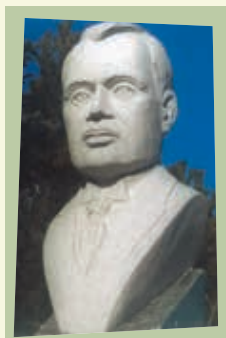


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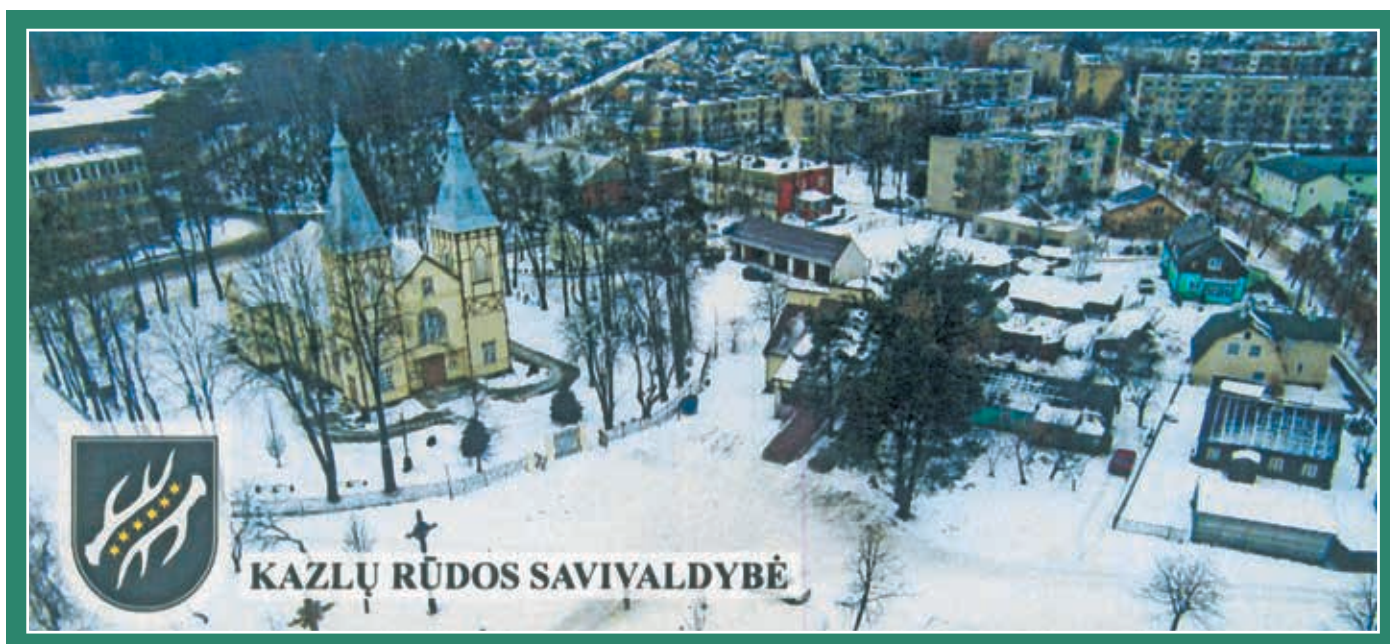
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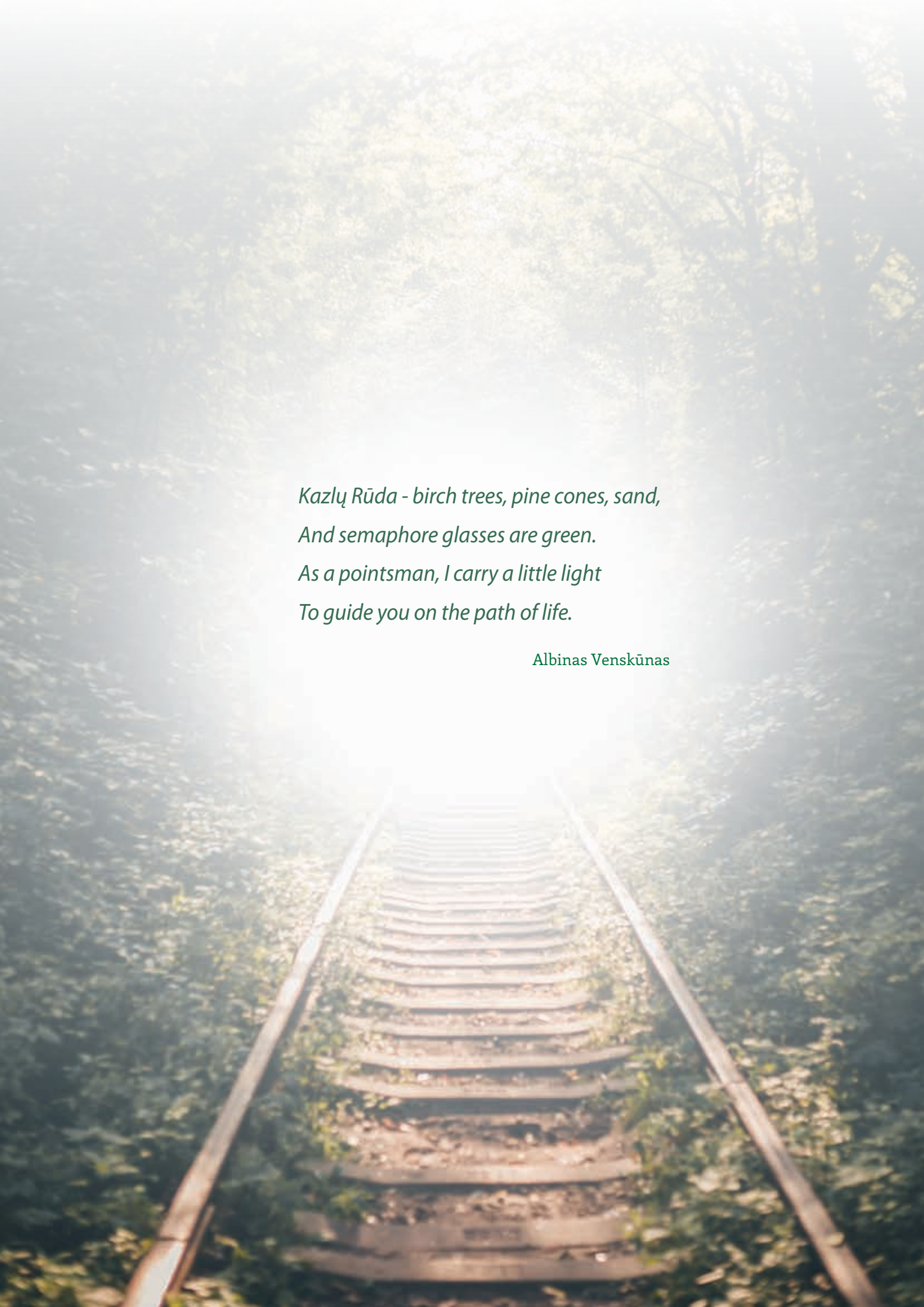
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*Kazlų Rūda - birch trees, pine cones, sand,  
And semaphore glasses are green.  
As a pointsman, I carry a little light  
To guide you on the path of life.*

*Albinas Venskūnas*





*Bronislav Algimantas Lelešius*

*Born in 1941, he was an exile, a rifleman,  
awarded the January 13th Commemoration Medal.*

**From the  
author's  
memoir book  
„Called by  
the Revival“**



*Domicelė Kališiūtė-Lelešienė, an exile from 1941, with her son Algimantas. Altai, 1949.*

*Pijus Lelešius, born in 1898 in Gudinė village, Javaravas township, Marijampolė district, was a political prisoner in 1941. He was a former head of the police department in Sasnava (Marijampolė region). He passed away on January 4, 1942, in the Rešotai camp in the Krasnoyarsk region. In 2009, P. Lelešius was posthumously granted the status of a war volunteer.*



„I confirm“  
Member of the Operational Service  
(signature)

**Exile sentences**  
June 15, 1941, Marijampolė

I, Sergeant Jezhkov, an authorized operative of State Security, having examined the incriminating material regarding the arrest of Pijus Lelešius, Juozas, on June 14, 1941, by State Security authorities, have determined the following:

Pijus Lelešius, Juozas, born in 1898, was arrested as a former head of the Sasnava police department, having held that position since 1936. He was a member of the military-fascist organization „Šaulių sąjunga“ (Riflemen's Union). His family, consisting of: 1) wife Domicelė Kališiūtė-Lelešienė, born in 1909; 2) son Bronislav Algimantas Lelešius, born in 1939, poses a social threat.

I propose that the family of the arrested individual, Pijus Lelešius, Juozas, consisting of two members, be exiled beyond the borders of the Lithuanian SSR as a socially dangerous group.

State Security operative sergeant Jezhkov (signature)

„I agree“ Chairman of the Marijampolė District Board of the People's Commissariat of State Security of the Lithuanian SSR  
(signature of Petrikas)  
Deputy Head of the Third Division of the People's Commissariat of State Security of the Lithuanian SSR  
(signature of Bogoduch)



*I dedicate this to the cherished memory  
of my dear parents,  
Domicelė Kališiūtė-Lelešienė and Pijus Lelešius*



## POETIC TEXTS

*You saved me, dear mother,  
Preserved me in the prison of exile.  
Never once did you neglect  
To place your bony hand on my shoulder.*

*We endured, we returned  
To our homeland  
Unwelcomed by the wickedness  
of those empowered  
We attained the Revival and our own state.  
It pains me that you didn't live  
to see it, mother.*

A. Lelešius

### **On All Saints' Day**

*Today, on All Saints' Day,  
Come, oh swarm of memories,  
Beloved spirits.  
May the wall disappear  
Between us and the departed.  
Come here...  
My father, the prisoner of Rešotai,  
We were together for only a year,  
And as exiles, our paths diverged,  
You perished by the Laptev Sea.  
As if fate opened the gates of hell  
Even in this world...*

*Oh, angel, tell us, what is our fault?  
The souls of the saints and the black sun...  
Existence and non-existence so close today...*

A. Lelešius



## **The Black June**

*In that Black June,  
In that time of troubles,  
The exiles were transported  
By the Asians of the East.  
They interrupted our dream  
By invading the night,  
And brought us to the train  
As living cargo.  
They crammed us into the wagons  
Without ceremony,  
Misfortune struck –  
Freedom in agony.  
To the East, to the East –  
The wheels kept rolling,  
And tears flowed –  
For what – we did not understand.  
Stifling, like in a prison,  
Inside the crowded wagon...  
We long for fresh air,  
Here, birth and death intertwine...  
Why, fate,  
Do you crucify us?  
A voice choked,  
Repeating "Mary."  
Will we return? Who knows?..  
Having lost our homeland...  
Give us, Oh Lord, a sign –  
We whisper our prayer.*

## **The Siberian Fir Tree**

*White snowflakes carried by the wind,  
Grow up we slowly in the wild...  
We bring a Christmas tree –  
The joy of a child's heart.*

*Around are columns of the trees –  
They stand as guardians eternal,  
Like in a sanctuary whispering prayers  
In solemn silence.*

*Here, the tree is adorned,  
Though modest in attire.  
In exile, that sacred morning  
Is like threads of memory...*

## **The Laptev Sea**

*The Laptev Sea,  
The Laptev Sea...  
Polar sun –  
Not amber.  
Glittering sun –  
Cold rays.  
The Laptev Sea,  
The Laptev Sea...  
White landscape –  
Black despair...  
...Mother's hands  
Hold the child tight...  
Guardian angel,  
Why have you left us?  
A tear drop  
Like a shimmering pearl...  
Battles of love  
With destruction.*

*The gaze of a baby  
Pierces the heart,  
The gaze of a baby  
Denies death.  
Fading words –  
The final prayer...  
Mother's eyes –  
They are little flames of love  
For her child...  
...For what, homeland,  
Did you suffer,  
Bound to the cross  
By the fate of Asian hordes?..  
In the sweet realm  
of non-existence,  
Suffering subsides,  
The spirits rise  
To the halls of abundance...  
The Laptev Sea,  
The Laptev Sea...  
Fierce waves.  
Ice tombs.  
The Laptev Sea,  
The Laptev Se...*

*Domicelė Lelešienė's  
happy life in pre-war  
Independent Lithuania will  
soon be replaced by the  
bleakness of Siberian exile  
and her husband's death  
in a Soviet labor camp.*



*To a friend of the days of exile*

### **Vytas Miliauskas**

*Though imposed, still our Homeland...  
Exile in Altai, marks of hardship...  
Dear hills, blue snow...  
Our childhood, where have you gone?*

-----

*Not only words revive  
Distant friendship with sincerity.  
The cinema of memories from days of exile,  
Like turning back, will return to us:  
There, on the edge of imagination, our footprints,  
Surrounded by childhood summers, nearby –  
A merry flock of goats in the resounding forest,  
And we – their shepherds – a joyful part.  
And cheerful winters, adorned with frost,  
A picture that we must not enter.  
It is Asia, imposed by the homeland,  
Mysteriously overshadowing Roerich.  
Like a distant call, it will find her,  
Which will be with you till the end.*

*A poem read on the occasion of the unveiling of a monument in the homeland of the exiled brothers Vincas and Pijus Bielskis in Balsupiai, Marijampolė District on October 25, 1998. The monument was erected by Jurgis Nevulis and Algimantas Lelešius*

*Like stones from the fields,  
Forgotten and displaced,  
We gather the scorned,  
Our own history embraced,  
An event, a date, a fact.  
And we climb like Mindaugas,  
Our Lithuania reclaiming,  
From crosses, monuments, and obelisks,  
We build for the fallen, the despised,  
Exiled from our Homeland.  
We must hurry,  
For time does not wait,  
For we too  
Slowly become the past...*

*To the participant in the fight for freedom*  
**Antanina Mikalonienė**

*You walked the thorny path of the fight for freedom,  
With Lithuania in your heart,  
Defying the destructive might of the enemy.*

*Let the birch groves of Suvalkija  
Tell you a beautiful tale, as in Dzūkija.  
Having left the earthly land behind,  
Journey to the realm of the Almighty.*

### **Farewell**

*To the political prisoner*  
**Algirdas Želenekas**

*For you, a small part of the nation,  
The struggle, the suffering, the hope will repeat.  
Fate's brothers, the partisans...  
Youth buried in Džezkazgan,  
Return home and waiting.  
And behold, the Dawn of Rebirth.  
We are free again. Even death  
Cannot overshadow the miraculous power of freedom.  
Rest in freedom in the land of the free,  
May the ray of freedom shine upon you there.*

*To the participant in the fight for freedom*  
**A. Lakickienė**

*Dear warrior for freedom,  
You are no longer with us. But in memory, you live on,  
In the green forest, comrades of the partisans,  
From the remarkable novel of your brave struggle,  
Which you wrote with a courageous life...  
Bless us from heavenly realms.*

### **Farewell**

*To the political prisoner*  
**Vincenta Čibirkiene**

*Vincenta, noble Lithuanian,  
In the dawn of youth –  
The thorny burden,  
The zone of camps – your fate...  
This is the painful memory  
Of our nation,  
Surpassing death  
The heroism of your generation.*

*Valerija Štreimikienė, a political exile,  
On Your 80th Birthday*

*Dear Valerija,  
The soul of Aukštaitija,*

*Entwined within the forests of Kazlų Rūda.  
Perhaps only the patches of clouds  
Remind you of your homeland and the wind,  
Swaying the trunks of pine trees,  
Like in Vajasiškė,  
Where your shouting childhood remained...  
Then youth behind barbed fences...  
But you endured it all  
Like the whispering breeze of the fields,  
Guiding us through heat and rain.*

### **To Partisan Vytautas Masikonis On Your 85th Birthday**

*Vytautas, dear partisan,  
You fought against the enemies of Lithuania  
In the post-war era, nearing our victory's horizon...  
As if in formation once again,  
Now you fight,  
An unwavering guardian of the Homeland,  
With pickets, rallies, courageous speeches,  
For a patriotic school,  
When others have long grown weary...  
On the occasion of this honorable jubilee,  
Accept these words of congratulations,  
May the closeness of comrades  
Bring you joy and solace.*

### **The Lithuanians have voted**

*The Lithuanians have voted,  
Without shame, without conscience,  
Once again, they humbled  
Their own name before the world.*

*From the Eastern horizon,  
The sun was rising...  
Our voters entrusted power  
To the son of the tundra.*

*He pats himself on the back,  
Feasting on countless promises...  
And the little Lithuanian huts  
Are tainted by the shaman.*

*Lithuania, dear Lithuania,  
Amber grace,  
What has occupation  
Done to you...*

### **To the one who broke the windows of the Seimas,**

*Not quite evolved,  
I understand your difficult situation:  
A big fist, small brain –  
And you itch to give someone payback...  
Blind rage, adrenaline,  
And there comes the wild scream –  
The long-awaited moment of smashing!  
(The argument of a savage).*

### **The folk lament about Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant and the Shining Lightbulb**

*Ignalina, Ignalina,  
It's the irony of fate:  
The "bad guys" built it for us,  
While the "good guys" take it away.  
And neighbors talk about us:  
"As Lithuanians, so are they backward..."  
Perhaps there's a Euro-hustler lurking there?  
Not long ago, it was  
An energetic giant,  
Now it's Euro-stricken:  
They already closed the first block  
(Brussels commanded),  
Soon they'll close the second,  
For they've completely lost their minds.  
The giant will quickly turn  
Into an energy dwarf –  
These are all Euro-tricks.  
Soon, for that Euro-troubler,  
That pitiful little Lithuanian,  
We'll have to beg like beggars by the roadside,  
Constantly pleading with our neighbors:  
"Have mercy on us... hard times,  
Give us at least a kilowatt,  
Until we can afford a lightbulb..."  
Ignalina, Ignalina,  
It's the irony of fate:  
The "bad guys" built it for us,  
While the "good guys" take it away.*

### **For July 6th**

*From the glorious green times of Mindaugas,  
Through the boundless storms of ages,  
Reborn like a living phoenix,  
In our hearts, the state of Lithuania.  
But, Lord, what a rocky path*



*For those awakened from a lethargic sleep.  
And how far afield the green tapestry of dreams  
For us, melting away in Europe like snow.  
History, who are you to us?  
Are you a wicked stepmother, or an angry god of fate?  
Our future like a cloud,  
Our days shrouded in uncertainty.  
Yet still, a fervent prayer,  
Strengthens us on the nation's journey  
To the distant realms of time,  
Where the promised lands may lie.*

### **Mindaugas' spirit Summoning**

*King Mindaugas, your crown it is,  
Shining miraculously through centuries.  
An ancient pagan headband against  
the enemy's crown,  
The echoes of battles, seemingly unceasing,  
Until this day, when Lithuania once again,  
As if remembering those times of yore,  
Revives with the spirit of our ancestors,  
An unbreakable multitude defending  
Against a new foe, armed to the teeth.  
Will it now defend, with minds sharpened,?  
Against the suicidal demise of the nation  
In the warm womb of the Euro-bog?*

-----  
*King Mindaugas, how can we learn  
The art of unity without lifting the sword,  
How to etch within ourselves  
That wondrous name – LIETUVA –  
Into our very souls?*

### **Were we...**

*Were we Lithuanians  
And homosexuals,  
Europe would rejoice in us,  
Being endlessly generous.*

*The Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant  
Would not only be spared,  
But another one would be built for us,  
And an electric bridge.*

*We wouldn't have to pay a penny  
For those expensive constructions.  
The clergy from the European Union*

*Would cover all the costs.*

*Because Europe loves  
All kinds of minorities greatly,  
Loves and fosters them,  
And strives to help.*

*Electricity would be the cheapest  
In Lithuania, in the world.  
We would rejoice in being  
Homosexuals.*

### **Žalgiris**

*A Chronicle of Battle in Verse*

*One thousand  
Four hundred and tenth  
On the fifteenth of July.  
The battlefield -  
Grunwald -  
The field of the Battle of Žalgiris.  
Facing each other  
Are two armies:  
Jogaila's and Vytautas'  
Poles, Lithuanians,  
Czechs, Tatars,  
The troops of Smolensk,  
In total, our soldiers -  
Twenty thousand strong.  
They are prepared for battle.  
Opposing them stands  
The ranks  
Of the Teutonic Order.  
Lines (three)  
Of the Crusader armies  
Appear menacingly,  
Armored brethren,  
Mercenary soldiers  
From European lands -  
Slightly fewer in number,  
But better armed.  
They are led by  
The Grand Master,  
Ulrich von Jungingen.  
Their left wing -  
Against the Lithuanians,  
Their leader - Marshal  
Friedrich von Wallenrode.  
Their right - against the Poles,  
Led by the Grand  
Komtur Konrad von Lichtenstein.  
Jogaila hesitates - hoping for negotia-*

tions.  
He consecrates knights, attends Mass.  
Heralds arrive,  
Presenting two swords:  
One to Jogaila, the other to Vytautas.  
"Do not avoid battle,"  
He rolls the stone-like.  
And Vytautas, resolute,  
Orders the Lithuanians to attack  
The left wing of the Order.  
Slightly delayed, Jogaila orders  
The Poles to join the battle.  
And the third line  
Is thrown by the Master  
Against the Lithuanians -  
A heavy charge,  
Iron-clad armor  
Like the forces of hell  
Against the Lithuanians.  
They clash bravely,  
Although many perish  
For the honor of the fight  
On the battlefield.  
Sword against sword,  
Steel against steel,  
As if on the final  
Day of Judgment.  
Sounds of metal,  
The cries of the dying,  
The resounding clatter of horses -  
The noise of hell,  
The embrace of death,  
Its claws the day of triumph.  
A powerful force -  
The heavy charge of the Poles -  
Overwhelms the enemy's  
Right wing.  
And the wing of the Lithuanians  
Begins to weaken,  
As thousands fall  
From the Order's knights,  
A torrent of steel.  
Retreat for the Lithuanians -  
Vytautas orders:  
Preserve the soldiers  
For the decisive blow  
And attempt to break  
The cohesive ranks of the Crusaders.  
It succeeds splendidly.  
Often the Lithuanians  
Used this tactic  
In frightful battles.  
A portion of our soldiers  
Covered the Poles'

Right wing.  
Of the three Smolensk regiments,  
Only one remained here -  
Two fierce knights emerged.  
A portion of the Crusaders  
Scattered, attempting  
To leave the Lithuanians  
And return to the battle.  
But they failed,  
As the Poles  
Met them.  
The Lithuanian maneuver  
Split the cohesive  
Area of the Crusader army,  
Separating a portion  
From the rest  
On the main battlefield.  
Having drawn  
The Polish forces into battle,  
Vytautas presses  
Conrad's wing.  
The Grand Master  
Is left with  
Only his reserve forces  
(He called them banners) -  
There were sixteen of them.  
And Vytautas hurls  
Into the heart of the battle  
His reserve -  
The remaining Polish forces  
And begins to attack the Crusaders.  
The Grand Master manages  
To break the encirclement,  
But here he encounters  
The returning Lithuanians.  
The Crusader soldiers,  
Pressed from all sides,  
Were already helpless  
To change the course of battle,  
Although they fought valiantly.  
The heavy armor  
In the dense crowd  
No longer helped.  
The Grand Master perished,  
The Marshal, the Komtur,  
The knights of the Order,  
The light soldiers,  
The guests from Europe -  
They all perished.  
Lithuanians and Poles,  
Having lost every second soldier,  
Crushed the Order  
In the Battle of Žalgiris  
In the year fourteen hundred and tenth

On the fifteenth of July.  
 The fame of Žalgiris  
 Spread throughout the world.  
 Vytautas earned  
 The glory of the warlord -  
 It lives in the hearts  
 Of Lithuanians to this day.  
 The power of the Teutonic Order  
 Came to ruin.  
 The Lithuanians, Samogitians,  
 The Poles, the cunning,  
 Were saved by Žalgiris  
 For all eternity.

## **A Ballad about “Longing for the Homeland”**

*For young exiles –  
 spreaders of the Lithuanian word*

That Black June,  
 That terrible time for the nation,  
 You, young Lithuanians,  
 Together with your families,  
 Were crammed into wagons  
 By the relentless Bolsheviks.  
 They soon separated the men  
 From their families, and most of them  
 Died in the horrific Reshoty  
 Concentration camp –  
 In the abyss of death.  
 It was the region of Krasnoyarsk.  
 And you, mothers,  
 Were taken to Barnaul –  
 The land of Altai.  
 After half a year, to the settlement  
 In the Troitsk District forest –  
 There, industry amidst the woods.  
 They cut down trees there, making  
 And running away from the forest,  
 And they loaded the logs  
 Into wagons, transporting them  
 Somewhere far away...  
 There, they suffered black misery,  
 They hungered and endured,  
 You, mothers.  
 There, they knitted and sewed,  
 Cleared the snow from the road  
 For passing cars  
 Carrying logs from the forest.  
 And they defended as best they could  
 The starving children  
 From the clutches of hunger.

Those Lithuanian exiles  
 From the lands of Lithuania.  
 A group of those young people,  
 High school students,  
 Lived, endured hardship  
 Together with their mothers  
 In the second forest settlement –  
 Called “Yuzhakovskiy  
 Vtoroy mechpunkt”,  
 Or otherwise known as “učias tok”:  
 And the village of Yuzakovo  
 Was eight kilometers away  
 Through the forest  
 From that “učias tok”.  
 There, Lithuanian mothers  
 Carried clothes, belongings,  
 Exchanged potatoes,  
 Until they had brought  
 something else  
 With them into exile.  
 They gathered  
 the young people there  
 (There were seven of them)  
 Aleksandras had an idea –  
 He was already twenty,  
 Having finished high school,  
 So he was an authority  
 For the other young people.  
 Vitalija, Nijolė,  
 Danutė, Janina,  
 Two Algirdas,  
 And the seventh – Aleksandras.  
 He proposed to the young people  
 To create a secret newspaper.  
 They enthusiastically agreed.  
 He took one copy,  
 Written by their hands,  
 And it became a source  
 Of solace in their exile.  
 They chose a title  
 For their almanac –  
 “Longing for the Homeland”...  
 And those young people created,  
 They were talented –  
 They put poems, stories,  
 And aphorisms  
 By famous men of the world  
 Into the almanac.  
 And Aleksandras inspired  
 And encouraged the young people  
 With the editor’s words  
 To continue writing, creating,  
 To immortalize in their work  
 The lost Homeland,

The beloved land of Lithuania.  
 Let us remember the creativity  
 Of those spiritual young people.  
 Aleksandras:  
 “Cold winter, silent night,  
 It beckons me to go outside.  
 So sad, lonely is the room  
 With the boring companion –  
 solitude.  
 The sky is starry, yet dark.  
 Everywhere is silent. Only dogs bark.  
 And, it seems as if I am  
 Not in Siberia, but in Lithuania.”  
 Janina:  
 “Tell me, dear God, will we return  
 To our beloved Homeland?  
 Will we ever see again  
 Our cherished homeland?  
 With hope in our minds  
 We will await that beautiful day,  
 When we will finally see again  
 The fields of beloved Lithuania.”  
 Algirdas:  
 “In the grand world  
 From the Alps to the Bering,  
 Among vast empires,  
 Powerful and restless,  
 You are so small,  
 (This land of Lithuania)  
 You are so tiny.”  
 Another Algirdas:  
 “The wind roars,  
 the machine rumbles,  
 Two guards stand by me.  
 The wind teases with its funeral curl...  
 They uprooted me  
 from the Homeland like a tree...”  
 Vitalija:  
 “How small you are, my country,  
 And yet I love you...  
 Only those who have  
 strayed beyond the mountains  
 Will understand...  
 Though Siberia separates us,  
 I am constantly with you,  
 You awaken poetic inspiration in me  
 And fill me with hope and smiles.”  
 Danutė:  
 “The wind howls, whistles outside  
 my window,  
 Longing is stirred by its  
 mournful tones,  
 And from the receiver,  
 that same old tango



Seems to play from afar,  
as if in Lithuania.  
In my eyes, my homeland, green meadows,  
Alder trees by the river, reddish clover,  
And a road lined with swaying birches,  
It seems, happiness is restless beyond the road.”  
Nijolė (“Amidst the Blizzard”):  
“On the morning of tomorrow,  
early in the morning,  
The first passersby,  
Struggling through the snowy drifts,  
Not far from the village, found  
A half-covered body in the snow,  
Belonging to an unknown woman frozen.  
She must have been sitting to rest  
On small wooden stumps  
And... fell into eternal sleep.  
Her hands folded in fur sleeves,  
And her head lowered low on her chest.  
A faint smile played on her tired face.  
Yesterday’s blizzard left no trace,  
Only white snowdrifts,  
Gleaming brightly in the sunlight,  
Swaying in the boundless sea of snow...”  
In the evening of creativity  
The young people were summoned,  
Their own mothers,  
And all the exiles.  
Excitedly, they read  
Their own creations –  
Prose and poems  
From the “Longing for the Homeland”  
Already prepared issue.  
It was the first one,  
In total – seven of them.  
The sincere creativity  
Stirred the exiles,  
The transparent longing  
For the lost Homeland.  
They applauded sincerely  
The talented creators  
And it seemed easier,  
To bear the dark hardship.  
Only Janina’s mother  
Warned her daughter in the evening,  
“Spare playing with fire.  
When safety comes,  
They will lock you up.”  
Prophetic words  
Those of the mother.  
Betrayed by a young man,  
Who came from elsewhere –  
A Judas, pretending  
To be a true Lithuanian.

Arrests, raids  
Quickly began.  
Aleksandras was sentenced  
To years in the labor camps  
As if he were the greatest enemy –  
He received ten years.  
The Bolsheviks were terrified  
Of the word,  
Like a free bird  
Unattainable.  
They extended Aleksandras’ “term”  
In the labor camps  
And he returned to his homeland,  
Though not as a free man.  
He happily greeted  
The dawn of rebirth  
And demanded  
The return of the former security  
(That of the Altai region)  
To Lithuania  
His “Longing for the Homeland” –  
All seven  
Of its issues.  
And indeed, they were returned.  
It was a miracle,  
Aleksandras rejoiced,  
His restless soul.  
He published the book,  
Including the works –  
The prose and poems  
Of their “Longing for the Homeland.”  
The underground almanac –  
The baby of those young people –  
It was the only one  
In the history of the exiles  
So unique,  
When the light of creativity  
And the spells of its words  
Illuminated the darkness  
Of that gloomy exile –  
There, near Južakovo,  
In the distant Altai,  
In the forests of Siberia...  
In the same settlement,  
I lived with my mother,  
And experienced the exile  
The same hardships...  
I was just five years old then...



SUMMONED BY THE REVIVAL

## REPORT TO THE NATION AND CONSCIENCE

*Suvalkija must demonstrate an example of spirituality to Lithuania,  
and Kazlų Rūda is that example to Suvalkija.*

A. Lelešius

I, Bronislavas Algimantas Lelešius, was born on November 29, 1939, in Sasnava (Marijampolė County, now Marijampolė Municipality). I was a deportee in 1941. In 1957, together with my mother Domicelė Lelešienė, we returned to Lithuania. My father Pijus Lelešius, the former head of the Sasnava police station, died from starvation on January 4, 1942, in the Rešotai camp in the Krasnoyarsk Territory. There, 2,500 Lithuanian intellectuals perished.

In the summer of 1942, an even more terrifying ordeal awaited the deportees to Altai, which proved fatal to many—a journey to the Laptev Sea, literally to the land of white bears. The average winter temperature there was  $-45^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Marija Miliauskienė, who knew Russian and was acquainted with General Stasys Raštikis' mother, was advised by her to ask to be left behind with her small children. Intuitively sensing the scent of destruction, my mother Domicelė Lelešienė and I, a 2.5-year-old child, went with M. Miliauskienė. We were ordered to present a note („spravka“) stating that the children were sick. M. Miliauskienė sacrificed a skirt with a zipper to the paramedic; it was an unseen, astonishing garment there. And my mother sacrificed her wedding ring. That skirt and ring saved us from perishing. In exile, my mother's ability to knit and sew also saved us. She became a well-known seamstress throughout the settlement. She had bought a hand-operated sewing machine (made in Podolsk). Now it is exhibited in the Taurus District Partisans and Exiles Museum in Marijampolė, where I work.

In 1957, in Altai, I successfully completed secondary school („desiatiletka“) with good grades and, in the same year, my mother and I returned to Lithuania.

In 1963, I graduated from Vilnius State Pedagogical Institute.

Together with the deputy director of Kazlų Rūda Secondary School (who was a good and experienced leader of school excursions), we travelled extensively with school tourists and students. During the summer, we would go to Crimea, and in winter, to the Carpathian Mountains. We participated in competitions in Latvia, Estonia, Belarus, Ukraine, and multi-day hiking trips across Lithuania. They would culminate in republican tourist and orienteering competitions at designated locations. Our tourists often became winners in those competitions. Once, we participated in the All-Union competition in Western Ukraine and returned with medals. I had a 16 mm film camera and would capture tourists and events in the school. It brought joy to the students, their parents, the tourists, and gave me considerable satisfaction as well.

The Revival was a spiritual uplift for me. On June 24, 1988, I participated in the first Sajūdis rally in Gediminas Square, Vilnius. The Lithuanian tricolor, the young people safeguarding order at the rally, and the green banners with white Gediminas Columns shook the imagination in a positive way. During the Soviet era, I used to listen to foreign radio stations on my radio receiver, some of which were heavily jammed. This allowed me to critically evaluate the Soviet regime and reality. Poland's „Solidarity“ had started eight years prior. We were waiting for similar events to begin in our country. And we witnessed it! The first sign was Nijolė Sadūnaitė's organized rally against the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact on August 23, 1987, near the A. Mickiewicz monument in Vilnius.

On June 3, 1988, the first Sajūdis group was formed at the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. Grandiose rallies started all over the country. I enthusiastically participated in them. It was a spiritual euphoria for everyone. On September 3, 1988, a large Sajūdis-organized rally took place in the microdistrict of Kazlų Rūda. My brothers Apučiai and I participated in it, holding tricolor flags. On September 5, 1988, a Sajūdis support group was formed in Kazlų Rūda, and I was responsible for working with political prisoners and deportees.

By the initiative of the Sajūdis group in Kazlų Rūda, a huge rally took place on June 14, 1989, near the railway station. We commemorated the tragic 48th anniversary of the Great Deportation of 1941. I prepared posters with strong messages and spoke at the rally.

In the same year, in autumn 1989, with the initiative of Sajūdis and funds collected in Kazlų Rūda, a remarkable monument called „Siberian Madonna“ (sculptor Julius Narušis) was unveiled near the railway station. It was a 3.6-meter-high stone sculpture depicting a deportee holding a lifeless child, dedicated to the victims of Soviet repression.

In February 1990, I organized two gatherings for political prisoners and deportees in Kazlų Rūda. We established a separate section for political prisoners and deportees in Kazlų Rūda, and I became its chairman, serving in that position until 1998.

On February 23, 1990, I organized a rally in Kazlų Rūda near the Executive Committee. We demanded the registration of the newly established section for political prisoners and deportees, as we wanted to participate in local government elections. We achieved our goal.

On March 11, 1990, Lithuania's Independence was restored. At that time, I worked as a history teacher at Kazlų Rūda Secondary School. On March 12, I managed to organize a commemoration of the restored Independence in the school auditorium. I read a brief announcement, and we sang the national anthem. It was the first commemoration of March 11th in Lithuania, taking place just half a day after the restoration of Independence. Filled with a sense of uplift, I went to the Kazlų Rūda post office and sent two telegrams to the TV show „Atgimimo banga“ (Wave of Revival) of Lithuanian Television. In one telegram, I congratulated the Supreme Council and its Chairman Vytautas Landsbergis on the restoration of Lithuania's Independence on behalf of Kazlų Rūda's political prisoners and de-

portees. In the other telegram, I greeted all political prisoners and deportees in Lithuania. The telegrams concluded with the words „May God help us.“ It was a moment of joy when Nijolė Baužytė, the host of the nearest broadcast of „Atgimimo banga,“ first read out my telegrams. We, the people of Kazlų Rūda, were the first to congratulate Lithuania on the restored Independence!

The Sajūdis party won the local government elections. Mečislovas Daugiala, the leader of the local Sajūdis group, became the Chairman of Kazlų Rūda City Council, and Valeras Plioplys became the Mayor. The representative of Kazlų Rūda's political prisoners and deportees, the patriotic fighter Juozas Mikalonis, was also elected.

On March 22, 1990, I organized a picket rally in front of the Kazlų Rūda police station to demand the removal of a plaque dedicated to the executioners. Interestingly, when the policemen learned about the rally, they were so scared that they had already left the building. So, nobody came out to talk with us. We covered the police station with posters and took photographs. The goal was achieved—the plaque was removed.

In June 1990, the Kazlų Rūda Unit of the Marijampolė Battalion was reestablished. I became the deputy of Algimantas, the leader of the unit and a valiant partisan from Eastern Lithuania. During the events of January 1991, five soldiers from the Kazlų Rūda Unit, including myself, were inside the Supreme Council building alongside other defenders. For our actions, we were awarded the Commemorative Medals of January 13. Another Kazlų Rūda teacher and three students also received the medals. In total, nine people from Kazlų Rūda were honored. According to this indicator, Kazlų Rūda is unmatched by any other similar-sized town in Lithuania.

On August 25, 1990, with my initiative and funding, a monument to the partisans of the Tauro District was unveiled. It was consecrated by Father Tadas Vallianas and unveiled by Antanas Lukša. Speeches were given by partisan liaison Marija Gražulienė, former partisans Juozas Ambrasas and Jeronimas Čibirka, myself, and other participants. Although the monument stood in the yard of Antanas Palubinskas, on Lietuvos Partizanų Street, it was desecrated four times.

In 2002, the monument was relocated to the new cemetery in Kazlų Rūda using government funds and became an integral part of the memorial com-



plex dedicated to the memory of the partisans.

The remains of seven partisans from the Sakalai (Bagotoji) Unit of the Tauro District's Žalgiris Battalion were found and exhumed on October 16, 1991, in a forest near the new cemetery in Kazlų Rūda. They were solemnly reburied at the new cemetery on November 23, 1991, with religious ceremonies. Temporary black wooden crosses with the names of the partisans were placed at the site of the partisan grave. These crosses were desecrated and inserted into the ground upside down. In July 1997, Jurgis Nevulis, a shooter from Kazlų Rūda, and I erected a monument made of field stones in memory of the seven fallen partisans.

In 1993, Zigmas Brazauskas, the son of Bronius Brazauskas-Sakalas, the deceased leader of a local partisan unit, and I excavated the remains of the Krapavičiai brothers, partisans who died in 1945 and originated from Skučiškės village (Kazlų Rūda region), at the location of their former hideout in the neighboring village of Eglupis. The Kazlų Rūdos Unit of the partisans solemnly reburied the remains of these partisans with religious ceremonies on October 23, 1993, at the Kazlų Rūda new cemetery, near the monument for the seven partisans. Two temporary black wooden crosses were placed on the brothers' grave and were desecrated along with the aforementioned seven crosses, inserted upside down into the ground. In July 1997, J. Nevulis and I erected a monument made of field stones in memory of the Krapavičiai brothers. Both monuments were consecrated by Father I. Plioraitis.

As Kazlų Rūda political prisoners, deportees, and soldiers, we distinguished ourselves with exceptional activity. In June 1989, I collected signatures from residents of Tarybinių Partizanų Street in Kazlų Rūda to have it renamed to Lietuvos Partizanų Street. The struggle for the name change lasted for about two years and ended with our victory. Tarybinių Partizanų Street became Lietuvos Partizanų Street. I, along with Valerija Štreimikienė, a political prisoner from Vorkuta, collected signatures from residents of Tarybų and Komjaunimo Streets (which practically form a single street in the center of Kazlų Rūda) to have these streets renamed to Atgimimo (Rebirth) Street. We achieved our goal, and I collected signatures from residents of Pergalės (Victory) Street, which then became Čiurlionio Street. Pionierių (Pioneers) Street was

renamed after V. Kudirka. These name changes reflect the struggle for a new and just perspective on our history. In Kazlų Rūda, Majakovskio Street was replaced by M. Valančiaus Street, Melnikaitės Street by Maironio Street, and Sokolovo Street by Vasario 16-osios (February 16th) Street. In other cities, there are still Soviet-era names such as Kosmonautai, Chkalov, and similar ones.

A significant place in our patriotic activities is dedicated to the persistent struggle for commemorating Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius in Kazlų Rūda by naming a street after him, which was previously known as Stoties (Station) Street (formerly Bažnyčios (Church) Street). At one end of this street, there is a monument to deportees near the railway station, and at the other end, there is a church. One day, an idea struck me: it would be good to name this street after the bishop martyr. He was a man of the Church and a martyr, and the monument to deportees symbolizes suffering. In December 1990, I gathered signatures from the residents of the street. The majority signed, but not everyone. The municipality, as usual for cowardly bureaucrats, delayed renaming the street, and in 1992, the left-wing parties won the parliamentary elections (which was a great sorrow for us at the time). Various vindictive forces emerged. By intimidating the residents, they forced them to renounce their signatures for the renaming of the street and collected more signatures to keep the old name.

That's when we started collecting signatures from the residents of Kazlų Rūda and even from residents of other towns. We collected over a thousand signatures. We were inspired by the Pope's visit to Lithuania in 1993. He mentioned Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius' name on the Hill of Crosses. A fierce battle also took place among the press publications. We were supported by „XXI amžius“ and the patriotic newspaper „Sūduva“ in Marijampolė.

In December 1994, I invited Monsignor Alfonsas Svarinskas to Kazlų Rūda. He met with the residents in the packed hall of the former cinema theater. The communication was very warm. Monsignor supported our efforts to commemorate Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius, and our opponents resorted to retaliatory actions. They started breaking the windows and walls of my house so that the house shook. In 1991, before September 1st, I received a warning letter that I could be burned (they might have done it, but there were other wooden houses about 4-5 meters away from mine). The windows were broken in a similar way ten times.

The situation changed when the right-wing parties won the local elections in 1995. Juozas Mikalonis, a representative of Kazlų Rūda, became the chairman of the Education Committee of the Marijampolė District Municipality Council (Chairman P. Povilonis). It was a great success. He urged the Council to make a positive decision regarding the naming of V. Borisevičius Street in Kazlų Rūda. For that purpose, our priest T. Vallianas went to P. Povilonis. Unfortunately, there was a lot of procrastination. At that point, I, losing patience, criticized P. Povilonis in my article titled „Pažemino ir įžeidė“ („Demeaned and Offended“). It was published in „Sūduva“ and „Lietuvos aidas.“ Even Antanas Terleckas, after reading my article in „Lietuvos aidas,“ made fun of the hesitancy of the right-wing parties. And they finally dared to make a positive decision regarding the street name. Street name signs with the name of Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius were hung, and no one tore them down. On November 26, 1995, Monsignor Alfonsas Svarinskas consecrated V. Borisevičius Street in Kazlų Rūda. Once again, he had a warm meeting with the residents in the hall of the former cinema theater. I wrote about it in the press. During a rally in Vilnius, I heard Monsignor say, „The residents of Kazlų Rūda fought for Borisevičius Street for five years and won.“

Thanks to our activism, in 2002, historians at Kazlų Rūda's municipal schools started allocating 18 lessons instead of one for Resistance history in the 10th grade, at the expense of half of the lessons dedicated to civic education. The first such case in Lithuania.

In the center of Kazlų Rūda, there are graves of Soviet soldiers who died during World War II. Graves are graves, a sacred place. However, there used to be a tall, about 6-meter, aggressively looking statue of a Soviet soldier in those cemeteries.

I wrote an article titled „Revival of Soviet Patriotism in Kazlų Rūda“ in „Lietuvos aidas“ and „Sūduva.“ It helped. The statue was demolished. This happened after the withdrawal of the Soviet occupation army from Lithuania on August 31, 1993. The statue was demolished in 1994. A modest monument with a humble inscription „To the Victims of World War II“ was erected. Thanks to our patriotism.

From 1992 to 1996, when the left-wing parties were in power, every year on March 11th and June 14th, after the Holy Mass at the church, I organized commemorations at the Deportees' Monument, located near the railway station. Later, the Leisure

Center also joined in. My speakers were political prisoners and deportees who have since passed away. Now, the Kazlų Rūda Cultural Center organizes the commemorations. When a political prisoner or deportee from Kazlų Rūda passed away, I would write an obituary for the press and deliver a speech by their graveside.

Over the course of 20 years since the beginning of the National Revival, I wrote hundreds of articles on patriotic topics for local, national, and diaspora press. I mostly wrote for the „Kazlų Rūdos kronika“ newspaper, which I transformed into a patriotic publication with my frequent contributions from 2005 to 2010. Unfortunately, the newspaper was destroyed by bureaucrats. On December 17, 1996, „Sūduvos kraštas“ published my article titled „A Separate Course for the History of the Struggle for Freedom“ (since then, I devoted dozens of articles to this issue).

In 1994, I left my job at the school and lived on a pension of 145 litas, which was based on my teaching experience. I also received 30 litas for rent. Life was very modest. But fate unexpectedly showed kindness to me: I got a job at the Marijampolė Regional Partisans and Exile Museum. I will be forever grateful to Jonas Vasmanas, the former director of the Marijampolė Regional Museum and a great-spirited man, for accepting me into this job. I started working there on July 1, 1996. This job was the greatest gift from above.

I donated thousands of litas to the books and films about deportees.

I donated highly valuable exhibits to the Partisans and Exile Museum of the Tauras District, including:

1. Russian military binoculars that I purchased for 200 litas in an antique shop on Bokšto Street in Vilnius.

2. The sewing machine of Mother Domicelė Lelešienė (Podolsk production), which was bought in Siberia and brought back to Lithuania. It saved us from hunger.

3. A broken memorial plaque made of white marble, dedicated to the volunteers who died in 1919 from the Kazlų Rūda region. It was originally located in Kazlų Rūda, at the Šauliai House. It was found by Liuda Lenkutienė, who was digging in her yard.

4. A granite plaque in memory of the victims of the Soviet Secret Police (NKVD) in Lithuanian and Russian languages. It was attached to the former headquarters of the secret police in Kazlų Rūda

(later transformed into the Kazlų Rūda Police Department) and remained there until March 22, 1990. The plaque was removed after the protest rally I organized in front of the police department building on March 22, 1990.

Together with Jurgis Nevulis, we erected six monuments:

1. The monument in Gulbiniškiai village, in a place called Baltrušaitynė (Pilviškiai eldership, Vilkaviškis district) dedicated to Antanas Baltūsis-Žvejas and his companions Juozas Balsys-Dobilas and Pranas Žaldaris-Šapalas. I designed the memorial plaque. The monument was consecrated by Monsignor A. Svarinskas on February 1, 1998.

2. The monument in Gulbiniškiai village (Marijampolė district) dedicated to the members of Vytautas Battalion Headquarters who died: Anela Senkutė-Pušelė, Vytautas Vabalas-Kunigaikštis, Antanas Pečiulis-Baritonas. The monument was erected on April 27, 1997, and consecrated by Father I. Plioraitis.

3. The monument in the forest near Braziūkai, close to Garankščiai village (Kazlų Rūda municipality), dedicated to five fallen partisans: Jonas Balsys-Aidis, Bronius Petrauskas-Šarūnas, Vytautas Žemaitis-Šermukšnis, Juozas Liogys-Dragūnas, Vytautas Naujūnas-Kariūnas. Consecrated by Father I. Plioraitis on February 10, 1999.

4. The monument to deportees Vincas and Pijus Bielskis, at the site of their former homestead in Balsupiai (Marijampolė district). Consecrated on October 25, 1998.

5. The monument to seven fallen partisans of the Tauras District Žalgiris Battalion: Jonas Staniulis-Šarūnas, Mykolas Adomavičius-Plienias, Jonas Vosylis-Strazdas-Bajoras, and the Germans Hans, Paulius, and Karolis. Their remains were reburied on November 23, 1991, in the new cemetery of Kazlų Rūda (consecrated by Father T. Vallianas). The monument, erected in 1997, was consecrated by Father I. Plioraitis.

6. The monument to the partisan brothers Juozas and Jonas Krapavičiai in the new cemetery of Kazlų Rūda. Their remains were reburied on October 23, 1993. The monument, erected in 1997, was consecrated by Father I. Plioraitis.

The most impressive memorial is the monument to the partisans of the Tauras District Žalgiris Battalion, which was created in 2002 according to my design by the artist V. Aputis. It consists of huge

oak pillars, one and a half meters high, symbolizing the struggle of the partisans for an independent state. The memorial stands at the intersection of Lietuvos Partizanų and Vytauto streets, near the forest where the bodies of the fallen partisans were buried. At the center of the memorial, there is a bas-relief of an unknown fallen partisan in uniform, created based on a photograph of the legendary Dzūkija partisan leader Vaclovas Voveris-Žaibas, taken by the NKVD at the site of his death. With his raised hand, he seems to be calling to fight. On the sides of the memorial, the most significant battles (12 in total) of the Žalgiris Battalion against the occupiers are listed. By the way, the Žalgiris Battalion, led by Vincas Štrimas-Šturmas, following the order of the famous leader of the Tauras District, Antanas Baltūsis-Žvejas, carried out a well-known operation to eliminate a resistance point of armed Russian colonists in Opšrūtai (Vilkaviškis region) in October 1947. It prevented the occupiers' plans to colonize the Lithuanian countryside. The memorial was financed by the Kazlų Rūda municipality. It was consecrated on December 1, 2002, by Monsignor A. Svarinskas. On November 21, 2006, President of Lithuania Valdas Adamkus, during his visit to Kazlų Rūda, laid a wreath at the memorial, and I briefly told the President and accompanying individuals about the monument.

The memorial to the partisans of the Tauras District, built with my funds, was consecrated on August 25, 1990, by Father Tadas Vallianas. For security reasons, we erected the memorial in the courtyard of Antanas Palubinskas (Lithuanian Partisans Str.). It was clearly visible from the street. The monument was destroyed four times, hence its name „the martyr monument.“ In June 2002, it was relocated to the new cemetery of Kazlų Rūda.

On July 11, 2004, on the 10th anniversary of the death of Father A. Ylius (1994-07-11), the only monument in Lithuania dedicated to resistant priests was unveiled. It honors Antanas Ylius, the founder of the Tauras District, and the partisan chaplain Father Justinas Lelešius-Grafas. The monument, created by the artist V. Aputis according to my design, was financed by M. Gudaitienė, Father I. Plioraitis, and myself. It was consecrated by Monsignors A. Svarinskas and V. Kazlauskas. The monument is located near the church of Kazlų Rūda.

My solitary picket in front of the Parliament building on September 17, 2007, was a protest against the intention to close the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant.



The poster (text by A. Lelešius - Ed. note) was written by Vladas Masevičius.

Dear citizens, do you hear?  
Let's defend the nuclear heart of our country,  
Because without it, the price of electricity will rise,  
And, consequently, the entire production.  
We'll have to tighten our belts,  
Fall behind our neighbors.  
No one will be guilty, everyone will suffer.  
And even more will run away  
(Though no one is chasing)  
The waves of young people  
From Lithuania as if from the plague.

5. Solo picket in front of the Seimas (Parliament) building on July 2, 2007. Protest against the rents for parliamentarians.

Poster:

„Let's love the parliamentarian  
As a brother, he struggles  
For just two salaries.  
Let's allocate a meager rent  
So that they don't die of hunger.

Citizens, let's demand a televised survey-referendum on parliamentary rents!“

Poster (text by A. Lelešius):

„History of an illness:  
Patient's name: Lithuanian Seimas (Parliament)  
Diagnosis: an attack of greed  
Form of manifestation: extortion of the nation  
Medicine: exposure sessions with public participation  
Recommendation: a sick leave until the end of the term.“

In 1997, I organized the commemoration of June 14th in Marijampolė near the Chapel of Suffering (next to the building on Vytauto Street 26, which used to be the headquarters of Soviet security officers).

10. On June 16, 1997, I organized a protest rally near the Marijampolė County Governor's Administration building. We protested against the privatization of the building at Vytauto Street 26, which used to be the headquarters-torture chamber of Soviet security.

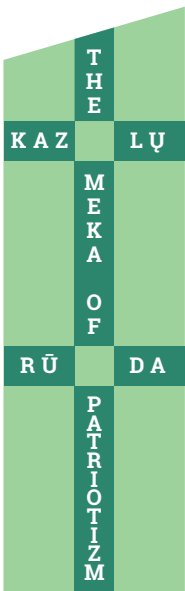
I described all the protest actions in the press („Kazlų Rūdos Kronika,“ „Respublika,“ etc.).

Yes, my patriotic activities were evaluated by Antanas Lukša, the brother of partisan J. Lukša-Daumant:

„How much  
one person can do!“

Former member of the Parliament, Vanda Briedienė, has said:

„Because of your teaching  
of the Resistance history in schools,  
you have done more  
than the entire Union of Lithuanian  
Political Prisoners and Deportees“.



## CHRONICLE OF LITHUANIAN WARS AND BATTLES

Scientists have calculated that throughout human history, there have been about 10,000 larger and smaller wars. In prehistoric times, in ancient times, and in the Middle Ages, wars were considered almost a normal phenomenon. Tribes in primitive communal systems fought over hunting grounds, and later states fought against other states. Especially aggressive nomadic tribes envied the wealth of settled communities and tried to plunder or conquer them. Often, wars were based on religious grounds. Sometimes the pretexts for wars were simply foolish. Once, the carriages of French and Spanish envoys collided in the street. Neither of the envoys wanted to yield and make way for the other. As a result, a war broke out between Spain and France. As weapons and killing methods became more advanced, the number of casualties increased hundreds or even thousands of times. The number of wars decreased significantly in the 20th century, but their consequences were devastating. The First World War claimed the lives of 20 million people, and the Second World War claimed 50 million lives. Since the Third World War, we are probably not protected by the suppressed instinct to kill (which is particularly characteristic of the stronger sex), but by the instinct of self-preservation – the understanding that in the event of a Third World War and the use of nuclear weapons, there will be no winners. And there are enough nuclear bombs accumulated to destroy the inhabitants of the Earth dozens of times over.

In a modern civilized perspective, it naturally arises that it would have been better if there had been no wars in the past. Unfortunately, we have to reconcile with the reality as it was. And then, in the consciousness of every nation, there naturally arises a certain sense of pride, perhaps even empty, but still pride in the military victories of the past. The French take pride in having had the famous military leader Napoleon, the Russians in Suvorov and Kutuzov, the British in Admiral Nelson, the Mongols in the ruthless Genghis Khan, and we, the Lithuanians, in Vytautas the Great. The spirit

of competition, inherent in human nature, is present in all fields, including the military. It resembles sports competitions, where, naturally, everyone roots for their own team, although one can also philosophically view it as emptiness.

Pride in past military victories is particularly characteristic of small nations, as those victories inspire the desire to strengthen their state power, demanded by the instinct of self-preservation, when surrounded by stronger neighbors.

Let's return to history. The Aesti tribes occupied a territory several times larger than the present-day Lithuania and Latvia (to the east up to Moscow, to the south up to the Pripyat River, to the west up to the Vistula, and to the north up to Estonia; only this border has hardly changed). The Slavs and Germans pressing upon us were more aggressive, so we have a territory several times smaller. But even in the never-ending wars of the past, we did not perish, we survived, we have an independent state, so we can take pride in the military victories and achievements of our ancestors. Let's remember the most important ones.

In September 1236, a great battle took place near Šiauliai. The Lithuanians defeated the knights of the Sword Brothers and the Pskov army that supported them. The entire leadership of the Sword Brothers, including the Grand Master, and many guests were killed.

In 1260, the Samogitians won a major battle near Lake Durbe, not far from Liepāja, against the armies of the Livonian and Teutonic Orders, supported by many European guests. In the battle, the entire leadership of the Orders, the Grand Master of Livonia, and the Marshal of Prussia, as well as almost all the brothers, were killed. The Curonians, who were subjugated by the Orders and brought here together with the Letts and Latgalians, withdrew from the battle. After the lost battle, uprisings of the subjugated tribes of the Orders began in Livonia and Prussia. Almost all Order castles in Prussia were destroyed, and their garrisons were killed. The Orders were saved only by the pope's declared ordinary crusade against the pagan peoples of the Baltic.

In 1362, Grand Duchy of Lithuania's (GDL) Algirdas won the Battle of the Blue Waters against the Tatars and captured Kyiv.

In 1368 and 1369, Algirdas defeated the Muscovite army of Grand Prince Dmitry near Moscow and besieged the Kremlin but did not storm it. Having concluded a favorable treaty with Moscow, he defended his ally, the Duke of Tver. Algirdas' campaign against Moscow in 1372 was less successful.

In 1399, GDL's Vytautas was defeated by the Tatars in the Battle of the Vorskla River.

On July 15, 1410, the greatest victory of the Lithuanians and Poles led by Vytautas against the Teutonic Order was achieved in the Battle of Žalgiris (Grunwald, Tannenberg). After this defeat, the Order never recovered.

In 1435, the Battle of Ukmergė (Pabaiskas) took place between the armies of Jogaila's youngest brother Švitrigaila and Vytautas' brother Sigismund. Švitrigaila was supported by the Livonian Order, the Tatars, and Russian princes. Sigismund's son Mykolas's Lithuanian army was supported by the Poles. Švitrigaila lost the battle. The Livonian Master himself and many knights were killed in the battle, as well as numerous Russian princes, and many fell into captivity. What the Battle of Grunwald was to the Prussian Knights, the Battle of Ukmergė was to the Livonian Order: its power was finally destroyed, and after more than 100 years, the completely devastated Livonian Order surrendered to the protection of Lithuania.

During the reign of King Casimir of Poland (the younger son of Jogaila), Lithuania was able to gather an army of 40,000 soldiers, while Poland, which was three times smaller, had an army of 60,000 (the eastern Russian lands of Lithuania were sparsely populated). By the way, the population of Poland is now 12 times larger than that of Lithuania.

In around 1500, King John Albert of Poland launched a campaign against the Crimean Tatars in Moldavia, but it was unsuccessful: almost the entire Polish army perished in the forests of Bukovina. Afterward, the Tatars intensified their raids and plundered the southern territories controlled by Lithuania and Poland. This lasted for more than a century.

In 1506, Mikolaj Radziwiłł (a magnate of Lithuania and Poland) won a battle against the Crimean Tatars near the town of Kleck.

From 1507 to 1508, the third war between Lithuania and Moscow took place. The Lithuanian hetman Konstanty Ostrogski defeated the Russians near Orsha.

In 1514, the Muscovite army captured Smolensk after three sieges. During the Battle of Orsha, the Lithuanian army, led by K. Ostrogski, crushed the Muscovite army. With a force of 30,000 soldiers, he attacked the enemy's 80,000-strong army, of which 30,000 perished on the battlefield, while the leader himself, along with 1,500 nobles and numerous soldiers, fell into captivity. The victory was as significant as the Battle of Grunwald. Unfortunately, Smolensk could not be recovered; it returned to Lithuania only after about 100 years (in 1611).

Wars with Moscow often ended unfavorably for Lithuania because the nobility did not want to fight or pay the necessary taxes for the war. While Lithuania was gathering its army, Moscow would occupy a significant number of Lithuanian castles. Furthermore, even significant victories did not guarantee the recovery of captured castles, as it was very difficult to reclaim them. Moscow never lacked funds for war because the nobles paid war taxes.

In 1564, Hetman Mikolaj Radziwiłł (the Red) defeated the army of Ivan the Terrible near Ula, with 4,000 Lithuanians winning against nearly 30,000 Muscovites. Another Muscovite army, upon learning about the first defeat, fled without a fight, leaving behind a large amount of plunder. However, the Lithuanians were unable to retake Polotsk or drive the Tsar's army out of the eastern part of Livonia because the nobility refused to fight and pay taxes.

The constant threat from Moscow brought the Lithuanians closer to Poland. In 1569, the Union of Lublin was signed, creating the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

The armies of Lithuania and Poland were each led by two hetmans: the Grand Hetman commanded the armed nobility, while the Field Hetman commanded the hired army. From the 17th century onwards, the nobility rarely participated in wars, leaving that duty to the hired army. The Grand Hetman took care of all military affairs, while the Field Hetman served as his assistant.

In 1579, King Stephen Bathory recaptured Polotsk from the Russians (since 1563, the city had been under Moscow's control).

In 1580, King Stephen Bathory's army captured the important Russian fortress of Velikiye Luki and many surrounding towns.

In 1581, King Stephen Bathory's army besieged Pskov. According to the Treaty of January 15, 1582, Tsar Ivan IV the Terrible relinquished Livonia, Polotsk, and Velikiye Luki, retaining only Pskov.

On September 27, 1605, the Battle of Kircholm (near Riga) took place. The Grand Hetman of



Lithuania, Jan Karol Chodkiewicz, with only 3,800 soldiers, defeated a well-armed Swedish army of 14,000. Many Swedish generals, the squire of King Charles, 9,000 soldiers, and others were killed or captured. King Charles himself barely managed to escape. J. K. Chodkiewicz captured 60 flags, 20 cannons, and several thousand soldiers. Riga was saved, and Livonia was liberated.

In 1611, after a two-year siege, the Lithuanian and Polish army led by King Sigismund III Vasa of Poland captured Smolensk.

The army of Eamonas Zolkievskis defeated the army of Shuysky near Moscow. The Moscow nobles removed Tsar Shuysky from the throne and promised to elect Vladislov, the son of Sigismund, as the tsar. Polish and Lithuanian troops occupied Moscow in 1612. When the local population rebelled, the Lithuanian and Polish garrison in Moscow surrendered due to hunger.

In 1632, the Russian army besieged Smolensk. The army led by King Vladislov arrived to help Smolensk, which had endured a year-long siege. Only 15,000 Lithuanians and Poles stood against the 100,000 soldiers of the Tsar. However, through clever maneuvers, Smolensk was saved as the Tsar's army was surrounded and forced to surrender (they were allowed to leave only after surrendering their weapons).

In 1648, the uprising leader Bogdan Khmelnytsky, supported by the Tatars, completely destroyed the Polish army in two battles near the Yellow Waters and Korson. Both hetmans also fell into captivity.

The Seimas called on the entire Polish nobility to fight against the Cossacks and Tatars. About 200,000 nobles gathered, but when they encountered Khmelnytsky's Cossacks and the Tatars, they dispersed.

In 1651, the Cossacks were defeated.

In 1654, one of the Tsar's armies began to advance towards Lithuania, while the other, together with the Cossacks, moved towards Poland.

In 1655, the Tsar's army occupied Vilnius. The city was wealthy and beautiful. Seeing nothing like it in their homeland, the Russians plundered and destroyed it ruthlessly. All the treasures were taken to Moscow. The furniture from the noble houses was transported there, the cellars of churches and monasteries were looted, and the bones found there were scattered. A fire broke out, which lasted for 17 days. Vilnius was no longer recognizable after the war. The Royal Palace was destroyed (only now rebuilt).

Soon, the Russians also occupied Grodno and

Kaunas.

In 1656, the Russian Tsar was given hope after the victory of John Casimir to obtain the entire Republic's throne. A truce was signed, leaving all the occupied lands to the Russians. By that time, the Swedes had already occupied the unoccupied Lithuanian territory.

In 1660, the Poles and Lithuanians rebelled against the Swedes and drove them out. The Treaty of Oliva was signed.

In 1658, the Cossack hetman Vikovski surrendered to the Polish king, John Casimir.

In 1660, a huge Tsar's army was defeated.

In 1661, the cities of Grodno, Mogilev, and Vilnius were liberated.

In 1794, the Russians suppressed Tadeusz Kosciuszko's uprising.

In 1831, the Tsar's army suppressed the Polish and Lithuanian uprising.

In 1863-1864, the Lithuanian and Polish insurgents were defeated by the Tsar's army. Lithuanian press was banned.

On February 16, 1918, the Act of Independence of Lithuania was signed.

On November 23, 1918, Lithuania's Army Revival Day. On that day, the Ministry of National Defense issued the first order on the organization of the Lithuanian army.

From February 7-9, 1919, the Lithuanian army won the first battle against the Bolsheviks near Kėdainiai. The first Lithuanian soldier, Povilas Lukšys from Taučiai village, was killed.

At the end of 1919, the Lithuanian army, having expelled the Bolsheviks from Lithuania, finished the battles with them near Daugpilis (Latvia).

On November 21-22, 1919, the Lithuanian army crushed the Bermontians near Radviliškis.

On October 7, 1920, Poland and Lithuania signed the Suwalki Agreement (according to which Vilnius was recognized as part of Lithuania).

On October 9, 1920, the Poles broke the Suwalki Agreement and occupied Vilnius.

On November 19, 1920, the Lithuanians defeated the Polish army near Sirvintos.

On November 21, 1920, the Lithuanians won against the Poles near Giedraičiai.

On January 15, 1923, the Lithuanians occupied the Klaipėda Region.

On June 13, 1940, the occupation of Lithuania began.

On June 23, 1941, an uprising took place against the retreating Soviet occupation army.

1944-1953: Period of partisan warfare against the Soviet occupational army.

March 11, 1990: Restoration of Lithuanian Independence.

January 13, 1991: Mass peaceful defense of the Vilnius TV Tower, involving a large crowd. 14 defenders of Lithuanian freedom were killed, including Rimantas Juknevičius from Marijampolė.

August 19-21, 1991: Struggle against the coup attempt by the Soviet empire. A massive unarmed

crowd of patriots participated. Artūras Sakalauskas, a volunteer, was killed near the Parliament Building.

August 31, 1993: Withdrawal of the Soviet occupational army from Lithuania.

March 29, 2004: Lithuania became a member of NATO.

„Lietuvos aidas,” November 22, 2008, No. 261.

## ***A Legend about the Daughter of the Baltic Land - Laura***

Once upon a time, not long ago, but in the distant past, beyond the seas, in the bustling city of London in the land of the Britons, representatives from all corners of the world, the most remote towns, villages, and faraway lands, arrived by airships, sailed by ships, and traveled by their own carriages. They came with their swift white, yellow, and black-footed creatures, their nimble and energetic beings, their strong and powerful companions. They wanted to determine who among them was the strongest, fastest, most agile, and accurate.

Among them was a fair-haired maiden named Laura. She was the fairest of them all, which fueled the envy of others. Her cousin Kipšas supported her with his white hand during the competitions. However, the beginning of the competition was difficult for Laura. Her opponents surpassed her with their faster iron-tipped darts.

Witnessing this, Laura's grandparents, parents, brother, and all the people of the amber land felt disheartened. They began to pray to the Baltic god of war, Kova: „Help Laura, inspire her with the spirit of battle.“ Kova heard their prayers. Laura felt a powerful fighting spirit within her and swiftly defeated numerous opponents in succession with lightning-fast strikes.

Moreover, Laura had to jump over obstacles on horseback. Her horse was incredibly agile. It did not falter at any hurdles, except for the Hungarian-style jump. Laura couldn't overcome this obstacle and withdrew from the competition.

The envious ones rejoiced, as Laura's horse had been assigned to her by a lottery, and they believed she would fail to conquer the obstacles. Fortunately, that did not happen.

The horse sensed a connection with Laura because it had inherited the knowledge that its great-great-grandfather had participated in Vytautas the Great's campaign near the Black Sea, where he quenched his thirst with lemon water from the sea's gentle current. With her obedient horse, Laura overcame all the obstacles faster than her opponents.

Furthermore, she had to run swiftly and shoot accurately. To the joy of the Balts, Laura triumphed over all her competitors.

A grand celebration took place throughout the amber land. The country's ruler adorned Laura and her fellow victors of the competition with wreaths made of oak leaves.

Algimantas Lelešius, graduate of Vilnius State Pedagogical Institute, 1963.  
“Šviesa,” November 2012.

# AWARDS

The most important one - January 13th Commemorative Medal.



**CERTIFICATE**  
OF THE JANUARY 13TH COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL

For courage and sacrifice for the Republic of Lithuania

*Algimantas Lelešius*

Is awarded  
WITH THE JANUARY 13TH COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL

This medal is awarded to honour Lithuanian and foreign citizens who distinguished themselves in defending the freedom and independence of Lithuania in 1991. in January-September.

The Republic of Lithuania  
The highest  
Council Secretary,  
Chancellor of Orders



L. Sabutis

Vilnius, 1992 January 9

No. 1-2193



### Lithuanian Riflemen's Union Awards

The most important one - the „Defender of the Parliament“ badge (No. 182) and four commendations..

### Awards of the Lithuanian Political Prisoners and Deportees Community

The most important one - the „Star of Hope“ (March 11, 2011) and three commendations..

### Awards of the Lithuanian Political Prisoners and Deportees Association

The most significant awards - the 2nd degree insignia „For Merit to Lithuania“ (October 21, 2000, No. 88) and the 1st degree insignia of the LPKTS „For Merit to Lithuania“ (November 26, 2011, No. 152);

Commendation of the Marijampolė branch of the LPKTS (January 9, 2010).

**Awards of Kazlų Rūda Municipality** - three commendations.

**Awards of Marijampolė Municipality** - four commendations.

**Commendation** „For support and sincere assistance in collecting and preparing publications of memories of deportees for the ‚Sibiro Alma Mater‘ series“ (Rector Vidas Lauruška, Šiauliai University, May 2012).

### Chechnya Award



**NOXÇIYN RESPUBLIKAN IÇKERIYN VEKALALLA LITVANE**



ČEČENIJOS RESPUBLIKOS IÇKERIJOS ATSTOVYBĖ LIETUVOJE  
MISSION OF THE CHECHEN REPUBLIC ICHKERIA IN LITHUANIA

Vilnius, Lithuania, e-mail:aminat125@hotmail.com Tel. 8-655-42-01-5

*This month marks 20 years since the start of the first Russian war against Chechnya.*

*Dear Algimantas Lelešius*

I thank you for your moral and political support in participating this year in the international campaign to collect signatures of solidarity for the rights of the Chechen people. Your understanding and support will never be forgotten by us, as they testify to the proud meaning and importance of the Lithuanian nation's struggle for freedom to the whole world.

The Chechens have a saying: "A friend from a distant land is like a fortress built." That is how we value Lithuania.

I congratulate you on the New Year and wish you bright days in your life.

*Aminat Saijeva* 

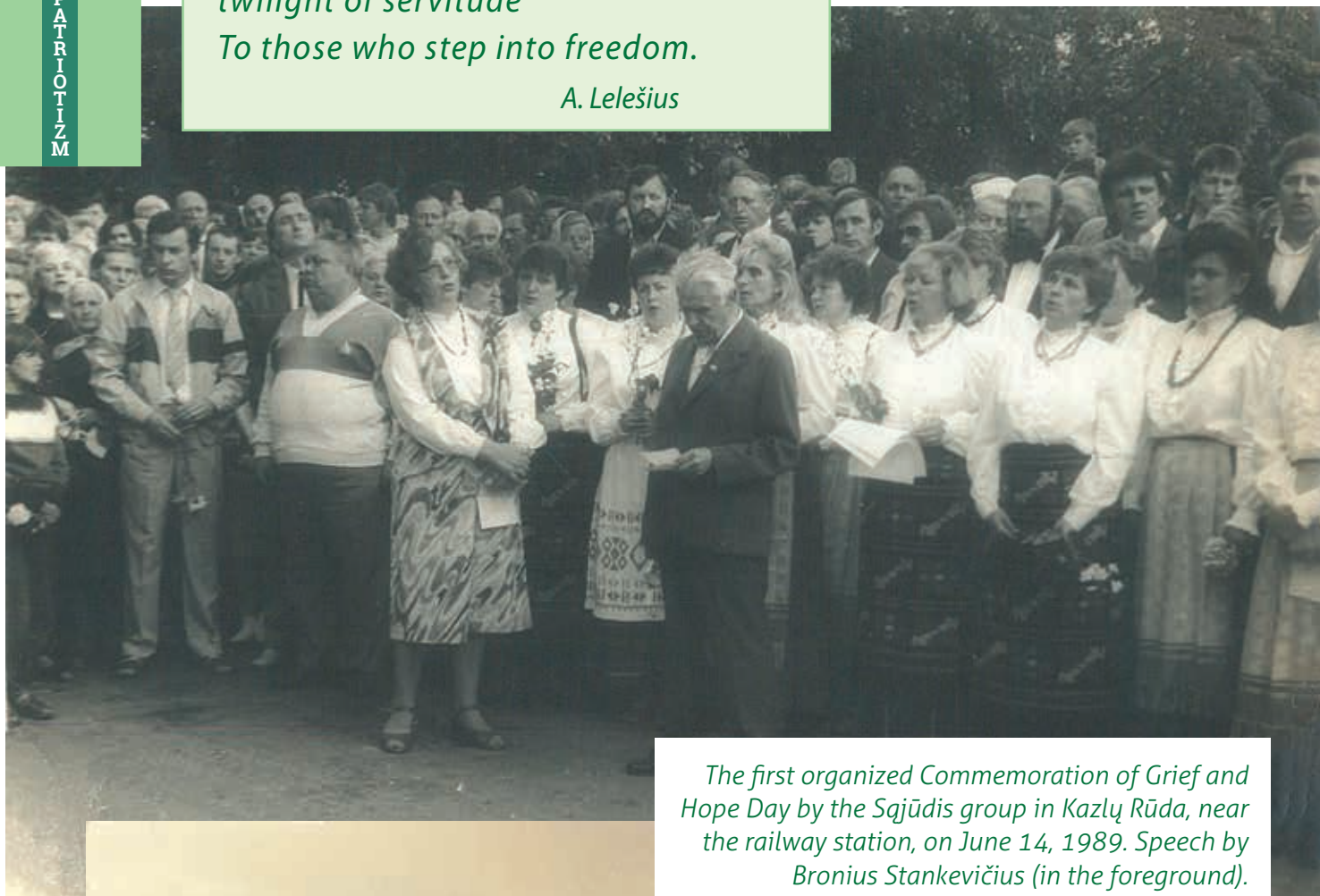
Representative of Ichkeria of the Republic of Chechnya in Lithuania

2014-12-11

## THE BEGINNING OF THE REVIVAL

*Oh Sājūdis, you radiant word,  
The light in the heart of brotherhood,  
You have shown the way through the  
twilight of servitude  
To those who step into freedom.*

*A. Lelešius*



*The first organized Commemoration of Grief and Hope Day by the Sājūdis group in Kazlų Rūda, near the railway station, on June 14, 1989. Speech by Bronius Stankevičius (in the foreground).*



*The Rebirth. November 1989. A consecrated flag being carried near the Kazlų Rūda Executive Committee building.*





*Kazlų Rūda's pride - The Exiles Monument near the railway station. Siberian Madonna - an exile holding a lifeless child. Sculptor Julius Narušis. The monument was unveiled on November 6, 1989. Consecrated by Father Tadas Vallianas. The monument was erected by the initiative and funds of the Kazlų Rūda SĄJŪDIS support group.*



*Booklet dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Kazlų Rūda SĄJŪDIS support group. 2013. From left: Algirdas Ališauskas, Irena Skučienė, Algimantas Lelešius, Regina Mocevičienė, Danguolė Botyriūtė, Zigmąs Salys, Mečislovas Daugiala (chairman), Antanas Adomaitis.*

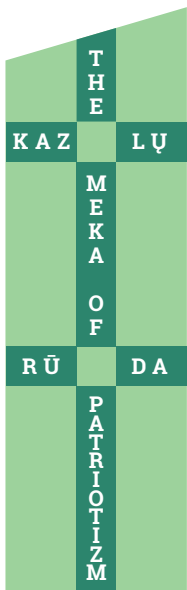


*Young residents of Kazlų Rūda near the Supreme Council building in Vilnius during the events of January 1991. From left: Romas Aputis, Lina Senkutė, Linas Žebrauskas, Budrevičius, (?), Evaldas Andziulis, Edas Aputis, Klaidas Helmokas, Artūras Aranauskas.*





*Reestablished Kazlų Rūda Rifle Company in 1990. 1995. In the front row, from left: V. Javaišis, S. Ambrasas, P. Narbutas, A. Lelešius, V. Klimavičius (leader), J. Aleksa. In the second row: V. Skūpas, J. Rainys, G. Dereškevičius, R. Gudanavičius, R. Aleksa (later became the leader), J. Bareiša, V. Andriušis, J. Barauskas. Some of the riflemen were former political prisoners and deportees.*



*May 18, 2008. From the right: Regina Mocevičienė, author of the book "Lessons of Citizenship," Valerija Štreimikienė, a political prisoner from Vorkuta, Algimantas Lelešius, a deportee from 1941.*





*Kazlų Rūda, November 6, 1989. Unveiling of the Monument to the Victims of Occupation near the railway station. Sculptor Julius Narušis, who also created the most impressive monument to Vytautas the Great in Vytautai Park, Marijampolė. The monument depicts an exile holding a lifeless child, known as the Siberian Madonna. It is the most striking monument to the victims of occupation on a national scale in Lithuania. The monument was erected by the initiative and funds of the Kazlų Rūda Sąjūdis support group. Consecrated by Father Tadas Vallianas.*

*At the unveiling ceremony of the monument, history teacher A. Lelešius recited his poem:*

### **O Lietuva, kiek tu aukų sudėjai**

*Oh Lithuania, how many victims you have endured  
Oh Lithuania, how many victims you have endured  
On the altar of freedom, with your great suffering.  
Like Prometheus chained to a rock,  
They lie beneath the polar lock –*

*In the deserts of Balchas and the steppes of Kazakhstan,  
In the forests of the Sayan Mountains, near distant Baikal,  
Without a cross, without a stone... The unknown conceals  
Their white bones until the end of the world...*

*Spread your light, candle of freedom in Lithuania,  
For those whose graves remain nameless  
In the lands of foreign countries... In our little homeland,  
Perhaps their spirits have returned, only our pain cries out.*

A. Lelešius





## **The Baltic Way**

*Ballad*

*We were still in captivity  
Of the Soviet Empire,  
Exiled, beaten, and shot,  
And raised with fear.  
During those five decades,  
Chained and oppressed,  
The free world forgot  
About us, the free ones.  
Quietly suffering underground  
Like a captured bird,  
Suffering, yet our restless  
Spirit remained.  
From restlessness, from longing,  
The feeling of freedom matured,  
And we ourselves, the Reborn,  
Lit the fire.  
And the Sajūdis emerged,  
And the Estonian  
and Latvian Fronts,  
And hopes of liberation  
Seized us all.  
Our minds enlightened...*

*Perhaps a divine revelation  
Offered that idea –  
The chain of hot hearts  
From Vilnius to Tallinn –  
And it was baptized with a name,  
The Baltic Way.  
The world admired,  
The world of free nations,  
That eighth wonder –  
The Baltic unity,  
Unseen in the world before.  
And enemies murmured quietly –  
The satraps of the empire –  
When we joined hands  
(Two million of us!)  
Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians  
From Vilnius to Tallinn  
Through the Latvian Riga  
With a living chain.  
Boldly, we started demolishing  
The empire first –  
The satanic empire.  
We were not afraid of tanks,  
Or the empire's soldiers,  
Armed to the teeth.*

*And quickly we liberated  
ourselves  
In body and spirit.  
We restored our state –  
From non-existence reclaiming,  
Proudly we live again  
In the family of free nations.  
-----  
Two decades have passed,  
New concerns have arisen...  
Oh, spirit of the Baltic Way,  
Inspire us!  
Grant us strength  
And wisdom, and determination  
To continue the true journey  
As the Baltic Way*

A. Lelešius



*The Act of Independence of Lithuania is proclaimed to the nation and the world*



Restored Independence of Lithuania! At that time, I worked as a history teacher at Kazlų Rūda Middle School. On March 12th, I successfully organized a commemoration of the Restored Independence in the school assembly hall. I read a short message, and we sang the national anthem. It was the first commemoration of March 11th in Lithuania, taking place just half a day after the Restoration of Independence. Filled with uplifted spirits, I went to the Kazlų Rūda post office and sent two telegrams to the television program ‚Atgimimo banga‘ (Wave of Rebirth). One telegram, on behalf of the political prisoners and exiles of Kazlų Rūda, congratulated the Supreme Council and its chairman Vytautas Landsbergis on the restoration of Lithuania’s independence. The other telegram greeted all the political prisoners and exiles of Lithuania. I concluded the telegrams with the words ‚May God help us.‘ There was joy when in the nearest episode of ‚Atgimimo banga,‘ Nijolė Baužytė first read out the telegrams I had sent. We, the residents of Kazlų Rūda, were the first to congratulate Lithuania on its restored independence!“

A. Lelešius

## On March 11th

March Eleventh,  
 March Eleventh...  
 How much is hidden  
 Behind these words, brothers...  
 We were forgotten by all,  
 Left without hope,  
 Gray and nameless  
 Like the blind.  
 We approached the abyss,  
 Consciousness faded.  
 As if Basanavičius  
 Had never existed,  
 As if no one died  
 In the post-war forest,  
 As if Vytautas, Žalgiris,  
 Were mirages...  
 Perhaps the Black June  
 And Kražiai were hiding  
 In our subconscious.  
 We were almost getting used to  
 Being reserves of the empire.  
 There, it’s full and warm,  
 And no thought  
 Penetrates the marshes...  
 -----  
 But nothing is eternal –  
 By God’s will,  
 Evil power  
 Destroys itself.  
 And the Nation awakens  
 Like Prometheus,  
 After enduring Siberia, the oc-  
 cupations,

*It rises like a phoenix  
 From the ashes...  
 But, Lord, how long they did not  
 Experience these days of  
 freedom!  
 Far from the Homeland,  
 Candles of hope  
 Were extinguished,  
 And no one said  
 For what reason  
 Their fate was so cruel...  
 May at least their souls feel  
 The yearning for freedom,  
 May they know  
 That it was the millions of  
 sacrifices  
 That brought down  
 The red evil empire,  
 That their Lithuania,  
 Like David valiantly,  
 Was the first to rise  
 Into battle  
 Against the threatening force  
 of Goliath.  
 And it won.  
 And suddenly freedom  
 Visited our homes  
 Like spring.  
 Bless us, Lord,  
 In this freedom.*

A. Lelešius

## Engaged to Freedom

*To Loretta Asanavičiūtė, a Lithuanian of Tatar  
 descent, who died before her wedding, crushed  
 by a tank near the Vilnius TV Tower  
 on January 13, 1991.*

*You dreamed of a wedding feast,  
 Dancing through the nights of youth...  
 Why does fate, like a curse,  
 Bring the steel monster near,  
 Creeping ruthlessly, roaring?..  
 You long to run away and escape...  
 Your heart, like a mad drum, beats,  
 And the roads begin to tremble.  
 Yet something holds you back –  
 A stronger force is at work.  
 Your unruly hair flutters,  
 And suddenly, the little lights  
 Glow with determined gazes,  
 Like in those distant times,  
 When our ancestors defended Vytautas  
 With their accurate bows,  
 Which, for some reason, remind me  
 Of the arch of your eyebrows.  
 You, the steppe daughter from Crimea,  
 Riding wild on a horse...  
 But fate destined you for Lithuania –  
 Now this warm word,  
 Which comforts our despair,  
 Is repeated by your frozen lips.  
 -----  
 Like the legend of Troy –  
 A tale of her, not fearing the tank.  
 A mournful tango echoes in the air.  
 She watered the land generously with her blood,  
 Entwined with our Freedom...*

A. Lelešius



*In Memory of the Cross Partisans, a Folk Craftsman S. Šemeta Erected a Memorial at Kazlų Rūda Cemetery in 1992.*



Nine residents of Kazlų Rūda were awarded the Medals and Certificates of Commemoration for their bravery and selflessness towards the Republic of Lithuania on January 13th:

Algirdas Ališauskas  
Aušra Kudžmaitė  
Aurelija Naujokaitė  
Aldona Petrukaitytė

and those who stood guard  
at the Parliament House:

Salemonas Ambrasas  
Juozas Bareiša  
Vytas Lapienius  
Algimantas Lelešius  
Bronius Žemaitaitis



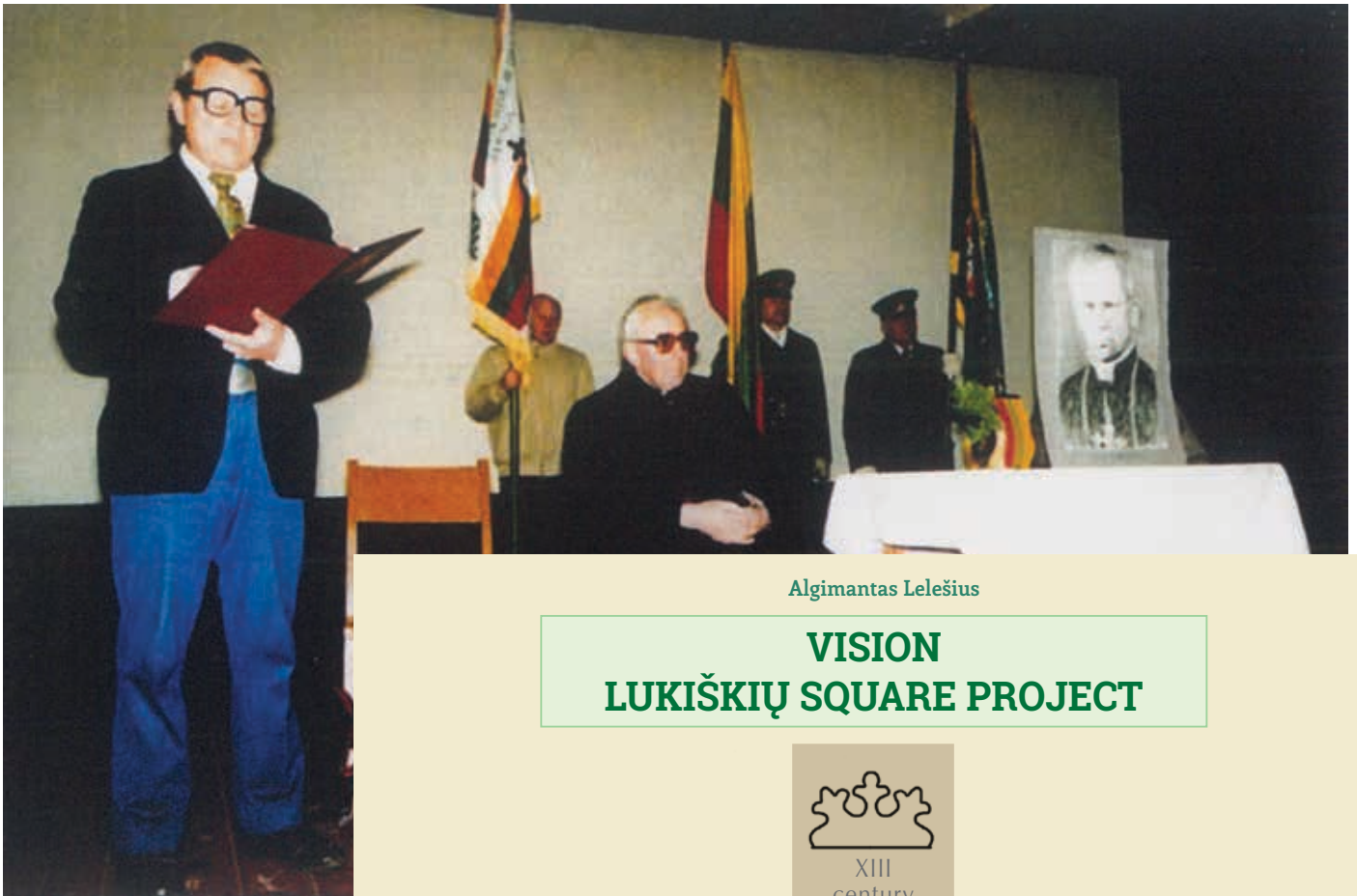
„Together with Valerija Štreimikienė, a political prisoner from Vorkuta, we collected signatures from the residents of Tarybų and Komjaunimo Streets to have these streets renamed as Atgimimo Street. We achieved our goal. I collected signatures from the residents of Pergalės Street, and the street became M. K. Čiurlionis Street. The name of Pionierių Street was restored to V. Kudirka’s name. Such renaming reflects the struggle for a new, fair perspective on our history,” wrote A. Lelešius.

Changing the name of Stoties Street to that of Bishop-Martyr V. Borisevičius required a lot of effort. The local authorities and residents opposed it due to concerns about changing records

in documents. But thanks to the stubbornness of A. Lelešius, the set goal was achieved. He proved that it is an honor for every Lithuanian city to have V. Borisevičius Street. Monsignor A. Svarinskas, a determined fighter and exile, was invited to help and supported A. Lelešius’s idea.

Opponents resorted to retaliatory actions. They broke the windows of A. Lelešius’s house and threatened to set it on fire. Parish priest Fr. T. Valjanas declared a prayer campaign, and believers prayed for the implementation of this meaningful idea. It took as long as five years to achieve the goal. Monsignor A. Svarinskas consecrated V. Borisevičius Street in Kazlų Rūda in 1995.





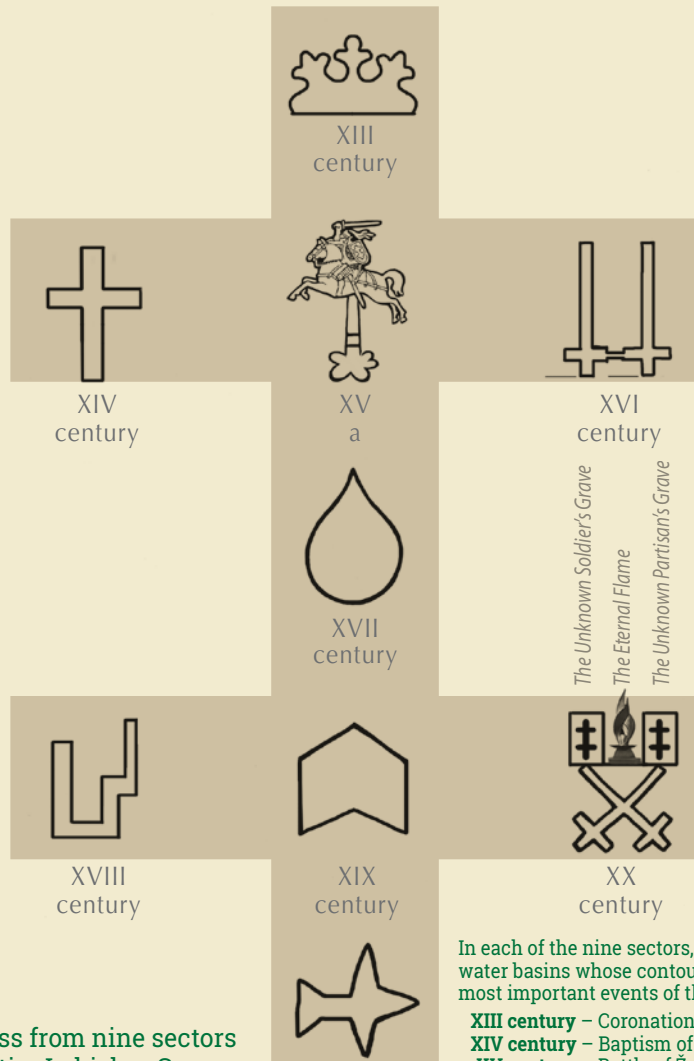
Algimantas Lelešius

## VISION LUKIŠKIŲ SQUARE PROJECT

The commitment to revamp the historic Lukiškių Square in Vilnius to commemorate the most significant periods of Lithuanian history for the centenary of Lithuania remains unfulfilled. The main principle is that the square would highlight and perpetuate the most significant stages of Lithuanian history with appropriate symbols. A. Lelešius prepared a project for the renovation of Lukiškių Square. Newspapers such as "Suvalkietis," "Kazlų Rūdos kronika," and "Lietuvos aidas" published the "Sūduviai Lukiškių Square vision" multiple times.

The Vytis cross from nine sectors across the entire Lukiskes Square eternalizes the memory of all fallen soldiers for Lithuania from the time of Mindaugas.

The Vytis - symbol of our age-old struggle for statehood.

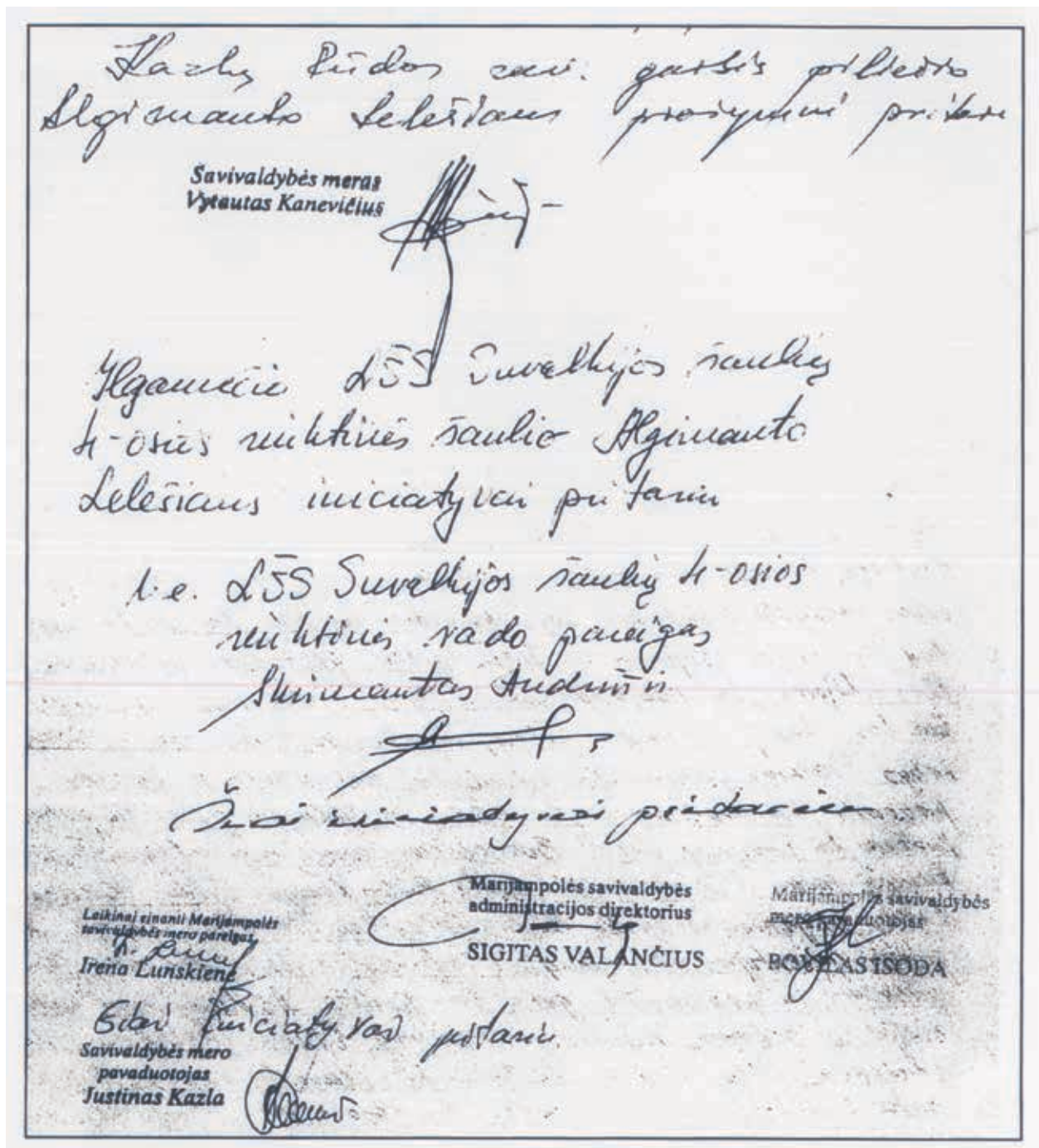


In each of the nine sectors, – water basins whose contours testify to the most important events of the century:

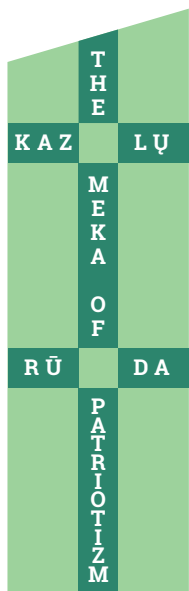
- XIII century** – Coronation of Mindaugas
- XIV century** – Baptism of Lithuania
- XV century** – Battle of Žalgiris, and in this sector, the sculpture of the White Vytis (oak leaf)
- XVI century** – Union of Lublin
- XVII century** – The Tsar's army devastates Vilnius (teardrop)
- XVIII century** – Collapse of the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth
- XIX century** – Book Smuggling
- XX century** – Bloody 20th Century
- XXI century** – Joining NATO

– The blood-stained emotional bonds connect us, the political prisoners and exiles, with this square. Our proposed projects should receive special attention,” wrote A. Lelešius. The Šauliai (Lithuanian Riflemen’s Union) and exiles enthusiastically supported his project in their gatherings.

As the 100th anniversary of the restoration of Lithuanian independence approaches, a competition was announced, which selected only 5 projects out of 32 submissions. Among them was Algimantas Lelešius’s „Sūduviai Lukiškių Square Vision.“ To turn the vision into reality, the support of the society is needed. The following endorse the project:







**A. Lelešius reflects on the patriotic activities of political prisoners, exiles, and members of the Šauliai organization in Kazlų Rūda since the miraculous time of the Atgimimas (National Revival) movement and beyond.**

There is a saying, „Man plans, and God laughs.“ But fate made an exception for us – we accomplished much more than we had planned. Perhaps

it was because we guided our actions by the principle that Sūduva should set an example of patriotism for Lithuania, and Kazlų Rūda should be the epitome of Sūduva. And we achieved that. Unfortunately, for some people with a frivolous mindset, the concept of patriotism seems outdated. We firmly believe that for a small nation and a state living on the outskirts of the Eastern monster, patriotism is as essential as air; there can never be too much of it. The most vivid example is Ukraine. If Ukrainians were not patriots, they would have already been enslaved by a terrorist state. Due to our dramatic fate and the trials we endured, we, the political prisoners and exiles, react more sensitively to reality and better sense the dangers facing the country. Unfortunately, there is a lack of response to our calls to strengthen patriotic education in schools, reintroduce military training in schools at a higher level, and resolve the patriotic issue of Lukiškių Square. Moreover, Lithuanian political prisoners and exiles are mistreated by the authorities and financially disadvantaged: our brothers in Latvia, Estonia, and Poland receive an additional €200 to their pensions, while in Lithuania, it is a mere €63. Despite this, our brothers of fate have erected over a thousand monuments to partisans throughout Lithuania, despite their modest pensions. This is the greatest outburst of idealism in our materialistic society.

What we have accomplished, driven by patriotism, is the spiritual and historical treasure of the Kazlų Rūda region. It must not be forgotten. That is the purpose of the books about the activities of political prisoners, exiles, and members of the Šauliai organization in Kazlų Rūda.

Date: June 27, 2022

A. Lelešius

**The Rebirth was a spiritual upliftment for me.**

On June 24, 1988, I participated in the first Sajūdis rally in Vilnius, at Gediminas Square. The sight of the Lithuanian tricolor flags, young people maintaining order at the rally, and the green banners with white Gediminas Columns shook my imagination in a positive way. During the Soviet era, I used to listen to foreign radio stations on my radio receiver, and some of them were heavily jammed. This allowed me to critically evaluate the Soviet regime and reality. Poland’s „Solidarity“ movement began eight years ago. We were waiting for similar events to unfold in our country. And we waited! The first spark was the rally organized by Nijolė Sadūnaitė against the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact on August 23, 1987, near the Adam Mickiewicz monument in Vilnius.

On June 3, 1988, the first Sajūdis group was formed at the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. Grand rallies began throughout the country. I enthusiastically participated in them. It was a spiritual euphoria for everyone. On September 3, 1988, a large Sajūdis-organized rally took place in Kazlų Rūda. I attended it with the tricolor flags in my hands, along with my brothers, the Apučiai. On September 5, the support group for Sajūdis was established in Kazlų Rūda, and I was responsible for working with political prisoners and deportees. Every day, several deportees and political prisoners would come to my house. I would fill out their questionnaires for the commission led by Julius Juzeliūnas, which investigated Stalinist crimes. Being single, I had the opportunity to dedicate several hours each day to this work. Later, I helped write applications for political prisoners regarding compensation for the years spent in prison, and for deportees regarding compensation for lost property. Many people were grateful to me for this assistance. At the initiative of the Kazlų Rūda Sajūdis group, a large rally took place on June 14, 1989, near the railway station in Kazlų Rūda. We commemorated the 48th anniversary of the tragic events of the Great Deportation in 1941. I prepared posters with a defiant message and spoke at the rally.

In the same year, in the fall of 1989, with Sajūdis’ initiative and funds collected in Kazlų Rūda, the most impressive monument in Lithuania, „Siberian Madonna“ (sculptor Julius Narušis), was unveiled



near the railway station. It is a 3.6-meter-tall stone sculpture of a deportee holding a lifeless child.

In February 1990, I organized two meetings for political prisoners and deportees in Kazlų Rūda. We established a separate section for political prisoners and deportees in Kazlų Rūda. I became its chairman and held this position until 1998.

On February 23, 1990, I organized a rally in Kazlų Rūda near the Executive Committee building. We demanded the registration of the newly established section for political prisoners and deportees because we wanted to participate in local government elections. We achieved our goal.

On March 11, 1990, Lithuania's Independence was restored. At that time, I worked as a history teacher at Kazlų Rūda Middle School. On March 12, I managed to organize a pre-celebration of the restored Independence in the school auditorium. I read a short message, and we sang the national anthem. It was the first commemoration of March 11th in Lithuania, taking place just half a day after the restoration of Independence. Filled with excitement, I went to the Kazlų Rūda post office and sent two telegrams to the Lithuanian television program „Atgimimo banga“ (Wave of Revival): one on behalf of the political prisoners and deportees of Kazlų Rūda, congratulating the Supreme Council and its chairman Vytautas Landsbergis on the restoration of Lithuania's Independence, and the other for all political prisoners and deportees in Lithuania. I concluded the telegrams with the words „May God help us.“ There was joy when in the next episode of „Atgimimo banga,“ Nijolė Baužytė first read out

the telegrams I had sent. We, the people of Kazlų Rūda, were the first to greet Lithuania on the restored Independence!

Sajūdis won the local government elections. Mečislovas Daugiala, the leader of the local Sajūdis group, became the chairman of the Kazlų Rūda City Council, and Valeras Plioplys became the mayor. Juozas Mikalonis, a representative of the political prisoners and deportees of Kazlų Rūda, was also elected, a courageous patriot.

On March 22, 1990, I organized a rally-picket near the Kazlų Rūda police building to remove a plaque dedicated to the NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs). Interestingly, when the police officers learned about the rally, they were so frightened that they left the building in advance. So no one came out to talk to us. We covered the police building with posters and took photographs. The goal was achieved - the plaque was removed.

In June 1990, the Kazlų Rūda unit of the Marijampolė Rifle Division was reestablished. I became the deputy of the unit leader, Eastern Lithuania's partisan Algimantas Vytautas Lapienis. The gatherings of the riflemen initially took place in the former cinema building, later in my house, and then in Gedimino Street, and finally in the house of the new leader, Vytautas Klimavičius. During the events of January 1991, the five riflemen of the Kazlų Rūda unit were inside the Supreme Council building along with other defenders. For this, we were awarded the January 13th Commemorative Medals. Another Kazlų Rūda teacher and three students also received medals. In total, nine resi-

dents of Kazlų Rūda were honored. According to this indicator, Kazlų Rūda surpassed any other similarly sized town in Lithuania.

*On November 23, 1990, a rally organized by A. Lelešius took place near the Kazlų Rūda municipality to change the names of the streets. A. Lelešius held a poster saying, "We have been waiting for 1.5 years for Lithuanian partisans' streets."*







*After the rally on March 22, 1990, at the Kazlų Rūda police building. The first person from the right is political prisoner B. Stankevičius, the second is V. Lapienis, the leader of the Kazlų Rūda Rifle Division (a brave partisan of the Algimantas Vytautas Lapienis District), the third person (in the second row) is political prisoner J. Čibirka from Norilsk, and the fourth person is the organizer of the rally, A. Lelešius. The participants of the rally demanded the removal of the plaque dedicated to the NKVD. The goal was achieved.*



*The beginning of the revival. The initiative and funding for the construction of the cross in the place of his parents' farm in Kazlų kaimas (Kazlų Rūda municipality) in 1988 were led by poet and political prisoner Juozas Ardžiauskas (third from the left in the first row). Algimantas Lelešius (third from the right) is giving a speech.*



## “The Martyr” Monument

The monument is dedicated to the partisans of Tauras District. It was built in the yard of Antanas Palubinskas, the former chairman of the Kazlų Rūda Communist Party of Lithuania (LPKTS) branch, deputy leader of the Kazlų Rūda Rifle Division, and a deportee in 1941. The initiative and funding for the monument came from A. Lelešius. It is located in Kazlų Rūda, on Lietuvos partizanų gatvė (Lithuanian Partisans Street).

The project was created by A. Lelešius, the letters were carved by Juozas Lelešius, and the image (from J. Lukša-Daumantas' memoir book „Partizanai,“ p. 105) was designed by the artist Vytas Aputis. The monument was unveiled on August 25, 1990, by Antanas Lukša, the brother of the renowned partisan leader Juozas Lukša. The dedication ceremony was conducted by priest T. Valianas. The monument has been vandalized four times: it was painted with paint the night before the unveiling, but it was successfully cleaned; it was knocked down twice, and the cross was bent, which is why it is called the „Kankinys“ (Martyr) monument. In June 2002, it was relocated to the new cemetery of Kazlų Rūda.



*Unveiling of the Monument*

*The monument was unveiled by Antanas Lukša, the brother of the renowned partisan leader Juozas Lukša*



*The moment of unveiling the monument on August 25, 1990. The patriotic song is performed by the young singers from Kazlų Rūda Middle School (led by teacher M. Serbentienė).*



*After the unveiling of the monument. From the left: Algimantas Lelešius, who financed the construction of the monument, Juozas Lelešius, the builder of the monument, with his grandson Dainius.*





*Even in the summer of 1991, some people were bothered by the monument, which was located in their private orchard...*

*The monument dedicated to the partisans of Tauro District, which stood in the yard of A. Palubinskas (Kazlų Rūda, Lietuvos partizanų gatvė), was knocked down.*

## **To the desecrated monument of the partisans**

*On the monument, you were sacred, warm, noble,  
We housed you in the courtyard of a human,  
So that it would be safer,  
For the enemy's army was still raging.  
As a member of that family  
You stood there, attractive,  
Properly maintained,  
Adorned with flowers and burning candles,  
You gladdened the eye of passers-by  
And reminded those who will never return  
To this sinful earth again.*

*...Now you are desecrated*

*Black hands,*

*Like the bodies of our brave brothers,*

*Whose holiest memory*

*You wanted to preserve.*

-----

*But we will never touch*

*The tombstone monuments of the enemy's soldiers...*

A. Lelešius



*Since June 2002, the "martyr" monument (it was desecrated four times when it stood in Antanas Palubinskas's yard on Lietuvos Partizanų street) is now in the new cemetery of Kazlų Rūda near the high cross in memory of the Lithuanian partisans. The cross was created and erected by the rifleman Skirmantas Šemeta (June 13, 1992).*



*In April 2022, the "martyr" cross was desecrated for the fifth time - the bronze cross was broken off from it. Radio and television reported on this.*



# Reburial of Partisans' Remains



1991 11 23  
Procession for the reburial of the remains of seven partisans. The remains were reinterred at the new cemetery in Kazlų Rūda.

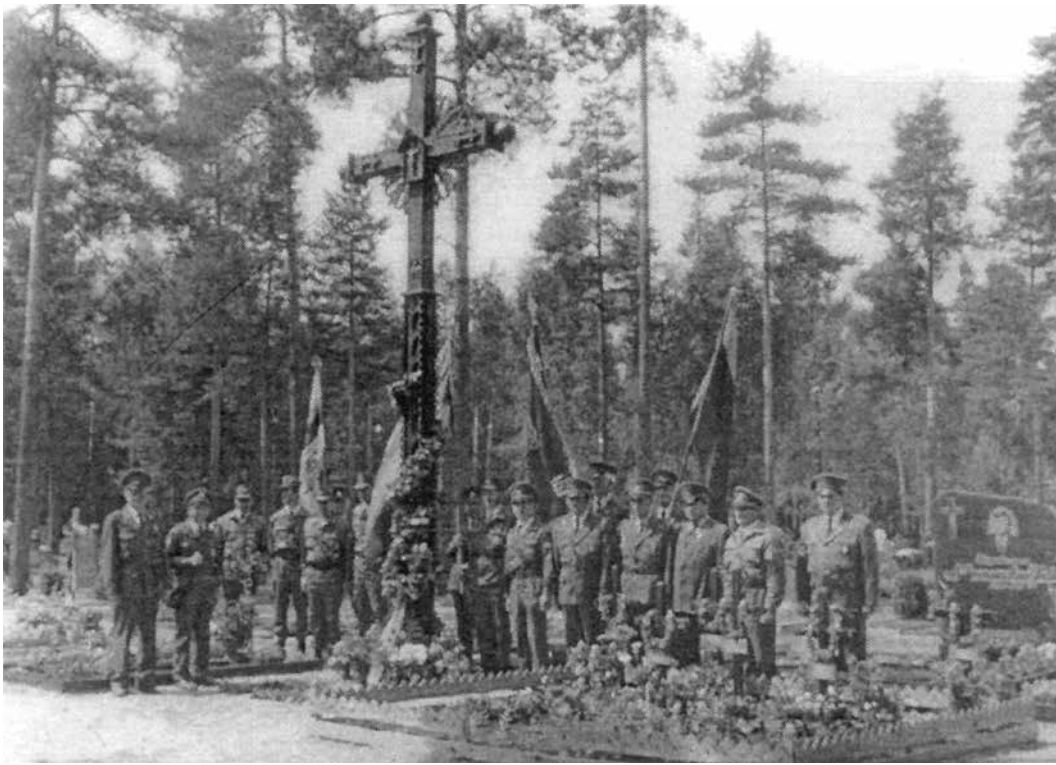


Formation of Kazlų Rūda Rifle Unit on June 13, 1992, at the new cemetery, where priest Tadas Valianas consecrated an impressive cross in honor of the partisans. The cross was created by rifleman Skirmantas Šemeta. The event was led by rifleman Algimantas Lelešius.



1991 11 23  
Reburial of the remains of seven partisans from the Žalgiris Battalion of Tauro District at the new cemetery in Kazlų Rūda. Rifleman Algimantas Lelešius spoke at the grave site.





1992 06 13  
 Unveiling of the cross  
 for the partisans at the  
 new cemetery in Kazlų  
 Rūda (created by rifleman  
 Skirmantas Šemeta).  
 Consecrated by Father  
 Tadas Vallianas. The  
 event was led by rifleman  
 Algiman-tas Lelešius.

Procession for the reburial  
 of the remains of partisan  
 brothers Juozas and Jonas  
 Krapavičius in Kazlų Rūda  
 on October 23, 1993.



1993 10 23  
 Reburial of the remains of  
 partisan brothers Juozas  
 and Jonas Krapavičius at the  
 new cemetery in Kazlų Rūda.  
 Kazlų Rūda and Marijampolė  
 riflemen were present at  
 the grave site. Rifleman  
 Algiman-tas Lelešius spoke.





## For Bishop Martyr Vincentas Borisevičius



*Celebration of the Bishop Martyr V. Borisevičius Street in Kazlų Rūda on November 26, 1995.*



*Meeting of Monsignor A. Svarinskas with the residents of Kazlų Rūda in the rifle hall on November 26, 1995, to consecrate V. Borisevičius Street. Father Tadas Vallianas is on the right.*



*Monsignor Alfonsas Svarinskas consecrated the street of Bishop Martyr Vincentas Borisevičius (for-merly known as Stoties Street, and before that, Bažnyčios Street) in Kazlų Rūda on November 26, 1995.*



*Image of the meeting with A. Svarinskas in the hall.*



*During the Soviet era, it was called Tarybinių partizanų Street. In 1989, A. Lelešius collected signatures from residents, and after two years of persistent demands (in 1991), the street was named after Lithuanian partisans. This is the only such case in Lithuania.*



*Before, it was Bažnyčios Street, and during the Soviet era, it was Stoties Street. On December 2, 1990, A. Lelešius collected signatures from residents to give the street the name of Bishop Martyr Vincentas Borisevičius because there is a church at one end of the street and a symbol of suffering, the monument to deportees (the stone Siberian Madonna, a deportee holding a deceased child), at the other end. After five years of persistent struggle, the name was changed. This is the only such case in Lithuania. On November 26, 1995, Monsignor Alfonsas Svarinskas consecrated V. Borisevičius Street.*





*Bishop  
Vincentas  
Borisevičius*



*On November 26, 2000, a cross was consecrated in the courtyard of the Kazlų Rūda church in memory of Bishop Martyr Vincentas Borisevičius. The cross was consecrated by Monsignor Alfonsas Svarinskas.*

*In the photo, Magdalena Gudaitienė is second from the left (with a stroller). She and A. Lelešius financed the construction of the cross. It was created by the artist V. Aputis.*

*Consecration of the Cross*



For Bishop Martyr

## **Vincentas Borisevičius**

*In the Chamber of Martyrs,  
He was imprisoned.  
From night until morning,  
He was interrogated, beaten,  
mocked,  
And it seemed that his spirit,  
On that dark and bitter night,  
Was already broken  
by the tormentors.  
Traitorous words  
And a hopeless thought  
Sank into the depths...  
But suddenly, he felt  
A surge of strength.  
And he understood:  
The Lord helps  
Him to resist.  
Since then, his words  
Comforted friends of destiny.  
He himself was immersed  
in suffering  
In that tormentors' dungeon,*

*Where his days were walled off..  
And the fateful moment comes:  
The bullet of an executioner  
Terminates his life  
On the path to eternity.  
His noble spirit  
Stands before the throne  
of the Lord..  
Pray for Lithuania,  
When we are like withered,  
When our minds are confused  
And powerless in sin,  
When we are lost  
And our spirits are dimmed.*

*Having overcome  
the burden of years,  
Breaking through  
the December of defamation  
(Do not touch  
their forgetfulness!)  
Let his pre-death words  
Awaken us:  
"Lithuania will be free  
And Christ will prevail"...*

A. Lelešius



*Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius during his  
consecration on March 10, 1940.*



*Elena Borisevičiūtė-Urbanavičienė, the half-  
sister of Bishop Martyr Vincentas Borisevičius,  
lived in Kazlų Rūda. The bishop would visit her  
and loved her children. She was buried in the  
old cemetery of Kazlų Rūda in 1945.*





*The Borisevičius family. In the first row (from left): Bishop's sister Ona, Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius, half-brother Reverend Antanas Vilkaitis, half-sister Elena Borisevičiūtė-Urbanavičienė. In the second row (from left): sister Agnietė, sister Marija, sister Magdalena, brother's daughter Marija A-domaitienė, and brother Juozas (father of Marija Adomaitienė).*

## Over the decades, the enduring light of the soul

### Remembering Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius of Telšiai

(1887-11-23 – 1910-05-29 – 1940-03-10 – 1946-11-18)

Bronislovas Algimantas Lelešius, a former exile who lived in Kazlų Rūda, deserves immense respect. An exceptional place in this person's patriotic activities was his persistent struggle to immortalize the memory of Bishop Martyr Vincentas Borisevičius in Kazlų Rūda by renaming Stoties Street after Vincentas Borisevičius. This street was highly suitable because at one end stands the monument to deportees near the railway station, and at the other end is the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The bishop was a man of the Church and a martyr. The monument to deportees is a symbol of suffering.

On December 2, 1990, Algimantas Lelešius collected signatures from residents of Stoties Street and other cities to rename it after Vincentas Borisevičius. Most people signed, but not everyone. Over a thousand signatures were collected. Opponents resorted to retaliatory actions. They began breaking the windows and walls of Algimantas' house, causing it to tremble. In 1991, just before September 1st, he received a written warning that his house would be burned down. A. Lelešius fought for five years to have Vincentas Borisevičius' name given to the street in Kazlų Rūda and he succeeded. This is the only such case in Lithuania, and to this day, the street named after the bishop in Kazlų Rūda remains the only one in Lithuania. On November 26, 1995, it approached the anniversary of the bishop's shooting - November 18th - and his birthday - November 23rd. A. Lelešius wrote



*Bronislovas Algimantas Lelešius, a deportee and a rifleman in 1941, was awarded the January 13th Commemorative Medal. Thanks to his efforts, a street in Kazlų Rūda was named after Vincentas Borisevičius.*



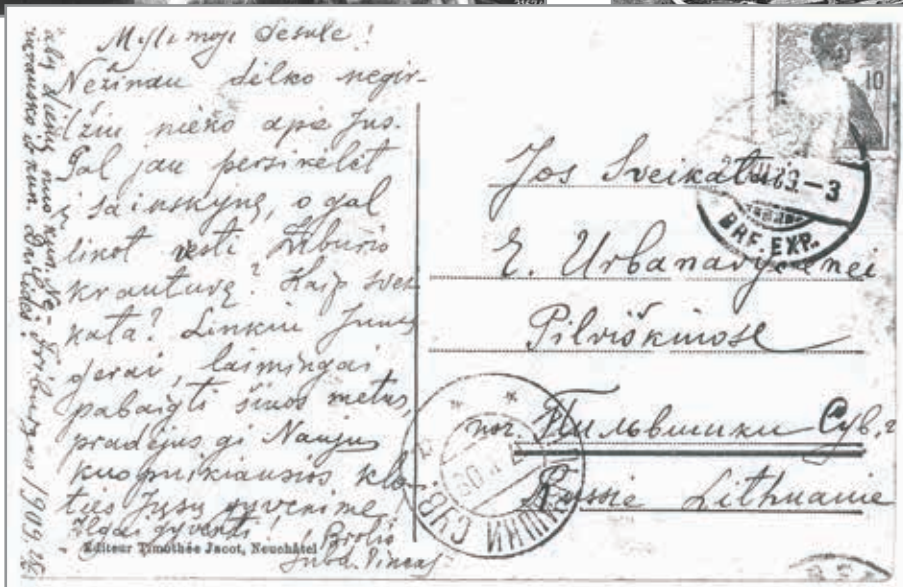
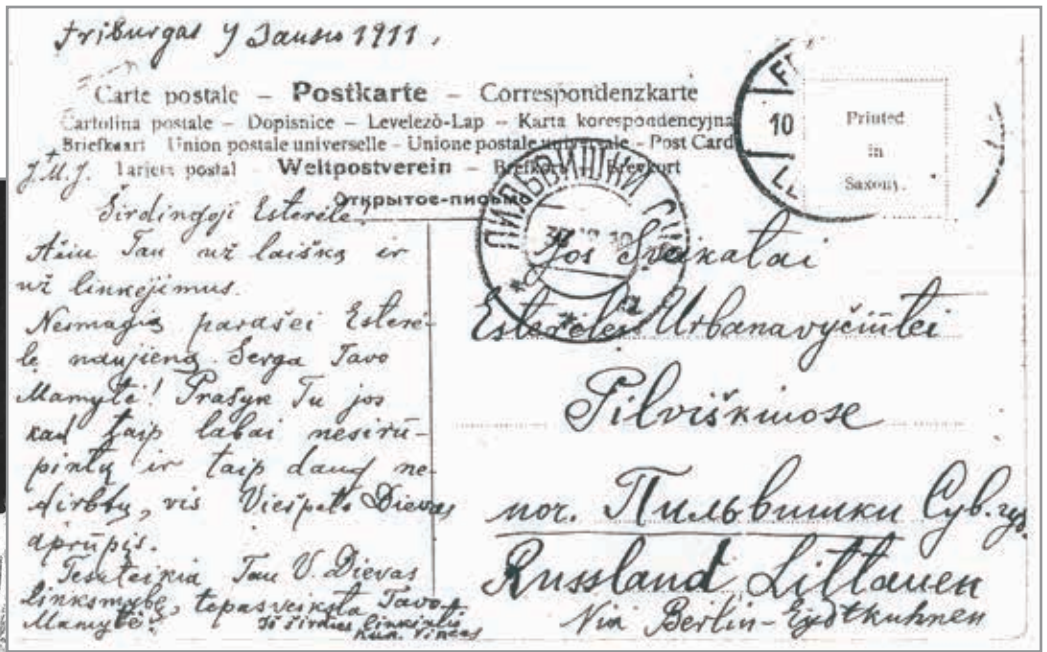
numerous poems about Bishop V. Borisevičius and published articles in the press.

Also, thanks to A. Lelešius' persistence, the memory of Bishop V. Borisevičius is immortalized not only by the street name but also by the construction of a cross in the sanctuary of the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Kazlų Rūda. At the top of the cross is a wreath made of barbed wire, symbolizing suffering. The cross was created by the artist A. Aputis. The church is adorned with a portrait of V. Borisevičius painted by the artist V. Gelgota. On November 26, 2000, the cross and the portrait were consecrated by Monsignor Alfonsas Svarinskas.

The search for the remains of Bishop V. Borisevičius led

to a mass grave of Soviet victims in the territory of Tuskulėnai Manor, and an archaeologist, Dr. Vytautas Urbanavičius, who holds a habilitation degree in humanities, was appointed to lead the excavation. He had also come to Utena. He was interested in the photos of the bishop that I had. By comparing a live person's photograph with the skull image, matching anatomical points and structures, it was determined that the found remains belong to the person captured in the photograph.

Danguolė Urbanavičiūtė-Jonaitienė  
"XXI century," October 18, 2019



Postcards of the Bishop Martyr.



## Finding and reburial of partisans' remains

*On October 16, 1991, A. Lelešius was inspecting a forest well in search of the remains of partisans.*

*A few steps into the forest, near the new cemetery in Kazlų Rūda, that day the leader of the Kazlų Rūda detachment Vytautas Lapienis, deportees Saliamonas Ambrasas and Algimantas Lelešius unearthed the remains of seven partisans.*



*Information plaque at the excavation site (Vidmantas Alesius)*



*The excavation site was commemorated by A. Lelešius.*



*The oath of the young Kazlų Rūda (50) and Sasnava (20) riflemen took place on June 17, 2001, in the forest near the new cemetery in Kazlų Rūda, next to the cross marking the site of the unearthing of the seven partisans' remains. The shooter Algimantas Lelešius spoke.*





*The young rifleman repeats the words of the oath and kisses the flag.*



*The oath of the young Kazlų Rūda and Sasnava riflemen on June 17, 2001.*





*Destroyed crosses in memory of the partisans in the new cemetery in Kazlų Rūda, 1994.*

*A. Lelešius, a deportee and shooter in 1941. July 1997. The monument to the seven partisans was erected in the new cemetery in Kazlų Rūda.*



*1997 07 27  
Monument to the seven partisans of the Taurus District Žalgiris Detachment (Sakalas Unit), who died on July 24, 1946, near Būdupis village (Kazlų Rūda municipality). Their remains were found and unearthed on October 16, 1991, by Vytas Lapienis, the brave partisan of the Algimantas District, the leader of the Kazlų Rūda detachment, deportee Saliamonas Ambrasas, and deportee Algimantas Lelešius. The remains were ceremoniously reburied on November 23, 1991, in the new cemetery in Kazlų Rūda. Temporary crosses were destroyed. Shooters Jurgis Nevulis and Algimantas Lelešius erected a monument for them in 1997. Another monument for the partisan brothers Juozas and Jonas Krapavičius. Both monuments were consecrated by Father Ignas Plioraitis. Jonas Staniulis-Šarūnas (leader), Mykolas Adomavičius-Plienias, Žalgiris detachment headquarters officer, private Jonas Vosylius-Strazdas, Bajoras (codename), Germans Hans, Karolis Paulius died.*



*1997 July 27  
At the monument to the partisan brothers Juozas and Jonas Krapavičius, communication officer Al-dona Bilbokienė.*



*The monument was erected by riflemen Jurgis Nevulis and Algimantas Lelešius. Consecrated together with the monument to the seven partisans by Father Ignas Plioraitis.*





1997 07 27

*The unveiling ceremony of the monuments is led by rifleman Algimantas Lelešius.*



*Kazlų Rūda residents who arrived at the monument unveiling.*





*The monument was consecrated by Father Ignas Plioraitis.*



*1997 07 27  
Honoring the fallen with a salute of military weapons.*





*Bartninkai (Kazlų Rūda municipality) 2005 05 07  
The monument to the seven partisans (initiated by Romas Rusteika) was consecrated by Father Tadas Vallianas. It was created by Bronius Jungaitis (Kalvarija). The construction of the monument was financed by Father Ignas Plioraitis. The event was led by A. Lelešius. Photo by A. Lelešius.*



*Kruveliai (Kazlų Rūda municipality) 2006 10 08  
Unveiling of the monument to the partisan Petras Kriščiūnas-Mekšras. The monument was erected at the initiative of Romas Rusteika. It was financed and the event was led by Algimantas Lelešius. It was consecrated by Father Ignas Plioraitis.*

*2007 10 13  
Scouts at the monument to the partisans of the Taurus District Žalgiris Detachment in Lekečiai (Ša-kiai district). The excursion was led by Algimantas Lelešius.*







2007 10 13  
*Scouts at the monument to the partisans of the Taurus District Žalgiris Detachment in Jankai (Kazlų Rūda municipality). A. Lelešius spoke about the partisans. Photo by A. Lelešius.*



2009 09 26  
*Commemoration of the partisans. Monument to the leader of the Taurus District partisans, Aleksand-ras Grybinas-Faustas, near his hideout. The monument is located in the forest near Šunkarių Giriniai village (Kazlų Rūda municipality). Photo by A. Lelešius.*





April 27, 1997.

Unveiling of the monument to the fallen (who detonated themselves) on April 27, 1947, for the members of the Vytautas Detachment Vytautas Brigade Headquarters: Anele Senkutė-Pušelė, born in 1922, Vytautas Vabalas-Kunigaikštis, born in 1919, and Antanas Pečiulis-Baritonas, born in 1923, in Gulbiniskiai village (Marijampolė district). The monument was consecrated by Father Ignas Plioraitis. It was erected by riflemen Jurgis Nevulis and Algimantas Lelešius.



1999 02 10 Braziukai

At the monument to the 5 fallen partisans of the Taurus District Žalgiris Detachment, who detonated themselves 50 years ago on February 10, 1949. Their surnames are: Vytautas Žemaitis-Šermukšnis, Jonas Balsys-Aidas, Bronius Petrauskas-Šarūnas (he shot the brutal interrogator Aronas Greisas in Marijampolė), Vytautas Naujūnas-Kariūnas, Juozas Liogys-Dragūnas. The monument was erected in 1998 by riflemen Jurgis Nevulis and Algimantas Lelešius. It was consecrated on February 10, 1999, by Father Ignas Plioraitis. The unveiling at the monument was led by riflemen Algimantas Lelešius.





*Braziukai*

*A commemoration in the summer at the monument to the 5 partisans who died on February 10, 1949. The monument was consecrated on February 10, 1999 (by Father Ignas Plioraitis).*

THE  
KAZLŪ  
MEKA  
OF  
RŪDA  
PATRIOTIZM



*Memorial to the Žalgiris Detachment partisans of the Taurus District in Kazlų Rūda. The project was by Algimantas Lelešius, and the sculpture was created by Vytautas Aputis. It was consecrated on December 1, 2002, by Monsignor Alfonsas Svarinskas.*





*Kazlų Rūda 2006 11 21*

*Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus with students and teachers of Kazlų Rūda Kazys Griniaus Gymnasium. An open lesson on the topic of Resistance History was conducted by history teacher and methodologist Birūta Bujauskienė. The President praised the teacher for conducting an excellent lesson. The teacher is next to the President (in costume).*

*Photo by A. Lelešius.*



*Algimantas Lelešius tells President Valdas Adamkus and accompanying individuals about the memorial dedicated to the partisans of the Taurus District Žalgiris Detachment, which was erected according to his own project by artist V. Aputis. On November 21, 2006, during his visit to Kazlų Rūda, V. Adamkus laid a wreath at the memorial.*





## Perpetuating the Memory of a Partisan



*Unveiling of the memorial to the commander of the Žalgiris Detachment of the Taurus District, Jonas Kleiza-Žalvaris, in Katinai (Kazlų Rūda municipality) on April 20, 2008. The event was led by Algimantas Lelešius. The crosses were consecrated by Father Ignas Plioraitis.*



*Partisan Juozas Armonaitis-Triupas with the Ledaitės sisters from Jūrė village (Kazlų Rūda municipality).*



*In the center with a camera is Romas Rusteika. He erected this cross and initiated the construction of several monuments and crosses in commemoration of the partisans. Romas had an extraordinary knowledge of the history of the resistance fights of Sudovia and Dzūkija and was called a "walking encyclopedia." A. Lelešius.*



*Partisan Juozas Armonaitis-Triupas speaking at the unveiling of the crosses for the commander of the Žalgiris Detachment of the Taurus District, Jonas Kleiza-Žalvaris, on April 20, 2008.*



## Opšrūtai - A Repulsive Punish- ment for Armed Rus- sian Colonists

The elimination of the resistance point of armed Russian colonists in Opšrūtai (Vilkaviškis district) in November 1947 was an exceptional military operation by the partisans of Lithuania. It was significant not only militarily but also politically and ideologically, as the partisans proved that they would be able to prevent the occupiers' intentions to colonize and subdue the Lithuanian countryside. Soviet propaganda, publishing an article in "Pravda" about how the "bandits" shot unarmed



*Guard of honour at the unveiling of the monument.*

Co-unity Branch, a significant monument (designed by Vytas Špakauskas) was erected to commemorate the partisan operation in Opšrūtai. The unveiling of the monument took place on November 12, with the participation of soldiers, political prisoners, deportees, and students. The event was led by Valda Šalaševičiūtė, the public relations officer of the Vytenis Battalion of Marijampolė's General Support Logistics.



*A detailed and impactful account of the Opšrūtai operation was narrated by historian Jonas Gustaitis.*

peaceful Soviet people, did a disservice to the occupiers. The inhabitants of Russia, which was devastated and impoverished after the war, realized that it was too dangerous to seek a better life in Lithuania. It was better in Latvia, Estonia, where the resistance was insignificant. Approximately 1,500 partisans died in Estonia, 1,500 in Latvia, and ten times more in Lithuania. The result: in Estonia, Russian speakers make up 30%, in Latvia - 50%, and in Lithuania only 7.8%.

The initiative of the Volunteers' Union of the Lithuanian Army's Creators (LKKSS) Marijampolė

Historian Jonas Gustaitis praised the partisan achievement in his impressive presentation and detailed the Opšrūtai operation. It was carried out on the orders of the commander of the Žalgiris Detachment, Antanas Baltūsis, by the Taurus District commander Vincas Štrimas-Šturmas.

The monument was consecrated by Chaplain Saulius Kasmauskas of Alytus and Marijampolė. The soldiers saluted. The current commander of the Taurus District, Vytautas Raibikis, spoke about the significance of the Opšrūtai operation. Reserve Major Arūnas

Stašaitis continued the statements of Jonas Gus-



taitis, stating that despite the deaths of women and children among the colonists, the partisans did not violate the Hague

*Speech by Antanas Plieskis, the leader of the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union.*





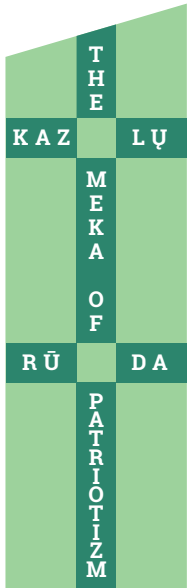
and Geneva international conventions because they defended their land against armed Russian colonists. The colonists were warned about what awaited them, so they could have left Opšrūtai or at least moved their wives and children to safer places like Pilviškiai or Vilka-viškis.

Speeches were given by Member of Parliament Julius Dautartas, the leader of the Lithuanian Rifle-men's Union Antanas Plieskis, reserve Major Algimantas Samuolis, one of the initiators of the monument, and the elder of Pilviškiai Vytautas Judickas.

Those who donated the most funds for the creation of the monument were awarded. Greta Ališauskai-tė, a student from Kybartai Gymnasium, read her essay on the theme of the fight for freedom.

*Reserve Major Arūnas Stašaitis spoke about the legitimacy of partisan actions.*

Algimantas LELEŠIUS  
 "Kronika," November 12 to December 10, 2010.



## Monument to Resistant Priests



*Monument to resistant priests Antanas Ylius and Justinas Lelešius-Grafas. Consecrated on July 11, 2004. Consecrated by Monsignors Alfonsas Svarinskas and Vytautas Kazlauskas. The project was by Algimantas Lelešius, the sculpture was created by Vytas Aputis. Financed by Magdalena Gudaitienė and A. Lelešius. Meaning: the upper part features a Catholic cross with the crucified Christ, the entire metal part represents the Vytis (the Coat of Arms of Lithuania), and together the metal and wooden parts resemble an arrow. It is a blessed arrow sent from the heavens by resistant priests. They bless the region of Kazlų Rūda and the whole of Lithuania. This monument should be visited by pilgrims. In the photo from the right: Algimantas Lelešius, Mon-signor Alfonsas Svarinskas, with the carriage Magdalena Gudaitienė.*





*Unveiling and consecration of the monument to resistant priests. 2004-07-11.*

## **Death of Partisans**

To the commander  
of the Taurus District,  
Antanas Baltūsis-Žvejas,  
and his companions,  
Juozas Bal-sys-Dobilas  
and Pranas Žaldaris-Šapalas,  
who died on February 1, 1948.

*The night of February is long  
It lasts like eternity...  
Why did that dog suddenly  
Start barking anxiously?  
So it is: this is the fateful  
Last night.  
The heart freezes with grief  
From the knowledge: surrounded...  
And no hope this time  
To break free from the encirclement,  
Hundreds of oppressors  
Have surrounded their dwelling...  
"Don't cry, mother," -  
Echo the words in the subconscious,  
Words sung many times before...*

*Although they gave their oath,  
So eagerly life  
Enters the folds,  
Programmed in their genes...  
The hand, like lead, does not listen,  
And the blood rebels in the veins...  
A flame blossoms in Žvejas' hands -  
He sets fire to a document.  
And strangely - it soothes,  
The sorrowful sentiment disappears...  
And the guns rise  
Directly to the temple,  
And three desperate shots  
Pierce the silence.*

*Thus perished Žvejas -  
The noble leader of Taurus,  
And his companions  
Dobilas, Šapalas... -  
A cup of young blood  
For the heavenly homeland...*

A. Lelešius  
(Poem by A. Lelešius read at the unveiling of  
the monument to A. Baltūsis, 1998-02-01)





*Unveiling of the monument to the renowned partisan commander Antanas Baltūsis-Žvejas in the Gul-biniškiai village of Vilkaviškis District (Pilviškiai eldership). The monument was consecrated by Monsignor Alfonsas Svarinskas. Mass was held at Pilviškiai Church. The monument was constructed by riflemen Jurgis Nevulis and Algimantas Lelešius, who designed the memorial plaque (consisting of words and numbers forming columns resembling the columns of the Gediminas' Tower, which transition into the Vytis, the Coat of Arms of Lithuania). 1998-02-01.*



*Unveiling of the monument to the renowned partisan commander Antanas Baltūsis-Žvejas - a moment of joy for patriots, political prisoners, deportees, and riflemen. 1998-02-01.*



# Monuments erected by Father Ignas Plioraitis

2011-10-30 (Sunday)  
Bagotoji (Kazlų Rūda municipality)

Unveiling of the monument to deportees. The founder is Father Ignas Plioraitis. The monument was unveiled by Algimantas Lelešius and Father Ignas Plioraitis.



Faithful gathered abundantly near the church.  
Photo by A. Lelešius



Monument to the deportees of this land in the courtyard of Bagotoji Church. Photo by A. Lelešius



At the monument, the son of a partisan Algimantas Čibirka, Valerija Štreimikienė, a political prisoner from Vorkuta, Algimantas Lelešius, a deportee from 1941.





*Račiliškės, Kazlų Rūda municipality, July 28, 2013*

*Monumental cross for self-defense unit soldiers. Erected by V. Kubertavičius and B. Jurgaitis. The event was led by riflemen Algimantas Lelešius. Consecrated by Father Ignas Plioraitis. From left: Bronius Jungaitis, creator of 26 memorial crosses for partisans, Jurgis Nevulis, who erected 19 monuments for partisans, standing next to the monument from the left, a riflemen and former partisan Vincas Kubertavičius, who funded several monuments.*

*Photo by A. Lelešius*

## Unveiling of the monument to Pranas Dovydaitis

Pranas Dovydaitis - signatory of the Act of Independence of Lithuania on February 16, 1918, a prominent figure not only in Kazlų Rūda region but in the whole of Lithuania. During the most challenging period of Lithuania's state-building in 1919, he served as Prime Minister. He founded the patriotic Ateitininkai Federation, was a professor and lecturer at VDU, financially supported underprivileged students, established several Catholic patriotic publications, and was the head of the first Lithuanian gymnasium in Kaunas.

Pranas Dovydaitis was born in 1886 in Runkiai village (Kazlų Rūda municipality). He was executed by Soviet occupiers in 1942 in Sverdlovsk.

The monument in Kazlų Rūda was erected in 1941 by the initiative and funding of deportee and riflemen A. Lelešius. Unveiled on February 16, 2015. Sculptor Zigmantas Buterlevičius.



*Unveiling of the Monument to P. Dovydaitis. There were as many people as during the times of the Sąjūdis movement.*





*Speech by Algimantas Lelešius, a 1941 deportee and a shooter, who financed the creation of the mo-nument. (Sculptor Zigmas Buterlevičius)*

*Relatives of Pranas Dovydaitis by the monument.*

*From the right: sculptor Zigmas Buterlevičius, patriot Dalija Karkienė, Algimantas Lelešius, a friend of Dalija.*





## **Algimantas Lelešius' speech at the unveiling of the monument**

*Oh, Signatory Pranas,  
You sowed love for Lithuania  
With your being, your creativity,  
A meaningful future of days.*

*You sacrificed yourself on the altar of the nation,  
Imprisoned by the enemies of vampires,  
When the oppressors tried to take away  
Your prayer book and rosary.*

*You resisted them.  
Their elder suddenly changed His decision  
And let them stay with you.  
You were the support of moral strength*

We, the political prisoners, deportees, riflemen of Kazlų Rūda, led by the noble Awakening, followed the principle: Suvalkija must show an example of spirituality to Lithuania, and Kazlų Rūda must show an example to Suvalkija. And we honorably fulfilled this principle. Our exceptionally active activities are characterized by the words: the first and the only ones. We were the first to greet Lithuania with restored independence through the television broadcast "Atgimimo banga" (Wave of the Awakening) in March 1990. The first telegrams I sent were read by actress Nijolė Baužytė. We were the first to organize the commemoration of March 11th in the assembly hall of Kazlų Rūda school. It happened on the next day, March 12th, just half a day after the Act was announced. We were the only ones in Lithuania for five years (from 1990 to 1995) who took care of commemorating the martyrdom of Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius, who visited us several times before the war. Even nine citizens of Kazlų Rūda have been awarded the January 13th Commemorative Medals; in terms of numbers, Kazlų Rūda surpasses any town of similar size. We are the only ones in Lithuania who have a monument to the resistant priests Antanas Ylius and Justin Lelešius-Grafas. Our most important achievement: since 2002, instead of one class, ten classes in the school have dedicated eighteen lessons to the history of Resistance. Other Lithuanian schools follow our example.

We can be proud that in the territory of Kazlų Rūda municipality, in a small plot of land in Lithuania, two outstanding public and state figures were born. They are President Kazys Grinius and the signatory of the Act of February 16th, Prime

*For the prisoners,  
Comforting them with Christian prayer.  
You said before the death intended for you by the torturer:  
"Here, in Siberia, only my body will remain,  
But my soul will roam beloved Lithuania..."*

*Live on, dear signatory,  
Having conquered death,  
In this monument, in the memory of the nation,  
And call us to live for it.*

*Live on, dear signatory,  
Having conquered death  
In this monument, a memory of the nation,  
And call us to live for it.*

Minister, founder of the Ateitininkai organization, martyr Pranas Dovydaitis.

The idea to perpetuate the memory of the distinguished compatriot with a monument in Kazlų Rūda arose 9 years ago, in 2006, on the occasion of his 120th birthday. P. Dovydaitis was born in 1886 in Runkiai village, between Kazlų Rūda and Višakio Rūda, and was shot in the Northern Urals in 1942. Based on Aldona Vasiliauskienė's book about P. Dovydaitis, "Akmenuotas patrioto kelias" (The Stony Path of a Patriot), I wrote several articles for the Kazlų Rūda chronicle. The municipality and the community supported the idea of the monument, and it was supported by a public survey. Unfortunately, at that time, due to various reasons, the monument could not be erected. It is said, "Man plans, and God laughs." However, when you want something very much and persistently pursue a noble goal, sometimes it succeeds, and then God helps. That's what happened in this case.

Even 6 signatories of the Act of February 16th came from Suvalkija. We, the people of Kazlų Rūda, by perpetuating the memory of P. Dovydaitis with a monument, set an example for other Suvalkians to commemorate their signatories, especially since in 3 years we will celebrate the centenary of the Act of February 16th. Now, when Lithuania is facing a threat from an aggressive eastern neighbor, reviving patriotism is particularly important.

We thank you for the moral support, the preparation of the foundation for the Kazlų Rūda municipality, the sculptor Zigmantas Buterlevičius, and all those who gathered for the unveiling ceremony of the monument.

Algimantas Lelešius  
Magazine "Varpas," (Bell) April 2015



## The commemoration of the signatory of the Act of Independence is immortalized in a monument

On February 16, 1918, the Act of Independence of Lithuania was signed by 20 members of the Council of Lithuania. The document proclaimed that Lithuania was henceforth separated from all state connections it had ever had with other countries. The signatory Pranas Dovydaitis, who originated from the village of Runkiai in Kazlų Rūda, also signed the document. Almost a century later, Kazlų Rūda celebrated Independence Day this year by unveiling a monument in memory of this distinguished individual.

### The monument - thanks to one person

The monument near the Kazlų Rūda municipality and Kazys Grinius Gymnasium sprouted thanks to one patriotically inclined person. Bronislovas Algimantas Lelešius financed the creation of the monument to honor the signatory of the Act of Independence, P. Dovydaitis, with his own funds. However, Mayor Vytautas Kanevičius acknowledged that the idea of creating a monument to a person who contributed to the restoration of Lithuania's freedom had been circulating within the corridors of the municipality for some time. „There were various thoughts, projects, but a lack of political will and daily concerns kept postponing the implementation of the project. Until finally, a person, a true patriot, emerged who did not hesitate to invest his own funds to finance the construction of the monument,” Mayor B.A. Lelešius thanked him on behalf of the municipality.

### The author expressed criticism as well

The sculptor of the monument, Zigmas Buterlevičius, was pleased that the creation of the monument, although it was a very demanding task, was also a pleasant process that required not only meticulous work but also cooperation with P. Dovydaitis' relatives, who supervised the process to ensure that the final work would be pleasingly natural. However, Z. Buterlevičius also had a remark for the representatives of the Kazlų Rūda municipality. „It's a shame that the municipality did not put in all the effort to improve the surroundings,” said the author of the artwork. „However, I believe that



*Monument - The monument is a gift from Bronislovas Algimantas Lelešius to Kazlų Rūda. Photo by Inga Žiūkienė.*

with the arrival of spring, the surroundings surrounding the monument will be arranged as promised, and the townspeople will be able to enjoy a monument to P. Dovydaitis that is as it should be.”

### The signature that brought freedom

P. Dovydaitis, who hailed from the vicinity of Kazlų Rūda, was the eldest son of a progressive and patriotic family with 15 children. As a doctor of science, the signatory also published and edited periodicals and taught as a professor. Elected to the Council of Lithuania, he, along with other signatories, placed his signature on the Act that restored Lithuania's freedom in 1918. This distinguished individual, originating from the settlement established in the forests of Kazlų Rūda, contributed not only to the establishment of the state but also laid the foundation for shaping the first directions of Lithuania as a legal state.

„Suvalkija must show a spiritual example to Lithuania, and Kazlų Rūda must show it to Suvalkija,” said the patron of the monument, B.A. Lelešius, in his impassioned speech. It remains to be hoped that the monument that sprouted in the heart of Kazlų Rūda in memory of a patriotic figure will set a good example for other cities and towns and remind them of the importance of honoring and immortalizing the memory of those whose patriotism and fervor laid the foundation for the state we can now be proud of.

Ugnė LEONAVIČIŪTĖ  
“Kazlų Rūdos laikraštis,” February 20, 2015.



## Kazlų Rūda Cemetery



Funerary monument for Vytautas Lapienis-Uosis, a fighter for freedom in the Algimantas Partisan District (Eastern Lithuania), and his wife Aldona Lapienė. Vytautas was the first commander of the Kazlų Rūda Rifle Company, reestablished in 1990, and was awarded the January 13th Commemorati-ve Medal. Kazlų Rūda New Cemetery.



Kazlų Rūda Old Cemetery. Graves of the June (23) 1941 rebels.



Kazlų Rūda Old Cemetery. Graves of the June (23) 1941 rebels.



Kazlų Rūda Old Cemetery. Graves of the June (23) 1941 rebels.



Kazlų Rūda Old Cemetery. Graves of the June (23) 1941 rebels.



Funerary monument for the volunteer Petras Javaišis and his relatives in Kazlų Rūda Old Cemetery. The volunteer fought on the Lithuanian-Polish front and belonged to the deadly battalion.



Kazlų Rūda New Cemetery. Funerary monument for the partisan of the Savanoriai and Tauro Districts Žalgiris Team and his wife.



Juozas was a partisan of the Tauro District's Žalgiris Team. He was captured. The monument was de-signed by Algimantas Lelešius.





*Funerary monument for the volunteer Benediktas Patašius and his wife. Benediktas fought on the Lithuanian-Polish front.*

*Kazlų Rūda New Cemetery. Funerary monument for the volunteer Augustas Sendos and his wife. Augustas fought on the Lithuanian-Polish front.*

*Elena Borisevičiūtė-Urbanavičienė. Elena was the paternal half-cousin of Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius, a martyr. She lived on Kauno Street (now Atgimimo Street) in Kazlų Rūda. The Bishop would visit her and loved her children. She was buried in the Old Cemetery of Kazlų Rūda in 1945.*

THE  
KAZLŪ  
MEKA  
OF  
RŪDA  
PATRIOTIZM



*Author: Elena Krušinskaitė Zapyškis Elderate, Kaunas County. February 22, 2019. Photo by A. Lelešius.*

THE  
KAZLŪ  
MEKA  
OF  
RŪDA  
PATRIOTIZM

Monument in the Holy Vysokio Rūda (Kazlų Rūda municipality) St. Stanislaus Church sanctuary to the church builder, priest Juozas Štrimaitis, 1829-1918. The priest managed to bypass the prohibition of the tsarist regime on building churches. He was buried in the Vysokio Rūda Cemetery. The construction of the monument was financed by benefactor Magdalena Gudaitienė.

*Photo by A. Lelešius.*



# For Chechnya and Dzhokhar Dudayev

„A slave who does not seek to free himself from slavery is worthy of double slavery.“  
Dzhokhar Dudayev



## APSKRITASIS STALAS

„PIRMOJO RUSIJOS KARO ČEČĖNIJOJE PRADŽIOS (1994-12-11) DVIDEŠIMTMETIS: PASEKMĖS“



„Vergas, nesiekiantis išsivaduoti iš vergovės, yra vertas dvigubos vergovės.“  
Džocharas Dudajevas



Lietuva, Vilnius 2014-12-12



## ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

„20 YEARS OF THE BEGINNING OF THE FIRST RUSSIAN WAR AGAINST CHECHENYA (11-12-1994): CONSEQUENCES“

„Any slave who doesn't try to escape from slavery, deserves double slavery“

Dzhokhar Dudayev



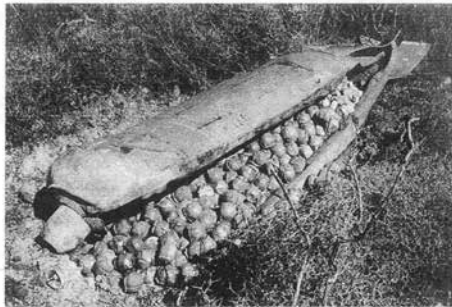
„The Economist“, 1999.12.18-30  
Gūdi ir kruvina Rusija.  
Boodane, s'iisha yuzna Oьрсийчoь.  
Bleak and bloody Russia.  
Mрачная и кровавая Россия.



## GUORGA SUOL

„ROSSIS NOHCHIICHOENAN DOEXAL T'UOM DIABUOLIINA TQA SHO DU (11-12-1994): CU T'EMAN T'EXLUONASH“

„Azatwaala ca lu'uchu layna shalha layla haq du.“  
Djohar Dudayev



Uždraustasis kamuolys bomba 600 sprogtamasis kamuoliukas, skirtas vaikams, kaip žaislas.  
Yah bjee telhash guorgalgex yuzna yolu lawzuo humanash sanna beerashna xaezhina camagina guorgalgan bomba.  
Forbidden ball bomb with 600 exploding balls intended for children as a toy.  
Запрещенная шариковая бомба с 600 взрывающимися шариками, предназначенными для детей как игрушка.

Lietuva, Vilnius 12-12-2014



## КРУГЛЫЙ СТОЛ

« 20-ЛЕТИЕ НАЧАЛА ПЕРВОЙ РОССИЙСКОЙ ВОЙНЫ ПРОТИВ ЧЕЧЕНИИ (11-12-1994): ПОСЛЕДСТВИЯ»

«Раб, не стремящийся выйти из рабства, заслуживает двойного рабства.»  
Джохар Дудаев




„Der Spiegel“, 2004-12-13  
Rusų kariškis Čečėnijos sostinėje 1995 m.  
Oersin t'emlo Nohchilichoenan koerta-ghaalax 1995 m.  
Russian soldier in Chechnya's capital in 1995.  
Российский солдат в столице Чечении в 1995 г.

LITVA, VILNIUS 12-12-2014

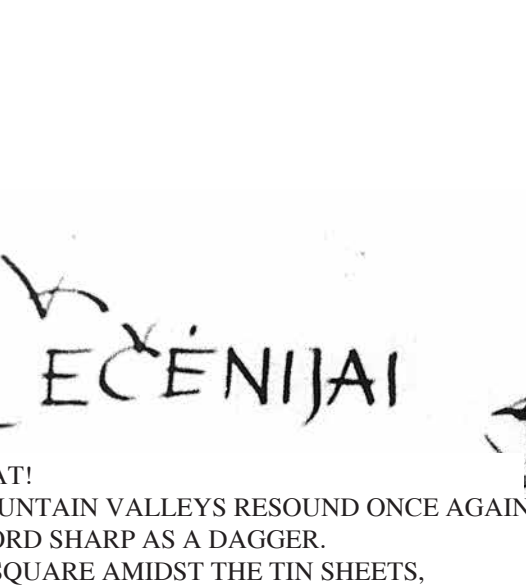
„The twentieth anniversary of the beginning of the First Russian War in Chechnya (1994-12-11): con-sequences“

„Round Table,“ Lithuania, Vilnius, 2014 12 12

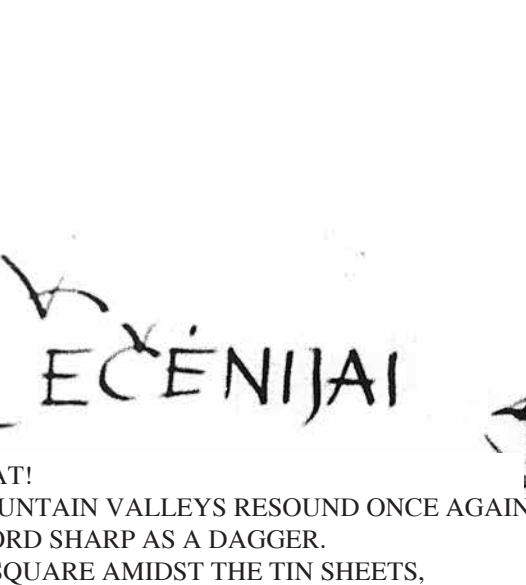





# LEČENIJAI



GAZAVAT!  
THE MOUNTAIN VALLEYS RESOUND ONCE AGAIN,  
THIS WORD SHARP AS A DAGGER.  
IN THE SQUARE AMIDST THE TIN SHEETS,  
AN AGITATED CROWD FINDS COMFORT.  
A JIGIT ARRIVES FROM BEYOND THE MOUNTAIN:  
“THE INFIDELS HAVE BEEN REBUKED, WE DEFENDED THE CAPITAL...”  
A HORSE NEIGHS, LONGING FOR FREEDOM,  
THE VOICES OF THE MOUNTAIN RIVERS RESONATE...  
“DZHOKHAR! DZHOKHAR!” CRY THE MASSES.



DEAR PEOPLE, WE, THE EXILES, ARE MOVED AS ONE,  
OUR FATE MOVES US TO TEARS.  
YOU HAVE FREEDOM... WE CELEBRATE THE HOLY STRUGGLE,  
THE SWORD OF SHAMIL, HANGING ON THE WALL.  
BUT THE ENEMY, WASHING OFF THEIR DISGUISE,  
WITH IRON, DRUNKEN SOLDIERS,  
NOW ADVANCES TOWARDS THE CAPITAL... LIKE A CROOKED TURKISH  
SWORD,  
THAT MONTH IN DECEMBER...  
YOU ARE ALONE LIKE IT,  
ALONE TOGETHER, LIKE US ONCE,  
FOR THE FREEDOM THAT IS INDIFFERENT  
TO EUROPE'S MERCANTILE SPIRIT,  
AND AGAIN WE ARE SADDENED...  
...BUT PROUDLY YOU ARE THE WOLF  
OF THE COAT OF ARMS,  
A FERVENT PRAYER “ALACH ATBAR!”  
HIS NAME FIGHTS FOR VICTORY.



1994 12 A. LELEŠIUS

GAZAVAT – ŠVENTASIS KARAS  
SAKLIA – KALNIEČIO NAMAS  
GIAURAS – NETIKĖLIS  
ŠAMILIS – KALNĖNŲ KOVŲ PRIEŠ CARO KARIKŪMENĖ VAMŲ  
(XIX A. FIRMA PUSE)  
ALACH AKBAR – ALACHAS DIDIS

**For Chechnya  
and Dzhokhar Dudayev,  
who died on May 10, 1996.**

*Like an explosion to some, this word,  
But to us, you are the suffering nation today.  
We repeat this word, let it comfort us,  
The good news from mountainous Chechnya.  
Greater than the great, you are the small nation,  
Like David against Goliath.  
Moscow, the proud one, was bewildered  
When its generals lost their minds.  
Death or freedom, death and liberation.  
Once again, the Muslim's soul rises  
To the throne of Allah, honorably in death.  
His wife mourns him, their son tells her:  
"I swear to avenge him," and examines the dagger.  
So it has been for ages. Against the ruthless heathens,  
Chechens fought – the jigits of Mansur,  
The valiant soldiers of Imam Shamil.  
Though centuries pass, the imperial vapor  
Is still just as poisonous. And quietly,  
Submissively, obediently like a child,  
It flames like a burning match next to Grozny's tanks.  
A Moscow boy, sung by the famous Vysockis.  
Now he is consumed, unfortunately, not a righteous one,  
But an intruder in a foreign home.  
And we, once upon a time,  
Alone, just like you now,  
Like the moon over the skies of Chechnya and Lithuania,  
Fought against the same enemy,  
As if together with your boys,  
For the freedom that the people now despise.  
The beauty of the Caucasus, its mighty mountains,  
Has fascinated us throughout the ages.  
But even mightier is the Chechen spirit,  
Implanted by a prophet from eternity...  
They fight courageously for themselves and for us.  
In honor and hope of small nations,  
With you, Chechnya, we are to the end.  
May the banner of the prophet, like a match in the night,  
Illuminate the path to victory for you.*

A. Lelešius





*A. Lelešius  
October 22, 1995  
Algimantas Lelešius  
welcomes honorable  
guests: Aminat Sajiyeva, a  
representative of fighting  
Che-chnya, and Member  
of Parliament Algirdas  
Endriukaitis.*



*On October 22, 1995, at the invitation  
of A. Lelešius, Aminat Sajiyeva, a  
representative of fighting Chechnya in  
Lithuania, and Member of Parliament  
Algirdas Endriukaitis visited Kazlų Rūda.  
During the meeting with the residents  
of Kazlų Rūda, A. Sajiyeva's speech was  
translated by A. Lelešius.*



*Flowers for the guests.*



*Elina Visingirijeva, a Chechen girl.  
In the summer of 1999, she was  
taken care of by political prisoner  
Valerija Štreimikienė in her home  
in Kazlų Rūda.*



## **NOXČIYN RESPUBLIKAN IČKERIYN VEKALALLA LITVANE**



ČEČENIJOS RESPUBLIKOS IČKERIJOS ATSTOVYBĖ LIETUVOJE  
MISSION OF THE CHECHEN REPUBLIC ICHKERIA IN LITHUANIA

Vilnius, Lithuania, e-mail:aminat125@hotmail.com Tel. 8-655-42-01-5



*This month marks 20 years since the start of the first Russian war against Chechnya.*



*Dear Algimantas Lelešius*



I thank you for your moral and political support in participating this year in the international campaign to collect signatures of solidarity for the rights of the Chechen people. Your understanding and support will never be forgotten by us, as they testify to the proud meaning and importance of the Lithuanian nation's struggle for freedom to the whole world.



The Chechens have a saying: "A friend from a distant land is like a fortress built." That is how we value Lithuania.



I congratulate you on the New Year and wish you bright days in your life.

*Aminat Saijeva*

Representative of Ichkeria of the Republic of Chechnya in Lithuania



2014-12-11



# Young Riflemen's Camp



2002 08 06  
Young Riflemen's Camp  
near the town of Jūrē  
(Kazlų Rūda municipality).  
Photo by A. Lelešius.

2002 08 06  
Young Riflemen on a hike.  
Photo by A. Lelešius.



2003 07 02  
Young Riflemen in Kazlų  
Rūda at the memorial for  
the partisans of the Tauro  
District Žalgiris Team. The  
story about the memorial  
and other monuments  
was told by rifleman  
Algimantas Lelešius.

Participants of the "Dragoon"  
summer camp (second shift),  
organized by Kazlų Rūda  
municipality, on July 9, 2003, at  
the Kazlų Rūda New Cemetery,  
near the ensemble of monuments  
for the Tauro District Žalgiris  
Team. Rifleman A. Lelešius told  
about the partisans (on the left).





## Memorial plaque for Volunteers

### For Volunteers

*In the dawn of the reborn state,  
We were threatened by the ruthless Bolsheviks,  
Bermontians, Poles, treaty breakers,  
But we stood strong, the enemies failed,  
Thanks to the brave village men.  
They lacked ammunition and weapons,  
Not only guns, but even shoes.  
But they never lacked  
Courage and the desire to fight...  
That's why our own word is Volunteers.*

A. Lelešius



*Volunteer Antanas Ledas. His interesting memories of battles with the Bolsheviks were published in "Suvalkietis". Buried in Višakio Rūda Cemetery. His daughters live in Jūrės village (Kazlų Rūda municipality).*

*"I solemnly swear to serve faithfully" - memories published in "Suvalkietis".*



*February 16, 2017. Unveiling of memorial plaques dedicated to volunteers on the wall of Kazlų Rūda Library. The event was led by rifleman Algimantas Lelešius and the plaque's creator Vidmantas Alesius.*



*A restored memorial plaque was placed on the wall of J. Dovydaitis Public Library in Vytauto Street, Kazlų Rūda, dedicated to the volunteers of the Kazlų Rūda region during the battles of 1919-1920. The plaque was restored by Vidmantas Alesius. Photo by K. Driskius. August 2021.*





*Lithuanian Partisans*

### ***Ballad about the Battle of Kalniškė***

*Spring walks through fields and homesteads,  
The meadows have adorned themselves  
with green arches,  
But the outburst of joy fades away, vanishes,  
For a ruthless occupier rages in our homeland...*

*The morning of May 16th dawned,  
The battalions of the oppressors were heading  
towards Kalniškė.  
Unyielding men were firmly determined  
To fight as true warriors of the Fatherland.*

*Thousands of enemies surrounded our hill,  
We observe them through the branches of firs.  
The wild roar of the Asian hordes  
Raises the battle cry: "Ura!"*

*They launch an attack, and their ranks perish,  
Our men tear them apart with precise fire.  
Grenades explode, machine guns rattle...  
Oh, my comrade, are you still with me?*

*And the friend has already fallen from a mine shrapnel,  
The one who laid down five at once*

*With a butter grenade from behind a tree – not in vain  
He closed his eyes for the freedom of the homeland.*

*From a machine gun, she thinned out the enemy,  
Brave Pušelė, she fell from a salvo,  
All mangled – receive her, Lord...  
The bodies of soldiers lie on the hill.*

*Wood groaned from the explosion of mines,  
Lead storms, voices of the screaming,  
The thunder of fire tried to envelop it...  
The souls of the fallen scattered in the country's embrace.*

*We marched in the sky. Our ranks thinned,  
While the enemy lost hundreds of the slain...  
Remember us, Fatherland, we gave everything  
With our lives, like a fleeting moment.*

*Even the ruthless Bolshevik fears our fallen ones  
And lies on the stone by the bridge...  
Whispers with respect: "The battle took place here" –  
The monument will remind them of the glory of Kalniškės.*

A. Lelešius

## The exiles of Južakovo (Altai) met in 1941

*Many trees stand tall,  
while tears well up  
as we reminisce.*

From a song of the exiles

In 1941, the exiles of the Black June... These words hold great significance for the older generation. In the inferno of Siberia, the nation's circle, its genetic heritage, the intellectuals of subtle pride perished. Our parents, mostly teachers, extinguished without a spark of hope in their eyes, with a solemn uncertainty of what awaited their annihilated nation, their families. Three thousand of them perished in the horrific kingdom of death, the Osvencim Bolshevik branch - the Reshoty camp in the Krasnoyarsk region. A large part of their families, after a year of exile in Altai, were transported by trucks and sailed on barges to the dominion of the white death's icy grip, far beyond the Arctic Circle near the Laptev Sea and the islands of the Lena Delta. The bones of many of those women and their children still ache in those desolate tundras of ruthless cruelty.

For us, dozens of families who remained at the mercy of fate in Altai, the preparation points in the second (and other smaller) Južakovo forest districts offered greater hope of survival. The older generation, our parents, were no longer there. Most of their representatives, however, experienced the joy of returning and reuniting with their homeland and found solace in their native land. But our ranks, the children, are also thinning.

We have participated in numerous gatherings, mostly official meetings, of the exiles of 1941. This time, we met only as Južakovo residents, like the last Mohicans of the once abundant Južakovo community of exiles, consisting mostly of women and children. The initiators were Vytas Miliauskas, the chairman of the Lithuanian Political Prisoners and Exiles Community Board, and his wife Virginija, who took on the entire preparation and expense burden. The meeting took place on October 1st in a garden house near Vilnius.

By the way, even in the second preparation point (učastkė) in Južakovo, where most of the exiles gathered, the family of the teacher Juozas Miliauskas served as a sort of center for gatherings on Easter and Christmas. Somehow, the teacher, perhaps due to some coincidence (maybe later he surrendered in Naujoji Vilnia, not wanting to leave one family behind in hardship), was not separated from his family (the devilish action of separation had already been



1941 - Yushakov (Troitsk district, Altai) exiles. 2005 10 01



carried out). I was deeply impressed by his recitation of Maironis' poems. It was the most poignant lesson of national upbringing in that spiritual wilderness where we, the children, found ourselves, as the school was Russian, Soviet. In the last years of the exile, the Miliauskas family subscribed to "Tiesa" (Truth). Although the newspaper was Soviet, reading it allowed us to learn Lithuanian writing, language, and expand our vocabulary with the dictionary of the cultural heap. The sports page was particularly interesting. It wrote about boxers Algirdas Šocikas, Romualdas Juškėnas, victories of the Vilnius football team "Spartakas," and the triumphs of Lithuanian basketball players. A rare Lithuanian book sent was a significant event. Vincas Krėvė's "Dainavos senų žmonių padavimai" (Legends of Ancient Dainava), Jonas Biliūnas' short stories, Šapoka's "Lietuvos istorija" (History of Lithuania) left an indelible impression on me. Among the exiles in our area were the grandparents of our current ambassador to the United States, the Ušackai. In the cemetery of the učastkė, the father of General Raštikis was buried (later, with Vytas Miliauskas' assistance, the remains were brought to Lithuania during the period of the Lithuanian National Revival).

Teacher Juozas Miliauskas, who participated in the meeting, and Justinas Radžiūnas worked extremely hard physical labor: they carried heavy logs on their shoulders and loaded heavy stones into the wagons, rolled logs, and there was a sawmill and a brick factory (špalzavod) in the učastkė. Representatives of various nationalities worked in the učastkė: besides Lithuanians, there were Volga Germans, sons of the steppe, Kalmyks, and later Armenians. During the post-war years, many Japanese prisoners of war were brought there.

Russians, while riding a log into a wagon, would shout, "raz, dva, vziali!" and the Japanese would say, "ceino oiza!" By the way, among the local residents, there were also Russian exiles (they were deported during the terrible tragedy of collectivization that took place in Russia from 1928 to 1932, which resulted in the deaths of tens of millions of people from famine, particularly in Ukraine).

Once, my friend Juozas Miliauskas found a "abrėzas" (a sawed-off shotgun, a symbol of despair and revenge of the exiled Russian peasants) on the upper floor of their hut. Justinas Radžiūnas recalled a tragic incident. Two frozen train wagons filled with Kalmyks were brought to the "učastka" (a designated area for exiles). The temperatures were extraordinarily low, reaching up to minus 50 degrees.

All the residents of Kalmykia had been deported. The authorities ordered the Lithuanian exiles to secretly load the corpses into large sledges at night and transport them by tractors to a frozen lake in the forest. They were threatened that if they spoke out, they would be imprisoned.

With resourcefulness and ingenuity, the Lithuanians tried to survive. In the first year of exile, they bartered various imported items (clothes, jewelry) for potatoes. They walked around in tatters due to hunger because the bread ration, according to the cards, was only a few hundred grams. The elderly died (in the Troitsky district, mostly in the second "učastka" or forest processing point), and approximately one out of every eight exiles died during the entire period of exile.

Later, in the small plots of land they received, the Lithuanians started planting potatoes, keeping chickens, piglets, goats, and some even had cows. The grip of hunger loosened.

My cousin Vytas Miliauskas and I spent several summers grazing our own and other people's goats in the nearby forests. We strongly disagree with the statement made by a certain classic writer, who barely spent a year in exile, that summer grazing was a "sold" summer. On the contrary, in the secluded density of the forest, it was quite enjoyable and interesting to remember. As children, by engaging in useful activities and helping our families survive, we gave meaning to our existence.

My mother, Domicelė Lelešienė, used to knit dresses for the wives of the superiors (!), and later she bought a hand-operated sewing machine made in Podolsk and became a well-known seamstress. Now her sewing machine is an exhibit in the Marijampolė Taurus District Partisans and Exiles Museum, where I work. Rare news from the Rešotos camps, where the men were imprisoned, reached our families. Once, a letter was received that listed some who had "gone to be with their own" (it was not allowed to openly write about deaths due to censorship). That's how my mother found out about the death of her husband, my father, Pijus Lelešiauskas.

We managed to learn about the partisan war in Lithuania. It was told to us by two Lithuanian soldiers who were conscripted into the Soviet army and brought with their unit to our "učastka" to load logs onto the wagons. The news that the partisans were seeking revenge on our behalf sparked an unprecedented enthusiasm among us, the children. We even tried to contribute to the partisan fight by sometimes knocking buckets with messages off trees.

Once, my half-brother wrote us a letter from Siberia, in which he wrote the sentence, “There is unrest in Lithuania.” We never received the letter, and my half-brother was pacified for those “unrestful” eight years in Mordovia camps.

Several times, the commandants, representatives of Soviet security, would summon the deportees and “calm them down,” saying that they were brought here for good. But the deportees did not associate their fate with Siberia, only with Lithuania. The desire to return was unbreakable. According to statistics, out of approximately 200,000 Siberian deportees, 2,000 escaped to Lithuania (one out of a hundred). The deportees from Južakovo and the entire Troicko district were much braver and more active. Out of approximately 40 families, 14 fled (meaning every third family or family member). Unfortunately, the evil eye usually caught those who escaped, and they ended up in prisons, camps, and then back in exile. I remember how the Tupalskis family, who had escaped from the “učastko,” was returned to it a year later.

But time worked for the benefit of the deportees. Sooner or later, evil destroys itself. In early March 1953, the radio reported compilations about the deteriorating health of the “great father and leader of all nations,” Stalin. The words spoken by Miliauskienė stuck in my memory: “Now it will definitely kick off.” Three years later, during Khrushchev’s “thaw,” we returned to Lithuania. It was a unique event in the history of our “učastke,” the Lithuanian Siberian deportees. In 1944, twenty-year-old Aleksandras Mikutavičius gathered a group of fellow former

high school students and started publishing a secret handwritten newspaper called “Tėvynės ilgesys” (“Longing for the Homeland”). Seven issues were released. In this way, young people tried to give meaning to their miserable, wretched, hungry existence under the harsh conditions of exile. This newspaper was a ray of light in the kingdom of darkness, testifying to the unbreakable idealism of youth, their belief in the hope of a good return to the Homeland. And to this day, their short stories, poems, and other literary works touch the heart with their sincerity and flashes of talent.

Aleksandras Mikutavičius, by the way, participated in a meeting and, after being denounced by a scoundrel, ended up in the Taišet lagers for ten years. With the start of the Sąjūdis movement, he addressed the Altai Krai security service with a request to return the confiscated newspaper issues, and (a miracle!) they were returned (now kept in the Lithuanian Genocide and Resistance Research Centre). But this story is already a topic for another article.

Vytas Miliauskas, who visited the “učastke” a few years ago, tells about a strange natural anomaly: a terrible period began, and the once abundant lakes where we used to swim, fish, and pick cranberries are rapidly drying up. In their place, young forests are growing. And now, ironically, the “učastkas” are called Mnogooziornyj (having many lakes). Perhaps nature is trying to hide the wounds soaked with the bloody sweat and bitter tears of the deportees.

Algimantas LELEŠIUS  
CHRONICLE. October 14, 2005, No. 41



*Deportees' meeting on the 50th anniversary of the exile on May 22, 1948, near Šunskai at Egidijus Ašmenskas's. There are also people from Kazlų Rūda.*



## **Black June**

*That Black June,  
That year of misfortune,  
The exiles were brought  
By the Eastern Asians.*

*They interrupted our dream  
By intruding at night,  
And they took us to the train  
As living cargo.*

*They crammed us  
into the wagons  
Without ceremony,  
Misfortune struck –  
Freedom in agony.*

*To the East, to the East –  
The wheels were rumbling,  
Tears were flowing –  
For what – we didn't understand.*

*Stifling like in a bathhouse  
In the crowded wagon...  
We long for fresh air,  
Here life is born and dies...*

*Why, fate,  
Do you crucify us?  
A voice choked up,  
Repeating «Mary.»*

*Will we return? Who knows?..  
Having lost our homeland...  
Give us a message, O Lord –  
We whisper a prayer.*

A. Lelešius

## **We remember that Grim June –**

*We remember that bitter June –  
The nation in the locked wagons,  
Its endless weeping...  
In the green maples of the homeland –  
The agony of destroyed freedom.*

*We remember that bitter June...  
Farewell to you, birch trees  
of our homeland,  
Perhaps, before closing my eyes,  
I will see you, turned upside down like us.*

*We remember that bitter June –  
Gloomy despair tormented us  
And the rumbling of the wheels,  
And the sorrowful eyes of mothers...*

*We remember that bitter June,  
The journey to the land of tundra.  
Whispered by the winds,  
The sad tales of exile followed us...*

A. Lelešius



*Kazlų Rūda Exiles. In the foreground, there is a plaque of the first political prisoner and exile of the Kazlų Rūda political prisoners and exiles department, political prisoner Julija Bučinskienė.*





June 14, 2005, commemoration in Kazlų Rūda. Participants of the commemoration: political prisoners and exiles from Kazlų Rūda.



June 14, 2008, commemoration in the courtyard of the care home in Kazlų Rūda. From the left: Juozas Mikalonis, the most prominent exile of the largest deportation on May 22, 1948, and an active patriot in Kazlų Rūda; Anelė Adomaitienė, a political prisoner (Uchta, Komija); and nun Joana.

June 14, 2008, commemoration of the "Day of Grief and Hope" in Kazlų Rūda. Honor of the 1941 deportees.

From the left: Ansevičienė (Jūratė) Jūra Giriūnaitė, Gelgota Vytautas, Šiaurienė Saulė Giriūnaitė, Lelešius Algimantas, Mackevičius Alfonsas, Makarevičienė Azita.



September 30, 2006.

Kazlų Rūda.

Political prisoners Valerija Štreimikienė and Julija Bučinskienė, and 1941 deportee Algimantas Lelešius. Photo by V. Masevičius.







October 6, 2007.  
A student excursion led by Auksutė Skokauskienė, the daughter of Lithuanian partisan leader Adolfas Ramanauskas-Vanagas, in Kazlų Rūda. Algimantas Lelešius, an employee of the Marijampolė Tauro District Partisans and Exiles Museum, provided information about the monuments. In the photo: excursion to the monument for the victims of the occupation near the railway station. The monument (sculptor Julius Narušis) depicts an exiled woman holding a deceased child. It is called the Siberian Madonna.

October 6, 2007.  
Student excursion by Auksutė Skokauskienė in Kazlų Rūda to commemorate the martyrdom of Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius. The excursion was led by Algimantas Lelešius.



October 6, 2007.  
Student excursion by Auksutė Skokauskienė in Kazlų Rūda to the memorial for the partisans of the Tauro District Žalgiris Detachment. Algimantas Lelešius provided information about the memorial.





Mock-up of partisan hideouts in the German hills, 0.7 km from the Kazlų Rūda Forest Office. The model and the stand dedicated to the memory of the partisans were created by Algimantas Lelešius.



Padidintas stendo tekstas

## Important Battles of the Žalgiris Detachment:

1. Krūveliai, December 25, 1945
2. Valkai (Sutkai) near Lekėčiai, May 12, 1945
3. Degučiai, November 20, 1945
4. Vierčiškės, March 26, 1946
5. Katinai, April 19, 1946
6. Griešiai, June 5, 1946
7. Agurkiškės (Šakiai district), June 12, 1946 - Tauro Region leader Zigmas Drunga was killed in this battle.

8. Opsrūtai (Vilkaviškis district), November 12, 1947. This was the most important military operation of the partisans on a national scale - a breakthrough against the occupiers' attempts to colonize the Lithuanian countryside. After this operation, Russian residents were afraid to travel to Lithuania, but not to Latvia and Estonia, where the resistance was much weaker, as thousands of Latvians and Estonians died in the war fighting on the side of the Germans. In Lithuania, Russian speakers make up 6-7%, in Latvia - 50%, and in Estonia - 30%.

## Commanders of the Žalgiris Detachment:

1. Bronius Abramavičius-Spyglis, January 1, 1945 – November 20, 1946
2. Jonas Kleiza-Žalvaris, January 13, 1946 – April 19, 1946
3. J. Ilgūnas-Šarūnas, April 20, 1946 – October 22, 1946
4. J. Jasulaitis-Kazokas, October 24, 1946 – January 24, 1947
5. V. Štrimas-Štrumas, January 4, 1947 – April 28, 1948
6. V. Vitkauskas-Saidokas, May 4, 1948 – November 1, 1949
7. F. Žindžius-Tigras, February 1, 1950 – September 27, 1950
8. K. Širvys-Sakalas, July 20, 1951 – July 25, 1952

Notable partisans from the Kazlų Rūda region: Bronius Brazauskas, Jonas Rimša, Monika Rimšienė, Juozas Rimša, Jonas Staniulis, Albinas Staniulis, Mykolas Adomavičius, Jonas Vosylius, Juozas Blažys, Leonas Gutauskas, Albinas Čibirka, Saliamonas Čibirka, Juozas Tamaliūnas, Vitas Naikelis, Petras Naikelis, Pranas Starkevičius, Juozas Krapavičius, Jonas Krapavičius, Jonas Stačiokas, Algirdas Stačiokas, Pranas Andriušis, Jonas Kvederis, Jonas Raulynaitis, Vincas Marcinkevičius, Bronius Petrauskas, Juozas Armonaitis, Juzė Petrulionytė, Vincas Stankevičius, Albina Vaitonienė, Jonas Merkevičius, Antanas Oleka, Vytas Oleka, Juozas Oleka, Valentinas Dainelis, Antanas Dereškevičius, Vacius Dereškevičius, Domicelė Didžpinigaitytė, Nikodemus Uosaitis, Jonas Balsys, Vincas Sutkus, Ona Sutkuvienė, Bronė Sutkutė, Valentinas Sadauskas.





Monument in memory of the members of the Vytautas Detachment of the Tauro Region Partisans Headquarters in Gulbiniškiai village (Marijampolė district).

On April 27, 1947, Anelė Senkutė-Pušelė, Vytautas Vabalas-Kunigaikštis, and Antanas Pečiulis-Baritonas were killed here. The monument was built by the riflemen Jurgis Nevulis and Algimantas Lelešius. The shield-shaped memorial plaque was designed by A. Lelešius. On April 27, 1997, the monument was consecrated by Father Ignas Plioraitis from Kazlų Rūda.



In the Tauro Region Partisans and Exiles Museum on June 5, 2004: museum employee A. Lelešius (on the right) with the son of the commander of the Žalgiris Detachment of the Tauro Region Partisans, Jonas Staniulis-Šarūnas (second from the right), and his family members (residing in Kaunas).



Protest on June 16, 1997, in front of the Marijampolė County Governor's Administration building regarding the privatized house on Vytauto Street 26. It used to be a torture chamber where the Soviet occupiers buried the remains of partisans and other imprisoned individuals. The protest was organized (with signs and banners) and led by A. Lelešius, an employee of the Tauro Region Partisans and Exiles Museum. The protest was attended by political prisoners and exiles who actively spoke out, demanding to prevent the trade of the partisans' remains and find a more suitable purpose for the privatized building, namely establishing a partisans and exiles museum there. A commission was formed, and its members, including partisan S. Plieskus (pictured first from the left), political prisoner P. Nedzinskas, and exile Algimantas Lelešius (pictured second from the left) addressed Kostas Jankauskas, the head of the Marijampolė County Administration. After some time, another commission was formed. Unfortunately, the nomenclature prevailed. However, the participants of this civil action boldly expressed their protest.

The protest was described in the newspaper "Lietuvos rytas".

## In Memoriam Jonas VASMANAS

(1949–2016)

“I long for death, my heart is burdened.  
I am tired of witnessing how frail  
The oath is, laid upon a soldier’s corpse,  
How the sacred is scorned.”

(William Shakespeare, Sonnet 66)

Jonas Vasmanas was born on March 22, 1949, in Vilkaviškis, where he attended secondary school. He was actively involved in sports, particularly basketball and athletics. He graduated from school in 1967 and in 1968, he enrolled in Vilnius State University to study economic cybernetics. He was a member of the “Romuva” society, and his activities with a national-patriotic character irritated the authorities. In 1973, Jonas graduated from the university with honors. He started working at the Economics Institute of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. He was an inconvenient figure for the authorities, as he fearlessly expressed views that shocked them.

Later, he moved to Kapsukas and worked as a chess coach, training high-level players. He actively participated in the activities of the Sajūdis



movement. The most significant period of his life was from 1992 to 1998 when he served as the director of the Marijampolė Regional Studies Museum. Since he had no family, he dedicated himself, his extraordinary intellect, and organizational skills to the museum. And the museum flourished. International folklore festivals called “Žiba žiburūžiai” were organized. The organizers were the talented musician sisters Džiuljeta and Žydruolė Mankauskaitės. Jonas assisted the renowned archaeologist Algirdas Merkevičius in excavations in Turlojiškė, Kumelionys, and Stanaičiai.

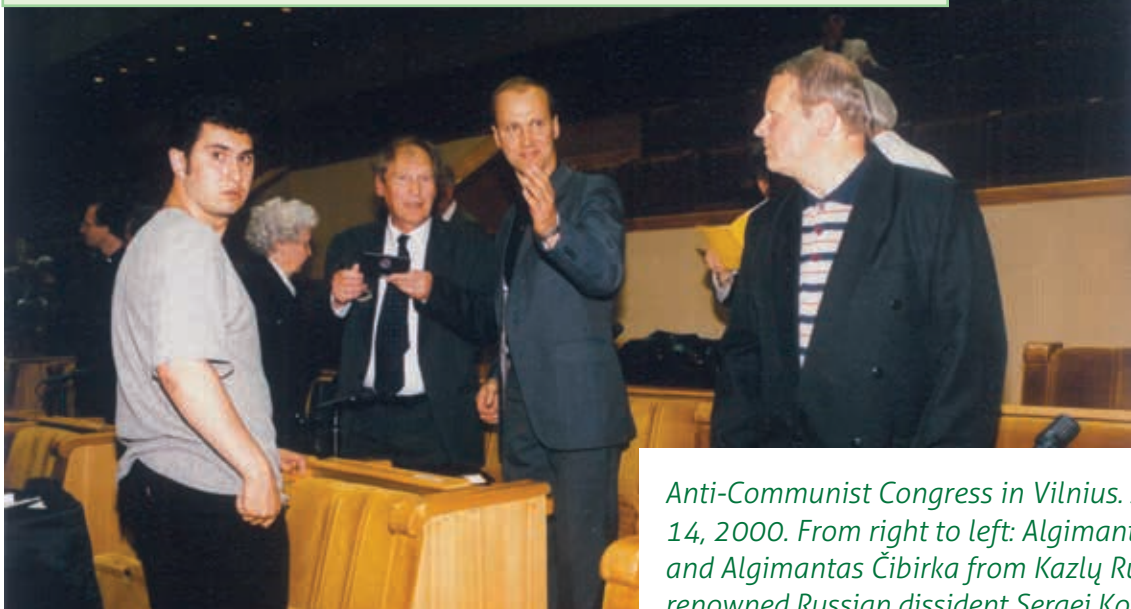
J. Vasmanas maintained connections with historians from Černiachovsk (formerly Insterburg) in the Kaliningrad Oblast. At his initiative, a three-part sculpture of a coiled serpent was erected in Narkyčiai (the presumed place of death of the Prussian rebel leader Herkus Mantas). It symbolized the tragedy of the Prussian people. The highest priest of Romuva, Jonas Trinkūnas, a reviver of ancient Lithuanian faith, was invited to the museum with his large family.

He maintained relations with Lithuanians in Poland, and expeditions were organized in their region.

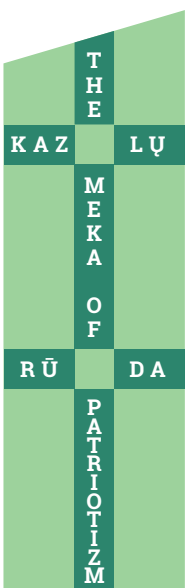
Jonas was an idealist in the true sense of the word. He rewarded his employees with prizes and forgot about himself. Material possessions held no interest for him; he was always focused on the spiritual. Jonas Vasmanas was laid to rest at the Virbalis Cemetery next to his parents.

Algimantas LELEŠIUS

## Anti-Communist Congress in Vilnius



*Anti-Communist Congress in Vilnius. June 12-14, 2000. From right to left: Algimantas Lelešius and Algimantas Čibirka from Kazlų Rūda, and the renowned Russian dissident Sergei Kovalev.*





## Patriotic activities with students



*Joint conference of political prisoners, deportees, and Kazlų Rūda Kazys Grinius Gymnasium students, dedicated to the history of Resistance, in the gymnasium's assembly hall, November 29, 2002. Guest speakers included Vytautas Miliauskas, the chairman of the Lithuanian Political Prisoners and Deportees Community Board from Vilnius, Algimantas Lelešius, and other guest representatives. The event was organized by history teacher Birūta Bujauskienė. In 2002, Kazlų Rūda teachers, historians, were the first in Lithuania to allocate 18 lessons instead of one, as specified in the curriculum, for the study of Resistance history in the 10th grade.*



*Kazlų Rūda Gymnasium, November 29, 2002.*

*Lina Mykolaitytė (Jankai Primary School, 10th grade) presented a report titled "The Life of Partisans."*



*December 6, 2003.*

*Conference organized by historian Birūta Bujauskienė, dedicated to the history of Resistance, in Kazlų Rūda Kazys Grinius Gymnasium's assembly hall. Guests from Vilnius - the Lithuanian Political Prisoners and Deportees Community - participated. Professor Ona Voverienė gave an inspiring speech. Students presented interesting reports on the topic of Resistance.*





*Speech by Professor O. Voverienė at Kazlų Rūda Kazys Grinius Gymnasium, December 6, 2003.*



*December 7, 2012. Conference on the history of Resistance at Kazlų Rūda Kazys Grinius Gymnasium. Initiated by A. Lelešius. Guests from Vilnius - the Lithuanian Political Prisoners and Deportees Community - participated. Mature reports were presented by senior high school students, guided by methodologist Birūta Bujauskienė, who also led the conference.*



*Participants of the Resistance History Seminar from Kazlų Rūda municipality schools, history teachers, and lecturer Jonas Gustaičius from Marijampolė College. Third from the left - Beta Zaveckienė, Head of the Education Department of Kazlų Rūda municipality. March 21, 2003.*



*Open class on the history of Resistance for senior high school students at Kazlų Rūda Kazys Grinius Gymnasium, conducted by teacher and methodologist B. Bujauskienė. President of the Republic of Lithuania, Valdas Adamkus, who participated in the event, highly appreciated the class. November 21, 2006.*



*Commemoration of January 13th at Kazlų Rūda Secondary School, 1997.*



*Commemoration of January 13th, 1997, at Kazlų Rūda Secondary School. Speech by Algimantas Lelešius, a member of the Riflemen's Union.*





June 5, 2003.  
Students from Kazlų Rūda School of Esthetics visited the memorial of partisan fighters in the Tauras District. A. Lelešius told them about the memorial, its creation, and the partisans. Photo by A. Lelešius.



Monday, June 4, 2012.  
Sixth-grade students from Kazlų Rūda Primary School (teacher Ramutė Giedraitienė) took a trip along the paths of the partisans. The guide was A. Lelešius, an employee of the Tauras Partisan Museum in Marijampolė. The photo was taken at the site of Juozas Lukša's death near Pažėrai (Kaunas district). Photo by A. Lelešius.

Kazlų Rūda.  
Algimantas Lelešius with third graders at the monument commemorating the first Sjqūdis rally in Kazlų Rūda on September 3, 1988. The monument was erected by the initiative of the Kazlų Rūda Sjqūdis group to mark the 30th anniversary of the first rally.





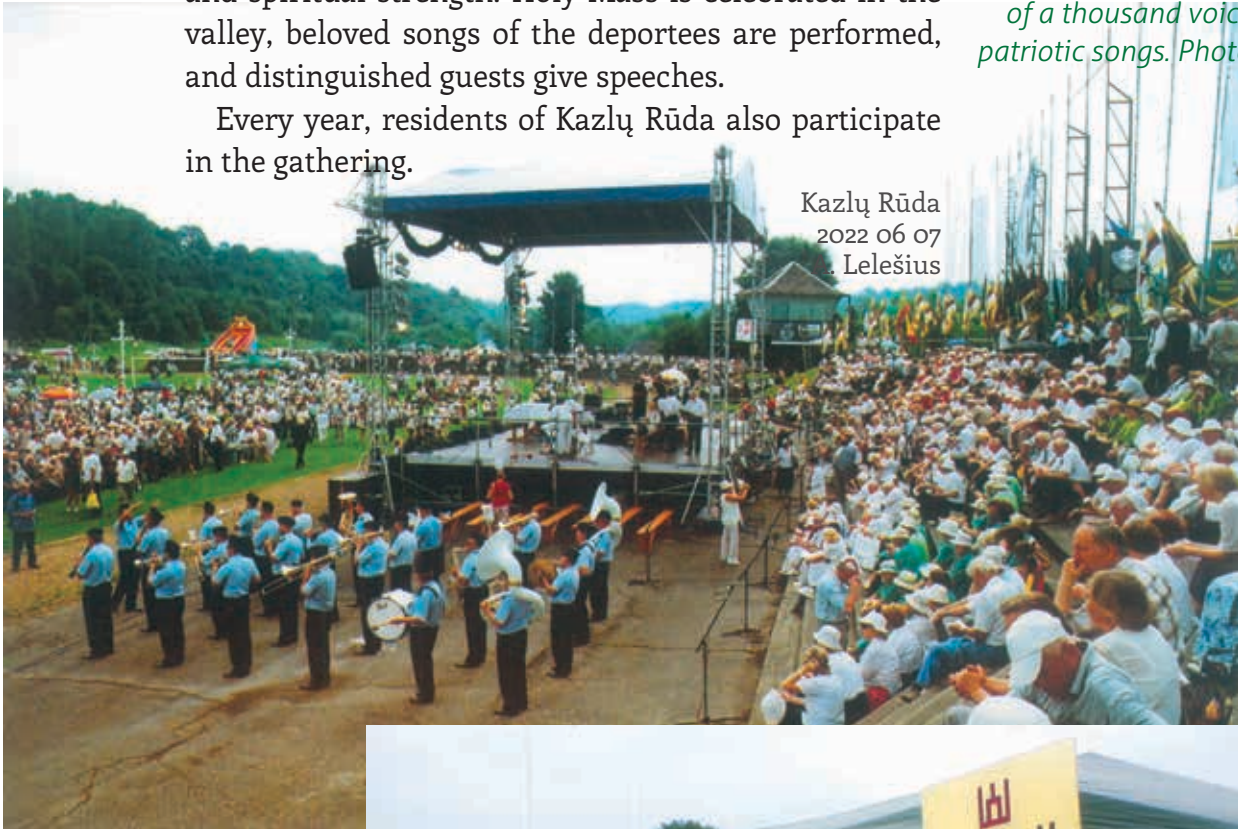
## Ariogala Gathering

Every year since 1991, on the first Saturday of August, a grand gathering of political prisoners and deportees from all over Lithuania takes place in Ariogala, in the picturesque valley of the Dubysa River. Thousands of brothers and sisters of fate come together. With gray hair and faces marked by wrinkles, they have seen things in their lives that one can't even imagine in a nightmare: the untimely death of loved ones, hunger, cold, humiliation, and abuse. But they did not break, they endured everything. That's why their faces and eyes still radiate kindness, seriousness, and spiritual strength. Holy Mass is celebrated in the valley, beloved songs of the deportees are performed, and distinguished guests give speeches.

Every year, residents of Kazlų Rūda also participate in the gathering.



*Ariogala. 2013-08-03  
A kilometer-long column of gathering participants descends from a steep slope into the valley of the Dubysa River. Holy Mass will be celebrated there, and a choir of a thousand voices will perform patriotic songs. Photo by A. Lelešius*



Kazlų Rūda  
2022 06 07  
A. Lelešius

*Ariogala  
2013-08-03  
An impressive view of the gathering...*



*Ariogala  
2011-08-06  
Kazlų Rūdis set up their own tent. Photo by A. Lelešius*



*Ariogala  
2013-08-03  
Residents of Kazlų Rūda at  
the festive table. Photo by A.  
Lelešius*



*Ariogala  
2006-08-05  
Algimantas Lelešius: We managed to  
have such joyful days.*



*Ariogala  
2011-08-06  
1941 deportee Algimantas  
Lelešius and Tauro District  
partisan Vytas Masikonis-  
Plutonas. Photo by V. Skupas*



*Ariogala  
Participant of the gathering, Žalgiris  
Battalion partisan Juozas Armonaitis-  
Triupas from the Tauro District.*



# Rallies



*Rally for the Resistance History Exam in 10th grade. Speech by the initiator and host of the rally, A. Lelešius, a deportee from 1941, a member of the Tauro District partisans and the Exile Museum. May 17, 2010.*



*Rally for the Resistance History Exam in 10th grade. Speech by Vilius Bražėnas. May 17, 2010.*



*Rally for the Resistance History Exam in 10th grade. May 17, 2010.*





*Picket for the Resistance History Exam in 10th grade. On the left - picket organizer A. Lelešius. October 11, 2010.*

*Picket for the mandatory 18-lesson Resistance History program in 10th grade. Picket participants (from the right): deportee Antanas Bunevičius, partisan Vytautas Masikonis. October 11, 2010.*



*Victorious rally for the mandatory 18-lesson Resistance History program in 10th grade, held on May 23, 2011. Speech by the organizer and host of the rally, A. Lelešius. On June 7, 2011, the Minister of Education issued an order "to dedicate no less than 18 lessons to Resistance History."*



*Rally for the mandatory 18-lesson Resistance History program in 10th grade. Speech by Prof. Ona Voverienė, with the megaphone held by Ričardas Čekutis, the director of the Lithuanian National Center, who also sharply criticized the Ministry of Education. May 23, 2011.*

*The second rally organized by A. Lelešius for the mandatory 18-lesson Resistance History program in 10th grade, held on May 23, 2011. Speech by the courageous and energetic fighter for a patriotic school, Dalija Karkienė. The rally was covered in the newspaper "Respublika."*





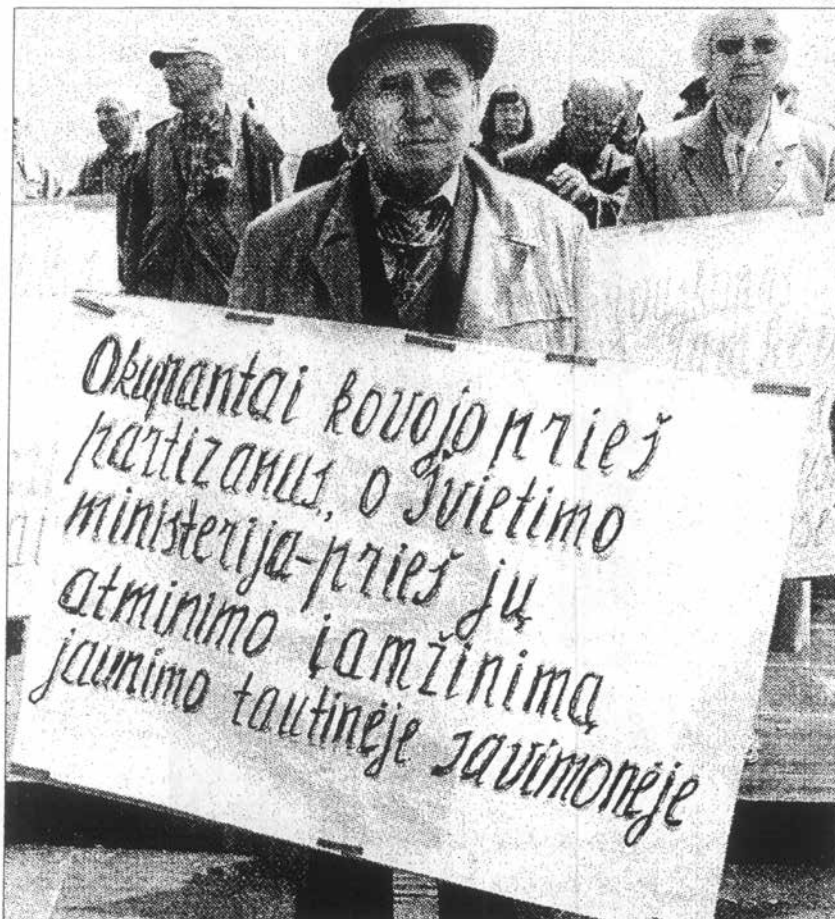


*Rally for the mandatory 18-lesson Resistance History program in 10th grade. Speech by the devoted patriot, Father Algimantas Keina. May 23, 2011.*



*Victorious rally, after which on June 7, 2011, the Minister of Education issued an order "to dedicate no less than 18 lessons to Resistance History." Posters were prepared by the organizer and host of the rally, A. Lelešius. May 23, 2011.*

Sauliaus Venckaus nuotr.



"Respublika" (Republic) May 24, 2011

## **No Word about the Struggle for Freedom in Schools**

Yesterday, at a picket in front of the Ministry of Education and Science in the capital, former political prisoners, deportees, and participants of the Freedom Struggle drew attention to the fact that in 21 years of independence, there has been no 18-hour Resistance History course in schools.

*With a poster stands Vytautas Masikonis-Plutonas (Tauro District), an 85-year-old partisan. The poster was written by the rally organizer Algimantas Lelešius. After this rally, on June 7, 2011, the Minister of Education issued an order to allocate no less than 18 lessons for Resistance History (instead of one according to the curriculum).*



# Rally in front of the Ministry of Education and Science



**Texts on the rally posters:** Let's not forget the biblical concept of "30 pieces of silver" for emigrating compatriots; The State institution - Ministry of Education and Science - disrespects the memory of those who fought and suffered for the country; The occupiers fought against the partisans, and the Ministry of Education and Science fights against their commemoration in the national consciousness of young people; Partisan shadows: "We fell in battle, we don't even have a grave, and they shed a few lessons on our struggle"; The "patriotic" education of the Ministry of Education - youth fleeing Lithuania like a plague, some of the youth becoming plunderers; More patriotism, less emigration; Nijolė Gaškaitė: Partisan struggle - the most beautiful diamond of our history"; We demand the Resistance History exam for 10th graders; Indifference to patriotism benefits a foreign state; Resistance history - an inexhaustible source of spirituality and patriotism; Teachers of all subjects, be like pre-war patriots, because Lithuania is in danger.



A rally took place on September 21, 2015, in front of the Ministry of Education and Science regarding the Resistance History exam. Speech by the rally initiator A. Lelešius. He wrote the posters for the rally and created their texts. Magazine "Varpas" (Bell). December 2015.



## Statement by Algimantas Lelešius

### Protest rally at the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Lithuania

Ladies and gentlemen,

We have gathered here for the rally “For a Patriotic School.” Because Lithuania is in danger, as the never-ending war in fraternal Ukraine is uncertain how it will end. A survey shows that only every other young Lithuanian would defend Lithuania in times of danger. This is a worrying fact and it demonstrates the helplessness of our education system in instilling patriotism in students and reducing the destructive, traitorous mass emigration. The Ministry of Education likes to list what films, CDs, maps, etc., it has provided to schools, but it does not care whether teachers actually use them or dedicate 18 lessons to Resistance History. Today, students’ knowledge is pitiful; some don’t even know that after World War II, we had our partisan war, they don’t know when Lithuania was occupied by the Soviets, etc.

I have worked in schools for many years, so I know the psychology of teachers. They have protested and gone on strike for higher salaries, but no one protests for the Resistance History exam. This means that the demand is necessary not only for students but also for teachers. I’m not saying that we should (like in Soviet times) attend teachers’ classes and stress them out. We need to evaluate teachers’ work based on results. We propose a questionnaire about the partisan struggle, the Sajūdis movement, and the Restoration of Independence. It would be just a few pages of highly concentrated information about the most important historical events and dates. It would be an easy exam for the 10th grade because it’s not math, physics, or chemistry. But if students and some teachers knew even that much, it would be a lot. Representatives from the Education Department, the Ministry, political prisoners, and deportees could choose a school in a district by drawing lots (for objectivity), choose one of the senior classes by drawing lots, and check whether the students can answer the questions in the questionnaire. If they know, the teacher is praised; if they don’t know, they are warned. Of course, teachers should have the questionnaire and be informed about the possibility of such checks. The results of the checks should be announced to all schools. This would be an effective way to achieve good results. This is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Of course, it’s easiest (as it is now) to do nothing.

That exam could have been introduced six

years ago. Unfortunately, arrogant officials from the Ministry of Education did not see the need to consider the signatures of thousands of political prisoners and deportees regarding the exam. They are half our age and will never see in their worst nightmares what we saw and experienced in the Siberian gulags. But they have the audacity to ignore us and our requests and demands. Isn’t this a violation of human rights, an activity resembling sabotage when Lithuania is facing danger?

Now, with the influx of masses of refugees into Europe, the situation becomes even more dangerous for us, as German, French, Italian, and Spanish politicians have stated that in the event of armed conflict between the Baltic States and Russia, they would try to avoid military action, so they would only help us with words. Therefore, we can only rely on ourselves. In 1940, we were occupied by 150,000 Soviet soldiers. And it could happen again. So, would those few thousand of our volunteers and professional soldiers withstand it? We need to train at least a hundred thousand fighters who know how to handle weapons. The Constitution requires that every citizen be prepared to defend the country. We proposed to the Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of Education the cheapest and most rational way of universal military training for senior high school students in army shooting ranges and training grounds. A student is not a soldier. They don’t need separate rations, uniforms, boots, or barracks. The costs of shooting practice are minimal. We only need ammunition and fuel for transportation to and from training for the students.

But even though we propose the best solution, as ordinary Lithuanian citizens, bureaucrats automatically react with rejection. As you can hear, we dared to disturb their bureaucratic tranquility. That’s why there is so much anger and disappointment in society. The result: a significant exodus from Lithuania, people stating that they will not defend such a state...

Thank you, dear residents of Vilnius, especially those who have gathered here. We have proven that it is too early to write us off.

Algimantas LELEŠIUS

“Lietuvos Aidas” newspaper, 2015-11-14

## Rally “For a Patriotic School”

Jonas BUROKAS

Surveys show that only every other young person would defend the country, and the significant emigration is a consequence of the lack of patriotic education, posing a danger to the future of the nation and the state. Political prisoners and participants of the Freedom Fighters' movement have been concerned about and are still concerned about the patriotic education of the youth since the beginning of the National Revival. Despite their modest pensions, they built two thousand monuments to the Freedom Fighters who did not return from exile, labor camps, and prisons. They organized thousands of patriotic events, wrote and published numerous books testifying to the losses. They made efforts, pleading, advising, and demanding from the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) to strengthen patriotic education and the consolidation of historical memory.

In 2009, Lithuania celebrated the 60th anniversary of the famous Partisan Declaration. On this occasion, the largest museum of partisans and exile in the Marijampolė Tauro district organized a collection of signatures to the Ministry of Education, demanding the inclusion of Resistance History as an exam subject in the 10th grade. Unfortunately, despite receiving thousands of signatures, the MES did not respond.

On May 17, 2010, a protest rally was organized in front of the MES due to the non-fulfillment of demands. Unfortunately, the Ministry did not yield. In the same year, on October 11, 2010, another protest picket was held, but again, without results. On May 23, 2011, there was another protest rally. This time, the Minister of Education and Science, G. Steponavičius, gave in a little. On June 7, 2011, an order was issued to allocate no fewer than 18 lessons to Resistance History. Unfortunately, not all teachers take the teaching of Resistance History responsibly, and the education departments give them concessions. If there were at least a non-difficult exam in the 10th grade, the situation would change, and the exam would mobilize teachers to better prepare students for it.

The Lithuanian Freedom Fighters' Union, on June 5, 2011, wrote a letter to the Minister of Education and Science Audronė Pitrėnienė regarding the questionnaire for the Resistance History exam in the 10th grade. However, the matter did not move forward. The Ministry acknowledged that "the topic of the history of freedom struggles requires exceptional attention" but only listed the number of films, books, albums, CDs, and posters on the topic that the Ministry purchased and handed over to the education departments. Unfortunately, it seems that the money was wasted because these resources remain unused, and no one controls their use. There is no exam, so there is no perceived need.

The Lithuanian Freedom Fighters' Union, the Coordinating Council of Non-Governmental Organizations Assisting in Strengthening the Defense Capabilities of Lithuania, the Board of the Lithuanian Sąjūdis, and the Partisan Museum of the Tauro District, without claiming a broader content and methodology for the implementation of necessary educational reforms, once again decided to awaken the entrenched bureaucrats of the MES and demand a fundamental change in the approach to youth education and the implementation of at least one measure towards patriotic education on September 21, 2015, through a rally.

The delegates of the rally presented a resolution to the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Education and Science, demanding the following:

**To give special attention to patriotic education in all history lessons in all grades, to introduce at least 18 mandatory lessons on patriotic education in the 10th grade, and to establish a mandatory resistance history exam in the second year of gymnasium classes based on a questionnaire submitted to the Ministry by one of the organizers of the rally, A. Lelešius.**

**To develop and introduce a military training discipline in gymnasiums and higher education institutions, in coordination with the Ministry of National Defense, and to revive the activities of scouts, young riflemen, and other public patriotic youth organizations.**



Since the restoration of independence, there has been a lack of serious and responsible patriotic education. Most students are unaware of the Soviet occupation, the dates of the restoration of independence, and many do not know about the armed resistance that took place during the post-war period. Teachers are confused by the variety of textbooks, programs, and methodological guidelines when a single textbook by Nijolė Gaškaitė, "Resistance History 1944-1955," would be sufficient.

Algimantas Lelešius, a former history teacher at Kazlų Rūda High School and current employee of the Partisan Museum in the Tauro District, has been fighting with the Ministry of Education for 15 years regarding patriotic education for young people in schools. A. Lelešius has professionally prepared teaching materials for history teachers, and it remains to introduce at least eighteen additional history lessons and a mandatory non-difficult exam. The Ministry acknowledges that "the topic of the history of freedom struggles requires exceptional attention," but only lists the number of films, books, albums, CDs, and posters on the topic that the Ministry purchased and handed over to the education departments. Unfortunately, it seems that the money was wasted because these resources remain unused, and no one controls their use. There is no exam, so there is no perceived need.

The participants of the rally demanded special attention to patriotic education in all history lessons in all grades, the introduction of at least 18 mandatory lessons on patriotic education in the 10th grade, and a mandatory exam on resistance history in the second year of gymnasium classes based on a questionnaire submitted to the Ministry by A. Lelešius, one of the organizers of the rally. The slogans on the participants' posters spoke for themselves: "Let's not forget the biblical concept of '30 pieces of silver' for our emigrated compatriots," "The State Institution - Ministry of Education - undermines the memory of those who fought and suffered for the country," "The occupiers fought against the partisans, and the Ministry of Education fights against their commemoration in the national consciousness of young people," "Partisans' spirits: 'We fell fighting, we don't even have graves, and they regret a few lessons about our struggle,'" "The result of the Ministry of Education's 'patriotic' education is the youth fleeing Lithuania like the plague, and some of the young people turning into plunderers," "More patriotism, less emigration," "Nijolė Gaškaitė: Partisan struggle is the most beautiful diamond of our history," "We demand a Resistance History exam in the 10th grade," "Indifference to patriotism benefits a foreign state," "Resistance history is an inexhaustible source of spirituality and patriotism," "Teachers of all subjects, be patriots like in pre-war times because Lithuania is in danger."

*The rally took place at the Ministry of Education on September 21, 2015.*

*The magazine "Varpas". October 2015*





The idea was conceived by A. Lelešius, and it was implemented by V. Aputis.

A poster from the Kazlų Rūda political prisoners and deportees' department was placed on the Sajūdis stand (which was near the square). Shortly after it was put up, the glass of the stand was shattered. The text and idea were created by A. Lelešius, and it was drawn by V. Aputis.

Uncle Beans on elections

One Mykolas ran away,  
Another is busy in Lithuania,  
He wants to become president  
With Striba, Chronius, Gluša.

In the 1992 elections, a cowardly collaborationist and alcoholic segment of the nation won seats in the parliament. The name of Lithuania was demeaned.



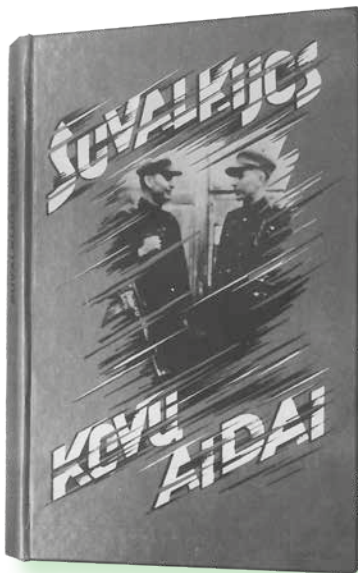
## Vladas Šemeta, a political prisoner



Vladas Šemeta, a political prisoner in Vorkuta (1955).

He wrote an impressive book called "Echoes of Suvalkija's Struggles" (1995), which he presented together with A. Lelešius to middle school students in Kazlų Rūda.

The cover of the book about Suvalkija's partisans. Written by Vladas Šemeta, a political prisoner in Vorkuta.

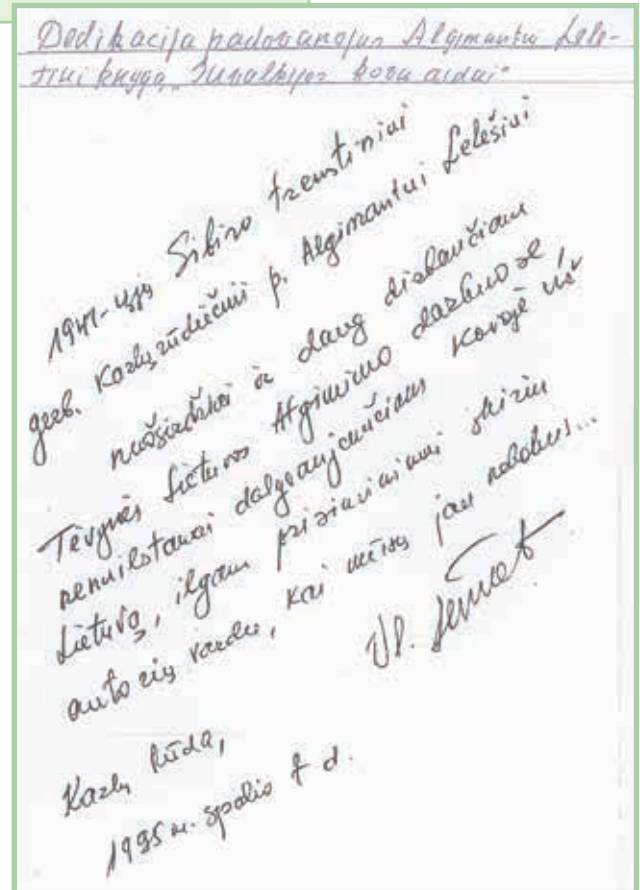


### Vytenis Grabauskas

(Lithuanian Elegy)

The horn of battle has fallen silent –  
And from now on,  
it will remain quiet...  
After the heated warmth,  
A storm will quickly linger.  
He lies there, the last one,  
On damp moss.  
From the brave battalion,  
Only a heap of ashes remains.  
The heavy blood flows  
From the major's wound.  
He is being nursed, the last one,

By the rain of April.  
He no longer cares:  
Who will mourn, where they will  
mourn...  
And with parched lips,  
He seeks solace in everything...  
Only in the fading mind  
Does the thought of hunger  
painfully strike?  
Was the fight in vain,  
And was death kissed in vain?  
Over the course of eight years,  
So much hardship,  
so much suffering,  
So many dreams shattered,  
So many hopes blown up...  
So many men, like lions,



Dedication: To Algimantas Lelešius, a respected Kazlų Rūda resident and a Siberian deportee of 1941, who works tirelessly for the restoration of our homeland Lithuania and actively participates in the fight for Lithuania, I dedicate this book "Echoes of Suvalkija's Struggles" in the name of the author, to be remembered long after we are no longer here...

Kazlų Rūda, October 7, 1995.

Caught in the pit  
Without orchestras, salutes,  
Without the honor of guards...  
Will they be praised with  
monuments  
Or will graves be their only  
reward,  
When in the homeland, it's not  
weapons,  
But larks that sing?  
The wolves howl again  
Stubbornly, annoyingly...  
The gray clouds gather again  
In the flock of pigeons...  
Where the major faded away,  
Inebriated by lead –  
The foam of blood blossoms

On the green moss.  
The sky, once again, has opened  
After a misty haze...  
Today, he, the last one,  
Will embark on a journey to friends.  
He tightly grasped the steel pipe –  
Soon his heart will no longer beat!  
The star of a cold morning  
Waved at him painfully.

Lyguma, 1962 m.

Note.  
This unparalleled elegy is from Vladas Šemeta's book "Echoes of Suvalkija's Struggles."  
Kazlų Rūda's political prisoners and deportees".



## Political prisoners and exiles in Kazlų Rūda



*Valerija Štreimikienė - Political prisoner in Vorkuta, active participant in the Sąjūdis movement*



*Valerija Juodvalkytė-Štreimikienė at the Vorkuta prison, second from the left. She led a women's construction brigade.*

### To Valerija Štreimikienė on her 80th birthday

*Dear Valerija,  
Noble soul from Aukštaitija,  
Embedded in the forests of Kazlų Rūda.  
Perhaps only scattered clouds  
Remind you of your homeland and the wind,  
Swaying the pine trunks,  
Like in Vajasiškis,  
Where childhood remains shouting...  
Afterward, youth behind barbed wire...  
But you endured everything  
Like a gentle breeze of winds,  
Guiding us through heat and rain.*

A. Lelešius



*Algimantas Lelešius  
Deportee of 1941, chairman  
of the Kazlų Rūda political  
prisoners and deportees section  
(1989-1998), marksman.*



*Julija Bučinskienė –  
Chairwoman of the  
Kazlų Rūda political  
prisoners and deportees  
section since 1998.*



*Juozas Mikalonis  
Representative of political  
prisoners and deportees  
actively serving in the Kazlų  
Rūda municipality later in the  
Marijampolė district  
(1990-1995).*



*Jeronimas Čibirka –  
Political prisoner in  
Norilsk, active participant  
in the Sąjūdis movement.*



*Wedding of  
Kazlų Rūda  
paratrooper  
Gediminas  
Štreimikis  
(code name  
Šarkis)  
and former  
political  
prisoner  
Valerija  
Juodvalkytė in  
Vorkuta.*



## Monument to the deportees



*Candle at the grave monument of Domicelė Lelešienė, a deportee from 1941.*

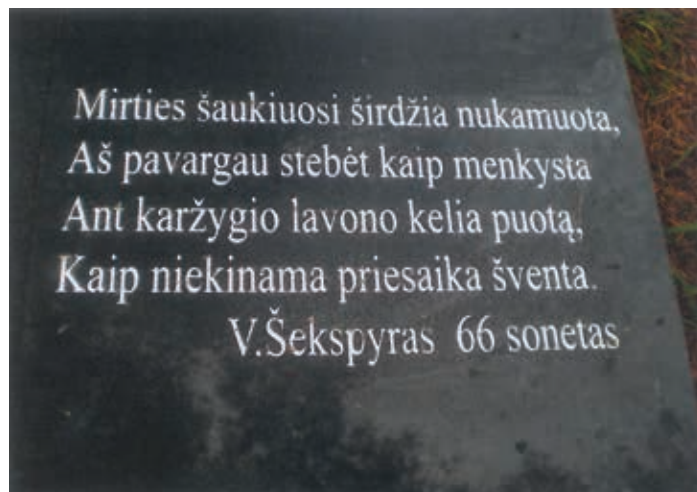
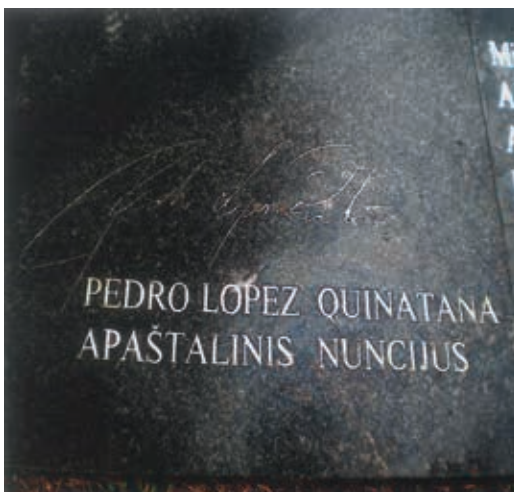
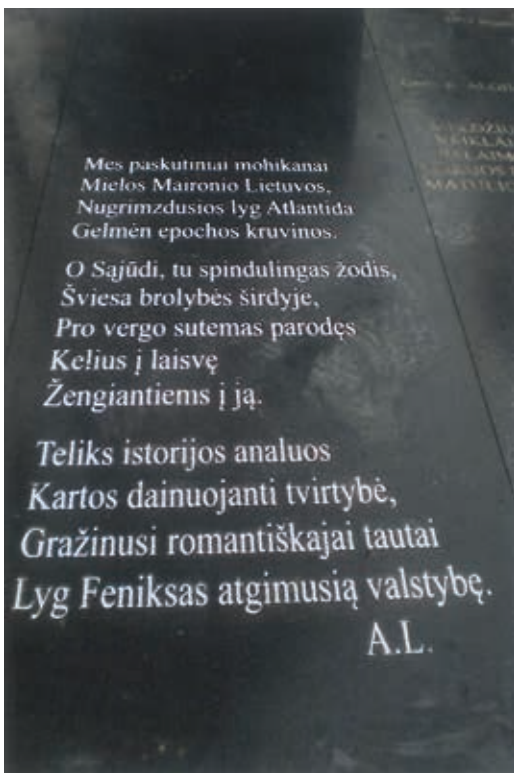
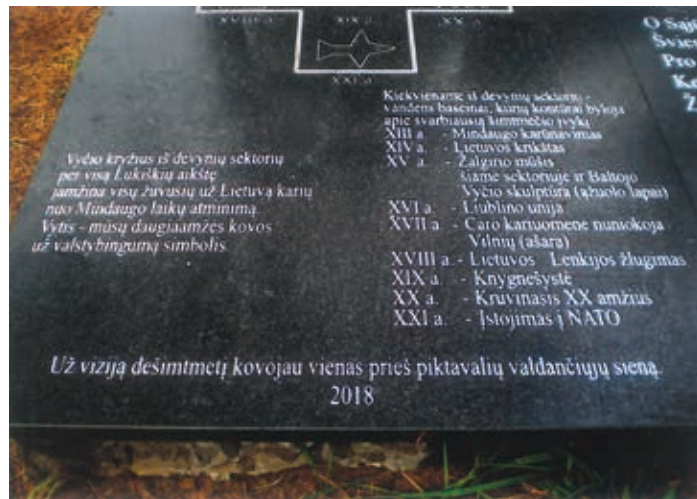


*Grave of Domicelė Lelešienė, a deportee from 1941, in the new cemetery of Kazlų Rūda. On the granite plaque of the grave, there is an image of her son, a deportee from 1941 and an honorary marksman, Algimantas Lelešius, a respected citizen of Kazlų Rūda - as if a future glimpse of oneself from the Beyond.*



*This architectural-literary composition of plaque content is likely the only one in Lithuania.*







# Rentos sukėlė piketų maratoną

Seimūnų užmojai pasirūpinti savo gerove sukėlė didelį žmonių pasipiktinimą - vakar prie Seimo rūmų prasidėję piketai dėl įstatymo pataisų, kuriomis numatomos rentos kadenciją baigusiems seimūnams, truks dar dvi dienas.

## Protestavo du piliečiai

“Mes nieko neatstovausime, jokiai organizacijai, jokiam judėjimui. Atstovausime patys sau, kaip Lietuvos piliečiai. Mes ir norime parodyti kitiems Lietuvos piliečiams, kad jeigu jie ir toliau tylės lyg žuvis, jų pačių išrinktieji užsiorės dar daugiau. Kaip gali Seimas pats sau pasiskirti rentą? Jeigu dabar jiems tai leisime, tai ateinantys užsipašys dar daugiau. Tegul surengia referendumą, atskliausia žmonių, ar turi tokią teisę”, - piktinosi vakar prie Seimo piketus prieš seimūnų rentas pradėjęs Kazlų Rūdos gyventojas Algimantas Lelešius.

Vakar kartu su kolega Vladu Macevičiumi vyras prie Seimo praleido kelias valandas. Laikydami rankose plakatą, kuriame pasisakoma prieš rentas ir reikalaujama referendumo šiuo klausimu, vyrai teigė, kad tik taip beįmanoma sustabdyti politikų savivalę.

## Kyla visuomenininkai ir Sąjūdis

Protestai dėl įstatymo pataisų, kuriomis numatomos rentos kadenciją baigusiems seimūnams, vakarykščiu piketu nesibaigė. Šiandien prie Seimo pareikšti pilietinė poziciją ketina visuomeninių organizacijų atstovai.

“Taip norime pareikšti savo pilietinę poziciją ir atkreipti žiniasklaidos dėmesį, - Eltai sakė profesinės sąjungos “Solidarumas” pirmininkė Aldona Jašinskienė. - Mūsų politikai pradėjo elgtis amoraliai. Negana to, kad jie panašesni į turistus nei į Seimo narius, dar įsigėidė užsitikrinti ir rentą. Gal ateityje sugalvos, kad ji yra paveldima?”

Pilaitės bendruomenės atstovas Vytautas Pelakauskas išreiškė viltį, kad piketas, kuriame tikimasi sulaukti iki šimto žmonių, padės sustabdyti įstatymo priėmimo svarstymą.

“Atsižvelgus į gyvenimo lygį Lietuvoje, sau kurti privilegijas yra neetiška”, - sakė jis.



“KAIP GALI SEIMAS pats sau pasiskirti rentą? Jeigu dabar jiems tai leisime, ateinantys užsipašys dar daugiau”, - šitikinę vakarykščio piketo dalyviai Algimantas Lelešius ir Vladas Macevičius

Dar vieną piketą prieš planuojamą įstatymą dėl rentų rytoj prie Seimo planuoja Lietuvos Sąjūdžio Vilniaus miesto taryba.

## Projektas juda

Seimas praėjusią savaitę po pateikimo pritarė Lietuvos Nepriklausomybės Akto signatarų statuso įstatymo pakeitimo ir papildymo įstatymo projektui ir nutarė pradėti jo svarstymo procedūrą. Praėjusį penktadienį projektui pritarė pagrindiniu paskirtas Biudžeto ir finansų komitetas. Jis pritarė konservatoriaus Sauliaus Pečeliūno pataisai, kad rentos būtų mokamos tik visų kadencijų dirbusiems parlamentarams.

“Respublikos”, Eltos inf.

## Reakcija



Viktoras MUNTIANAS  
Seimo pirmininkas, Pilietinės demokratijos partijos lyderis

Būtų gerai, kad įstatymo projektą mes priimtume ne šios kadencijos Seimui, o kitam Seimui, kaip paprastai turėtų būti sprendžiant socialinius klausimus.



Andrius KUBILIUS  
Seimo vicepirmininkas, Tėvynės sąjungos lyderis

Tokias socialines lengvatas reikėtų taikyti tik tiems Seimo nariams, kurie būtų išdirbę ne mažiau kaip dvi kadencijas. Reikėtų rūpintis profesionaliais politikais.

“How can the Seimas set their own rent? If we allow it now, those who come next will ask for even more,” - convinced participants of yesterday’s picket Algimantas Lelešius and Vladas Macevičius.

“Respublika,” July 3, 2007. Photo and accompanying text.



# Seimo besočiai užsitikrino ateitį



PATRIOTINĖS DAINOS IR RAGINIMAI išvalkyti Seimą, kurlų negailėjo protestuotojai, parlamentarų neįtikino nesityžioti iš savo rinkėjų

*PATRIOTIC SONGS AND URGINGS to drive out the Seimas, which the protesters did not hesitate to express, did not convince the parliamentarians not to mock their constituents.*

“Respublika,” July 4, 2007. Photo and accompanying text.

## **About the parliamentarian’s blue dream - rent**

*Let’s understand the parliamentarian as well,  
And he is just a human being too,  
The resounding word RENT echoes  
In his mind, so astonishing.*

*That magical word RENT,  
Like stars falling into the palms,  
It takes hold of thoughts and emotions,  
It makes the heart beat  
Faster and more alert than ours.*

*Day and night, the Vaidenas  
That word, like a graceful fairy.  
How afraid he is to lose it,  
That would be a miserable fate...*

*Let’s understand the parliamentarian too.  
And he is just a human being too.  
Without RENT - the blue dream -  
He will fade and wither away...*

Algimantas Lelešius

## Protest against the closure of Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant

### The goal of the picket is to awaken civic activism

We, deportees, due to our exceptional spiritual experience, are more sensitive to certain social issues. We react more sharply to manifestations of truth and lies, justice and villainy because we have seen both warmth and coldness in life, enough for several lifetimes in a more or less normal environment.

The most painful, I would say, circumstance that humiliates society is the absence of an active civil society compared to the West.

A strong civil society forces the government to respect it, to respond sensitively to the demands of citizens. Therefore, in the West, society manages to successfully solve many pressing problems.

It is completely different with us. Due to the incredible passivity of the public, the government can do whatever it wants, abuse in every possible way. All that remains for citizens is to be angry, unwilling to understand that the public itself, especially the intelligentsia, is largely to blame for the abuses of power because it allows the government to abuse its passivity.

Due to the absence of an active civil society, we can only blame ourselves. It is a rare case when blaming the government for this would be illogical because what government would want to have an ardent controller and critic of its actions?

Being of an active civic nature (I have organized 7 pickets since the Restoration of Independence), encouraged by success, I decided to try again - on



*Marijampolės Marijampolės Kraštotyros muziejaus Tauro apygardos partizanų ir tremties filialo darbuotojo Algimanto Lelešiaus piketas prie Seimo rūmų.*

*2007 m. rugšėjo 17 d. dėl Ignalinos atominės elektrinės antrojo bloko darbo pratęsimo po 2009 m.*



September 17, 2007, participate in a picket against the future closure of the second block of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant in 2009, which is energetically devastating for us. Each time, I tried to find comrades-in-arms willing to participate in the protest picket together, but unfortunately, without success. Then I decided to participate alone (it is always psychologically easier for a few people).

Although my poster was of good artistic and intellectual level (it was created by Vladas Macevičius based on my text, thanks to him), the media responded with a boycott this time (an exception -

Dalia Byčienė's brief advance notice on September 15, 2007, in „Respublika“ (for which I am very grateful), although TV3, LNK, and newspapers knew about the upcoming picket as well. I understood why. The content of the poster was too sharp, relevant, logically motivated, and I would have expressed similar thoughts in words (both blocks of the power plant were in operation, we were an energy giant, but when we close the second block in 2009, we will become an energy dwarf, we will beg other countries to sell electricity, we will pay billions for imported electricity, closed power plant blocks).

Algimantas LELEŠIUS  
“KRONIKA” September 28, 2007, No. 39



January 16, 2009

*Protest rally at the Seimas building. Algimantas Lelešius' poster - protest against the closure of the second block of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant. After the closure of the power plant, the price of electricity doubled. We have become highly dependent on Russia for energy.*



*Algimantas Lelešius protesto mitinge Vilniuje Kudirkos aikštėje. 2009 m. birželio 13 d.*

## Posters written by A. Lelešius:

Captions on the posters at the rally:

Let's wish emigrating compatriots not to forget the biblical concept of "30 pieces of silver";

State institution - Ministry of Education, Science, and Sport - undermines the memory of those who fought and suffered for the state;

The occupiers fought against the partisans, and the Ministry of Education, Science, and Sport fights against their commemoration in the national consciousness of the youth;

Shadows of the partisans: "We fell fighting, we don't even have a grave, and they regret a few lessons about our struggles";

The result of the Ministry of Education, Science, and Sport's "patriotic" education - the youth fleeing from Lithuania as if from the plague, some of them turning to looting. More patriotism, less emigration;

Nijolė Gaškaitė: "The partisan struggle is the most beautiful diamond of our history";

We demand a Resistance History exam in the 10th grade;

Indifference to patriotism is beneficial to a foreign state;

Resistance history - an inexhaustible source of spirituality and patriotism;

All teachers, be patriots like in the pre-war period, because Lithuania is in danger.





RECEPTION DEPARTMENT OF THE COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT OF THE  
OFFICE OF THE SEIMS OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
LITHUANIA

Register of legal entities Code 1886 05295 Gedimino ave. 53, LT-01109 Vilnius Tel. (8~5) 239 6060 Fax  
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A. Leleši  
Vytauta st. 18  
69443 Kazlų Rūda

2008-03-15 Nr. S-2008-1588  
To the letter received on 03/12/2008

FOR YOUR APPLICATION

in 2008 February 27 Draft Law on the Obligations to negotiate on the extension of the operation of the second unit of the Ignalina nuclear power plant was registered in the Secretariat of the Seimas Sessions No.

XP-2863.

Therefore, we forwarded your and other residents' appeal (with signatures) addressed to the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania regarding the extension of the operation of the Ignalina nuclear power plant to the Secretariat of Seimas meetings (tel. 239 6049; 239 6046), where all submitted draft laws and proposals are registered. The Secretariat of the Seimas sessions forwards these proposals to the relevant Seimas committees for consideration.

Head of the reception department

Birutė Baltrušaitytė



RECEPTION DEPARTMENT OF THE COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT OF THE OFFICE  
OF THE SEIMS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

Register of legal entities Code 1886 05295 Gedimino ave. 53, LT-01109 Vilnius Tel. (8-5) 239 6060  
Fax (8-5) 239 6289 E-mail [prim@lrs.lt](mailto:prim@lrs.lt)

Algimantas Lelešius  
Vytauta st. 18  
69443 Kazlų Rūda

2008-05-26 Nr. S-2008-5113  
To the letter received on 05/22/2008

FOR YOUR APPLICATION

We would like to inform you that we have forwarded your and other residents' appeal to the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania regarding the extension of the operation of the Ignalina nuclear power plant to the Secretariat of Seimas meetings (tel.: 239 6049; 239 6046), where all submitted draft laws and proposals are registered. The Secretariat of the Seimas sessions forwards these proposals to the relevant Seimas committees for consideration.

Head of the reception department

Birutė Baltrušaitytė



# Pre-war Kazlų Rūda

*Kazlų Rūda's riflemen's house. Now it is a library.*



*Students of the pre-war Kazlų Rūda primary school.*



*Kazlų Rūda resident Sigitas Štreimikis, a paratrooper who graduated from the Naikopfe Intelligence School in 1944, codename "Žukauskas." He died in the Kolyma labor camp in 1947(9). And his brother Gediminas, also a paratrooper, had the codename Šarkis. Gediminas was imprisoned in Vorkuta under the name of Šarkis Žukauskas, inspired by the name and surname of the Lithuanian-American world boxing champion Šarkis Žukauskas. He was buried in Kazlų Rūda.*



*June 9, 1935  
Sports event at the Kazlų Rūda primary school. Teachers Prapuolenienė and Statkevičienė.*





*Students of Kazlų Rūda (pre-war Lithuania)*

*Pre-war Kazlų Rūda residents, students of Kaunas Saulė Gymnasium. Kazlų Rūda had only a progymnasium.*



*Pre-war Kazlų Rūda female students.*





1939 Veiveriai.  
Young Kazlų Rūda  
basketball players.



Šauliai (Lithuanian Riflemen's Union)  
event in Kazlų Rūda.



Kazlų Rūda choir,  
1928.



\*\*\*

*Dear pre-war Lithuania of beloved Maironis,  
Sunk into the depths like Atlantis,  
Into the abyss of a bloody epoch.  
Lithuanian Riflemen, soldiers, fast riders.*



*Pre-war Lithuanian soldiers.*



*Pre-war Riflemen's unit. Marijampolė Regiment.*





*Pre-war Lithuanian Army cavalry.*



*Pre-war Lithuanian Army cavalry.*





*Riflemen in Paluobiai (near Kazlų Rūda), now in Šakiai district, in 1933. On September 8, the day of Vytautas' (planned but unrealized) coronation.*

## June 14 - Day of Mourning and Hope

Photos - from exile.

The most terrifying moment of exile is when unexpected and unannounced deporters give an hour or a little more to prepare for deportation, pack belongings into bags. Women, overwhelmed by stress, have a hard time orienting themselves in the situation. A familiar deportee once told me that she was struck as if by a bolt, crying and not knowing what to do. Russian soldiers threw some things into bags and took her, pregnant with a 2-year-old child, into a train car.

In a similar situation was my mother Domicelė Kališiūtė-Lelešienė with me, a year and a half old child. Still, intuitively, she took something that no one takes in such a stressful situation - a heavy album with photographs. If not for those beautiful, high-quality stock paper photos, I wouldn't even know what my father Pijus Lelešius looked like, the chief of the Sasnava (Marijampolė district) police station, immediately separated from us and died in the abyss of death at the Reshoty camp (Krasnoyarsk Krai) in 1942.



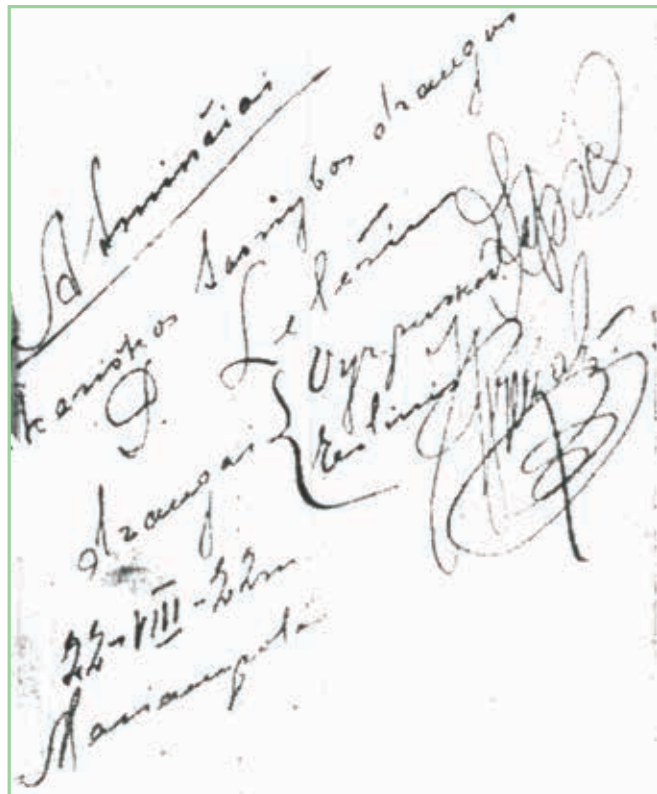
*In 1922, Sergeant Pijus Lelešius served in the Lithuanian Army in Marijampolė.*



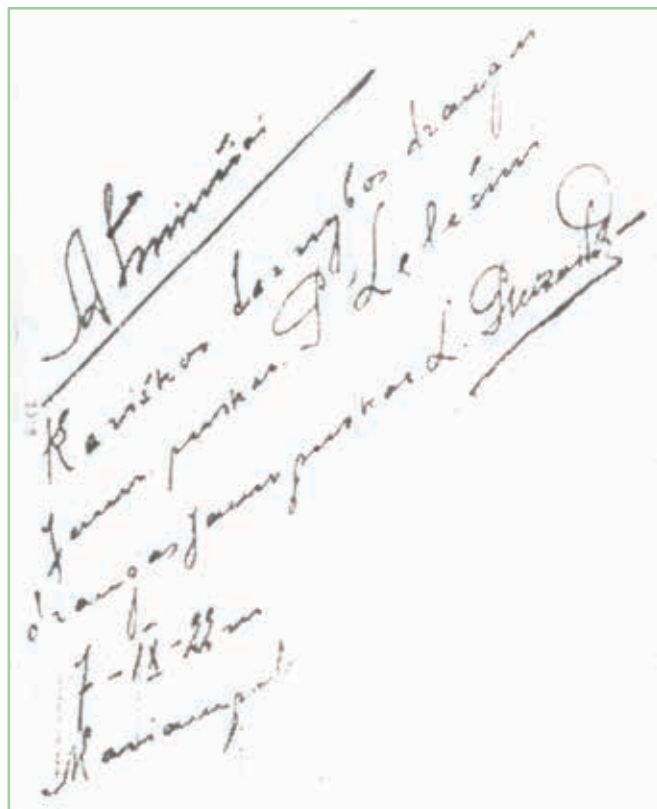


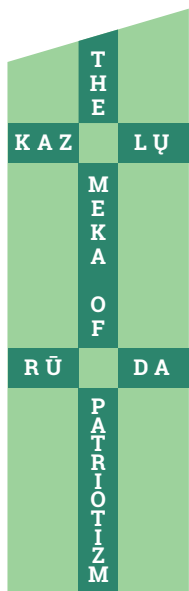
Many times in exile, my mother and I looked at the photos, she commented on them to me. I learned a lot about the happy life of pre-war Lithuania. It was brief but strong breaths of relief in the gloomy forge of exile. Those photos, in their own way, gave hope and strength.

After 16 years of exile in Altai (from 1941 to 1957, narrowly avoiding the Laptev Sea), we returned. Along with us, the photos of our good pacifiers, inspirers, and nurturers of hope also returned. Some of them are already a hundred years old.



Algimantas Lelešius  
Deportee of 1941  
2022-06-07





# “Partisan Warfare - the most beautiful diamond in our history”

(Nijolė Gaškaitė)

## BRIEF HISTORY OVERVIEW OF TAURAS PARTISAN DISTRICT

(August 15 -57th anniversary of  
the establishment of the Tauro  
Partisan Region)

In the summer of 1944, the second Soviet occupation began. Lithuania was inundated with a wave of Bolshevik terror. Killings, looting, and the burning of estates became a daily occurrence. The youth, contrary to international conventions, were forced to join the occupying army to become cheap “cannon fodder,” unprepared to die on the front lines. The Lithuanian youth, resisting similar Nazi intentions, steadfastly avoided mobilization and joining the Soviet army. The occupiers responded with punitive actions. Rural youths, sometimes even those who had documents exempting them from the army, were shot on the spot.

The youth had no choice but to go into hiding and join armed groups. Thus, armed resistance against the occupation spontaneously began throughout Lithuania. Initially, it was sporadic and unorganized, with occasional cases of unmotivated revenge.

In Suvalkija, the first partisan groups were led by Vytautas Gavėnas, Sergejus Staniškis, Bronius Abromavičius, and others.

Remaining patriotic intellectuals, soldiers, and civilians understood the necessity of organized resistance. The structures of the first organized resistance began to form. The first one was formed as the Great Warfare Region, and the second one (on August 15, 1945, in Suvalkija) was the Tauro Partisan Region. The initiator of its establishment was Father Anta-

nas Ylius of Skardupiai. One leader after another fell: K. Taunys-Kovas, Z. Drunga-Mykolas-Jonas, A. Baltūsis-Žvejys, A. Grybinas-Faustas, J. Aleščikas-Rimantas, V. Vitkauskas-Karijotas.

Due to the historical circumstances, Suvalkija has always been charac-

terized by a high intellectual potential and has set an example of practical and rational activities for others. It is not coincidental that the best museum dedicated to the Tauro Partisan Region and exile is located in Marijampolė.

The Tauro Partisan Region, a territorial combat unit of Suvalkija, stood out with the high intellectual level of its leaders, their proactive strategic thinking, until the death of the famous leader A. Baltūsis-Žvejys on February 2, 1948. It was distinguished by its unique geographic and strategic position.

Twice, the representative of the Tauro Partisan Region, the legendary partisan J. Lukša-Daumantas (sent by A. Baltūsis-Žvejys), managed to break through the Bolshevik “iron curtain” to the West.

J. Lukša and his comrades managed to expose the most treacherous enemy, J. Markulis-Erelis, who had infiltrated the highest leadership of the partisans. After Markulis’ exposure, A. Baltūsis-Žvejys reestablished the BDPS (General Democratic Resistance Movement) and VGPS (Supreme Headquarters of Armed Forces), of which he became the commander. The BDPS and VGPS were to lead the partisan struggle



throughout the country. Until his death on February 2, 1948, A. Baltūsis-Žvejys was the most prominent figure in the Lithuanian partisan war (considering the entire period of the partisan war, he ranked third after Jonas Žemaitis-Vanagas). A. Baltūsis-Žvejys achieved a great deal, particularly in leading the Tauro Region. He declared that the organization of freedom fighters was a military one, and therefore, it required military discipline. Fighters had to wear the uniform of the Lithuanian Army and abide by the requirements of the military statute (the Tauro Region was the only one with its own statute).

For conscious violations of discipline and looting, partisans faced field courts-martial (several were executed). In August and September 1947, partisan training courses were organized in the forests of Kazlų Rūda (around 100 semi-partisans were trained). By the order of A. Baltūsis-Žvejys on November 15, 1947, the most unique operation in Lithuania took place (led by the commander of the Žalgiris Battalion, V. Štrimas-Šturmas) to destroy the armed resistance point of Russian settlers in the village of Opšrūtai (Pilviškiai volost, Vilkaviškis district). This operation prevented the occupiers' plans to colonize the Lithuanian countryside.

Almost every day in the territory of the Tauro Region, armed clashes with the occupiers took place in one place or another. Partisans attacked enemy resistance points and conducted sabotage operations. The towns of Pajevonis, Gižai, Žalioji, Antupis, Kačerginė, Keturvalakiai, Jiezno, Šilavotas, and the estates of Buktos and Pagermaniai, as well as the Antanava distillery, were attacked.

At the end of 1944, a large partisan unit (over a hundred fighters) was formed in the current territory of Prienai district, calling themselves the Iron Wolf Brigade. They successfully employed guerrilla tactics, appearing unexpectedly in different locations. Supported by the local population and having good and reliable intelligence, the unit successfully used large-scale sabotage tactics. The Iron Wolf soldiers engaged in successful battles with the occupation army in Daukšiagirė (January 1945), near Antrieji Girininkai close to Veiveriai (January 1945), Alšininkai (February 1945, unsuccessful combat), Žemaitkiemis (February 1945), Gerčiai (February 1945), Margininkai (March 1945), Būdninkai (March 1945), Kalniškės (May 1945), and Paliai (August 1945). Losses on both sides amounted to tens and sometimes hundreds of

fighters (the occupiers, as the attacking side, suffered losses four to five times greater).

Other partisan groups were active in various regions as well. On May 12, 1945, a major battle took place near Lekėčiai (Šakiai district) in the Sutkai Forest, specifically in Valkai. A partisan unit led by Captain Jurgis Valčius-Vilkas of the Lithuanian Army fought against a border guard unit, resulting in the death of 20 partisans and three times as many enemies.

On June 4, 1946, officers of the Tauro Region headquarters organized an ambush near Grybinė (near Šunskai). A group of 22 soldiers and informers was destroyed. In the Buktos ambush on March 19, 1947, 20 informers and soldiers were killed. In the Raišupis Battle on July 30, 1947, six partisans and dozens of Russian soldiers died. In the Battle of Žiūriai-Gudeliai on June 22-23, 1950, five partisans and several Russian soldiers were killed.

The occupiers did not feel secure in the city of Marijampolė either. Harsh interrogators A. Greisas and Naujokas faced retribution, and Communist Party Officials J. Karašauskas and Labanauskas were shot. I. Laukaitytė, a deputy of the Supreme Council of the Lithuanian SSR, suffered the same fate. On February 18-19, 1947, partisans Anelė Senkutė-Pušelė and Kazimieras Pyplys-Mažytis carried out a bold punitive operation (known as the "Užgavėnės Carnival") against high-ranking collaborators of the occupiers in the city of Marijampolė. In an attempt to disrupt the departure of a train carrying deportees from Marijampolė, the tracks were sabotaged in the suburbs (1948).

An underground organization called the "Vytenis" group was formed at the Rygiškiai Jonas Gymnasium. They engaged in intelligence work, provided information to the partisans, distributed partisan publications and calls to action, armed themselves, and prepared to join the partisan ranks. Unfortunately, the members were captured, and many of them ended up in Soviet gulags for many years, with four of them being executed in Tuskulėnai.

Patriotically inclined youth also employed passive forms of resistance, such as attending church en masse. Girls would deliberately come to religious services wearing national attire, and so on.

Algimantas Lelešius,  
"Suvalkietis," August 13, 2002.

## PARTISANS OF THE TAURAS DISTRICT AND OTHER DISTRICTS

### PARTISANS OF THE TAURAS DISTRICT



Tauras Region  
Commander **Antanas  
Baltūsis-Žvejys**

Antanas Baltūsis was born in 1915 in Gulbiniškiai village, Pilviškiai parish, Vilkaviškis district, into a farmer's family. Having not completed the course at the Vilkaviškis Seminary, A. Baltūsis chose to work as a teacher. In 1936, he was called up for compulsory military service and graduated from the Kaunas Military School. In 1940, when the Soviet army occupied Lithuania, Lieutenant Antanas Baltūsis was released into reserve and returned to his homeland. During the German occupation and the restoration of local self-government, the multilingual officer, fluent in German and English, was appointed as the Chief of Police in Pilviškiai. When the Soviets returned in 1944, he went into hiding for a while and was forced to join the ranks of the partisans. On August 15, 1945, when the Tauras Partisan Region Headquarters was established, Lieutenant A. Baltūsis-Žvejys worked in the field of press and propaganda, and in the autumn, after the capture of V. Radzevičius-Vaidila, he was appointed as the Chief Editor of "Laisvės Žvalgas" (Freedom Scout). When the regional leader Mykolas-Jonas left for Žemaitija, Žvejys was appointed as the Chief of the Regional Headquarters.

Intelligent, determined, and extremely dutiful, Lieutenant A. Baltūsis-Žvejys, convinced by the compelling and logical arguments of Vampyras and Krivaitis, agreed to lead the region and issued the first orders.



**Vincas Štrimas-  
Šturmas** –

Commander of the Žalgiris Detachment of the Tauras Region. He led a crucial operation in the Lithuanian partisan war on November 16, 1947, to eliminate a resistance point of armed Russian settlers in Opšrūtai (Vilkaviškis district). This partisan

attack prevented the occupiers' intentions to colonize the Lithuanian countryside. The percentage of Russian speakers in Lithuania is 6-7%, in Latvia - 50%, and in Estonia - 30%.



**Jonas Staniulis-  
Šarūnas,**

born in 1916 in Juodbariškės village (Kazlų Rūda parish), was the commander of the "Žilvičio" platoon (51st unit) of the Žalgiris Detachment in the Tauras Region. He died on July 24, 1946, near Rūdūpis village

(Kazlų Rūda parish). His remains and the remains of his six comrades were reburied on November 23, 1991, in the new cemetery of Kazlų Rūda. Instead of temporary wooden crosses, on July 27, 1997, a monument made of field stones was erected in their memory (built by J. Nevulis and A. Lelešius). It was consecrated by Father Ignas Plioraitis.





Former political prisoner  
Commander of the 51st platoon, 1st company of  
the Žalgiris Detachment in the Tauras Region  
**Pranas Starkevičius-Dėdžiukas.**

A volunteer and creator, he participated in battles against the Bolsheviks and Bermontians in 1919. He died in 1979 and was buried in the new cemetery in Kazlų Rūda.

On the occasion of the centenary of the legendary Sūduva partisan  
**Jonas Lapatas-Giedris**

### ***The Tale of the Brave Partisan Giedrius***

In the free land of Lithuania, he grew up in the green village of Padovinis, in the Sūduva region. In a harmonious and happy family, he was raised alongside his six sisters: Marytė, Albinutė, Onutė, Petrutė, Kastulė, and Stasiukė.

The ruthless enemies, the Bolsheviks, invaded the peaceful and happy land. Thus began the forced deportations and massacres of peaceful Lithuanians.

One of the sisters, Marytė, along with her child, ended up in brutal exile in Siberia. Her husband, a teacher, was considered an enemy by the Bolsheviks.

As soon as the armed struggle of the nation against the occupiers began, Jonas Lapata joined the Tauras Region unit of the Iron Wolf partisans. His code name was Giedrius, while the enemies nicknamed him Eglė.

In the fifth year of the fight, in 1948, the beloved date of February 16th was approaching—a date cherished by every Lithuanian.

Jonas Lapata's comrades, the brave warriors of Freedom, decided to commemorate February 16th by raising the tricolor flag. Jonas volunteered to raise it above a tall chimney (of the sugar factory). He bid farewell to his fellow fighters and disappeared into the night.

The chimney was so high; it was frightening to look at. The iron climbing hooks were slippery and seemed to burn with cold. His hands grew tired from tension, his legs trembled, and the top of the chimney seemed hopelessly far away.

But the flag—a sacred tricolor—gave him miraculous strength near his heart. He reached the top and raised it above the chimney's height. The tricolor fluttered in the wind, and he felt as if it brought him blessings, joyfully listening to the sound of its fluttering.

The flag fluttered, bearing witness to the relentless pursuit of freedom and the approaching freedom of the nation through a sea of blood.

Unfortunately, there are no victories without bloody sacrifices. The brave Giedrius was noticed and injured by the enemies. They pursued him in the bloody snow, but the partisan refused to surrender, shining his grenade.

Birch and pine trees in Padovinis tell a beautiful tale of the brave partisan Giedrius, and the free nation cherishes his heroic deeds.



*Jonas Lapata sesers vestuvėse*

Exiled in 1941, Algimantas Lelešius  
2022-07-04



## The first commander of the restored Kazlų Rūda Riflemen Battalion Vytautas Lapienis

1922-1991

If I had to describe Vytautas' life in one word, I would say "self-sacrifice." Quietly, outwardly unnoticed, he sacrificed himself for Lithuania, the Rebirth, and his battalion of riflemen. His fate seemed to echo the bitter fate of our nation. Vytautas was born in 1922 in Galvydžiai village, Svėdasai district, Rokiškis county. It was a region of stunning natural beauty. The picturesque valley of Šventoji River, green hills painted in

the distance, nurtured his sensitive and patriotic soul. Vytautas' parents were hardworking and honest Lithuanian farmers. Among four brothers and two sisters, Vytautas was the youngest. At the age of 16, he joined the Svėdasai Riflemen Battalion of the Lithuanian Riflemen Union. It was as if he sensed that his homeland and its people would face great trials and that he would soon have to defend the Fatherland against a fearsome enemy. In 1944, shortly after the start of the second Soviet occupation, Vytautas became one of the first freedom fighters in his area, a partisan with the nickname Uosis. He belonged to the Algimantas Region Starkus Battalion for five years. In the uneven struggle against the Soviet occupiers, he lost many of his comrades, including his brother Antanas, who fought in Vytautas' region under the nickname Pempė and was shot around 1951. Vytautas took part in numerous risky operations, inflicting painful blows on the occupiers. Once, they destroyed an entire truck carrying guards who were carrying out a deportation operation. It was such a blow to the local authorities that they secretly buried the bodies of the executioners. Another time, a frontline German mine planted by the partisans



### CERTIFICATE

OF THE JANUARY 13TH COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL

For courage and sacrifice for the Republic of Lithuania

*Vytautas Lapienis*

Is awarded

WITH THE JANUARY 13TH COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL

This medal is awarded to honour Lithuanian and foreign citizens who distinguished themselves in defending the freedom and independence of Lithuania in 1991. in January-September.

*L. Sabutis* L. Sabutis



Vilnius, 1992 January 9

No. 1-2193



destroyed dozens of occupiers and guards who had gathered to celebrate May 1, 1949. In December, the partisan leadership presented Vytautas Lapienis with the Order of the Vytis Cross, but unfortunately, he was unable to receive the award as he was already imprisoned in January 1950 after being betrayed (sleep-inducing substances were added to his food). That winter, Vytautas' fingers froze, so the NKVD agents took pleasure in sadistically torturing him, pricking his fingers that had already started to gangrene. The Soviet court sentenced Vytautas to the harshest punishment - 25 years of imprisonment. And so began his Golgotha of 15 years in Soviet prisons and labor camps. He spent 14 years in the Vladimir and Mordovia prisons. He spent a year and a half in labor camps. His mother, Veronika Lapienienė, died in exile in Siberia. With the start of the Rebirth, his soul, like ours, soared on the wings of hope. Vytautas became an active participant and organizer of all events. He took part in rallies, joined the Baltic Way, and collected signatures for the campaign "No to the Soviet Constitution." Vytautas collected 3,000 signatures while traveling through villages and on trains in Kaunas. The day before his death, he was still col-

lecting signatures for the President of Lithuania.

In 1990, Vytautas was elected as the commander of the Kazlų Rūda Riflemen Battalion of the Marijampolė Regiment. He held great authority among the riflemen. Under his leadership, the battalion actively participated in the defense of the parliament in January 1991 and during the events of the August 1991 coup from August 19 to 22.

Vytautas was awarded the January 13 Commemorative Medal, the Badge of the Defender of the Parliament - January 13, and the badges of the Lithuanian Political Prisoners and Deportees Resistance Participant.

Vytautas Lapienis was buried in Kazlų Rūda, next to the graves of Lithuanian partisans, which he discovered together with his comrades on October 16, 1991.

Vytautas, your life was profoundly meaningful and serves as an example to all of us. Your memory will remain in our hearts for a long time. Together with your wife, daughter Loreta, and loved ones, we, the Kazlų Rūda Riflemen, mourn your loss.

Bronislavas Lelešius,  
"Trimitas" (Trumpet) 1992

## UNKNOWN PARTISANS OF THE TAURAS DISTRICT





*Unfortunately, your name is unknown to us,  
But the image in the photographs is more important.  
You proved with courageous  
struggle towards eternity,  
That freedom is more precious than life.*

*In the ranks of partisans, such young faces,  
A bursting bravery of youth.  
You sacrificed it to the altar of freedom  
for the nation,  
Destined not to witness the maturity of life.*

*You fought for a decade  
Against the Galitsian from the East.  
The duration of the battle  
Has no parallels  
In all of Europe.*

*Now the Sword of Damocles  
Has pierced  
Into the body of Ukraine,  
Bloody.  
Above us, it still hangs.  
And if it falls,  
Will we have the determination and courage  
To fight like the partisans of Lithuania?*

*Algimantas Lelešius,  
Kazlų Rūda, June 26, 2002*



*Antanas Karpauskas-Kurtas, Leader of the Righteous Fatherland of Geležinis  
Vilkas Regiment, b. 1926, died in 1951.*



*Kurto Būrys, on the left K. Popiera-Gegužis, Klajūnas, on the right  
K. Kurtinys-Ažuolas, Partisans of Tauro Apygarda, Geležinis Vilkas,  
Antanas Karpauskas-Kurtas' Battalion, Kazimieras Popera-Gegužis,  
Klajūnas (on the left) and Kazimieras Kurtinys-Ažuolas.*





*Unknown Partisans  
of Tauro Apygarda.*







*Unknown Partisans  
of Tauro Apygarda.*







*This photograph was in the hands of the occupiers' security personnel. They were numbering the partisans' photographs.*



*Unknown Partisans of Tauro Apygarda.*







*Unknown Partisans  
of Tauro Apygarda.*



*Possibly, this is  
Krasnodemskis Nikodemas-  
Voveris, who died near  
Serbentai Farm in Kazliškiai  
(Kazlų Rūda) in 1948 (?).*





*Unknown Partisans  
of Tauro Apygarda.*



*Leisure time of the partisans,  
demonstrating their combat  
actions. It is speculated that  
one of the grappling partisans  
is Popiera (one of the five  
brothers who were partisans).*



## PARTISANS FROM OTHER DISTRICTS



*Partisans of Aukštaitija*

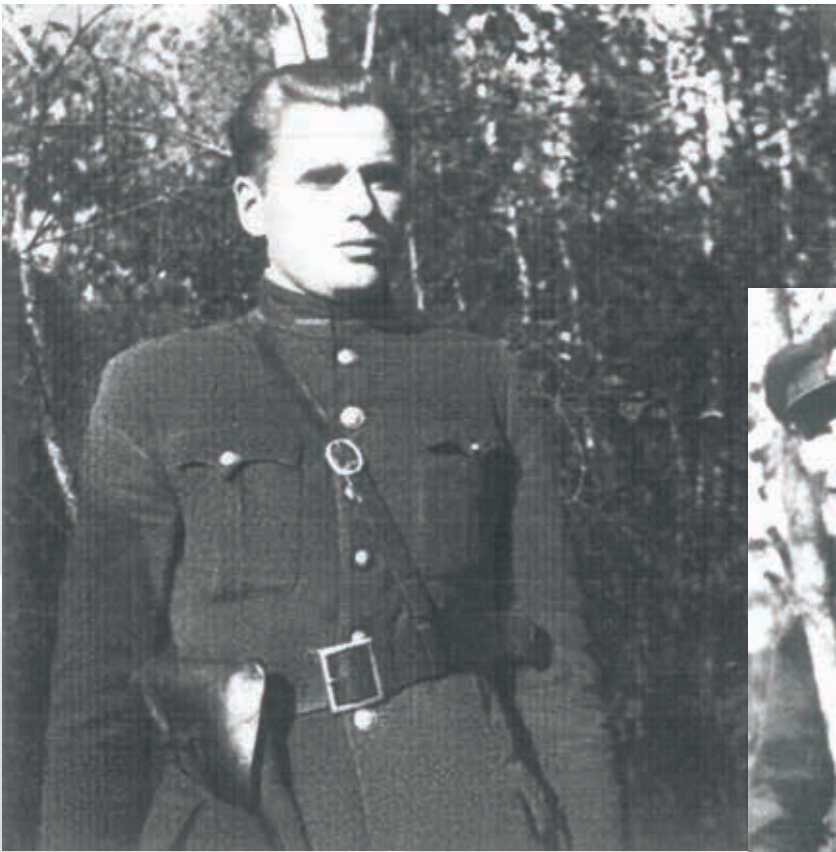


*Jonas Vepštas-Paukštelis, leader of the  
Vyčio Apygarda Battalion*



*Fighters of the Vyčio Apygarda "Paukštelis" Battalion*





*Fighter Starulis-Plienias of the Vyčio Apygarda "Paukštelis" Battalion*



*Brother and sister partisans - Albertas and Alina Norkai, originating from Balakiai, fought in the "Vytenis" - Ivanauskas battalion. Photo from 1946. Žemaitija.*



*Eastern Lithuania. Unknown partisans.*



## Unveiling of the Vytautas monument in Vytautas Park, Marijampolė

### Is the Municipality of Marijampolė planning to create a panorama of the Battle of Žalgiris?

There are possibly dozens of such panoramas in various countries. For us, Lithuanians, the panoramas of “Borodino” in Moscow and “Sevastopol Defense” in Sevastopol (during the Crimean War of 1853-1854) are better known.

A panorama is a depiction of the course of an important battle on a canvas of 2,000 square meters. Viewers observe it from an observation deck, which is located as if in the center of the battle. Surrounding them are the attacking, retreating, and fighting units of both armies, their leaders, military fortifications, firing cannons, explosions of shells, and the fallen and deceased soldiers, and so on.

There is a three-dimensional plan, which is the area between the painting and the viewer. It contains a natural, authentic piece of the battlefield with craters caused by explosions and unexploded shells. The transition from the three-dimensional plan to the painting can be interesting and creative. For example, a real carriage can be used, but the horses pulling it can be painted. A guide, using a special spotlight, can move along the painting and explain the course of the battle, describe the leaders, their decisions, and praise the achievements of our soldiers. Panoramas attract a constant flow of visitors on excursions. The revenues of their administrations are impressive.

Panoramas are an effective tool for emotionally engaging the viewer in the country’s history and cultivating patriotism. This is especially important for us now as the aggression of our larger neighbor intensifies.

Marijampolė has a favorable and very rare opportunity to create a panorama of the Battle of Žalgiris. Next to the wonderfully arranged Vytautas Park with an impressive monument to Vytautas (sculpted by Julius Narušis), there is a building marked with number 26 on Vytauto Street, which used to be the headquarters of the occupiers’ security during the post-war period. For several years, the building was owned by a bank, but now it has

a different owner. He is trying to lease the building, but unfortunately, there are no interested parties. So,

for several years, the building has been standing like a ghost with mournful windows. But it could become a source of pride for Marijampolė and earn it fame. Its location, next to Vytautas Park with the monument to Vytautas, its size, and height would be suitable for creating the panorama of the Battle of Žalgiris. It would be the only one in the Baltic countries. It would be visited by excursions from Poland, Belarus, Latvia, Estonia, and, of course, mostly by our compatriots. The business situation of the services catering to visitors would improve to some extent. More cafes would be needed to feed the tourists, souvenir shops, perhaps paid parking lots for buses, and so on. Banks would willingly provide loans for such a promising project, and perhaps funds from the EU could be used for such completed projects. The people of Marijampolė would justify the name of a smart and proactive city. We hope that the idea will be supported by the Vytautai Club, which initiated the construction of the monument to Vytautas.

Algimantas Lelešius,  
“Suvalkietis,” August 8, 2015.



*The pride of the people of Marijampolė - the monument to Vytautas the Great (sculptor Julius Narušis). The monument was unveiled in Vytautas Park in Marijampolė. May 22, 2010. Photo by A. Lelešius.*





*Unveiling of the monument to Vytautas in Vytautas Park in Marijampolė on May 22, 2010. Soldiers of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and a cannon.  
Photo by A. Lelešius.*



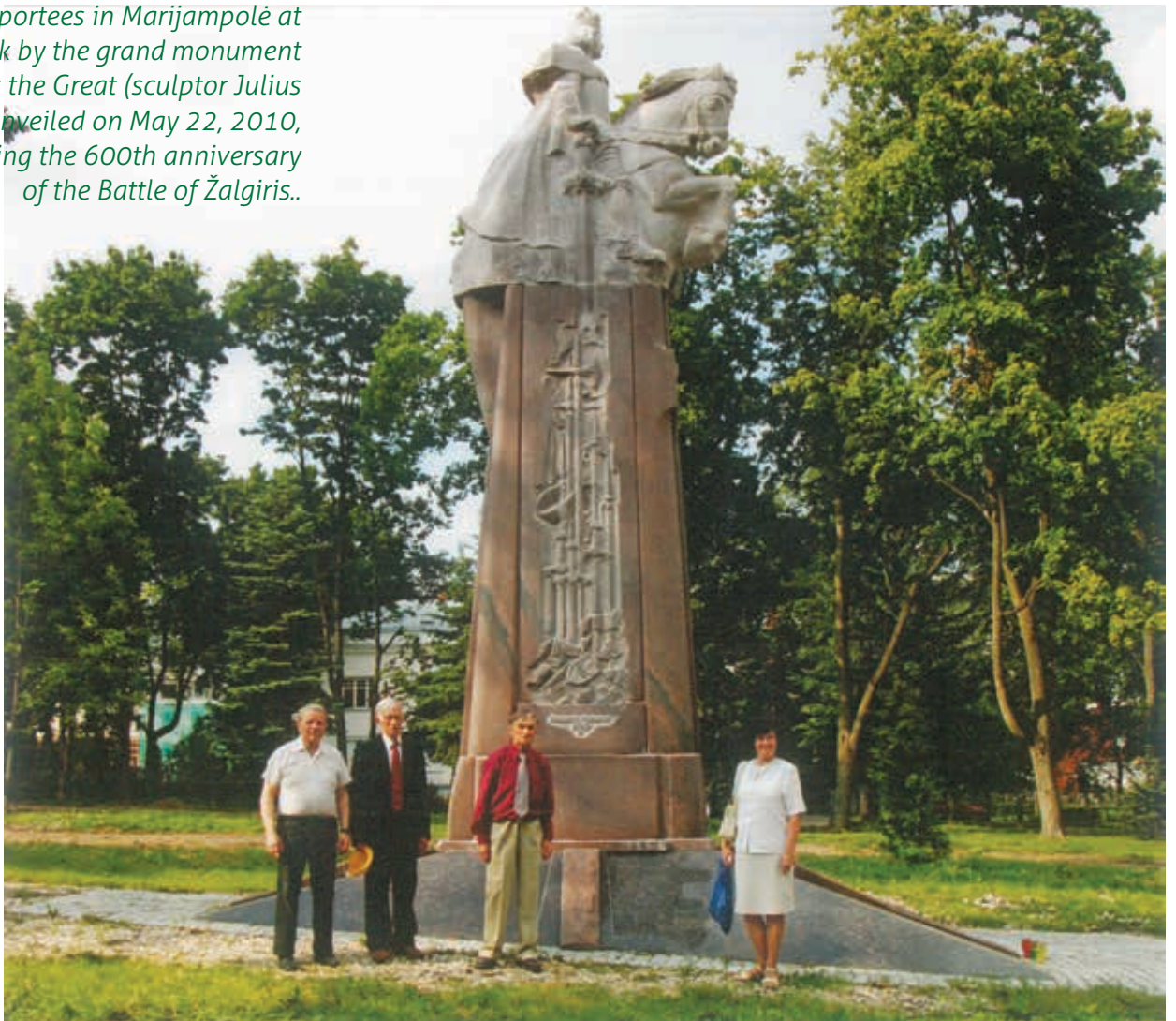
*Unveiling of the monument to Vytautas (sculptor Julius Narušis) on May 22, 2010, in Vytautas Park in Marijampolė. Soldiers of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.  
Photo by A. Lelešius.*





*Exercise lineup commemorating the Partisan Tribute, Army, and Unity of Society Day in Vytautas Park, Marijampolė, on May 22, 2010. On that day, the monument to Vytautas the Great (sculptor Julius Narušis) was unveiled.  
Photo by A. Lelešius.*

*Altai deportees in Marijampolė at Vytautas Park by the grand monument to Vytautas the Great (sculptor Julius Narušis). Unveiled on May 22, 2010, commemorating the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Žalgiris..*





## The heroic personality of Viktoras Ašmenskas – Pride of Kazlų Rūda Region

Born on February 19, 1912, in Viliūšiai, Jankai Valleys, Šakiai District, now Kazlų Rūda Municipality.

Died on February 25, 2016 (at the age of 104).

Father: Antanas Ašmenskas

Mother: Ona Bielskytė-Ašmenskienė

Spouse: Eleonora Žūsinaitė

Children: Nijolė, Aušra

Occupation: Engineer, aviator, resistance member.

Alma Mater - Vytautas the Great University in 1942.

Most notable award - Order of the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas, Commander's Cross, in 2003.

Member of the Lithuanian Union of Independent Writers.

### Biography

After completing the Jankai Primary School in 1924, he enrolled in the "Žiburys" Gymnasium in Sakiai. From 1925 to 1927, he studied at the Kaunas Jesuit Gymnasium. From 1929 to 1934, he attended the Kaunas Higher Technical School. From 1932 to 1939, he collaborated with the press ("Karys," "Trimitas," "Lietuvos sparnai"). In 1934, he completed the Nida Gliding School and later obtained international pilot's licenses. From 1936 to 1937, he studied at the VDU Faculty of Technology. On August 16, 1936, together with Vladas Butkevičius, he performed the second risky sport parachute jump in Lithuania in Palanga. On August 17, 1939, during the first Baltic aviation sports championship in a two-seater aircraft, he flew a 750-kilometer route from Tallinn to Riga, Joniškis, Palanga, and Kaunas, winning a prize.

Since 1941, he participated in the activities of the anti-Nazi Lithuanian Activist Front.

Participant of the June 1941 Uprising. From 1941 to 1944, member and leader of the organizational unit of the anti-Nazi Lithuanian Front's military organization "Kęstutis" in Trakai County. In 1942, he graduated from Vytautas the Great University.

After the war, together with Captain Jonas Noreika (codename "General Vėtra"), he organized the illegal Anti-Soviet Lithuanian National Council's Kaunas District Headquarters. In 1945, this council ordered the seizure of an aircraft and the transportation of documents related to the resistance against the Soviet occupation regime to Sweden. He was betrayed and arrested in Vilnius on March 19, 1946. After torture, he was imprisoned in Lukiškės, Klaipėda, and from 1948, in strict regime camps in Moldova. In 1955, he was deported to the

Krasnoyarsk Krai. He returned to Vilnius in 1957. From 1977 to 1987, he worked at the Prienai Sports Aviation Factory. From 1969 to 1972, he was a member of the High Aerobatics Committee of the Aviation Sports Federation (ASF), and from 1972 to 1976, he was the chairman of the Parachute Sports Committee. From 1976 to 1990, he served as the responsible secretary of the ASF. From 1990 to 1992, he was the general secretary of the Lithuanian Aero Club. From 1994 to 2000, he was the chairman of the Union Council of the June 1941 Uprising.

He wrote seven extensive books dedicated to the anti-Soviet resistance of the nation and the history of Lithuanian aviation.

### Awards:

- 1992 - Honorary Member of the Lithuanian Aero Club
- 1993 - Darius and Girėnas Medal
- 1994 - Medal of the International Aeronautical Federation "For Merits to Aviation Sports"
- 1996 - Order of Gediminas, 1st Class Medal
- 1999 - Medal of the Volunteers of the Lithuanian Army Creators
- 2002 - "Steel Wings" Honor Badge
- 2002 - KKSD Gold Medal "For Merits to Lithuanian Sport"
- 2002 - Lithuanian Aero Club Medal "For Merits to Lithuanian Sport"
- 2003 - Order of Merit to Lithuania, Commander's Cross
- 2007 - Reserve Officers' Union Medal
- 2011 - Medal "For Merits to Vilnius Sport"

The heroic personality of Viktor deserves an impressive and romantic memorial, possibly with an airplane or airplane wings in the background.

The memorial could become a visited cultural heritage site on a national scale.

It would glorify the Kazlų Rūda municipality. It could be erected in Jankai, as it is a sizable village (about 400 inhabitants), and there should be a significant Monument of Remembrance in the hometown of Viktor Ašmenskas.

Instead of meaninglessly planning to build a second (!) monument to Kazys Grinius in Kazlų Rūda (an impressive tree sculpture in his memory, approximately 10 meters high, is already next to Kazlų Rūda's Kazys Grinius Gymnasium), it is worth considering a memorial dedicated to the heroic personality of Viktor Ašmenskas.

Honorable citizen of Kazlų Rūda  
1941 deportee  
Algimantas Lelešius

2022

## Vytautas Jasevičius – a collector of folk songs



*For remembrance! From the times of my uncle Leopold Vytautas Jasevičius' gymnasium*



*Slonimas. December 24, 1941  
In memory of Sister M. who did not return from the war, Leopold Vytautas Jasevičius, who collected 1334 songs, hailing from the village of Pentviršiai (near Paluobiai, Šakiai district, now a region). He served in self-defense units.*



*Leopold Vytautas Jasevičius' family at their homestead in the village of Pentviršiai (Šakiai district, now a region). Vytautas is standing next to his seated grandfather.*



## Our Time's Victory of Žalgiris

At the beginning of 1991, we felt an increasing tension and unrest in society. There were numerous alarming reports about the movement of Soviet occupation forces in Lithuania, with more frequent maneuvers. Tanks seemed to be driving through the streets of Vilnius, trying to intimidate and demonstrate their military power. It was clear that the demonstration

(the leader was G. Jankus). The uniforms inspired confidence. The second night, we slept on the floor next to each other. We learned that during the seizure of the Press House, a Soviet officer had fatally shot one of the defenders in the chest. The building was full of defenders, but no visible weapons were seen. It was said that the weapons were in the cellars. After two days, we were allowed to rest and sleep. The number of defenders in the building began to decrease.

of power would not be limited to that. Rumors spread that a special unit had arrived from Pskov to the Northern Suburb of Vilnius.

Following the call of the Supreme Council, patriotic citizens began to gather and guard important strategic objects throughout Lithuania. With the approval of the Kazlų Rūda local municipality council (Chairman Mečislovas Daugiala, Mayor Valera Plioplys), people from the region would travel to Vilnius every day to stand guard near the Supreme Council building and be brought back in the evenings.

Once (it was January 10), the guards near the entrance of the Supreme Council building, upon learning from a conversation that we were riflemen (we were still without uniforms), invited us inside to potentially defend the building. We and the other arriving defenders were lined up on the first floor (in the vestibule). We took an oath. Father Robertas Grigas absolved us of our sins. The Minister of National Defense, Audrius Butkevičius, shed light on the dangerous situation. The Chairman of the Supreme Council, Vytautas Landsbergis, briefly addressed the gathering. Those who had doubts were given the option to leave the Supreme Council building, but no one chose to do so.

We spent the first night sitting. The uniformed leadership of the Riflemen's Union made an im-



pression (the leader was G. Jankus). The uniforms inspired confidence. The second night, we slept on the floor next to each other. We learned that during the seizure of the Press House, a Soviet officer had fatally shot one of the defenders in the chest. The building was full of defenders, but no visible weapons were seen. It was said that the weapons were in the cellars. After two days, we were allowed to rest and sleep. The number of defenders in the building began to decrease.

On the morning of January 13th, at home, we learned about the killings near the Television Tower. Once again, we are traveling from Kazlų Rūda to Vilnius by bus. Near the Gariūnai market, by the highway, we saw three huge tanks. A military patrol stopped our bus. A soldier got on board and asked in Russian, "Do you have weapons?" Vidas Lubinas, who was sitting next to me, made a sarcastic remark: "We have lard." The soldier shrugged indifferently and said, "We can give you lard." Seeing that we were unarmed, he allowed us to continue. We drove past the Radio and Television building on Konarskio Street. The sight was vivid. The windows of the buildings were shattered and gaping. The streets were strewn with broken glass. There was a Soviet military patrol near the building. Next to it were the wreckage of a bus, which looked as if it had been split in half by a giant knife. The scene

was surreal, reminiscent of scenes from Andrei Tarkovsky's film "Stalker."

Tens of thousands of determined citizens gathered near the Parliament House. There was a powerful positive aura that enveloped the newcomers, and they became part of its optimistic atmosphere. People sang patriotic songs, chanted "Lietuva, Lietuva!" (Lithuania, Lithuania!), and some warmed themselves by bonfires. Women distributed sandwiches.

As dusk fell, someone from the leadership addressed the crowd through a window of the Parliament House. They said that an agreement had been reached with the Soviet military leadership: there would be no assault, and people could go home to rest. Without even realizing it, I shouted from the crowd, "Don't believe the killers!" The citizens did not disperse. They knew that deceit could be ex-

pected from the occupiers...

Later, I was at the Sports Palace by the Neris River. There lay the fallen heroes who had been shot near the Television Tower. The sight was gruesome. They lay in open coffins, disfigured and injured, with bloodied faces. Their relatives wept by the coffins. Thousands of wreaths were brought from all over Lithuania and placed in designated areas. The next day, the bodies of the heroes were buried in the Antakalnis Cemetery. The whole of Lithuania participated in the funeral. Vilnius was filled with people. Two chains of burning candles stretched along Gediminas Avenue to the Cathedral.

Lithuania's Independence was defended. It was our modern-day victory of Žalgiris.

Algimantas Lelešius, 1941 deportee, *Kazlų Rūda*  
"Vakaro žinios," January 7, 2021

## History of Perpetuating the Resistance

From the very beginning of the restoration of independence, political prisoners and deportees held a firm belief that schools must be patriotic. Just like they were before the war. It was precisely the pre-war patriotic school that raised a generation that valiantly fought against the most ruthless Soviet occupation for almost a decade. Over 20,000 freedom fighters lost their lives. The pre-war Lithuanian army had a similar number. Such a long and persistent resistance was unprecedented in any Western European country.

A similar armed resistance, as heroic as in Lithuania but on a larger scale, took place in Western Ukraine. There, 60,000 patriots and an equal number of Soviet occupational army punishers lost their lives. Both us and the Ukrainians were inspired by the selfless armed resistance of the post-war period. It continues in Ukraine, but on a nationwide scale. The entire civilized world supports the heroic struggle of the Ukrainians against the Kremlin psychopath.

But let's return to Lithuania. Nijolė Gaškaitė, a renowned researcher of Lithuania's post-war armed resistance, who wrote the unparalleled "History of Resistance," said, "The partisan struggle is the most precious diamond in our history." All patriotic-minded Lithuanian people must read this textbook and recommend it to the youth. It is the bible of patriotism, and every family must have it.

Lithuania's political prisoners, deportees, and freedom fighters, despite their modest pensions, erected a thousand monuments throughout Lithuania in memory of the Freedom Fighters. It is the greatest outburst of idealism in our materialistic society.

Unfortunately, the situation in the education system was disappointing. When it comes to patriotic education, it was as distant as the moon before the national school was established.

In the 1992 parliamentary elections, the stagnant forces that had been in power won. They realized that if students were raised patriotically in schools, they would not vote for them when they grow up. School principals remained the same as in the Soviet era. Teachers were also trained during the Soviet era, so their views corresponded to that period. The history curriculum dedicated only one lesson to the history of resistance, which was practically a taboo, in the tenth grade.

There were also comical cases. One school collective was offered to name the school after a famous partisan leader. Out of 72 teachers at that school, 69 voted against it. The leadership of political prisoners and deportees' organizations lacked courage; they were quite passive.

It contradicted the active patriotic attitudes of political prisoners, deportees, and participants of the freedom struggle. They sought active engagement. Monuments were erected, memoirs were



written, and they actively participated in patriotic events.

On January 13, 1991, when independence hung by a thread, tens of thousands of political prisoners, deportees, participants of the freedom struggle, riflemen, and other patriotically inclined citizens selflessly stood guard day and night at the Supreme Council building, the Television Tower, where 14 defenders were killed, and hundreds were injured. Thanks to their sacrifices, independence was defended.

The heroic Battle of January 13, the voluntary battles of 1919-1920, and our entire history are an inexhaustible source of patriotic education. It should be utilized properly because for a small nation in a dangerous geopolitical zone, patriotism is as essential as air. Only patriotically inclined citizens will defend the country. A clear proof of this is the heroic struggle of the Ukrainians against the Eastern menace.

In the current geopolitical space, which is potentially dangerous for Lithuania, there are no alternatives to patriotism. It is worth recalling certain events and dates related to this stance. I mentioned that the education system, in terms of patriotic education, did not satisfy us, political prisoners, deportees, and participants of the freedom struggle.



Šalį gins tik  
patriotiškai  
nusiteikę piliečiai



► Šio laiško autorius tremtinys Algimantas Lelešius

And now it is far from ideal.

Since the very beginning of the Restoration, political prisoners, deportees, and riflemen from Kazlų Rūda have shown greater activism in addressing this issue. I will elaborate on their activities another time.

But now it's worth recalling an important date. In 2002, exactly 20 years ago, in March, historians from Kazlų Rūda municipality schools became the first in Lithuania to start dedicating 18 lessons per year to the history of resistance instead of one, as prescribed by the curriculum in the tenth grade. This accounted for half of the lessons intended for

civic education. It was an initiative of local deportees and riflemen.

Our initiative spread among school historians on a national scale. At historians' conferences in Druskininkai (2004), Alytus (2005), Marijampolė (2006), Kaunas (2007), and Kaišiadorys (2008), teacher Birūta Bujauskienė and the author of these lines, Algimantas Lelešius, a worker at the largest partisan and exile museum in Marijampolė's Tauro District, shared their experiences.

1941 Exile  
Algimantas Lelešius  
"Vakaro žinios," April 1, 2022

## Gentlemen, you're late... by 22 years

"Vakaro žinios," March 25, 2022, "Proposal to Introduce Mandatory National Defense Subject in Schools."

"Members of the Homeland Union - Lithuanian Christian Democrats parliamentary faction propose to introduce mandatory National Security and National Defense subject in general education."

This proposal was registered for the draft resolution of the Seimas (Parliament), which plans to approve the National Agenda "Strategy for the Civic Resistance Training of the Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania," by the Chairman of the Seimas National Security and Defense Committee (NSGK),

Laurynas Kasčiūnas, and a member of this committee, Valdas Rakutis, as well as parliamentarians Edmundas Pupinis and Audronius Ažubalis.

Excerpt from Algimantas Lelešius' book "Called by the Revival" ("Piko valanda," Marijampolė, 2013) Regarding the Resistance Course in Schools

On March 3 of this year (2000), my article "The Separate Course of the History of National Resistance and Suffering in Schools - Necessity" was published in Tremtyje.

I wrote about this issue to the Chairman of the Seimas, Professor Vytautas Landsbergis, and received a response.

Dear Chairman of the Seimas,

*We, political prisoners and deportees, are concerned about the upcoming Seimas elections and their results. We are worried that the majority of the future Seimas may have a less positive attitude towards resistance and the history of the nation's suffering than the current majority of the Seimas. Important and necessary laws have been passed to legalize the resistance of the nation, the status of partisans, political prisoners, and deportees.*

*The ranks of political prisoners and deportees are thinning, so we rightfully care about the patriotic upbringing of the youth, the illumination of the history of the nation's resistance and suffering, and the fate of our spiritual experience.*

*In the history curricula of schools, only one hour is devoted to the topic of the nation's suffering and resistance. This is more of a mockery than a detailed analysis of this period. The history of the nation's resistance and suffering is equivalent to the legendary hero Margiris' feat; it is an inexhaustible source of spirituality that the youth lack.*

*We ask the majority of the Seimas to use their powers and pass a law on the separate teaching of the history of the nation's suffering and resistance in schools (preferably in the tenth grade and in primary schools). In my opinion, the textbook could be N. Gaškaitė's „History of Resistance 1944-1953.“ The knowledge of this subject could be tested during exams, and the obtained grade could be recorded in the graduation certificate, the certificate of completion of secondary education. This would be an expression of special respect for the fallen freedom fighters.*

*Lithuania is preparing to join NATO. Knowledge of resistance history would be the moral preparation of the youth to defend their homeland. And if military training lessons were introduced, it could be said that the youth are prepared to defend their country. The introduction of a separate course on the nation's suffering and resistance into the curriculum would be a significant turn towards patriotic upbringing and towards a national school.*

On behalf of the employees of the Partisan and Exile Museum of the Tauro District in Marijampolė,  
1941 deportee Algimantas Lelešius  
Respectfully,  
June 28, 2000.

To the Minister of Education and Science, Mr. K. Platelis

Dear Mr. A. Lelešius,  
Vytauto str. 18, Kazlų Rūda, Marijampolė district.

*I am sending A. Lelešius' statement regarding the introduction of a separate resistance course and military training lessons in educational institutions.*

*Please review the proposal submitted by the author of the letter, which, in my opinion, is important, and inform me and A. Lelešius about a possible decision.*

Vytautas Landsbergis  
(signature)

*Editor's note: We hope that A. Lelešius' efforts and the response from the Chairman of the Seimas will bring attention to this pressing and relevant matter.*

1941 deportee  
Algimantas Lelešius  
March 28, 2022  
“Tremtinys” (Exile), July 27, 2000.



## Kazlų Rūda honored its insurgents

(the only such commemoration in all of Lithuania)

On the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the June 23 uprising, Kazlų Rūda commemorated the clash with the Red Army that took place here 80 years ago and paid tribute to the fallen fighters. On that day, a memorial plaque was unveiled near the railway station to honor the defenders and the fallen. 64 residents of Kazlų Rūda, volunteers, defended the railway station from destruction.

The defense was led by Reserve Captain A. Mikalauskas and Reserve Junior Lieutenant S. Trinkauskas. It was decided to disarm the Red Army soldiers, and a firefight ensued. The Red Army made several attempts to occupy the station but were repelled with losses. When the Germans appeared, they demanded that the insurgents surrender their weapons, but realizing that their strength alone would not be enough, they returned the weapons to the insurgents and asked them to hold their positions.

During the clash, 8 German soldiers and members of the Kazlų Rūda detachment K. Škėrys, E. Kakarėnas, J. Radavičius, V. Ulevskis lost their lives. S. Urbonas, J. Gendvila, A. Gasiūnas, V. Gertanavičius, J. Demikis were injured.

June 23, 1941, is the Day of Armed Resistance of the Nation against Soviet Occupation. The uprising claimed the lives of 2,000 insurgents. Similarly, the same number of volunteers died during the fights for independence against the Bolsheviks, Bermontians, and Poland in 1918-1920.



Atidengiant memorialinę lentą prie Kazlų Rūdos geležinkelio stoties apie sukilimą papasakojo 1941 m. tremtinys, istorikas Algimantas Lelešius

*Financed by Vidmantas Alesius.  
Unveiling of the memorial plaque -  
the only case of its kind in the country.*

*Insurgents,  
You died here  
Boldly attacking  
The cruel occupier  
And you remain  
in the memory of the nation  
As its noble warriors*

A. Lelešius

Dalia Byčienė

“Vakaro žinios” (Evening News), June 30, 2021



March 11, 2014  
Beginning of the National Youth March from Vilnius Town Hall to the Seimas (Parliament). Kazlų Rūda residents also participated. In the photo - the coats of arms of Lithuania and Ukraine.  
Photo by A. Lelešius.

## For February 16th

### Ballad

VO  
On February sixteenth,  
On February sixteenth—  
Those words are grand to us,  
They remind us how  
Under the claws of czars and Germans,  
The plundering eagles,  
We freed ourselves,  
Led by the patriarch  
Jonas Basanavičius.  
He was the most distinguished  
In the revered assembly  
Of the Council of Lithuania.  
By the highest authority,  
He proclaimed the Act,  
The birth of the state  
On February sixteenth.  
Like a grain in the earth,  
The nation ripened,  
This date the most significant,  
But behind it lies  
Our history,

Noble and painful.  
...Through the flames of uprisings,  
The increasing ages of time,  
The romantic leader Tadeusz  
Kościuszko,  
The weaving Emilija,  
The brave captain,  
Their eyes attentively  
Gaze upon us once.  
The courageous leaders,  
Kalinauskas, the priest Mackevičius,  
And Sierakauskas,  
Knock on our memory.  
And Zikaras, the “Book Smuggler,”  
Seems to have revived...  
He raised the spirit of the Lithuanians,  
“Aušra” by Basanavičius,  
And “Varpas” by Kudirka.  
...In the cruel  
Apocalyptic wars,  
In the senselessness

Of the plundering empires,  
The chains of the conquered nations  
Helplessly fell,  
And the spring of the National  
Revival dawned.  
...After two decades of Freedom,  
We were struck once again  
By the black night of occupation.  
But we endured everything,  
And the younger sister  
Of February sixteenth was born.  
Her name—  
March eleventh—  
Inspires in us  
Vigilance and resolve  
To face future trials  
And endure once more...

1941 deportee  
Algimantas Lelešius  
February 11, 2022.



## A Good start. We are already able to repel the intruders

Every morning, we anxiously await the radio news report about the number of intruders who crossed our border with Belarus. Are there hundreds again?! Many times, the mood of the majority of Lithuanian residents was spoiled.

We are not hostile to them as individuals, but we are a small country, and our ability to accommodate them is limited. They should think about it before flying here. We have to convey this message to Iraqis over the internet.

The beginning of the repulsion was made on August 2nd to the 3rd. But even then, in other places, 185 intruders still crossed the border.

Anxiously, we await the Thursday, August 4th morning radio news. And hooray! Rustamas Li-

ubajevas, the head of border security, reports that in many places, the intruders were repelled, and only 35 illegal immigrants crossed the border. The mood of the majority of our compatriots immediately improved.

Of course, such a failure of the intruders will cause irritation to our neighbor possessed by an impure spirit. Provocation can be expected. Possibly thousands of intruders may attempt to break through various parts of our border. We need to mobilize more of our army to the border. In the name of Lithuania, we must withstand it!

1941 deportee  
Algimantas Lelešius  
August 4, 2021.

## December 17, 1926 – an underestimated historically important date

When talking about this date, a stereotypical (worn-out term) and clichéd thinking prevailed, coming from the Soviet era, when people were influenced to believe that it was a fascist coup. And even after 1990, when we became independent, the essentially negative attitude towards the December 17th coup did not change, unfortunately.

And now, many still do not dare to openly express their opinion about that coup. The unofficial opinion of many elderly people is as follows: the communists became insolent towards Kazys Grinius because their party became legal. They were preparing to take power by force, forming armed groups. It's a known fact that they tried to arrest Pranas Dovydaitis, a signatory of the February 16th Act and founder of the patriotic Ateitininkai Federation. Concerned about the fate of the state, patriotic state figures urged Kazys Grinius to act more decisively, to prevent the concentration of anti-state forces and their audacious provocations. Unfortunately, he was passive and indecisive. The state was spiraling into an abyss. Then a group of officers, led by the determined Povilas Plechavičius,

carried out a coup and took power. They offered Antanas Smetona to assume the presidency. His authoritarian rule is positively evaluated by the majority of compatriots. Monuments are erected in his honor.

After the coup, one state figure said, "It is better to sacrifice the constitution than the state." At that time, the majority of European states were autocratic: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and others.

The neighboring states, in order to better defend against the powerful totalitarian and terrorist state, the Soviet Union, had to create autocratic regimes, which were better organized militarily than democracies, which always face anarchy and the fate of becoming victims of totalitarian states.

By the way, we are already feeling the threat of totalitarian regimes from our neighbors.

1941 deportee  
Algimantas Lelešius  
December 17, 2021.

## If both warring sides were to win with good will

*Already a hundred days  
Ukraine is ablaze  
Spitting fire  
The dragon of the East.  
Awake, world  
Of Christian sun,  
Save brothers  
Nations together.  
Rise against evil,  
Satanic evil –  
War killings, founded on lies.  
Win, sword of goodness  
The noble world,  
Win, while it's not too late...*



*On the initiative and with the funds of the Kazlų Rūda Sajūdis Support Group, a monument was erected to commemorate the first Sajūdis rally (September 3, 1988) on the occasion of its thirtieth anniversary.*

Russia has almost no chance of winning the war. But hundreds of thousands can still perish. And the fate of the leader of the losing side would be enviable.

Or perhaps intuition and a sudden enlightenment of sound mind, or perhaps Patriarch Kirill could hint an exit to Putin. While Russia has not yet lost...

Let's remember. Boris Yeltsin, the President of Russia, which was then briefly a democratic state, handed over power to Vladimir Putin. He made a condition: Putin must promise that Yeltsin and his family will be protected from any accusations and persecution.

Now, in a somewhat similar situation (Putin is already 70 years old), he could transfer power to another person. In this way, both he and, most importantly, Russia would avoid the shame of defeat and an adequate punishment. Of course, Putin must be promised what he promised Yeltsin – complete protection for himself and his family from any accusations and persecution.

And who could possibly, temporarily, be the President of Russia? It must be a prominent figure acceptable to both Russia and Europe. The choice is very limited.

Possibly such a person could be Mikhail Khodorkovsky. He is a person of strong democratic and humanistic views, extraordinary intellect, unparalleled willpower, and courage.

Let's remember. When M. Khodorkovsky decided to challenge Putin and participate in the presidential elections, he was warned that it could end badly for him, and he was offered to leave for abroad while it's not too late. But Mikhail didn't get scared and chose to fight for his beliefs, for a just, democratic Russia, despite imprisonment. After 8 years, he was released.

At the conference of the Russian democratic quorum in Vilnius, he spoke insightfully, stating that Russia in the future must be a democratic, multi-party, parliamentary republic. There should be no President. Regional rights should be significant.

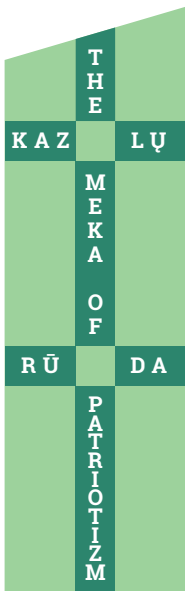
1941 deportee  
A. Lelešius  
2022-06-04

### o Brothers

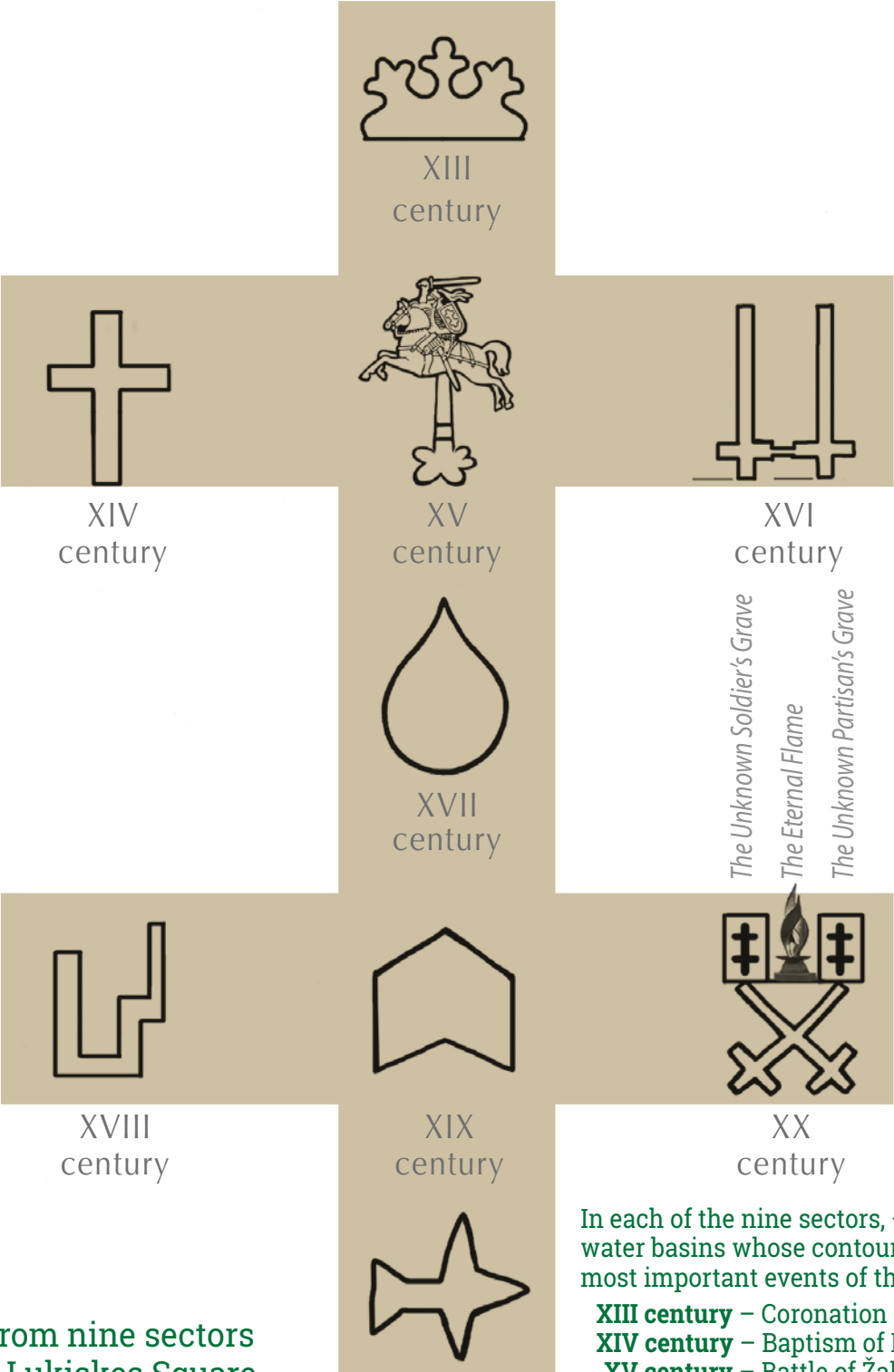
*The blood-stained Antichrist of hell,  
The envoy of underground death,  
Attacked  
The fate brothers  
Of a bright land of sunflowers.  
Not vengeance, heavenly aid  
We pray for them  
On Holy Easter  
At dawn.  
And even more firmly  
Through suffering,  
the bloom of losses,  
May they believe:  
Christ has risen.*

1941 deportee  
Algimantas Lelešius  
April 13, 2022.





# VISION THE LUKIŠKĖS SQUARE PROJECT



*The Unknown Soldier's Grave*  
*The Eternal Flame*  
*The Unknown Partisan's Grave*

The Vytis cross from nine sectors across the entire Lukiskes Square eternalizes the memory of all fallen soldiers for Lithuania from the time of Mindaugas.

The Vytis - symbol of our age-old struggle for statehood.

In each of the nine sectors, – water basins whose contours testify to the most important events of the century:

- XIII century** – Coronation of Mindaugas
- XIV century** – Baptism of Lithuania
- XV century** – Battle of Žalgiris, and in this sector, the sculpture of the White Vytis (oak leaf)
- XVI century** – Union of Lublin
- XVII century** – The Tsar's army devastates Vilnius (teardrop)
- XVIII century** – Collapse of the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth
- XIX century** – Book Smuggling
- XX century** – Bloody 20th Century
- XXI century** – Joining NATO



One of the variations of the Vytis monument on the heights of Lukiškių Square – is a highly elevated, sacred White Vytis. It is based on white (good) and black (evil) columns. Both are engraved. The white column testifies to the bright periods of our state and nation, while the black column represents the dramatic and tragic ones. The columns are surrounded by crowned serpents, representing the good spirits of ancient Baltic consciousness. They inspire us to fight against evil.

The cylinder on which the horse relies must have a mirrored surface that reflects the sun, the sky, and the clouds. It will appear as if the Vytis is leaping through space without any support.

Where there are serpents, there is a forest floor covered with grass and bushes (a mock-up). The forest represents the spiritual foundation of our consciousness. A miniature symbolic forest area warms the Vytis monument.



## Let Lukiškių Square be an oasis of our glorious revived history

The vision of the project was conceived by the author in 2002. The first publication was in “Suvalkietyje” on November 7, 2002. The vision was enthusiastically supported by political prisoners, deportees, riflemen, mayors of Sūduva, and it was featured in various newspapers multiple times. It would be a great honor for hundreds of thousands of Sūduva residents if the vision were realized in honor of Sūduva, Vilnius, and the whole of Lithuania.

Political prisoners and deportees collected hundreds of signatures in support of the vision. Thousands of them dreamed of seeing the patriotic Lukiškių Square, but having not seen it, they departed this life. And those who remained alive saw... a beach in the square. They also heard assurances that such a beach-like freedom was what they fought for.

The vision of the square places great emphasis on the historical mission of the Church. The coronation of Mindaugas, the baptism of Lithuania, and the Vytis cross across the entire square are not strangers to the Church. The sector of joining NATO signifies that the alliance protects the entire Christian world. This argument convinced the Apostolic Nuncio Pedro Lopez Quinatana, and on August 18, 2017, he wrote to the author: “I pray for abundant blessings from God for your work and activities, and the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the late Bishop Teofilus Matulionis.”

Since 2009, copies of the vision have been received by the Vilnius municipality, the Seimas, the Government, the Presidential Palace, and the Ministry of Culture. Unfortunately, unfortunately...

In 2017, the Contemporary Art Center organized a competition to transform Lukiškių Square. 32 architects participated, and 5 projects were selected, including the vision of Sūduva. A. Sakalauskas’ “Laisvės karys” (Soldier of Freedom) was also among them. He succeeded, and his monument stands in a very appropriate place near Kaunas Castle. Everyone was shocked by the decision of the evaluation commission to award first place to A. Labašauskas’ “Laisvės kalvai” (Hills of Freedom). Five years have passed, and those hills have not been poured and will not be poured on the square. Cultural heritage does not allow the hills to harm the square. Pouring the hills would make us a laughingstock in Europe. If the hills fail, three projects remain. Two of them are at the level of a kindergarten. This means that our Sūduva project should be declared the winner. If, even after five years, the commission had at least a shred of fairness. And not only the commission, but all state institutions. They have distanced themselves from the author and the project for a reliable 13 years. This shows how much they truly care about the proper restoration of the historical Lukiškių Square and the tribute to Vytis. But the

vision of hundreds of thousands of citizens cannot be extinguished, as it holds our dramatic history as if in the palm of its hand. It is our most precious possession.

The square would be completely original, as it depicts our history through the element of water. The square would adequately proclaim the name of Lithuania. It would be eagerly visited by foreign tourists, of whom one million come to Vilnius each year.

According to a survey conducted in 2017, the vision was most liked by the residents of Vilnius due to its recreational nature. The project proposed the inclusion of pools with fountains and greenery. In Kudirkos Square, the national symbols of Lithuania, the Anthem and the Columns of the Gediminas, would be appropriately commemorated. In Lukiškių Square, other symbols such as the Vytis and the Vyčio Cross would be worth commemorating. The bottom of the pools would be decorated with a changing mosaic of colored stones. There would be no benches due to the accumulation of trash. For a symbolic fee, people could rent foldable chairs if they wished. In the evenings, for 10-15 minutes after dusk, there would be a fireworks display in the square, with mini fireworks in the colors of our national flag rising from each sector. A pleasant tradition of gathering in the square in the evenings would emerge, similar to those in Japan.

As political prisoners and deportees, we tirelessly argued that there can never be too much patriotism for a small country like ours, especially in the face of a neighboring monster. Patriotism is as necessary as air. Only a patriotically inclined citizen will step up to defend the country. The current tragic events in Ukraine confirm this.

The realization of the Sūduva vision for Lukiškių Square would be an important patriotic decision. I am an honored shooter. I believe that the implementation of the patriotic Sūduva vision for the square and the tribute to Vytis is a sacred duty of Lithuanian shooters and soldiers.

P.S. We, the people of Sūduva, have always been known for our good initiatives. Our “Aušra” by J. Basanavičius, “Varpas” by V. Kudirka, the legendary partisan Juozas Lukša, and the most impressive monument to Vytautas the Great (sculpted by Julius Narušis) in Lithuania, as well as the largest partisan and exile museum in the Taurus District, are all our achievements.

Our initiative as people of Sūduva to properly commemorate the freedom fighter’s memory in Lukiškių Square (there have been several decisions by the Parliament) is undeniable, exceptional, and has withstood the test of a decade. The Minister of Culture, Gintautė Žemaitytė, recognized the exceptional idea behind the vision.

Will we, the people of Sūduva, have the determination to defend the honor of Sūduva in our pursuit to realize the vision of Sūduva for Lukiškių Square?

1941 deportee

Algimantas LELEŠIUS.

“Suvalkietis,” September 7, 2022.



## **Ballad about the Suduvių Lukiškių Square's Vision**

Vilnius Mayor Valdas Benkunskas spoke about the problem of Lukiškių Square, which has been going on for 25 years already (by the end of March 2023).



*Lukiskes Square looks like it's been through a nuclear war*

*In the honorable  
square of Lukiškės,  
Who will understand  
you and lift you up?  
Ignorant souls  
Darken your body, square...*

*The tsar's soldiers praised here  
The brave rebels.  
They met death nobly,  
Noble personalities.*

*In the torture chambers of the KGB,  
They silently killed patriots  
And took them to Tuskulėnai,  
Buried them in garages.*

*Therefore, our brothers of fate,  
The martyrs of the Soviets,  
The bloody ties  
Connect them to this place.*

*Therefore, when arranging the square  
(It is a symbol of freedom),  
The opinion of our brothers  
Must be the most important.*

*The Cross of Vytis in the square  
Throughout its entire area  
Would perfectly immortalize  
The memory of the fallen  
Lithuanian soldiers  
From the time of Mindaugas.*

*And it forms the Cross of Vytis  
With nine sectors -  
As many centuries  
For Lithuania, the homeland.*

*And in each sector,  
There would be a small basin  
with fountains.  
And its contours remind us  
Of the most important event of  
the century:  
The coronation of the king,  
The baptism, the fiercest battles  
In the conquered Prussian lands -  
"From your past, your sons  
Shall draw strength."*

*In Polish Lublin  
We signed the union.  
Against the eastern neighbor  
We defended more successfully.*

*In the "Tear" sector,  
A hidden tragedy lies,  
When the tsar's army  
Occupied Vilnius  
They killed, looted, burned...  
This event urges us  
To remember the past,  
To foresee the future.*

*The eighteenth century.  
It is the century of downfall  
For Lithuania and Poland,  
When the nobles' "veto"  
Rendered the republic  
Disabled.  
The Third Partition...  
And our greedy neighbors  
Tore apart*

*The territory of the state.  
Book smuggling -  
A dear word  
To every Lithuanian.  
The spiritual strength  
of the nation consoles  
And warms the past.  
And no nation has  
A more meaningful content.*

*The twentieth century,  
full of bloodshed,  
Is not only for us but for the world.  
Lord, protect us  
From the terrible madness  
Of ruling governments.  
NATO, NATO,  
NATO, NATO!  
We are getting rid  
Of fear  
For the first time in a hundred years.  
NATO, NATO,  
NATO, NATO!*

*President of Lithuania,  
We ask for support  
For the vision of Lukiškės  
This vision of Suduva  
About the destiny of the nation.  
The vision will glorify  
Suduva and Vilnius.  
We ask for support  
For this noble vision.*

A. Lelešius  
2016 07



## **A mockery of Vilnius Mayor R. Šimašius and the madman Žirinovskiy**

Vilnius Mayor, upon observation,  
A handsome man,  
But with one little flaw -  
Thinks like a scoundrel.

He doesn't need Vytis,  
Nor the Cross of Vytis  
In Lukiškės Square...  
Žirinovskiy would praise him:  
"Fantastic, Supporter!

Why do you need this?  
Respect for your pagans,  
His ancestors are losers?  
Bring back Lenin  
To Lukiškis Square!

This year is special -  
The hundredth anniversary of October,  
You supported it so well,  
Greetings from Moscow!

You and I - we're both  
Liberal warriors,  
Anyone against us -  
Hit them in the face -  
They're fools!"

A conversation of disabled spirits...  
For now, it's virtual...  
But you are a shooter, Šimašius,  
Wake up once!

Is it fitting for a shooter  
To fight against Vytis?  
The end of the world -  
We can't comprehend it!

Betrayal - a dreadful word  
Sticks to you, human,  
Even your children  
Won't wash it off..

Rifleman Algimantas Lelešius  
Kazlų Rūda, 2017 05 07  
"Hot Commentary"  
2019 08 16-30

## **Improvisation on the Theme of Lukiškės Square**

Kaunas has the War of Independence  
By the historic castle  
Vilnius - a toilet  
In the sacred square of Lukiškės

Former Vilnius  
Mayor's monologue:  
Are we wandering about Vytis  
In Lukiškės Square?  
I tell you, it's a mirage,  
Wake up suddenly.  
I will create a beach in the square for  
you -  
It will be a small Palanga.

For the former mayor,  
It seems,  
It would be practical, beautiful  
To turn the cemetery into a beach.

People say:  
A bureaucratic monster  
Tortures Lukiškės Square.

New Mayor of Vilnius, Valdas,  
Respected, for now,  
We hope you won't become  
An object of ridicule,  
But a distinguished leader.  
And there will be no more talk  
That Vilnius -  
Is a black hole, having swallowed  
The sacred meaning  
Of Lukiškės Square  
With its Cross of Vytis  
Throughout its entire area,  
With a prominent monument to Vytis -  
A symbol of the warrior for freedom.  
And that square will make Vilnius famous  
Throughout Europe.

1941 Exile  
Algimantas Lelešius  
2023-04-28



## How politicians from the past “draw strength”

As the war in Ukraine unfolds, tens of thousands of our citizens flock to our enemy, Batka, for cheaper fuel, fertilizers, and grains. In fact, by participating in meticulous trade, we are financially supporting him. This does not bode well for our future armed trials when considering it optimistically. It is evident that society lacks civic and patriotic consciousness. This is also evidenced by the words of our anthem: “Your sons draw strength from the past.”

Unfortunately, our politicians lack this consciousness as well. For 25 years, they have been unable, and unwilling, to patriotically resolve the issue of Lukiškės Square - to properly commemorate the memory of the Freedom Fighter. This would elevate patriotism to a higher level. Lukiškės Square would become a beacon for the dissemination of our idealism and patriotism.

These are the years of Sūduva. It would be a great honor for hundreds of thousands of Sūduva residents, as well as for the people of Vilnius and many honorable citizens, if the patriotic vision of the Sūduva Lukiškės Square were realized.

The Vilnius municipality allocated 400,000 euros for sparkling Christmas trees, which is a kind of kitsch. One-third of that amount would be enough to realize the vision of the Sūduva Lukiškės Square. It would be an original solution that does not exist anywhere else: the representation of our dramatic history through the expression of water in pools. Therefore, such a square would be eagerly visited by foreign tourists, of whom a million arrive in Vil-

nius every year. Half of the amount received from them (which would be hundreds of thousands of euros) could be allocated to Ukraine. Tourists would also be attracted by the impressive mosaic of colorful stones at the bottom of the pools, featuring symbols such as the Coat of Arms of Mindaugas, Lithuania, Poland, the Book Smuggler, and others.

And what do the politicians gain from such foolish stubbornness? They become objects of ridicule. People say, “A bureaucratic monster tortures Lukiškės Square.” In their attempt to deceive society, they deceive themselves. People laugh at their foolish, theatrical brawls in the empty Seimas. It is no coincidence that according to surveys, the Seimas is always in last place.

What will a thinking person think of their stubborn position regarding the unwillingness to realize the vision of the Sūduva Lukiškės Square? They do not need Vytis and the Cross of Vytis in the square, they do not need a proper commemoration of the Freedom Fighter, they do not need an original reminder of Lithuanian history and the opportunity to promote it, and they do not need the possibility of allocating a portion of the funds earned from foreign tourists to Ukraine.

But who would be pleased with such a position? Clearly, our aggressive neighbor. The Kremlin despises Vytis and the Cross of Vytis because with these symbols of statehood, Lithuanians successfully fought against the Russian tsars for centuries. Ukrainians continue that fight.

1941 Exile  
Algimantas Lelešius  
2022 12 29

## Prosecutors should investigate Lukiškių Square

A group of members of the Vilnius City Council has appealed to the Prosecutor General’s Office regarding the reconstruction of Lukiškių Square carried out by the Vilnius City Municipality Administration and the public procurement organized during the process.

According to them, the Public Procurement Office has found that the Vilnius City Municipality

Administration, in carrying out the reconstruction of the square, grossly violated the Public Procurement Law. “It has been established that the municipality deliberately created a situation where, after purchasing the initial square maintenance works, other necessary completion works for the square’s reconstruction were procured without any competition from the same contractor. As a



# Lukiškių aikštę turi išbandyti prokurorai



result, the budget for the square's reconstruction increased from the initial 2 million euros to 4 million euros," the initiators of the appeal say.

During the reconstruction of the square, fictitious transactions could have been organized as well: "In order to avoid public tenders, the municipality administration and its company UAB Vilniaus Vystymo Kompanija simulated receiving gifts of square maintenance works or inventory from private entities on behalf of the city. At the same time, the same donors, real estate developers, received the necessary administrative decisions for their development projects from the Vilnius City Municipality. Such a coincidence suggests that fictitious transactions were carried out to avoid public procurement procedures and to ensure that the construction work was carried out by a specific entity."

"Under the guise of the importance of square improvement and an absurd hurry, the public procurement procedures were grossly violated. Moreover, someone benefited greatly from this whole farce, as the budget for the square's improvement doubled from 2 million euros to 4 million euros. It is evident that when the Public Procurement Office announced its findings, the public needs to be answered whether all of this

was done intentionally to profit at the expense of the municipality," says the group of Vilnius City Council members.

The Public Procurement Office examined three public procurement contracts for the reconstruction works of Lukiškių Square carried out by the Vilnius City Municipality. All of them were carried out in violation of the Public Procurement Law. Due to these violations and the breach of public interest, the Public Procurement Office promises to take the matter to court.

Prepared by Irma JURKEVIČIŪTĖ,  
„Vakaro žinios“, 2018 01 12



## MINISTRY OF CULTURE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

Budget institution, J. Basanavičiaus str. 5, LT-01118 Vilnius, tel. (8 5) 219 3400, e-mail Mr. dmm@rkm.lt.  
Data is collected and stored in the Register of Legal Entities, code 188683671

Algimantas Lelešius  
Vytauto st. 18  
69420 Kazlų Rūda

2020-04-30 No. \$2-2150  
To your letter of 12/07/2020  
(21/07/2020 No. G1-714)

### ON THE PROPOSALS OF ALGIMANTO LELESIIUS

Dear Algimantas Lelešiau,

Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania on June 29, 2020 adopted the law on the memorial status of Lukiškiau Square in Vilnius, but the Government has not instructed the Ministry of Culture to carry out actions to implement the provisions of the law. Thank you for your sincere letter, creative suggestions and opinions and unique ideas.

Sincerely

Vice Minister of Culture

Gintautė Žemaitytė



## Centuries of Statehood

The proposed memorial by Algimantas Lelešius, a refugee, historian, and local history researcher at the Kazlų Rūda Museum, is a composition of nine small architectural creations - small basins - arranged across the entire square in the shape of the Vytis Cross. Each of the nine accents symbolizes one century of Lithuanian statehood, starting from the thirteenth and ending with the twenty-first century. This cross is dedicated to the memory of all those who perished in the struggle from the time of Mindaugas to the present day, and its attractive form serves as a reminder of the most important events of the past centuries for Lithuania.

The thirteenth century is represented in this architectural group by a basin in the shape of a crown, with an inlaid bottom - this symbolizes the crowning of Mindaugas. The fourteenth century is represented by a Catholic cross-shaped basin with flowing water, symbolizing the baptism of Lithu-

ania. The fifteenth century is represented by a stylized shape of two oak leaves and a victorious vertical shield or flag on a stem - this is the symbol of the Battle of Žalgiris. The sixteenth century is marked by the Union of Lublin with Poland and is symbolized by a union of two swords. The seventeenth century is represented by a tear-shaped basin with a mournful black bottom, reminding us that during this century, the Russian imperial army occupied and devastated Vilnius. The eighteenth century is marked by halved columns of Gediminas, symbolizing the collapse of the Lithuanian and Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The twentieth century is commemorated as the bloody century - here, the dominant color is red, and the silhouette of crossed swords represents the fight. The twenty-first century is symbolized by a stylized military aircraft, representing Lithuania's accession to NATO.

„Lietuvos žinios“ 2017 10 04



*Algimantas Lelešius' Proposed Memorial with Centennial Symbolism*

## Among the finalists of the Lukiškių Square Memorial competition is a project by Algimantas Lelešius from Kazlų Rūda

This month, the results of the first creative workshop stage of the Lukiškių Square Memorial competition were presented at the Contemporary Art Center (CAC). The commission selected five finalists out of 32 works, and their projects will soon be presented to the public. Among the finalists is the project by Algimantas Lelešius, an honorary citizen of Kazlų Rūda and a local historian.

A. Lelešius' project represents the sacrifice for freedom emerging from the community

The proposed memorial by Algimantas Lelešius consists of nine small architectural structures and small basins arranged in the shape of the Vytis Cross, covering the entire square. Each of the nine accents in this project symbolizes one century of Lithuanian statehood, starting from the 13th and ending in the 21st century.

For example, the architectural group representing the 13th century features a crown-shaped basin with an inlaid bottom, symbolizing the coronation of Mindaugas. The 14th century is represented by a Catholic cross-shaped basin with flowing water, symbolizing the baptism of Lithuania.

According to the commission, Algimantas Lelešius' proposed memorial accents effectively and engagingly convey the narrative of freedom emerging from the community. This project could be implemented through meaningful cultural collaboration between several organizations and initiatives.

The expert commission, evaluating ideas for the new Vilnius Lukiškių Square Memorial:

Dr. Alfredas Bumblauskas - historian, head of the Department of History Theory and Cultural History at Vilnius University, laureate of the Lithuanian National Culture and Arts Award; Dr. Lolita Jablonskienė - art researcher, director of the National Art Gallery; Virginija Januškevičiūtė - contemporary art curator, chairperson of the commission meeting; Dr. Giedrė Mickūnaitė - art researcher; Deimantas Narkevičius - sculptor and filmmaker, laureate of the Lithuanian National Culture and Arts Award; Mindaugas Pakalnis - urbanist, director of the City Development Department of Vilnius City Municipality; Dr. Ūla Tornau - contemporary art curator, architectural historian.

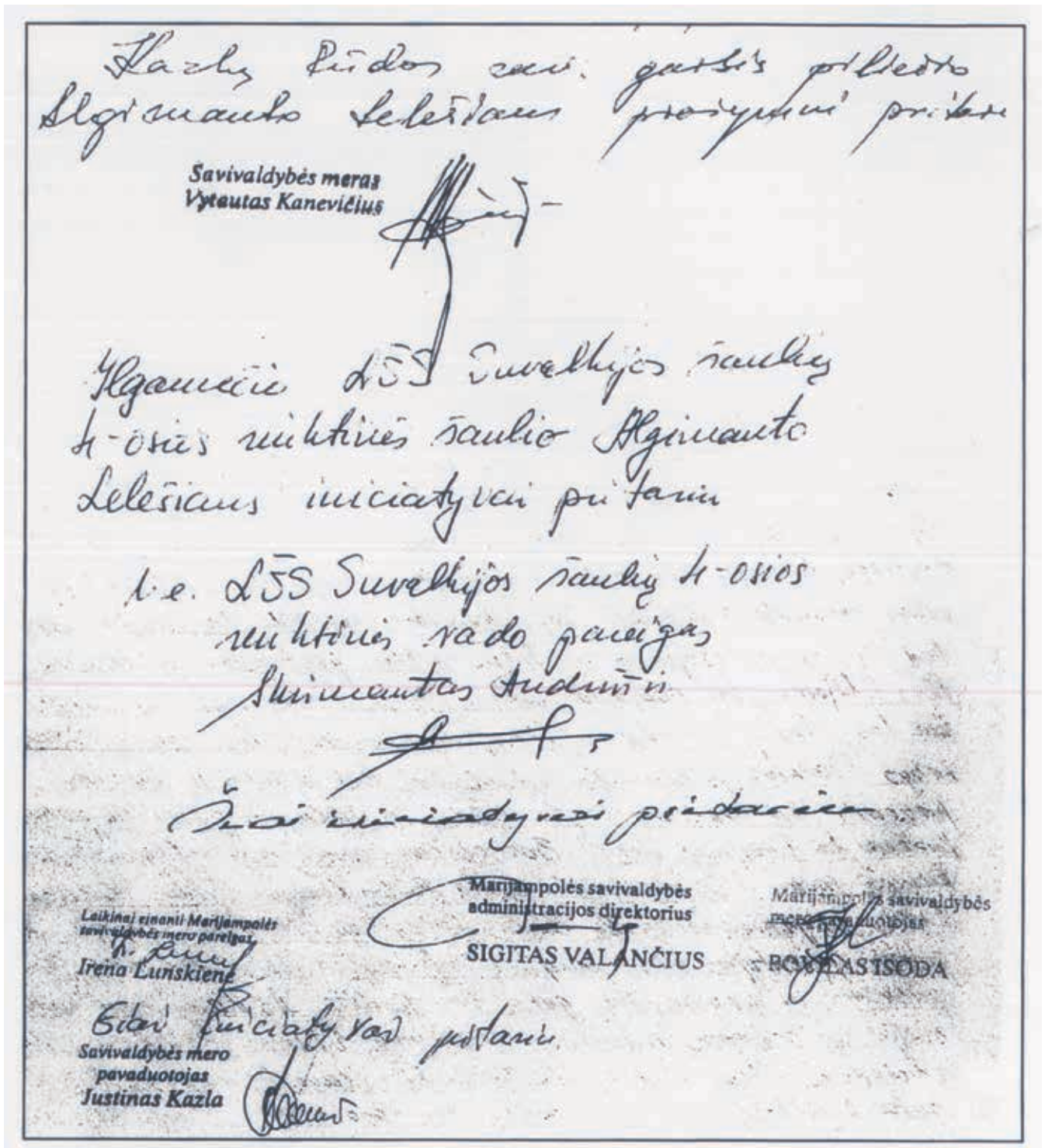
Source: KRL, Ministry of Culture, "Kazlų Rūdos laikraštis" (Kazlų Rūda Newspaper), October 23, 2017.



Over the years, information about the Sūduva patriotic vision of Lukiškiai Square has been received by simple and email by patriotic organizations: the Lithuanian Union of Political Prisoners and Deportees (all over 50 branches received it), the Lithuanian Community of Political Prisoners and Deportees (all branch chairmen received it), the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union (all 10 regiments received it), the Lithuanian Military Volunteer Founders' Union (all 10 branches received it), the Lithuanian Freedom Fighters' Union.

In 2017,

A. Lelešius' Sūduva vision for Lukiškių Square was approved by:





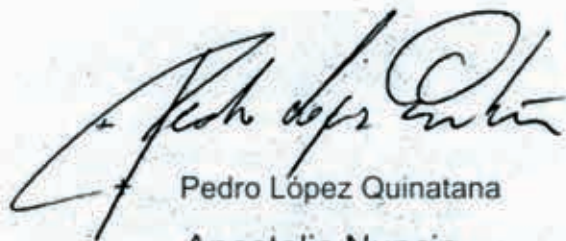
APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE  
IN LITHUANIA

August 18, 2017, Vilnius

Dear Mr. Algimantai Lelešiau,

I received your letter, which I read carefully. I am sorry, but I cannot decide on the project you have proposed, because it is not my competence as the Apostolic Nuncio.

I pray for abundant blessings of God and St. Virgin Mary and pal. Bishop  
Under the care of Teofilius Matulionis.



Pedro López Quinatana  
Apostolic Nuncio

---

Dear Mr. Algimantas Leleši  
Vytautas 18  
LT-69420 Kazlų Rūda



*To the Government and Parliament  
of the Republic of Lithuania*

*Dear Sirs,*

*hear the sincere prayer of the Apostolic Nuncio wishing us God's blessings and St. Virgin Mary and blessed the guardianship of Teofil Matulionis will not be delayed by God, the Church, in fulfilling Jaduvik's patriotic vision of Lukiškiai square. May the coming Great Jubilee inspire you Kazlų Rūda.*

*Kazlų Rūda  
2017 08 23*

*Sincerely Algimantas Lelešius*

*P.S. If Pope tar knows about this problem of the reconstruction of Lukiškiai square, Pope can learn it too.*

*He would be pleased to know that the reconstruction project of Lukiškiai Square, in which great attention is paid to the Church, under the auspices of St. Virgin Maria and bl. Bishop Teofil Matulionis, nicely realized.*



## Let's support the vision of Sūduviai Lukiškių Square

What should be the main square of the country? What historical accents should be reflected there? What is the memory of a person in the 21st century? How important is the remembrance of those who died for freedom? The reconstruction of Vilnius' Lukiškių Square and the commemoration of history have been discussed for about 20 years.

Over a year ago, the reconstruction of the square began and it will be opened to the public on November 3rd. Within a year, by the end of 2018, artistic accents representing the most important events in Lithuanian history should be incorporated into the square.

Out of the 32 projects submitted by artists and public figures, the Ministry of Culture and the Contemporary Art Center selected five ideas for commemorating the fighters for Lithuanian freedom in Lukiškių Square. Among the selected ideas is the vision of Sūduviai Lukiškių Square created by Algimantas Lelešius, the initiator and author of many monuments dedicated to partisan fighters and a former citizen of honor of Kazlų Rūda municipality, a former deportee, a shooter, and a long-time employee of the Marijampolė Taurus District Partisan and Exile Museum.

The authors of the selected ideas had two months to refine their creations, consult with architects, protocol experts, historians, art researchers, and conduct the necessary research for the creative process. In the creative workshops, the artists were tasked with creating a memorial idea dedicated to the memory of those who fought and died for Lithuanian freedom, adapted to the reconstructed square's space and scale.

Architect Gintaras Čaikauskas presents the vision of the "Freedom Warrior" memorial, sculptor-designer Andrius Labašauskas envisions creating memory and future in relief form, architect Tomas Grunskis proposes the idea of "Enlightening the Truth" through illuminated tiles depicting personalities, and photographer, painter, and public figure Darius Žiūra presents the idea of a video archive.

In his project, Algimantas Lelešius vividly, comprehensively, and acceptably presents history in Lukiškių Square to the contemporary society.

'For people who are not very interested in history, they enjoy a recreational nature. Therefore, I propose nine water basins with fountains and a green lawn,' the author explains his idea. 'The ba-

sins not only serve a recreational purpose but also serve as a reminder of the most important events in our history. An important coincidence is that there are nine basins, which corresponds to the number of centuries of our statehood. They form the Cross of Vytis, which perfectly immortalizes the memory of all the soldiers who died from the time of Mindaugas. The contours of each basin resemble the most significant events of that century. For example, the coronation of Mindaugas in the 13th century is represented by a basin in the shape of a crown, the baptism of Lithuania in the 14th century is represented by a cross-shaped basin, the Battle of Žalgiris is represented by a basin in the shape of oak leaves (a symbol of honor), and so on.

The vision is an embodiment of European tolerance. Even our former enemies, the Crusaders, are respectfully honored because if it weren't for their defeat, we would have nothing to be proud of for so many centuries. The Union of Lublin with the Poles is honored. It helped us defend ourselves against aggressive eastern neighbors. The tribute is also paid to NATO soldiers of different nationalities. NATO ensured our security for the first time in 100 years. The tribute to NATO in the 21st-century sector, in the form of an airplane-shaped basin, testifies to the modernity and relevance of the vision. Great attention is given to the church,' this is how A. Lelešius envisions Lukiškių Square.

According to him, the vision will not be a static creation. It will change because the mosaic of colored stones on the bottom of the basins will change. In the future, the vision of Sūduviai may be complemented by a monument to Vytis.

'The elevated, sacred white color Knight, as if leaping among floating clouds. It leans on two columns: white (good) and black (evil). The white one speaks of successful periods of our state, while the black one represents dramatic events (wars, plagues, occupations, deportations). Both columns are deeply carved with spears. This is a sign that neither human nor state life is ever ideal; there are always trials, challenges, disagreements, and various problems.

The columns are flanked by two crowned serpents - the benevolent spirits of our prehistoric Baltic ancestors. They calm us, warm us, and inspire Vytis for eternal struggle against evil, which is not lacking in our lives,' A. Lelešius, the author of one of the five selected projects, has laid out such accents.

From November 3rd, the public is invited to vote and choose one of the five presented projects to become a reality. The author of the Sūduviai vision for Lukiškių Square hopes for the support of fellow countrymen."

Marija BURBIENĖ

"Suvalkietis," November 2, 2017.



Copy to Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė,  
Žygimantas Pavilionis, Laurynas Kasčiūnas

*Dear Mayor of Vilnius, Valdas Benkuskas,*

*We, civic-minded and patriotic citizens, associate your election with positive hopes (which have been significantly dimmed for the past 25 years) regarding the patriotic transformation of Lukiškių Square, the appropriate commemoration of the Freedom Fighter, and the honoring of the national symbol, Vytis, in order to promote the name of Lithuania.*

*We are awaiting your historic decision to realize the patriotic and original vision of Sūduviai for Lukiškių Square. Your decision to reject the absurd „Hill of Freedom“ project is pleasantly correct.*

*You have also touched upon the theme of Aukos Street (near Lukiškių Square). There is a modest memorial to the victims of occupation on Aukos Street. It would be meaningful and logical to re-locate the grave of Lukiškių Square, where capsules with soil from the locations of partisan memorials are buried, to that monument.*

*As for the vision of Sūduviai for Lukiškių Square, it is worth creating a hidden partisan shelter from the bloody 20th-century sector under thick glass and a green cover. The mysterious shelter should evoke special interest among tourists. Only a guide can open the green lid. And what will tourists see through the thick, transparent glass? They will see wax figures of four Freedom Fighters. One will be handling a weapon (symbolizing armed resistance), another will be operating a typewriter to print a partisan newspaper (symbolizing spiritual and ideological resistance), and a girl partisan will be tending to the bloody wound of a wounded partisan (symbolizing sacrifice).*

*The vision of Sūduviai is flawlessly original - the expression of water conveys our dramatic and glorious history. Such a square does not exist anywhere else. If creatively implemented, it would become a source of pride for Vilnius and a center of attraction for foreign tourists. Half of the funds collected from them could be allocated to aid Ukraine.*

*„From the past, your sons draw strength.“*

1941 deportee  
Algimantas Lelešius  
Kazlų Rūda  
April 3, 2023

## Correspondence with Vytautas Landsbergis



2000 July 27

TREMTINYS

### Due to the resistance course at school

*March 3rd of this year. "Tremtinys" published my article "The necessity of a separate course on the history of national resistance and suffering in schools".*

*I wrote about this problem to the Speaker of the Seimas, Prof. V. Landsbergis and I received an answer.*

*There are no secrets in my statement and the reply of the Speaker of the Seimas, and the issue is important for all brothers of destiny.*

**Algimantas LELEŠIUS**

Dear Speaker of the Seimas,  
We, political prisoners and exiles, are concerned about the upcoming Seimas

elections and their results. We suspect that the attitude of the majority of the future Seimas towards the resistance and the history of the nation's suffering may not be as positive as the majority of the current Seimas. Very important and necessary laws were passed, legitimizing the national resistance, the status of partisans, political prisoners and exiles.

The ranks of political prisoners and exiles are thinning, so we are rightly concerned about the patriotic education of the youth, the illumination of the history of the nation's resistance and suffering, and the fate of our spiritual experience. In school history programs, only one hour is devoted to the subject of national suffering and resistance. This is more of a mockery than a detailed analysis of the period. The history of the nation's resistance and suffering is equivalent to the work of the legendary hero Margiris; it is an inexhaustible source of spirituality, which is so lacking in the youth. We ask the majority of the Seimas to use their powers and pass a law on the separate teaching of the history of the nation's suffering and resistance in schools (preferably in tenth grades and in the main schools). In my mind, the textbook could be

"History of Resistance 1944-1953" by N. Gaškaitė. The knowledge of this subject could be checked during the exams, and the grade obtained could be recorded in the matriculation certificate, marking the completion of the basic science. This would be an expression of special respect to the fallen freedom fighters.

Lithuania is preparing to join NATO. Knowledge of the history of resistance would be the moral preparation of young people to defend their homeland. And if military training lessons were introduced, it can already be said that the youth are ready to defend their country. The introduction of a separate course on national suffering and resistance into the curricula would be a sharp turn to patriotic education, and at the same time turn to national school. The Seimas adopted a very important law on compensation for damages caused during the Soviet occupation, as a logical completion of the process of restoration of Lithuania's Independence. The law on separate resistance and the course of the nation's suffering would be similar to the one adopted on compensation for occupation damage, only in the spiritual plane. The adoption of the law before the Seimas elections would consolidate conservatives, political prisoners, exiles, all patriotic forces.

By the way, centrists can also

use this idea, because R. Ozolas once stated on the radio that the resistance has not yet been sufficiently evaluated.

Sincerely,  
Marijampolė Tauras district  
on behalf of the Partisans  
and Exile museum staff.  
The 1941 exile  
**Algimantas LELEŠIUS**  
June 28th, 2000

**To the Minister of Education  
and Science, Hon.  
D. Platelis**

Dear A. Lelešius,  
Vytauto st. 18, Kazlų Rūda  
Marijampolė district

I am sending A. Lelešius's statement regarding the introduction of a separate resistance course and military training classes in educational institutions.

Please consider the proposal submitted by the author of the letter, which, in my opinion, is very important, and inform me and A. Lelešius about the possible solution.

**Vytautas LANDSBERGIS**  
(signature)

*Ed. note. We hope that the efforts of A. Lelešius and the response of the chairman of Selmo will move a sensitive and urgent matter from the "point of death".*





LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS SEIMO  
PIRMININKAS

2000 072-Nr.450-2792

To the Minister of Education and Science, Hon.  
D. Platelis

Dear A. Lelešius,  
Vytauto st. 18, Kazlų Rūda  
Marijampole district

I am sending A. Lelešius's statement regarding the introduction of a separate resistance course and military training classes in educational institutions.

Please consider the proposal submitted by the author of the letter, which, in my opinion, is very important, and inform me and A. Lelešius about the possible solution.



Vytautas Landsbergis

**VYTAUTAS LANSBERGIS**  
Traidenio st. 34-15, LT-08116 Vilnius, Lithuania

To Mr Algimantas Lelešius  
Vytauto st. 18  
Kazlų Rūda

8 October 2019

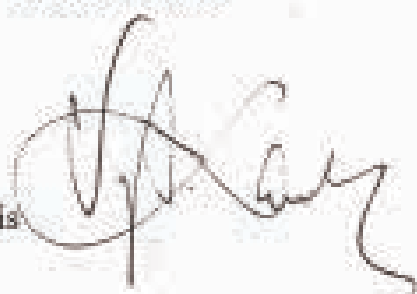
Dear Algimantas,

Thank you for your persistent work to keep Lithuania's memory and spirit alive.

What you have written and sent, I will remember.

Good health!

Vytautas Landsbergis





## *To Vytautas Landsbergis*

*We are the last Mohicans,  
Of the dear Lithuania of Maironis.  
Having sunk like the ancient Atlantis.  
Oh, SĄJŪDIS, you radiant word,  
Light in the heart of brotherhood,  
Through the darkness of the slave,  
You will show the way and freedom to those  
Who enter it. Valiant history  
Generation's singing strength  
liberty be, beautifying the romantic  
nation like a Phoenix reborn.*

*Kazlų Rūda*

*2019 10 13 Algimantas Lelešius*

*Dear Professor,  
Your letter, thank you very much for your reply, gave me a  
breakthrough of poetic inspiration...*

*Jaunius Vylius's address: Mokyklos 8-1 Marijampolė.*

*And*

*I wish you the most important thing - a good speech*

*Vytautas's 18*

*Kazlų Rūda*

*Sincerely, Algimantas Lelešius*



**Vytautas Landsbergis: KAZLŲ RŪDA can see better. A Lithuanian combat veteran, 1941, wrote to me a month and a half ago. Exile Algimantas Lelešius from Kazlų Rūda. He shared visions and reasoning.**

"The West treats Ukraine like a sick person: they give only enough medicine (weapons) not to die, but not to recover either. For half a year, the Ukrainian massacres have been going on. A sadist indulges his murderous instincts and feels perverse pleasure. How ridiculous and naive are Putin's intimidations of Westerners against war: if we are going to introduce them, we will introduce such sanctions that it will be terrible for Russia. Sanctions followed, and for Russia it was like water off a goose. Exports of gas and oil are less, but they have become more expensive, so Russia has no losses. It continues to spend billions on war. It is clear that Russia cannot be stopped by sanctions. Let's imagine that the Ukrainians managed to push the Russian army out of the occupied territories. Then the monster, in a rage, would order the entire Russian missile system from Russian territory to destroy everything possible in Ukraine 24 hours a day, so that Ukraine would turn into a scorched earth, as Russia did in Chechnya". It is understandable that the sadist would not be humiliated, because then he would be angry. What if the attacked and devastated Ukrainians had long-range missiles aimed at Moscow?

Berlin and Paris do not see this yet, but Kazlų Rūda does, it is closer to it. The smallest of the little ones, the protets of the Kremlin would quickly restore themselves to their intact places. This is Kazlų Rūda's recipe.





**MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA**

Budget office. Totorių g 25. LT-01121 Vilnius, phone: (8 5) 273 5501/262 4821. fax. (8 5) 264 8517, e-mail p kam-  
verkam It Data is collected and stored in the Register of Legal Entities. code 188602751. VAT payer code LT100001016116

Algimantas Lelešius  
Vytautas St. 18  
LT-69420 Kazlų Rūda

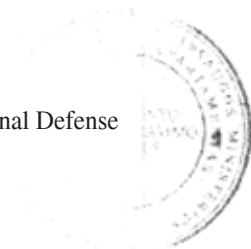
2015-07-No. 12-01-1412

For the volunteer union of the creators of the Lithuanian army,  
A. Mickevičius str. 19  
LT-44310 Kaunas

**REGARDING THE RE-PROPOSAL OF THE VOLUNTEER RIFLEMAN LELEŠIUS OF  
THE VOLUNTEER UNION OF THE CREATORS OF THE LITHUANIAN ARMY OF THE  
VOLUNTEER UNION OF MARIJAMPOLE COUNTY VINCAS KUDIRKA**

Thank you for your opinion on military training for youth. Your suggestions will be  
valuable in further planning the activities of the Ministry of National Defense in the field of  
citizenship and patriotism education of children and youth.

Deputy Minister of National Defense



**Antanas Valys**

## The Unparalleled Patriotic Work of Aldona Vilotienė - The Treasure Trove of Sūduva History

*The Partisan Struggle - The Most Beautiful Diamond in Our History..*

Nijolė Gaškaitė

### On the 90th Anniversary of Her Birth



It is obvious that we, Aldona's former colleagues, as well as those who have been "in the wider homeland" beyond the Urals against our will, know and can best assess her activities.

She spent a few years in prison in Komi - in the Inta and Lem camps - because in 1945 she became a liaison of the Tauras District partisan units Geležinis Vilkas and Vytautas. She had romantic aliases "Forget-me-not" and "Hope". With the rise of the Awakening movement, the noble meaning of these aliases seems to have inspired her noble work: to remind the public of the Freedom Fighters and their heroic deeds. And she began to cherish the hope of high flight - to create a museum in honor of the Sūduva Freedom Fighters.

Such a goal could only be achieved by a strong-willed, extraordinarily persistent personality. Such was Aldona.

In 1988, the Marijampolė branch of the Deportees Club (later the Lithuanian Union of Political Prisoners and Deportees) was established. Aldona led the historical memory group there. And an enthusiastic collection of data, items, photographs, written materials, and memories of Sūduva partisans, liaisons, political prisoners, and deportees began. Aldona infected others with her enthusiasm. She

even established contact with those Sūduva people who found themselves in other parts of Lithuania. She urged them to write memoirs, and she herself recorded them. Later, these memoirs gave birth to the book "The Third Color of the Flag". About the Sūduva partisans, liaisons, their struggle, and the rampages of the occupiers.

A huge achievement at the Lithuanian level was the publication of the list of the fallen Tauras District partisans in 1999. It contains more than five and a half thousand partisan names! This is an immortal written memorial monument to the heroes with the eloquent title "Speak My Name." The publication of the directory crowned a decade of persistent, meticulous gathering of knowledge about the partisans.

Aldona released it with a co-author. After the introduction "We are alive here" follows a thank you to former partisans, couriers, their relatives, exiles, political prisoners "We thank for the unsilenced word". The list has 173 surnames! The pinnacle of dedication!

Out of the nine former partisan districts, only the Tauras district has such a directory.

And yet the most important thing is that the cherished high dream has been fulfilled - the Tau-



ras district partisan and exile museum has been established. And not just any museum. The largest and most famous in Lithuania!

But let's go back to the origins. When Aldona collected enough interesting material, she offered the Marijampolė Regional Studies Museum to organize an exhibition on the theme of the Freedom Struggle. At the time, the museum was headed by a popular, spiritual intellectual, an extraordinary personality, a museum worker, and a devotee, Jonas Vasmanas. He gladly agreed to Aldona's idea, and the exhibition took place. The idea was born to establish a partisan and exile branch in the museum. This was also the goal of the museum director Jonas Vasmanas.

The municipality allocated two positions and a large area on the second floor of Vytauto St. 29 for the branch. Aldona, with the help of Marijampolė political prisoners and exiles, cleaned the hall and prepared the branch for the opening. It was solemnly opened on November 21, 1993.

Unfortunately, a serious obstacle to the museum's activities arose - the museum's floors were rotten. A renovation that lasted several years began.

The branch operated in two rooms on the first floor of the same building. Excursions followed one after another...

Finally, the slow renovation of the museum, which cost Aldona a lot of nerves and health, was completed. Designer artist Artūras Kaminskas arranged an impressive exposition. The branch already had five positions, and many honored guests were invited to the opening on April 10, 1999. The ribbon was cut by the Speaker of the Seimas Vytautas Landsbergis and the head of the branch Aldona Vilutienė. The new exposition was consecrated by Bishop Juozas Žemaitis.

Aldona organized many impressive events. For example, partisans who died in 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948 were honored in separate events, with the participation of renowned historians, representatives of the Genocide Center, the Ministry of Culture, and prominent clergy. The museum maintained contacts with the USA, Lithuanians in the Punska region, and earlier with the Ninth Fort Museum.

Aldona wrote about partisan leaders and important events in "Tremtinys".

Excursions came one after another from all over Lithuania, from foreign countries, from the Lithuanian Military Academy of Vytautas the Great, and several times a year - participants of the non-commissioned officers' courses from Kaunas. Of course, the most were students, riflemen, and scouts from the local area and other settlements of Sūduva. Visits were free for political prisoners, exiles, and participants of the Freedom Struggle.

The museum carries out a noble mission - by telling about the partisans, the victims of the Siberian gulags, it spreads the principles of patriotism, spirituality, and civic consciousness, and fosters a sense of duty to the nation. For a small nation, patriotism is as necessary as air, so that we do not melt in the melting pot of European nations.

The armed resistance of the postwar period, unparalleled in Western countries and lasting almost a decade, inspired unarmed resistance. Many underground organizations appeared, such as the Lithuanian Freedom League, the Helsinki Group, the Organization for the Defense of Believers' Rights, and the undetectable "Chronicle of the Catholic Church." The country was patriotically shaken by the feat of Romas Kalanta. Later, the Rebirth began. The wave of the Sąjūdis movement swept Lithuania into Independence. Thanks to patriotism, we defended our restored state on January 13, 1991.

Throughout Lithuania, former political prisoners, exiles, Freedom Fighters, riflemen, on their modest pensions, erected a thousand monuments to partisans and Siberian victims. This is the greatest burst of idealism in our increasingly materialistic society.

In Sūduva, hundreds of monuments and crosses have also been erected. Aldona eloquently spoke at the unveiling of many of them. On the initiative of the museum, several monuments were erected. The most important one is dedicated to Antanas Baltūsis-Žvejys, the famous commander of the Tauras partisan district in the postwar armed resistance. Aldona, at her own expense, erected two monuments in her native Vytautiškių village (Krosnos eldership, Lazdijai district). One - in memory of the village, the other - to the local partisans. This is the village where she was born on March 17, 1931.

The visitor's book of the museum contains excellent reviews, assessments, and wishes from the most famous people in Lithuania and other countries.

May the memory of the museum's founder, Aldona Vilutienė, inspire the museum's employees to continue to actively carry out their noble patriotic activities for the sake of that Lithuania.

The detailed study of the museum's activities is the task of historians.

Algimantas LELEŠIUS, a former employee of the Partisan and Exile Museum of the Tauras District in Marijampolė, a deportee in 1941..

Kazlų Rūda  
"Hot Comment", April 2-16, 2021



*Marijampolė Local Lore Museum staff trip.*

*In the center (with glasses) is the popular Marijampolė museum director Jonas Vasmanas. First from the right is the head of the Tauras District Partisan and Exile branch Aldona Vilutienė.*



*The Tauras District Žalgiris Regiment partisan Juozas Armonaitis-Triupas speaks at the unveiling of a cross for the Tauras District Žalgiris Regiment partisan leader Jonas Kleiza-Žalvaris on 2008 04 20.*



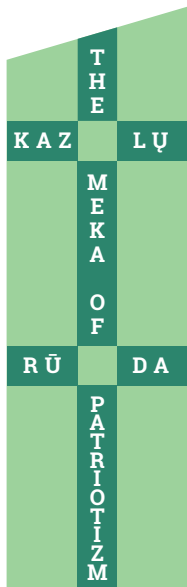
After spending the day at the home of the liaison Naktibaldas, as night fell the meeting participants dispersed. The chaplain Krivaitis and the Vampire, accompanied by Albinas Ratkielis-Oželis and three fighters, went to the Fisherman's headquarters.

Antanas Baltūsis was born in 1915 in the village of Gulbiniškiai, Pilviškiai district, Vilkaviškis county, into a farmer's family. Without completing his studies at the Vilkaviškis seminary, A. Baltūsis chose the profession of a teacher. In 1936, he was called up for mandatory military service and graduated from the Kaunas Military School. In 1940, when the Soviet army occupied Lithuania, Lieutenant Antanas Baltūsis, discharged from the army, returned to his hometown. During the German occupation, when local self-governance was restored, the fluent German and English speaking officer was appointed as the chief of police in Pilviškiai. In 1944, when the Soviets returned, he went into hiding for a while and was forced to join the partisan ranks. On August 15, 1945, when the headquarters of the Tauras Partisan District was established, Lt. A. Baltūsis-Fisherman worked in the press and propaganda field, and in the fall, after the arrest of V. Radzevičius-Vaidila, he was appointed as the editor-in-chief of the "Laisvės Žvalgas" newspaper. When the district commander Mykolas-Jonas left for Žemaitija, he appointed the capable, resolute and diligent Lieutenant A. Baltūsis-Fisherman as the new district chief of staff.

Convinced by the strong and logical arguments of Vampire and Krivaitis, the capable, resolute and extremely conscientious Lt. A. Baltūsis-Fisherman agreed to lead the district and signed the first orders.



Tauras District Commander  
**Antanas Baltūsis-Fisherman**



## Literary Rebellion in the Purgatory of Exile



**On July 11, in Kaunas, Petrašiūnai Cemetery, the former 1941 deportee and political prisoner Aleksandras Mikutavičius was laid to rest.**

**In 1941, to the Altai deportees, he was an unparalleled authority, like a guru.**

The deportation of June 14-17, 1941, known as the Black June, was an apocalyptic trial for the young



generation of Lithuanian intellectuals, highlighting the miraculous outbursts of spiritual rebellion. Let us recall the immortal essay by Dalia Grinkevičiūtė, „Lithuanians by the Laptev Sea“. Aleksandras belonged to the same generation as Dalia, but his spiritual exploits are unfortunately little known to

the public.

He was born in 1924 in Rokiškis, and after two years, the family moved to Panevėžys. Aleksandras' father, also named Aleksandras, worked as an assistant prosecutor in Panevėžys. Separated from his family, like all the men of the 1941 deportation, he died in 1942 in the abyss of death - in the Reshoty camp (Krasnoyarsk region), where about a thou-

sand Lithuanian intellectuals died of starvation, cold, and disease.

Aleksandras and his mother suffered in exile in the Second Južakovo Forest Processing Point, called the „uchastok“, in the Troitsk district of the Altai region. There was a diversity of nationalities and races: Lithuanians (42 families in the second „uchastok“ and others scattered in the surrounding forests), Volga Germans, the Kalmyk steppe people, Japanese prisoners of war, and later Armenians.

Aleksandras graduated from the Panevėžys gymnasium, which was renamed a Soviet secondary school. Even in Lithuania, he dreamed of studying literature and wanted to become a writer. In exile, he began writing memoirs, short stories, and poems.

In 1944 (when he was 20 years old), he proposed to several friends, former gymnasium students, to gather as if into a literary circle and publish a newspaper. Thus, „Longing for the Homeland“ was born. Over a year (1944-1945), seven issues were published. The former gymnasium students read the content to the deportees. After a year, the circle disbanded, and „Longing for the Homeland“ ceased publication.

A young man, M. Ž., would visit the second „uchastok“. The young people showed him „Longing for the Homeland“. M. Ž. was an informant for the Soviet security. He reported to his superiors. Searches began, and all seven issues of „Longing for the Homeland“ were found.

In July 1946, Aleksandras was arrested, taken to the MGB prison in Barnaul, interrogated for four months, and sentenced to ten years of imprisonment for „anti-Soviet agitation“. The Bolsheviks feared the free word, even if politically neutral. And a terrible prisoner's life began in the Taishet camp (Irkutsk region).

In 1947, Aleksandras' mother risked illegally returning to Lithuania to support her imprisoned son. But the security found her and deported her to Siberia for the second time, this time to the Irkutsk region, in 1948.

Alexander was released to freedom in 1955. He was not allowed to return to Lithuania. Alexander studied mathematics at Irkutsk University. He graduated in 1962 with a „red“ diploma. By then, he was already allowed to return to Lithuania. Alexander met his childhood friend and they got married. Two sons were born, and they lived in Kaunas.

It was difficult to get a job, as the former exile was not wanted anywhere. He was barely accepted as a laboratory assistant at the Kaunas Polytechnic Institute. It was only after 5 years that he was allowed to work as a mathematics lecturer (assistant).

When „perestroika“ began in Russia, the Supreme Court of Russia rehabilitated Alexander. In 1990, the KGB of the Altai region returned all the notebooks of „Longing for the Homeland“. Alexander compiled their content into his book „Longing for the Homeland“ (2008, „Naujasis lankas“).

The story of „Longing for the Homeland“ is a unique, one-of-a-kind phenomenon in the history of Lithuanian exile, testifying to the courageous youthful idealism of the pre-war independent Lithuania's maturing youth, bursting forth in the morally and physically oppressive reality of exile.

1941 exile  
Algimantas LELEŠIUS  
„Vakaro žinios“, 2019-07-17



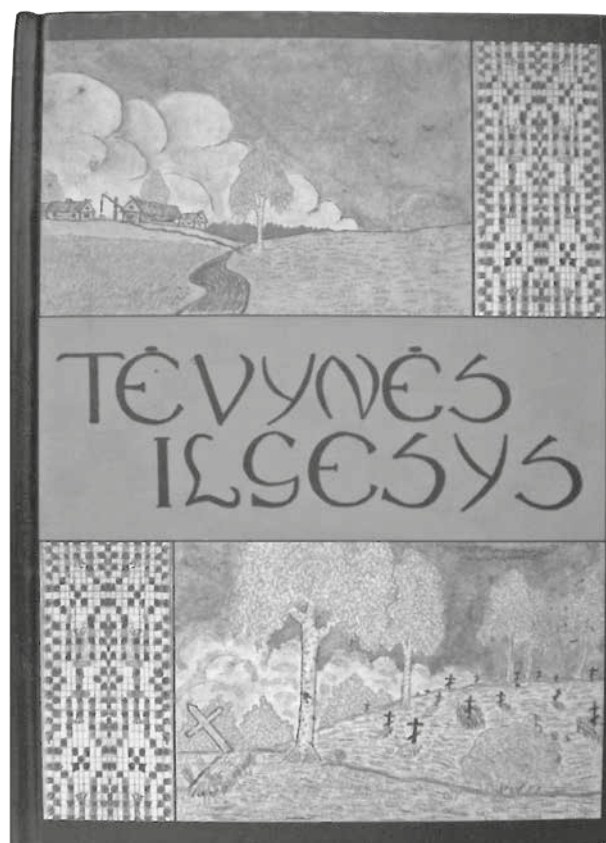




June 14, 1941 - Black June - Lithuanian exiles, young men and women. The year 1944. Altai region, Troitsk district, Yuzhakovo second forestry point (“uchastok”). On the initiative of Aleksandras Mikutavičius, a high school student from Panevėžys, they published a hand-written almanac called “Longing for the Homeland” (7 issues, one copy each) in the underground. This is the only such case in the history of Lithuanian exile. For this, A. Mikutavičius was sentenced to 10 years in labor camps and served his sentence in Taishet. With the start of the Rebirth period, some managed to retrieve all seven copies of the publication from the Altai security service (it was like a miracle!) - now they are stored at the Genocide and Resistance Research Center of Lithuanian residents, copies - at the Taurus District Partisans and Exile Museum in Marijampolė. First row (from left): Janina Kumpinaitė, Nijolė Vaisiūnaitė, Danutė Rozmanaitė; second row (from left): Janina Biliūnaitė, Vytautas Biliūnas, Aleksandras Mikutavičius, Aldona Nadzeikaitė. Contributors to “Longing for the Homeland”: A. Mikutavičius - editor, J. Kumpinaitė, N. Vaisiūnaitė, D. Rozmanaitė.

By the way, A. Lelešius is an exile from the same locality in 1941.

In 2008, A. Mikutavičius published the book “Longing for the Homeland”.



*“Longing for the Homeland” - a literary rebellion in the purgatory of exile. A. Lelešius. The only one of its kind, of such scale, in the history of Lithuanian exile.*

## The poem “Ballade” for February 16th:

### Ballade

February Sixteenth,  
February Sixteenth -  
Majestic words for us  
They remind us how  
We got rid of  
The predatory eagles  
Of the tsars and Germans,  
Led by Patriarch  
Basanavičius Jonas.  
He was the most eminent  
In the honorable council  
Of the Lithuanian Nation.  
By the will of the Highest  
It proclaimed the Act  
Of the birth of the State  
On the sixteenth of February.  
As the earth nurtures

A grain, the nation matured  
This most important date  
And behind it lies  
Our history  
Brave and painful  
... Through the bonfires of uprisings,  
The growing centuries  
The eyes of romantic leader  
Tadas Kosciuszka,  
Brave captain  
Emilija Pleterytė,  
Intently  
Observe our generation.  
Courageous leaders  
Kalinauskas, priest Mackevičius  
And Sierakauskas  
Knock on our memory.  
And Zikaras’ “Book Smuggler”  
As if revived...  
Raised the spirit of Lithuanians  
Basanavičius’ “Aušra”  
And Kudirka’s “Varpas”  
... In the cruel

Apocalyptic  
Senselessness of wars  
Of the predatory empires  
The powerless chains of  
The subjugated nations fell  
The spring of  
National Revival dawned.  
... After two decades of Freedom  
We were again struck by  
The black night of occupation.  
But we endured everything  
And the younger sister  
Of February Sixteenth was born.  
Her name is -  
March Eleventh  
May it inspire our  
Vigilance and determination  
To withstand  
Future trials...

1941 exile  
Algimantas LELEŠIUS  
February 11, 2023



## 1926 December 17 - a historical date of unrecognized importance

When discussing this date, a stereotypical (a worn-out term) and formulaic way of thinking has become deeply entrenched, which came from the Soviet era, when it was hammered into people’s minds that this was a fascist coup. And even after 1990, when we became independent, the essentially negative attitude towards the December 17th coup unfortunately did not change.

Even now, many still do not dare to openly express their opinion about that coup. And the official opinion of many elderly people is as follows: the communists became insolent towards K. Grinius, because their party became legal. They were preparing to seize power by force, and began to create armed detachments. It is a known fact that they tried to arrest Pranas Dovydaitis, the founder of the patriotic Ateitis Federation and a signatory of the Act of February 16th. Concerned about the fate of the state, patriotically-minded state figures urged K. Grinius to act more decisively, to prevent the gathering of anti-state forces and their bra-

zen provocations. Unfortunately, he was passive and irresolute. The state was hurtling towards the abyss. Then a group of officers, led by the resolute Povilas Plechavičius, carried out the coup and took power. They offered Antanas Smetona to take on the duties of the President. His authoritarian rule is seen positively by the majority of compatriots. Monuments are erected in his honor.

After the coup, one state figure said: “Better to sacrifice the constitution than the state.” At that time, most European states were autocratic: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and others.

Threatened by the powerful totalitarian, terrorist state - the Soviet Union, the neighboring states had to create autocratic regimes, which were better militarily organized than democracies, which are always threatened by anarchy and the fate of becoming victims of totalitarian states.

By the way, we still feel the threat of the totalitarian regimes of our neighbors.

1941 exile  
Algimantas LELEŠIUS  
December 17, 2023



## For three decades, the people of Kazlų Rūda have dreamed of having a swimming pool.

At the beginning of the Rebirth, we, the people of Kazlų Rūda, cherished many beautiful dreams. Among them was the desire to have a swimming pool: We even speculated that it would be good to have two pools - one at the secondary school for students, and the other at the sports center - for the public.

But it is well said: Man plans, and God laughs. Three decades have passed. We have neither a pool nor a sauna, which was successfully privatized, or rather “grabbed” by the cunning.

During the Soviet era, Marijampolė had a small pool (now it has a standard size). The length of the lanes in that small pool was 12.5 m, i.e. half the standard 25 m lane length. It was heavily frequented, and of course, competitions of not the highest rank were held there. And I even got to swim there during the teachers’ competitions.

It would be good for us, the people of Kazlų Rūda, to have at least such a pool. Or maybe, if a favorable financial situation arises, it could be expanded to a standard 25 m lane length pool.

The previous Kazlų Rūda administration did not bother with such problems. This administration, with a capable and energetic mayor, seems to be able to provide hope. The bus stop is pleasantly surprising - it is aesthetic and provides impeccable shelter for passengers from snow, wind, rain, and cold.

The square is adorned with interesting wood sculptures depicting the legends of the founding of Kazlų Rūda.

And a swimming pool would be the cherry on the cake. By the way, some towns of a similar size (Šakiai, Pasvalys, Ignalina, which is smaller than Kazlų Rūda) have pools.

The pool would be a place of joy, of uplifting mood, washing away the dregs of the gray everyday life. Especially in the middle of winter, to soak in this water would be an unparalleled pleasure, especially for children. Coaches could teach them to swim, which is essential for everyone.

We hope that this lofty goal will inspire a creative solution from our municipality and entrepreneurs. The mere anticipation of a pool would make it easier to endure this gloomy pandemic period.

Algimantas Lelešius

2021-01-31

“Naujasis gėlupis”, February 3, 2021

### Aleksandras Pushkin’s poem “To the Day of Milda”:

K...

*I remember a charming moment -  
I beheld a wondrous face.  
Like a miraculous vision,  
Like the genius of utmost beauty.*

*In the anguish of hopeless sorrow,  
In the tumult of the crowd that wounds,  
Your voice echoed for a long time  
And I dreamed of your dear face.*

*The tumultuous storms of life  
Dispersed the former dream.  
And I forgot your gentle voice  
And the divine allure of beauty.*

*In the gloomy corner, in dismal captivity  
My days are dull and gray.  
Without inspiration, tears, without love,  
Without divinity, without a spark of life.*

*And suddenly my spirit revived,  
For you appeared again.  
The rose of femininity, wondrous,  
And the pure genius of beauty.*

*And again my heart beats joyfully,  
Within it revived like pain  
Divinity, ardor, life,  
And tears, and the feeling of love.*

Free translation by  
Algimanto LELEŠIAUS  
Translated from Russian

## Photo exhibition dedicated to the 30th anniversary of Sajūdis at the Jurgio Dovydaičio Public Library in Kazlų Rūda

Oh, Sajūdis, you radiant word,  
Light in the hearts of brotherhood,  
Showing the paths to freedom  
To those walking towards it through  
the darkness of slavery.

The singing steadfastness  
of the nation will remain  
In the annals of history,  
Restoring the romantic nation  
A reborn state like a Phoenix.

Algimantas Lelešius

It is regrettable that before the anniversary of Sajūdis - the most beautiful, spiritual and noble breakthrough of the nation's quest for freedom - the media is drowning in a murky atmosphere of endless petty squabbles.

The Kazlų Rūda Sajūdis Support Group, formed on September 5, 1988 during the uplifting period of the Rebirth, after the rally organized by the Lithuanian Reconstruction Sajūdis initiative group in Kazlų Rūda on September 3, is still active and energetic.

The photographs of the exhibition revive the memories of noble idealistic activities, not allowing them to sink into the oblivion of the past. "From the past, may your sons draw strength," as the wise words of V. Kudirka remind us, but they are increasingly forgotten.

The photographs depict the first grandiose thousand-strong rally of Kazlų Rūda residents at the railway station on June 14, 1989, commemorating the tragedy of the June 14, 1941 deportations. Organized by the Kazlų Rūda Sajūdis Support Initiative Group. Such rallies took place all over Lithuania during the

uplifting period of the Rebirth. And the triumphant carrying of the national (the state flag was still Soviet) flag for consecration in the church in October 1988. And the euphoria of unveiling an impressive monument, the Siberian Madonna of stone holding a lifeless baby (sculptor Julius Narušis) at the railway station on November 6, 1989. The monument was erected on the initiative and with the funds of the Kazlų Rūda Sajūdis Support Group.

Kazlų Rūda's political prisoners, deportees, and riflemen were particularly active. On their initiative, monuments were erected to the partisans of the Tauro Region (even desecrated 5 times, called the monument to the martyrs), the only monument in Lithuania to the priest-resisters, and the monument to the partisans of the Žalgiris Regiment of the Tauro Region, at which President Valdas Adamkus laid a wreath on November 21, 2006.

On the initiative of the political prisoners, deportees and riflemen of Kazlų Rūda, with the approval of the mayor and the Education Department, history teachers in the municipality's schools were the first in Lithuania to devote 18 lessons (instead of 1 scheduled in the program) to the history of the Resistance from 2002 onwards. The current terrible events in Ukraine confirm the necessity of serious patriotic education, as only a patriotically-minded citizen will go to defend the country.

The Kazlų Rūda Sajūdis Support Group does not let the spirit of Sajūdis' freedom fade and for several decades has been organizing impressive commemorations of the anniversaries of Sajūdis, the Baltic Way, March 11, and January 13.

The solemn unveiling of the photo exhibition is today, June 1, at 2 pm.

Algimantas Lelešius  
June 2, 2023

## Instead of patriotic, moral education posturing about "the rump"?

The new school year is approaching. I read an article in the "Vakaro žinios" newspaper "Parents unite against a new lesson for children" (August 10, 2023). I was interested, as I used to be a teacher. The new lesson is life skills education classes. The Ministry of Education recommends reaching out to "specialists" who are

knowledgeable about LGBTQ topics as "particularly competent" to influence the still fragile, just forming children's minds.

Parents are concerned. Some plan to participate in such lessons themselves, others to not allow their children to attend. In fact, it is incomprehensible why the LGBTQ community, which makes up maybe 2% of the population and does not have children, should be concerned with the education of



heterosexual children?

At the Baisogala school, sex education lessons were held. Parents were outraged that 6th-8th grade students were talked to about masturbation and gays. The program does not include sex-defining concepts such as “boy” or “girl”, “mom” or “dad”, “man” or “woman”. Parents are afraid that bullying against children with a different opinion like their parents may begin.

I remember when a lecturer once came to the high school where I worked. Several classes of teenage boys were gathered into one classroom. When the lecturer talked about intimate matters, masturbation, the teenagers snorted, grimaced, and gestured the action of masturbation. It was disgusting to see such a reaction, such a repulsive sight.

You don't have to be a psychologist to realize that intimate matters are intimate and it is inappropriate, foolish to talk about them publicly.

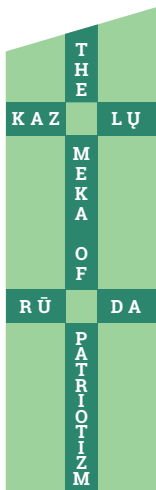
This is what the “sages” of the current Ministry

of Education, succumbing to the influence of minorities, do not understand.

However, what should sex education be like so as not to cause confusion and turmoil in the school?

It should be intimate and not conducted at school. And how should it be done? Specialists in this problem should prepare intimate films intended for boys, girls, teenagers of a certain age. The lecturers who are filmed must be properly prepared, consider every word, sentence, and find a connection with the viewers beyond the screen. Parents need to have these films and encourage their children to watch them, maybe even several times. It would be best if the children watched these films one by one, intimately. By the way, this would be a great support for parents, because this topic is also difficult and uncomfortable for them.

1941 deportee  
Algimantas Lelešius  
August 10, 2023



## The anti-Kremlin underground is active, but there are more opportunities to resist

The Kremlin is sending more and more, even poorly trained conscripts, to the meat grinder of the war in Ukraine. Approximately 200,000 of them have been killed or wounded. But the promised victory by Putin is nowhere to be seen.

Even the most ardently pro-Kremlin Russian citizens are starting to doubt the meaningfulness of the war.

However, there are also those who realize that peaceful protests are impossible, and they are resorting to sabotage, possibly seeking revenge for their loved ones who have died meaninglessly in Ukraine.

Increasingly, there are reports of exploded, drone-bombed ammunition, munitions, food and other warehouses, burning fuel depots, and shelled locations of the occupiers. This is a tangible retaliation against the aggressive Russian army.

Let's remember World War II. The underground and partisans in Nazi-occupied countries waged a fierce war against the occupiers' railway trains, forcing various cargo wagons off the tracks, and attacking passenger trains with soldiers going to the front or to the rear.

The Russian Volunteer Corps fighting against the Kremlin's army, the Russian underground, and partisans could consider applying this effective

mode of combat. The zombified Russian society could gradually wake up, take to the streets in demonstrations of hundreds of thousands in Moscow and St. Petersburg, and the regime would be overthrown.

By the way, a third of Russian society, according to surveys, believes that strikes should be made on the Baltic states, which are ten times weaker than Ukraine in terms of population and territory. And most importantly, from the aggressor's point of view, they do not have either cruise or ballistic missiles, meaning they are powerless. This means that the cities of the Baltics, like those of Ukraine, can be quickly turned into ruins by long-range missile strikes.

It is vital for us to obtain some cruise and ballistic missiles from NATO. This should have a deterrent effect on the Kremlin, as it would know that Moscow could also be shelled by our ballistic and cruise missiles.

This is vitally important for our society to know, and, before it's too late, to demand these missiles resolutely, knowing that this topic is hardly interesting to the clever members of the Seimas (Lithuanian Parliament).

1941 deportee  
Algimantas Lelešius  
2023-06-26

## Military training with servicemen would foster patriotism among students

A young man was shown on television who firmly stated that he would rather pay fines than serve in the Lithuanian military, because service (only 9 months!) is an obstacle to his personal goals. He already has a bachelor's degree, taken out a loan to pay for a car and apartment.

Is it worth showing such demoralizing youth cases on television. Such a young person can also be a bad example of selfishness, impudent shameful egotism for others. It is not difficult to find strained reasons why one does not want to serve in the military. If this young man does not want to serve in peacetime, what can be expected of him in a time of war? Chances are he would be the first to flee abroad. And you who remain will have to deal with it. According to the survey, only every other young person would defend the state with a weapon, and in the event of a danger, their number could possibly decrease even further.

Let's compare with Israel. There, women serve in the military for 2 years, men for 3. And they all dutifully fulfill their duty. Cases like the one with our young man are unimaginable there.

This case shows that compared to Israelis, the level of civic-mindedness and patriotism in our society is questionable. We are far from the interwar patriotic society and school. The young generation of that time (over 20,000 freedom fighters, as many soldiers were in the pre-war Lithuanian army) sacrificed themselves in the fight against the Soviet occupation, for the Independent State of Lithuania, which we now have.

From the very beginning of Independence, we, the exiles, have demanded to strengthen patriotic education in schools, to devote more lessons to the heroic armed resistance of the post-war period, which has no analogues in Western European countries, as it lasted for about a decade (there is an unmatched textbook - Nijolė Gaškaitė's "The History of Resistance 1944-1953").

Our military leaders claim that it is difficult to deal with those conscripts who come unwillingly to serve. They lack patriotic, civic-minded attitudes. School and society, radio, television and the press have failed to instill these qualities in them. Many TV shows are meaninglessly trivial and cheaply entertaining.

Unfortunately, bureaucratization of the government is a fierce enemy of people's initiatives. We have proven that even the best, most logical proposals from the Government and Parliament representatives are never recognized - they always feel self-righteous. And there is no institution, which would be greatly needed, that would stand between the bu-



reaucrats and the citizen and defend good, logical citizen proposals. Let's take the case of a young person unwilling to serve in the Lithuanian army. Will the high-ranking government officials and civil servants acknowledge that the reason for the unwillingness to serve is the low level of civic and patriotic education?

Seven years ago, we, the exiles, appealed to the Ministry of National Defence with a proposal to improve the civic, patriotic and military training of high school students. We proposed to reintroduce military training for high school seniors (grades 11-12 in the current gymnasium system). But it should be different from the previous one, when there was only one military training teacher. Imagine a bus full of military personnel arriving at the gymnasium, taking one class to the training ground. There, the gymnasium students would shoot at targets with various weapons, learn to disassemble and assemble weapons, dig trenches, and so on.

This age of gymnasium students (17-18 years old) is very suitable for military, and at the same time patriotic, training, because these activities (trips, target shooting) are interesting to them. They still don't have families, and work, professional and financial problems are not their concern. Shooting skills can be learned quickly, but civic and patriotic education is a rather long process, so a 2-year interaction with the military personnel would be very helpful for this.

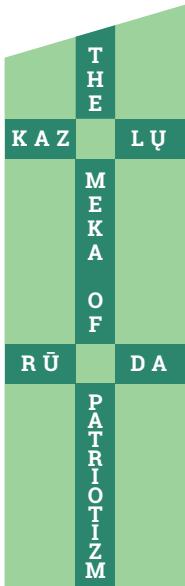


By the way, in Russian and Belarusian schools there is military training, why should we lag behind? A student is not a soldier, he doesn't need a salary, food, uniform, boots, or barracks. Therefore, such military training of students would be financially very beneficial.

The Lithuanian Riflemen's Union operates in a similar way. Unfortunately, it cannot cover all students and cannot organize the level of military training that professional military personnel can.

The Riflemen's Union focuses more on younger and older riflemen. Military training in gymnasiums and the activities of the Riflemen's Union would complement each other. By the way, such cooperative activity could possibly allow the reduction of service in the Lithuanian army to half a year (such a proposal was made).

1941 exile  
Algimantas Lelešius  
"Hot Commentary", February 2, 2023



## The statement that “Ukraine is not ready for NATO accession” wounds the Ukrainians

The statement that “Ukraine is not ready for NATO accession” wounds the Ukrainians who are suffering the horrors of war. Such a statement plunges the Ukrainians, of whom over a hundred thousand soldiers and civilians have been killed, cities reduced to scorched earth, and millions have emigrated, with no end in sight, into despair. Ukrainians understand that some NATO representatives do not wish to, or struggle to, comprehend

their situation (if Americans or Britons were dying in Ukraine, the attitude would be different). The Westerners conceal their cowardice behind convoluted rhetoric. By not accepting Ukraine, NATO is psychologically losing to Russia, which knows that it must never stop fighting and that Ukraine will not be admitted, and Ukraine will be increasingly drained. Ukrainians understand this. They think: they don't want to accept us, but they accepted Finland and Sweden for nothing. And where do these stupid, incomprehensible NATO rules come from: a country at war cannot be admitted. The very country that needs to be admitted would be the most understandable, humane thing, as the attacked country needs the most help. It is as if they are speaking different languages. The Westerners scare themselves: if Ukraine is admitted, a world war will start, and Russia is a nuclear power. But the US, Britain, and France are also nuclear powers. If they were not nuclear powers, Russia would already have used a low-yield nuclear weapon against Ukraine (without suffering itself). Bandits are not those who could sacrifice themselves in a nuclear war. Only idealists sacrifice lives, while the bandit's goal is to survive at all costs and live a comfortable life.

It doesn't mean that if Ukraine is admitted, NATO would immediately start shelling Moscow with missiles and bombing Russian cities. Then

Russia would retaliate in kind against Europe. The nature of the war would change gradually. Both sides would strive not to cross the red line. But Ukraine would receive long-range missiles to be able to retaliate against the positions of Russian missiles that have struck Ukraine, perhaps thousands of kilometers into Russian territory (e.g., the Caspian and Black Sea fleets).

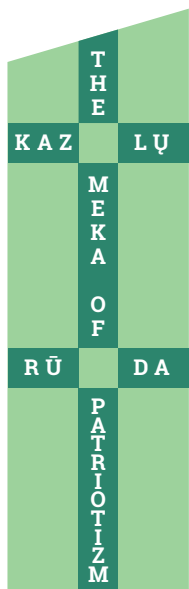
More promising are the “Volunteer Corps”, the underground, and the partisans in Russia, who are blowing up military depots, setting fire to fuel storage facilities, and attacking military targets, especially the most vulnerable and hard-to-defend infrastructure - the railways. Russian civilians must at least partially feel what war is like. Then their brainwashed mentality will gradually change until hundreds of thousands of Russians take to the streets, and the regime collapses.

Russia has 140 million inhabitants, the European Union 500 million, and the US 300 million. Western weapons are more sophisticated, and more need to be produced than Russia has. So far, Russia has been the privileged side in the war (it can destroy Ukraine, but Ukraine cannot retaliate). Russia's defeat would be a globally significant event. The West would seem to have found the way to the legendary land of happiness - Eldorado.

This Western cowardice, passivity, inability to understand the situation, and failure to foresee even a somewhat more distant course of events is threatening.

Disappointed and exhausted, the Ukrainians may vote for a pro-Russian candidate in next year's presidential election, who will promise what they long for most - peace, even with possible territorial losses. This would increase the threat to the Baltic states and Poland.

1941 exile  
Algimantas Lelešius  
2023-07-17



## To us, Margarita Drobiazko and Povilas Vanagas are Olympic champions

The behavior of our state institutions towards our former famous ice dancer Margarita Drobiazko is deplorable, malicious, contradicts the logic of common sense, humiliates the name of the state, and is fodder for hostile anti-Lithuanian propaganda. The senseless, stupid noise caused by Margarita's Lithuanian citizenship (the opportunity to remain silent was missed).

D. Žalimas, our law enforcement expert: There is no threat to our state in the activities of Margarita Drobiazko and Povilas Vanagas. Are tens of thousands of our citizens who go to Belarus for cheaper fuel, fertilizers, salt, cereals, and fill the budget of dictator Lukashenko, so that he can imprison and torture a thousand and a half Belarusians hostile to the regime, more worthy of Lithuanian citizenship? The merits of this famous pair of ice dancers to Lithuanian society, sports, and culture are enormous, undeniable, and historical.

Without delving into their current activities (e.g., they participated in an ice dance performance for disabled children), an inflated bubble of pseudo-accusations has been created.

The wisest, most honorable, and noble thing would be to apologize to Margarita and leave her both Lithuanian citizenship and the medals and orders she has won. This would be Christian. And it would be a relief for us as well. And we don't need

to invite Margarita, it seems, to apologize. It will be reminiscent of an Inquisition trial.

Let's recall the scandalous case when, due to the brazen attitude of Russian judges against our pair, she lost the title of 2002 Olympic champions and was pushed back to 5th place. We, the older people, remember that case well. Our pair skated impeccably. You didn't have to be a judge to realize that. And the opponents even fell on the ice. And yet they became... champions.

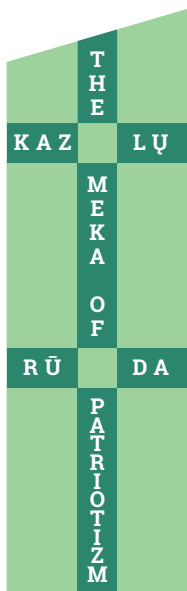
G. Furmanavičius: "If our pair had represented Russia, they would have become champions, but with athletes from a small state, you can act without ceremony. Such mockery of our pair (only 5th place?!) caused outrage among the public and the sports community, the arena roared, almost all the skaters and their coaches signed a petition disagreeing with the judges' assessments. The Lithuanian Figure Skating Federation filed a protest with the International Skating Union. An international scandal erupted. How we used to await the performances of our pair, how we rooted for them."

Now, when Russia is considered an illegal terrorist state, perhaps it is worth the Lithuanian Olympic Committee to appeal to the International Olympic Committee to review the 2002 Winter Olympics figure skating judges' assessments.

There was a somewhat similar case with our heptathlete A. Skujytė at the Summer Olympics. She finished 5th. After some time, it turned out that the athletes who finished 3rd and 4th were using doping. Their results were annulled, and A. Skujytė, it seems, received the Olympic bronze medal after about 2 years.

1941 exile  
Algimantas Lelešius  
2023-08-18





1941 exile, rifleman,  
awarded the January 13th Commemoration Medal,  
erected a monument at his own expense  
to the signatory of the Act of February 16th,  
Pranas Dovydaitis, in Kazlų Rūda (2015),  
Honored Citizen of Kazlų Rūda Algimantas Lelešius

August 21, 2023

To the Mayor of Lazdijai District, A. Miškinienė

## Regarding the monument to the Dainava District partisans in Kalniškė

I have read the article “The plan for perpetuating the site of the Kalniškė battle has been presented” in the newspaper “Tremtinys” (August 18, 2023). I have examined the photo of the proposed memorial complex design.

We, the political prisoners, exiles, and participants in the freedom fights, are not convinced by the proposed reconstructed site of the Kalniškė battle of the partisans. In our opinion, the Kalniškė hill should be preserved as authentic as possible, the way it was. It should be protected like the ancient Lithuanians protected sacred oak trees and sacred groves. Of course, the hill should be cleaned of trash and fallen trees. The top of the hill should have a green lawn, attractive to visitors. In this lawn, there should be small stones, about 20-30 cm, with the crosses of the Vytis and the names and dates of the Dainava partisan battles.

We propose to erect a monument to the Dainava District partisans on the top of the hill, which would be pleasing to the exiles, political prisoners, and riflemen.

The proposed reconstructed Kalniškė battle site, however, oppresses with its numerous, long, and bulky granite stairs. They damage the hill, suffocate it, and do not allow the earth to breathe. These long granite stairs will cost hundreds of thousands, and we believe this is the reason they will be built. A mischievous child who falls on such stairs would get injured. Granite is an alien material to us, Lithuanians.

We suggest that the municipality abandon this proposed extremely expensive project, which will cause discontent among the citizens, and implement our ten times cheaper project that will be pleasing to the public. This would popularize the municipality throughout Lithuania.

## The Memorial of the Dainava District Partisans

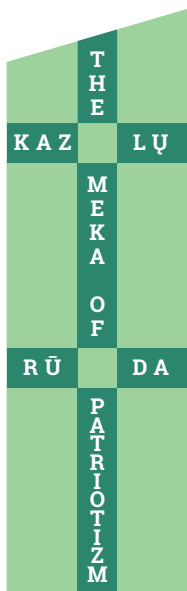
Bas-reliefs of the leaders:  
Dominykas Jėčius-Ažuolis,  
Juozas Vitkus-Kazimieraitis,  
Vaclovas Voveris-Žaibas,  
Adolfas Ramanauskas-Vanagas.

2017



*Pieliko, beveik neapdoroto granito luitas ar didžiulis akmuo simbolizuoja ginkluoto Pasipriešinimo, kilusio iš tautos, įėgą.*





## LI-TU-A-NIA –

# The syllables that have enchanted us for eternity

In the “Evening News” (2023.07.25), I read the relevant article by journalist Olava Strikuliene “Who this time ordered the attack on Justinas Marcinkevičius?”

Geniuses have always had enemies. Let’s remember Mozart and Salieri. This theme has always attracted writers with its eternal drama.

The brilliant poet Justinas Marcinkevičius is no exception. A decade ago, political scientist Neringa Putinaite took on the Sisyphean task of trying to criticize J. Marcinkevičius, but apparently achieved the opposite results. Allegedly, he portrayed the Lithuanian as a poor, powerless, and always wronged little man. But by portraying him this way, he indirectly (and through his civic activities, directly) urged people not to be that way, to rise up from their fears. This has happened in our history more than once (Žalgiris, uprisings, volunteers, partisans, January 13).

Now the attackers of poets (after his death!) have been taken over by ordinary people: prose writer Kristina Sabaliauskaitė, public figure Ričardas Savukynas, teacher Vytautas Toileikis, and others.

But there is no evil that does not lead to good. The despicable efforts to belittle the poet have the opposite effect - they unite and increase the ranks of his admirers.

The article enthusiastically praises the poet, his work, and civic activities through the voices of well-known public figures: literary critic Valentinas Sventickas, poet Erika Drungytė, opera soloist Liudas Mikalauskas, politician Vytenis Andriukaitis, and musicologist Viktoras Gerulaitis.

No one is born a tower of wisdom, a genius. Such people become so through long, exhausting trials of reality, overcoming inevitable mistakes. Only a few manage to rise from the gray zone. Justinas Marcinkevičius’ mistakes (e.g. “The Pine Tree that Laughed”) are of negligible value compared to his becoming a unifying poet of the Nation. He was the first to start the Rebirth. His dramas “Mindaugas”, “Mažvydas”, “Cathedral” would evoke catharsis, tears of soul purification, faith in goodness, and the Rebirth of the Nation. That is why we regained our freedom.

The majority of the nation dreamed of seeing him as the President of Lithuania. But this was foreign to the poet’s nature. We experienced that he did not become our dreamed President, but we did not get angry, we understood him.

And again there is dissonance from the Writers’ Union. Previously, they defended their guild member Petras Cvirka, although his own spirit was striving for his own in Grūtas Park (which I wrote about). The desire of the spirit was fulfilled.

And now the Writers’ Union again craves attention. They came up with the idea of immortalizing, although everyone criticizes it, the poet’s Trilogy next to their headquarters. And again, a guild initiative. The project features three granite or marble blocks with chaotically carved, winding surfaces. An ordinary citizen would need a great explanation, otherwise he would turn his finger to his temple and say: “From a great inscription...”

But seriously, the monumental immortalization of his personality is the concern of the nation, because the genius poet is a cornerstone figure of the Rebirth. Modernist sculptors’ experiments are not in place here.

In Vilnius, Vincas Kudirka and Jonas Basanavičius have been appropriately and eloquently immortalized. On the front page of the newspaper “Vakaro žinios” there is a historic photograph: Justinas Marcinkevičius speaking to a huge gathering of people in Vingis Park. This is how the monument immortalizing the poet should be: the poet speaking into a microphone, surrounded by people, because he was the tribune of the nation.

I imagine a large white (expression of sacredness) marble wall next to the Cathedral. It would be engraved with the bright faces of the gathering of people from the times of the Rebirth, and in the background the beloved poet Justinas Marcinkevičius would be speaking into a microphone. His image would possibly be sculptural, not bas-relief, similar in size to the monument of Vincas Kudirka. People should reflect on the sacred problem of immortalizing the poet. The vision that pleases the public should be enthusiastically uniting the community to pursue the noble goal - the Rebirth and the high immortalization of its inspirator.

1941 deportee  
Algimantas Lelešius  
2023-07-28





On May 15th, it was announced that the winning project for the monument to Justinas Marcinkevičius, with the motto “Trilogy”, was created by the Lithuanian and Finnish company “Architektūros linija”, represented by director Daiva Čaikauskienė, architects Gintaras Čaikauskas and Agnė Mockevičiūtė, and sculptor Gediminas Piekuras. This monument idea received a lot of criticism in the public sphere. Questions were raised whether this was a “creative disability” or even “mocking the poet’s memory”.



Reply to the article by A. Lelešius  
**LI-TU-A-NIA – The syllables  
that have enchanted us for eternity**

**ANDRIUKAITIS Vytenis Povilas**

Thanks for the very valuable thoughts. It is known that the Writers' Union took up the interpretation of Justin Marcinkevičius after this small square was given his name. I had to contribute to the interpretation of the poet J. Marcinkevičius in the courtyard of the Prienai library. Sensitively done. I think Druskininkai can also sensitively interpret the poet who loved this resort so much and wrote "Mindauga" in 12 days. He was just there, caught by the Spirit in the "Dainava" sanatorium.

And here in Vilnius, it is already necessary to carefully weigh all the pros and cons due to the location, volume, etc. It is true that we have no common sense of the great men of the Second Revival. In my opinion, the composition dedicated to "Baltic road" is very bad. Yes, there is Vingis Park, there is Cathedral Square, there is also Mount Tauros, where J. Marcinkevičius opened a memorial stone for the House of the Nation. But I am not against the interpretation of the "Trilogy" by the Writers' Union. And this would not prevent the Poet to be immortalized together with other bright faces of the revival in some larger space than those you have already mentioned. I am not a supporter of demolishing monuments either. I am a supporter of their relocation, use for historical interpretation, tourism, etc. Because, even in his "Young Lithuania" Maironis taught Lithuanians not to destroy, to reinterpret those built monuments. Yes, I am not a supporter of Herostratus' logic. History is only complete when it is revealed without any erasures, embellishments, or omissions. Otherwise, it is not life teacher And just a servant of new ideologies.

Sincerely,  
Vytenis Andriukaitis.

## The Ideal Location for a Belfry Monument - In the Square on Vytauto Street next to the March 11th Oak

*In times of national calamity and victory  
You rang out, bell, exaltedly.  
When the enemy is near, nation, awake,  
Again resound, bell, rouse us.*

A. Lelešius

The Commission's decision to recommend the construction of a belfry monument to the "Kazlų Rūda Community" Association is unacceptable. Our arguments:

The commission members did not delve into the exceptional, important spiritual and value-based meaning of the belfry monument, especially now, when a terrible war is raging near us, which poses an existential danger to us as well.

The purpose of the bell is to awaken the nation and prepare to repel the danger.

The square near the church is not a suitable place. The trees in the square are twisted and of little value. There the belfry monument will be like an exile. Next to it - a powerful accent overshadowing the belfry monument - the church and other accents - a cross, a monument.

The location near the Monument to the Deportees is also not ideal, as the monument and the belfry monument would compete with their impact.

The impeccable, well-thought-out place is the square on Vytauto Street near our pride, the Independence Oak. The belfry monument should be placed 1.5 m from the flag pole towards the oak. The oak leaves should be perhaps 0.5 m from the belfry monument. Here one can see a great original meaning - the oak is a symbol of nature, and for the nation - a symbol of spiritual power, which fits the belfry monument, because it supports, reinforces, complements, decorates, and makes it vibrant.

I think that the lighting poles are not an obstacle here, and the flag pole is suitable. During events, the police will have to close the traffic around the square, so there will be enough space for the gathered people.

By the way, people say: the church is somewhat compromised, but the oak will never be compromised.

1941 deportee  
Algimantas Lelešius  
2023-08-26



*We repeat with exaltation:  
Glory to you, Ukraine!  
And glory to your heroes!  
Land of sunny sunflowers,  
You were attacked  
By the messenger of underground death  
In the form of a man,  
Thirsty for blood and sacrifices,  
Delighting in the ruins  
The tyrant.  
With the iron fist of terror  
He turned Russia  
Into his obedient  
Slavery country.  
Forcing the Slavic Russian  
To kill the Slavic Ukrainian,  
Because he, the Ukrainian,  
Does not want Russian slavery.  
And we do not want it either  
So with heart and conscience  
We are with you, courageous Ukraine!  
As in the days of the glory of Vytautas,  
When we were in one state -  
The Grand Duchy of Lithuania.*

***SOS! Every third Russian  
according to polls demands  
to attack the Baltics***

*Without missiles, we are powerless  
So let's know: the Kremlin can  
level a country to the ground*

*We demand from NATO:  
Give us long-range missiles,  
So that we don't have to wait for  
an unexpected blow from the Kremlin*

*The Kremlin must know:  
The Baltic countries  
can strike with "Iskanders".*

1941 deportee  
Algimantas Lelešius  
August 22, 2023

1941 deportee  
Algimantas Lelešius  
November 22, 2022

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# ALGIMANTAS LELEŠIUS



Photos from the author's archive

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