

# THE MEANING OF WORLD WAR II AND AUSCHWITZ FOR LITHUANIA



R. Krulikauskienė, 2014

# WORLD WAR II

Jean Paul Richter: “Our memories are the only *paradise* from which we can never be expelled.” Some memories couldn't be thought of like paradise but they are a part of live history

## WWII 2 occupations of Lithuania

1940, June 15th Soviet occupation. Lithuanian State lost independence, economic, political, cultural and social life was totally ruined. A huge part of Lithuanian people were sent to exile to Siberia.

1941, June 22nd Nazi occupation. Holocaust. Almost all Jewish community (92 – 94%) and all gipsies (roma) were exterminated.

The first Soviet occupation period in 1940–1941 and the second one in 1944-1990 are studied by The Subcommittee for the evaluation of the Soviet crimes. The Subcommittee for the evaluation of Nazi crimes is responsible for the period in 1941–1944 of Nazi occupation and Holocaust research.



- Historical research is an ongoing process in the International Commission. There are conferences, seminars and projects organized. Discussions in society and the research can lead to the objective evaluation of the topic. Close investigation of Nazi and Soviet regimes' crimes gives an opportunity to present Lithuania with sociological and historical researches made in Western countries in the past 50 years. It is the way to eliminate the isolation and dissociation of historical information that was common to the Soviet times.
- Two mainstreams of opinions:
  1. 1941 – 1944 period is more important for those who suffered from Nazi occupation.
  2. Soviet occupation is more important for people who suffered from deportations, political persecution,

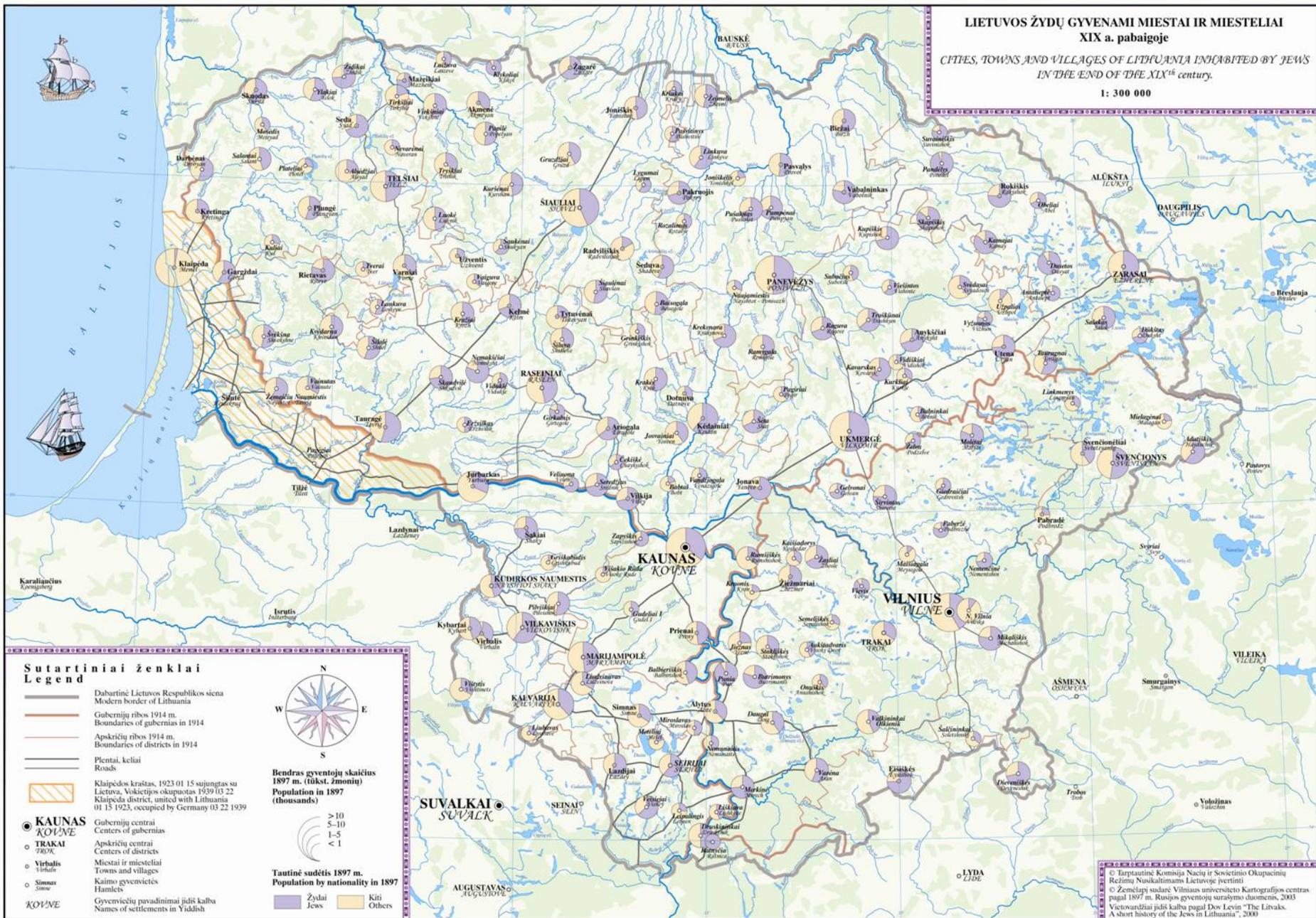


LIETUVOS ŽYDŲ GYVENAMI MIESTAI IR MIESTELIAI

XIX a. pabaigoje

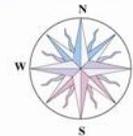
CITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES OF LITHUANIA INHABITED BY JEWS  
IN THE END OF THE XIX<sup>th</sup> century.

1: 300 000



Sutartiniai ženklai  
Legend

- Dabartinė Lietuvos Respublikos siena  
Modern border of Lithuania
- Gubernijų ribos 1914 m.  
Boundaries of gubernias in 1914
- Apskričių ribos 1914 m.  
Boundaries of districts in 1914
- Pientai, keliai  
Roads
- Klaipėdos kraštas, 1923 01 15 sujungtas su Lietuva, Vokietijos okupuotas 1939 03 22  
Klaipėda district, united with Lithuania 01 15 1923, occupied by Germany 03 22 1939
- KAUNAS  
KOŪNE  
Gubernijų centrai  
Centers of gubernias
- TRAKAI  
TRAKY  
Apskričių centrai  
Centers of districts
- VILKAVIŠKIS  
VILKAVIŠKIS  
Miestai ir miesteliai  
Towns and villages
- VILNIAUS  
VILNIAUS  
Kaimo gyvenvietės  
Hamlets
- SIMONAS  
SIMONAS  
Gyvenviečių pradininiai jidiš kalba  
Names of settlements in Yiddish



Bendras gyventojų skaičius  
1897 m. (tūkst. žmonių)  
Population in 1897  
(thousands)



Tautinė sudėtis 1897 m.  
Population by nationality in 1897



© Tarptautinė Komisija Nacių ir Sovietinio Okupacijų  
Rezimų Nusikaltimams Lietuvoje įvertinti  
© Žemėlapių sudarė Vilniaus universiteto Kartografijos centras  
pagal 1897 m. Rusijos gyventojų surašymo duomenis, 2003  
Vietovardžiai jidiš kalba pagal Dov Levin "The Litvaks.  
A short history of the Jews in Lithuania", 2000



# Auschwitz

- This concentration and extermination camp is well-known in Lithuania but not because of the great number of Lithuanians as victims. It's rather a symbol of all the crimes against humanity.
- Students are taught about Auschwitz in History and Ethics lessons.
- There is a number of lesson plans and methodical guidances given for different subject lessons and different grades. Some groups of creative teachers have made lessons' plans (Lithuanian, English, History, Art, Ethics, Mathematics) The main topic which integrates all different subjects is human values.
- Auschwitz is mentioned as one of the places where crime against humanity took its heights.



# Main principles of integrated lessons



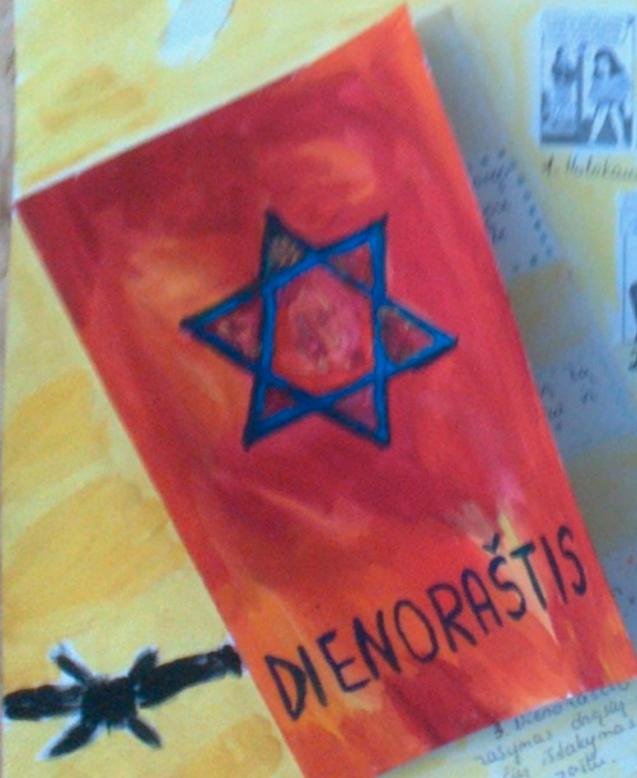
New pedagogical approach – from history learning to personal and social changes focusing on the development of system of values, attitudes, knowledge and skills.

Multidisciplinary approach – to present historical information in the context of other subjects: social sciences, literature, ethics, religion, arts, etc.

Individualising and contextualising history – to show the crimes of the Nazi and Soviet occupation regimes in the broader historical context, teaching to estimate the repressions not only by figures and facts but also by people's destinies.



# HANNA



1. Mėtuokaitė parduota, iš paimtos parduotuvės



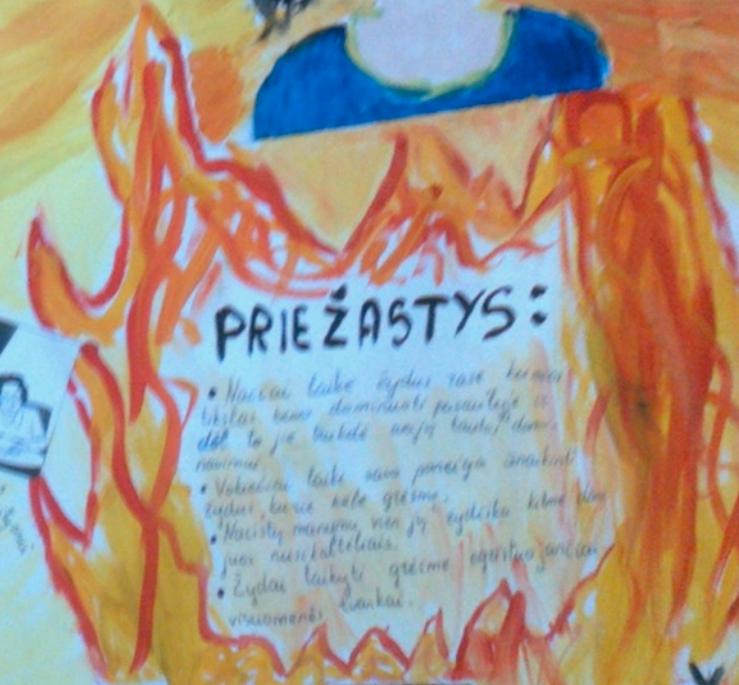
2. Kankinamą deplėvą gyventojai ragavo...  
vėdinti, su...  
lyginti su...  
amblioziną gyve...  
nėmė



4. Tėvelis, dėmesys...  
mūšiai, karys...  
šaukiamas



5. Mėnuo...  
rašymas...  
šaukiamas...  
šaukiamas...  
šaukiamas...



## PRIEŽASTYS:

- Nacistai laikė žydus rasės kankinamais, tiksliai buvo dominuoti pasaulio...  
dėl to jie turėjo aną...  
naivumą
- Vokietija laikė savo ponia...  
kankinamą...  
gėsmę.
- Nacistų mąstymu nėra jėgų...  
juos nušlavė...
- Žydai laikėsi...  
vismomentė...  
Lankai.

Jewish people believed  
another day and  
Freedom coming

2 grupė: Kestutis  
Greta G., Greta M., Erika V., Vytas



# Auschwitz witnesses

- People, who survived Holocaust are not eager to talk about Auschwitz for several reasons.
- The biggest part of Lithuanian Jews were exterminated in Lithuania, shooting them straight in the neighbourhood, nearest forests of the villages and small towns. Vilnius, Kaunas and Siauliai ghettos were liquidated in 1943 and 1944 and that small number of people who survived up to the liquidation, were sent to Stuthoff and Klooga (Estonia) concentration camps. The biggest number of ghetto residents were shot down in Lithuania.
- Activist and Holocaust Survivor Renée Firestone
- <http://furtherglory.wordpress.com/2014/04/06/renee-firestones-shoah-testimony/>



# Tolerance Education Centres about Auschwitz

- One of the main goals of the Commission is to educate society – to make public and disseminate the generated information, to inform citizens and students of all age groups about the crimes of totalitarian regimes, and their aftereffects to Lithuanian society and international community.
- The International Commission as a part of Teaching about the Crimes of Totalitarian Regimes, Prevention of Crimes against Humanity and Tolerance Education Programme, together with the Tolerance Education Centres since 2003 annually organizes the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, inviting all schools, local communities and Holocaust survivors to join the national conference in Radviliškis. Most of the films, presentations are about Lithuanian Jewish community tragedy, but every year there are several presentations about Auschwitz and 27th of January, 1945, Liberation of this concentration camp.



# Butterflies

- More than 80 Lithuanian schools commemorated International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 26-27 January with the "Butterfly Project."
- The project, initiated in 2012 was meant to commemorate the 1.5 million children who perished in the Holocaust. Lithuanian teachers were encouraged to talk with their students about the tragic fate of the children, both from Lithuania and across Europe, who died during the Holocaust.

Students observed the commemoration of International Holocaust Remembrance Day with a variety of different activities, including multi-subject lessons, post-film discussions, and historical source analysis.



# Butterflies exhibition



- The butterflies made during the Project could be found in Washington Holocaust museum, Yad Washem, Houston Holocaust museum. The Exhibition has been travelling for two years round the schools and other institutions in Lithuania, and right now it is in the UK emabssy, Vilnius.



[www.memorialsites.lt](http://www.memorialsites.lt)

## Recommendations and lessons plans made by the participants.

- Project Partner: Auschwitz – Birkenau State Museum
- Project was implemented on the basis of European Commission “Europe for citizens” programme Action 4 – Active European Remembrance. The aim of this action to preserve the memory of the past, to commemorate the victims of Nazism and Stalinism, to equip contemporary and future generations with knowledge and deeper understanding of the events in concentration camps and the other mass murder places and to define the inducement of those events. By preserving the sites and archives associated with deportations to honour the memory of the victims of Nazism and Stalinism and to reveal the origin of European integration and its future.

7 days spent in Auschwitz changed the attitudes and encouraged to be actively involved in educational activities of Commission.



# Auschwitz ABC

- *One of the ways to give information;*
- *Students have to find the most important things for each letter of the alphabet;*
- *Students can cooperate, share the material, discuss;*
- *It is easier to compare the results of students' work (the same form of presentation)*
- *It is possible to use the presentations for future studies.*

# Uniformos



<http://www.scrapbookpages.com/auschwitzscrapbook/history/articles/Selection.html>

Kalinių žymėjimas koncentracijos lageriuose

	Politiniai	Nusikaltėliai	Emigrantai	Jehovos liudytojai	Homo-seksualai	Asocialūs	Romai
Pagrindinės spalvos							
Recidyvistai							
Starfkompanie							
Žydai							

Dear Teacher,



I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no man should witness:

Gas chambers built by LEARNED engineers; Children poisoned by EDUCATED physicians; Infants killed by TRAINED nurses; Women and babies shot and burned by HIGH SCHOOL and COLLEGE graduates.

So I am suspicious of Education.

My request is: Help your students become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns.

Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human.

Haim Ginott

Teacher and Child, New York: MacMillan, 1972, p. 317

# The Question

*The Frankfurt judge, who had heard endless protestations about irresistible orders from higher authorities, was amazed by Dr. Lingens' testimony. "Do you wish to say," he asked, "that everyone could decide for himself to be either good or evil in Auschwitz?"*

*"That is exactly what I wish to say," Dr. Lingens answered.*