LITUANUS

Defining Lithuanians

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Conceptualizing "self" and "other" is important, and some-
times problematic. According to government policy, an entry
in a passport clearly defines Lithuanian citizenship. In history,
language and culture, in the broadest sense of the word, un-
doubtedly separates Lithuanians and other national groups
living in Lithuania; the range of citizenship rules, social, and
cultural values changes through time. The "other" exists side-
by-side with the "self." More than ten years of studies have
shown that Lithuanians in particular often remember their
gimtinė (homeland), *žemė* (land), and *namai* (home); in many
cases, *giminystė* (kinship) and features of other connections and
social organizations are also important. Definitions of ethnic-
ity, self and other reveal various social and cultural values. The
ties to a place where a person was born and grew up, most
often in smaller villages and towns, are important to the elder-
ly; younger people reveal varying attitudes. Surprising opin-
ions about what it means to be Lithuanian appear. Instead of
a single identity, people choose different situational identities.
In today's Europe and in a wider area, affiliation with a group
and conceptions of ethnicity and nationality are rapidly chang-
ing. Many Lithuanians all over the world try not to forget their
language and take an interest in genealogy, family history, and

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relationships. Lithuanians who do not speak Lithuanian remember the symbols and signs of Lithuania. To be Lithuanian is important or dear to them.

The I and self integrate into separate social roles. Many modern individuals, as Thomas Hylland Eriksen asserts, think they are "integrated persons" or, in other words, "actors," and various social ties require expanding surroundings for it to be possible to adapt to various situations. Comparative studies show that all human beings have a changing concept of themselves as individuals and as a group. In European societies, self is most often associated with the undivided individual, integrated and sovereign as an independent agent. In non-Western societies, self is most often understood as "the sum total of the social relationships of the individual," based on studies of kinship, societies, individuals' socialization, their concept of self and other, and the "shared customs and knowledge of society."[1] Many scholars distinguish between self in the public and private sphere, i.e., public and private personas.

The concept of people belonging to a group, a nation, their concept of identity, has become one of the most important problems in today's world. Notions of exceptional historical and contemporary experiences of nations, individuals, and groups distinguishing and revealing cultural identities are urgent problems in scholarly discourse.[2] The connections between personal and cultural notions dominate; individual and collective cultural identities and people's viewpoints and interpretations of cultural historical layers are analyzed. How is Lithuanian identity defined in theory, and what is its future?

In Lithuania, the shared similarity of cultural objects was more important in ethnography, ethnology, and histography than personal identification, aspects of social identities, or other particulars of cultural definition. There are many ethnological and anthropological studies, impossible to enumerate here, devoted to revealing cultural identity, symbols, and stereotypes.

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[1] Eriksen, *Small Places*, 54–55.
[2] Edgar and Jonuks, "The edgy Northern European imaginaries," 79–80.

Language, ethnic customs, and heraldry are considered important identity symbols in specific historical surroundings. Like many other European states, when Lithuania regained its independence, the questions of what significance ethnic culture has to self-consciousness and identity came to the fore.

In their theoretical approach to the evolution of ethnic culture, the discourses of ethnological studies were closely related to the comparative studies of historical scholarship. The dominant historical studies on ethnic culture eventually linked to social problems. To disclose culture, man's attitude toward "self" and "other," or toward the other's culture, became essential, and the grounds for improvisation appeared. Together with the spread of democratic society, self and other were discussed more widely at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Democratic consciousness opened the possibility of numerous pluralistic attitudes. The word "freedom" raised controversial opinions.

This article seeks to reveal which theoretical and practical aspects are foremost in the study of Lithuanian identity and how the concept of "to be Lithuanian" is critically evaluated. I will analyze the concepts of self and other in history, identity/alterity and belonging to a group, collectivity and nation.

Johannes Fabian's Orientalism had a great influence on the contemporary attitude, asserting that too much attention is paid in anthropology to hierarchical determinations of time and place when researching the particulars of distant others.[3] Criticism of "other" and "othering" opened the way to today's anthropological alternatives; in Andre Gingrich's words, studies were chosen on the subject of identity/alterity. This was dependent on a growing cultural relativism; a neo-Marxist viewpoint promulgated the determination of the boundaries of identity, and the modality of othering in anthropology was decided by self-reflection. It was asserted that there is no pure concept of othering when speaking of an anti-essentialist multidimentional "soft" approach to identity/alterity.[4]

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[3] Fabian, *Time and the Other.*
[4] Gingrich, "Conceptualising Identities," 10–15.

According to Vered Amit, one of the most important aspects is the feeling of belonging to a collective.[5] The concept of home in anthropology is associated with the growth in migration processes, the movement from the village to the city, the search for work and better living conditions, etc. The growing mobility of people's lifestyles has changed attitudes toward home. Homes became ever more individual and private. Everyone selects his or her own, and "one's choice might remain invisible (and irrelevant) to others."[6] Lithuanians frequently define their identity laconically but then begin a lively description of where and what their homes are, or sometimes remain silent.

My ethnographic research experience allow for the assertion that to be Lithuanian, that is, to be a member of the nation, a citizen of Lithuania, in whatever place in the world, means to cherish nationality, kinship, language, home, the land, and the national and ethnic culture or collective and individual memory.

The theoretical approaches, concepts and research insights into Lithuanian identity mentioned in this article are further explored in this issue of *Lituanus* by Auksuolė Čepaitienė, Darius Daukšas, and Vytautas Tumėnas.

Self in an Ethnic Group and a Nation

In *The Seasons*, Kristijonas Donelaitis wrote of the Germans and French who arrived: "They learn to speak our tongue, as they enjoy our food,/And even wear our clothes as gladly as we do."[7] Many authors highlight ethnic group differences in ethnographic, historical, and literary texts that reflect comparisons between self and other. Until the end of the nineteenth century, reasons such as dress and language were used to purify the concept of one's self and the other's nationality "from the inside," as Paulius Subačius states.[8] As the ideas of nationalism matured, people turned to their own nation.

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[5] Amit and Rapport, *Community,* 9.
[6] Rapport and Overing, *Social and Cultural Anthropology,* 173-177.
[7] Donelaitis, *The Seasons,* 112.
[8] Subačius, *Lietuvių tapatybės kalvė,* 65–67.

Self is associated with origin. In the words of Darius Staliūnas, Mečislovas Davainis-Silvestraitis taught that giving up one's national language is one of the greatest sins, equated to perversion. According to Jonas Basanavičius, repudiating one's native language is identical with not fulfilling one of God's precepts. Jonas Šliūpas warned that Lithuanians, creating a nation, must cherish language, education, and society's standard of living. Ethnonationalists believe a person's affiliation with a nation is determined by his origin; a nation is not made up of just those living at a given moment, but their ancestors as well, and all the members of a nation are connected by ties of kinship or blood. One of the clearest examples of this is Jurgis Zauerveinas's lines: "Lithuanians we are born,/Lithuanians we must be."[9] Self is connected to language, religion, and the nation's values.

The feeling "we" always seems to hide its opposite, "them," defined or undefined. In histories written at the beginning of the nineteenth century, more attention was paid to the particularities of self rather than of the other. The opposition of self and other was not enough to reveal the relationship between the nation and the individual. The history of nationalism in Eastern and Central Europe attests that the first step in identifying "self vs. the enemy" is usually done with a caricature of the ethnic other. As the area of reflexive consciousness spread during the nineteenth century, people turned inwardly to refine their ideas of "I" as a member of a national community.[10] Staliūnas states that Lithuanian historians first built Lithuanianness on Lithuanian's ethnocultural values, apparently as a counterweight to Polishness. Lithuanianness, a national or ethnic identity, was, in an ethnocentric point of view, "purified," and Lithuania's history was conceived as the history of ethnic Lithuanians. To developing Lithuanian nationalism, language was the most important national criterion. However, due to so-called "exterior" requirements (the goal of establishing Vilnius as the capital and the "return" of the nobility to the Lithuanian

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[9] Staliūnas, "Lietuvos idėja Aušroje," 274–276.

[10] Subačius, *Lietuvių tapatybės kalvė*, 65–73, 107–108.

nation), the nationalist arsenal of criteria had to be expanded, so the arguments of origin or ethnography were added.[11]

In the ethnographic works of authors who wrote in the nineteenth century and in the first half of the twentieth, we will find descriptions of the other seemingly fortifying the image of the self among those investigating cultural assimilation and other topics.[12] Povilas Višinskis described the traits of the Samogitian character, cultural assimilation, and the influence of German, Polish, Latvian, and Russian culture on Lithuania; in his words, "when you want to put together a clear picture and understanding of a group of people, you should first come to know some other group, and only then, by comparing them, do the ones you want to research become clear and understandable..."[13] Anthropologist's studies of their own culture are associated with nationalist movements and are valued critically for "possible" or obvious ethnocentric elements.

In the twentieth century in Lithuania, as in neighboring countries, the study of peoples, their national character, and their culture expanded. Ruth Benedict's analysis of "national character," well-known at that time, widened into stable collective-identity studies. In 1968, a wave of neo-Marxism arose, based on the German concept of identity, from unity (*Einheit*) to identity (*Identität*). Unity encompassed a possible identity as well as a common identity. During the Soviet period, attention turned to ethnos and ethnic culture. As early as 1968, in *Pabaltijo istorinės etnografijos atlasas*, the scholars who prepared the atlas observed that the typological areas of clothing and farming implements did not correspond with ethnic ones, and so the cherished hypothesis about nations and their traditional culture's self-contained homogeny collapsed.[14] In the same decade as this hypothesis's refutation, in social anthropology, Fredrick Barth's concept of the boundaries of ethnic identity arose; the notion of "strong" identity (which criticized constrictive

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[11] Staliūnas, "From Ethnocentric to Civic History," 312–325.
[12] Savoniakaitė, *Lietuvos etnologijos ir antropologijos enciklopedija*, 8–14.
[13] Višinskis, *Raštai*, 129.
[14] Merkienė, "Pratarmė," 11.

ethnic identities)[15] and later the concept of orientalism[16] were also criticized.

Eventually, the influence of growing instrumental and constructive factors can be seen. In *Modernity and Self Identity*, Anthony Giddens's concept of self is based on strong psychological rules of the ego. He associates self-reflexivity in modernity with decreasing social knowledge and trust between people when comparing traditional and modern societies. Life becomes manageable not via traditions, but rather through new social slogans and rituals.[17]

The "self" in Lithuanian ethnography is associated in its widest aspects with the self's ethnic group, culture, religion, society, and territory. Lithuania's scholars are interested in their own ethnic culture's particularities as various social strata (nobility, peasants, town dwellers, political prisoners, exiles, and others); ethnic and civil aspirations in history; the influence of the educated on the development of ethnic culture, nationality, and the formation of a national culture; and state public and community organizations,[18] in other words, agents' actions and influence on changes in ethnic culture. The term ethnic culture was based on a viewpoint toward people as much as their cultural particularities and the historical social surroundings that had formed these particularities. Numerous scholars emphasize the connections between the Revival and the Enlightenment era's ideas, which encouraged interest in one and other nations' cultures, in forming a national culture, fostering nationality, interpreting ethnic and national cultural elements, and creating new national symbols. Latvian scholars linked the development of a nation with cultural traditions.[19] Latvian identity is revealed through their studies of national culture. In the meantime, for the Czechs, whose discourses are closer

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[15] Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*.

[16] Said, *Orientalism*.

[17] Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, 18, 79.

[18] Merkienė, *Etninė kultūra ir tautinis atgimimas*.

[19] Dumpe, "Entwicklung der lettischen Ethnographienwissenschaft," 42–54.

to German ethnologists, national self-identity,[20] associated with Herder's romantic ideas and the processes of constructing a political nation, is crucial.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, studies of the other intensified through the influence of the social sciences. As the paradigm of conflict became prominent in social theory, its importance acquired new incentives in constructing identity.[21] The spread of democracy invited a deeper investigation of the other, not just the self. Studies of national minorities are particularly widespread in contemporary historians' works;[22] interesting viewpoints on historical and contemporary pluralistic society are revealed.

For Lithuanians, the other belongs to a mythological world: it is people of other faiths, other social groups or ethnographic areas, villages, kin, or families.[23] In studies of contemporary society, the opposition of self and other, and according to Jolanta Kuznecovienė, specifically these antifeatures are used as a differential criteria to draw the boundaries between these oppositions; it supplements and clarifies the features of national identity.[24] Today's increasing migration encourages new approaches to the problem of identity. The contours of the displaced Lithuanian identity are transformed into a specific configuration of traits affected by adaption, acculturation, and other processes at work on the formation of identity.[25] In Neringa Klumbytė's studies, the other appears as a person who has landed beyond the boundaries of a democratic society, expressing a nation's variety of communities and its changing identities,[26] which we will investigate further.

In analyzing the terms and viewpoints of the concepts of self and other, the field of problems widens considerably.

[20] Uherek, "Constructing the National Identity," 32–34.
[21] Savukynas, "Kito buvimas visuomenėje," 12–13.
[22] Potašenko, *Daugiatautė Lietuva* and others.
[23] Anglickienė, *Kitataučių įvaizdis*, 60–64.
[24] Kuznecovienė, "Nelietuviškumo dėmenys," 90.
[25] Čiubrinskas, "Transnacionalinė migracija," 8.
[26] Klumbytė, "Post-Socialist Sensations," 93–116.

Several aspects with influence on contemporary pluralistic interpretations of self and other in anthropology and ethnology will be highlighted. These include the historical and interdisciplinary viewpoints of scholarship, which intriguingly influence the concepts of identity, from nation to individual alterities in civil society, revealing national and other urgent contemporary issues.

"Hard" and "Soft" Identity, and Alterity

Multicultural societies' issues encourage humanitarian and social science representatives to take an interest in identity. According to Gringrich, at the turn of the century scholarly discourse in anthropology on identity/alterity (or differences) became controversial. This encouraged the spread of interdisciplinary discourses in anthropological works. The generation of younger scholars stepped beyond the boundaries of anthropological scholarship and offered interdisciplinary viewpoints. The older generation of anthropologists relied on classical anthropology works, extensively investigating Fredrik Barth's, Abner Cohen's, and Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of identity; they researched phenomena "inside anthropology" and seem isolated from wider debates.[27]

"Hard" and "soft" identities are recognized. Some investigate identity in terms of difference; identity is seen essentially as difference. This tendency is known as the hard identity concept. Others study difference/alterity/other. If it is assumed that otherness and belonging are the constitutive parts of identity, then the second tendency is inclined to ignore alterity. It is considered the soft identity concept, understood together with the concept of alterity.[28] Gringich emphasizes that identity/alterity are from interdisciplinary discourses, which could be called a concept adopted from "others."

The concept of identity/alterity or difference came to anthropology from philosophy, literary criticism, and culture studies. Lawrence Grossberg's work from the 1990s is known

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[27] Gingrich, "Conceptualising Identities," 3.
[28] Ibid., 4.

in cultural studies. He criticized the notion of a pure identity and raised the idea of the soft concept of difference, based on philosophical discourses of identity/alterity; he also claimed that a singular identity doesn't exist, because in specific contexts it can become just a part of identity.[29]

Personal similarities are associated with belonging to a group, while the self's differentiation is associated with other people. Your membership in a group can be expressed via different means. Many of the most important contemporary social and political problems of the world involve the ties between different social groups: of race, sex, and age, as well as economic, religious, ethnic, and national groups. These ties define social identity. Social identity is a common concept involving three different questions: first, the origin of identity categories; second, what it means to belong to a social group, or how this membership is defined via biological, social, or cultural interpretations, or all three simultaneously; third, what the contents of these categories are, and how people themselves define the significance of this. This reveals the cultural significance of people's social identities and shows how people adopt their identities and associate them with other identities.[30]

In many cases, in defining difference, the philosophical discourses on identity experience influences from postmodernism and culture studies, and draw on Martin Heidegger's criticism.[31] Heidegger's view of identity primarily singles out the self. He purifies difference, and he holds to the hard concept of difference scholars associate with Nazi ideology. This ideology was opposed by postcolonial ideas, among many others, the works of Jacque Lacan, which differentiated the other like the self, and asserted that the difference is only a part of identity. This and other assertions had great influence on anthropology's theoretical viewpoints, and the concept of hard identity

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[29] Ibid., 4–5.

[30] Grossberg, et. al, *Media Making*, 218–219; Amit and Rapport, *Community.*

[31] Heidegger, *Identität und Differenz.*

and difference changed into the concept of soft identity and many multidimentional conceptions of identity/alterity.

The concept of alterity assists in understanding the concepts of self and other. This notion has recently achieved prominence in anthropology. The concept of alterity is held to be broader than otherness, which, like evolutionism, functionalism, structuralism, and Marxism, in other words, Western civilization's imperialistic and capitalist past, is criticized in modern thought.[32] A broader, more relevant interdisciplinary viewpoint, more suitable to contemporary society's aspirations, arises together with this concept's spread in anthropological theory.

The contemporary concept of alterity is associated with the growing criticism in postcolonial anthropology, considered an academic discipline that discusses foreign countries' otherness. The appearance of these concepts and self-reflection in anthropology provoked criticism of the "grand narratives of modernity,"[33] reflecting rising questions about the discipline's past and the study of otherness as a central vision of modernity, and discussion of anthropology as a discipline that is no longer what it once was. Careful anthropologists frequently avoid global definitions; this requirement of the discourse was inspired by philosophers' works.

All otherness systems are structures of identity and difference that have a close connection to the formation of self, rather than an empirical reality revealing the alternative world of the other – a neighbor, peddler, enemy, or other individual. However, this still does not mean that we must "always consider all ethnocentrism, or concepts of difference as the same." For example, conceptions of monsters differ, because the self can understand them or interact with them differently;[34] clearly, the boundaries of otherness are particularly varied. The otherness revealed in Eurocentrism was a political and colonial discourse, born out of a hierarchical system in which the self

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[32] Rapport and Overing, *Social and Cultural Anthropology,* 11.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid., 14–17.

opposes the other. We find different notions of identity/alterity in concepts concerning what it means to be Lithuanian. The people of contemporary Lithuania define themselves by nationality, while some, considering nationality a given, according to their citizenship and language, indicate their belonging to an ethnic group, an ethnographic regional community, as well as their alterity.

The ethnographic research presented in this article was carried out in all of Lithuania's small towns and villages from 2002 to 2008. These were unstructured interviews and observations done according to the research/polling program "Local Communities." The questions asked were dictated by the conversation's theme, which sought to variously reveal people's definition of their identities, local social interactions, local community particulars, and the local culture's dependency on economic changes, politics, information, migration, and new global structures. This research also revealed contemporary integration and communication processes, priorities, and effects. All of these show the lifestyle of traditional village and town communities and the fate of values, a topic that would make up a separate history about the nation's cultural priorities. Inhabitants of various nationalities, faith, age, education, sex and social position were interviewed; their attitudes toward people's relationships, the influence of religion on local cultural traditions and customs, people's opinions about culture politics and cultural assimilation, as well as elements of the social integration processes in the local community were revealed.[35]

According to my research, we can conclude that, in communities made up of various ethnic groups, people most often indicate belonging to a nationality or an ethnic group and, at the same time, indicate the "other," or belonging to a minority. The residents of Lithuania Minor are most likely to associate their

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[35] Data from this study is stored in the manuscript section's Ethnology collection (LIIBR F–75) at the Lithuanian History Institute's library. The narration of 329 people (157 in Aukštaitija, 44 in Dzūkija, 29 in Suvalkija, 22 in Lithuania Minor, and 77 in Samogitia) made up a major part of the research.

nationality with their identity; few locals there call themselves *lietuvininkas* (a Lithuanian), *prūselis* (a Prussian), or *šisioniskis* (a local), because after World War II many new inhabitants settled in the area, when the previous residents were repatriated to Germany. From an ethnic viewpoint, consolidated and settled Lithuanian communities more often mention belonging to an ethnographic territory.[36] "I wanted to be a *dzūkė* (female inhabitant of Dzūkija); they wrote Lithuanian... I don't know Lithuanian, I only speak Dzūkian."[37] The narratives indicate a view of oneself as an ethnic Lithuanian, but also indicate the other nationalities of one's town: Poles, Russians, and Jews. In the eastern Lithuanian boundary territory, the former Vilnius territory, and places on the edges of Dzūkija and Aukštaitija, where various ethnic groups such as Poles, Lithuanians, Russians, and others live, people frequently mention their nationality first. The former Vilnius territory is marked by people's "instrumental" and various "situational" identities influenced by historical political events; many people consider themselves Poles, even though they speak Russian.[38]

The research reveals that people in eastern Lithuania define their identity more openly than in the west. For example, in Samogitia and Lithuania Minor people do not express their opinion as freely as they do in Aukštaitija; fewer wish to publicize their identity.[39] We met with people from families exiled to Siberia who would say nothing about either their nationality or homeland.[40] It must be observed that, in contemporary society, people's reservedness is changing; this fact is influenced by

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[36] Many research subjects emphasized their regional identity. The positive results of Lithuania's regional culture policies can be seen here; on the other hand, this indicates that people value their culture.

[37] LIIBR F–75 b. 2317(9), l. 82–83.

[38] See Darius Daukšas's article in this issue.

[39] In Samogitia and Lithuania Minor, 29 percent gave only a first name. In Samogitia, 8 percent, and in Lithuania Minor, 14 percent would give neither a first nor last name. In Džūkija and particularly Suvalkija, this proportion reached as much as 40 percent.

[40] LIIBR F–75 b. 2333(42), l. 366.

information gotten at different times and psychological, social, and many other factors; we will further investigate people's tendencies towards alterity.

Narrative identity and belonging

Taking a wider look, for today's society, defining identity for its individuals, communities, and groups is closer to the concept of alterity, which had in part rebutted and transformed pure "hard" identity or essentialist viewpoints. According to representatives of cultural studies, the essentialist view of human identity maintains that every category exists naturally within itself and this category's significance belongs to itself; it is defined by time. To represent the means to accurately depict identity seems to contradict stereotypes. The question is how to reveal the authentic and original contents of identity. In place of the "other," a separate completely constructed chosen identity is offered. Another theory offers the impossibility of such a completely manufactured, separate, and exceptional identity. It denies the existence of an authentic identity. This theory asserts that the categories of identity are culturally constructed and can only be understood rationally; they are constantly changing and unfinished. In the anti-essentialist viewpoint, the existence of these categories, the distinctiveness of their means of functioning, the signs of their distinctiveness and the distinctive meaning they offer, are all culturally constructed.[41] Identity became soft and depended on the effects of various relations in different contexts; in other words, many situational identities could be seen.

These two opposing concepts can be examined using narrative identity, which reveals many aspects about people. According to Nigel Rapport, "we are all entangled in stories, from those told to us by others, from childhood on, to those we tell about ourselves – both to ourselves and to others." This telling and receiving of stories, forgetting and reviving of stories, mingling and denying of stories, produces significant narrative identities, according to Paul Ricoeur. Individuals know

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[41] Grossberg, et. al, *Media Making*, 219–220.

themselves and are known by others, in important respects, by the stories they know and in which they figure; social groups may be represented by the stories shared in their collective traditions.[42]

When speaking of self and others, people mention many things that reveal their individual identities and relationships with others, and membership in groups or communities. Important religious aspects are distinguished; these are also heavily accented by representatives of ethnic minorities and people from mixed families. For example, in Lithuania Minor a devout woman mentioned that she is an Evangelist and added that, if a mother is Catholic and the father an Evangelist, their children must be Evangelists.[43] Many inhabitants of Samogita are Catholics, but that is emphasized only when speaking of family intercourse and holidays, as if remembering the saying that reveals the primordial concept: "Even if someone wanted to, they couldn't get rid of those customs very fast – an observant eye will immediately see where you came from and whose child you are."[44]

People tell stories and remember: "Running away from Samogitia, you won't turn into an Aukštaitian. A good dog returns to his barn to die. ... A Samogitian is harder working, tidier, gentler... He speaks the truth to your face."[45] "A Samogitian is stubborn. Aukštaitians are quicker. If a Samogitian does something faster, the Aukštaitian will teach someone else."[46] "The local people are unbelievably tidy and clean. Dzūkians are messier... the Prussians support the Samogitians... The Samogitian has a good character, they're slower."[47] "The Germans help one another more than Lithuanians do."[48] "Suvalkians are very

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42 Rapport, *Social and Cultural Anthropology*, 116.

43 LIIBR F–75 b. 2333(18), l. 165.

44 Končius, *Žemaičio šnekos*, 32.

45 A Samogitian woman from Papilė who had lived in Aukštaitija, LIIBR F–75 b. 2342(5), l. 28, 30.

46 A folk artist from Viekšniai, LIIBR F–75 b. 2342(7), l. 42.

47 An inhabitant of Vilkyškiai, LIIBR F–75 b. 2333(8), l. 68.

48 A Samogitian woman living in Saugos, LIIBR F–75 b. 2333(15), l. 127.

hardworking..."[49] We can find many memoirs and narratives that reveal people's anti-essentialist viewpoints and alterity. It is possible, however, to discern essentialist elements – primordial viewpoints.

It must be emphasized that the people of Lithuania, particularly in western Lithuania, think very highly of their native land and home. Some think of their homeland as the place where they were born; others as the place where they were born and spent their youth; others, in a wider sense, as their country. Comparing research results, we noticed that people from Samogitia and Lithuania Minor speak warmly of their homeland; the Dzūkians only half as much.[50] *Žemė* (the land) is more important than homeland to the people of Suvalkija and Aukštaitija. Young people describe the boundaries of their identity associated with their homeland, residence, parents' roots, kinship, family interactions and traditions as warmly as the older ones do. People's strong attachment to "their" place remains: "Oh yes, home's special to everyone here. This is where we were born, grew up; this is where we'll grow old, where we'll be buried."[51] "How could it not be special? This is home; this is where we were born, grew up, went to school, where we were christened and christened our children. We didn't go anywhere, move anywhere else... When the children take me somewhere, I come home quickly. Where can you find a better place? This is dear to my heart; it's grown into my blood."[52] "No, I wouldn't go anywhere now."[53] "Always [lived] close to home. Not much difference – [it's] the same Samogitia; they just talk different."[54] "Don't know, if it's special, I got used to it here. Wouldn't want to go far."[55] "I really love the Klaipėda

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[49] LIIBR F–75 b. 2323(40), l. 357–364.
[50] In Samogitia, 64 percent; in Lithuania Minor, 63 percent; in Dzūkija, 32 percent of the people in the study.
[51] A woman from Judrėnai, LIIBR F–75 b. 2333(17), l. 149.
[52] A woman from Pikeliai, LIIBR F–75 b. 2342(9/1), l. 52.
[53] A man from Plateliai, LIIBR F–75 b. 2342(13), l. 82.
[54] A well-educated middle-aged man from Žarėnai, LIIBR F–75 b. 2342(18), l. 118.
[55] A young man from Girkalnis, LIIBR F–75 b. 2333(53), l. 462.

area. It's not just the place and the neighbors, it's all the trees and flowers and birds too. We love our homeland because it belongs to our country."[56] "If I hadn't loved my home, I wouldn't have stayed here. It's so special to me that I wouldn't trade it for anything."[57] "How can't you love your homeland: it even smells different in Dzūkija."[58]

The same symbols, beautiful expressions, and motifs of longing repeat in stories about home : "There's a cottage. It's nice there; it's like you're in a different country. Every inch has been stepped on; it's where you were born, where you grew up; the woods are all explored. Now it's overgrown; it's changed."[59] "My home is no more. I'd like to be there; there's some kind of longing."[60]

In the border areas, people associate their identity with the land.[61] "I wouldn't want to live anywhere else. Your land is your land. Country people are more sincere."[62] "I was born and raised here. We're not real Samogitians here. It's very, very special, I wouldn't change it for anything. Probably my blood's grown into this land. As long as I'm alive, I'm not going anywhere."[63] "I'm not going anywhere as long as I have my arms and legs; you can make money here."[64] At intervals, relationships were revealed: "I'm half Aukštaitian... We're near Samogitia and Latvia here. My husband's from Latvia. My children: one daughter is Latvian; the other two girls and the two boys are Lithuanian. My son-in-law and daughter-in-law are

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[56] A woman from Dovilai who identifies herself as a *lietuvininkė*, LII-BR F–75 2333 (16), l. 137.
[57] A man from Katyčiai whose entire family emigrated to Germany, LIIBR F–75 b.2333(20), l. 179.
[58] A middle-aged woman from Seirijai, LIIBR F–75, b. 2317(12), l. 114.
[59] An elderly man from Ylakiai, LIIBR F–75 b. 2333(54), l. 456.
[60] A woman from Nemakščiai, a former exile, LIIBR F–75 b. 2333(49), l. 419.
[61] Twelve percent of the Samogitians interviewed.
[62] A teacher from Kaltinėnai, LIIBR F–75 2333(39), l. 403.
[63] A woman from Vaiguva, LIIBR F–75 b. 2333(47), l. 403.
[64] A Samogitian from Rietavas, LIIBR F–75 b. 2333(29), l. 245.

Polish: the grandchildren are Lithuanian."[65] "I'm half-Samogitian. I don't know how to say it. My mother's half-Samogitian."[66] "I'm an Aukštaitian from Ukmergė. We talk like everyone here does, *po prostu*, half Belorussian, half Polish. I sent the children to a Lithuanian school."[67] In some narratives, land is probably linked with homeland, with a wider sense defining the area or the country where one lives. Land is associated with people, their character, their peculiarities. Blood is a symbol showing family roots and family ties. At the same time, a viewpoint toward politics and people's work achievements is expressed. Those of mixed families who are inclined toward patriotism emphasize their native language.

The images of self are associated with the concept of the local. In Samogitia and Dzūkija, it is thought that a local is someone who has solid ties to a particular place: "I'm not a Samogitian. Maybe I'm thought to be Samogitian. My father's a local; he was born here."[68] "I'm a local; my parents, grandparents, great-grandparents are here. The children are in Pakruojis, they're Aukštaitians."[69] Or, "A Lithuanian Aukštaitian – that's what I was born."[70] Records of the inhabitants of Dzūkija showed more mentions of locals; a Pole who was born in Butrimonys, who did not mention his surname, thought "Maybe I'm a Džūkian; since I didn't come here, I'm a Lithuanian; my parents are locals."[71] This reveals the particularities of migration,

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[65] A former exile; her parents lived in Latvia because they were not allowed to return to Lithuania from exile. LIIBR F–75 b. 2342(3), l. 18.

[66] A young man from Vaiguva, LIIBR F–75, b. 2323(14), l. 90.

[67] A middle-aged woman who self-identified as half-Polish, half-Russian, from Butrimonys, LIIBR F–75, b. 2323(14), l. 90.

[68] A middle-aged woman from Bazilionai, LIIBR F–75 b. 2333(41), l. 359.

[69] A woman who identifies herself as a Samogitian from Papilė, LIIBR F–75 b. 2342(5), l. 27.

[70] A teacher from Spitrėnai village, Utena area LIIBR F–75 b. 2221(1), l. 2–4.

[71] A middle-aged Polish man from Butrimonys, LIIBR F–75 b. 2323(13), l. 86.

people's belonging to a nation, and feelings toward the community, or the other's transformation into self and alterity.

Conclusions

In theoretical interdisciplinary research, approaches and images of identity are changing. The Lithuanian language and cultural priorities disclosed in nineteenth-century historiography and later, reveal primordial, instrumental, and, in part, constructive concepts of ethnic identity. Over time, the constructive approach increased in studies of Lithuanian society; the primordial or instrumental concepts were not rejected; the discourse was expanded from essentialist to anti-essential views of self and other, eventually tying itself to "hard," "soft," "situational," and other identities, exceptional personalities, and belonging to groups, communities, or territories.

On this basis, the concept of "alterity" in a definitive view is important in disclosing contemporary man; essential concepts are rare – self turns into other, and the other way around. It is meaningful to research "identity/alterity" so observant eyes see "where you came from, whose child you are."

Definitions of self and other are important to the people of Lithuania, whose concept of identity is revealed in diverse ways by alterity and community. During the last two centuries of political convolutions, the love of the Lithuanian language and culture is revealed. As dialects assimilate, people speak less of their or others' language than they do of their homeland, home, land, and family.

In their narratives, the people of western Lithuania pay particular attention to their homeland and ties to a place; they speak warmly of family and kinship. These particulars of "narrative identity" are confirmed by the positive statements made as often by people who have migrated as by those who still live there. The distinctive value Suvalkians place on "our land" could be associated with an agricultural mentality and the echoes of historical politics, influenced by the value of a fertile soil. The narratives reveal that many things associated with collective customs and traditions change, while the concept of

homeland or home in the wider sense remains as important to the younger generations as to the old, although the narratives of young individuals in many cases are less Romantic.

Research on narrative identities were carried out in the small cities, towns, and villages of Lithuania, so there is no sense in investigating situational identities associated with people's lifestyles, professions, nature of activities, jobs, and economic change. We did not find distinctive conclusions peculiar to Lithuania in the last decades; we can see the influence of economic development, associated with new large-scale farming operations, business, European Union policies and numerous political aspects, and the huge change in migration and demographics, which, of course, encourages alterity in ethnic, cultural, and national identities.[72] The work that has been done raises new questions about identities' alterity and home in a changing space in large Lithuanian cities as well as wherever in the world Lithuanians and their children live.

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[72] Savoniakaitė, "Šiuolaikiniai žemaičiai ir lietuvininkai."

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