SUTARKIM GERAI:

DIALOGICAL RELATIONS OF LEGITIMIZATION BETWEEN LITHUANIAN STATE BUREAUCRACY AND POLITICAL AND CULTURAL MOVEMENTS THROUGH MECHANISMS OF FOLK MUSIC

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ABSTRACT

This anthropological research project investigates the dialogical relationship between two entities: first, the official and expert organs of Lithuanian folk music, including the Lithuanian Executive Branch of Government, the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture, and various non-governmental folklore organizations and institutions that monitor and control the folk music genre through programming and funding; and second, the rising neo-Nazi folk youth movement as representative of many radical fringe groups which fall on the extremely conservative end of the political spectrum. The Lithuanian Ministry of Culture has featured the performance of dainos*, or folk songs, in much of the country's state-sponsored arts and culture programming over the last two decades of Lithuania's independence. In recent years, a new trend of engagement with Lithuanian folk music is emerging among self-identifying neo-Nazi and Skinhead Lithuanians, particularly under the umbrella of youth-centered xenophobic organizations such as the* Jaunoji Lietuva *(Young Lithuania) radical political party. Their demonstrations and performances – namely, protests, gatherings, and marches that occur in central, public locations in many of Lithuania's biggest cities – incorporate the singing of modified folk musical material as a strategic part of their events. Within the frame of an ethnographic study based in Vilnius, Lithuania, I aim to collect and order claims towards authenticity, authority, and expertise over folk music material, in so much as they relate to these aforementioned groups. Equipped with this analysis, I will be able to understand the real relations and changing conditions within which authenticity and folk culture are developed and instrumentalized as compared with a historical background that covers the folk music over the past century in Lithuania. This project accesses a deeper understanding of how state apparatuses are engaged in a dialogical relationship with these radical fringe groups that invoke processes of continual, mutual legitimization over time.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The Lithuanian winter of 2011 had been so cold, and the budget for street maintenance within the Vilnius Municipality so frozen as a result of the economic crisis, that the walk down Tauro Hill from the supermarket on the afternoon of March 11th was nothing short of a slippery arctic adventure. Earmuffs strapped on tight, burying my headphones deep within my ear canals, I shuffled down the winding sidewalk towards Lukiškių Square, once known as Lenin Square in a bygone era. I had learned to laugh at myself that first winter in Lithuania each time my boots slipped out from under me on the unsalted layers of ice that had been slowly accumulating atop the pavement since November. When I saw others dance about to keep their balance, I did my best to stifle my laughter. But I cringed every time I witnessed an elderly woman fall upon the unsafe ground – and I had seen this happen far too many times.

As I approached the square shuffling to keep my balance, I began to hear shouting and chanting over the music playing on my own noisy iPod, coming down Gedimino Avenue from the Cathedral. Unknowingly, I had crashed into a marching mixture of bundled, boisterous Lithuanians: pockets of shouting, mohawk-sporting teenage men, young women dressed in warm layers of traditional folk fabric, mothers carrying their children, and older men in puffy winter jackets. Today is March 11th – this must be a Lithuanian Independence Day celebration, *I thought to myself. And then, I saw it: a large, black cloth banner adorned with swastikas in each corner, reading "Skinheads Lithuania" in an oversized gothic font. Eager to capture a video of the young men carrying the sign, I opened the video function on my iPhone. But no sooner had I removed my thick wool mittens and pressed play on my touch screen had the sign passed me. Instead, what I managed to capture on camera was a pocket of approximately twenty-five people walking and singing, from memory, a Lithuanian*

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folksong about a family living on the countryside – led by fur-cloaked elderly women not unlike those I had sympathy for each time they lost their balance on the ice. The contrasts within this context confused me. Why were the harmonies of beautiful folk songs floating in the same air that was carrying the shouts of "Lithuania for Lithuanians!" from the self-identified neo-Nazis?

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The Lithuanian Ministry of Culture has featured the performance of *dainos*, or folk songs, in much of the country's state-sponsored arts and culture programming over the last two decades that Lithuania has been an independent nation. In the past century, the Lithuanian folk song canon has been used during periods of the nation's occupation to mediate the relationship between nationalist Lithuanian sentiments and the aims of unification: first under the Russian Empire, and later under the Soviet Union. However a new trend of engagement with Lithuanian folk music is emerging among self-identifying neo-Nazi and Skinhead Lithuanians, particularly under the umbrella of youth-centered xenophobic organizations such as the *Jaunoji Lietuva* (Young Lithuania) radical political party. Their demonstrations and performances – namely, protests, gatherings, and marches that occur in central, public locations in many of Lithuania's biggest cities – incorporate the singing of modified folk musical material as a strategic part of their events.

In this paper, I will argue that these radical fringe groups legitimize their agendas through a mechanism, carried out by Lithuanian neo-folk groups associated with neo-Nazi movements, of public *performance* of ancient folk songs that have been co-opted and altered to promote their agenda, centered around principles such as anti-Semitism, homophobia, and ethnic purification. It seems that the state does little to prevent these protests – even offering funding to neo-folk projects that have varying degrees of indirect associations with these neo-fascist movements in Lithuania. Such strange, forgiving relationships might be best

exemplified with the recent example allowance of the March 11th neo-Nazi march of a few thousand participants to take place once again this year with no legal penalties, though the march formally denied a permit when the application was reviewed by the Municipality. Without question, there are some curious mechanisms at play that relate these groups to one another that are worth ethnographic exploration.

This research project investigates the dialogical relationship between two entities: first, the official and expert organs of Lithuanian folk music, including the Lithuanian Government, the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture, and various non-governmental folklore organizations and institutions that monitor and control the folk music genre through programming and funding; and second, the rising neo-Nazi folk youth movement as representative of many radical fringe groups which fall on the extremely conservative end of the political spectrum. Within the frame of an ethnographic project based in Vilnius, Lithuania, I will collect and order claims towards authenticity, authority, and expertise over folk music material, in so much as they relate to these aforementioned groups.

First, I will contextualize this particular case study within a historical background, followed by an exploration of theoretical frameworks relating to discourses within the social sciences on social memory, state-building anthropology of expertise, the construction of authenticity, conservation practices, performative action, and ritual behavior. Equipped with the investigation of the central debates and discourses surrounding my research topic, I aim to develop my own theoretical perspective, and offer a new perspective on the political and structural conditions that shape the dialogical relations of legitimization between the state apparatuses and their alters in the form of radical political groups. In turn, I will shed new light on the complex ways in which messages of hate speech become permissible and perpetuated throughout a post-Soviet environment. Through this analysis, it will be possible to better understand how rising neo-Nazi groups in Lithuania engage in processes of self-

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legitimization through conceptualization of authentic Lithuanian culture, practicing and performing their particular brand of nationalism. On a more sophisticated level, this project explores how state apparatuses are engaged in a dialogical relationship with these radical fringe groups that invoke processes of continual, mutual legitimization over time. Through this project, I will be able to understand the real relations and changing conditions within which authenticity and folk culture are developed and instrumentalized.

<p align="center">* * *</p>

Sutarkim Gerai has been selected as the title for this research project as its various subtle meanings and connotations in the Lithuanian language apply to several facets of this ethnographic project. The sentence itself literally means, "let's fit together well," and is used in the sense of "let's be in accordance," or more colloquially, "let's get along." In this light, the title is suggestive of the very dialogical relations between the state bureaucracy and fringe political and cultural movements that are central to this thesis and its argumentation.

The verb *sutarti*, meaning to agree with, can also suggest harmonization, and it also serves as the root of the word *sutartinė*, the name of a special type of Lithuanian folk song These songs come from Aukštaitija, the beer-making region of Lithuania in northeastern Lithuania (Ambrazevičius 2009:15) and are of particular importance to nationalist groups because of their unique structure. Historically, *sutartines* are linen-making songs that are comprised of two or more melodic vocal lines. These voices overlap in continual dissonance with one another, oscillating between unsettling, dissonant pitches, as if to imitate the threads weaving through each other on a loom. The dissonance of the *sutartines* subgenre is marketed as a uniquely Lithuanian tradition within folk music: their structure of continuous, hypnotizing dissonances sung in jarring ratios with one another is not found in many other musical traditions. To the Western Classically-trained musical ear, the harmonies produced paired with the use of overlapping rhythmic syncopation only intensifies the feeling of

instability in the music. Yet music continues, the dialogue between the discordant melodies continue, the pulsing rhythms play off of one another contrapuntally.

Let's work together, sing the actors within this ethnographic project. *Let's play off of one another; let's legitimize our identities through chords of dissonance. Let's harmonize.*

CHAPTER ONE: Historical Context

Political celebration and state sponsorship of the "authenticity" Lithuanian folk song tradition is not a recent phenomenon throughout Lithuania's complex historical past. Mapping the relationship between the shifts in governmental power and the changing nature of the Lithuanian folk song canon as a "national" commodity over the past century reveals a variety of functions that this art form has served. The celebration and exploitation of this tradition has served entirely different, and sometimes opposing, political goals and functions over time despite very little change in the *collection* or *performance* of the music itself. As the folk song canon is intrinsically connected with the Lithuanian national identity and the surrounding geographical area's contested past, it is important to situate this music within a particular historical context before further ethnographic exploration.

1.1 Lithuania in Flux: Cultural and Political Changes Throughout History

To contextualize the role that the Lithuanian traditions of folk singing have played in Lithuania's more recent history, it is important to first investigate the origins of the Lithuanian national obsession with ethnic folk music. However, it is difficult to accurately determine when the concept of *Lithuania* itself was established and hard to track how this particular cultural identity, which birthed the Lithuanian singing tradition, has been reshaped over time. Following many territorial conflicts between tribes in the Baltic area prior to the formation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, several key political occupations and border shifts have redefined Lithuanian territory: the augmentation of the territory of Grand Duchy of the Lithuania that preceded to the Crusades, the treaty that established the political connections between Lithuania and Poland in 1413, the Union at Lublin in 1569 which established the Polish-Lithuanian Confederation, and the division of the territory of Lithuania

between by the rulers Maria-Theresa of Austria, Frederick of Prussia, and Catherine of the Russian Empire between 1772 and 1795 (Lopatto 1917:190; Jusaitis 1917:17). These borders continued to shift as additional partitions were established throughout these two decades (Our Lady of Sorrows Convent 1954). The border changes that took place during this time were reflected within the shifts and fragmentation of society and culture within this region, for as historian John S. Loppato writes, "the Prussianization of German-Lithuania and the Russification of Russian Lithuania marched hand in hand" (Lopatto 1917:191). The region continued to change as Lithuania sided with Napoleon in the war against Russia in 1812, and as Lithuania was unsuccessful in the 1831 insurrection against Russia (Our Lady of Sorrows Convent 1954), both done an effort to resist this pattern of cultural erasure and political control. When Napoleon appointed General Mikhail Nikolaev Muraviev as the Governor General of the Northwestern Empire of the Russian Empire in 1855, Tsar Alexander II ordered the general "to crush the Polish Lithuanian insurrection" (Page 1959:2), such that the Polish and Latin influences in religion and culture were erased, and that Russian (and also, Cyrillic script) were the official languages within the educational system (Page 1959:3; Suny 1993:36). Overall, these several first centuries of Lithuania's contested history brought many cultures, languages, and political systems through this geographical territory, indubitably fusing (or *confusing*) the various cultural traditions in this region. Neither a particular Lithuanian national history, nor a specific Lithuanian cultural tradition, was clear throughout this period, and a national cultural tradition as folk song was not yet a particular scholarly or political focus.

As this brief summary of Lithuania's early history demonstrates, the concepts of Lithuanian ethnicity and nation have been dynamic in nature even prior to the drastic political changes that took place in the 20th Century, yet *fin de siècle* Lithuania experienced a shift in understanding this national history. Driven in part by the abolishment of serfdom between

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1861 and 1865 (Our Lady of Sorrows Convent 1954), the *Aušra* Era (meaning "dawn," or "reawakening") of Lithuanian Romanticism blossomed, drawing from roots in the movement of German Romanticism, and throughout this period the fascination with "pure" Lithuanian ethnicity developed among historians, artists, and musicians. Politically, Lithuanians fought for their independence from the Russian Empire at the Lithuanian Diet in December 1905 and finally achieved independence after World War I (Our Lady of Sorrows Convent 1954; Page 1959:21; Hazard 1992:100). This newly independent state capitalized on new wave of Lithuanian Romanticism for primordialist political gains: turning to ancient historical roots to rediscover their nation's "ancient" cultural past, prominent Lithuanian historians and scholars began to document traditions, art, and music – manipulating them to form what would become an historically recurring sentiment of the "regilding of Lithuania's faded glory" (Page 1959:4-5) throughout the following century.

Folk music in particular served as an effective tool for helping to construct an identity of a "Lithuanian nation" since the performative, *living* aspects, like all musical traditions, were "a particularly potent representational resource…a means by which communities are able to identify themselves and present this identity to others" (Dawe and Bennet 2004:224). Historians and musicologists described "immortal *dainos*" and distinctly Lithuanian instruments as the preserved survivals of a pure ancient Lithuanian culture (Harrison 1928:126) – one that, as previously demonstrated, had never fully existed in the region that became the Lithuanian state due to a complex cultural and historical past. Musicologists found the work of Lithuanians "to be unusually rich in number and in signs of creative talent" (Page 1959:4; Harrison 1928:132; Bender 1936:328), and have claimed that the Western Classical composers Schubert, Chopin, and Schumann incorporated folk song motives from Lithuanian *dainos* into their compositions (Bender 1936:238). Of course, this political independence was ultimately short-lived, as the Baltic States (including Lithuania) became

part of the Soviet Union under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in 1939, remaining so until the early 1990s. The obsession with Lithuanian folk music as one of the *cultural* traditions independent and unique in comparison to other traditions of nearby ethnic groups had already been established.

Folk music was one mechanism used by Lithuanians within the Soviet Union to construct an ancient past for the purposes of preserving their former independent *national* identity. Whether or not the nation is officially recognized as independent, cultural customs and traditions are often imagined as "the cultural property of the nation, products of the collective genius of its nationals…important to their identity and self-esteem. They are of the nation and cannot be alienated from it" (Cuno 2009:1). Surely, music was a strong part of Lithuanian life under the Soviet Empire, but the government attempted to forcefully control the direction of the folk song tradition through strategic documentation techniques and support of musical performances. Soviet song festivals were held since 1948, but they necessarily included the performance of Russian folk songs alongside Lithuanian ones, providing "a popular outlet for national feeling" in front of the overarching Soviet backdrop (Iwaskiw 1996:38; Misunas and Taagepera 1983:111). This particular folk festival environment provided the material for state-sponsored ethnologists to investigate the "evolutionary" development of culture as a linear progression of these groups, from simplicity and primitiveness towards *high culture* over time (Hirsch 2000:213; Kozlov 1988:153). Stalin's idea of internationalism was that the multi-ethnic Soviet State would allow diverse cultures to develop together, from pagan and folk roots through increasingly complex forms of culture and ultimately amalgamate into one merged, uniform state, such that the original traditions of the separate cultures of the Soviet Union could be "ethnically engineered" (Tishkov 1997:24). Contrary to sociologist Jean-Louis Fabiani's description of "the most important cultural festivals…[which] allow a fair space for critical discussions, not

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only about cultural tastes but also about political issues" (Fabiani 2011:2), these festivals provided the Soviet state with a mechanism for slowly stifling the nationalist spirit expressed through performance of Lithuanian folk music, promoting conformity, and quelling notions of independence instead of encouraging debate. The Soviet system continued to flourish for several decades, encouraging ethnic groups to define themselves in terms *other* than class or religion, and music was one cultural category through which the Lithuanian people could continue to understand their culture and ethnicity under the USSR.

1.2 Folk Music Performance Since the Fall of the Soviet Union

The folk song tradition took a strong turn as the movement for independent Lithuania, called *Sajūdis* (The Singing Revolution), grew stronger in the late 1980s with Gorbachev's *glastnost* policy in 1987 (Hazard 1992:100). The public demonstration of nationalist sentiments, including events such as the Baltic Way and the Vilnius Television Tower actions that were accompanied by the peaceful performance of folk songs by demonstrators, were part of the actions that broke down the communist system (Gleason 1992:6). Lithuania became the first nation to declare independence from the Soviet Union in January of 1991. Folk music became one of the key tools through which developing Lithuanian nationalist sentiments have helped to construct the modern Lithuanian state and a new corresponding *independent* and *free* national identity. The performance of folk songs alongside *Sajūdis* actions and protests have been increasingly glorified as a grander ritual embedded in contemporary Lithuanian society, taking on new significance that ritualizes the demonstration of independence today. This has also involved not simply ideological, but also financial support within Lithuania as post-Soviet capitalist country, since "'state support of artists' suggests direct financial support, through fellowships, purchase of art works, or funding of arts organizations" (Alexander 2007:185,186). Now more than ever, there is a strong trend

in Lithuania to manipulate its national history through public, performative presentation of national culture.

Two decades after the fall of the Soviet Union, and nearly one decade after Lithuania became a member of the European Union in 2004, Lithuanians use their musical tradition to display their ancient ethnic roots, imagining that their folk songs are living relics of their ancient past. Lithuanians demonstrate and celebrate these primordialist sentiments at folk-song festivals that reflect national and pan-Baltic regional pride. This new use of folk culture not just to determine a past, but to project a mystical, mythical form of nationalism into the future, is much in keeping with the themes of John and Jean L. Comaroff's 2001 essay "Millennial Capitalism: First Thoughts on a Second Coming," which served as the introduction to their volume *Millennial Capitalism and the Culture of Neoliberalism*. The authors discuss the fervent nature of what they term "millennial capitalism" – signifying both the new nature of capitalism during the decades surrounding the year 2000, and the way that capitalism itself is has manifested and become mystified (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001:2). Explaining millennial capitalism's connection to mystical trends, occult movements, and other particular features of contemporary society, such as the changes in how production and consumption are related, these authors demonstrate that this shift is ultimately changing how labor and capital are related, which in turn has a profound effect on the nature of social classes and political and economic environments (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001:3). Imagined communities based on nationality and ethnicity are often envisioned through a primordialist lens (Suny 1993:3; Anderson 1991). Combined with the new uses of "primordialist thought" (Suny 1993:3), and in connection with the Lithuanian folk song canon, is the new phenomenon that mythologizes the past to establish definitions of national identity that *reinvent the future* – and certainly we can understand this as a "millennial," *mystical* turn in capitalist cultural practices. Sometimes, these details of the past are not even factually

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based, but products of invented occult, pagan Lithuanian legends. It is precisely this complex community-growing, primordialist process that has led folk music and 21st century politics in Lithuania to become grossly conflated.

By turning to ancient historical roots to find an "ancient" cultural past, sentiments of nationalism have grown, and folk song traditions have become a cultural commodity that is now marketed by the Lithuanian State to draw attention and financial benefits from sources in the international capitalist market. Keeping in mind Lithuania's history of oscillating between occupied and independent statuses over the last several centuries, it proves useful to examine how *authentic* Lithuanian folk culture has been imagined and performed over time. In order to serve the Lithuanian State agenda of nation-building, the performance of folk songs has been used to strengthen Lithuania's image as a capitalist independent country. As the governmental structure has changed from one of communism to capitalism in Lithuania, the arts as a whole have struggled to become a viable privatized business sector, and this struggle between the artists and the state to find a compromise have led to an understanding that "art should be state-supported but not state-controlled" (Iwaskiw 1996:204). Although not all events are controlled *per se* by the Lithuanian Ministry of culture, performances of folk songs have been utilized through the Lithuanian state's exploitation of *the festival* as a major cultural form to expose the nation to fellow European Union Member States and the greater international market. By developing a strong national folk music culture through sponsorship of festivals that feature folk music, the State uses folk music as a political tool to bridge Lithuania's contested past with its national future, despite the series of occupations and border shifts that have taken place in this nation. Annual pan-Baltic folk song festivals and International Student folk song festivals, both held during the warm and sunny summer months that draw tourists, also receive state funding, which both encourages cooperative

participation in both local folk song groups and larger-scale international festivals, and also trains the millennial generation in the folk song tradition.

Circling around these trends of ethnic re-discovery in Lithuania in this current millennial moment is a growing radical neo-nationalist political and cultural movement. This trend has been witnessed and documented in much of Central and Eastern Europe over the last two decades. The political party "Jaunoji Lietuva" (Young Lithuania) has perhaps not grown in support, but certainly in media presence, over the last five years with its racist and homophobic election slogans and political marches on Lithuanian national holidays. The party, led by party chairman and Vice-Mayor of Kaunas, Lithuania S. Buškevičius, uses bigoted euphemisms to attack minority groups in Lithuania with their main campaign slogan, "For a Lithuania Without Blue, Black, Red, and Gypsies from the Encampment." This main slogan, these offensive color-centered euphemisms are clearly understood by most Lithuanians, the party explains their slogan in explicit detail:

> For a Lithuania *be žydru* – for example, without the ideology of sexual perversion that is being imposed on us from abroad – *be juodu* – for example, without black money and liberalist and tolerant traditions, and *be raudonu* – for example, without communist yeast that is still torturing our society. (Šaras 2011)

The colors that are used by the party have very direct translations within Lithuanian culture. For instance, light blue is a slang term for gay men, and black signifies ethnic diversity as well as the black market. Red serves as a signifier for ethnic and linguistic Russians, as well as the communist party. Such obvious hatred against minority groups, including those of different races, genders, ethncities, political ideologies, sexual orientations and identities, and social classes, is certainly not a new tradition of the Young Lithuanians. The party employs slogans, campaign messages, and other performative actions that hover around the border of hate speech. Part of this group's success is in its ability to use illegal hate speech within their

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campaign activities and political events, using euphemisms to represent ideologies that can be

twisted or misconstrued for different purposes while evading legal prosecution.

CHAPTER TWO: Theoretical and Empirical Frameworks

The past two decades since the fall of the Soviet Union have led to the generation of an entire canon of literature dedicated to new theoretical approaches to nation-building, state-making, and nationalism. The following literature review will identify many of the frameworks which I will use to inform my own argumentation within my empirical analysis.

2.1 Investigating Directionality: Examining the Construction of Nationalism, Nations, and State in post-Soviet Space

Primarily, the proposed research project will be investigated through the frame related to **questions of state-making and nationalism**. In his book *Nations and Nationalism,* Eric Hobsbawm addresses the production of nationalism, stating that "nations do not make states and nationalisms but the other way around," (Hobsbawm 1990:10). Through this ethnographic research project, I aim to reinvestigate Hobsbawm's claim, digging deeper into the mutual dependencies and ongoing dialogues between these aforementioned actors by illuminating the falsity of the unidirectional constructionist vector from the entities of nationalism and state to that of the nation. In the case of the Lithuanian nation, Lithuanian folk music has been historically co-opted by nationalist traditions as one of the key tools for cohesive cultural production at the state level. Similar trends have been witnessed within many countries during similar periods of initial state formation (Eriksen 1993). Lithuania's history has been compared with that of its fellow former Soviet states: these nations and their corresponding nationalisms have been continually contested as many cultures, languages, and political systems were fused (or *confused*) throughout this geographical territory as a result of changing borders, several occupations, and other political shifts over the last millennium (Jusaitis 1918:17, Lopatto 1917:190, Page 1959:2-3). As the nation changed, so did its state and nationalism – *and vice versa*. Whether or not the nation of Lithuania was officially recognized as independent at different moments in history, cultural customs and traditions

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were often imagined as "the cultural property of the nation, products of the collective genius of its nationals…important to their identity and self-esteem. They are of the nation and cannot be alienated from it" (Cuno 2009:1). John A. Hall, speaking of Karl Marx's understanding of state formation as dependent upon social structure, states that "human beings make history but in situations which they did not choose" (Hall 2006:33). Following from this sentiment, in order to understand how the *cultural tool* of music is being used and manipulated today within greater multi-actor social mechanisms, one must understand that Lithuanian folk music has been a tool for national institutions to *create* and monitor nationalism, just as nationalist performance and co-option of Lithuanian folk has helped to recreate and reinvent the nation time and time again from a historical perspective. This cyclical creation mechanism continues through the present day.

Within my empirical analysis, I intend to investigate the perspectives of all actors involved within the processes of state-making, critical of Louis Althusser's understandings of the operation of the state as an institution that teaches " 'know-how,' but in forms which ensure *subjection of the ruling ideology* or the 'mastery of its practice' " (Althusser 2006:88). Althusser's conceptualization of the state hearkens back to the description Karl Marx puts forth within the *Communist Manifesto* (1848) – as a "'machine' of repression." In some aspects, the state is culturally repressive: folk culture curriculum within the state education system and state-sponsored performances of "authentic" folk traditions are processes that may be analyzed as mechanisms through which conformity, subjugation, and normalization are achieved (or, at least, attempted) in Lithuania's case. "Homogenization processes," states Hall with reference to the theoretical approaches of Ernest Gellner, "have been central to the history of nationalism" (Hall 2006:38). Citing Arjun Appadurai, Abbebe Kifleyesus notes that thorough investigation of "culturally creative" political strategies, especially the significance of nation- and state-building, is critical when researching folk music "precisely

because these folk-fairs and festivals invoke tradition and modernity as sources of legitimacy" (Appadurai 1990:43, Kifleyesus 2007:250). However, is not the state as the bureaucratic representation of that state also *limited* by its available cultural potential? The state and the success of its nationalist fervor *depend* upon the production of culture from people who identify as members of the *nation* in order to continually legitimate its existence. Reaching beyond these disparate, yet virtually all unilinear approaches to state-building, I aim to shed light upon the interdependent and highly intertwined nature of these dialogical relations within my empirical analysis.

2.2 A Review of the Mechanisms and Materials Found in the Toolkit for Constructing the State, the Nation, and Nationalism

Thomas Eriksen describes *primordialist* views as both exclusive of and impermissible of change over time, emphasizing the basis or permanent, "pure," and durable ethnicities within a "myth of common origin" that clings to traditions of the past (Eriksen 1993:12). Yet reality is devoid of such purity: nation, nationhood, and statehood are connected with the entity of *ethnicity* in incredibly complex ways and remain in constant, fluctuating dialogue with each other. To have a firmer grasp on the workings of these entities and to explore how constantly reaffirm the legitimacy of one another, it is necessary to parse apart their interrelatedness and examine the mechanisms that are embedded within these processes. One mechanism through which the relationship between state-sponsored folk music performances and the co-option of folk tradition by *Jaunoji Lietuva* can be understood is the mystical and primordialist **construction of authenticity**, and the accompanying processes through which this authenticity is legitimized. The constructivist lens has been sharpened a great deal within the field of post-Soviet studies since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. However, celebration of the Lithuanian folk song tradition through the lens of "primordialist thought" (Suny 1993:3) is not a recent phenomenon in Lithuania's complex historical past.

Primordialism, or the contention that nations and cultures are organic and ancient organs that possess true biological and territorial origins, is legitimized through consistent validation of the present with elements traced to the distant past. Imagined communities based on nationality and ethnicity, such as Lithuania in its recently independent form, are often constructed from and supported by a primordialist vantage point (Anderson 1991; Suny 1993:3). Folk culture is one strategic tool through which this imagined community built around, whether or not it plays a part in the daily lives of most members of that community. When performed, national folk musics systematically and theatrically "stage culture" (Stocking 1985:102, in Kifelyesus 2007:252) for the community to observe, and as such the audience plays a role within the constructive process as well. Through the imagination of this "live music" as a resurrected, *living relic* of Lithuania's imagine's past, the Lithuanian folk music canon becomes a means through which the imagined Lithuanian "nation" is constructed and validated.

A critical augmentation of the theoretical exploration of state-making will include an exploration of anthropological literature on **expertise**, specifically in terms of the relationship between state projects and the origins and development of particular fields of expertise related to folk culture and folk music performance. Timothy Mitchell (2002) writes of the state as an evolving and contingent series of expert decisions that become formalized. Mapping the relationship between governmental power and the changing nature of the Lithuanian folk song canon as a "national" commodity over the past century, it becomes apparent that the intellectual and cultural exploitation of this tradition has served different, and sometimes opposing, political goals over time. The study of cultural change within the context of state expertise, Robert Whuthnow explains, "necessitates, even more so than before, an approach that focuses on the institutional contexts in which [culture] is produced, enacted, and disseminated" (1989:539). In terms of relating the idea of cultural production to

the collection, preservation, and distribution of Lithuanian folk music, it is critical to explore the sub-field of **conservation expertise and practices**. Abbebe Kifleyesus writes that the display of folk music performance is a special form of cultural conservation as it is temporally bound to the live concert form, and as such, "folk-fairs and festivals frequently act as primary agents of cultural conservation, and stages for the construction and consolidation of national identity formation" (Kifleyesus 2007:250). During periods of revolution and resistance against occupying forces in Lithuania, the performance of these folk songs has been a preservation methodology through which nationalist Lithuanians have maintained their national identity, particularly within the non-violent Singing Revolution of the late 1980s.

An antithetical procedure of anti-preservation was at work simultaneously under the Soviet Union's aims of state-sponsored evolutionism described by Francine Hirsch (2005). Soviet ethnographers countered trends of cultural conservation through a complex process of cultural manipulation. Encouraging Lithuanians to take pride in folk song traditions and performances, while simultaneously manipulating the art form for their own aims, Soviet-sponsored ethnographers and politicians aimed to control the changes within the folk song tradition, imposing directionality upon their development. By temporarily raising cultural awareness through state-sponsored performance of folk music, ethnic groups would develop strong pride in the systems of cultural support, would shift in interest from folk performance towards forms of "higher culture," and eventually, would believe in the idea that their "people," and their particular form of culture belonged under one larger Soviet umbrella, which then may be erased as ethnic groups identified instead *as sovetskii narod* [Soviet people *or* nation]. Nowadays, cultural conservation is linked to the new methods of cultivating of the Lithuanian folk music community today. The practice of targeting Lithuanians that fall within particular under-engaged demographics by the state is "a means

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of accounting for the way in which locally-produced musics become a means through which individuals are able to situate themselves within a particular city, town or region" (Bennet 2004:224). This continued recruitment practice trains Lithuanian individuals as new conservationists of the folk music tradition, which directly reinforces an individual's cognitive and emotional attachment to national pride and motivates them to advocate for the preservation of ideals for which the music purportedly stands.

Discourse on **social memory**, a field that has blossomed within academic studies and civil society over the last few decades (Halbwachs 1992; Blight 2009:240), reveals additional mechanisms through which state, nation, and nationalism can continually affirm and produce one another. The tension that has developed around the task of distinguishing between history and memory, in terms of study and scope, is paralleled within the presentation of ancient folk music. The struggle has far-reaching implications within history, anthropology, sociology, and related interdisciplinary fields as scholars continue to suggest typological systems for classes of memory evidence and their distinctions from "purely" historical information. In this light, artistic means for cultural transmission prove especially problematic as their mediums often mix the memory-based and factual forms of information. What kinds of subjectivities are introduced into the cultural memory through artistic hyperbole, impressionism, and approximation? Collective memory works through two particular areas of social activities: commemorative ceremonies, and bodily practices (Connerton 1989:7), both of which are continually put into action during performances and protests that feature folk music as demonstrated within my empirical analysis. The transmission of folk music over generations, as well as the ethnomusicological collection of folk songs from Lithuanian villages, may be considered as transmission of national and cultural "memories," regardless of whether or not they may be classified as "authentic."

On the one hand, I aim to understand how social memory of "ancient folksongs" and traditional culture have been remembered, re-remembered, or falsely remembered during the buildup that led to the Singing Revolution of the 1980s, and how these processes have shifted in the post-Soviet era. On the other hand, I want to continue investigation of how the musical and cultural aspects of the Singing Revolution is remembered, distorted, and reenacted today by a small radical fraction of Lithuanian political culture embodied by the *Jaunoji Lietuva* party, two decades after the movement for restoring independence took place. These tensions – which shape the state, the nation, and notions of nationalism in Lithuania today – are also mirrored within the aforementioned realms of cultural expertise, education, and conservation. Within civic life, forms of memory evidence such as folk music education are used in teaching children about historical events, particularly traumatic ones such as the social and political catastrophes of national pasts, as this method reaches children in a familiar, active, accessible, and relatively benign manner. Since folk songs are embedded with symbolic material that may be classified as *memory evidence* of Lithuania's past periods of origins, occupations, and independences, and these songs are deliberately taught Lithuanian youth who are too young to personally remember life under the Soviet Union so as to augment their *historical* understanding of Lithuania's past, this project is a particularly relevant case for examination of social memory under the theoretical umbrella of this project.

2.3 The Performativity of (Re)Invented Rituals: Folk Songs in Action

An additional extremely relevant frame through which my empirical analysis is shaped through the theoretical standpoints presented in the **anthropological literature on the ritual**, as the performances, commemorations, and processions of the folk canon is a method of both preserving and producing the nation through ritual. Within his fourth book, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912) Emile Durkheim argued that the origins of

not only religion, but entire societies, were the result of social ritual and their practice by individuals. This is certainly, as my empirical analysis demonstrates, what many Lithuanian nationalists believe: scholars such as E. J. Harrison have noted since the time of the *first* independence of Lithuania (from the Russian Empire) that "the Lithuanians are a musical people" (Harrison 1928:134), and this sort of national and ethnic stereotype pervades Lithuania's culture today and helps to reinforce *Lithuanianness* as a both a state- and national- concept. Durkheim demonstrated that "the effervescent sensations born in ritual are embodied in totems...[which are] powerful representations, or elementary forms, which bring these powerful sentiments to the surface of consciousness, even in the absence of ritual" (Erikson and Murphy 2003:92). Robert Whuthnow suggests the productivity of real "cultural products" *à la* Durkheim though a mode that gives them "greater tangibility," such as through the medium of music, increases their symbolic potential. Whuthnow points out that Durkheim "wrote not only of the interiorized conceptions of collective consciousness but also of the concrete rituals and symbols – the totems, dances, flags, and anthems – that represented these conceptions" (Whuthnow 1989:539 – 540), and although folk music itself is not tangible, its written and recorded forms offer a concrete representation of collective consciousness within the Lithuanian nationalist (and neo-nationalist) movements. It will be necessary to investigate the historical frames of folk song performance over the last few centuries in relation to Max Gluckman's concept of "rituals of rebellion," in which he claims that societies have the ability to sublimate real and often violent conflict through performance rituals that legitimize and benefit the social order, and this approach will be beneficial in terms of analyzing critical changes in folk performance means and methods during periods of occupation, revolution, and independence in Lithuania (Gluckman 1952). Combining elements of Gluckman's theoretical approach with Victor Turner's understanding of liminality (a concept developed by his predecessor Arnold van Gennep), I hope to establish a

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complex analytical angle useful in demonstrating the ways in which those engaged with folk music are able to step across boundary lines into liminal states generated through ritual. These liminal states allow individuals to be "considered both 'outside' society and in some cases even a danger to it (Turner 1967; van Gennep 1960; Erikson and Murphy 2003:139). The performance of folk songs alongside *Sajūdis* (Singing Revolution) remembrance actions and protests have been increasingly glorified as a grand ritual, taking on new significance that ritualizes the demonstration of independence today, and states of liminality give participants the temporal and spatial opportunity to reflect and " 'be themselves'…when they are not acting institutionalized roles" (Turner 1967:53). In summary, this analytical approach allows such folk song performance to be understood as a multi-layered-ritual: "authentic" folk songs are claimed to have originated during ancient Lithuanian pagan rituals, and the ritualized performance of these supposed "ritual elements" of the ancient past is key element in the imagination of authentic Lithuanian culture today.

Another theoretical framework which builds upon the concepts bound up in ritual connected to the current debates in the social sciences surrounding **performative acts of identity**, as developed by Judith Butler (1998). In particular, the exploration of collective performance imagined as *cohesive* at the national level is particularly relevant to this research. Culture is practiced and performed, explains Robert Whuthnow, such that it "comes about through a series of actions, is expressed in action, and through actions shapes the relations of individuals and societies" (1989:538). Not bound within or limited by curated walls, folk music performances are different from museum exibitions in that they "are not tidy events and neat packages, instead they are disorderly and messy incidents" (Kifelyesus 2007:252). Part of this "mess" that relates to the nature of Lithuanian folk music is that the modifications in symbolic meaning cannot be curated or controlled in every instance of its performance, either by independent experts or organs of the state that aim to

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produce and manage the tradition for ongoing political aims. The production and state-sponsorship of folk music performance, accompanied by scholarly investigation into folk culture, is critical within post-Soviet Lithuania to establish a new corresponding *independent* and *free* national identity.

CHAPTER THREE: Empirical Analysis

3.1 Ethnographic Methodology

Over a thirty day research period in April and May of 2013 in Vilnius, the capital city of Lithuania, I conducted a variety of over twenty semi-formal interviews as the primary method data collection for this ethnographic project. My methodology was informed by the development of ethnographic technique over several centuries of anthropological research, from the origins of Malinowskian participant-observatory methods (1922) to the use of thick description to illustrate the ideas and events of the everyday lives of humans (Geertz 1973) while accounting for the particular histories and lived experiences that has shaped the lives of my informants (Boaz 2004). My project design was conceptualized to uniquely match my personal interests from both topical and theoretical standpoints (Bernard 1994:103).

Through previous research and advocacy experiences as a Fulbright Fellow and Embassy Grantee in 2010 – 2012, I had already been able to establish connections with members of the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture, members of the Executive Branch of Lithuanian Government, as well as with several foreign diplomats working in Lithuania before reentering the field this past spring. My informants within the bureaucratic and diplomatic fields were able to offer insights about their collaborative work as part of, or with, the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture on cultural diplomacy projects. I was fortunate enough to interview officers from the Lithuanian state that are connected with (and active within) the debates central to this thesis. I was able to use this pre-established network to my advantage by connecting with colleagues to find additional valuable interviewees and scout out additional, spontaneous fieldwork opportunities once I was situatied in the field.

Whether in formal settings of the offices of government buildings, or at cafes and coffee shops around the center of Vilnius, I encouraged the interviewees within this study to

initiate lines of discussion while maintaining a semi-formal structure of interviews. Through this semi-formal interview methodology, I was able to balance my own bias in the solicitation and production of knowledge related to my research interests with the different interests, subjectivities, and positionalities of my informants (Briggs 1986). I supplemented these interviews with conversations with individuals who have been linked, either as organizers of or performers in, folk and otherwise artistic state-sponsored cultural programming, and also spoke to professional activists and volunteers who deal with combatting intolerance, specifically anti-Semitism, anti-Roma, and homophobia within Lithuanian society.

3.2 Authority and Authenticity: Production and Regulation of Folk Projects

"Imagine I am a singer, a performer, in Lithuania," I proposed to Ms. Irena Seliukaitė, Manager of the Cultural Heritage Department within the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture. "What are the ways in which I, if I wanted to perform folk songs, could receive some scholarships or other funding?" Her face scrunched up in puzzlement, and she readjusted her necklace and scarf in one swooping gesture, as if to dismiss the hypothetical situation as an actual financial request for an upcoming project. "Such scholarships do not exist," she replied, suggesting that I inquire at the Ministry of Education for other funding opportunities. "I am simply inquiring as an anthropologist," I interjected, emphasizing that I did not want to personally apply for funding, and to hopefully steer the conversation back towards a discussion hypothetical projects. "So…talking about folk songs," she explained, "support can only be given for programs or projects of educational nature." I found the combination of financial awards specifically for educational projects that target young Lithuanians intriguing, especially her suggestion of involving folk music within the project's primary educational medium. But I wondered, for what purpose(s) do these grants exist? What is the benefit for the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture, as well as other state apparatuses, of producing these educational grant opportunities that are necessarily situated within the

genre of folk culture? Her hands whisked through applications and paperwork covering her desk in search of a particular worksheet. As she explained the application timelines and general requirements to me, I wondered silently: *is Lithuanian cultural funding a financial method for cultural preservation, or something else at work here? What is the greater benefit beyond cultural dissemination, or cultural education?*

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From the perspective of the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture and other state-affiliated institutions that manage the collection, performance, and study of Lithuanian folklore, one purpose of folk music stand out above the rest: the promotion of Lithuanian's ethnic culture through awareness-raising for the purposes of strengthening the state. Some conceptualize the strengthening of ethnic culture as a process of *homogenization*, but methods of augmentation and diversification of folk culture are also under employ within the case study at hand, which add breadth and depth Lithuania's constructed post-Soviet identity. Funding and focus of the Lithuanian state apparatuses are dedicated to projects that include aims of expanding the folk song canon through ethnological study and collection by trained philologists and ethnologists, and increasing the potential for performative expressions of nationalism among the Lithuanian population.   Examination of the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture as a complex cultural object allows one to better understand purposes of state-making through promotion of Lithuanian ethnic culture, and to more thoroughly explore how these aims relate to the rising anti-Semitic and xenophobic folk youth movement.

More recently, Lithuanian folk music traditions have been redefined in tandem with the *new*, "enchanted" construction and flourishing of *the festival* as a new major cultural form within Lithuanian nation-building. Since Lithuania regained independence, folk song performances have become a part of marketing Lithuania to the rest of the globe as a particularly Lithuanian cultural product, and thus have been connected the introduction of

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new state systems and initiatives, such as capitalism, in defining the Lithuanian nation. The Ministry of Culture funds the promotion and performance of folk music not only to preserve a contestable notion of the country's "ancient" national *past*, but to also launch Lithuania into the *future* as a financially strong and nationally stable European Member state. Overall, the complex processes of state-making within these funding strategies illuminates the real relations and changing conditions within which folk culture is developed and instrumentalized.

"Folk music is not a *property*, Emily, it belongs to the nation," mused my colleague Jonas with a chuckle over coffees on the back patio of Contemporary Art Center in the center of town. Living a "double life" with both an accomplished artistic background as well as a prestigious job within the field of policy analysis, he had used Lithuanian folk elements within his art, and affirmed that folk is a cultural material that is permissible for any use (even abuse) within any project. His statement was refracted in various iterations across the other interviews I conducted in the field. Officials from the Lithuanian Government, as well as from the Lithuanian Cultural Ministry, were adamant about simultaneously *protecting* the *authentic* nature Lithuanian culture, the "pure material" which Lithuanians consider to be cultural truth (Nettl 1964:180), while also allowing the scope and purity of the tradition to be morphed by those who care very little for the protection of authenticity. In some cases, these actors even have the purposeful desire to dismantle authenticity entirely.

I wanted to ask Jonas further about his experiences obtaining funding from the state apparatuses in order to assess the procedural elements of creating projects that the Ministry of Culture would financially support, and to document whether preferences are given to projects that promote a particular folk-centric artistic agenda. After all, speaking in an earlier interview I found myself confused by the information provided by officials from the Ministry of Culture - not only from Ms. Seliukaitė, but from one of her colleagues, Ms. Gražina

Sluškšo, from a related department dealing with tolerance issues. Over coffee, she had explained to me that within most departments, the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture does not directly fund projects they initiate or implement as the leading institution. Rather, the Ministry identifies needs, develops particular missions, and then finances such projects produced by outside centers, partner non-governmental organizations, and other institutions that meet the needs of carrying out those particular campaigns of the Ministry.

"I've gotten funding before," Jonas said, "both as an individual artist and as projects with friends…but I wouldn't say, in terms of projects when you are receiving funding that there is very *strict* line that projects that are connected with folklore would be more important." I was surprised about this information – from where did I develop the misconception that folklore is an important factor when pitching projects for funding from Lithuanian cultural institutions? Jonas recognized my frustration, and clarified the indirect relationship between the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture and the Lithuanian Culture Foundation in detail:

> Folk projects are well-financed, in another way. They are financed through the main source of funding for small projects…you know for NGOs, some small institutional projects, some artistic projects, it's Lithuanian Cultural Foundation, not the Art Council, It's 17 million litai, and they give 3,000 projects each year. The funding is around 10,000 litas, so it is small piece… and it depends on the field. If you are a performer, it's enough [money], but if not, it's not okay…They have these baskets for different art fields, and each basket has their expert team, which serves as the judge for those who apply to that basket. And they are very different expert teams. This link to national culture - I don't remember now, because we didn't write a project for this field, but it is one of ten priorities. And if you write in your project that one of your priorities is national folklore, you will target your projects to young artists, or national expertise, these are the horizontal priorities that give more points to your application.

I understood Jonas' remark that a budget of 10,000 Lithuanian litas – roughly about $3,800 USD, might only serve as enough financial support for a project that requires only minimal purchases of equipment. But for an artist to do an independent project that produces tangible

art that is not easily replicated, the funding might not even cover the cost of supplies. He described to me in detail a particular photography project through which he found himself in debt because of supply costs, as well The Lithuanian Culture Foundation also requires a separate application for salary-based projects, which are extremely underpaid for the amount of hours and effort put into the small-scale projects. No wonder that folk projects that by nature incur very few costs seem most attractive to grant application committees: imagine the application of a vocal folk ensemble project that targets children and young artists through performance and educational projects, while the requirements for renting or purchasing materials is minimal. Most folk song material is easily taught and transmitted, so a project might be rendered "educational" in nature, and would be able to include a wider range of individuals from various musical backgrounds and experiences as participants than more complex artistic projects.

3.3 Connecting Young and Old – Allegedly Ancient Songs and the Jaunoji Lietuva Political Party

Viens, du, trys, graži Lietuva,	One, two, three, beautiful Lithuania
kaip gėlelė žydi visada…	How beautiful your flowers always blossom…
Viens su puse, du su puse,	One and a half, two and a half,
graži Lietuva be rusų	Beautiful Lithuania without the Russians,
kaip gėlelė žydi visada…	How beautiful your flowers always blossom…

Jonas' reminder that folk culture, and its linked authenticity, is under the authority of the people, owned equally by *everyone*, becomes critical when considering one folk song which has become co-opted by the *Jaunoji Lietuva* political party over the past decade. The first example is representative of this song in an older form, and the second version is the one which is chanted in the streets or at folk song festivals by those who identify with this neo-conservative political movement. *Lithuania is beautiful*, but even more wonderful when the extra rhythms of "half-skips" are inserted within the lyrics that Many informants within my

fieldwork explained that even if the phrase "without Russians" is omitted, the rhyming half-skips are clear and unequivocal indicators of the message of intolerance that conflates the entities Russian ethnicity, the Soviet era, communist ideology, and the Russian together under one xenophobic umbrella characteristic of such neo-Nazi groups.

What can we glean from this example besides an instance of hate speech embedded within secret song lyrics? Educators often look for teaching methodologies that reach children in a familiar and accessible manner, all while delivering the critical factual evidence necessary to establish a common knowledge of what happened in the past. This melody is demonstrative of the power of music to encapsulate information and carry it generational divides: the fear of „Russianness" may be in a past that young Lithuanians today may not personally remember, but the musical media offers a mechanism through which an encoded social message of intolerance and social exlcusion can be propagated without physical violence. As the *Jaunoji Lietuva* group continues to spread the messages of hate by performing these musical materials such as these in public settings, the secret information is instantly contextualized, the *embedded* messages becomes *embodied* by the performers, and the agenda is under the innocent guise of performing the unique folk material that is critical to Lithuanian nationalism and national identity construction.

But is folk music really the best mechanism through which these social messages can be spread to younger Lithuanians who may not have been old enough to formulate memories of the difficulties in the nation's recent past? I prodded Ms. Seliukaitė to explain how the genre of folk music has become relatively popular with young people in Lithuania, which is a critical quality necessary for the success of folk as a mechanism of transmission. Without much coaxing, she eagerly explained to me that,

> "we need teach the young that folk songs are actually beautiful, that their content is not just two lines that get repeated, but that there are whole *narratives* in these songs…Thus that young person can feel

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that content, albeit in a different rhythm. Now it is becoming very popular to use various rhythms, and, though them, through something more uplifting, young people become closer to folk music."

The engagement of Lithuanian youth in terms of aesthetic connection to Ms. Seliukaitė was eager to remind me that Lithuania possesses the most archaeic, ancient and unique way of singing *recitativo*-style within polyphonic music genres, such as *sutartines*. As a result she explained, UNESCO has awarded the tradition a cultural heritage title. This connection with UNESCO is exactly the issue that my artist colleague Jonas finds most abhorrent about state-sponsored cultural institutions, such as the Lithuanian Folk Music Center and Folk Archives of Vilnius. In part resulting from the unconditional funding schema which protect the institutions under their further separate any semblance of authentic origins from the powers and finances that support their development, so that city-dwellers end up with the most exposure to the traditions that are still performed in the countryside. "Give this money to the village communities who actually sing and dance," he told me passionately over another coffee at the Contemporary Art Café. "Give them the money and the control in their own space, because their mothers did it there. You don't need to make an imitation in the cities, of folk culture." I argue, however that the metropolitan location of these institutes is strategic, as the Lithuanian state depends upon the production of folk culture in order to legitimize its own identity and existence.

<p style="text-align:center">* * *</p>

Lipo žydas kopėčiom	A Jew climbed up a ladder,
Ir nukrito netyčiom	And accidentally fell.
Imkit vaikai pagaliuką	Children, take a stick,
Ir užmuškit tą žyduką	And beat that Jew.

The preceding lyrics are from children's counting rhyme that is very well known among my contemporaries in across Lithuania. Informants of mine recounted first hearing it on a playground as a child, when other children would use this violent rhyme innocently to

decide who would be the *chaser* in a playground game akin to tag. Children may be found singing it while swinging about on a jungle gym with their friends in parks around Vilnius – once, I even found the poem drawn on a park bench next to a children's slide in one popular playground in the center of the Old Town. One informant of mine, a woman from the Lithuanian Government who wishes to remain anonymous within this study, recounted moments from her childhood when her grandmother would ask her to recite the rhyme over and over as a game, and my informant expressed her anger and frustration in understanding whether her grandmother had meant to harm her or instill these Anti-Semitic messages within her granddaughter at such an impressionable age. I argue instead that once again, we can see the unique mechanism of music at work, transmitting messages that reaffirm the nation-building efforts of the state and invigorating fervor of nationalism. Whether or not this intention was meant by the grandmother on a conscious level is irrelevant.

3.4 Dialogical Relations Between Bureaucracy and Cultural Movements: Mechanisms of Legitimization

Finally, I had a moment to broach the difficult subject of the most recent March 11th neo-Nazi gathering in Vilnius with Ms. Seliukaitė from the Lithuanian Ministry of culture. I struggled to frame my question as to reveal my own bias, and tried to use as much neutral language as possible within defining the neo-Nazi groups as they prefer – "Skinhead'ai" or with the terms neo-Nazi, neo-fascist, and neo-nationalist that even I as the ethnographer tend to use interchangeably. "Could you comment," I asked in Lithuanian, "on how apolitical music is being used for political purposes in Lithuania?"

"Obviously, you cannot ban such marches; it is a democratic society," she said quickly and calmly, without hesitation in her voice. "And, of course, any songs, including these, can be used for political purposes…The songs of the partisans come from a specific period in our history, when people were in the woods and did not know what would happen to

them: if they would survive or not. What they did was basically taking tunes of known songs but adding new lyrics, on the spot. They are considered to be older folk songs, because, well, you cannot identify the author. One would take the tune, add something else, another one would change it in a way, too, but in all cases they would still be partisan songs. But so these songs come from history itself. During the Soviet times, no-one gathered these songs, no-one really wrote them down. They have only surfaced and started being sung some twenty years ago, after regaining independence. So maybe these songs are being used by neo-Nazis, "sharpened" in a way, because they see this period as a crucial part of how our nation survived."

I was shocked to hear this explanation, which built a myth of the invention of these intolerant songs as connection with the traumatic historical period of the Sajūdis Revolution during the Soviet Era – was the folk scholar conflating historical concepts herself, in order to excuse her institution from turning a blind eye to the musical violence being performed in the streets at these protests? I was convinced that through her storytelling of the origins of these songs was a political strategy of avoiding action, and I have learned through informants within the vocal performance field that her myth was false.

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Lietuva, Tėvyne mūsų…	*Lithuania, our Homeland…*
Lietuva lietuviams!	*Lithuania for Lithuanians!*

What memories lie within the words we do not sing? Consider the associations and subtexts that are carried through musical mechanisms such as rhythm within the two preceding lines. The second given example, which is the chant echoed by neo-Nazi groups in public protests, is chanted with the same rhythm as the first example, opening line of the Lithuanian National Hymn, despite the unnatural stress patterns that are placed on the words in this rhythm. The association between the signature chant of those who identify with the

neo-Nazi movement with the official, honored hymn of the state and nation is revelatory of the movement's allegiance of, and respect for, the state in its current operation. This musical mechanism may be subtle, but it serves to support the continual construction of the state and its power. Folk music has served as an effective tool for helping to construct an identity of a "Lithuanian nation" since the performative, *living* aspects, of the musical traditions, were "a particularly potent representational resource…a means by which communities are able to identify themselves and present this identity to others" (Dawe and Bennet 2001:224). The folk arts, as scholar Howard S. Becker states, "involve elaborate networks of cooperation" (Becker 1974:768), and the performance of folk music by neo-Nazi groups mirror and in some ways augment the reach of the state-sponsored performances, which include financial cooperation posed to ultimately benefit the Lithuanian economy while playing "a significant part in the process of nation building" (Fabiani 2011:4). Without a doubt, this trend reflects a larger pattern internationally about cultural policies: "the development of a discourse about culture as a real economic sector" (Menger 1999:542-543), and the performance of culture is a disorganized and decentralized action through which many parties stand to benefit or profit, even in antithetical ways.

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, this thesis has attempted to address the methods of *playing discordant harmonies off of one another*, in the manner of the purposefully discordant contrapuntal melody lines within the Lithuanian *sutartines* folk song genre, in order to establish dialogical relations of legitimization between seemingly conflictual actors. This research brings the hidden dialogical relationship between two disparate entities of the Lithuanian state and marginal radical neo-Nazi groups understood as in conflict with the state, to light for analysis, offering a new perspective on the political and structural conditions that shape the dialogical relations of legitimization between the state apparatuses and their alters in the form of radical political groups.

In summary, the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture has featured the performance of dainos, or folk songs, in much of the country's state-sponsored arts and culture programming over the last two decades of Lithuania's independence. In recent years, a new trend of engagement with Lithuanian folk music is emerging among self-identifying neo-Nazi and Skinhead Lithuanians, particularly under the umbrella of youth-centered xenophobic organizations such as the Jaunoji Lietuva (Young Lithuania) radical political party. Their demonstrations and performances – namely, protests, gatherings, and marches that occur in central, public locations in many of Lithuania's biggest cities – incorporate the singing of modified folk musical material as a strategic part of their events. I have investigated the cultural and political changes of Lithuania throughout history while examining the directionality of constructing nationalism, nations, and state in post-Soviet space. I have attempted to collect and order claims towards authenticity, authority, and expertise over folk music material, in so much as they relate to these aforementioned groups.

This project accesses a deeper understanding of how state apparatuses are engaged in a dialogical relationship with these radical fringe groups that invoke processes of continual,

mutual legitimization over time. After thoroughly contextualizing my field research with the historical backgrounds of Lithuanian folk music and its connection to the development of the Lithuanian state, nation, and nationalism, I embarked upon a literature review in the attempt to define my own theoretical approach the case study at hand. Bringing the data I conducted through ethnographic fieldwork to life with vignettes and narrative, I have completed my initial attempt to contextualize and fully investigate these mechanisms in operation within various frameworks.

Reflecting upon my research in the field, I still remain shocked by the candor of my informants who expressed that there was little to be done about the co-option of Lithuanian folk music by political movements. ""You cannot really ban music," explained Ms. Seliukaitė. A song does have that power: it can gather people, it can inspire them." As this quote demonstrates, even the experts understand music as a harmless material full of rhythmic and melodic complexity while maintaining an intangible form. Perhaps this study can suggest a reconsideration of the *violence*, *intolerance*, and *dangerous materials* that, though ineffable and evanescent, can serve as mechanisms for strengthening groups that have the power to bring their suggested action to fruition. Further analysis within this field, augmented through the incorporation of quantitative data collection and analysis, may help to further illuminate the connections between "innocent" musical media and the development of danger and violence within the neo-Folk groups of Lithuania, perhaps even demonstrating the inaction of the state to react to the threat of "musical ammunition," as state apparatuses depend upon music to fuel the relations with their alter that continually redefine their existence. The processes of identity construction and legitimization are not unilinear, they work in terms of counterpoint: overcoming dissonances and collaborating through opposition in order to establish and continually mutually beneficial systems of support and legitimization.

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