HISTORY

The Darkest Page in the History of Lithuanian Journalism: anti-Semitism in Legal Press During the Second Half of 1941

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Abstract. *There is a saying of warfare: inter arma silent musae – when arms speak, muses are silent. And yet some Lithuanian journalists had found their inspiration even in 1941 – when Lithuania was at the epicenter of war and the Holocaust. Later on, this period will be defined as the darkest page in the history of Lithuanian journalism,[1] because the genocide of the Jews had been accompanied by an outbreak (on a scale previously unseen) of anti-Semitism in Lithuanian press. It is a well-known but little-studied case. Moreover, usually anti-Semitism within the press was interpreted only as an integral part of the Nazi propaganda in Lithuania. It is not surprising, since this already mythical concept appears as a "phantom," most often when someone wishes to employ easily understandable arguments for justification or explanation.*

Political activists sought to restore the independence of Lithuania in the summer of 1941. It was the main reason why they also rebuilt press organizations in the country. Initially, it was certainly not a Nazi propaganda project. Therefore, the same Lithuanian activists could be held responsible for the escalation of hate aimed at Jews as much as the Germans. On the other hand, Lithuanian anti-Semitism can be seen in many ways: as a form

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[1]   TRUSKA, Liudas. *Lietuviai ir žydai nuo XIX a. pabaigos iki 1941 m. birželio: antisemitizmo Lietuvoje raida.* Vilnius: Vilniaus pedagoginis universitetas, 2005, p. 277.

of revenge, a collaboration strategy or an uncritical adoption of totalitarian Nazi rhetoric, finally, as an integral part of Lithuanian nationalism or National Socialism – a pragmatic ideology used to achieve political goals.

So, this essay revolves around two main questions: who and why published the anti-Semitic writings within Lithuanian press in 1941? Study findings are based on a combination of primary sources and secondary literature. This study was also supplemented by an analysis of hundreds of anti-Semitic articles (their headlines and content) published June 24-December 31, 1941. The purpose of this analysis is to characterize the discourse of anti-Semitism in Lithuanian press. Our study seeks to identify the authors of these publications and their sources, determine the most common topics and genres, as well as to see whether there was a proposition (direct or indirect) to prosecute and use physical violence or even murder Jewish individuals.

Keywords: journalism, press, anti-Semitism, the Holocaust, Lithuania.

1. Introduction

During the Soviet occupation, the Holocaust was one of the purposely-forgotten subjects of the history of World War II in Lithuania. Only after the restoration of independence, Lithuanian historians began to actively study the Jewish genocide. We can agree that now it is evidently the most explored topic of the Second World War – both globally and in the country.[2] The devastating events of the Shoah and the active role played by Lithuanian collaborators during the massacre led historians to explore the preconditions of the Holocaust, as well as to study Lithuanian-Jewish relations in general, starting with the end of the 19th century. Scientific articles, monographs, memoirs and diaries on this subject are counted in hundreds. If viewed from this perspective, it is strange that the anti-Semitic press has been so little researched. The negative attitude of the media toward the Jews is presented in a number of monographs, but only a few historians actually have analyzed the

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[2]　VAREIKIS, Vygantas. "Kontroversiniai Antrojo pasaulinio karo vertinimai." In PO-CYTĖ, Silva et al. *Antrojo pasaulinio karo pabaiga Rytų Prūsijoje: faktai ir istorinės įžvalgos.* Klaipėda, 2009, pp. 11-34.

content of these publications, among them Linas Venclauskas,[3] Algis Kasparavičius,[4] Alfonsas Eidintas,[5] Liudas Truska.[6] These and many other studies were used in preparing for this research and forming its opening parts.

The first part of this article is dedicated to present the historical context and to identify the potential causes of the anti-Semitic campaign during 1941. So, it will bring out the evolution and essential characteristics of the hatred aimed at Jews in Lithuania, the variation of motives and arguments of Lithuanian anti-Semites until the Holocaust. This chapter begins with a brief introduction to the international concept and history of anti-Semitism.

Authors of the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* define anti-Semitism as a hatred of Jews as a group or of "the Jew" as a concept. The term was first coined in the late 1870s, and since then it has come to be used with reference to all types of Jew-hatred, both historical and modern.[7] It is important to emphasize that not all critique of Jews must be considered as a manifestation of hatred or discrimination. Vytautas Kavolis proposed a broader explanation of the concept – we can consider a statement to be anti-Semitic if: (a) Jews are distinguished from other ethnic and religious groups, and considered to be the greatest source of evil; (b) Jews are blamed on the basis of their religion or race; (c) Jews are accused of an extremely powerful conspiracy to dominate or exploit others; (d) It is required, for these mentioned reasons, to isolate Jews,

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[3]   VENCLAUSKAS, Linas. "Žydų stereotipas laikraštyje 'Į laisvę.'" *Akiračiai*, 2002, no. 8 (342), pp. 6-8; VENCLAUSKAS, Linas. "Žydų stereotipas laikraštyje 'Į laisvę.'" *Akiračiai*, 2002, no. 9 (343), p. 6, 7, 12, 13.

[4]   KASPARAVIČIUS, Algis. "From the Lithuanian Press About the Jews During the Nazi Occupation 1941-1942." In: LEVINSON, Joseph. *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania*. Vilnius: Vaga, 2006, pp. 225-228.

[5]   EIDINTAS, Alfonsas. *Žydai, lietuviai ir holokaustas*. Vilnius: Vaga, 2002, pp. 215-226.

[6]   TRUSKA, Liudas. "Tautinis atgimimas ir istorija: straipsnių rinkinys". Vilnius: *Edukologija*, 2012, pp. 189-233.

[7]   ROZETT, Robert; SPECTOR, Shmuel. *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*. New York: Facts on File, 2000, p. 112.

to segregate them from a community, and the same is not requested of other ethnic groups.[8]

V. Kavolis tried to offer a universal definition, but it is important to note that anti-Semitism is not a modern phenomenon and that it has a certain distinction: through the ages, anti-Semitism was largely based on religious discrimination, while in modern times it was deliberately used for political and economic reasons. It is well known that only at the end of the 19th century anti-Semites started to use the racial argument, which was based on the new ideas of evolution posited by the English naturalist Charles Darwin, who himself never meant them to leave the realm of science; included in this new form of anti-Semitism was the idea that Jews were responsible for the world's troubles because of their race.[9] At that time, organized anti-Semitic movements began to emerge in Germany and France. However, Hannah Arendt observes that the only direct and real consequence of these anti-Semitic movements was not Nazism, but, on the contrary, Zionism, which (at least in the form of Western ideology) was a kind of a counter-ideology, an "answer" to anti-Semitism.[10]

At all times, anti-Semitism has been expressed through various myths. In modern times, one of the most popular, influential and bizarre was the myth of the *Jewish World Conspiracy*. It has been based on idea that Jews use their incredible political and economic influence to achieve total domination over the world. Anti-Semites even produced pseudo-evidence for these claims – the infamous *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. At the beginning of the 20th century, *The Protocols* were translated into dozens of languages and later used by the Nazis as "proof" against the Jews in Germany.

After the Great War, German Jews (who made up a small minority in the country) were accused for the national shame and defeat in this war.

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8   KAVOLIS, Vytautas. *Žmogus istorijoje*. Vilnius: Vaga, 1994, p. 544.
9   ROZETT, Robert; SPECTOR, Shmuel. *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*. New York: Facts on File, 2000, p. 113.
10   ARENDT, Hannah. *Totalitarizmo ištakos*. Vilnius: Tyto alba, 2001, p. 13.

The democratic Weimar Republic was nicknamed as the "Jewish Republic." The Nazis had predicted that anti-Semitic propaganda would attract a considerable number of supporters and they made attempts to exploit these anti-Semitic feelings in Germany from the beginning of their ordeals. Joseph Goebbels founded a weekly *Der Angriff* (*The Attack*) in 1927, and violent anti-Semitism permeated the pages of that newspaper – a recurring slogan was *Deutschland erwache, Jude verrecke!* ("Germany awake, Jewry be dammed!") – the Jews became scapegoats for all of Germany's and the world's problems.[11] On the other hand, it was not only an attempt to take advantage of widespread hatred for political purposes. According to André Gerrits, Adolf Hitler was among the many contemporaries during the early 1920s who actually believed that the *Jewish World Conspiracy* was neither an ominous idea nor a pending threat – it was real, as was supposedly proven by what was actually happening in Europe.[12]

Eventually, anti-Semitism became a part of the German state ideology. Nazi conception was based on the myth of *Jewish Communism*, also known as *Jewish Bolshevism* or *Judeo-Bolshevism* – this was a version of the *Jewish World Conspiracy* theory. "The myth elaborated on traditional anti-Jewish images: Jews as a mystical, subversive sect, set on undermining and controlling Christian society. But the myth was more than just a modern variant of an ancient prejudice. The notion of *Jewish Communism* combined traditional, religiously inspired anti-Jewish sentiments with radical 19th and 20th century anti-Semitic ideas. Moreover, the *Jewish Communism* myth came in various shapes and forms: from the most banal and viciously racist interpretations to more sophisticated, even quasi-scholarly explanations."[13] The identification of Jews with

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[11] WELCH, David. *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda*. 2nd Edition. London: Routledge, 2002, p. 13.

[12] GERRITS, André. *The Myth of Jewish Communism: a Historical Interpretation*. Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2009, p. 12.

[13] GERRITS, André. *The Myth of Jewish Communism: a Historical Interpretation*. Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2009, p. 195.

communism was one of the most popular stereotypes of the first half of the 20th century in Europe and its central-eastern region.

What was the situation in Lithuania – had anti-Semitism thrived in the country? Juozas Keliuotis, who was a prominent Lithuanian journalist and scholar, a contemporary of the Holocaust, in his memoirs argued that neither he nor Lithuanians had ever been anti-Semites, on the contrary – during the interwar period, the old liberal intelligentsia always opposed to "the requirements raised by young people to the Jews."[14] Mr. Keliuotis was partly right. First of all, the Lithuanian ruling elite actually tolerated Jews and ensured their safety. According to Liudas Truska, a number of prominent scholars (E. Medelsohn, D. Levin, S. Sužiedėlis, J. Bluvšteinas, S. Ginaitė) agree that the situation of Jews in Lithuania was better than in other Eastern European countries: "the Jewish question" never was an object of maniacal attention, as it had been in Poland, Romania or Hungary; the Government of Lithuania always remained committed to the principle of legal equivalence.[15]

On the other hand, the image of Jews in Lithuania was not only covered by universal European myths, prejudices and stereotypes, but also influenced by economic competition, cultural isolation, later – acculturation and integration, and these are only a part of the circumstances.[16] In the same memoirs of Keliuotis,[17] we can also find some of his anti-Jewish statements[18] that could be easily considered as anti-Semi-

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[14] KELIUOTIS, Juozas. *Mano autobiografija: atsiminimai*. Vilnius: Lietuvos rašytojų sąjungos leidykla, 2003, p. 404.

[15] TRUSKA, Liudas. *Lietuviai ir žydai nuo XIX a. pabaigos iki 1941 m. birželio: antisemitizmo Lietuvoje raida*. Vilnius: Vilniaus pedagoginis universitetas, 2005, p. 204.

[16] VAREIKIS, Vygantas; ŠIAUČIŪNAITĖ-VERBICKIENĖ, Jurgita. "Žydo įvaizdis Lietuvos visuomenėje." In LEMPERTIENĖ, Larisa; ŠIAUČIŪNAITĖ-VERBICKIENĖ, Jurgita. *Žydai Lietuvoje: istorija, kultūra, paveldas*. Vilnius: R. Paknio leidykla, 2009, p. 89.

[17] After the war, Keliuotis spent all the remaining years of his life in the Soviet Union. It is interesting that the author wrote these memories long after the Holocaust and the book was published only in 2003, 20 years after the author's death.

[18] For example: "Many Lithuanian politicians, administrators and traders were systematically bribed and demoralized by the Jewish capitalists. No one was afraid to take bribes from the Jews because they strictly complied with their clever strategy and 'ethics' of bribery."

tism.[19] Before World War II, Keliuotis had expressed a similar hostile attitude toward Jews – in his book *The Social Ideals*,[20] the author prophetically argued[21] that the Jews were provoking frustration and that sooner or later Lithuanians will request a review of Jewish rights in the country.[22] Of course, such statements are far from the "angriest" form of anti-Semitism; however, it is important to remember that Mr. Keliuotis was not only a Catholic-minded nationalist, but also an intellectual.

The modern form of anti-Semitism emerged among Lithuanians at the end of the 19th century. Their national leaders had spread the idea that only a person who prefers to speak Lithuanian could be a fullfledged member of the nation. They also motivated Lithuanians to take root in crafts and trade – areas that had been dominated by Jews.[23] According to Joachim Tauber, despite that the young Lithuanian nation realized its identity primarily through language, most of the Jewish population could not speak Lithuanian, so it was an important issue for the nationalists, and they easily identified it as an insult or Jewish disloyalty. So, a certain degree of antagonism was inevitable because Lithuanians had not only developed a national movement, but later they also established a national state.

Economic competition was also intense among these ethnic groups all the time – rising young Lithuanian entrepreneurs faced the long-es-

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[19] KELIUOTIS, Juozas. *Mano autobiografija: atsiminimai*. Vilnius: Lietuvos rašytojų sąjungos leidykla, 2003, p. 404.

[20] KELIUOTIS, Juozas. *Visuomeninis idealas: visuomeninės filosofijos metmenys*. Kaunas: Naujoji Romuva, 1935, p. 200.

[21] This book was published in 1935, when Mr. Keliuotis began to teach at Vytautas Magnus University. By the way, in the same year, the Nuremberg Laws were introduced at the annual Rally of the NSDAP, and Nazis finally laid the official grounds for the persecution of Jews in Germany.

[22] KELIUOTIS, Juozas. *Visuomeninis idealas: visuomeninės filosofijos metmenys*. Kaunas: Naujoji Romuva, 1935, pp. 96-97.

[23] VAREIKIS, Vygantas. "Antisemitizmas Lietuvoje: XIX a. antroji pusė – XX a. pirmoji pusė." In TRUSKA, Liudas; VAREIKIS, Vygantas. *Holokausto prielaidos: antisemitizmas Lietuvoje*. Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2004, p. 38.

tablished Jewish economic structure in the cities and towns.[24] A negative stereotype of Jews as exploiters was based exactly on the belief that they, as members of a particular community, had been disproportionately well-established in the economic and social spheres of Lithuania. So, it is not surprising that during the period from 1883 to 1940 the aspect of economic competition was one of the most popular in the anti-Semitic articles of Lithuanian press.[25] The relevance of this issue had been unstable and cyclical, but successfully exploited by both Lithuanian liberals and conservatives.[26]

In the fourth decade, the journal *The Business* became undoubtedly the largest and most notorious mouthpiece of the economic, as well as the cultural-political statements of anti-Semitism in the country.[27] It was popular among the readers – initially, the circulation of the weekly was five thousand copies, and it was later doubled. At the time, Lithuanians proposed two different solutions to "the Jewish question": although the radicals were not satisfied with the evolutionary way and demanded to take more stringent measures, to "reform" the cities, but the government decided to uplift the Lithuanian business gradually.[28]

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[24] TAUBER, Joachim. "Antisemitizmas Vokietijoje ir Lietuvoje." In TRUSKA, Liudas; VAREIKIS, Vygantas. *Holokausto prielaidos: antisemitizmas Lietuvoje.* Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2004, p. 11.

[25] VENCLAUSKAS, Linas. *Moderniojo lietuviško antisemitizmo genezė ir raida (1883-1940 m.).* Daktaro disertacija. 2008, pp. 220-223. [interaktyvus]. Prieiga per internetą: <http://vddb.library.lt/fedora/get/LT-eLABa-0001:E.02~2008~D_20090218_103525-81817/DS.005.0.02.ETD> [žiūrėta 2015 m. rugpjūčio 8 d.].

[26] VENCLAUSKAS, Linas. *Moderniojo lietuviško antisemitizmo genezė ir raida (1883–1940 m.).* Daktaro disertacija. 2008, p. 220. [interaktyvus]. Prieiga per internetą: <http://vddb.library.lt/fedora/get/LT-eLABa-0001:E.02~2008~D_20090218_103525-81817/DS.005.0.02.ETD> [žiūrėta 2015 m. rugpjūčio 8 d.].

[27] KASPARAVIČIUS, Algimantas. *Lietuviai ir žydai katastrofos išvakarėse: iššūkiai ir įvaizdžiai.* In SIRUTAVIČIUS, Vladas; STALIŪNAS, Darius. "Kai ksenofobija virsta prievarta: lietuvių ir žydų santykių dinamika XIX a. – XX a. pirmojoje pusėje." Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos instituto leidykla, 2005, p. 127.

[28] TRUSKA, Liudas. "Lietuviai ir žydai nuo XIX a. pabaigos iki 1941 m. birželio: antisemitizmo Lietuvoje raida." Vilnius: Vilniaus pedagoginis universitetas, 2005, p. 138.

The significant rise of anti-Semitism in Lithuania was influenced not only by the growing commercial and industrial layer, but also by the strengthening of Jew-hatred in Germany, as well as in Poland.[29] However, in contrast to Germany, there was no cult of the *Overman* in Lithuania, nor racist theories that brought the notion of a "superior race" over others.[30] Lithuanians had not formed a complete or extreme anti-Jewish ideology, too. However, after the restoration of the diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Poland in 1938, anti-Semitism was made of something more than just national economic propaganda. The Jews gradually became the most important internal enemy of Lithuanian nationalism.[31] The geopolitical situation in Europe was threatening for Lithuania, so the Jews became a scapegoat; during 1938-1939, the attacks against Jews took place in the country almost daily.[32]

In 1940, the independent Republic of Lithuania was occupied and incorporated into the Soviet Union. It was a crucial year (June 15, 1940 – June 22, 1941) for the Lithuanian Jews as well. During this period, there was a strong wave of anti-Semitism in the country; however, the hatred of Jews was limited to a single argument – accusations of *Jewish Bolshevism*. It is interesting that during 1940-1941, the Jews suffered from the Soviet repressions even more in proportion than the Lithuanians,[33] but, of course, Nazi Germany was still a greater threat to their survival

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[29] VAREIKIS, Vygantas. *Antisemitizmas Lietuvoje: XIX a. antroji pusė – XX a. pirmoji pusė.* In: TRUSKA, Liudas; VAREIKIS, Vygantas. "Holokausto prielaidos: antisemitizmas Lietuvoje." Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2004, p. 53.

[30] VAREIKIS, Vygantas. "Antisemitizmas Lietuvoje: XIX a. antroji pusė – XX a. pirmoji pusė." In: TRUSKA, Liudas; VAREIKIS, Vygantas. *Holokausto prielaidos: antisemitizmas Lietuvoje.* Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2004, p. 21.

[31] TRUSKA, Liudas. *Lietuviai ir žydai nuo XIX a. pabaigos iki 1941 m. birželio: antisemitizmo Lietuvoje raida.* Vilnius: Vilniaus pedagoginis universitetas, 2005, p. 138.

[32] VAREIKIS, Vygantas. "Antisemitizmas Lietuvoje: XIX a. antroji pusė – XX a. pirmoji pusė." In: TRUSKA, Liudas; VAREIKIS, Vygantas. *Holokausto prielaidos: antisemitizmas Lietuvoje.* Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2004, p. 60.

[33] The first Soviet occupation of Lithuania ended in the sudden deportations (to the interior of the Soviet Union) of nearly 18 000 Lithuanian citizens only days before the German attack – among them were 3 000 Jews.

than the Soviet government. As a result, many historians always point out that on eve of the Soviet-German War, the geopolitical orientations of the two main ethnic communities in Lithuania were diametrically opposed. It is argued that while most Jews saw the Soviets as the lesser of two evils, for many Lithuanians, the only realistic hope for liberation from Stalin's tyranny lay in the War.[34]

The majority of Lithuanian Jews did not approve of Bolshevism; however, from the mid-thirties to the beginning of Soviet occupation, the Jews had a disproportionately large representation in communist organizations in Lithuania. It was a common tendency in East-Central Europe and Russia.[35] Actually, Communism seemed attractive to Jews because the ideology promised social equality. Nevertheless, communist organizations in Lithuania were not purely Jewish;[36] furthermore, the absolute collapse and smooth liquidation of the national state was a result of mass cooperation of the Lithuanian society with the Soviet government. Most importantly, after the establishment of the communist regime in the country, a large number of Jews had actively entered into non-Jewish society and became much more ambitious. According to L. Truska, it was considered as an impertinence: Lithuanians memorized not what the Jews did, but how they did it.[37]

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[34] DIECKMANN, Christoph; SUŽIEDĖLIS, Saulius. *The Persecution and Mass Murder of Lithuanian Jews During Summer and Fall of 1941: Sources and Analysis*. Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2006, p. 100.

[35] GERRITS, André. *The Myth of Jewish Communism: a Historical Interpretation*. Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2009, p. 194.

[36] It is widely researched by L. Truska and N. Maslauskienė. See TRUSKA, Liudas. *Tautinis atgimimas ir istorija: straipsnių rinkinys*. Vilnius: Edukologija, 2012, p. 559; MASLAUSKIENĖ, Nijolė. "Lietuvos komunistų tautinė ir socialinė sudėtis 1939 m. pabaigoje–1940 m. rugsėjo mėn." *Genocidas ir rezistencija*, 1999, 1(5), pp. 77-104; MASLAUSKIENĖ, Nijolė. "Lietuvos komunistų sudėtis 1940 m. spalio–1941 m. birželio mėn." *Genocidas ir rezistencija*, 1999, 2(6), pp. 20-46.

[37] TRUSKA, Liudas. "Lietuvių ir žydų santykių krizė (1940 m. biželis – 1941 m. birželis)." In TRUSKA, Liudas; VAREIKIS, Vygantas. *Holokausto prielaidos: antisemitizmas Lietuvoje*. Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2004, p. 86.

In summary, before World War II, Lithuanian anti-Semitism was based on economic issues and the leaders of a new nation-state justified anti-Jewish sentiments to a certain degree. The Jews, as an ethnic group, were not directly involved in the Lithuanian national matter. Therefore, their social status remained inferior. On the other hand, the safety of the Jews was guaranteed at a national level. The real threat to the Jewish community arose only after the rapid and dramatic political changes during 1939-1940, when the illusion to identify Soviet authorities only with the Jews spread widely in Lithuania.

2. LAF's Role and Attitude Toward the Jews

In the fall of 1940, Lithuanian patriots formed a political organization named the *Lithuanian Activist Front* (LAF). They operated in Germany as well as in Lithuania. Historians of the Holocaust argue that the Lithuanian rebel leaders, specifically the LAF, had encouraged through their propaganda the organization of anti-Jewish actions just a few months before the Soviet-German war. In some instances, Jews were threatened with death, they were outlawed, their persecution was given a free reign.[38] Truska claims that after the war broke out in 1941, Lithuanian press simply continued to develop the anti-Semitic ideas of LAF.[39] Therefore, the organization and its role is exceptionally important for further research. It will be analyzed in the next section.

During the war, LAF was the largest patriotic organization that had aspired to restore the independence of Lithuania. Originally, LAF was founded in Berlin on November 17, 1940, by Kazys Škirpa, the former Lithuanian envoy in Germany. The Berlin unit of LAF represented the nation, especially because there was no other significant and organized

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[38]   DIECKMANN, Christoph; SUŽIEDĖLIS, Saulius. *The Persecution and Mass Murder of Lithuanian Jews During Summer and Fall of 1941: Sources and Analysis*. Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2006, p. 128.

[39]   TRUSKA, Liudas. "Lietuvių ir žydų santykių krizė (1940 m. biželis – 1941 m. birželis)." In TRUSKA, Liudas; VAREIKIS, Vygantas. *Holokausto prielaidos: antisemitizmas Lietuvoje*. Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2004, p. 69.

political group of Lithuanians in exile. The communist system had been hostile to all other political parties and ideological forces in Lithuania, so the Front was also created as a unified political organization whose main purpose was to change the regime of the country. Members of the LAF had to break all political ties with other parties, too.[40]

Before the start of *Operation Barbarossa*, members of the Front collaborated with the German military and security agencies. They were very active in the Lithuanian underground and tried to confront the Soviet regime. As soon as Germany had attacked the Soviet Union, the Activists conducted a campaign of small-scale military operations against the Red Army. It was later dubbed as the *June Uprising*. Soviet activists fled immediately, and the rebel leaders took control of Kaunas, also establishing their first newspaper *Toward Freedom*. It was done before the Wehrmacht even arrived in the city.

The main ideas of LAF were developed in Nazi Germany. So, it is not surprising that Kazys Škirpa adopted some principles of National Socialism for the ideology of LAF.[41] Among many of those principles, of course, was a shared negative attitude toward the Jews. It was based on a variety of motives; however, the most important motive was to politically accuse the Jews of anti-Lithuanian activities of identifying with communists. Anti-Semitism was only a part of LAF ideology, and visually it could look like a meaningless one, but, in fact, the Front were very keen on using the opportunity to blame the Jews.

First of all, in the fourth decade, there was a wave of ideological radicalization in Lithuania, especially among the intellectuals, and a broad confrontation broke out between two main groups: the nationalists and the supporters of Communism. In 1940, the intensive changes of the political life brought even more confusion and fear to the public. At the time, the Soviets found a lot of collaborators among Lithuanians, even

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[40] BRANDIŠAUSKAS, Valentinas. *Siekiai atkurti Lietuvos valstybingumą (1940 06– 1941 09)*. Vilnius: Valstybinis leidybos centras, 1996, p. 38.

[41] BRANDIŠAUSKAS, Valentinas. *Siekiai atkurti Lietuvos valstybingumą (1940 06– 1941 09)*. Vilnius: Valstybinis leidybos centras, 1996. pp. 42-43.

the nationalists tried to survive by glorifying the new regime. Finally, Lithuanian society had got in an epicenter of the inevitable Soviet–Nazi conflict, so it was at risk of a large-scale internal confrontation. The opportunity to use the Jews as a scapegoat could help in avoiding further confrontations within the nation. According to Liudas Truska, during the occupation, the LAF merely made mentions regarding "their own" (Lithuanian) communists, the Front offered amnesty to all such collaborators in exchange for supporting the anti-Soviet rebels. The Activists even addressed soldiers of the Red Army by inciting them to break free from the "slavery" of the Jews, so that hope was given to all – except, of course, the Jews.[42]

Moreover, such illusions about the Jewish "guilt" were useful for the particular activists as well. For example, in the beginning of the Soviet rule, Ernestas Galvanauskas, one of the founders of LAF, was working as the Minister of Finance. On the eve of occupation, dr. Antanas Maceina, a prominent Lithuanian philosopher, one of the most important ideologists of LAF, expressed a very positive position toward Bolshevism in Russia in his public lectures.[43] Even Bronys Raila, a radical and extremely xenophobic LAF activist,[44] before fleeing from Lithuania in the summer of 1940, wrote several pro-Soviet poems. The author did not publicize his poetry because he had been warned that, in any case, he will remain a *persona non grata* for the Soviets.[45]

In 1941, the situation changed radically once again – now the collaborators of the Soviet regime had to fear for their future. However, as was expected, all the hatred was directed against the Jews. It was very helpful that Adolf Hitler had presented the attack on the Soviet Union

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[42] TRUSKA, Liudas. "Lietuvių ir žydų santykių krizė (1940 m. bizelis – 1941 m. birželis)." In TRUSKA, Liudas; VAREIKIS, Vygantas. *Holokausto prielaidos: antisemitizmas Lietuvoje*. Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2004, p. 90.

[43] MACEINA, A. *Buržuazijos žlugimas*. Kaunas: Sakalas, 1940, p. 110.

[44] BRANDIŠAUSKAS, Valentinas. *Siekiai atkurti Lietuvos valstybingumą (1940 06–1941 09)*. Vilnius: Valstybinis leidybos centras, 1996. p. 38-39.

[45] TAMOŠAITIS, Mindaugas. "Bronys Raila ir 1940 m. birželis Lietuvoje." *Istorija*. 2009, vol. 75, pp. 52-56.

as a war of defense against the *Judeo Bolshevism*.[46] It was the main slogan in German war propaganda, which was aimed simultaneously at their own nation, the Soviet population and the Red Army.[47]

Perhaps that is why some scholars tends to interpret the anti-Semitic slurs found in Lithuanian press just as a part of the German war propaganda. For example, Alfonsas Eidintas argues that Lithuanian press workers were merely collaborators of the German propaganda, and not the initiators of anti-Semitism.[48] Valentinas Brandišauskas also argues that Lithuanians were only partly responsible for anti-Semitism, since the press was controlled by German authorities.[49] Algis Kasparavičius takes quite the opposite view and submits that the degree of anti-Semitism in Lithuanian newspapers depended only on the will of their editors and, in part, on those political leaders that stood behind the press.[50]

Without a doubt, the editors had to follow the directives of the German military and civil administration. The media was restricted by the regime in many ways,[51] so the journalists were not able to declare their sympathy for Jews, even if they had been willing to do so. On the other hand, it is a well-known fact that the first issue of *Toward Freedom* was released by the local activists on June 24, 1941, and their first anti-Semitic statements were announced on the front page of it as well: " […] Bolshevism and the Jews are one and the same inseparable thing."[52] By

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46   ARAD, Yitzhak. *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009, p. 68.

47   ARAD, Yitzhak. *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009, p. 67.

48   EIDINTAS, Alfonsas. *Žydai, lietuviai ir holokaustas*. Vilnius: Vaga, 2002, p. 215-226.

49   BRANDIŠAUSKAS, Valentinas. *Siekiai atkurti Lietuvos valstybingumą (1940 06– 1941 09)*. Vilnius: Valstybinis leidybos centras, 1996. p. 139.

50   KASPARAVIČIUS, Algis. "From the Lithuanian Press About the Jews During the Nazi Occupation 1941–1942." In LEVINSON, Joseph. *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania*. Vilnius: Vaga, 2006, p. 225.

51   More on this in BRAŽIŪNAS, Mantas. "Legalios spaudos ir valdžios santykis Lietuvoje vokiečių okupacijos metais (1941–1944)." *Žurnalistikos tyrimai*, vol. 7, pp. 195-218.

52   "Priespaudą numetant." *Į laisvę*. 1941, birželio 24, No. 1, p. 1.

the way, the first issue was distributed free of charge,[53] so everyone in the city could get it. On June 27, the newspaper *Freedom* proclaimed: "Still we stood unarmed in front of the oppressor, the Russians and the sneaky exploiters, parasites, the Jews. They had eaten the fattest mouthful, built a palace, murdered us."[54] The newspaper published these anti-Semitic statements before the Germans started to supervise it. Only on June 30 did the headquarters of the German Commandant order Jurgis Bobelis, who was one of the leaders of LAF in Kaunas, that all publications must be submitted for pre-censorship to the press unit of the Propaganda Company.[55]

Moreover, it seems, that the potency of the German propaganda in Lithuania is significantly overestimated. It is really possible that Lithuanians simply represented the same attitude toward Jews as the occupational authorities were expecting. Of course, the Germans had first paid much attention to communication with the local society, as the colonial regime was very interested in the stability of Lithuanian economy. They tried to take full and direct control of the media so as to exploit it for propaganda campaigns. From the beginning, German censorship in Lithuania was strict, based on fear and self-censorship, so the mechanism was effective and required a little amount of resources. However, it seems that the propaganda campaigns were partly entrusted to Lithuanians. For example, the editors of *The New Lithuania* in Vilnius were able to develop the newspaper on their own initiative. The censors were referring their political demands and expectations regularly, but the editors were given partial independence. Naturally, the management of newspaper was authorized by German leadership, but the main concept was that *The New Lithuania* would look really "Lithuanian".[56]

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[53] VENCLAUSKAS, Linas. "Žydų stereotipas laikraštyje 'Į laisvę.'" *Akiračiai*, 2002, No. 8(342), pp. 6-8.

[54] "Pagaliau ….", *Į laisvę*. 1941, birželio 27, No. 4, p. 1.

[55] BARANAUSKAS, B.; RUKŠĖNAS, K. *Nacionalistų talka hitlerininkams*. Vilnius: Mintis, 1970, p. 30.

[56] More on this in BRAŽIŪNAS, Mantas. "Legalios spaudos ir valdžios santykis Lietuvoje vokiečių okupacijos metais (1941–1944)." *Žurnalistikos tyrimai*, vol. 7, pp. 195-218.

Even Juozas Brazaitis[57] noted[58] that the German propaganda material was placed in the press, but only the one that was sent by DNB (*Das deutsche Nachrichtenbüro in Kauen*).[59] Indeed, the press was forced to publish a larger part of the Bureau material (by the way, the Nazis relied on the same tactic in Germany, too); however, it was the only way how the Germans could directly fill the pages with the ideological material in Lithuania. The occupation regime openly controlled only the German newspapers (*Wilner Zeitung* and *Kauener Zeitung*). So, the responsibility for the publications that were not marked with a reference to the news agencies – which constitutes a major proportion of them – can probably be directly assigned to local editors or journalists.

Soon, the anti-Semitic slogans became a reality. Lithuanians were among those who had supported the Nazis by choice – together they quickly got rid of the Jewish "oppression." Approximately 203-207 000 Jews were left in Lithuania under the German occupation in 1941,[60] and about 80 percent of them were murdered during the first period (June 22–December, 1941[61]) of the Holocaust in Lithuania.[62] Algis Kasparavičius emphasizes that surely it was not the degree of anti-Semitism in Lithuanian newspapers that determined where more Jews were killed sooner. But we also can easily agree with his position that the incitement of anti-Semitic passions created a favorable psychological

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[57] He was a member of LAF and the acting Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of Lithuania.

[58] BRAZAITIS, Juozas. *Vienų vieni*. Vilnius: Vilties spaustuvė, 1990, pp. 123-124.

[59] The Germans had closed the Lithuanian news agency ELTA. In its place, they founded a subdivision of the German Information Office, better known as DNB.

[60] ARAD, Yitzhak. "The Murder of the Jews in German-Occupied Lithuania (1941–1944)." In NIKŽENTAITIS, Alvydas; SCHREINER, Stefan; STALIUNAS, Darius. *The Vanished World of Lithuanian Jews*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004, p. 176.

[61] Therefore, the newspapers released during this period will be analyzed in the following chapter.

[62] ARAD, Yitzhak. "The Murder of the Jews in German-Occupied Lithuania (1941–1944)." In NIKŽENTAITIS, Alvydas; SCHREINER, Stefan; STALIUNAS, Darius. *The Vanished World of Lithuanian Jews*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004, p. 177.

background for genocide.[63] In order to characterize more specifically the discourse of anti-Semitism in the press, and to verify its origins, the last part of this paper is dedicated to provide a qualitative analysis of the anti-Semitic articles published by legal Lithuanian newspapers from June 1941 to December 1941.

3. Analysis of the anti-Semitic articles

The goal of this chapter is to show how the ethnic hatred of Jewish community was actually expressed in Lithuania and to verify past claims that the anti-Semitic articles were originally created by Lithuanians. The study was designed to determine the most common topics and genres of the anti-Jewish writings, to identify the authorship of the articles and their sources and, in the end, to answer the question: had the press used genocidal rhetoric, and had it directly or indirectly offered to persecute or kill the Jews?

During the German occupation of Lithuania (1941-1944), publishers had released at least 40 periodicals in the country. It was decided to analyze five of the best-selling newspapers and dailies published in Lithuanian: *Į laisvę* (*Toward Freedom*), published in Kaunas, *Naujoji Lietuva* (*The New Lithuania*), published in Vilnius, and weeklies: *Tėvynė* (*The Homeland*), published in Šiauliai, *Ūkininko patarėjas* (*The Farmer's Adviser*), published in Kaunas and *Išlaisvintas panevėžietis* (*The Liberated Citizen of Panevėžys*), published in Panevėžys.[64]

The dailies were published only in two major cities: Kaunas was the center of *Generalbezirik Litauen* (the General District of Lithuania);[65]

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[63] KASPARAVIČIUS, Algis. "From the Lithuanian Press About the Jews During the Nazi Occupation 1941–1942." In LEVINSON, Joseph. *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania.* Vilnius: Vaga, 2006, p. 228.

[64] The first issue of *Toward Freedom* was released on the 24th of June, *The New Lithuania* – on the 29th of June, *The Homeland* – on the 6th of July, *The Farmer's Adviser* – on the 28th of June, *The Liberated Citizen of Panevėžys* – on the 4th of July.

[65] Lithuania was part of the *Reichskommissariat Ostland*, which covered all the Baltic states and parts of western Belorussia.

at the time, Vilnius was the largest city in Lithuania, which had one quarter of a million inhabitants – half of them were Jewish.

In the beginning of the German rule, these newspapers consisted of 2-4 pages of different types of writings (later 6-8). The press was fairly inexpensive[66] and began its activities with huge circulation; for example, *Toward Freedom* was printed with 90 thousand daily copies. Weekly newspapers also reached tens of thousands of copies. On the other hand, the war went on, and it's not surprising that soon publishers were running out of paper and other materials. Consequently, they reduced circulation.[67] But it is most important that the press was distributed more or less regularly, so it is possible to analyze the whole selected period.

After the analysis, it was decided to divide the analyzed period into two parts and to present insights about each one individually. The first phase covers the period from late June to early August, the second – from the beginning of August to the end of December. This decision will be fully explained in the presentation of results.

3.1. End of June – Beginning of August

At the start, all newspapers covered very similar topics: the Soviet occupation of the country, repressions and terror against Lithuanians, resistance, liberation and "the beginning of a new life." During the Soviet rule, a significant part of society had certainly suffered injustices in different ways: from the political humiliation and loss of capital to the most violent, shocking repressions of the regime. Therefore, it is easy to understand why Lithuanians expressed their gratitude to Adolf Hitler and the Wehrmacht.

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[66] The ruble and the Reichsmark were both valid in Lithuania during the German occupation – the ratio was 10 py6/1 RM. During the first months, the issue of a daily cost about 20-30 kopeks; later, the price rose up to 5 Reichspfennig. For comparison: a fixed price of a 1 kilo of rye bread was 60 kopeks and a kilo of curd cost 3.65 rubles; a barber's salary could reach 700 rubles in Vilnius.

[67] More on this in BRAŽIŪNAS, Mantas. "Legalios spaudos ir valdžios santykis Lietuvoje vokiečių okupacijos metais (1941–1944)." *Žurnalistikos tyrimai*, vol. 7, pp. 213-215.

On the other hand, the typical greetings to the liberators of the country were usually full of Jew-hatred. For example, *The Liberated Citizen of Panevėžys* wrote that "After the long years of misery and struggle, ultimately the economic Jewish bondage was dropped from the Lithuanians' hands. It was broken not by Lithuanians themselves, but by the Glorious German Army, and after 23 years,[68] the Lithuanian liberated himself from slavery to the Jew."[69] At the same time, it was clearly stated that the Jews "will be eliminated and deleted from the political, economic and cultural life of free Lithuania."[70] The Lithuanians had many reasons to celebrate the fall of the Soviet regime; however, it was certainly possible to express the gratitude to the Germans without anti-Semitism, as well as to describe the crimes of the Soviet regime. For example, there were no anti-Jewish statements in the publication "Our Gratitude" by J. Valakas.[71] So, it seems that in such cases the journalists were not required to express Jew-hatred by force.

It is important that other minorities were also declared as public enemies. According to the press, "the second-placed disaster of the Lithuanian nation was the Poles."[72] "Lithuania for Lithuanians!"[73] was a slogan declared by *The New Lithuania* in the city where the absolute majority of the population consisted of Poles and Jews. *Toward Freedom* also attacked the minorities, not only the Jews and the Poles, but the Russians as well. These ethnic groups were entitled as a "poisonous

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[68] It is interesting that the author classified the period of independent Lithuania as "the Jewish slavery" era.

[69] PETKŪNAS, Al. "Veidu į Vakarus." *Išlaisvintas panevėžietis*. 1941, July 20, No. 3, p. 1.

[70] Vilniaus miesto komiteto pirmininko St. Žakevičiaus kalba, pasakyta birželio 28 d. per radijąVilniaus miesto komiteto pirmininko St. Žakevičiaus kalba, pasakyta birželio 28 d. per radiją. *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, birželio June 29, nrNo. 1, p. 2.

[71] VALAKAS, J. "Mūsų padėka." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 1, No. 3, p. 3.

[72] "Lietuvių aktyvistų Vilniaus vadovybės atsišaukimas." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, June 29, No. 1, p. 2.

[73] "Imkimės darbo." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, June 29, No. 1, p. 4.

mushroom."[74] It certainly was not German propaganda, but rather an extreme form of Lithuanian xenophobia.

Sometimes the press displayed compassion or forgiveness for the oppression to all ethnic communities – even the Red Army – but, of course, it was spared for the Jews. For example, *The New Lithuania* attacked Jewish women simply because some of them allegedly had pretended to be Christian, thus trying to avoid the "retribution" or at least buying the necessary food.[75] However, a completely different standpoint was formed of the wives of Red Army soldiers. *The New Lithuania* wrote that these women could work in the agricultural field and freely live in Vilnius.[76]

The most important aspect of anti-Semitism was the identification of Jews with Bolsheviks and their policy. During 1940-1941, it became a norm for the underground press to portray these two groups of people, whose members had been linked in their communities by entirely different relations (ethnic and religious; political and ideological, respectively) as one and the same enemy, as a symbol of a clear and tangible political evil – the loss of an independent state. After the German invasion, Lithuanians continued to cultivate this political motive on the front pages of their legal press. The journalists adopted or designed original terms, especially used them for the headlines of their articles, and it would reflect the common situation, for instance: "Jewish Bolshevik imperialism," "Jewish Russian Bolshevism;" the Soviet regime was known as the order of the Jewish Bolshevik, Communism was dubbed as the Jewish system, the Red Army was called the defender of the Jews, the Lithuanian SSR – a Jewish colony and Lithuanian Jews themselves were accused of being the backbone of the occupational regime. Although individual publications acknowledged that some Jews

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[74] "Apvalyti lietuvių tautą nuo grybo." *Į laisvę*. 1941, July 5, No. 11, p. 1.

[75] "Žydai nebijo kryžiaus." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 3, No. 5, p. 3.

[76] "Vilniuje likusių sovietų šeimų stovykloje." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, August 6, No. 34, p. 3.

had also suffered from the Soviets, the authors presumed that Jewish victims were "only an exception to the rule."[77]

Of course, Lithuanians were considering themselves as the main victims of the Soviet regime in the country. Despite that, journalists began a debate (particularly in the editorials) about their own nation's political behavior during the occupation. On the other hand, the only specific targets for persecution were the left-wing intelligentsia, so LAF basically kept the promise of providing the countrymen who had collaborated with the occupational regime with amnesty. What was the main argument for their kindness? The newspapers claimed that the Lithuanians had been illegally, fraudulently seduced; of course, in most cases, the authors did not provide any evidence of how it was actually done. For example, Stasys Šetkus had defended those Lithuanians, because, according to the author, they had been just innocently touched by the "satanic, twisted terror policy."[78] There were other causes stated in the press – for instance, activists from Šiauliai claimed that they had worked for Soviet newspapers for "purely conspiratorial reasons."[79] It was argued that some Lithuanians had collaborated with the occupational regime for personal gains and the security of their families, as well as for salvaging the nation.[80] "Lithuanians had realized the mistake" – sometimes that was enough for the journalists.[81]

The New Lithuania even published a reader's submission later on this topic – it was a story about a young Lithuanian communist who had been "forced by circumstances" to join the party. Of course, the author blamed the Jews for this.[82] This theme was developed by using enter-

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[77] "Žydų klausimas turėtų būti išspręstas iš esmės." *Tėvynė.* 1941, July 13, No. 2, p. 2.

[78] ŠETKUS, St. "Pradėdami atstatymo darbą." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 4, No. 6, p. 2.

[79] "Lietuviai Aktyvistai savo uždavinį įvykdė." *Tėvynė.* 1941, July 6, No. 1, p. 1.

[80] BRUŽAS, Ant. "Neteiskite ir nebūsite teisiami!" *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 14 No. 14, p. 1.

[81] "Žydų klausimas turėtų būti išspręstas iš esmės." *Tėvynė.* 1941, July 13. No. 2, p. 2.

[82] "Kaip aš buvau tapęs žydų-komunistų tarnu (vieno suklaidinto lietuvių išpažintis)." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 12, No. 13, p. 4.

tainment journalism genres as well. For example, Kęstutis Čerkeliūnas produced an essay about another young Lithuanian communist, who had been "misinformed by political deceivers," but who redeemed his sins by fighting against the Soviet regime in the *June Uprising*.[83] However, it is important to point out that it is possible to find some negative comments about the Lithuanian collaborators, but basically, as it had been planned, the Lithuanians were able to create the new Lithuania in a national harmony because most of the anti-Soviet hatred was directed against the Jews.

The political accusation for state treason was definitely the most popular action against the Jews, but it must be remembered that Lithuanian anti-Semitism had been traditionally based on commercial rivalry between the nations. So, it is interesting that during this period, Jew hatred, due to economic reasons, was no longer widespread in the press. Without a doubt, we can find some reflections on the "Jewish economic dictatorship" within published comments or editorials.[84] Jewish businessmen, traders, even buyers were accused of dishonesty, fraud and exploitation of Lithuanians.[85] It is a paradox that some authors blamed Jews for laziness, but others explained that they had supposedly occupied most of the jobs in public offices, factories and trade. However, the economic problems became irrelevant simply because the authorities had "resolved the Jewish question" in the cities very quickly.

During the summer of 1941, the Germans and Lithuanian political activists committed a substantial "revision" of the Jewish rights in Lithuania. The legal definition of a Jew corresponded with the law that was issued by the Reich six years ago, but unlike in Germany, there were no practical difficulties to separate the Jews from others because they

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[83] ČERKELIŪNAS, Kęstutis. "Išpirkimas." *Į laisvę*. 1941, August 1, No. 34, p. 2.

[84] M-ius. "Tautiniai verslai – kertinis laisvės akmuo." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 24, No. 23, p. 2.

[85] "Nereikia nei žydų, nei jų darbų." *Ūkininko patarėjas*. 1941, July 25, No. 5, p. 8; BURAČAS, B. "Kaip jie pirko …." *Ūkininko patarėjas*. 1941, July 31, No. 6, p. 6; "Sužydėjo visas kraštas raudonai." *Ūkininko patarėjas*. 1941, July 31, No. 6, p. 6; "Kai žydai Tauragėje viešpatavo." *Ūkininko patarėjas*. 1941, July 31, No. 6, p. 6.

had already lived separate communities. Lithuanians had once again become the dominant, supervising, privileged ethnic group – of course, second only to the Germans.

The press was flooded with publications that directly marked that the Jews had been displaced outside of society.[86] They were banned from using sidewalks, all recreation areas, public parks and squares, as well as public transport.[87] Those who had fled were forbidden to return to their hometowns; the rest of the residents received orders to wear the yellow Star of David on their chests and move into a ghetto; the Jews were also prohibited to take, sell or destroy their property.[88] The authorities closed Jewish institutions of culture, art and education, they fired all the Jews from public office, universities, factories, refineries, expelled them from schools and student dormitories, removed Jewish books from libraries.

The press was obligated to publish these anti-Jewish orders. On the other hand, it seems that some editors agreed to these social changes joyfully.[89] The reasons were clearly generalized in the editorial article ("In a Positive Direction") by *the New Lithuania*: "The new business sectors were opened for Lithuanians: trade, crafts, industry, which had been employed by the Jews. After the isolation, we will be searching for barbers, shoemakers, craftsmen – it is a respectable and profitable field. Lithuanians must switch from a passive agrarian type to an active, positive citizen-worker type; without a doubt, we also need to engage agriculture."[90] As we can see, the visions of interwar nationalists were fulfilled in combination with vengeance, and even journalists did not look for arguments in order to discuss these changes, it was accompanied by the wave of Jew hatred instead.

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[86] Firstly, it was the official orders issued by the German government officials.

[87] "Privalomas nutarimas Nr. 1." *Į laisvę.* 1941, July 28, No. 30, p. 1.

[88] "Viešas skelbimas Nr. 2." *Į laisvę.* 1941, July 31, No. 33, p. 4.

[89] LABUNAITIS, Vytautas K. "Mūsų tautos priešai." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 12, No. 13, p. 4; "Žydai sutvarkyti." *Į laisvę.* 1941, August 4, No. 36, p. 4.

[90] VYKINTAS, Stp. "Pozityvia linkme." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 17 No. 17, p. 1.

It is interesting that the press identified Lithuanians not only as Jewish victims, but also as the Aryan nation.[91] Therefore, it was suggested for them to accept the discrimination against Jews as a natural and deserved opinion.[92] For better understanding, it is useful to quote a particular passage from the editorial article by *the Homeland*: "The Lithuanian nation belongs to the honorable Aryan race, the creators and protectors of European culture. The nation's veins carry the blood of the race, which for centuries has preserved and defended great human values – nobility, sacrifice for others and respect for the man."[93]

In fact, Lithuanians failed to defend human values from the beginning of German rule – violence against Jews was indeed brutal and ruthless. Massacres had reached the scale of genocide only a few weeks later, and there were almost no information about it in the press. The newspapers sometimes tried to calm the outrage and suggested to wait for trials, but the authors never pointed out that they were writing exactly about the Jews.[94] On the other hand, it is important to note that in many cases the press conducted the hate campaigns against Jews without any actual aspirations to encourage the public to take real acts of violence, and the authors did not give any specific and clear instructions. It is very possible that the terrible results and scale of the prosecution was not expected by the editorial offices as well.

However, the rhetoric of anti-Semitic publications during the first phase is really shocking. For example, the editor of *the New Lithuania* wrote the following passage:

Even today, the Jewry is still not satisfied, it is causing damage everywhere. The Jewry was left by the communists to raise disturbance, the Jews are communist spies. […] The fight against Communism is a fight against the Jewry. […] The Jewry must be completely removed from

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[91] Vm. "Sostinės kronika. Naujas vaizdas sostinės gatvėse." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 9, No. 10, p. 3; "Ir Vilniuje jau yra gheto." *Į laisvę*. 1941, September 10, No. 68, p. 5.

[92] "Žmonės su geltonomis žvaigždėmis." *Į laisvę*. 1941, August 2, No. 35, p. 7.

[93] "Tautos garbė – Tėvynės gerovė." *Tėvynė*. 1941, August 11, No. 6, p. 1.

[94] "Kova prieš sauvališkus smurto veiksmus." *Į laisvę*. 1941, July 24, No. 27, p. 2.

Lithuanian cities, communist Jewry must be destroyed; otherwise, Lithuania will never be guaranteed with safety. […] To wipe out the Jewry, as well as Communism, it is the first task of the new Lithuania.[95]

For a while, *the New Lithuania* would even devote a separate page for anti-Semitic articles because the daily had increased its size up to 6 pages. It is interesting that later such material even gained a pseudo-historical character.

Other newspapers were using similar rhetoric. For example, the editorial of *the Homeland* had urged: "Lithuanian! Once and for all, clean up the holy Lithuanian land from the perfidious and sadistic Jewry!"[96] It seems absurd, but the most aggressive in the promotion of domestic anti-Semitism was the weekly *the Farmer's Adviser*.[97] Jew-hatred was especially provoked in the rubric "The Facts Speak," which developed the theme of sexual abuse: "It was a feat for the Jew to rape a Lithuanian woman. Later, he liked to boast with satisfaction to the most reliable friends and tell all details."[98] The author of another feuilleton went even further and vividly described a specific imaginary situation of sexual abuse.[99]

Another important topic was the myth of the *Jewish World Conspiracy*. First publications with a hint of it appeared on July 2;[100] however, the famous *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* were remembered only on July 31, in the editorial article of *the New Lithuania* by K. Lieknys.[101] The author reminded that during the interwar, the *Protocols* were rejected by the

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[95] P. L. "Lietuva be žydų." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 4, No. 6, p. 1.

[96] "Kartą visiems laikams." *Tėvynė*. 1941, July 13, No. 2, p. 1.

[97] For example: "Kokį žydai buvo parodę susidomėjimą žemės ūkiu." *Ūkininko patarėjas*. 1941, July 18, No. 4, p. 6; "Žydų viešbučiai." *Ūkininko patarėjas*. 1941, July 18, No. 4, p. 6.

[98] "Faktai kalba." *Ūkininko patarėjas*. 1941, July 18, No. 4, p. 6.

[99] "Faktai kalba. Pasisaugokit, moterys! – Jis jau ateina." *Ūkininko patarėjas*. 1941, July 25, No. 5, p. 2.

[100] VILYS, K. "Ką sako žuvusių pavardės." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 2, No. 4, p. 1; "Raudonojai barbarijai žlungant." *Į laisvę*, 1941, July 2, No. 8, p. 1.

[101] LIEKNYS, K. "Kas yra demokratija." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 31 No. 29, p. 1.

public.[102] Indeed, such ideas had not received high popularity in Lithuania. Despite that the elites of society supported the myth of the *Jewish World Conspiracy*, the majority of Lithuanians, especially the peasants, basically considered the Jews as a poor community, so the idea seemed improbable.[103] It's hard to say if Mr. Lieknys was a true believer of the myth or not; however, he tried once again to convince Lithuanian society about "the true intentions of the Jews – to make all of humanity its servants and slaves." In the next article,[104] Mr. Lieknys pointed out even more aggressively that "the Jewish question will be important until the complete disposal of the Jews." However, at this stage, the expression of Jew hatred by using conspiracy theories continued to be very rare.

In summary, topics of the anti-Semitic articles were varied in style as well as in genre. Anti-Jewish hatred was usually expressed through an editorial article or commentary, sometimes through the genres of entertainment journalism, also poems or anecdotes. On the other hand, content of the entertaining publications was usually primitive and senseless. It is likely that in many cases it was produced not by professional journalists, but perhaps by individual readers or active members of the new political parties – it seems that their only motives were based on the traditional Jew-hatred and stereotypes. Only few anti-Jewish publications during the period could be formally characterized as analytic journalism. For example, even a review of a German film "the Jew is Guilty!" was completely flooded with anti-Semitic myths and fantasies.[105]

At the time, the press also published a lot of anti-Semitic messages and reports, mostly on two main topics: beside the isolation of Jews,

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[102] Apparently, he referred to this book: *Slaptasis pasaulinis žydų suokalbis*. Panevėžys, 1924, p. 120.

[103] VAREIKIS, Vygantas; ŠIAUČIŪNAITĖ-VERBICKIENĖ. "Žydo įvaizdis Lietuvos visuomenėje." In LEMPERTIENĖ, Larisa; ŠIAUČIŪNAITĖ-VERBICKIENĖ, Jurgita. *Žydai Lietuvoje: istorija, kultūra, paveldas*. Vilnius: R. Paknio leidykla, 2009, p. 96.

[104] LIEKNYS, K. "Kas yra 'liaudis' ir 'proletariato diktatūra.'" *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, August 11, No. 38, p. 1.

[105] Vm. "Žydas kaltas!" *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 26, No. 25, p. 4.

newspapers very often reported about "the Jewish crimes." Just before the German invasion, the Soviet regime had deported tens of thousands of people and tortured to death hundreds of political prisoners. Because of the chaotic retreat, the Soviet administration and repressive structures had no time to hide the evidence of their crimes, so information about the repressions soon spread in Lithuanian society as well as in the newspapers. It became a general tendency in the press to blame for those crimes not only the communists, but also the Jews, as a collectively responsible community.[106] On the other hand, such an interpretation of the events was only a supplement to the myth of *Judeo-Bolshevism*. Of course, the topic was presented in editorials as well,[107] but the news reporting maintained the continuity of hatred and sometimes it was intensified by shocking photos of tortured people.[108]

Arguably, all these messages and reports of "the Jewish crimes" in Lithuania were created by members of the editorial offices, Lithuanian correspondents or associates. ELTA and DNB delivered anti-Semitic messages as well, but the news agencies covered mostly foreign topics, hence the headlines: "Jews, Bolshevism and Plutocracy Must Be Destroyed if Europe Wishes to Finally Live Happily,"[109] "The Perpetrators of the European Wars and Revolutions are Jews."[110]

In addition to the agencies material, the German propaganda apparatus was also surely responsible for the publication of certain anti-Jewish proclamations, as well as the announcements and speeches of

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[106] "Tarptautinis Raudonasis Kryžius painformuotas apie bolševikų žiaurumus." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 7 No. 8, p. 2; "Panevėžyje žydai ir bolševikai žvėriškai nukankino gydytojus." *Ūkininko patarėjas*. 1941, July 11, No. 3, p. 3; "Kruvina savaitė Panevėžy." *Tėvynė*. 1941, July 20. No. 3, p. 2; "Šakiuose žydai žvėriškai žudė gyventojus." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 22 No. 21, p. 3; "Žydai su komunistais žiauriai išžudė apie 100 mažeikiškių darbininkų." *Į laisvę*. 1941, July 29, No. 31, p. 3.

[107] "Mes kaltiname." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 7 No. 8, p. 1.

[108] MALDEIKA, J. "Panevežio žydų ir bolševikų darbas!" *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, August 9, No. 37, p. 6.

[109] "Žydija, bolševizmas ir plutokratija turi būti sunaikinti, jei Europa nori pagaliau laimingai gyventi." *Į laisvę*. 1941, July 11, No. 16, p. 1.

[110] "Europos karų ir revoliucijų kaltininkai yra žydai." *Į laisvę*. 1941, July 21, No. 24, p. 1.

Nazi leaders.[111] But it is difficult to answer who decided to proclaim and chose particular (mostly anti-Semitic) passages from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*.[112] During the first period, there was no other anti-Semitic material created by the Germans in Lithuanian press.

3.2. Beginning of August – End of December

It was decided to divide the period into two parts for several reasons. First of all, in early August, the press noticeably declined the amount of anti-Jewish writings. During the month, it was essentially replaced by an attention to the war front. Why did "the Jewish question" suddenly disappear from the press agenda? The main reason lies in the changes of Lithuanian political life. From late July to mid-August, the conflict between LAF and LNP took place and ended in favor of the Nationalists.[113] After the collision, the ideological climate of the editorial offices was shifted even further toward National Socialism, some of personnel being replaced in there as well.

From the beginning of German rule, the LAF operated legally and sought for a political consensus with the occupational administration. Therefore, the Activists were the only ones who could establish and control the press. For a while, the LAF had been identified as the official publisher on a front page of many newspapers; sometimes the Activists even introduced themselves and their ideas in editorials.[114] After the victory, LNP took over the privileges. By the end of August, it was controlling the most important newspapers as well.[115] The organization

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[111] "Kryžiaus karas prieš bolševizmą. Adolfo Hitlerio atsišaukimas." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, July 1, No. 3, pp. 1-2.

[112] Newspaper issues: *The New Lithuania*, no. 19, 25; *Toward Freedom*, no. 5, 6, 17; *The Farmer's Adviser*, no. 4; *The Homeland*, no. 3, 13.

[113] For more on the subject, see BRANDIŠAUSKAS, Valentinas. *Siekiai atkurti Lietuvos valstybingumą (1940 06–1941 09)*. Vilnius: Valstybinis leidybos centras, 1996, pp. 118-136.

[114] "Lietuviai Aktyvistai savo uždavinį įvykdė." *Tėvynė*. 1941, July 6, No. 1, p. 1.

[115] BRANDIŠAUSKAS, Valentinas. *Siekiai atkurti Lietuvos valstybingumą (1940 06–1941 09)*. Vilnius: Valstybinis leidybos centras, 1996, p. 133.

was formed by the so-called *Voldemarians*, who had also significantly contributed to the establishment of LAF in Berlin. The Nationalists had considered themselves as an ideologically close party to the Nazis, so felt ambitious enough to rule Lithuania. However, in the beginning, the key positions of the Lithuanian political life (in the Provisional Government and LAF structures) had been occupied by the Christian Democrats[116] – it was main reason why the Nationalists had caused the conflict.[117]

During the period, the LNP was undoubtedly trying to link itself and the Lithuanian nation with German National Socialism. It was particularly well reflected in the pages of newspapers[118] and publicly declared in all media. For example, on November 7, Ignas Taunys gave a speech by the Kaunas radio and promised, on behalf of the LNP, to return to Lithuanians "the good qualities of the Aryan race." This speech was published or reviewed in many newspapers.[119]

In late August, once again the anti-Jewish sentiment arose in the press, but the subject and problems of it were fundamentally changed. In contrast to the "LAF phase," the editorial offices focused mainly on the theme of Jewish conspiracies.[120] This indicated that at that time the

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[116] One of the most influential political forces in Lithuania during the interwar period.

[117] BRANDIŠAUSKAS, Valentinas. *Siekiai atkurti Lietuvos valstybingumą (1940 06– 1941 09)*. Vilnius: Valstybinis leidybos centras, 1996, p. 129.

[118] For example, Juozas Girnius published a series of articles "Ideological Grounds for National Socialism" in the daily *Toward Freedom* (see issues 59, 63, 65, 69, 71, 77). Of course, Hitler's *Mein Kampf* was the ideological basis for these publications.

[119] "Lietuvių Nacionalistų Partija ir žmonių atrankos klausimas." *Į laisvę*. 1941, November 11, No. 120, p. 4; "Lietuvos Nacionalistų Partija žmonių atrankos klausimu." *Ūkininko patarėjas*. 1941, November 14, No. 21, p. 11; "Lietuvos nacionalistų partija ir žmonių atrankos klausimas." *Panevėžietis*. 1941, November 21, No. 19, p. 1.

[120] VILNENSIS. "Dveji metai." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, August 31, No. 55, p. 1; "Atėjo laikas pamatyti visą tiesą." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, August 9, No. 62, p. 1; VILNENSIS. "Ir čia žydai subankrutavo." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, September 16, No. 68, p. 1; "Didžiausias išdavimas." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, October 6, No. 86, p. 1; "Mano brangus Staline ir … Kerenski." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, October 11, No. 89, p. 1; "Naujas Anglijos smurtas." *Naujoji Lietuva*, December 9, No. 139, p. 1.

topics of anti-Semitic publications were centered not as much on local problems, but more on international ones, which were very close to the Nazi war propaganda. For example, the press often published such statements: "Jews lead a desperate struggle with the Germanic race. The most important tools of the Jews in the East are Bolshevism, and in the West – freemasonry. By using these tools, the Jews, both from the East and the West, are attacking the Germanic race."[121]

The myth of the *Jewish World Conspiracy* was repeated in publications of different genres, radio speeches,[122] even published as a reader's letter.[123] However, it seems that instead of original anti-Semitic comments, the press was frequently using the translations of German articles,[124] as well as reports of the news agency.[125] Newspapers also continued to publish the official anti-Jewish decrees, of course, and the speeches of Nazi leaders (savagely anti-Semitic as ever) were usually placed in the first pages.[126] Although the general attitude toward the Jews was inspired by the Nazi ideology, most of the anti-Semitic writings were published in the press only because LNP members had sought to cooperate with the German authorities and tried to gain political power by copying them.

In addition to these characteristics of anti-Semitic articles, we can also find some details that are very unusual to the general situation. First – the content of *the Homeland* in Šiauliai. It is interesting that the

[121] "Galvokime rasiškai." *Į laisvę.* 1941, October 24, No. 106, p. 1; "Galvokime rasiškai." *Ūkininko patarėjas.* 1941, October 31, No. 19, p. 3.

[122] "LNP 'Geležinio Vilko' skyriaus virš. gen. št. Mjr. Kiaulėno – Gintauto kalba pasakyta per Kauno radiją." X. 30. *Į laisvę.* 1941, November 6, No. 116, p. 4.

[123] "Amerikoje yra ir kitokių žmonių." *Ūkininko patarėjas.* 1941, October 31, No. 19, p. 8.

[124] "Tai yra žydas." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, August 28, No. 52, p. 2; "65 žodžiai – 115 klaidų." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, August 31, No. 55, pp. 3-4; "Žydiškas karas." *Naujoji Lietuva.* 1941, November 22, No. 125, p. 2.

[125] "Anglijos karas yra žydų karas." *Į laisvę.* 1941, October 21, No. 103, p. 2; "Maršalo Antonescaus atsakymas Rumunijos žydams." *Į laisvę.* 1941, October 27, No. 108, p. 3; "Žydai norėjo karo – dabar jį turi." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, November 19, No. 122, p. 1.

[126] "Fiurerio kalba Miunchene." *Ūkininko patarėjas.* 1941, November 14, No. 21, p. 1; "Dr. Goebbelsas žydų klausimu." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, November 21, No. 124, p. 1.

weekly, as other newspapers, significantly reduced the number of anti-Semitic writings and published series of articles on the myth of the *Jewish World Conspiracy*,[127] but even after August the editorial office was still publishing articles on topics that had been typically used during the first period.[128] Lithuanian historian Algis Kasperavičius even got the impression that *the Homeland* had been the most anti-Semitic newspaper of all.[129] Most importantly, he also stated that the anti-Semitic fury of *the Homeland* was by no means due to pressure from the occupational authorities. It was primarily determined by the special hostility that its editor, Simas Milginas, harbored toward the Jews.[130]

Second, the article published by Rapolas Mackonis, "The Concept of Jewish literature," is quite unusual as well.[131] The author of this pseudo-analytical, anti-Semitic essay wrote about the alleged Jewish aspirations to entrench Lithuanian literature. It was very unusual, as the articles on cultural anti-Semitism were extremely rare during the entire period.

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[127] "Žydų siekimai pasaulį valdyti." *Tėvynė*. 1941, October 3, No. 15, p. 2; "Žydų siekimai pasaulį valdyti." *Tėvynė*. 1941, October 6, No. 16, p. 2; "Žydų siekimai pasaulį valdyti." *Tėvynė*. 1941, October 10, No. 17, p. 2; "Žydų siekimai pasaulį valdyti." *Tėvynė*. 1941, October 13, No. 18, p. 2; "Žydų siekimai pasaulį valdyti." *Tėvynė*. 1941, October 17, No. 19, p. 2; "Žydų siekimai pasaulį valdyti." *Tėvynė*. 1941, October 20, No. 20, p. 2; "Žydų siekimai pasaulį valdyti." *Tėvynė*. 1941, October 24, No. 21, p. 2.

[128] "Naujų uždavinių akivaizdoje." *Tėvynė*. 1941, August 17, No. 8, p. 4; "Talmudas liepia krikščionių neapkęsti." *Tėvynė*. 1941, August 24, No. 9, p. 2; "Mūsų tautos votys." *Tėvynė*. 1941, August 31, No. 10, p. 4; "Talmudo paslaptys." *Tėvynė*. 1941, September 9, No. 11, p. 2; "Žydai mums duobę kasė." *Tėvynė*. 1941, September 9, No. 11, p. 3; "Talmudo paslaptys." *Tėvynė*. 1941, September 12, No. 12, p. 2; "Žydiškas sadizmas žudant lietuvius." *Tėvynė*. 1941, September 19, No. 13, p. 6; "Kaip žydai šeimininkavo mūsų įmonėse." *Tėvynė*. 1941, December 12, No. 29, p. 2.

[129] KASPARAVIČIUS, Algis. "From the Lithuanian Press About the Jews During the Nazi Occupation 1941–1942." In LEVINSON, Joseph. *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania*. Vilnius: Vaga, 2006, p. 227.

[130] KASPARAVIČIUS, Algis. "From the Lithuanian Press About the Jews During the Nazi Occupation 1941–1942." In LEVINSON, Joseph. *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania*. Vilnius: Vaga, 2006, p. 228.

[131] MACKONIS, R. "Žydiška literatūros sąvoka." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, September 14, No. 67, p. 3.

Lastly, there are the reports from the Ghetto in Vilnius.[132] Those were probably the only publications that regarded the Jews in a neutral way and without any hatred.

These simple cases show that the decision of whether the general attitude must be obeyed, and which themes, genres or styles are to be chosen, sometimes depended solely on a particular editor or journalist. During the Holocaust, some people ignored the widespread madness and risked their lives as well as their property help the Jews. Sadly, we don't know anything about journalists who had possibly opposed anti-Semitism in the Lithuanian media. There are no signs of such resistance, and the main reason lies in this press itself. Therefore, the analysis will be finished with a passage from an article that was published in October, when the massacre of Jews took on more of a genocidal scale: "Those who help the Jews and prisoners or demonstrate solidarity with them will be treated accordingly. In doing so, one places himself outside the community, because today we follow this principle: either us or them."[133] In this case, the press followed.

4. Conclusions

The first two chapters presented the reasons that led to the emergence of anti-Semitism in Lithuania during 1941. The main factors that should be emphasized are the lasting anti-Semitic myths in Europe, as well as in Lithuania, the strengthening of the anti-Jewish sentiment just before World War II, the political ideologies of LAF and LNP, as well as the ambitions and goals in the context of German war propaganda.

The year of the first Soviet occupation was crucial. The Jews, as an ethnic group, had been partly isolated from the political society in Lithuania until 1940. Then they entered it after the dramatic political

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[132] "Vilnius jau turi Gheto." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, September 9, No. 62, p. 3; "Žydų ghete apsilankius." *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, September 20, No. 72, p. 3.

[133] "Kas yra?" *Į laisvę*. 1941, October 25, No. 107, p. 1; "Kas yra?" *Naujoji Lietuva*, 1941, October 28, No. 104, p. 4; "Kas yra?" *Ūkininko patarėjas*. 1941, October 31, No. 19, p. 3.

and ideological changes. During the occupation, the LAF were using Jew-hatred for political reasons, as it was done on the eve of the war. The Jews were seen as an internal enemy, a scapegoat, painted as such in order to unite the Lithuanian nation during the times of ideological chaos and storm. Therefore, the illusion to identify Soviet authorities only with the Jews was spread widely.

During the second half of 1941, the press became a trophy of the power struggle between the LAF and LNP. So, the period was also divided into two phases, each characterized by an original discourse of anti-Semitism in the press. The first phase covers the period from late June to early August, the second – from the beginning of August to the end of December. During the first phase, there was a strong wave of anti-Semitism in the country. The prime arguments were formulated on the basis of the *Jewish Bolshevism* myth and accusations of state treason. Anti-Jewish hatred was usually expressed through an editorial article or commentary and sometimes through genres of entertainment journalism. The second wave of Jew hatred was produced by the LNP and mostly inspired by Nazi ideology and the *Jewish World Conspiracy* theories.

It seems that the newspapers conducted the hate campaigns against the Jews usually without any clear aspirations to encourage the public to take real acts of violence. However, the rhetoric of anti-Semitic publications during the period was really shocking and it definitely created a favorable psychological background for the genocide. Certain actions committed by people during the Holocaust were so savagely violent that at times they all begin to look like fiction. It seems that the only possible suggestion, after comprehending what those people had done and wrote in 1941, is to place them, and not Jews, as the outsiders of this nation.

However, sometimes the sequel of the Holocaust is still quite the opposite. The Jews are gone, even most of those who had survived left the country after the war. As well as a large part of the journalists, too. Among them was Simas Miglinas, editor of the most anti-Semitic news-

paper of all. Mr. Miglinas emigrated to Germany, where he spent his remaining days, and in 1997, at the age of 89, he died peacefully in Munich. After the war, he had done nothing significant in the field of journalism – to be fair, nothing of such before *the Homeland* as well. Despite the fact that S. Miglinas had been deservedly forgotten for many years, in 2011, the editors of the almanac *Journalism* found inspiration to pay tribute to him in the rubric "The Greats of Journalism."[134] Of course, his attitude toward Jews was kept in silence.

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