Saja in 1968, skilfully satirized the Soviet reality, and the performance itself quickly gained incredible popularity – during the incomplete first season, 70 performances were staged. Unfortunately, the fate of this popular play was predictable in Soviet times.

Prof. A. Martišiūtė-Linartienė (n.d.) described the fate of the performance as follows: “After a few months after the premiere of “Mammoth Hunt”, the performance was condemned at the annual Party meeting of the Kaunas State Drama Theatre: it was claimed that the performance destroyed confidence in the party and the government; some layers of the society, hostile to the Soviet society, were delighted with it and use it for evil ends, and at the time of a particularly intense ideological struggle, this performance was undue. The performance was attested as anti-Soviet and removed from the theatre repertoire”.

It was also difficult to buy tickets to the stage plays by J. Miltinis (1907–1994) at the Panevėžys Drama Theatre, which staged such masterpieces as plays by Shakespeare, Diurenmat, Strinberg, and Sophocles.

In 1945, on the initiative of the Moscow authorities, a Russian drama theatre was established in Vilnius, the aim of which was to achieve not only cultural, but also ideological benefits (the actors and the theatre managers were sent to Lithuania from Moscow, Leningrad, and some other cities of the Soviet Union). Thus, at the beginning of its activities the theatre did not feature artistic dramaturgy and was filled to only 27% of its capacity. However, later, after the death of the dictator J. Stalin, the theatre redirected its repertoire towards universal values and soon became widely visited not only by Russians, but also by Lithuanians and people of other nationalities (Pocevičius, 2018, pp. 87, 90, 93–95).¹⁰⁹

Around the end of 1970s, the works of emigrant writers compliant with the Soviet ideology were published in Lithuania. Streikus (2007, p. 47) notes that guardians of the ideological vigilance made sure that the works of emigrants were interpreted correctly. However, due to the cultural cooperation between Lithuania and representatives of the culture of emigration, supporters of this cooperation increasingly raised the question of wider representation of the culture of emigration in Lithuania in the 1990s. The Soviet authorities could no longer ignore the voices of representatives of Lithuanian culture, which, at the time of the revival, made one more step towards the development of the Lithuanian national culture (Streikus, 2007, p. 58).

The damage done to the national identity by the Soviet period touched all national groups of Lithuania. During the Soviet era, minorities had to transfer customs and traditions of ethnic character to the private domains of family, relatives or friends, which helped them to protect their personal identity during the five decades of the Communist period, thus managing to avoid forced assimilation and preserve their national identity. During the Soviet period, such human behaviour was a very important moment of survival and seriously contributed to the preservation of Lithuanian multiculturalism foundations.

During the Soviet period, one of the oldest Jewish communities (Litvaks¹¹⁰) living in Lithuania suffered huge losses. In the summer of 1940, non-communist Jewish organisations were closed down and the only newspaper circulated out of numerous periodicals was *Der Emes* (*The Truth*). On the other hand, after the war, as the most severely affected national community, in 1945 the Jews were allowed to establish a Jewish museum in Vilnius with a library of 45,000 books (including unique publications from the 16–17th centuries), art works and archives.¹¹¹ However, on the initiative of the Soviet dictator Stalin, as a result of

¹⁰⁹ Since 1946, over 400 premieres have been staged in the Russian drama theatre. After Independence, the theatre has successfully continued its creative activity. Its performances have seen not only by Lithuanian, but also Russian, Polish, Ukrainian, German, Czech, Byelorussian and Israeli audiences. The theatre is the only professional team in Lithuania that creates and performs in the Russian language (Lietuvos Rusų dramos teatras, 2018).

¹¹⁰ According to Palmaitis (1998, p. 8), Jewish Litvak is the child of the GDL, the land of Lithuania and Belarus is his true Homeland.

¹¹¹ Unfortunately, at the height of the anti-Semitic campaign, the museum ceased to function, and the exhibits protected therein were distributed to other institutions.

a wide-ranging anti-Semitic campaign and accusations of Jews being Zionism agents¹¹² and killers, the Jewish School was closed down in Vilnius in 1948 and in Kaunas in 1950. The ghetto was destroyed in Vilnius, and the three cemeteries which belonged to the Jewish community were nationalised in 1948. Soon two of them were destroyed, their sites were used for the construction of a gym and a swimming-pool, and more than 1000 tons of tombstones were used for construction of staircases in different parts of the city, walls or decoration of transformer buildings, etc. (15min, 2017). Klaipėda's Old Jewish Cemetery awaited a similar fate when a radio station was built in its place to suppress broadcasts from the West. When the radio station was constructed, most of the tombstones were destroyed and used as foundation stones for the antenna of the station (Uostas.info, n.d.). In all places of the massacre of Jews, inscriptions in Yiddish were destroyed as part of the Litvaks' identity, references to the nationality of the victims were deleted, the Great Synagogue (1953), which was famous all over Europe before the war, was demolished (Drėma, 2013, p. 319), the richest Jewish public library in Eastern Europe stopped functioning, etc. – almost everything that could speak of the life of Jews in the historical capital of Lithuania was destroyed. A brick synagogue built in 1911 in Alytus, as in many other places, was turned into a salt warehouse and a chicken hut during the Soviet era. At that time, more than ten spiritual seminaries of Judaism – Yeshivas, which existed in Lithuania before the war – were severely damaged.¹¹³ By 1953, all structures reflecting Jewish national self-awareness in Lithuania (with the exception of two synagogues) ceased to function. In the late 1990s, almost everything that could remind us of the long-standing culture of Lithuanian Jews was rebuilt. In general, in that period in Lithuania, any forms of Judaism were systematically suppressed, so that the Jewish ethnic group would not distinguish as such and would not remember or mention Shoah (Žukauskienė, 2014, p. 200; Veidas, 2013).¹¹⁴ In spite of the state policy of cultural barbarism, the Jewish community, in opposition to this policy, made efforts to preserve the remnants of the heritage accumulated over the centuries. As a result of the resistance of the Jewish community, in 1956 the authorities gave permission to establish an amateur theatre (since 1965 it has been granted professional theatre status), a choir and a dance group.

Although there are no reliable and comprehensive sources of information left, it is notable that, for example, the new arrivals from Muslim countries of the Soviet Union did not participate in community life with the local Muslims who had lived in Lithuania since

¹¹² Zionism was recognized as a nationalist, racist, and anti-Soviet movement in the Soviet Union.

¹¹³ Yeshivas were used to provide Torah education. Yeshivas of Lithuania were known outside the country; very often Yeshivas abroad, e.g., in the USA and Israel, have Lithuanian place names (Vilnius, Telsiai). Restoration of the Telshe Yeshiva (Rabbinical College of Telshe, Telz Yeshiva), which was opened in 1875 and functioned until 1940, was known throughout Eastern Europe.

¹¹⁴ Shoah (*HaShoan*, catastrophe) is the genocide of the Jewish people, committed by the Nazi Germany and its assistants during the World War II in Lithuania.

ancient times (Lukoševičiūtė, 2014, p. 183). In this way, two types of national communities appeared in Lithuania during the occupation period: traditional, with historic Lithuanian heritage; and non-traditional, with heritage formed by the Soviet authorities. Dissolution of the organisations belonging to the Muslim communities and abolition of their confessional status since the beginning of the Soviet occupation also served this purpose. Religious ceremonies surrounding the marriage registration of Muslim families were prohibited. At that time, almost all prayer houses which belonged to Muslims were closed; thus, in 1947 the Kaunas mosque was closed and used for the city archive, later as a sports club and institutions of other purpose. Even though after World War II Lithuanian Muslims were able to perform prayers at the wooden Lukiškės mosque in Vilnius, and were able to bury their relatives in the nearby Muslim cemetery (*myzaryar*) which was established in the 1930s, in 1968, after the authorities barbarically destroyed everything, some research institutes were built on the site, and the remains of Tartars were placed in boxes and taken to unknown locations.

Tombstone plates and monuments from this cemetery were later found on the stairs of other cemeteries (Jakubauskas et al., 2012).

In 1923, a Karaim kenesa built in the Moorish style stopped functioning in Vilnius, and a geodesic archive was established there. In 1970, the Panevėžys kenesa was destroyed, Karaite cemeteries were destroyed in Kaunas and Vilnius, and private museums were nationalized, such as the Museum founded by the Karaite spiritual leader Seraja Szapzal in Vilnius (Kobeckaitė, 2014, p. 157). In Vilnius, the Belarussian community-owned St. Bartholomew church was closed down. Examples of cultural barbarism committed against the ethnic groups under the Soviet regime are not isolated – there were dozens, thus the incorporation of alien social dogmas into the traditional environment of Lithuanian society is considered to be a period of the systematic destruction of cultural heritage of Lithuanians and other communities that had long lived in Lithuania.

To sum up, it can be noted that in the 20th century, Lithuania was removed from the political and cultural map of the world against its will due to the Soviet occupation that lasted for five decades. Throughout this time, Lithuanians experienced significant damage in terms of cultural restraints (on cultural development of traditional national communities of Lithuania, poor knowledge of foreign cultures and ignorance of relations between different cultures, etc.), and, ultimately, constraints on the freedom of conscience. During Soviet times, the government focused on rewriting Lithuanian history and adapting it to dogmas of the communist ideology; thus, as Putinaitė notes, pre-war history was deleted and for a long time it was even forbidden to speak about medieval Lithuania (Antanavičius, 2019).

As Western countries continuously improved their state management skills and sought

novel development solutions in the business, social, cultural, and spiritual domains, Lithuania, under the coercion of the Soviet authorities, was pushed onto the path of degradation and fell behind the living standards of the Western countries and the multicultural society. Meanwhile, during the Soviet era, due to the active position the Lithuanian people accumulated a tremendous internal potential, which in the late 1990s facilitated a breakthrough which was expressed through a national revival movement. Other national groups also took active participation in this movement. Organisations independent of the government were established. Some well-known public figures (poet Prof. Česlovas Kudaba, translator Marcelijus Martinaitis, restorer Dr. Napalys Kitkauskas and others) in 1987 initiated the Lithuanian Cultural Foundation, the aim of which was to support research into Lithuania's historical and cultural heritage, including the revival of historical memory.¹¹⁵ Since 1988 the first cultural societies of Lithuanian national communities have been formed under the foundation. In the same year, at the beginning of August, the cultural societies of the national communities, by joining the process of social revival which started on 3 June 1988 and supporting the demands of the Lithuanian nation to live independently, formed the Lithuanian International Coordinating Association independent of the authorities. One of the declared principles of the Coordinating Association was the goal of uniting the ethnic communities operating at that time together to reduce the transnational suspicion accumulated over many decades and to provide the authorities with possible solutions to problems. The Coordinating Association clearly spoke out against the soviet government policy and practice of mixing and "merging" nations, which brought many nations to the brink of ethnic extinction. At the same time, the Coordinating Association actively participated in the public life of that time. Together with all the people of Lithuania it participated in rallies and various types of demonstrations. For example, in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Coordinating Association took part in the Baltic Way on 23 August 1989. In September 1989, it organized a rally in Vilnius Kalnų Park with the aim to show the common desire of Lithuanians and other ethnic communities in Lithuania to live in free Lithuania.

¹¹⁵ Conditions for the emergence of the Lithuanian Cultural Foundation were provided for by the reorganisation announced by the head of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, and as a result, the USSR Cultural Foundation was established in 1986 and as well as its republican subdivisions (Lietuvos kultūros fondas, 2008).



Rally organized by the International Coordination Association in Vilnius Kalnų Park (September 1989). Photo from Prof. Gražulis' personal archive.

To preserve the historical memory of Lithuanian national communities, the Coordinating Association advocated tolerance and goodwill in relations between people of different nationalities, respect for each other's way of life and traditions, shrines and cemeteries, and the development of the community's national culture and writing. This historical period can reasonably be considered as the beginning of the modern stage of the development of multiculturalism in Lithuania.

On 3 June, 1988, a revival of the Lithuanian society started, and in the face of imminent changes a Law on Ethnic Minorities was adopted in Lithuania on 23 November, 1989, i.e., while still under Soviet rule (which was amended and supplemented on 29 January 1991, No. 4-117, *Official Gazette* No. I-1007). This law recognized that the historical path of people of different nationalities living in Lithuania is closely related to the fate of the Lithuanian nation and determines the identity of common goals. In addition, Article 1 of the Law provides that any discrimination based on race, nationality, language or other grounds related to human nationality shall be prohibited and punished.¹¹⁶ Meanwhile a specialized advisory body was established under the Government – the Department of Nationalities, who became responsible for drafting legal acts on national minorities and contributing to the implementation of the respective legal norms. The Department at the time was the first and the only institution of

¹¹⁶ Unfortunately, this law expired on 1 January 2010, however, as stated in the Third Opinion of the Advisory Committee of the Council of Europe, this resulted in “leaving national minorities without any specific legal protection in Lithuania” (European Human Rights Foundation, 2015). A new version of the law is currently being drafted.

such a kind in the Middle and Eastern Europe.¹¹⁷

1.3.6. Contemporary trends of multiculturalism development in independent Lithuania

1.3.6.1. *Overcoming the legacy of the Fascist Germany and Soviet Internationalism*

Since the democratically elected Parliament of Lithuania proclaimed the Act on the Restoration of the Independent State of Lithuania on 11 March 1990, Lithuania has returned to the path of independent political, economic, social and cultural life. On 25 October 1992, the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania was adopted by a universal citizens' referendum, and this became a legal basis for dismantling of the Soviet legacy and forming a civil society oriented towards European values. After the Restoration of Independence, the process of formation of the structures characteristic of a democratic state began (for example, abolition of the central governance functions of the Government and the ministries, etc.), including restoration of self-government and a multi-party system, depoliticisation of cultural life, and initiation of reforms in the economy sphere (first of all, denationalisation and restructuring of the country economy). The agenda of the political and cultural life of the restored state included first of all consistent formation of civil society and the need to preserve the multicultural heritage that had been formed over centuries by Lithuanians and other ethnic groups; therefore, this period of the country's development can reasonably be called the beginning of the process of consolidation of all ethnic groups of Lithuania. Lithuania's multicultural heritage has once again become a moral and cultural value of the society, therefore the aspiration to create a civil society shows that Lithuania follows the common European path of development with its characteristic democratic values and multicultural environment.

Article 45 of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania (1992) establishes the norm that "Ethnic communities of citizens shall independently manage the affairs of their ethnic culture, education, charity, and mutual assistance". Additionally, "Ethnic communities shall be provided support by the State".

As Lithuania started undergoing the Europeanisation process, one of the most important tasks in the initial stage was the transposition of the European minority policy provisions

¹¹⁷ In 2010, the department was abolished and its functions transferred to the Ministry of Culture, Education and Science and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, this reorganisation caused dissatisfaction among national minority organisations, who felt that the abolished department represented their interests more efficiently. The Department of National Minorities, as an independent institution under the Government, was re-established on 1 July 2015 (Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania No. 1300, 24 November 2014). Today, this department is responsible for the implementation of national minority policy in Lithuania.

into the national law, first of all by strengthening the individual rights of foreigners, such as protection against discrimination, assimilation, etc. As Lithuania became part of the process of international cooperation for protection of the rights of national minorities, it was one of the first European states to accede to the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities adopted by the Council of Europe on 23 February 1995 (Tautinių mažumų apsaugos pagrindų konvencija, 1995), under which the state has committed itself to the following:

- to preserve the essential parts of the distinctiveness of national communities, namely, religion, language, traditions and cultural heritage, thus to create equal conditions for self-expression of people of all nationalities and for the equality of cultures;
- to recognize that diversity within and between national minorities must be respected in view of implementation of all minority rights;
- to take measures against possible discrimination against persons belonging to national minorities;
- to refrain from politics and any actions aimed at assimilating persons belonging to national minorities against their will.

On the other hand, in formulating the state policy on the issues of protection of the rights of national minorities, Lithuania took into account that the Convention of 1995 seeks to maintain a balance between the wider interests of society and the rights of individuals, and thus to manage diversity and encourage persons belonging to national minorities to respect the national law and the rights of other people living in the country (Council of Europe, 2016).

In order to help preserve the cultural and ethnic identity of the national minorities in Lithuania and their full integration into the country's social life, in 1991 the House of National Communities was established in the capital of the country, Vilnius, with organisations developing national cultures of most of the national minority communities (Azerbaijani, Belarusian, Greek, Latvian, Estonian, Romanian, Russian, Ukrainian, German).¹¹⁸ A centre of culture of different nations has been opened since 2004 in Kaunas, and a centre of national cultures has been established since 2012 in Klaipėda. The main function of these institutions is to promote interethnic dialogue between cultures in Lithuanian society (Tautinių mažumų departamentas prie LR Vyriausybės, n.d.-b). For this purpose, cultural, artistic, historical heritage, etc., projects relevant to national minority organisations are developed. In addition, training, seminars and discussions on the issues of Lithuanian history and cultural integration processes are regularly organized for leaders of national minority communities, their active

¹¹⁸ Polish, Jewish, Tartar, Roma and some other ethnic communities have settled in the premises regained or newly built after denationalization.

members, and young people, and participation in international cooperation with foreign partners is facilitated.

In pursuit of the declared objective of the Constitution to preserve the diversity of all Lithuanian national communities, their cultural freedom, and intercultural dialogue, in 2013 the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania declared 21 May to be the Day of National Communities.¹¹⁹ Currently, the Department of National Minorities under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania re-established on 1 July 2015 deals with formation of the policy of national minorities.

The provisions of the 1992 Constitution designed to implement the rights of national minorities demonstrate their vitality by the following facts:

- in early 1990, only around 20 non-governmental cultural organisations of national minorities were active in Lithuania, representing people of 14 nationalities, whereas in 2003 their number reached 270 and united people of 21 nationalities (Petrauskas, 2003, pp. 18–19);
- national minorities are allowed to broadcast in the national languages (in 2003, 37 periodicals were published – 27 newspapers and 8 journals) (Grigolovičienė, 2003, p. 79); translations of literary works of Litvaks, Poles, Russians and other national communities appeared among the publications devoted to the topic of Lithuanian cultural heritage.
- national minority organisations independently produce programs on the national television of Lithuania, including 30 programs per month in Russian, 4 in Belarusian, 4 in Polish, 2 in Ukrainian and Jewish, and 2 each for other communities (Tartars, Karaites, Latvian, German, etc.; Grigolovičienė, 2003, p. 79);
- in the 2013–2014 study year there were 131 state-owned general education schools (10.8% of the total number of schools) in the Polish, Russian and Byelorussian languages in Lithuania, in which 26,500 pupils studied (7.4% of the total number of pupils) (Tautinių mažumų švietimas Lietuvoje, 2013). Foreign nationals in Lithuania¹²⁰ can study their native languages in Sunday and summer schools, where they can also master the Lithuanian language.
- various state-funded non-governmental organisations take care of preservation of the cultural heritage of national minorities; for example, the House of National Communities

¹¹⁹ In fact, this day dates back to 2001, when UNESCO adopted the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity; a year later, on May 21, UNESCO declared it the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development.

¹²⁰ It should be noted that the Roma community, due to a specific way of life, not only in the old days but also now, despite some positive impulses (e.g., the program of integration of the Romanians into the Lithuanian society adopted in 2000 by the government), has encountered serious obstacles to successfully integrate into the modern living environment, therefore, it is necessary to develop not only research, but also a wider approach, to combine the common efforts of other European countries. In Lithuania, Roma traditions and current problems are addressed by the Vilnius University as well as the Roma Information Centre in Kaunas.

(functions since 1991, <http://www.tbn.lt/>), the Folklore and Ethnography Centre of the Lithuanian National Minorities (functions since 2006, <https://www.ltmfc.lt/>), **etc.**, who actively promote multiculturalism of the society and help to preserve the cultural and ethnic identity of the national minorities of Lithuania and their national self-expression traditions. There are almost 40 popular amateur art ethnic minority folklore song and dance ensembles.¹²¹ They frequently give performances not only in Lithuania but also in their historical homeland and in many European countries (Austria, Germany, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia, Slovakia, Norway, France, Italy, Hungary, Finland, Sweden, *etc.*)¹²²

Since 1994, Lithuania has commemorated the 23rd of September as the Day of Remembrance for Jewish Victims of Genocide in Lithuania, dedicated to honour the victims of the liquidation of the Vilnius ghetto on 23 September 1943.¹²³ In schools, the topic of the Holocaust is integrated into history, Lithuanian language and literature, art, and other training programs.¹²⁴ General education schools in Lithuania have more than 100 Tolerance Education Centres (TUC), which provide students with information about totalitarian regimes, commemorate the victims of the Nazi and Soviet occupation regimes, organize visits to places of mass deaths of Lithuanian partisans and Jews, participate in the civic initiative “The Way of Memory”, help the younger generation develop personal tolerance and introduce the basics of multicultural competence.

Among many other primary tasks of restoring the country’s multicultural heritage ruined during the Soviet era were decisions of the local authorities to return the historical names of streets of cities and other residential areas. Thus, in Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Kėdainiai, Utena and many other cities and towns the historical names of the streets such as those involving Jews and Synagogues were restored. The names of the streets in Vilnius and Kaunas commemorate not only the historical personalities of Lithuania of different origin (Russian, Polish, Byelorussian), but also world-famous Jewish actors (*litvaks*): the Great Lithuanian Rabbi Vilna Gaon (1720–1797), the writer Abraham Map (1808–1867), and the creator of international language Esperanto, physician Ludwik Lazar Zamenhof (1859–1917).

¹²¹ Today there are over 300 folklore groups in Lithuania. According to Apanavičius et al. (2015, p. 25), based on the number of folklore ensembles and their participants per one statistical resident of Lithuania, our country is possibly amongst the first in Europe.

¹²² The specialized Musical Folklore Archive (<http://folkloras.mch.mii.lt>), which already has about 200,000 items in its own funds and is recognized as one of the largest Lithuanian music folklore and dialects information databases in Europe, contributes to promotion of activities of national minority folklore groups.

¹²³ The last surviving Jews were killed or taken to concentration camps that day.

¹²⁴ The Lithuanian system of education of the younger generation seeks to implement the Resolution of 1 November 2005 of the United Nations General Assembly that condemns denial of Holocaust, discrimination and violence on religious or ethnic grounds. The International Holocaust Remembrance Day in Lithuania, as in other numerous countries, is celebrated each year on 27 January. On this day, the Auschwitz concentration camp in the Polish territory was liberated in 1945.

As a result of this process, municipalities have recently started hanging street name signs in the languages of national minorities next to signs in Lithuanian.

New names have also been given to spaces. For example, while Lithuania was still occupied in 1991, one of the squares in Vilnius was named after Andrei Sakharov (1921–1989), a well-known Russian dissident, human rights activist in the Soviet Union, Nobel Peace Prize winner, and active defender of Lithuanian independence. The opening of the square was attended by the wife of academician Andrei Sakharov, as well as an active human rights activist in the Soviet Union, Yelena Bonner (1923–2011).



Yelena Bonner at the opening of Academician Andrei Sakharov Square in Vilnius. Photo from Prof. Gražulis' personal archive.

To facilitate the communication of foreigners with governmental and municipal institutions, information relevant to people (related to law, various areas of activity, services provided, etc.) has been provided on websites not only in Lithuanian but also in English, and information on the websites of Vilnius City Municipality and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been translated into Polish, Russian and French.

The path to civil society pays special attention to the education of national minorities and the preservation of the linguistic diversity of traditional communities, which today can be seen as an important part of the state's multicultural cooperation, playing a significant role in national integration strategies.

Researchers who analyse Russian-speaking and Polish-speaking communities in Lithuania note that currently most Russians, Polish, and other national minorities speak Lithuanian fluently, which makes it easier for them to integrate into the society, first when looking for a job and entering universities, colleges or vocational schools. On the other

hand, in order to maintain ethnic identity, many foreigners living in Lithuania also study their mother tongue (Ramonienė, 2013a; Ramonienė, 2013b, p. 235; Labanauskas, 2014, pp. 130–133; Šliavaitytė, 2015). According to the 2011 population and housing census of the Republic of Lithuania, 87.2% of Russians and 77.1% of Polish indicated the language of their nationality as their mother tongue. At the same time, only one in five Belarusians and one in three Ukrainians considered their national language to be their mother tongue (Statistics Lithuania, 2011).¹²⁵ In fact, minorities often use their native language with family and friends, and less often in public spaces, such as schools where the teaching process takes place in their mother tongue, performances in national theatres and art festivals, shopping malls and so on.¹²⁶ Research conducted to determine the ethnic identity of Belarusians shows that although knowledge of the mother tongue is emphasized as an essential factor in describing a person's national identity, not all Belarusians are able to speak their mother tongue. On the other hand, Belarusian identity for many means simply the fact that they consider themselves Belarusians (Šliavaitytė, 2011). In addition, surveys show that most young Russian-speaking people, especially those born in the independent Lithuania, compared to the older generation who came from various regions of the Soviet Union during the Soviet era, see Lithuania as their homeland and no longer have greater sentiments towards the country of their ethnic origin (Frėjutė-Rakauskienė, 2011, p. 106; Labanauskas, 2014, pp. 134–138; Taljūnaitė, 2014, pp. 116–120). As a result, ethnic differences between Lithuanians and national minorities have not only decreased in recent years, but have also started disappearing, which in turn promotes the development of multiculturalism in Lithuania. This period of development of Lithuania can reasonably be described as a consolidation process of all ethnic groups in the country.

After regaining the independence of Lithuania, the immovable property nationalized in the Soviet era had to be returned to the legitimate owners including representatives of minorities (for example, the cult buildings of traditional religious communities,¹²⁷ historic estates, land, etc.). To this end, on 18 June 1991, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania adopted a law regulating the procedure and conditions for the restoration of citizens' property rights to their real estate (Lietuvos Respublikos įstatymas "Dėl Piliiečių nuosavybės teisių", 1991). In Vilnius alone, over twenty churches, monasteries, chapels and

¹²⁵ The fact that a relatively small percentage of Belarusians and Ukrainians do not consider their national language to be their mother tongue is a reflection of the legacy of the language policy of the Soviet government towards people of these nationalities.

¹²⁶ Unlike in the Soviet era, after the Lithuanian language became the state language, the use of the mother tongue by non-native speakers with family and friends in independent Lithuania is not associated with ideological restrictions.

¹²⁷ The Church assets seized by the Soviet government began to be returned in late 1988. Even at the time of the Soviet Parliament, on 14 February 1990, the Law "On the Return of Prayer Houses and Other Buildings to Religious Communities" started the Restitution Process (Katalikai.lt, 2005).

other religious objects, which the city is proud of not only as objects of cult, but also because of their unique architecture and historical and cultural heritage, were returned to Catholics and other religious communities. Restoration of churches and monasteries took place in other areas of Lithuania as well.

During the Nazi occupation and the Soviet times, Jewish religious heritage was severely damaged; thus, almost 50 synagogues were completely destroyed Vilnius, Kaunas, Panevėžys, Šiauliai and Jurbarkas which existed in the interwar period. After the war there were only 80 synagogues left in Lithuania, however during the Soviet times they were nationalized. The Soviet authorities used synagogues to install warehouses (e.g., to store salt), sports halls, and even chicken huts. Due to poor maintenance, almost all the synagogues were abandoned. Many of such synagogues were built in the 18th century and were wooden.¹²⁸ Today there are only fourteen of them left. After the restoration of independence, 43 synagogues were recognized to be objects of architectural heritage representing the Jewish culture in Lithuania. Unfortunately, most synagogues have been returned to the Lithuanian Jewish community in emergency condition; therefore, it is not yet possible to revitalize all objects of considerable historical value. Today, only three synagogues which perform their direct function remain in Lithuania – in Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipėda, i.e., in the cities where the majority of Jews currently live.



Alytus Synagogue (the wooden Synagogue was first built in 1856 and restored as a brick building after fires in 1911)



Kėdainiai Summer Synagogue (rebuilt in 1784)

The Government of Lithuania, together with municipalities, has been making considerable efforts to make Jewish cultural heritage more meaningful by restoring synagogues of Alytus, Kėdainiai, Žiežmariai, Kalvarija and others (Miškinytė, n.d.; Rimgailė-Voicik, 2016). Some

¹²⁸ In general, wooden synagogues in Lithuania were built as far back as the late 17th century; now they are recognized as a unique Jewish heritage of wooden synagogues, because in modern Europe wooden synagogues are rare; there are only two dozen wooden synagogues preserved and most of them are in Lithuania.

of the museums and memorials founded in the Soviet era, including the Holocaust Memorial (e.g., Paneriai Memorial Museum in Vilnius, the IX Fort Museum in Kaunas, and other places of massacre of Lithuanian Jews) are regaining their authentic historical memory.¹²⁹

Today, according to Žukauskienė (2014, p. 200), who analysed the history of the Lithuanian Jews, great intellectual and cultural efforts of the Lithuanian Jews and Lithuanians contribute to the reconstruction of the 19th–20th century image of Vilnius as the Northern Jerusalem and the landscape of Jewish shtetels in Lithuania.



Paneriai Memorial in Vilnius

The first Christian church of the GDL built of stone in Vilnius – St. Paraskeva Church (1345) – was returned to the Russian Orthodox Church in 1990, whereas in the Soviet times it was turned into a fine art museum. Currently, there are 56 orthodox churches in Lithuania, 7 of which were reopened after the restoration of the independence of Lithuania (Klaipėda, Palanga, Visaginas, etc.). Orthodox churches in Lithuania are subordinated to five Orthodox Deaneries. In addition, Vilnius, Šiauliai and other places of Lithuania more densely populated by Russian Orthodox Old Believers, and have about 50 Old Believers' Orthodox churches (Mockus, 2020).¹³⁰

¹²⁹ According to Žukauskienė (2014, pp. 195–196), a specialist in the Lithuanian cultural heritage, the themes of Soviet patriotism prevailed in the museums established in the Soviet era, therefore, most of the memorials were devoted to the victims of Nazism or Soviet activists. Nowadays the expositions are being updated to reveal facts about the life in ghetto, the fate of children, the Nazis responsible for the murders and the Lithuanians who collaborated with them.

¹³⁰ Old Believers are a branch of the Orthodox Church, who do not acknowledge the church reform of 1653–1666 in Russia. Due to the resistance of Old Believers to the reform, the hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church condemned them and in 1667 separated them from the church and began persecuting them. Today, there are Old Believers not only in Lithuania, but also in Russia, Belarus, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Moldova, Poland, the USA, Canada, and Latin America. Most of Old Believers are Russians, but there are Belarusians, Ukrainians, Finns, Estonians, Karelians, and others among them (Potašenko, n.d.).



Church of St. Paraskeva (built in 1345)



Church of Old Believers in Vilnius
(opened in 1830)

The Catholics of the Lithuanian Byelorussian community regained St. Bartholomew the Apostle Church, built in 1824 in the Classicism style, which was closed down and used as a workshop during the Soviet era.



Church of St. Bartholomew (built in 1824)

Through the efforts of Kaunas Muslims in 1991, the worship was started in a mosque

that was closed during the war and used as a circus and a warehouse in the Soviet era.¹³¹ The wooden mosque which was built in 1815 in the Village of Forty Tatars not far from Vilnius and operated on a semi-legal basis during the Soviet era was opened after reconstruction in 1993. Next to the mosque there is the Old Tatar Cemetery, which dates back several hundred years. As a sign of gratitude, a monumental stone to Duke Vytautas the Great was built by the Lithuanian Tatar community near the mosque. At present, the mosque is recognized as a historical and architectural monument of sacral significance and is the spiritual centre of Muslims in Lithuania. There are now four mosques in Lithuania, all of which are active.



Kaunas Mosque



Mosque of the Village of Forty Tatars
(built in 1930)

In 1993, the Karaite community of Lithuania regained the Karaim kenesas in Vilnius and in Trakai, which were closed in 1949 by the Soviet government.¹³²

¹³¹ Recently, it has been observed that immigrants from Islamic countries – Afghanistan, Lebanon, Turkey, Chechnya, etc. – started visiting the Kaunas Mosque, some of them have settled in Lithuania due to marriage, others are refugees, some come for a short visit to work or study (Lukoševičiūtė, 2014, pp. 185–186; Račius, 2011).

¹³² Karaim kenesas were closed due to the fact that supposedly the number of believers is only 15 people and there is no cleric, although at that time about 200 Karaims lived in Vilnius. In 2009, the building of the former school in Trakai was reconstructed and opened the door for cultural and social activities of Karaites (Voruta, 2010).



Karaite kenesa in Vilnius (opened in 1911)



Karaite kenesa in Trakai (opened in 1894,
first built in the late 14th century)

In 1992, the Catholics (Uniates) of the Ukrainian community of Lithuania regained the Church of the Holy Trinity which was closed and used as auxiliary premises in the Soviet era (15min, 2014).¹³³



Church of the Holy Trinity (Uniates) (built in 1516)

The Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Restoration of the Rights of Ownership of Citizens to the Existing Real Property adopted by the Lithuanian Parliament on 18 June

¹³³ At present, there are about 150 active Ukrainian national members of the Vilnius Uniate Church (15min, 2014).

1991 provided for the return of property expropriated by the Soviet government to its former owners or their descendants, or in the absence thereof, for the public needs. The revival of historic mansions has become of particular importance.

Thus, under this law, in 1993 Countess Laima Broel-Pliaterienė (1921–2015), a famous patroness, regained the Švėkšna Manor, which was mentioned in historic documents in the 15th century.¹³⁴ In 1940, the manor was nationalised by the Soviet authorities. On 8 October 1944, the Countess with her husband managed to move to the West (Germany, the USA), but her father-in-law, as well as many people of Lithuania, was exiled to Siberia and died there. Before the Soviet authorities came to Lithuania, the family archive was kept in the manor house, and included manuscripts in Lithuanian and a collection of valuable pieces of art (paintings, portraits). During the Soviet era the valuables were taken away. Although the manor was restored in 1964, the quality of the reconstruction works was very poor; thus, after the countess regained the manor in 1993, everything was restored once again by the efforts of the Countess herself. A decade ago, the manor was revived. Today, at the request of the owner, the manor is used for cultural activities and tourism (Kultūros paveldo departamentas, n.d., **Švėkšnos dvaras**; Stražnickas, 2019).



Švėkšna Manor

Under this law, Baron Antonas Rozenas – a descendant of the German dynasty of Rozens,

¹³⁴ The Pliateriai family, which descended from Westphalia (Germany and Switzerland), ruled the manor since 22 May 1766. Some members of this family, such as Emilija Pliaterytė and her cousin Cezaris, are known in the Lithuanian history as active participants in the 1831 uprising against the Tsarist Russia; thus, Emilia was named after the French national hero Jeanne d'Ark.

who preserved Lithuanian citizenship – regained the three-hundred-year-old Gačionys estate in the Rokiškis district (Kultūros paveldo departamentas, n.d., Gačionių dvaras). During the Soviet era, the Rozenai family was exiled, the manor was nationalized, and the premises were used for collective farm offices, apartments, warehouses, and even for keeping chickens. In 2006, Gačionys Manor with all its buildings and the park were revived (Kultūros paveldo departamentas, n.d., Gačionių dvaras).



Gačionys ,Manor

Another restored manor is in Krikštėnai, and has been mentioned since the 18th century as the property of Duke Ksaveras Bogušas. From the turn of the 20th century to 1940, the manor belonged to the family of Baron Ignas de Bondi of French origin, an admiral of Tsarist Russia. As the manor was expropriated after World War II, the Soviet authorities handed over the manor to the Soviet farm of Krikštėnai. Due to poor maintenance of the buildings, the manor quickly deteriorated and eventually became abandoned. In 1994, the manor was returned to the ownership of the heirs of the former owners, the de Bondi family. Fortunately, Krikštėnai Manor has been revived, its unique style has been restored and it is frequently visited by tourists (<https://www.pamatyklietuvoje.lt/details/krikstenu-dvaras/1975>).



Krikštėnai Manor (Source: www.plotai.lt/2416-krikstenu-dvaras.html)

Unfortunately, after several decades of Soviet rule, it is not always possible to find out the legal owners of immovable property. Thus, after reconstruction of historical objects by the state and private investors, most are used for museums, educational and environmental activities and tourism development. An example of such objects is one of the oldest Baroque ensembles, Liubavas Manor (in the historical documents mentioned since the 15th century), located near Vilnius (Liubavas, n.d.; Karosas, 2017).

Such revived objects also include the Rietavas Manor, which belonged to the family of the famous composer, patriot of the GDL, Duke Mykolas Kleopas Oginskis (1765–1833).¹³⁵ Despite the fact that in the mid-19th century the estate, which belonged to the Dukes Oginskiai, hosted the Museum of Cultural History, which currently holds about 2,500 archaeological and historical objects and other exhibits, the estate was constantly destroyed in part during the 20th century.¹³⁶ It holds book presentations, concerts, literature events, and conferences, and hosts the Oginskiai Cultural Heritage Society and a chamber theatre. Due to its historical significance, the manor is frequently visited by Lithuanian and foreign tourists

¹³⁵ Among a hundred memorial dates, in 2015 UNESCO (on the proposal of Lithuania, Poland and Belarus) celebrated the 250th anniversary of the birth of the composer, diplomat of the RTN, Mykolas Kleopas Oginskis, who in 1811 drafted a project of the independent state of Lithuania and submitted it to the Russian Emperor Alexander I. (Vaitekūnas, 2006, p. 124).

¹³⁶ For instance, during World War I, a large part of the valuable objects, musical instruments and works of art of the manor were taken to Germany; after 1926 the main building of the manor was demolished, whereas during the Soviet era the manor housed a Soviet technical school of agriculture.

(Kultūros paveldo departamentas, n.d., Rietavo dvaras.)

After restoration, the Kelmė Manor, built in the baroque style, which for 350 years was ruled by the Gruzewski family of Polish origin who were active supporters of the Reformation and played an important role in the 1831 uprising, was returned for the needs of society. The manor, which as early as the 18th century was famous for its nearly five thousand volume library, was converted into a poultry farm during the Soviet era, and the last family owning the manor was exiled to Siberia. Currently, the Kelmė Regional Museum takes care of the manor (Kultūros paveldo departamentas, n.d., Kelmės dvaras).



Kelmė Manor

The Renavas Manor, mentioned as early as the 16th century, has historical and cultural significance. The manor was ruled by Baron Antonijus (Antanas) Ronne (1794–1869); in the 1960s and 1970s the Narutavičiai brothers lived there. It was also once home to the future President of Poland, Gabrielius, and his older brother Stanislovas, who became a Signatory of the Lithuanian Act of Independence of 16 February 1918. Prior to the Soviet era, the manor was famous for its valuable collections of paintings and antiques, as well as ancient porcelain. In 1940 the manor was nationalized, and after World War II its buildings were used as many of the Lithuanian manors as farm offices, libraries, culture houses, etc. After restoration of the manor in the late 20th century, part of the premises with the library were used for various expositions (exhibitions of art, folk art, literature, ethnography) and other cultural events, including dissemination of cultural tourism.



Renavas Manor

In honour of the 1980 Nobel Prize winner in literature – Polish poet and literary critic of Lithuanian origin Czesław Miłosz (1911–2004), who considered himself a citizen of the RTN – in 1999 oak trees were planted in the park of the manor which belonged to his family in Šeteniai, and which during the Soviet era was nationalized and completely devastated.¹³⁷ This was done as a symbol of gratitude and recognition, with Miłosz personally taking part in the opening. Since then, a cultural centre named after him has been opened in the reconstructed manor house.

To date, the Lithuanian Register of Cultural Heritage includes 535 manors,¹³⁸ many of which are not only of historical but also multicultural significance. Currently, 35 manors with heritage status have been restored and opened to visitors, but the process of reviving the manors is still ongoing (Kultūros paveldo departamentas, n.d.). All historic manors are open to the public as cultural centres and preserve local traditions, crafts and folk art, perform museum and nature conservation activities, and develop tourism. In recent years a large number of historical manors have become objects of education not only for Lithuanian but also for foreign tourists.

¹³⁷ During the Soviet era, the manor house was turned into an apartment building with occasional residents who did not care about its condition, so soon the building was worn out to the extent that even its foundations were ruined. A similar fate befell the farm buildings, which in Soviet times were used as pig farms.

¹³⁸ Register of Cultural Heritage, <https://kvr.kpd.lt/#/static-search-results/dvar////////4b6379d5-e21f-4803-b65d-532ea5b-b76a8////////535>



Šeteniai Manor

(Source: <http://www.kedainiutvic.lt/turizmas/lt/objektai/nobelio-premijos-laureato-ceslovo-miloso-gimtaine>)

On 7 October 1991 Lithuania became a member of UNESCO and at the same time actively joined the organisation by promoting the culture of peace and diversity not only among nations but also within its own country. As a result, the Song and Dance Celebrations have been included in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (UNESCO Lietuvos nacionalinė komisija, n.d.).

Since the initial restoration of the state in 1989, Lithuanian Radio and Television (LRT) have played a significant role in forming a multicultural Lithuanian society (LRT, 2020, pp. 40–41). Today, the LRT takes an active position in creating weekly cultural programs in the languages of many ethnic communities living in the country, including “Kultūrų kryžkelė” (The Crossroads of Cultures) on TV, “Santara” on the radio and the like. The programs are designed to present the multicoloured cultures of the national communities of Lithuania and their development in the context of the long-term history of Lithuania and to discuss the daily life of these communities. The LRT report of 2019 states that during the year the LTR broadcast 173 hours of 150 programs in the languages of national communities. All ethnic communities independently create their programs, including the programme “Rusų gatvė” in Russian, “Vilniaus albumas” in Polish, “Vilniaus sąsiuvinis” in Belarusian, “Trembita” in Ukrainian, and “Menora” in Lithuanian by the Jewish of Lithuania. In 2019 Lithuanian Radio organized 697 programs in the languages of various national communities, devoting 348.5 hours to broadcast them. Some TV shows are already internationally recognized, e.g., the

show “Rusų gatvė” was the winner of the Grand-prix in 2012 in Prague in the festival of an international television and radio program in Russian. Gradually, TV cultural programs in the languages of Lithuanian national communities have become more and more familiar to their compatriots abroad. For example, the program “Vilniaus albumas”, which is created in Polish, organized a car trip on 3 May 2020 to Żalawa, the birthplace of the President of Poland J. Piłsudski, to commemorate the Constitution of 3 May 1791 of the RTN. This was attended not only by Lithuanian Poles and Lithuanians, but also by a large number of guests from Poland. Prominent figures of Lithuanian society and culture and guests from abroad interested in Lithuanian Jewish heritage are often invited to take part in the Lithuanian Jewish show “Menora”.

Under the European Parliament resolution of 15 April 2015 on the occasion of International Roma Day and in recognition of the memorial day of the Roma genocide during World War II (Bieliavskā, 2019), on June 2019 the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania passed a resolution commemorating the memorial day of the Roma genocide, which can be viewed as an important event for all the Lithuanian Roma community. It is hoped that implementation of this resolution will draw the attention of the public to the painful facts of Lithuanian history and will contribute to the openness of the Roma culture, the intercultural dialogue and elimination of stereotypes. The memorial day of the Roma genocide in Lithuania will be commemorated annually on the 2nd of August. According to statistics, in 2011 there were 2,115 Roma living in Lithuania.

Article 43 of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania declares that there is no state religion in Lithuania, and the State recognizes all traditional churches and religious organisations in Lithuania,¹³⁹ while other churches and religious organisations can legitimately act “provided that they have support in society, and their teaching and practices are not in conflict with the law and public morals”. All churches and religious organisations recognized in Lithuania can freely “proclaim their teaching, perform their ceremonies, and have houses of prayer, charity establishments, and schools for the training of priests” (Article 43 of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania). In 2011, in Lithuania there were 59 religious communities representing 11 religions, which are confessed by more than one thousand people each.

¹³⁹ The term “Lithuanian traditional churches and other religious organisations” includes not only Christian denominations, called churches, but also non-Christian traditional religions in Lithuania. Organisations are attributed to the category of traditional Lithuanian churches and religious organisations, based on their significance for formation and development of the state, their heritage into the national culture and the influence of individual national societies on religious life. At present, the rights of traditional churches and religious organisations in Lithuania were granted to the Roman Catholics, the Orthodox (Orthodox and Old Believers), Uniates (Greek Catholics), Evangelicals (Lutherans, Reformers, Baptists and Methodists), Judaists, Karaites, and Sunni Muslims (Plumpa, 2003; Ališauskienė, 2014, p. 13).

1.3.6.2. Lithuania, from multiculturalism towards multiculturalism

According to the data of the Lithuanian Department of Statistics, on 1 January 2018, 2.81 million people (Official Statistics Portal, 2018) lived in the country attributing themselves to 154 nationalities, but only 11 ethnic groups consisted of at least 1,000 or more people (Statistics Lithuania, 2011). Lithuania has a very small variety of ethnic composition: Lithuanians – 84.2 percent; Polish – 6.6 percent; Russians – 5.8 percent; Byelorussians – 1.2 percent; Ukrainians – 0.5 percent; and Jews, Tatars, Latvians, Germans, Gipsies, Karaites, Azerbaijanis, Georgians, Armenians, Moldovans and other nationalities together account for only 0.6 percent of all inhabitants of Lithuania.

On 1 January 2019, foreign nationals who resided in Lithuania made up 2.08% of all residents of Lithuania (European Migration Network, 2020); thus, traditionally, Lithuania is considered to be a relatively homogeneous European country characterised by stability of the national composition and small scale of arrival of foreigners. On the other hand, even small migration flows gradually change not only the population of the country and the demographic composition of the society, but also its ethnic structure, which, with time, for small countries including Lithuania, becomes a problematic issue of preservation of national identity. Thus, the immigration processes, if not properly regulated, can have not only positive, but also negative consequences; therefore, the state has to take into account these possible risks when shaping Lithuanian multiculturalism policy.

The number of migrants who arrive in Lithuania is constantly increasing. For instance, in 2011 1,670 foreign nationals settled in Lithuania, including: arrivals from the European Union countries – 500 people; and other countries – less than 1,200 people. In 2017, the total number of immigrants reached 10,200 people, with arrivals from the European Union – 700 people, and other countries – more than 9,500 people (see Table 5).

Table 5. Immigration to Lithuania in 2011–2017

Immigration from:	Year, people							Total number of people in 2011–2017
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	
European Union member states	503	738	671	658	813	751	700	4,834
Other states	1,170	1,748	2,365	4,108	2,934	5,204	9,513	27,042
Total immigration to Lithuania	1,673	2,486	3,036	4,766	3,747	5,955	10,213	31,876

Source: European Migration Network (2020).

The majority of immigrants to Lithuania are citizens of Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Latvia, Poland, Germany, and Romania. In 2017, in comparison with the previous period, immigrant flows increased from Ukraine (4,340 people), Belarus (2,714 people), India (336 people) and Syria (219 people). Since the beginning of 2018, there have been more than 49,000 foreigners living in Lithuania (European Migration Network, 2020), mainly from the countries which Lithuania has been associated with for the common cultural and historic period of 50 years within the Soviet Union (the common elements were the Russian language, general education programs, celebrations, competitions, festivals and sporting events). It can be reasonably asserted that modern Lithuania, like every other country, hosts people of different nations, races, and religions, who speak different languages and are in different social positions, and rely on different values and traditions in their everyday lives.

After the restoration of independence of Lithuania in 1990, the presence of foreigners legally staying in the territory of the country has been regulated in accordance with the norms of the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens; at the same time the state has assumed responsibility to create favourable conditions for new entrants to integrate into the political, social, economic and cultural life of Lithuania (*Valstybės žinios*, 1998, Nr. 115-3236). Upon entrenching legal provisions of the status of foreigners in Lithuania, the government further emphasized that the integration of foreigners into Lithuanian society is the responsibility of not only foreigners themselves, but also state institutions, which must ensure additional possibilities for them to enjoy human rights that are universally acknowledged. Said law prompted the Lithuanian society to become more interested in the development of global events, the peculiarities of the current migration processes, as well as traditions, customs, and religious diversity of the newly-arrived foreigners. The results of various studies show that nine out of ten people in the country have a positive attitude towards individuals of other ethnicities and believe that every culture is unique and respectful, that cultural diversity is a value, and that therefore all people of Lithuania, regardless of race, nationality, religious beliefs, gender and age, must have equal opportunities to cherish their cultural traditions (Vilmorus, 2003; Gražulis & Kojelytė, 2014b, p. 126).

According to the research “Intercultural Dialogue in Europe” carried out in all European countries in autumn 2007, the greatest interest in such dialogue was observed in Lithuania: 80% of the survey participants were “very interested” or “interested” in it (The Gallup Organisation, 2007, p. 11). In addition, the study revealed that 76% of the population of Lithuania have positive attitudes towards intercultural diversity, as the cultural life of the country, according to the survey participants, enriches people of other cultural origins (p. 6).

Many Lithuanians agree that a close intercultural dialogue reduces the possibility of culture shock – or, in other words, stressful situations – as Lithuanians understand that when they communicate with other nationals they can learn from it (Gražulis & Markuckienė, 2014b, p. 117). On the other hand, the research “Intercultural Dialogue in Europe” revealed that 51% or only every second resident of Lithuania has had a kind of communication with foreigners. In comparison, eight out of ten people from such countries as Luxembourg, Ireland, the United Kingdom and Austria have had communication experience with citizens of other countries, i.e., up to 1.6 times more than Lithuanians. Unfortunately, Lithuania, according to this indicator, is attributed to those European countries with the least communication with foreign nationals, and is only ahead of Bulgaria, Poland, Estonia and Romania (The Gallup Organisation, 2007, p. 5).

From a present-day perspective, the five-decade-long cultural isolation of the society and poor motivation to study foreign languages has become a serious obstacle to direct, live communication with foreigners. Although live intercultural communication is believed to reduce isolation of the society and contributes to the development of a person's multicultural competency, unfortunately, only one in three Lithuanians communicate with foreigners at least once or twice a year or have no experience of international communication.¹⁴⁰ As a result, many of them are not interested in multiculturalism issues. On the other hand, every second person in Lithuania has a permanent (several times a year) connection with foreigners, but such communication is usually associated with work relations, especially in higher positions. More than half of employees communicate with foreigners without leaving Lithuania; less than one third go to other countries to their partners once in a few years; and only leading management staff meet foreign partners abroad from several to several dozen times a year (Gražulis, 2016).¹⁴¹ Rare communication with foreigners, even the absence of such experience, together with the lack of communication skills in a foreign language, leads to fear of miscommunication and at the same time decreases self-confidence, which eventually becomes the greatest barrier to communication and increase the effect of a person's cultural isolation (Norvilienė, 2012; Gražulis & Markuckienė, 2014b).

Lack of intensive communication with foreigners can be considered a traditional feature of Lithuanians and is primarily related to the fact that until the 20th century a peasant

¹⁴⁰ Similar results are provided by the Lithuanian Department of Statistics on the situation in the public sector. E.g., in small municipalities of Lithuania in 2014 less than half of the employees contacted foreigners 1–2 times a year, while 50–75% of employees did not contact foreigners at all (Gražulis & Markuckienė, 2014a, p. 83). The survey data show that those working in the business sector have more experience of cooperation with foreigners in the work environment ($R^2 = 96.384$; $df = 6$; $p = 0.000$, $p < 0.01$).

¹⁴¹ Other specialists in Lithuania draw similar conclusions, e.g., analysis of frequency of communication with foreigners of 382 managers of small and medium-sized enterprises revealed that most of them have live meetings from several times a week to several times per year (Dabravalskytė & Vveinhardt, 2015, p. 38).

monocultural perception of the world dominated in Lithuania. This aspect along with the experiences of the Soviet era have so far had a negative impact on the development of multiculturalism. A clear example of this is the “Guidelines for the Lithuanian Migration Policy”, approved by the Government on 22 January 2014, which acknowledged that traditionally the society is characterised by the prevailing cultural isolation, which is considered to be one of the main hindrances to the development of multiculturalism (Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Resolution No. 29, cl. 11.8). This problem was already noted in 2003 by nearly half of the respondents who participated in the sociological research of Lithuanian tolerance profiles.

Although after the Restoration of Independence Lithuanians have succeeded in establishing personal and business relations with people from numerous countries and have recently expanded the geography of such relations, nonetheless today more than half of the Lithuanian communication with foreigners is first developed with people (partners) from the former socialist countries (see Table 6) whose cultural legacy (behaviour, customs) and organisational features of the iron curtain period are closer and more understandable (Gražulis, 2016, p. 69).

Research conducted in 2015–2016 revealed that every fifth Lithuanian communicated more closely with people from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, and every sixth with people from Latvia and Estonia, whereas a similar number of Lithuanians communicated with people from Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. Every third Lithuanian in the last decade had an increased interest in communicating closer with representatives from Western European countries (France, Germany, Spain, Great Britain), Northern Europe (Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden) and Southern Europe (Italy, Greece and other countries) not only in terms of working visits, but also in terms of tourism. More and more Lithuanians are interested in the historical and cultural heritage of these countries and in the present-day life. It can be noticed that the geography of the countries visited by Lithuanians is constantly expanding and the direction of present travels covers all continents of the world.

Table 6. Geography of communication of Lithuanians with foreigners from other countries

Destination	Percent
Eastern Europe (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus)	19.7
Baltic states (Latvia, Estonia,)	16.4
Middle Europe (Poland, Czechia, Hungary, Slovakia)	15.8
West Europe (France, Germany, Spain, Great Britain)	12.4
North Europe (Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden)	11.0

South Europe (Italy, Greece and other)	6.6
North America (Canada, USA)	3.8
Far East (China, South Korea, Japan, Philippines)	2.4
Africa (Libya, Sudan, Nigeria and other)	2.0
Near East (Iran, Iraq, Syria, Israel, Egypt, Qatar, Lebanon)	1.9
Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia	1.2
South America (Brazil, Argentina, Columbia, Venezuela)	0.9
Other	5.9

Source: compiled by the authors based on the results of research carried out in 2015–2016.

Despite the growing possibilities to develop personal multicultural skills, so far, there are problems with the development of multicultural competencies in the daily environment, especially in the study and work environment. Thus, the results of some research conducted in Lithuania show that teachers lack multicultural education competencies, schools pay too little attention to multicultural diversity studies and more help is needed for children of national minorities in order to integrate them into the Lithuanian spoken environment (Reingardė, Vasiliauskaitė, & Erentaitė, 2010, pp. 51–52; Council of Europe, 2019). The situation is similar in the work environment, as employees are not always provided with the necessary possibilities to participate in experiential trainings, seminars or internships, related to the issues of multiculturalism, or the development of competencies abroad. Only every third student and one in four employees have used the opportunity to systematically develop their multicultural skills. Although the research data suggest that the range of intercultural contacts depends directly on the education, nonetheless, multicultural competency has become a norm only for those students who participate in Erasmus mobility and other training programs. For these reasons, many people have to take care of the development of multicultural competencies themselves or via the help of their colleagues (Gražulis & Markuckienė, 2014b, pp. 113–117; Dabravalskytė & Vveinhardt, 2015, p. 39).

Lack of experience of communication with foreigners has a negative effect on the attitude of people in Lithuania towards the need to develop their multicultural skills. Despite the fact that Lithuanians do not consider a person's race and gender as essential for communication with foreigners, the nationality of foreigners and the language can still be a serious obstacle to communication. Finally, other issues of communication with other nationals include a different temperament, differently perceived informal communication style, ignorance of the culture of other nationals, and therefore the lack of interest in these circumstances eventually becomes an important reason for causing intolerance outbreaks (Gražulis & Kojelytė, 2014a, p. 84).

An action plan for the development of integration policy for aliens adopted in 2014 provides for three priority objectives:

- integration of foreigners from third countries into the Lithuanian society,
- enhancing tolerance of the society towards foreigners,
- development of interinstitutional cooperation in the area of integration of foreigners (Ministry of Social Security and Labour, 2014).

Thus, more than two decades after entrenching the provisions of basic integration of foreigners in legislation, the plan of action still addresses such problems as public tolerance issues and existing gaps in cooperation between institutions. For example, the functions of state/municipalities and NGOs in the integration of foreigners so far have not been fully distinguished, there are serious unresolved issues in cooperation and coordination of this activity, proper teaching of the Lithuanian language is not ensured and, as a consequence, employment issues are not adequately tackled (Refugees in Lithuania, 2015).

In addition to the above-mentioned problems of developing multiculturalism, experts of the Advisory Committee of the Council of Europe, assessing Lithuania's reports on the implementation of the resolutions of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, in 2015 emphasized that the most acute problems include incompleteness of the legal framework for the protection of national minorities, first of all surrounding the absence of laws on protection of national minorities which would guarantee the fundamental rights of this group of individuals to education, culture and the use of minority languages in public life. Unfortunately, this issue was also brought up in the Resolution of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe of 27 March 2019 CM/ResCMN(2019)4. The resolution proposes, among other things:

- to improve the legal framework regarding the spelling of names of representatives of national minorities;
- to ensure that the education system deepens the knowledge of the majority about peculiarities of the cultures of national minorities, their traditions and history, languages and religions.

The enumerated problems of integration of national minorities hinder the development of multiculturalism in Lithuania; therefore, it can be reasonably asserted that Lithuania is still making only the first, though essential, steps towards comprehension and management of cultural diversity.

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