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**THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
IN COMPREHENSIVE DEFENSE**

by

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**THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
IN COMPREHENSIVE DEFENSE**

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Master's, National Defense Academy of Latvia, 2022

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ABSTRACT

The ongoing war in Ukraine has demonstrated that Russia is an aggressive power capable of using all elements of national power to reach its strategic aims. Lithuania, due to its proximity to Russia, historical ties, and strong overt support to Ukraine, might be a prime target for the next Russian aggression. Due to its limited resources, Lithuania cannot establish a large regular force; therefore, developing a comprehensive defense might be an effective deterrent. This research investigates the ways and means to enhance the comprehensive defense strategy by utilizing non-governmental organizations. To examine the roles of NGOs in the comprehensive defense effort, this thesis used the Lithuanian Catholic Church (LCC) as a contributor to state defense. The LCC was chosen because of its substantial influence on Lithuanian society. The research utilized a case study analysis to investigate the role of the Catholic Church in Lithuanian resistance against the Czarist and Soviet occupations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Overall, the findings of this research indicate that the Catholic church of Lithuania positively influenced social capital, and thus fostered unity, trust, and collaboration. These elements strengthened social resilience and enabled Lithuanians to resist both Czarist and Soviet occupations. Therefore, this research leads to the assumption that other non-governmental organizations might have the potential to support the comprehensive defense strategy.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
II.	LITERATURE REVIEW	3
A.	COMPREHENSIVE DEFENSE AS A STRATEGY	3
B.	THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN COMPREHENSIVE DEFENSE.....	7
C.	BUILDING RESILIENCE ON SOCIAL CAPITAL	8
	1. Resilience	8
	2. Social Capital and Resilience	10
	3. Religious Organizations and Social Capital	12
D.	SOCIAL CAPITAL AND NATIONAL IDENTITY	14
III.	RESEARCH DESIGN.....	17
IV.	COMPREHENSIVE DEFENSE: A STRATEGY OF CHOICE FOR LITHUANIA	21
A.	DEFINING THE THREAT TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY OF LITHUANIA.....	21
B.	COUNTERING THE THREAT WITH THE CONCEPT OF COMPREHENSIVE DEFENSE	22
V.	LITHUANIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SUPPORT OF COMPREHENSIVE DEFENSE	25
A.	LITHUANIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND NATIONAL IDENTITY.....	25
B.	THE ROLE OF THE LITHUANIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE RESISTANCE TO RUSSIFICATION: 1776–1918.....	28
	1. Russification Policies of the First Half of the Nineteenth century and the 1830–31 Uprising.....	29
	2. The General Uprising of 1864 and Passive Resistance in the Second Half of the Nineteenth century	32
	3. Conclusions.....	38
C.	THE ROLE OF THE LITHUANIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE RESISTANCE TO SOVIETIZATION: 1944–1990.....	40
	1. Religion Policies of the Soviet Regime	41
	2. LCC and the Sovietization of Lithuania	43
	3. Active Resistance: 1944–1953	44

4.	Passive Resistance: 1953–1990.....	48
5.	Conclusions.....	54
VI.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	57
A.	SOCIAL RESILIENCE AS A MATTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY	60
B.	IMPROVEMENT OF CIVIL DEFENSE.....	63
C.	ACTIVE DEFENSE AND RESISTANCE	65
	LIST OF REFERENCES.....	69
	INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST	75

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	The Pillars of Comprehensive Defense.....	6
Figure 2.	Largest Religion Groups in Lithuania.....	58
Figure 3.	Registered Religious Organizations in Lithuania.	59
Figure 4.	The Will to Fight the Population. Part of Civic Empowerment Index Survey 2022.	61

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CD	Comprehensive Defense
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
LCC	Lithuanian Catholic Church
MOI	Ministry of Interior
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCDH	NATO Comprehensive Defense Handbook
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
ROC	Resistance Operating Concept
SC	Social Capital

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This thesis explores the possibilities of improving the national security of Lithuania through Comprehensive Defense (CD). It seeks to answer the overarching research question of how non-governmental organizations (NGO) could contribute to comprehensive defense, with a focus on the Lithuanian Catholic Church (LCC) and its historical role in the resistance against occupation regimes. The Catholic Church has been chosen as a case study due to its historical influence on Lithuanian society, which evolved beyond its religious role into being a cornerstone of social resilience and the facilitator of resistance movements against the occupation forces in the past.

The first part of the thesis investigated the rationale behind implementing the CD as a strategic approach for Lithuanian state defense. The analysis of the recent conflict in Ukraine demonstrates Russia still pursues the total war concept, a strategy that is not limited to military objectives and targets civilian infrastructure and population centers. Lithuania, recognizing Russia as an existential threat, must devise a defense strategy that ensures its survival as an independent state. The Lithuanian government as stipulated in the strategic documents associated with national defense acknowledges Russia's potential to use total war principles and underscores the importance of a unified and comprehensive approach to state defense. Therefore, the concept of CD, as specified in NATO's comprehensive defense handbook (NCDH), is well-suited to counter the possible Russian aggression.

This research aimed to find ways to improve CD by utilizing the potential of NGOs. While existing defense concepts, and framework documents that outline the principles of CD, acknowledge the value of NGOs, their specific contributions remain undefined. To evaluate the possible roles of NGOs in CD, the thesis utilized the qualitative historical case study method to investigate the role of the LCC in Lithuanian resistance during two historical periods: the Czarist occupation (1795-1918) and the Soviet occupation (1944-1990). The main purpose of this historical analysis was to identify what functions and tasks influential NGOs, such as the LCC, could undertake in support of Lithuania's comprehensive defense strategy.

The findings of this research indicate that:

- According to NHDH, CD depends on social resilience, which is a foundation for the further development of state defense. The LCC has historically been a stronghold, bolstering social cohesion and trust, and ultimately enhancing the resilience of the Lithuanian population against the Czarist Russia and Soviet occupations.
- The LCC during the armed phases of Lithuanian resistance did not assume an active role but acted as an auxiliary component to frontline fighters and provided crucial psychological, spiritual, logistical, and intelligence support.
- From the perspective of NCDH during both historical periods, the LCC supported the functions of Social and Psychological Defense as well as Civil Defense, serving as a vital support base for resistance movements.
- During the phases of passive resistance, the LCC emerged as a central force for non-armed struggle, which fortified Lithuanian society against the attempts of the occupation regimes to destroy national identity and assimilate them into the Russian Empire and Soviet Union.
- The LCC, being part of the global Catholic Church with numerous Catholic organizations in the free world, maintained vital links with the West, thus fostering the external backing necessary for achieving success of the resistance movement.

Overall, the findings of this research suggest that, historically, the LCC had a positive impact on bonding social capital, thus fostering unity, trust, and collaboration. These components proved crucial for social resilience and enabled Lithuanians to resist both Czarist and Soviet occupations. Therefore, these findings lead to the assumption that other NGOs that are founded on the grounds of national history and traditions aim to maintain national culture and historical heritage, and promote such values as national unity, and trust, could be valuable contributors to CD.

In conclusion, the thesis provides the following recommendations for Lithuanian policymakers and defense planners:

- Despite the historical evidence that, the LCC could increase resilience and support CD strategy, this thesis does not recommend that the Lithuanian government utilize and favor a single religious group. According to existing research backing a specific faith or limiting religions is considered threatening, and often results in aggressive religious oppression. Furthermore, favoritism of a single religious group frequently manifests in broader societal conflicts. Therefore, it would be beneficial to utilize the potential of all confessions and religious organizations.
- Since social resilience is the backbone of CD, it should become a matter of national security. To address this, the Lithuanian government and agencies in charge of state defense should expand the existing surveys such as the Civic Empowerment Index to comprehensively understand the actual state of Lithuanian social resilience.
- The ongoing conflict in Ukraine suggests that civil defense is a core element of comprehensive defense. NGOs should be considered as contributors in areas such as medical support, shelter facilities, and population evacuation, and integrated into state civil defense plans.
- NGOs should be integrated into the state defense plans, since they have the potential to support military effort, by serving as the auxiliary component that provides psychological and spiritual support to the military forces along with logistics and intelligence.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Russia's actions over the last two decades suggest it is an increasingly revisionist power aimed to change the current international order. This is evidenced by its 2008 war with Georgia, annexation of Crimea, invasion of Eastern Ukraine in 2014, and the current full-scale conventional war against Ukraine. Even though Russia has restrained itself from using conventional military actions against Western allies, it has been using national elements of power to reach its strategic goal, which is to redefine the current security architecture in Europe.¹ The war in Ukraine, the most recent geopolitical shock, has demonstrated that Russia is ready to use military force against its neighbors. This leads to an assumption that the Baltic states, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, might be the prime targets for the next Russian aggression due to their proximity to Russia, historical ties, and strong support of Ukraine.

Due to its limited resources, such as population, economy, and military capability, Lithuania, for one, cannot establish a large regular force; therefore, developing a comprehensive defense (CD) based on resilience and resistance might be an effective deterrent against the Russian Federation. CD is a strategy of choice for the states bordering aggressive hegemonic powers.² CD, which is sometimes referred to as total defense, is an all-encompassing strategy for safeguarding a nation's security. It involves the combined efforts of a state's military, governmental bodies, private sector, and citizens, thereby enhancing conventional defense and deterrence approaches. CD is particularly effective in countering hostile information campaigns, ensuring the psychological well-being of the population, fortifying essential services and infrastructure, bolstering military defenses, and effectively responding to emergencies.³ This strategic approach considers that the states can be threatened by conventional military aggression and attacks which target the

¹ Dalia Bankauskaite et al., *Baltics Left of Bang: Comprehensive Defense in the Baltic States*, Strategic Forum No. 307 (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2020), 3, <https://inss.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/stratforum/SF-307.pdf>.

² Bankauskaite et al., 2.

³ Bankauskaite et al., 2.

economy and society of the state with the intention of undermining its unity and determination.⁴ Therefore, a comprehensive defense strategy should include governmental agencies and functions, private and commercial ventures, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and individuals. This thesis examines the role of one non-governmental organization historically central to Lithuanian society: the Catholic Church.

Historically, Catholicism and the Catholic Church have strong connections with Lithuanian identity. Lithuania was the last pagan state in Europe and adopted the Roman-Catholic faith in 1386.⁵ According to Miniotaite, by the nineteenth century, Catholicism became Lithuania's major religion; most present-day Lithuanians are Roman Catholics.⁶ From the fourteenth century onwards, the Catholic Church gradually became the dominant institution in Lithuanian social and political life; in addition to providing religious services, it became a cultural and educational center with a vast internal network and strong ties with Catholic organizations abroad.⁷ Since the Catholic Church is an influential element in Lithuanian society, this thesis will aim to investigate the following question: How can the Catholic Church in Lithuania (LCC) and other NGOs contribute to comprehensive defense?

⁴ Bankauskaite et al., 2.

⁵ G. Miniotaite, *Nonviolent Resistance in Lithuania: A Story of Peaceful Liberation* (Boston, MA: Albert Einstein Institution, 2002), 12.

⁶ Miniotaite, 12.

⁷ Miniotaite, 12.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The existing literature on national defense concepts, while recognizing the value of non-governmental organizations, does not specify in detail how this important element of society could contribute to state defense; how they could positively influence the population to enhance the overall defensive effort; and how the existing governmental agencies in charge of crisis response could utilize this potential. To address this gap, this thesis will aim to identify how NGOs, such as dominant state religious institutions, due to their strong influence on society, could contribute to the social and psychological function of state defense and enhance the resilience of the population, thus making CD more effective.

The literature review establishes a theoretical framework for the research on how non-governmental agents such as religious organizations could improve the comprehensive defense strategy. The review will investigate the existing theoretical concepts of resilience, social capital, and their effect on society and comprehensive defense.

A. COMPREHENSIVE DEFENSE AS A STRATEGY

The concept of Total War was the principal military doctrine during the first part of the twentieth century, which was introduced by General Erich Ludendorff in his book *Der Totale Krieg* or *Total War*, published in 1935.⁸ The basic concept outlined in this work is that wars are no longer won in decisive battles, and instead are fought by large, mobilized armies that require large state support structures to arrange mobilization. Accordingly, the involvement of numerous structural components of society to support the war effort creates a set of vulnerabilities. Whereas soldiers are trained to sustain the combat conditions, the civilian population remains unprepared to withstand the hardships of war. So, according to Ludendorff, if this weak element of the state is attacked,

a nation might collapse without suffering defeat in a front-line battle. That possibility might be enhanced if society found itself divided and governed by a weak state. On the other hand, since wars involved such high stakes, it might

⁸ Jan Willem Honig, “The Idea of Total War: From Clausewitz to Ludendorff,” in *The Pacific War as Total War: 2011 International Forum on War History* (Tokyo: National Institute for Defence Studies, 2012), 29–41, <http://www.nids.mod.go.jp/english/event/forum/pdf/2011/08.pdf>.

be possible to continue the war with irregular forces even if the regular army was defeated in battle.⁹

The principles of the Total War doctrine were not only adopted by the major powers of the first half of the twentieth century but were recognized by the military experts of the small states. Major of the General Staff of the Lithuanian Army Vytautas Bulvičius in his seminal book *Preparing State for War* proposed the idea of total defense, which is defined as an effort of the whole nation.¹⁰ In his work, he suggested that total war should not be a matter of the state's armed forces alone but involve the capabilities and resources of the whole nation; therefore, all of society should be involved "in state defense planning, thus making the preparation of the society or preparation for the defense of one's state—one of the major tasks."¹¹

The concepts of "Total War" and "Total Defense" have not lost their relevance in the twenty-first century. The concept of comprehensive defense was introduced by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Special Operations Headquarters, which echoes the main principles outlined by the early military theorists. The NATO Comprehensive Defense Handbook (NCDH) defines CD "as an official government strategy, which encompasses a whole-of-society approach to protecting the nation against potential threats."¹² The U.S. Army War College in the context of nation-states defines strategy as "the employment of the instruments of National power (political/diplomatic, economic, military, and informational) to achieve the political objectives of the state in cooperation or in competition with other actors pursuing their own objectives."¹³ The primary objective of national strategy is to guarantee the survival of the state, promote economic prosperity, and uphold enduring

⁹ Honig, 35.

¹⁰ Vytautas Bulvičius, *Preparing the State for War* (Vilnius: Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania, 2020), 113.

¹¹ Bulvičius, 4.

¹² NATO Special Operations Headquarters, *Comprehensive Defense Handbook Volume I, A*, vol. I (Mons, Belgium: NATO Special Operations Headquarters, 2020), 15.

¹³ Harry R. Yarger, "Toward a Theory of Strategy: Art Lykke and the Army War College Strategy Model," in *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Policy and Strategy*, ed. J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr., 2nd ed. (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2006), 107, <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/monographs/78/>.

national values. National security strategy must balance ends, ways, and means and be backed by concepts grounded in all the elements of national power and their related resources.¹⁴

The strategic approach of comprehensive defense considers that the states cannot only be threatened by traditional military intervention but also from attacks targeting their economy and society.¹⁵ These attacks are intended to undermine the cohesion and determination of the state. CD addresses all spectrums of threats ranging from conventional aggression to cyber-attacks and incorporates activities necessary to ready a nation to safeguard its independence and territorial integrity; this incorporates both civil and military defense.¹⁶

According to the NCDH comprehensive defense as a concept rests on social resilience, which serves as a foundation for the further development of state defense.¹⁷ NCDH defines resilience as “the will and ability to withstand external pressures and influences and/or recover from the effects of those pressures or influences in an individual and collective manner.”¹⁸ Figure 1 presents the model of a CD, which is constructed on five pillars that specify the required functions and actions to be addressed for effective response to crises.

¹⁴ Yarger, 108.

¹⁵ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, *Comprehensive Defense Handbook Volume I*.

¹⁶ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, *Comprehensive Defense Handbook Volume I*.

¹⁷ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, I:17.

¹⁸ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, I:17.

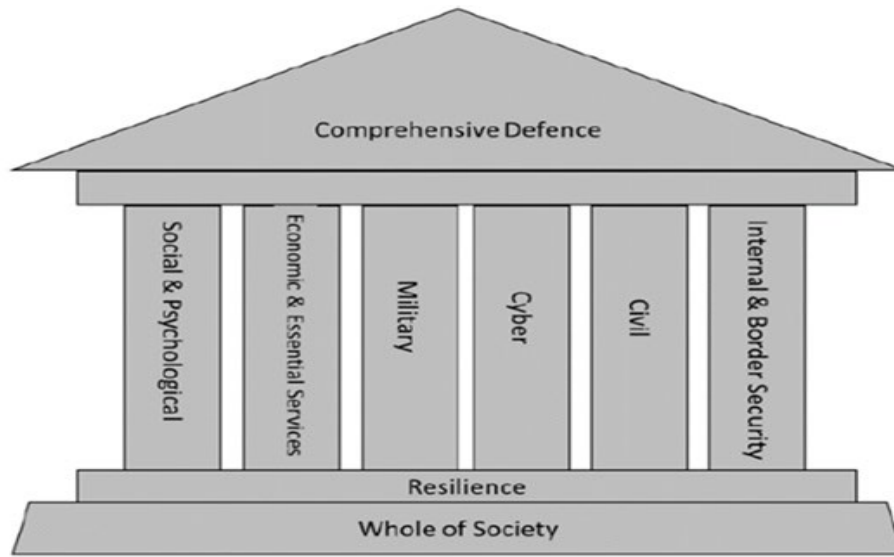


Figure 1. The Pillars of Comprehensive Defense.¹⁹

The pillars of CD according to NCDH are defined as follows:

1. Social and Psychological Defense builds on resilience and determination “by reinforcing national pride and identity amongst all citizens and residents to overcome any crisis.”²⁰ This function is achieved by improving the understanding and appreciation of the national heritage and culture, thus reinforcing national identity and cohesion. According to NATO handbook, the end state of this pillar of comprehensive defense is “a mentally prepared and resilient population that is well informed, has confidence in the national authorities, and demonstrates the collective will and commitment to defend the country.”²¹
2. Economic and Essential Services incorporate the creation and sustainment of economy and robust critical infrastructure capable of sustaining the state in case of crises.²²

¹⁹ Source: NATO Special Operations Headquarters, 17.

²⁰ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, 19.

²¹ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, 19.

²² NATO Special Operations Headquarters, 19.

3. Military Defense falls under the realm of the armed forces with the main task of deterring and countering aggression.²³
4. Cyber Defense concentrates on the prevention and detection of possible hostile actions in the cyber domain, with the main task of delivering effective cyber defense, and thus ensuring critical digital infrastructure and access to information remains intact and operational.²⁴
5. Civil Defense aims at protecting all elements of civilian activities. Generally, it incorporates crisis management, emergency preparation, and the protection of civilians. This function exclusively concentrates on emergency operations.²⁵

Since the comprehensive defense strategy addresses all aspects of the state, it should include not only governmental organizations and functions, but also businesses, NGOs, and individuals.²⁶

B. THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN COMPREHENSIVE DEFENSE

The existing literature that examines possible defense policies to a certain extent recognizes the value and possible roles of NGOs in national defense. Gene Sharp and Bruce Jenkins argue that all the activities associated with state defense “will be highly influenced by the independent institutions and groupings in the society that may conduct and support such action.”²⁷ They conclude that state defense can be effectively improved if it integrates social institutions, such as religious institutions, trade unions, political parties, and that have “the backing of regional, cultural, national, or kinship groupings, and even local,

²³ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, 19.

²⁴ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, 19.

²⁵ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, 19.

²⁶ NATO Special Operations Headquarters.

²⁷ Gene Sharp and Bruce Jenkins, *Civilian-Based Defense: A Post-Military Weapons System* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 52.

provincial, and regional governments or their subdivisions.”²⁸ They further emphasize the role of society’s non-state organizations, since they believe these groups are the main enabler of the collective action of the population. They refer to such non-governmental organizations as “loci of power” or centers of power through which people can act collectively, and within these collective bodies, “the power is located, converges, or expressed.”²⁹

The Resistance Operating Concept (ROC), drafted by Swedish Defense University in 2019, also emphasizes that defense planning must, along with military and government agencies, include non-governmental organizations to ensure that all elements of the state have a role in national defense.³⁰ The ROC refers to such an approach as “Unified Action,” which it defines as a strategy to ensure that all stakeholders such as government agencies and organizations, international partners, and NGOs are integrated into national defense.³¹

To conclude, the existing framework documents related to the strategic approach of CD foresee a role for NGOs in state defense and the integration of these elements might further improve the overall national security strategies.

C. BUILDING RESILIENCE ON SOCIAL CAPITAL

Existing literature indicates that there is a strong link between social capital and social resilience. The following sections will investigate scholarly research that examines how these elements positively influence one another.

1. Resilience

Resilience as a concept derives from the Latin word *resilio*, which means the return of the element of the system to its initial state. Resilience as a term in an academic debate was introduced in the context of engineering and protection studies, and later, was adopted by the social sciences and is based on the idea of resilience at the group or community

²⁸ Sharp and Jenkins, 52.

²⁹ Sharp and Jenkins, 31.

³⁰ Otto C. Fiala, *Resistance Operating Concept* (Stockholm: Swedish Defence University, 2019), 82.

³¹ Fiala, 82.

level.³² In this context, Daniel Aldrich and Michelle Meyer define community resilience as the “collective ability of a neighborhood or geographically defined area to deal with stressors and efficiently resume the rhythms of daily life through cooperation following shocks.”³³

Resilience also finds further definitions in the literature related to national security strategies. In this context, resilience is associated with the concepts of defense, crisis response, deterrence, and civil defense, where social resilience is directly linked to the resilience of the state.³⁴ Social resilience ensures that the population in the face of crisis will be ready to withstand possible challenges while at the same time maintaining trust in the state, its institutions, and the democratic system.³⁵ To further investigate the concept of resilience within the framework of national security and state defense, there is a need to discuss the possible definitions of resilience.

Remigijus Žilinskas defines social resilience as the will to withstand negative factors. Generally such factors include resistance against kinetic and non-kinetic actions, and the efforts to minimize the consequences of these activities.³⁶ ROC defines resilience as “the will and ability to withstand external pressure and influences and/or recover from the effects of those pressures or influences.”³⁷ NCDH recognizes resilience as a foundation of comprehensive defense, since its success depends on the willingness of the population to dedicate themselves to their personal and collective defensive responsibilities, both in times of peace and crisis, and the readiness to protect their nation from aggression.³⁸

³² Remigijus Žilinskas, “Valstybės Atsparumas Išoriniams Hibridinio Pobūdžio Grėsmėms: Hipotetinis Modelis [National Resilience against External Hybrid Threats a Hypothetical Model],” *Politologija* 3, no. 87 (2017): 47.

³³ Daniel P. Aldrich and Michelle A. Meyer, “Social Capital and Community Resilience,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 59, no. 2 (February 2015): 255, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764214550299>.

³⁴ Žilinskas, “Valstybės Atsparumas Išoriniams Hibridinio Pobūdžio Grėsmėms,” 48.

³⁵ Daphna Canetti et al., “What Does National Resilience Mean in a Democracy? Evidence from the United States and Israel,” *Armed Forces & Society* 40, no. 3 (July 2014): 507, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095327X12466828>.

³⁶ Žilinskas, “Valstybės Atsparumas Išoriniams Hibridinio Pobūdžio Grėsmėms,” 48.

³⁷ Fiala, *Resistance Operating Concept*, 21.

³⁸ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, *Comprehensive Defence Handbook—Vol I*, 17.

For the purpose of this research, it is worth examining the psychological aspects of social resilience, since it is directly linked to social and psychological defense, which is a core function of the CD concept.³⁹ In the context of resilience, psychology studies the ability of the individual to withstand short-term and long-term pressures of stress or other uncommon situations for the individual in question. On the systematic level, it analyzes how the existing system (community, organization, state) can sustain or adapt its main functions in the face of external and internal pressures.⁴⁰ Shannon Houck argues that in the process of preparing society for crisis, psychological readiness is equally important as “civil preparedness for natural, accidental, or malicious disasters through infrastructure resource management, emergency response protocols, communication networks, and educating the public.”⁴¹ Furthermore, psychological resilience promotes a sense of unity and connectivity between members of society, builds trust in national armed forces and governmental institutions, and most importantly develops national identity and pride, which are commonly recognized as vital elements of a resilient population.⁴²

From the review of the existing literature on the concept of resilience, it can be concluded that there is no clear-cut definition of resilience, and in the context of social and organizational resilience it can be viewed differently. However, there is strong evidence that social resilience is directly connected to citizenship, national identity, strong community ties, and psychological readiness.

2. Social Capital and Resilience

Several scholars in their research have indicated that social capital (SC) is directly linked to group resilience. John Field highlights several definitions of SC from prominent social scientists: Robert Putnam, Pierre Bourdieu, and James Coleman.⁴³ Putnam defines

³⁹ NATO Special Operations Headquarters.

⁴⁰ Žilinskas, “Valstybės Atsparumas Išoriniams Hibridinio Pabūdžio Grėsmėms,” 58.

⁴¹ Shannon Houck, “Psychological Capabilities for Resilience,” War on the Rocks, December 27, 2022, <https://warontherocks.com/2022/12/psychological-capabilities-for-resilience/>.

⁴² Houck.

⁴³ John Field, *Social Capital* (Hoboken, NJ: Taylor and Francis, 2012), 4.

SC as “features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions.”⁴⁴ Coleman and Bourdieu provide slightly different definitions, but generally, all three scholars agree that “social capital consists of personal connections and interpersonal interaction, together with the shared sets of values that are associated with these contacts.”⁴⁵

Theorists distinguish three forms of SC: bonding, bridging, and linking. Bonding SC reinforces exclusive identities and maintains homogeneity; bridging unites individuals across various social divides; while linking connects different people who are situated in different communities, thus enabling society to utilize multiple resources available in a single community.⁴⁶ All three types might add value to social resilience; however, bonding and bridging forms of SC seem to contribute the most, since, according to Field, bonding connections are the most effective “for undergirding specific reciprocity and mobilizing solidarity while serving as a kind of sociological superglue in maintaining strong in-group loyalty and reinforcing specific identities. In contrast, bridging connections are better for linkage to external assets and for information diffusion and provide a sociological WD-40 that can generate broader identities and reciprocity.”⁴⁷

To sum up, from the theoretical perspective, social capital emphasizes the importance of social connections. By making and maintaining personal ties, people empower themselves to accomplish things they would not be able to do individually. This brings forward the conclusion that the more ties with others one has, the more an individual shares common values with existing social networks and the more valuable the SC becomes.⁴⁸

The literature that examines SC and social resilience brings forward the idea of a direct relationship between the two concepts. For example, Daniel Aldrich and Michelle

⁴⁴ Field, 4.

⁴⁵ Field, 13.

⁴⁶ Field, 42.

⁴⁷ Field, 32.

⁴⁸ Field, 1.

Mayer argue that SC is a critical component of resilience.⁴⁹ They base their conclusion on the analysis of disaster relief efforts in the aftermath of large-scale disasters such as the March 2011 9.0 earthquake in Japan and the 2013 Yolanda Typhoon in the Philippines, which demonstrated that communities consistently collaborate to endure and recuperate from severe consequences. The networks linked to SC proved an effective tool in dealing with crises, since they enable people to gain access to such vital resources as “information, aid, financial resources, and childcare along with emotional and psychological support.”⁵⁰ Furthermore, the value of SC to community resilience and its potential was recognized by several crisis management organizations. For example, the Federal Emergency Management Agency found that

government at all levels cannot manage disasters alone [which] means that communities need the opportunity to draw on their full potential to operate effectively. Empowering local action requires allowing members of the communities to lead—not follow—in identifying priorities, organizing support, implementing programs, and evaluating outcomes. The emergency manager promotes and coordinates but does not direct these conversations and efforts. The lasting impacts of long-term capacity building can be evident in an evolving set of civic practices and habits among leaders and the public that become embedded in the life of the community. In this regard, the issue of social capital becomes an important part of encouraging communities to own and lead their own resilience activities. Furthermore, community ownership of projects provides a powerful incentive for sustaining action and involvement.⁵¹

Such studies on crisis management clearly indicate that there is a direct link between SC and social resilience; therefore, it can be concluded that the increase in the level of SC would result in a more resilient population.

3. Religious Organizations and Social Capital

Several studies of religious organizations and their role in community activities have demonstrated their significance in the development of SC, since being part of such

⁴⁹ Aldrich and Meyer, “Social Capital and Community Resilience.”

⁵⁰ Aldrich and Meyer, 256.

⁵¹ Federal Emergency Management Agency, 14.

networks increases trust and commitment among its members and facilitates the interchange of common values and world outlook.⁵² Furthermore, these relationships have the potential to manifest into social capital in the form of civic engagement in general, and social action more specifically.⁵³

Academic literature indicates that religious communities positively contribute to building SC. Anneli Kaasa evaluated data from twenty-nine European countries, which included such factors as religiosity, various religious organizations, their proportions in the population, and religious diversity.⁵⁴ Her aim was to examine these religion-related aspects in relation to different aspects of SC such as trust at both the general and institutional levels, norms, formal and informal networks, and engagement in civic activities. She concluded that being part of a religious community increases SC by promoting such values as “solidarity, altruism, honesty, and by providing civic skills and encouraging joining other organizations.”⁵⁵

Jason Rivera and Ashley Nickels examined the involvement of the Mary Queen of Vietnam Catholic Church in the relief initiatives following Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans.⁵⁶ This specific case study demonstrated the capacity of religious organizations to foster different forms of social capital by contributing to the needs of the community in a crisis. It further illustrated the effectiveness of religious communities in delivering vital services under conditions where governmental disaster relief agencies had limited capacity to operate.

To conclude, religious organizations could have a crucial role in the response and recovery from crisis, thus positively contributing to SC. Several studies have demonstrated that there is a tendency for people to turn toward religion and faith-based organizations in

⁵² Jason David Rivera and Ashley E. Nickels, “Social Capital, Community Resilience, and Faith-Based Organizations in Disaster Recovery: A Case Study of Mary Queen of Vietnam Catholic Church,” *Risk, Hazards & Crisis in Public Policy* 5, no. 2 (2014): 7, <https://doi.org/10.1002/rhc3.12050>.

⁵³ Rivera and Nickels, 7.

⁵⁴ Anneli Kaasa, “Religion and Social Capital: Evidence from European Countries,” *International Review of Sociology* 23, no. 3 (November 2013): <https://doi.org/10.1080/03906701.2013.856162>.

⁵⁵ Kaasa, 589.

⁵⁶ Rivera and Nickels, “Social Capital, Community Resilience, and Faith-Based Organizations,” 20.

the face or in the aftermath of a crisis. Rivera and Nickels in their research on the role of the Mary Queen church in disaster relief efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina have concluded that in addition to social services, religious organizations contribute to providing psychological support, since

faith-based organizations and the spiritual services they provide have been demonstrated to lower levels of anxiety and depression by providing a positive worldview, personal empowerment, a sense of control, guidance for decision-making, and social support which have been shown to be critical sources of community resilience in the aftermath of disasters.⁵⁷

D. SOCIAL CAPITAL AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

There is an increasing agreement across the literature related to social capital and social ties that national identity has the potential to foster unity within society.⁵⁸ Francis Fukuyama defines national identity as a collective acceptance of the country's political framework, regardless of its democratic nature.⁵⁹ This identity can manifest itself through official regulations and establishments that determine, for instance, the recognized languages or educational curriculum pertaining to the nation's history. However, national identity also encompasses cultural and value systems, encompassing narratives of origin, communal festivities, shared historical recollections, and the criteria for authentic inclusion within the community.⁶⁰ According to Putnam, based on the above-mentioned features, national identity promotes trust and other forms of unity between among citizens.⁶¹

The available research on national identity suggests that it increases the likelihood of individuals trusting their compatriots, since trust necessitates solidarity not only within groups but also across them, and this solidarity relies on a shared identity that can be

⁵⁷ Rivera and Nickels, 4.

⁵⁸ Tim Reeskens and Matthew Wright, "Nationalism and the Cohesive Society: A Multilevel Analysis of the Interplay among Diversity, National Identity, and Social Capital Across 27 European Societies," *Comparative Political Studies* 46, no. 2 (2013): 155, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414012453033>.

⁵⁹ Francis Fukuyama, "Why National Identity Matters," *Journal of Democracy* 29, no. 4 (2018): 8, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2018.0058>.

⁶⁰ Fukuyama, 8.

⁶¹ Reeskens and Wright, "Nationalism and the Cohesive Society," 154.

uniquely provided by nationality.⁶² This trust becomes crucial, as it motivates people to make sacrifices for “anonymous others” whom we may never encounter, and whose ethnic origins, faith, and lifestyle may differ. The main idea is that shared and collective identity surpasses ethnic, religious, or linguistic affiliations, acting as a cohesive force that binds society together.⁶³ Therefore, from the perspective of the theory of SC, national identity can be regarded as a form of “bridging” SC, as it unites individuals from diverse social classes, religious beliefs, and ethnic origins under a shared identity, thereby fostering solidarity among them.⁶⁴

To conclude, national identity encourages a broad scope of trust, which serves as a facilitator for economic transactions and political engagement. Trust is rooted in SC, which involves the capacity to collaborate with others based on informal norms and shared values.⁶⁵ Therefore, based on existing literature and research, it can be concluded that a strong national identity increases the overall resilience of a given society, since it has a positive effect on both bonding and bridging SC. Furthermore, the existing literature suggests that religious organizations have a positive effect on maintaining national identity.⁶⁶ Membership in a religious community has a positive effect on SC through the promotion of such values as unity, selflessness, and integrity, and by fostering civic abilities, thus increasing trust among people.⁶⁷ In this way, religion becomes an element of national identity along with shared history, language, and culture.⁶⁸

⁶² Reeskens and Wright, 155.

⁶³ Reeskens and Wright, 155.

⁶⁴ Reeskens and Wright, 155.

⁶⁵ Fukuyama, “Why National Identity Matters,” 10.

⁶⁶ V. Stanley Vardys, “The Role of the Churches in the Maintenance of Regional and National Identity in the Baltic Republics,” *Journal of Baltic Studies* 18, no. 3 (Fall 1987): 288, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01629778700000141>.

⁶⁷ Kaasa, “Religion and Social Capital,” 589.

⁶⁸ Miranda Zapor Cruz, “The Role of Catholicism in the Development of Lithuanian National Identity,” *Church History and Religious Culture* 94, no. 4 (2014): 482, <https://doi.org/10.1163/18712428-09404003>.

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III. RESEARCH DESIGN

The thesis aims to answer the main research question: how non-governmental organizations could contribute to comprehensive defense? To answer this question, the thesis will examine the ways and means the Catholic church contributed to the resistance of Lithuanian people against the occupation regimes. The reason the LCC was chosen as an object of study is because of its substantial influence on Lithuanian society. Historically the Catholic Church and its institutions provided not only religious services but became cultural and educational centers. By the nineteenth century, the LCC became an influential element in Lithuanian society in Lithuania and Catholicism had a close relationship with the national identity of the Lithuanian people. Furthermore, the occupying forces starting in the late eighteenth century aimed to destroy the influence of the Catholic Church, since it became an important facilitator of resistance to occupation and a counterweight to efforts aimed at destroying the national identity of Lithuania.⁶⁹

The first part of this thesis will aim to answer the initial question: Why is comprehensive defense a strategy of choice for Lithuania? To answer this question, it will examine the most recent analysis of the war in Ukraine to determine whether possible aggression could be countered by the principles outlined in the NCDH.⁷⁰ Furthermore, the analysis of the current Lithuanian national security strategy, military doctrine, and other relevant official documents related to state defense, would determine whether Lithuanian officials and defense policymakers foresee the implementation of concepts and guidance stipulated in the NCDH and the ROC.⁷¹

Further, it will examine the possible ways and means to enhance the comprehensive defense strategy by utilizing the potential of NGOs. The existing concepts on national defense policies, such as the NCDH and the ROC, recognize the value of non-governmental

⁶⁹ Vilma Narkutė, “The Confrontation between the Lithuanian Catholic Church and the Soviet Regime,” *New Blackfriars* 87, no. 1011 (September 2006): 456–75, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-2005.2006.00105.x>.

⁷⁰ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, *Comprehensive Defense Handbook Volume I*.

⁷¹ Fiala, *Resistance Operating Concept*.

organizations; however, they do not specify in detail what added value this important element of society could bring forward for national defense and how they could contribute to comprehensive defense. To investigate the possible roles of NGOs in the comprehensive defense effort, this thesis will use the example of the LCC as a possible contributor to state defense.

To examine the role of the LCC in the struggle of Lithuanian peoples against occupying forces, this thesis will analyze two historical cases:

1. The Czarist occupation between 1795 through 1918, a period characterized by the attempts of Czarist Russia to destroy Lithuanian national identity, generally defined as Russification.⁷² The national struggle against the Czarist occupation had two culminating points, historically known as the general uprisings of 1831 and 1863.
2. The Soviet occupation between 1944 through 1990, the so-called era of Sovietization, and the attempt of the Soviet regime to fully integrate the Lithuanian state into the communist system.⁷³ The case is further divided into the period of active resistance between 1944 and 1953 and passive resistance between 1953 and 1990.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the role the LCC played in the resistance of Lithuanian society against occupation during the above-mentioned historical periods. The findings of the case studies have been cross-checked with the concepts and recommendations outlined in the NCDH and the ROC to identify what functions and possible tasks NGOs with strong influence on society could serve in the comprehensive defense strategy.

The thesis was conducted through the analysis of historical literature, scholarly opinions, official national security and defense documents of Lithuania, and the main

⁷² *Encyclopædia Britannica*, s.v. “Russia–Russification Policies,” accessed February 24, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Russia/Russification-policies>.

⁷³ *Collins English Dictionary*, s.v. “Sovietize” accessed February 24, 2023, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english/sovietize>.

guiding concepts of CD: NCDH and the ROC. Finally, based on the findings and conclusions, it will aim to provide recommendations for Lithuanian policymakers and defense planners on how to improve CD strategy with the integration of NGOs into the overall national defense effort.

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IV. COMPREHENSIVE DEFENSE: A STRATEGY OF CHOICE FOR LITHUANIA

The strategy of a state is an active pursuit and safeguarding of national interests with an application of instruments of national power. When it comes to national security, the end state of a national security strategy is the survival of a state as a sovereign entity.⁷⁴ Therefore, the security policies are directed toward countering the potential adversary that poses an existential threat to a given state. The following chapter will aim to identify the main security threat to Lithuania and will examine the best suitable strategic policy to counter this existential challenge.

A. DEFINING THE THREAT TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY OF LITHUANIA

The ongoing full-scale conventional war in Ukraine has clearly demonstrated that Russia is an aggressive power capable of using all elements of national power to reach its strategic aims. The president of the Russian Federation, V. Putin, and the ruling Russian elite regard the return of the former Soviet territories as a matter of “historical justice.”⁷⁵ On the eve of the Ukraine invasion, the Russian Federation issued a set of demands to the Western community, which included banning Ukraine from joining the NATO. It further demanded a stop to the deployment of NATO forces to eastern Europe, thus in effect requesting the return to the security situation in Europe to 1997, before an eastward expansion.⁷⁶ Such rhetoric and ultimatums clearly indicate that Russia under its current authoritarian regime sees former Soviet and Warsaw Pact states as its sphere of influence subject to its aggressive policies. Therefore, Lithuania, a former Soviet republic due to its proximity to Russia, historical ties, and strong overt support to Ukraine, might be the prime target for the next Russian aggression.

⁷⁴ Yarger, “Toward a Theory of Strategy.”

⁷⁵ Richard D. Hooker, Jr., *How to Defend the Baltic States* (Washington, DC: The Jamestown Foundation, 2019), 10, <https://jamestown.org/product/how-to-defend-the-baltic-states/>.

⁷⁶ Andrew Roth, “Russia Issues List of Demands It Says Must Be Met to Lower Tensions in Europe,” *The Guardian*, December 17, 2021, sec. World news, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/dec/17/russia-issues-list-demands-tensions-europe-ukraine-nato>.

In the most recent conflicts, Western democracies demonstrated that the introduction of precision-guided munitions and appropriate tactics allowed military operations to be conducted without excessive collateral damage and the targeting of civilian infrastructure and population centers. These practices were being applied in the recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.⁷⁷ Russia, on the other hand, has revealed that it never shifted away from the concept of total war. In Syria, the Russian military deliberately engaged civilian targets during two Chechen wars in the 1990s, where Russia used brute force against civil populated areas without any regard for collateral damage.⁷⁸ The same principles are being applied in the recent aggression against Ukraine. With the failure to implement the principles of modern warfare, used effectively by the coalition forces against Iraq and Afghanistan, Russia has resorted to attacks on Ukrainian population and civilian infrastructure. These have included the leveling of the whole apartment complexes, attacking Ukraine’s critical infrastructure, and laying WWII-style prolonged city sieges, such as against Mariupol in the spring of 2022.⁷⁹ This analysis of the post-Cold War conflicts with Russian involvement leads to the conclusion that Russia has been applying the total war principles outlined in Chapter A. of this research.

B. COUNTERING THE THREAT WITH THE CONCEPT OF COMPREHENSIVE DEFENSE

Lithuania recognizes the Russian Federation as an existential threat due to its geographical proximity, the historical experience of prior occupations, and the most recent aggression on its neighboring state. The national security strategy of Lithuania, which was updated in 2017 in the aftermath of the Russian annexation of Crimea and invasion of eastern Ukraine, states that the main threat to its national security is posed by aggressive actions of the Russian Federation, which violates security architecture based on

⁷⁷ Lawrence Freedman, “Kyiv and Moscow Are Fighting Two Different Wars,” *Foreign Affairs*, February 17, 2023, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ukraine/kyiv-and-moscow-are-fighting-two-different-wars>.

⁷⁸ Freedman.

⁷⁹ Freedman.

international law and peaceful coexistence.⁸⁰ Therefore, Lithuania must adopt the most suitable defense strategy to counter this threat to national security to ensure its survival as an independent state.

The political leadership of Lithuania recognizes the importance of preparing a whole state for national defense. The bipartisan agreement on national security and defense signed by the major political parties of Lithuania in July of 2022 states that the main pillars of defense of Lithuania are the armed forces of Lithuania, collective defense along with NATO allies, and civilian governmental and municipal institutions, along with private enterprises, non-governmental organizations, and citizens. State defense requires all these components to ensure the implementation of CD.⁸¹ One of the main priorities listed in the document is to develop and implement a comprehensive defense model that would enable the effective concentration of the state civilian and military resources for defense and deterrence and consolidate the efforts of governmental organizations, the civil sector, and ordinary citizens. Furthermore, the agreement notes the necessity to draft a state defense plan by 2023. The plan should clarify the roles and tasks of state entities, civilian organizations, and citizens in national defense.⁸²

The strategy for implementation of civil resistance principles of the Republic of Lithuania also recognizes the principles of comprehensive defense.⁸³ This conceptual document on national defense states that CD is the main principle for the defense of Lithuania. It defines comprehensiveness where the responsibility for the defense of the country is not solely the responsibility of the armed forces since threat prevention and

⁸⁰ Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, *Nacionalinio Saugumo Strategija [National Security Strategy]* (Vilnius: Ministry of National Defense Republic of Lithuania, 2017).

⁸¹ Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, “Seime–Partijų Susitarimo dėl Gynybos Finišas: 15min Dalijasi Dokumento Tekstu [in the Seimas–the Conclusion of a Party Agreement on Defense: 15min Shares the Text of the Document],” 15min, accessed February 22, 2023, <https://www.15min.lt/naujiena/aktualu/lietuva/seime-partiju-susitarimo-del-gynybos-finisas-15min-dalijasi-dokumentu-tekstu-56-1682258>.

⁸² Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania.

⁸³ Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, *Dėl Nacionalinės Darbotvarkės „Lietuvos Respublikos Piliečių Rengimo Pilietiniam Pasipriešinimui Strategija“ Patvirtinimo [The strategy for implementation of civil resistance principles of the Republic of Lithuania]*, XIVP-1308(2) (Vilnius: Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, 2022), <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAP/105d3340cf6611ecb69ea7b9ba9d787b>.

resistance against aggression and occupation is a duty of every citizen regardless of age and place of residence. The document further echoes the bipartisan agreement on national defense, emphasizing that all governmental, and municipal institutions, private companies, and social organizations must be committed to all defensive efforts of the state.⁸⁴

This analysis of the national security strategy of Lithuania, the strategy for implementation of civil resistance principles of the Republic of Lithuania, and the bipartisan agreement on national security and defense lead to the conclusion that the Lithuanian government and major stakeholders involved in the planning and execution of national defense recognize that Russia as a potential aggressor will use all elements of national power to reach its strategic goals and very likely will resort to total war principles on the operational level. The abovementioned documents indicate that CD is the strategy of choice in Lithuania for deterrence and defense in case of crisis. The following chapters of this research, based on historical case analysis, will investigate how NGOs could improve the comprehensive defense of Lithuania.

⁸⁴ Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, 3.

V. LITHUANIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SUPPORT OF COMPREHENSIVE DEFENSE

This part of the research will examine the role the Catholic Church and Catholicism have played in shaping the National identity of Lithuanians. Further on it will analyze two historical cases: the Czarist occupation between 1795 through 1918, and the Soviet occupation between 1944 through 1990, the so-called era of Sovietization, the attempt of the Soviet regime to fully integrate the Lithuanian state into the communist system. The study of these cases will help to identify the functions the Catholic Church served during the resistance of Lithuanian society against occupation by a foreign power in accordance with the principles outlined in the NCDH and the theory of SC.

A. LITHUANIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

Scholars typically acknowledge the significant role that religion has played in shaping nations. There is also historical evidence that demonstrates religion's substantial influence on the emergence and character of nationalism.⁸⁵ Catholicism is a global faith with a centralized organizational structure, but according to Polish historian Irena Borowik "each church belongs at the same time to this universum sociologically (as an organization) and theologically (as a community of believers) and has specific features."⁸⁶ In the case of Lithuania, Catholicism has strong connections with Lithuanian identity. In her research on the role of the Polish Catholic Church in the democratic transformation of Poland, Borowik has proposed that the Catholic Church had strong connections with a national identity. It has been particularly strengthened by historical experience when the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth was divided by foreign powers when these two countries were deprived of their nationhood for a century.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Vardys, "The Role of the Churches," 287.

⁸⁶ Irena Borowik, "The Roman Catholic Church in the Process of Democratic Transformation: The Case of Poland," *Social Compass* 49, no. 2 (2002): 240, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0037768602049002008>.

⁸⁷ Borowik, "The Roman Catholic Church."

The adoption of Catholicism by Lithuania during the thirteenth century initiated a lengthy partnership with Poland. For nearly four centuries, spanning from 1385 to 1794, the two countries were formally joined in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania-Poland. This entity stood as the predominant Catholic force in Eastern Europe, stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea.⁸⁸ The first significant shift in the Lithuanian population's embrace of Catholicism occurred during the rule of Grand Duke Casimir, who was also crowned as the King of Poland in 1447.⁸⁹ He aimed to educate the Lithuanian population and sought guidance from the universities of Western Europe, which led to a growth in Western educational influences. This, in turn, resulted in a more Western perspective that placed a greater cultural emphasis on the Catholic Church. Moreover, the increasing military threat posed by the Grand Duchy of Moscow, the hub of the Eastern Orthodox realm, added to the reinforcement of the Lithuanians' Catholic identity under Casimir.⁹⁰ The historical rivalry between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Russia was intensified by their mutual interest in expanding their territories and control over Baltic trade routes. The relationship between the two states was further strained by politically driven marriages between the reigning dynasties of Russia and Lithuania. From the Muscovite rulers starting with Ivan, the official Russian foreign policy became the westward expansion toward territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.⁹¹ As a result, the military danger originating from the Grand Duchy of Moscow strengthened the political partnership between Poland and Lithuania, while also strengthening their Catholic identity. To distinguish themselves from Orthodox Russian Empire rather than Catholic Poland, the Lithuanians adopted additional Catholic practices.⁹²

The connection between the Lithuanian populace and the Catholic Church, which was based on religion and nationalism, grew even stronger during the twenty years of

⁸⁸ Marite Sapiets, "Religion and Nationalism in Lithuania," *Religion in Communist Lands* 7, no. 2 (1979): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09637497908430903>.

⁸⁹ Zapor Cruz, "The Role of Catholicism," 485.

⁹⁰ Zapor Cruz, 485.

⁹¹ Zapor Cruz, 485.

⁹² Zapor Cruz, 485.

independence in the interwar period between 1918 and 1940. Zapor Cruz argues that the importance of the two decades of independence in shaping Lithuanian national identity cannot be emphasized enough.⁹³ It represented the only time before 1991 when the Lithuanian populace had the opportunity to assert self-determination as a sovereign state. The active involvement of the LCC in political and societal affairs emphasized its crucial role in the Lithuanian collective consciousness, reinforcing the connection between religion and nationalism. The nationalist principles and the relationship between the church and the state forged during the interwar era of independence set the foundation for resisting Soviet influence in the subsequent years.⁹⁴

Gradually the LCC became the oldest and one of the most influential state institutions that survived foreign occupation and numerous political and social changes throughout history. It is firmly rooted in national traditions and serves as an important focal point for maintaining and promoting these traditions. Additionally, LCC is the only public institution that have managed to avoid complete control and destruction both during the occupation by Czarist Russia between 1918 and 1944 and by the Soviet regime between 1944 and 1990.⁹⁵ Despite being oppressed by occupational authorities, over the one and a half century religion to this day remains a significant aspect of life in Lithuania. Stanley Vardys argues that the main reason why Catholicism sustained an important role in society is related to the fact that most Lithuanians practice this Western-originated religion.⁹⁶ According to the Association of Religion Data Archives, in 2020 77.1 percent of the population in Lithuania were Roman Catholics.⁹⁷ Although Catholicism shares certain theological commonalities with Russian Orthodoxy, it diverges notably in religious philosophy, rituals, and cultural aspects. Over time, Western religious influence has instilled in the Lithuanians distinct perspectives on authority, community, work ethic, and

⁹³ Zapor Cruz, 492.

⁹⁴ Zapor Cruz, 492.

⁹⁵ Vardys, "The Role of the Churches," 288.

⁹⁶ Vardys, 288.

⁹⁷ Association of Religion Data Archives, "National /Regional Profiles," World Religion, accessed August 22, 2023, <https://www.thearda.com/world-religion/national-profiles?u=134c>.

the law, resulting in different cultural concepts.⁹⁸ Moreover, adherence to these religious convictions has not only connected Lithuanians but also Estonians and Latvians to Western Europe and the United States. Consequently, the Catholic faith and tradition continue to play a significant role in shaping the distinctions between the Baltic region and Russia.⁹⁹

To conclude, Lithuania's history, which was significantly influenced by oppression and occupation first by Czarist Russia in the nineteenth century and by the Soviet Union in 1944, made nationalism a powerful force.¹⁰⁰ The LCC, which had a dense network of religious and parish organizations, created an effective, autonomous system of social communication, and became an important part of national identity.¹⁰¹

B. THE ROLE OF THE LITHUANIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE RESISTANCE TO RUSSIFICATION: 1776–1918

After the complete dissolution of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Lithuania fell under the control of Czarist Russia in 1795. The process of incorporation of Lithuania into the Russian empire occurred through three partitions of the Commonwealth: initially in 1772, which encompassed only its peripheral regions, followed by another partition in 1793; this ultimately culminated in its complete annexation in 1795.¹⁰² Following the 1795 partition, a significant portion of the former territories belonging to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania became integrated into the Russian Empire.¹⁰³ Historians define this historical period of Lithuania as a history of a divided, occupied, fragmented, annexed, adapting, and

⁹⁸ Vardys, "The Role of the Churches," 288.

⁹⁹ Vardys, 288.

¹⁰⁰ Zapor Cruz, "The Role of Catholicism," 482.

¹⁰¹ Arūnas Streikus, *Sovietų Valdžios Antibažnytinė Politika Lietuvoje: 1944–1990 [Soviet Anti-Church Policies in Lithuania: 1944–1990]* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Gyventojų Genocido ir Rezistencijos Tyrimo Centras, 2002), 7.

¹⁰² Karolė Mueller and Vaida Tumosaitė, "Factors Affecting Identity Formation Process: Comparative Analysis of Lithuania and Korea in the 19th–21st Centuries," *Religiski-Filozofiski Raksti* 2, no. 2 (2021): 58.

¹⁰³ Aurelija Tamošiūnaitė, "Defining 'Lithuanian': Orthographic Debates at the End of the Nineteenth Century," *Written Language & Literacy* 18, no. 2 (September 17, 2015): 6, <https://doi.org/10.1075/wll.18.2.08tam>.

struggling land, a period of dilemmas in restoring statehood, and the transformation of ethnic Lithuanians into an independent political and cultural community.¹⁰⁴

The period of the occupation of Lithuania by Czarist Russia is generally distinguished by the two uprisings in the Polish-Lithuanian region, which resulted from the discontentment stemming from the imperial policies and the desire for political freedom, and the reinstatement of autonomy. The first rebellion against the Czarist occupation occurred in 1830–1831, and the second in 1863–1864. These attempts to rebel were quelled by the authorities, leading to further constraints on social, political, and cultural aspects of life.¹⁰⁵ The second half of the nineteenth century, after an unsuccessful uprising of 1863, can be defined as a period of passive or nonviolent resistance of the Lithuanian population against Russian rule. The following sections will examine the roles and functions the LCC played in fighting the Russification and oppression of national identity.

1. Russification Policies of the First Half of the Nineteenth century and the 1830–31 Uprising

After the third and final partition of the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth, Czarist Russian authorities in Lithuania made efforts to erase Lithuanian history from the memory and public usage of the population. Starting from the early decades of the nineteenth century, the term Western Borderlands began to be applied to the former lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Such policy was aligned with the historical concept emerging at that time, which asserted that these lands not only had historical ties to Russia but also, from an ethnic perspective, were Russian.¹⁰⁶

During this historical period of oppression and attempts to destroy the national identity of the Lithuanian population, historians identify the importance of religion and the LCC in countering policies of Russification. Darius Staliūnas argues that in the nineteenth century, religion, specifically affiliation to the Catholic Church, was the most crucial

¹⁰⁴ Alfonsas Eidintas et al., *Lietuvos Istorija [History of Lithuania]*, 2nd ed. (Vilnius: Vilnius University, 2013), 98.

¹⁰⁵ Tamošiūnaitė, “Defining ‘Lithuanian,’” 6.

¹⁰⁶ Darius Staliūnas, *Making Russians: Meaning and Practice of Russification in Lithuania and Belarus after 1863*, *On the Boundary of Two Worlds* 11 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 57.

attribute of national identity.¹⁰⁷ Religious affiliation was regarded as the inheritance from the ancestors from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania that should be preserved.¹⁰⁸ From the start of the partition of the Lithuanian-Polish commonwealth, there was a systematic effort to impose Russian culture that was accompanied by unfair treatment of the Catholic Church. Significant portions of land and monasteries belonging to the LCC were taken away and given to the Russian Orthodox Church. Educational institutions and academies in Lithuania were shut down, and even the term “Lithuania” was officially prohibited. In this context, the LCC came to be viewed as a protector of Lithuanian national identity. The two major uprisings against Tsarist rule in the nineteenth century—in 1831 and 1863—were closely connected with the LCC.¹⁰⁹

The first major uprising against the rule of Czarist Russia began spontaneously in the spring of 1831. The main hotbed of the rebellion occurred in the Lithuanian region of Samogitia (Žemaitija), where the population violently opposed the government’s announcement of conscription to the Russian army. Among the insurgent groups led by local minor nobility representatives, the majority were peasants, who, along with opposition to the draft, demanded the liberation of peasants from serfdom. The rebel groups also included many LCC clergy, who actively supported the uprising.¹¹⁰ There was no unified leadership for the insurrection in Lithuania, with numerous “governments” operating within specific county territories. By May 1831, the insurgents had assumed control over the entire territory west and north of the former Lithuanian capital Vilnius.¹¹¹ According to Eidintas et al., the Czarist Russia occupational authorities managed to gather more than 20,000 troops; these later were reinforced by the Russian reserve army along with other military units, which constituted approximately an additional 36,000 troops and could reoccupy previously liberated territories from the rebels. The uprising lost

¹⁰⁷ Staliūnas, 207.

¹⁰⁸ Staliūnas, 207.

¹⁰⁹ Sapiets, “Religion and Nationalism in Lithuania,” 1.

¹¹⁰ LNB Mokslo ir Enciklopedijų Leidybos Centras, “1830–1831 Sukilimas [the Uprising of 1830–1831],” *Visuotinė Lietuvių Enciklopedija*, accessed August 18, 2023, <https://www.vle.lt/straipsnis/n1830-1831-sukilimas/>.

¹¹¹ Eidintas et al., *Lietuvos Istorija [History of Lithuania]*, 105.

momentum and was put down by the fall of 1831. In the spring of 1832, most insurgents dispersed, while others engaged in guerrilla warfare and hid for about two years.

The historical research related to the uprising of 1831 provides very little detail on the actual role of the LCC during the insurrection. However, the occupation authorities' punitive actions against the clergy and the LCC suggest that the it actively supported the uprising. In the aftermath of the rebellion, the previously liberal stance of the Czarist governance toward LCC changed dramatically. Accusing them of supporting the insurgents, the authorities started active repression against the clergy and the institutions of the LCC.¹¹² According to Bairašauskaitė, Medišauskienė, and Miknys, following a special decree by Czar Nicholas I, Vilnius University was closed, and the Vilnius Roman Catholic Spiritual Academy, established in its place, was relocated to St. Petersburg in 1842.¹¹³ Suspected priests who aroused secular authority's suspicions were sent to Siberia, and censorship was imposed on sermons. Through the December 25, 1841, Act, lands were seized from all monasteries, dioceses, seminaries, and chapters. A decree was issued on December 15, 1842, leaving each parish with 30–50 percent of tithes to support churches and their servants. The aim of the Russian authorities at that time was to make the Catholic Church subservient to the ruling regime. Catholic priests became a kind of civil servants whom the Russian authorities could control.¹¹⁴

Given the historical evidence, it can be concluded that the LCC participated in the resistance of the Lithuanian people against the occupational regime. Even though there is no detailed analysis available on the actual functions of the Church during the uprising of 1831, several assumptions could be made. First, as already indicated above, the Catholic Church strongly influenced national identity and authority among the Lithuanian population; this suggests that the LCC might have served the function of Social and Psychological Defense as defined in the NCDH. Secondly, the LCC at the beginning of the nineteenth century had 86 monasteries, 235 churches, and 106 chapels in the territory of

¹¹² Eidintas et al., 106.

¹¹³ Tamara Bairašauskaitė, Zita Medišauskienė, and Rimantas Miknys, *Lietuvos Istorija [the History of Lithuania]*, vol. 8 (Vilnius: Baltos Lankos, 2005), 28.

¹¹⁴ Bairašauskaitė, Medišauskienė, and Miknys, 8:28.

Lithuania.¹¹⁵ This vast network allowed it to act as a support base for the rebel organization, serving as communications hubs and logistic bases. Finally, the LCC could serve the function of civil defense with a vital medical support service since most of the hospitals and care facilities, starting from the 16th century, were organized within churches, monasteries, and other facilities of the LCC.¹¹⁶

2. The General Uprising of 1864 and Passive Resistance in the Second Half of the Nineteenth century

At the end of January 1863, another wave of conscription into the Russian army spiked the second uprising in the former territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The uprising was almost spontaneous; therefore, little preparations were made for these activities. Similar to the uprising of 1831, most insurgent groups were formed and operated in the historical ethnographic territory of Lithuania.¹¹⁷ Eidintas et al. argue that this time, however, the czarist authorities were well prepared to suppress the uprising; for this purpose, a hundred-thousand-strong Russian army was concentrated in the Vilnius military district.¹¹⁸ Therefore, the insurgent groups could not control larger territories. In the spring, Zigmantas Sierakauskas (Zygmunt Sierakowski), a former captain of the Russian army's general staff, appointed as the Chief Commander of the Lithuanian rebel movement, attempted to reorganize the insurgent groups into an army. This move allowed the Russian army to crush the uprising with a single blow. In early May, the insurgent army was defeated in a major battle near the small town of Birzai in the northern part of present-day Lithuania, and Z. Sierakauskas was wounded, captured, and soon

¹¹⁵ Darius Liutikas, "Katalikų Bažnyčios Ir Koplyčios Lietuvoje: Statistinė Analizė [Catholic Churches and Chapels in Lithuania: Statistical Analysis]," *Lietuvių katalikų mokslo akademijos metraštis [The Yearbook of Lithuanian Catholic Academia]* 44 (2021): 335.

¹¹⁶ LNB Mokslo ir Enciklopedijų Leidybos Centras, "Lietuvos Katalikų Bažnyčia [The Catholic Church of Lithuania]," *Visuotinė Lietuvių Enciklopedija*, accessed August 18, 2023, <https://www.vle.lt/straipsnis/lietuvos-kataliku-baznycia/>.

¹¹⁷ Eidintas et al., *Lietuvos Istorija [History of Lithuania]*, 108.

¹¹⁸ Eidintas et al., 108.

publicly executed in Vilnius. After his death, a young Lithuanian priest, Antanas Mackevicius, took over as the Chief Commander of the insurgents in the Kaunas region.¹¹⁹

Historical literature has described Antanas Mickevicius's role in the 1863 uprising and his motives for joining the rebellion quite ambiguously. At different times of historical research, he was portrayed as a fierce rebel and as a revolutionary and leader of the Lithuanian people in their struggle against the tsarism, and ultimately as a fighter for Lithuania's independence, laying the groundwork for, the declarations of independence in 1918 and 1990.¹²⁰ Historian Darius Staliūnas argues that Mackevičius joined the uprising driven by socio-economic and religious motives and not because of the vision of an independent Lithuania.¹²¹ Furthermore, the available historical sources suggest that the case of active participation in the uprising of Catholic priests such as Mackevicius is more an exception than a general rule since most of the clergy prioritized passive resistance and preaching God's word and prayer over taking part in armed combat.¹²²

After the defeat, the rebel formations abandoned the attempt to concentrate on larger formations and resorted to guerilla warfare as in the previous uprising. At this time, Michail Muravyov was appointed as the Governor-General of Vilnius. Having prior experience in suppressing similar uprisings in the Russian empire and after being given basically unlimited authority by the Czar, Muravyov resorted to demonstrative cruelty and terror.¹²³ Implementing these measures had an effect, and the uprising began to lose momentum. At the end of 1863, A. Mackevicius fell into the hands of the Russian authorities and soon was publicly executed.¹²⁴

¹¹⁹ Eidintas et al., 109.

¹²⁰ Darius Staliūnas, "Antanas Mackevičius lietuvių istoriniame naratyve [Antanas Mackevicius in the Lithuanian Historical Narrative]," *Review* (Vilnius: Institute of Lithuanian History, 2008), 6.

¹²¹ Staliūnas, 8.

¹²² Darius Staliūnas, "Aldona Prašmantaitė, 1863 Metų Sukilimas Ir Katalikų Bažnyčia Lietuvoje [Aldona Prašmantaitė, the Uprising of 1863 and the Catholic Church in Lithuania]," *Nasza Przeszłość [Our Past]* 123 (2015): 370, <https://doi.org/10.52204/np.2015.123.295-301>.

¹²³ Eidintas et al., *Lietuvos Istorija [History of Lithuania]*, 109.

¹²⁴ Eidintas et al., 109.

The role of the LCC during the rebellion is still being debated in historical literature, and generally, historians agree that there is still a lack of data for solid conclusions. However, some researchers have tried to analyze the functions and general position of the LCC during the uprising of 1863. Historian Aldona Prašmantaitė argues that the parish church and the residing clergy often became a distinctive support base for the insurgents, since priests serving in the parish had the duty to administer the oath of those joining the uprising and provide religious services.¹²⁵ She discusses the primary forms of clergy participation in the uprising, such as the proclamation of programmatic uprising documents, administering the oath to the insurgents, performing chaplain duties with the insurgent groups, and delivering sermons urging people to join the insurgents. Prismaitaite further notes that the uprising manifesto was most intensively proclaimed by the clergy in March of 1863, and it was also read in churches in April and May of the same year. To conclude, the LCC was not actively participating in the uprising of 1863, and as was the case with the event of 1831, it served the functions of Social and Psychological Defense and Civil Defense. Furthermore, according to the ROC, the LCC acted as an auxiliary component of the armed uprising, giving spiritual support to active fighters, and providing logistics and intelligence.¹²⁶

The uprising of 1863 was the last attempt to actively resist Czarist Russia's rule in Lithuania. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the country entered a period of passive resistance. Gene Sharp refers to passive resistance as a nonviolent action.¹²⁷ He argues that this form of resistance is an action that is comprised of “mass protests, social, economic, and political non-cooperation, and nonviolent intervention.”¹²⁸ This nonviolent struggle was centered around the LCC, which was the leading force in the resistance of the Lithuanian population against the occupation policies of the Russian authorities.

¹²⁵ Staliūnas, “Aldona Prašmantaitė,” 366.

¹²⁶ Fiala, *Resistance Operating Concept*, 158.

¹²⁷ Sharp and Jenkins, *Civilian-Based Defense*, 38.

¹²⁸ Sharp and Jenkins, 38.

Bairašauskaitė, Medišauskienė, and Miknys argue that in the second half of the nineteenth century, the LCC entered a period, perhaps unique in Lithuanian history when events and phenomena directly related to it became the axis of societal development and expression.¹²⁹ In a region turned into a province of the Russian Empire, no other institutions and their representatives had equivalent power and means that could match the LCC in defending societal positions against Russia's attempts to destroy the national identity of the Lithuanian population. Such a position of the LCC led to a situation where it became a national political force that led to the national resistance to the Czarist occupation.¹³⁰

Following the effective suppression of the final uprising in 1864, the occupational authorities started implementing a new strategy. According to Mueller and Tumosaitė, the Russian Empire aimed to transform the nation's cultural and ethnic identity, with a particular focus on language.¹³¹ This effort prohibited any written materials in Lithuanian, encompassing books, newspapers, and even non-politically oriented prayer books. The use of Latin script for writing Lithuanian was deemed illegal. After the prohibition, all publications were required to utilize a writing style known as "grazdanka," which employed Russian orthography within the framework and vocabulary of Lithuanian grammar, lasting until 1904.¹³² Furthermore, Lithuanian schools were forcibly closed, and education was conducted with Russian as the only language of instruction.¹³³

The Lithuanian population held their most cherished ideals of national identity in religion, which promised moral excellence and the prospect of an afterlife, as well as in their native folk culture encompassing language, traditions, and folklore.¹³⁴ Therefore, they regarded Cyrillic script as a symbolic embodiment of Orthodoxy and as a clear danger

¹²⁹ Bairašauskaitė, Medišauskienė, and Miknys, *Lietuvos Istorija [the History of Lithuania]*, 8:29.

¹³⁰ Bairašauskaitė, Medišauskienė, and Miknys, 8:29.

¹³¹ Mueller and Tumosaitė, "Factors Affecting Identity Formation Process," 60.

¹³² Mueller and Tumosaitė, 60.

¹³³ Miniotaitė, *Nonviolent Resistance in Lithuania*.

¹³⁴ Vytautas Merkys, "Bishop Motiejus Valančius, Catholic Universalism and Nationalism," *Lithuanian Historical Studies* 6, no. 2001 (2001): 72, <https://doi.org/10.30965/25386565-00601004>.

to their Catholic essence. Furthermore, Lithuanians saw these policies as an initial measure that would pave the way for the Russification of their culture and the conversion of Lithuanians to the Orthodox faith.¹³⁵ As already mentioned, at this point, the LCC took the leading role in fighting the oppression of national identity. The central figure in these efforts to resist the Russification policies of Czarist authorities was Motiejus Valancius, the bishop of Samogitia from 1850–1875, who inspired the anti-Czarist movement and eventually became a leader of the Lithuanian national movement in the second half of nineteenth century.¹³⁶

The two major activities of passive resistance inspired and led by the LCC and bishop M. Valancius were clandestine tutoring in the Lithuanian language and printing and distributing Lithuanian press materials. According to Tamošiūnaitė, sometime between 1867 and 1869, M. Valančius released six pamphlets with a clear political agenda against the process of Russification and the efforts to convert Lithuanians to Orthodoxy.¹³⁷ These brochures offered explicit guidelines on opposing Russian educational initiatives, advocating for the refusal to engage with Lithuanian books written in Cyrillic. Additionally, they promoted clandestine home-based education using materials in the Latin alphabet.¹³⁸ The document provided additional guidance for establishing a clandestine network of Lithuanian homeschools.¹³⁹ Eidintas et al. further argue that bishop M. Valančius took measures to ensure priests were respectful towards the Lithuanian-speaking population, demanded that they master the Lithuanian language, and delivered sermons in Lithuanian.¹⁴⁰ Since his diocese covered most of ethnographic Lithuania, not just the region of Samogitia, he instructed priests to establish Lithuanian schools near churches and monasteries. These schools completely outperformed state-run schools in the Russian language. This initiative resulted in the fact that in some areas, the percentage of people

¹³⁵ Tamošiūnaitė, “Defining ‘Lithuanian,’” 14.

¹³⁶ Miniotaitė, *Nonviolent Resistance in Lithuania*.

¹³⁷ Tamošiūnaitė, “Defining ‘Lithuanian,’” 15.

¹³⁸ Tamošiūnaitė, 15.

¹³⁹ Bairašauskaitė, Medišauskienė, and Miknys, *Lietuvos Istorija [the History of Lithuania]*, 8:34.

¹⁴⁰ Eidintas et al., *Lietuvos Istorija [History of Lithuania]*, 113.

who could read Lithuanian increased to 60 percent, which was an impressive number given the conditions of rural life in the nineteenth century.¹⁴¹

Another passive resistance activity organized by the LCC and led personally by Bishop Motiejus Valancius was the printing and distribution of illegal press in the Lithuanian language and Latin alphabet.¹⁴² M. Valančius undertook clandestine cultural and pastoral work for the Lithuanian cause. He began publishing covert Lithuanian literature. He wrote fictional works, religious and political pamphlets, and religious books, which he financed and published in East Prussia (approximately 19,000 Lithuanian books were published here between 1867 and 1869).¹⁴³ He established the first book smugglers' organization, which transported and distributed literature to Lithuania. Catholic institutions within the country, such as churches and chapels, allowed the LCC to maintain a vast network of book suppliers and distributors, thus assuring that printed material reached every part of the country.¹⁴⁴ The individuals responsible for this covert book transportation, a significant number of whom were Catholic priests, frequently encountered apprehensions, brutal interrogations, and forced relocation to Siberia. The inaugural and most renowned publication in the Lithuanian language was "Ausra" (The Dawn), which eventually became the voice of Lithuanian national reawakening and held a strong association with Bishop Valancius.¹⁴⁵

According to Eidintas et al., Bishop M. Valančius became the most influential figure in the nineteenth-century Lithuania.¹⁴⁶ His activities and authority among the population enabled him to unite society against Russification. While officially not a political figure, the bishop exerted perhaps more influence on the nineteenth-century political processes in Lithuania than anyone else. For M. Valancius, the common people became the most important force in his struggle against the Czarist regime. He secretly

¹⁴¹ Eidintas et al., 113.

¹⁴² Sapiets, "Religion and Nationalism in Lithuania," 1.

¹⁴³ Bairašauskaitė, Medišauskienė, and Miknys, *Lietuvos Istorija [the History of Lithuania]*, 8:34.

¹⁴⁴ Miniotaitė, *Nonviolent Resistance in Lithuania*, 14.

¹⁴⁵ Sapiets, "Religion and Nationalism in Lithuania," 1.

¹⁴⁶ Eidintas et al., *Lietuvos Istorija [History of Lithuania]*, 113.

urged the people not to succumb to the regulations imposed by the Russian authorities and essentially thwarted the intentions of Russification. His policies were adhered to since, through his activities, he had become a figure of close and undisputed authority for the Lithuanian people in every sense.¹⁴⁷

To conclude, language, along with the Catholic faith, played a pivotal role in shaping the nationalist identity in Lithuania. Despite the efforts of Russification during the late nineteenth century, the Lithuanian language and Catholicism managed to endure, exhibiting a notably limited level of assimilation among ethnic Lithuanians. This stands as a prime illustration of the establishment and sustenance of the Lithuanian national identity. To put it differently, during the late nineteenth century, the Lithuanian language and religion served as the foundation for a cultural characteristic that subsequent advocates of an independent Lithuanian nation would ultimately capitalize upon.¹⁴⁸ The Czarist regime admitted that clandestine schooling and distribution of illegal literature in the Latin (Lithuanian) alphabet was the strongest factor of resistance to Russification.¹⁴⁹

3. Conclusions

During the nineteenth century in Lithuania, religion became an element of national identity along with the Lithuanian language and culture.¹⁵⁰ This way, the Catholic church, from the perspective of the theory of social capital, became one of the critical elements that had a positive effect on bonding social capital. Based on the historical evidence, bonding connections among the Lithuanian population proved to be effective in bringing people together to resist the occupational policies, providing them with specific national values and helping to build the capacity based on trust to collaborate with each other.¹⁵¹ This way,

¹⁴⁷ Eidintas et al., 113.

¹⁴⁸ Mueller and Tumosaitė, “Factors Affecting Identity Formation Process,” 57.

¹⁴⁹ Miniotaitė, *Nonviolent Resistance in Lithuania*.

¹⁵⁰ Zapor Cruz, “The Role of Catholicism,” 482.

¹⁵¹ Field, *Social Capital*, 32.

the LCC positively affected and increased the overall resilience of the Lithuanian population against the Czarist occupation.¹⁵²

Throughout the active phase of resistance against Russian rule, the uprisings of 1831 and 1863, the LCC did not take an active role and generally was not part of the first tier of the uprisings, which is defined by the ROC as active front-line soldiers.¹⁵³ The available historical data suggests that the LCC did fit into the third tier of the active resistance phases, which the ROC referred to as the supporters or auxiliary component that provided psychological and spiritual support to the active fighters along with logistics and intelligence.¹⁵⁴ From the perspective of the NCDH, the LCC served the functions of Social and Psychological Defense and Civil defense by operating as a support base for the rebel organizations.¹⁵⁵

The LCC was a key enabler for the passive resistance of Lithuanian society against the Czarist regime in the second half of the nineteenth century. It contributed to sustaining and improving the resilience of the Lithuanian people to attempts by an occupying force to destroy their national identity and assimilate them into the Russian empire. Furthermore, it fostered the anti-czarist movement by sustaining networks within the country and maintaining the vital link to Western Europe, primarily Eastern Prussia, thus guaranteeing external support to Lithuania's overall effort national aspirations. Anika Binnendijk and Marta Kepe argue that a key objective for the members of passive nonviolent resistance movements is to secure the external backing necessary for achieving success.¹⁵⁶ This external support grants the occupied population a form of persuasive influence they would otherwise lack when attempting to remove the occupying force.¹⁵⁷ The LCC, being part of

¹⁵² Vardys, "The Role of the Churches," 288.

¹⁵³ Fiala, *Resistance Operating Concept*, 158.

¹⁵⁴ Fiala, 158.

¹⁵⁵ LNB Mokslo ir Enciklopedijų Leidybos Centras, "Lietuvos Katalikų Bažnyčia" [The Catholic Church of Lithuania].

¹⁵⁶ Anika Binnendijk and Marta Kepe, *Civilian-Based Resistance in the Baltic States: Historical Precedents and Current Capabilities* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2021), 19, <https://doi.org/10.7249/RR-A198-3>.

¹⁵⁷ Binnendijk and Kepe, 19.

the global Catholic Church with numerous Catholic organizations in the Western European countries, possessed this vital capability to foster external support for the resistance effort against the Russian occupation.

C. THE ROLE OF THE LITHUANIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE RESISTANCE TO SOVIETIZATION: 1944–1990

The Soviet occupation is regarded as a period of repression, armed resistance, and the Sovietization of political life.¹⁵⁸ In Lithuania, the Soviet regime was actively working to shift the allegiance of the people towards the East. According to Senn these efforts aimed to sever existing connections by isolating the country from external relationships, channeling all aspects of economic, political, and cultural life toward Moscow.¹⁵⁹ Achieving this goal involved suppressing any opposition, leading to the deportation of an estimated 200,000 Lithuanian nationals to various parts of the Soviet Union in the initial three years following the Second World War.¹⁶⁰

Sovietization is defined as a policy of enforcing conformity with cultural patterns, governmental policies, principles, and practices of a Soviet system.¹⁶¹ For Lithuania, Sovietization was an effort by the Soviet regime to incorporate it into the Soviet Union through a vigorous campaign. The Communist authorities had undertaken economic restructuring, carried out deportations of those opposed to their regime, and attempted to instill a sense of loyalty to the USSR in the Lithuanian population through re-education.¹⁶²

Since the 1940s, Lithuania has experienced three separate occupations. Firstly, it was annexed by the Soviets in 1940. This was followed by a German occupation that lasted most of the Second World War. Finally, in the last few months of the war, the Soviets

¹⁵⁸ Darius Makūnas, *Sovietinis Katalikų Bažnyčios Persekiojimas Lietuvoje 1940–1990 Metais* [Persecution of the Catholic Church in Lithuania by the Soviet regime 1940–1990] (Kaunas, Lithuania, 2015), 8.

¹⁵⁹ Alfred Erich Senn, “The Sovietization of the Baltic States,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 317, no. 1 (May 1958): 124, <https://doi.org/10.1177/000271625831700116>.

¹⁶⁰ Senn, 124.

¹⁶¹ *Merriam-Webster*, s.v. “Sovietize,” accessed September 25, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sovietize>.

¹⁶² Senn, “The Sovietization of the Baltic States,” 123.

reoccupied the country.¹⁶³ This research will focus on the second Soviet occupation and Sovietization policies from 1944 to 1990 when Lithuania regained its independence in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's dissolution.

1. Religion Policies of the Soviet Regime

The Soviet Bolshevik regime, which took power in Russia after a coup d'état in 1917, was based on Marxist-Leninist ideology, which was regarded as the official state policy. According to Ramonaitė, Klumbys, and Kukulskytė, since such policy was aimed at creating a uniform and single-minded citizen who would blindly follow communist ideas, freedom of speech, national culture, and identity were considered an existential threat to Soviet rule.¹⁶⁴ The regime was determined to eliminate all aspects of life that did not fall in line with the established political goals. Inevitably, this led to a social conflict between the regime and the people, especially in the newly acquired territories that became part of the Soviet Union after World War II.¹⁶⁵

Religion is the foundational aspect of most cultures. Streikus argues that it exists in an institutionalized form, meaning that it acts as a separate participant in the life of society and can serve as an intermediary between the individual and the governmental structures.¹⁶⁶ Therefore, religious institutions were at odds with the official Soviet policy of all-encompassing state control. Religion has been a target of the Soviet regime since it regarded it as an outright ideological adversary of the Communist Party. As a result, the entire Soviet Union's social and political structure was designed and institutionalized to isolate, eradicate, and reject religion.¹⁶⁷ According to Cruz, since religion, and Catholicism specifically, was the most influential element of Lithuanian society, it became one of the

¹⁶³ Roger Dale Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 2.

¹⁶⁴ Ainė Ramonaitė, Valdemaras Klumbys, and Rytė Kukulskytė, *Exploring Vindicated Clandestine Networks: The Functioning of Samizdat in Soviet Lithuania* (Vilnius: Institute of International Relations and Political Science Vilnius University, 2013), 3.

¹⁶⁵ Ramonaitė, Klumbys, and Kukulskytė, 3.

¹⁶⁶ Streikus, *Sovietų Valdžios Antibažnytinė Politika Lietuvoje*, 6.

¹⁶⁷ Vardys, "The Role of the Churches," 287.

main targets of the Sovietization efforts.¹⁶⁸ She further argues that it was understandable that with Lithuania's annexation in 1940 and subsequent occupation after World War II in 1944, the LCC garnered more focus than other religious communities in the USSR. The Soviet regime recognized that the LCC was directly linked to national identity, had a favorable standing with Lithuanians, and received a quite substantial level of public involvement in Catholic practices and ceremonies. According to a report by the Lithuanian Communist Party compiled in 1946, the Church presented itself as the rightful custodian of the country's cultural heritage, national customs, and traditions. Moreover, it frequently linked national traditions with religious customs and positioned itself as the protector of national identity.¹⁶⁹

The clash between the Soviet occupation regime and the LCC resulted in the dissolution of all Catholic monastic institutions and the disbandment of all societies, organizations, and written works associated with the LCC. From 1940–41 to 1944–53, approximately 30 percent of the clergy, including 342 priests, almost all monks and nuns, and four bishops, were forcibly sent to camps in Siberia and Central Asia, alongside more than 200,000 Lithuanians.¹⁷⁰

To conclude, the Soviet regime regarded the LCC and all clergy as dangerous political enemies who negatively influenced society. From the perspective of the occupation authorities, the Church was a source of negative SC, which might enable the population to achieve collective goals that were in direct confrontation with the Soviet policies, thus reinforcing anti-government sentiments.¹⁷¹ Therefore, the authorities sought to strictly control their activities while undermining internal hierarchical connections within the LCC. They aimed to create completely autonomous structures for local believers, to minimize the number of clergy and the Catholic Church's influence on the Lithuanian population.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸ Zapor Cruz, "The Role of Catholicism," 497.

¹⁶⁹ Zapor Cruz, 497.

¹⁷⁰ Sapiets, "Religion and Nationalism in Lithuania," 1.

¹⁷¹ Field, *Social Capital*, 71.

¹⁷² Makūnas, *Sovietinis Katalikų Bažnyčios Persekiojimas*, 12.

2. LCC and the Sovietization of Lithuania

The second Soviet occupation of Lithuania commenced with the withdrawal of Nazi German forces from the Baltics and the subsequent thrust of the Soviet Army toward Poland in 1944. Soviet rule lasted until March 11, 1990, when Lithuania regained its independence. The timeframe between 1944 and 1990 is referred to as an era of Sovietization, the attempt of the Soviet regime to fully integrate the Lithuanian state into the communist system.¹⁷³

During the inter-war period between 1918 and 1940, when Lithuania was a sovereign state, the LCC became an active and highly influential institution in the country.¹⁷⁴ Following World War I, statistics from Lithuania revealed that 80 percent of the populace adhered to Catholicism, 9.56 percent identified with Protestantism, predominantly Lutheran, and 2.62 percent embraced the Orthodox faith. Most Lithuanians were Catholic, while the Orthodox belief was linked to the Russian minority within the nation. The Protestants encompassed the entire German minority, constituting roughly fifty percent of the Protestant community.¹⁷⁵ According to Streikus, the network of Catholic organizations, which included many members, covered all societal groups.¹⁷⁶ Children were gathered in the “Angelo Sargas” Children’s Association, which had around 60,000 members in 1932. The most popular among the youth was the Catholic “Ateitininkai Union.” According to some sources, the Students’ Ateitininkai Union, which was one of the most important divisions of this federation and operated illegally during the Antanas Smetona authoritarian regime, had about 11,000 members in 1940. This would have made up three-quarters of the gymnasium and secondary school students.¹⁷⁷ The main mission of these Catholic organizations was fostering patriotism and active citizenship in

¹⁷³ *Collins English Dictionary*, s.v. “Sovietize” accessed February 24, 2023, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english/sovietize>.

¹⁷⁴ Arūnas Streikus, “Lietuvos Katalikų Pilietinio Aktyvumo Pavyzdžiai Ir Ribos XX Amžiuje [The Examples and Limits of the Civic Activities of the Catholic Church in Lithuania],” *Naujasis Židinys-Aidai* 9, no. 10 (2010): 316–21.

¹⁷⁵ Vardys, “The Role of the Churches,” 289.

¹⁷⁶ Streikus, *Sovietų Valdžios Antibažnytinė Politika Lietuvoje*, 40.

¹⁷⁷ Streikus, 40.

accordance with Catholic values and worldviews. Historian Streikus argues that the bulk of the active resistance members in the initial stage of the anti-Soviet resistance period consisted of former members of the “Ateitininkai” organization who matured on Christian values and the ideas of nationalism.¹⁷⁸

To conclude, the LCC became a central force in opposing Soviet occupation and Sovietization policies, since it was able successfully connect Catholic faith and the institutional Church to national traditions and cultural heritage and preserve the aspirations of independence.¹⁷⁹

3. Active Resistance: 1944–1953

Generally, historians divide the postwar Lithuanian resistance into two periods: active armed resistance between 1944 and 1953 and passive resistance between 1954–1990.¹⁸⁰ The initial period is characterized as a guerilla war against the occupation regime. According to Miniotaite, the members of active resistance, the so-called “Forest Brothers,” constituted a force of 30,000 armed members, and their activities were primarily oriented towards attacking and harassing Soviet forces stationed in Lithuania, functionaries of the Soviet regime, and Lithuanian collaborators.¹⁸¹ Armed resistance continued until its ultimate destruction in 1953, and later was replaced by the passive resistance efforts, which culminated in the 1980s with the subsequent reestablishment of the Lithuanian sovereignty.

The organized anti-communist and anti-Soviet active resistance movement in the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania is commonly known as the “Forest Brothers.” The armed struggle against the regime by this organized resistance group is generally divided into three phases:

1. Phase 1. July 1944 to May 1946. The most significant engagements and losses occurred during this phase. Resistance fighters assembled in well-defended camps in the wooded areas of the country. They assaulted

¹⁷⁸ Streikus, “Lietyvos Katalikų Pilietinio Aktyvumo Pavyzdžiai.”

¹⁷⁹ Vardys, “The Role of the Churches,” 295.

¹⁸⁰ Miniotaite, *Nonviolent Resistance in Lithuania*, 21.

¹⁸¹ Miniotaite, 21.

occupation authorities in small towns, disarmed local collaborators' military groups in rural areas, released the detainees of the regime, and destroyed draft and quota records used to forcefully conscript the population into the Red Army.¹⁸²

2. Phase 2. May 1946 until November 1948. The phase witnessed a decline in active fighters; only about 4,000 partisans remained in the forest, split into smaller groups, and relocated to specially constructed camouflaged bunkers. During these two years, large-scale battles with Soviet security troops were avoided in favor of more clandestine activities against Soviet officials and collaborators.¹⁸³
3. Phase 3. November 1948 to May 1953. During the final stage of the active resistance, the movement significantly weakened due to losses in armed engagements and infiltration of the movement by Soviet secret services. The main activities during this phase concentrated on propaganda work done through clandestine print. The goal of this activity was to raise people's awareness of their country and society and to keep them optimistic about the struggle's eventual victory and return to freedom.¹⁸⁴

According to ROC, historians generally agree that the Lithuanian Forest Brothers was the most well-established and well-organized group of active resistance.¹⁸⁵ Four percent of the Lithuanian population was directly or indirectly involved in the activities against the occupation regime.

The ROC breaks the active resistance movement in Lithuania into three tiers. The first tier was "active front line soldiers," made up of fighters who donned military uniforms to represent legitimacy as combatants fighting in battle rather than armed criminals acting unlawfully. In accordance with the ROC's terminology, this tier constituted the "guerilla

¹⁸² Fiala, *Resistance Operating Concept*, 157.

¹⁸³ Fiala, 157.

¹⁸⁴ Fiala, 157.

¹⁸⁵ Fiala, 158.

fighters.”¹⁸⁶ Inactive fighters who took a more passive role constituted the second tier. Despite having weapons, they led law-abiding lives and only engaged in combat when it was appropriate. The ROC defines these members of the resistance as “underground.” The third tier was composed of “supporters,” who made up a sizeable section of the population. They sponsored an underground press and provided logistics and intelligence. This final tier of the resistance movement, according to ROC, corresponds to “auxiliaries.”¹⁸⁷

Religion in Lithuania gave resistance a unique element. Most of the population was served by Catholic parishes; therefore, they represented grassroots institutions in the country. Furthermore, the Soviet anti-religious policies incentivized the Catholic Church to support the active resistance movement.¹⁸⁸ Misiunas and Taagepera argue that the LCC gave the resistance movement a spiritual and national rallying point, which might explain the relative strength of the Lithuanian guerillas as compared to Latvia and Estonia where, due to century-long association with Baltic Germans, the Lutheran Church could not provide the identical facet to the armed struggle.¹⁸⁹ Furthermore, the LCC had a dense network of religious institutions that served as an autonomous social communication system. In one of his first reports drafted by the representative of the Committee for Religious Affairs of the Soviet Union, Gailevičius drew attention to the fact that the LCC is well organized and has had a great influence, since 80 percent of Lithuania’s inhabitants were Catholics, the vast majority of whom were sincere peasant believers. According to data provided by diocesan authorities, in 1945, there were 711 functioning churches and 1,232 priests in the Lithuanian SSR territory.¹⁹⁰ The above-mentioned characteristics and capabilities enabled the LCC to function as a source of SC that consisted of personal connections and interpersonal interaction, which were further bonded together by the

¹⁸⁶ Fiala, 158.

¹⁸⁷ Fiala, 158.

¹⁸⁸ Romuald J. Misiunas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States, Years of Dependence, 1940–1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 84.

¹⁸⁹ Misiunas and Taagepera, 84.

¹⁹⁰ Streikus, *Sovietų Valdžios Antibažnytinė Politika Lietuvoje*, 88.

shared sets of values associated with national identity.¹⁹¹ According to SC theory, the Catholic Church served as a bonding social capital that reinforced exclusive identities and maintained homogeneity. According to Field, these bonding connections are the most effective in supporting reciprocal relationships and encouraging solidarity within a particular social group, acting as a powerful force that helps to maintain strong bonds and reinforce unique identities.¹⁹² This unique characteristic of the LCC might be linked to the source of the resilience of the Lithuanian population and the resistance movement and explain the reasons why the armed resistance struggle was the most organized and effective among the three Baltic states.

When it came to openly supporting the armed resistance, as was the case in the nineteenth century, the LCC had found itself in a dilemma. On one hand, the Church unconditionally supported the resistance, but the official endorsement of the armed struggle presented not only a challenge but also an imminent danger to the institution.¹⁹³ For the LCC to remain a legally operating structure, its hierarchies could not publicly endorse the partisan struggle. Soviet propaganda claimed that the LCC was the instigator and supporter of armed resistance, so even unofficial approval, if known to the relevant Soviet authorities, would have provided a strong argument to further persecute the Church.¹⁹⁴ Between 1946 and 1949, roughly 350 priests were exiled, particularly after the Soviet authorities were unsuccessful in persuading younger members of the clergy to establish a church that would collaborate with the regime. By 1954, 741 priests remained (compared to 1,451 in 1940), and 688 churches were still functioning (compared to 1,202 in 1939).¹⁹⁵ Furthermore, some bishops were more cautious in evaluating the international situation and, doubting the prospects of resistance, restrained from provoking even more armed resistance and, thus, more casualties.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹¹ Field, *Social Capital*, 13.

¹⁹² Field, 32.

¹⁹³ Streikus, *Sovietų Valdžios Antibažnytinė Politika Lietuvoje*, 94.

¹⁹⁴ Streikus, 94.

¹⁹⁵ Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States, Years of Dependence*, 125.

¹⁹⁶ Streikus, *Sovietų Valdžios Antibažnytinė Politika Lietuvoje*, 94.

This ambiguous situation of the LCC was the reason why the active participation in the armed resistance or Tier 1, according to the ROC, was more an exception, and only a few priests were active guerilla fighters. Most of the priests can be characterized as Tier 3 auxiliaries who were sympathetic supporters who would provide religious services to the resistance fighters upon request, enabled the establishment of guerilla networks, acted as liaisons, and facilitated material and spiritual support, thus being an important element in maintaining social resilience to Soviet occupation.¹⁹⁷

To conclude, during the period of active resistance to the Soviet occupation, the LCC was not only the source of positive bonding social capital, which contributed to the resilience of the population to withstand the hardships of occupation and support to armed struggle but also served a function of social and psychological defense. According to the NCDH, the concept of Social and Psychological Defense is based on the idea of resilience and determination, which is reinforced by promoting national pride and identity among all citizens to overcome crises. This is achieved by enhancing the understanding and appreciation of national heritage, culture, and practices, which strengthens national identity and cohesion.¹⁹⁸ In Lithuania, where nationalism and religion were closely interconnected, Catholic parishes functioned as “grass-roots institutions” capable of providing a “spiritual and national rallying point.”¹⁹⁹ The Soviet prosecution of many Catholic church leaders elevated ordinary village priests to the status of martyrs and saints, reinforcing people’s admiration for the LCC and its role in preserving national identity.²⁰⁰

4. Passive Resistance: 1953–1990

The Soviet regime was able to put down active resistance in Lithuania by 1953. By this time, the Soviet regime had established itself in Lithuania, and most of the population adapted to the new reality. Men stopped hiding from service in the Soviet army, and the

¹⁹⁷ Arūnas Streikus, “Katalikų Bažnyčia Lietuvoje 1940–1990 Metais: Tarp Pasipriešinimo Ir Prisitaikymo [Catholic Church in Lithuania 1940–1990: In between Resistance and Compliance],” *The Studies of Lithuanian History* 23 (2009): 113.

¹⁹⁸ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, *Comprehensive Defense Handbook Volume I*, I:19.

¹⁹⁹ Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion*, 208.

²⁰⁰ Zapor Cruz, “The Role of Catholicism,” 495.

armed underground was essentially crushed despite a successful process of centralization.²⁰¹ The guerrilla campaign was replaced with a passive anti-Soviet struggle, which culminated in the declaration of independence in 1990.

With the end of the active phase of resisting the Soviet occupation, the Lithuanian populace embraced a strategy of passive civil resistance. This approach centered on employing nonviolent means, including psychological, social, and political pressures, to force a change in the oppressive regime. Such strategy distinguishes itself from other nonviolent forms of political mobilization by utilizing organized “campaigns” that possess certain defining traits: they are instigated by an organizations with clear names, leaders, and structures; they express particular political goals; and they advocate for the use of “extra-institutional” tactics that deviate from conventional political activities, often commencing on a predetermined date.²⁰² The LCC was an organization that fostered a passive civil resistance movement against the Soviet occupation. The first secretary of the communist party in Lithuania in 1953 sent a special note to the central comity of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) where he explicitly asserted that with the complete elimination of underground armed nationalist centers, the Catholic Church in the republic remains the only support for all anti-Soviet and hostile nationalist elements.²⁰³

During this period of passive resistance, the LCC served as a strong link with the independent Lithuania of 1918–1940 and acted as a platform for fostering nationalism and national pride.²⁰⁴ The Catholic Church went to great lengths in combining religion and nationalism by adapting liturgy to national features. Vilma Narkute points out that “traditional costumes were used during Church processions, old religious traditions and holidays were presented as Lithuanian custom and many priests tried to convince believers that to be a good Lithuanian meant to be a good Catholic.”²⁰⁵ Catholicism became an

²⁰¹ Streikus, *Sovietų Valdžios Antibažnytinė Politika Lietuvoje*, 145.

²⁰² Ches Thurber, “Social Ties and the Strategy of Civil Resistance,” *International Studies Quarterly* 63, no. 4 (December 2019): 975, <https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqz049>.

²⁰³ Streikus, *Sovietų Valdžios Antibažnytinė Politika Lietuvoje*, 171.

²⁰⁴ Narkutė, “The Confrontation between the Lithuanian Catholic Church and the Soviet Regime.”

²⁰⁵ Narkutė.

important element in distinguishing Lithuanian elements from Soviet influences. Taking the arguments mentioned above into account and the fact that Lithuania was the only Soviet republic with a predominantly Roman Catholic population, the LCC, despite being part of a supra-national religious organization, became a national Church and the center of the passive resistance against Sovietization.²⁰⁶

The passive civil resistance in Lithuania can be divided into three stages that generally correspond with the change in the leadership of CPSU.²⁰⁷ The first stage commenced with the death of Stalin in 1953 and ended with the ousting of Khrushchev from the post of the general secretary of CPSU. According to Cruz, the Khrushchev stage can be described as a time of adjusting to life under communism and building resilience for upcoming challenges.²⁰⁸ While there was no widespread opposition from religious or nationalist factions, a sense of dissatisfaction with the Soviet government persisted. Additionally, the people's steadfast allegiance to the Catholic Church endured despite the effective propaganda campaigns. According to Cruz, despite the considerable risks associated with publicly practicing worship, priests persevered in conducting Mass, and families transmitted their faith to the succeeding generation.²⁰⁹ Lithuanian population considered Catholic faith as a key component of national identity that distinguished them from the occupying regime, therefore Catholic priests were highly respected by the parish communities. These persistent challenges would eventually yield positive outcomes during the governance of Khrushchev's successors.²¹⁰

From the seventh decade of the twentieth century, the second stage that is referred to as the Brezhnev years, the LCC became a leader of the passive resistance movement. During this period, the representative of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania often claimed that priests were trying to present themselves as the sole defenders of national interests and culture. Communists were particularly annoyed by the fact that

²⁰⁶ Narkutė.

²⁰⁷ Miniotaitė, *Nonviolent Resistance in Lithuania*, 21.

²⁰⁸ Zapor Cruz, "The Role of Catholicism," 496.

²⁰⁹ Zapor Cruz, 496.

²¹⁰ Zapor Cruz, 496.

some priests and active Catholics promoted the theory of the “Lithuanian Catholic,” asserting that only a Catholic could be a true patriot and that without Catholicism, there would be no Lithuanians.²¹¹ Although the rational and factual basis of such theories was highly questionable, it helped the Church become a unifying center for the opposition movement in the 1980s and 1990s.²¹²

Historian Arūnas Streikus argues that the convergence of the Catholic opposition and the national movement is indeed a distinct feature of this period; however, it did not occur due to any inherent connection between Catholicism and Lithuanian nationalism, but simply because, apart from individuals close to the Church, there were hardly any others willing to engage in passive resistance with the aspirations of independence.²¹³ A similar situation existed in the nineteenth century when the Church was the primary catalyst for national revival, since there was a significant shortage of secular intellectuals. The fact that Catholics constituted a significant portion of the passive resistance movement in Lithuania can be attributed to the fact that believers, from an early age, directly confronted the discriminatory policies and injustices of the regime. Secondly, due to their convictions, they often faced limitations in advancing their professional careers, so, having nothing to lose, they were more willing to engage in dissident activities.²¹⁴

During the second stage of passive resistance, the predominant form of dissent in Lithuania was the underground distribution of self-published anti-Soviet publications. During the 1970s and 1980s, Lithuania had the highest per capita number of so-called “samizdat” publications than any other Soviet republic. The most productive and impactful publication among them was the Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania. (The Chronicle).²¹⁵ This publication, whose main conceptual principle was to inform about violations of believers’ rights and the expressions of the believers’ rights movement, became the most important tool for advocates of believers’ rights communication and

²¹¹ Streikus, *Sovietų Valdžios Antibažnytinė Politika Lietuvoje*, 255.

²¹² Streikus, 255.

²¹³ Streikus, 256.

²¹⁴ Streikus, 256.

²¹⁵ Zapor Cruz, “The Role of Catholicism,” 497.

struggle. The Chronicle successfully undermined the information monopoly, which was one of the pillars of the Soviet regime.²¹⁶

The Chronicle was first published on March 19, 1972, and circulated for 17 years, with a total of 81 issues printed.²¹⁷ According to Januzyte, the editors of the journal, including priests Sigitas Tamkevičius and Jonas Boruta, had several objectives.²¹⁸ These included informing the public about the true state of the LCC, which was vastly different from the Soviet propaganda; informing the Vatican and the West about the situation in Lithuania; exposing Soviet propaganda regarding the situation of Catholics in the country; fighting against atheism; denouncing priests who collaborated with the Soviet regime; and informing readers about instances of discrimination, protest actions, and other incidents related to human rights violations. Over time, the network responsible for preparing and distributing the journal was established in Lithuania despite initial fear and skepticism. This network included individuals who provided information, contributors who often remained anonymous or used pseudonyms, editors, and technical personnel such as publishers, copyists, and distributors. Due to the need for secrecy and safety, these individuals had limited knowledge about each other.²¹⁹

In 1977, the organization known as Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, which was founded in Chicago with the main objective of gathering and publishing documents concerning human rights violations based on religious and national grounds in Soviet Lithuania, underwent a name change to the Society for the Publication of The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania.²²⁰ They established 70 divisions worldwide, responsible for securing the financial resources required for printing, distribution, and translation of the journal into foreign languages. Importantly, the publishers volunteered their efforts

²¹⁶ Streikus, *Sovietų Valdžios Antibažnytinė Politika Lietuvoje*, 250.

²¹⁷ Audronė Janužytė, “The Underground Cooperation between Soviet Lithuania and the West in 1972–1990: A Case Study on the Chronicle of The Catholic Church in Lithuania,” *Valahian Journal of Historical Studies* 20 (2013): 95.

²¹⁸ Janužytė, 95.

²¹⁹ Janužytė, 95.

²²⁰ Janužytė, 102.

without payment, and the Chronicle was funded through contributions collected from Lithuanians living abroad. These contributions also facilitated the publication of the Chronicle in various other languages.²²¹

To conclude, the Chronicle was a remarkable phenomenon. It was published clandestinely in Lithuania and smuggled illegally to the West, where it disseminated accurate information about human rights violations and the infringement of believers' rights in Soviet Lithuania.²²² This information was then translated into multiple languages and made available to the public. Thus, the Chronicle played a significant role in inspiring resistance within Lithuania and among Lithuanian emigrants. Furthermore, it helped draw global attention to human rights abuses and the ongoing resistance against them. The Chronicle ended up being the longest-running dissident publication in the USSR.²²³

Streikus brings up another important passive resistance function carried out by the LCC, which was to maintain links with the free world and counter Soviet propaganda and Sovietization.²²⁴ According to the author, bishops and ordinary priests not only refused to openly support the Soviet regime, but also, in their personal letters to the parish members and in sermons, quite boldly commented on daily life actualities and assessed them from the perspective of Christian values. Under the conditions of a totalitarian regime, this was one of the few sources of alternative information available to the population. This information was grounded on the great moral authority of the LCC; therefore, it was highly effective in countering propaganda and misinformation.²²⁵

The Soviet regime was determined to cut all contact between Lithuania and the Western democracies. According to Narkute, an important role in maintaining these ties was played by the Catholic Church and its institutions abroad.²²⁶ The Vatican was among

²²¹ Janužytė, 102.

²²² Janužytė, 103.

²²³ Janužytė, 103.

²²⁴ Streikus, "Lietyvos Katalikų Pilietinio Aktyvumo Pavyzdžiai," 319.

²²⁵ Streikus, 319.

²²⁶ Narkutė, "The Confrontation between the Lithuanian Catholic Church and the Soviet Regime."

the states that declined to acknowledge the inclusion of Lithuania into the USSR, both de jure and de facto. Consequently, Vatican radio broadcasts emerged as the most accessible means of disseminating information and presenting the Lithuanian situation to the public. Through the efforts of Bishop Petras Bilčys, an official request was submitted to the Vatican seeking permission to commence broadcasting Vatican radio programs in the Lithuanian language. The service commenced in November 1974, marking the inclusion of Lithuanian as the eleventh language in the Vatican radio programming.²²⁷

By the ninth decade of the twentieth century, especially by the late 1980s with the introduction of “perestroika” and “glasnost” by the General Secretary of the CPSU, Gorbachev, nationalist and religious dissident movements were growing in strength and started forming alliances with each other.²²⁸ According to Cruz, cooperation between the LCC and politics would reach its pinnacle with the establishment of “Sajūdis,” a populist movement that championed the cause of Lithuanian independence.²²⁹ In the end, the convergence of Moscow’s perestroika and glasnost policies, along with religious and nationalist opposition in Lithuania, resulted in a unique combination that ultimately resulted in the sovereignty of the Lithuanian state in 1990.

5. Conclusions

Considering the historical significance of religion as a source of resistance among the Lithuanian population, it is unsurprising that the LCC played a crucial role in the dissent movement that eventually resulted in Lithuania’s independence from the USSR. Cruz argues that the LCC not only advocated for religious freedom but also actively engaged in the struggle for political liberty.²³⁰ Additionally, patriotic individuals and nationalists recognized the Catholic Church as an essential component of Lithuanian national identity, leading them to actively seek the Church’s support. During the Soviet occupation up to the restoration of independence, the Catholic Church remained the hotbed that preserved the

²²⁷ Narkutė.

²²⁸ Zapor Cruz, “The Role of Catholicism,” 503.

²²⁹ Zapor Cruz, 503.

²³⁰ Zapor Cruz, 504.

image of free sovereign Lithuania that was distorted by Sovietization.²³¹ It was an important organization that sustained the resilience of the population to withstand the hardships of occupation and facilitated passive resistance to the Soviet regime.

The LCC, during the years of Soviet occupation, was a central component of both bonding SC that brought Lithuanian society together and bridging social SC that reached out to other dissident organizations within the Soviet Union. Finally, it served as a linking SC that maintained vital ties with catholic organizations in the free world, which promoted the independence aspirations of Lithuania abroad. As already indicated in the existing literature and research, a direct positive link exists between social capital and social resilience; therefore, it can be concluded that the LCC directly contributed to the social resilience of Lithuania society, which in turn was one of the main reasons Lithuania was able to sustain occupation and emerged as an independent state in 1990.

²³¹ Zapor Cruz, 504.

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VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Lithuania's national security strategy recognizes Russia as a potential aggressor and total war principles as the most probable course of action in the event of aggression. Comprehensive defense is Lithuania's strategy of choice for deterrence and defense. The principles outlined in the NCDH and the ROC are the most important framework documents that provide guidance for the planning and execution of the comprehensive defense concept. Therefore, Lithuanian authorities in charge of the national defense of the state should adhere to the main guidelines of these fundamental documents and find ways to improve defensive posture through the involvement of all elements of society including NGOs.

This thesis's findings suggest that religious organizations, and in the case of Lithuania, the Catholic Church, play a vital role in the response and recovery from the crisis thus positively contributing to social capital. This is achieved through the promotion of such values as unity, selflessness, and integrity and by fostering civic abilities that thus increase trust among people.²³² In this way, religion and religious organizations become an important element of national identity along with shared history, language, and culture.²³³

The Catholic Church remains Lithuania's most influential organization, as Figure 2 indicates, 77 percent of the population identify themselves as Catholics.²³⁴

²³² Kaasa, "Religion and Social Capital," 589.

²³³ Zapor Cruz, "The Role of Catholicism," 482.

²³⁴ Association of Religion Data Archives, "National /Regional Profiles."

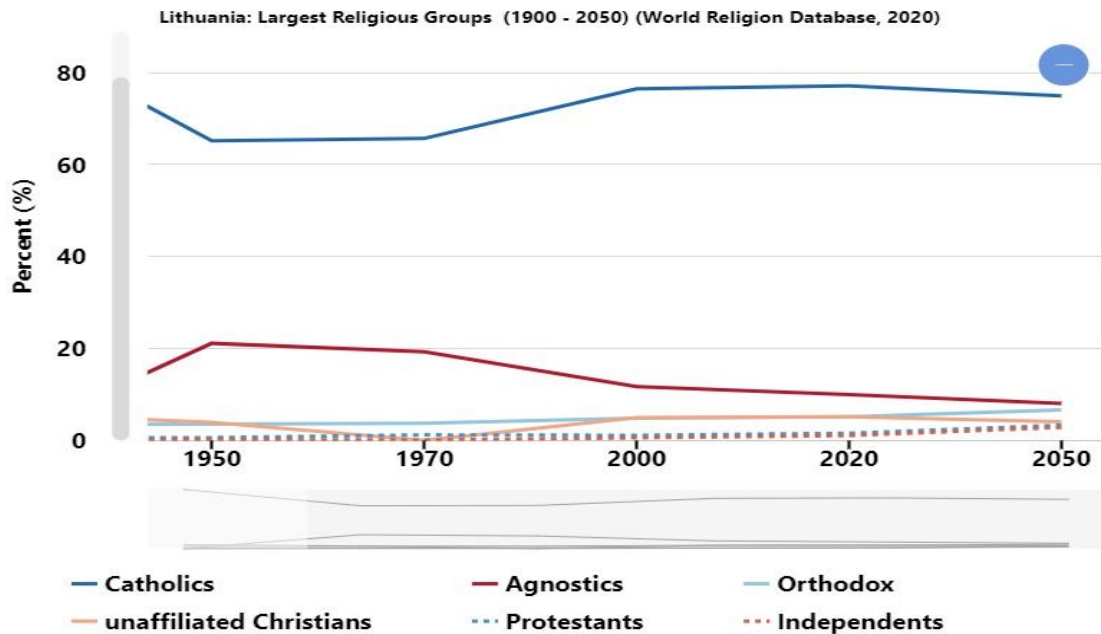


Figure 2. Largest Religion Groups in Lithuania.²³⁵

However, despite the strong evidence that, historically, Catholicism has proven beneficial for Lithuania, and could help build up a nation’s social capital and increase resilience, this thesis does not recommend that the Lithuanian government utilize and favor a single religious group. In their research, Brian Grim and Roger Finke concluded that backing a specific faith or limiting religions is considered threatening, and often results in aggressive religious oppression.²³⁶ They further suggest that favoritism of a single religious group frequently manifests as a facet of social discord entwined with or extending into broader societal conflicts. Consequently, these types of conflict have repercussions that extend beyond the religious realm and impact various aspects of society. Therefore, the state authorities in charge of national security and defense could utilize the potential of all confessions and religious organizations in applying the principles of CD. Figure 3 indicates that currently there are 1,271 registered religious organizations in Lithuania.

²³⁵ Source: Association of Religion Data Archives.

²³⁶ Brian J. Grim and Roger Finke, *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 2.

Registered religious organizations

	Registered religious organizations units ¹				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Roman Catholics	900	902	906	906	910
Old Believers	64	64	64	64	64
Evangelical Lutherans	57	57	57	58	58
Orthodox	57	57	57	57	57
Charismatic Evangelical Christian communities	56	57	59	56	56
Pentecostals	31	32	32	36	36
Baptists and Free Churches	31	33	33	32	34
Seventh-Day Adventists	14	13	11	11	11
Evangelical Reformed Believers	18	18	18	18	17
Methodists	9	9	9	9	9
Jehovah's Witnesses	3	3	3	3	3
Churches of Christ	3	3	3	3	3
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)	3	3	3	3	3
Armenian Apostolic Church	2	2	3	3	5
Greek rite Catholics	2	2	2	2	2
Christian Community	1	1	1	1	1
The Salvation Army	1	1	1	1	1
New Apostolic Church	1	1	1	1	1

Figure 3. Registered Religious Organizations in Lithuania.²³⁷

All religious organizations can be classified into thirty-five religious denominations, of which twenty-six are considered non-traditional. Traditional religious communities include Latin Rite Catholics, Greek Rite Catholics, Evangelical Lutherans, Reformed Evangelicals, Orthodox Christians, Old Believers, Jews, Sunni Muslims, and Karaites.²³⁸ The thesis does not specifically recommend excluding non-traditional religious organizations as possible contributors to social resilience. However, it can be assumed that, since traditional religious organizations have more adherents and ties with Lithuanian National traditions, they should be a priority at least in the initial stages of the efforts to improve national resilience.

²³⁷ Source: Valstybės Duomenų Agentūra, “Database of Indicators,” Official Statistics Portal, accessed October 3, 2023, <https://osp.stat.gov.lt/statistiniu-rodikliu-analize/>.

²³⁸ LNB Mokslo ir Enciklopedijų Leidybos Centras, “Lietuvos Religijos [Religions in Lithuania],” Visuotinė Lietuvių Enciklopedija, accessed October 6, 2023, <https://www.vle.lt/straipsnis/lietuvos-religijos/>.

A. SOCIAL RESILIENCE AS A MATTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY

Comprehensive defense as a concept depends on social resilience, which is a foundation for the further development of state defense. The success of comprehensive defense depends on the population’s willingness to commit to their individual and group defensive roles, in peacetime and crisis, and the willingness to defend their country against aggression.²³⁹ Only a resilient population can efficiently sustain and recover from crises and emergencies; therefore, national resilience becomes a matter of national security and must be addressed accordingly.

A critical first step is to assess the actual level of resilience of society. To date, there have been no specific surveys that have examined the resilience of the Lithuanian population. However, every other year the civic empowerment index includes indicators of social resilience. According to the Civil Society Institute of Lithuania, the Civic Empowerment Index consists of the following four dimensions: “civic activeness, potential civic activeness, the conception of civil society’s influence, and civic activity risk assessment. Society’s civic empowerment is reflected not only in actual activeness but also in potential civic activeness—a decision or determination to act in case an urgent matter arises.”²⁴⁰ The latest survey conducted in 2022 found a decline in the overall empowerment index and identified some worrisome data on the potential behavior of certain parts of society in case of crisis. Figure 4, which is related to the part of the survey dedicated to estimating the population’s will to fight, shows that 50 percent of the respondents do not intend or do not know how to commit to national defense.²⁴¹ Considering the ongoing conflict and the increased threats to national security as stipulated in the Lithuanian national security strategy, this raises serious concerns which must be addressed without delay.

²³⁹ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, *Comprehensive Defense Handbook Volume I*, I:17.

²⁴⁰ “Civil Society Institute Home,” Civil Society Institute, accessed March 2, 2023, <http://www.civitas.lt>.

²⁴¹ Civil Society Institute.

In case Lithuania is attacked by a foreign entity, would you take arms to defend Lithuania?; would defend it with other means?; would You stay aside?; or would You leave the country?

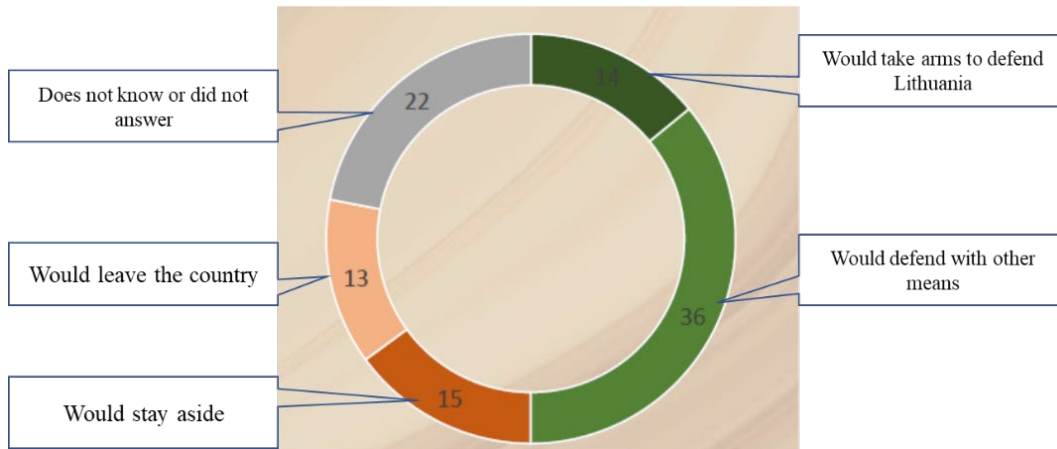


Figure 4. The Will to Fight the Population. Part of Civic Empowerment Index Survey 2022.²⁴²

Furthermore, the strategy for the implementation of civil resistance principles of the Republic of Lithuania clearly identifies the importance of strengthening national resilience. The document brings forward the following steps necessary to improve social resilience:

1. Encourage the population to assess critically the information to recognize disinformation.
2. Support non-governmental organizations in organizing projects and initiatives that aim at strengthening resilience and encourage partnerships with these organizations.
3. Plan and implement strategic information campaigns dedicated to lowering the impact of disinformation and propaganda, which is aimed at affecting the will to fight.

²⁴² Adapted from Pilietinės Visuomenės Institutas, *Lietuvos Visuomenės Pilietinės Galios Indekso 2022 M. Tyrimas [Lithuanian Civic Empowerment Index Survey 2022]* (Vilnius: Pilietinės Visuomenės Institutas, 2023), 29, <http://www.civitas.lt/time-line/pilietines-galios-indeksas-2022-m/>.

4. Increase the training and education efforts to ensure the population is integrated into crisis response activities.²⁴³

These initiatives and means aimed at strengthening national resilience should become the main priority of the Lithuanian government and all the stakeholders involved in the planning and execution of national defense. The first step is to improve the monitoring of resilience levels, since these types of research enable the state to take necessary steps to improve this vital societal condition. To increase our current understanding of Lithuanian resilience, the survey of the Civic Empowerment Index survey could be expanded to include observation of civic initiatives, the conducting of expert surveys that target Lithuanian resilience specifically, and the summary of statistical data collected by various state institutions or non-governmental organizations.²⁴⁴ Experts from the Civil Society Institute suggest that data gathered by combining different methods would be more comprehensive and detailed.²⁴⁵ This will require Lithuanian authorities in charge of implementing CD to dedicate sufficient resources to improve research on this pressing topic.

The case studies examined in this thesis indicate that NGOs can be valuable contributors to increasing the overall resilience of the population. They have the capability to serve as critical elements that have a positive effect on bonding social capital. Such bonding connections among the population prove effective in bringing people together in the face of a crisis by fostering national values, providing guidance, and building trust and collaboration. Such positive bonding social capital contributes to the resilience of the population to withstand the hardships of a crisis and provides the capacity to recover from the negative consequences of an emergency. Furthermore, the findings of this research indicate that NGOs could have the capacity to preserve national traditions and cultural heritage, the elements that are crucial for national identity. National identity enhances the overall resilience of society by positively influencing both bonding and the bridging of

²⁴³ Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, “Seime–Partijų Susitarimo dėl Gynybos Finišas.”

²⁴⁴ Civil Society Institute, “Civil Society Institute Home.”

²⁴⁵ Civil Society Institute.

social capital. NGOs that are founded based on national traditions and aim to maintain and promote national culture and historical heritage, could have a positive effect on social capital through the promotion of such values as unity, selflessness, and integrity, and by fostering civic abilities, thus increasing trust among people. These characteristics make such NGOs guardians of national identity and therefore increase the overall resilience of the population and contributes to the function of social and psychological defense.

Currently, there are 2,210 registered NGOs in Lithuania that could possibly contribute to state defense and national resilience.²⁴⁶ This list could be thoroughly scrutinized to identify the organizations with the highest potential for positive effects on bonding social capital, thus promoting collective action, and building trust not only between its members but also in democratic values and constitutional order. This thesis's findings suggest the most valuable are those NGOs that were founded on the grounds of national history and traditions, aim to maintain national culture and historical heritage, and promote such values as national unity and trust.

B. IMPROVEMENT OF CIVIL DEFENSE

Civil defense is one of the core functions of comprehensive defense. It generally encompasses crisis management, emergency management, emergency preparedness, and civil protection.²⁴⁷ Civil defense usually falls under the responsibility of local authorities such as municipal governors or city administrations and is carried out with the support of emergency services such as firefighters, disaster management agencies, and medical emergency services.

Ivo Jurvee, in his analysis of Ukrainian civil defense during the ongoing war with Russia, states that Russia has not restrained itself from targeting civilian infrastructure.²⁴⁸ Significant damage has been caused to administrative buildings, supermarkets, gas

²⁴⁶ Transparency International Division of Lithuania, "NVO Atlasas [NGO Atlas]," NVO atlasas–nevyriausybių organizacijų registras, accessed October 4, 2023, <https://nvoatlasas.lt/>.

²⁴⁷ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, *Comprehensive Defense Handbook Volume I*, I:21.

²⁴⁸ Ivo Juurvee, *Civil Defence in Ukraine: Preliminary Lessons from the First Months of War* (Tallinn, Estonia: International Centre for Defence and Security, 2022), 11.

stations, hospitals, schools, and residential housing. Such strikes on civilian infrastructure have both psychological and physical effects on the local population. He further identified key lessons for the states when preparing for the crisis:

1. Russian forces will target civilian infrastructure not only in the ongoing conflict but in possible future aggression.
2. Nationwide robust air defense against cruise missiles and other precision-guided munitions would be impractical and extremely expensive, if not impossible, to build. It will never cover all population centers and critical facilities—and even where it does, enemy strikes may be occasionally successful.
3. Russian precision-guided munitions may not be as precise as previously assumed. Therefore, civilian housing and infrastructure, if in the vicinity of critical infrastructure, may become unintended targets.²⁴⁹

These findings suggest that the function of civil defense has become as important as conventional military defense. As a result, with the start of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Lithuania evaluated its civil defense system. In a September 22, 2022, interview, the minister of interior, Agne Bilotaite, head of the agency primarily responsible for managing civil defense, admitted that this core function of state preparedness for the crisis was neglected for almost a decade.²⁵⁰ Considering these findings, Lithuania’s Ministry of Interior (MOI) is taking steps to improve the existing civil defense capabilities, and NGOs could be an important entity that could contribute to the effectiveness of state civil defense. The civil defense plans at all levels starting from the MOI down to municipal levels could include the NGOs that have the capabilities to assist in such areas as medical support, protection/shelter facilities, and evacuation of the population from the danger zones.

²⁴⁹ Juurvec, 11.

²⁵⁰ Andresa Repšytė, “Bilotaitė Pripažįsta—Civilinė Sauga Lietuvoje Buvo Apleista: Štai, Ko Bus Imtasi. [Bilotaite Admits—Civil Defence in Lithuania Was Neglected],” tv3.lt, accessed March 8, 2023, <https://www.tv3.lt/naujiena/lietuva/bilotaite-pripazista-civiline-sauga-lietuvoje-buvo-apeista-stai-ko-bus-imtasi-n1188595>.

Current initiatives taken by the MOI and its subordinate agencies such as the Fire and Rescue Department have identified the potential of NGOs. While this thesis was still in the draft process the MOI has signed a cooperation agreement with the LCC to cooperate in the matters of civil defense.²⁵¹ This agreement aims at enhancing public education on civil defense issues, providing the population with more information on preparedness for potential threats, and strengthening a culture of self-protection. Furthermore, there are plans to explore possibilities of installing shelters in suitable religious facilities which would provide shelter in case of air raids. The representatives from the Lithuanian Fire and Rescue Service further announced that with the approval of the LCC, buildings, and infrastructure belonging to the Church could be used for installing warning sirens and contribute to the expansion of their network in Lithuania.²⁵²

C. ACTIVE DEFENSE AND RESISTANCE

Lithuania's political leadership recognizes the importance of preparing a whole state for national defense, along with the possibility of integrating NGOs. The bipartisan agreement on national security and defense signed by major political parties of Lithuania in July of 2022, states that the main pillars of defense of Lithuania are (1) the armed forces of Lithuania, (2) the collective defense along with NATO allies, and (3) the civilian governmental and municipal institutions, along with private enterprises, non-governmental organizations.²⁵³ Furthermore, the agreement notes the necessity to draft a state defense plan by 2023 to ensure the implementation of comprehensive defense. The plan should clarify the roles and tasks of government institutions, the private sector, and citizens in national defense.²⁵⁴ NCDH also calls for the implementation of a state-level combined civil-military comprehensive defense plan.²⁵⁵ According to NCDH, such a plan should

²⁵¹ Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, "Prie Civilinės Saugos Informacinės Kampanijos Jungiasi Lietuvos Katalikų Bažnyčia [Lithuanian Catholic Church Joins the Civil Defense Information Campaign]," Lietuvos Respublikos Vidaus Reikalų Ministerija, September 13, 2023, <https://vrm.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/prie-civilines-saugos-informacines-kampanijos-jungiasi-lietuvos-kataliku-baznycia>.

²⁵² Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Lithuania.

²⁵³ Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, "Seime–Partijų Susitarimo dėl Gynybos Finišas."

²⁵⁴ Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania.

²⁵⁵ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, *Comprehensive Defense Handbook Volume I*, I:119.

include “the private and civic sectors and address natural and accidental threats, as well as malicious acts.”²⁵⁶

As this thesis and the bipartisan agreement conclude, it is important that NGOs are fully integrated into a state defense plan. The historical cases analyzed in this thesis have demonstrated that the LCC supported the active struggle of Lithuanian people against the occupation regimes of Czarist Russia and the Soviet Union. It acted as an effective support component that provided psychological and spiritual support to the active fighters along with logistics and intelligence and operated as a support base for the resistance movements. This leads to the assumption that NGOs could most effectively contribute to military defense, which according to the NCDH falls under the realm of the armed forces,²⁵⁷ by serving as the auxiliary component that provides psychological and spiritual support to the military forces along with logistics and intelligence. Furthermore, the LCC was an effective support element since it maintained a vast network of Church facilities across Lithuania. Therefore, other NGOs along with the LCC, that have the infrastructure and branches spread out across the country could act as support bases for state defense structures and serve as communications hubs and logistic bases. These possible roles and functions should be clearly outlined in the state defense plan to ensure that all the potential of the NGOs is effectively utilized.

The state defense plan should not be limited to the conventional defense of the state but also foresee the passive or non-violent resistance phases in case parts of the country fall under enemy occupation. This thesis found that historically the LCC took a leading role and was a key enabler of the passive resistance of Lithuanian society against the Czarist and the Soviet regimes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Therefore, NGOs might become the driving force for non-violent resistance. First, in the case of occupation, NGOs could become a central component of bonding social capital that throughout Lithuania’s history have brought Lithuanian society together and provided overall guidance and even leadership for passive resistance efforts.

²⁵⁶ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, I:120.

²⁵⁷ NATO Special Operations Headquarters, I:19.

Secondly, as this thesis has shown, resistance efforts are more likely to succeed when the state can extend its focus beyond national borders and rally external entities, including international allies and organizations. Such external support grants the state a form of persuasive influence in the attempt to resist the aggression.²⁵⁸ Historically, being part of a global Catholic Church, the LCC maintained vital links to Western democracies, thus guaranteeing external support to Lithuania's overall resistance efforts and national aspirations for independence. Accordingly, it can be assumed that NGOs that are part of international global organizations could be very effective in fostering external support for states' defense and resistance efforts and national aspirations. Therefore, it is important that non-violent resistance becomes an integral part of state defense, and NGOs with the highest potential to contribute to these efforts are identified and clearly tasked.

NGO are an important part of the daily life of a state. Their main goal is to defend the interests of a group (members) or the public and to create public well-being. Non-governmental organizations arise from civic initiatives that aim to address emerging problems and meet needs that the government and business sectors cannot cover.²⁵⁹ This research aimed to improve comprehensive defense by answering the main research question: How can non-governmental organizations contribute to comprehensive defense? The scope of this thesis did not allow for an investigation of the role of all organizations that could possibly contribute to the comprehensive defense. It was limited only to the Catholic Church and its role in the resistance of Lithuanian people against the occupation regimes. This is the main limitation of this thesis, and since currently there are over 2,000 NGOs officially registered in Lithuania, their potential and ability to contribute to comprehensive defense would require follow-up research.

²⁵⁸ Binnendijk and Kepe, *Civilian-Based Resistance in the Baltic States*, 19.

²⁵⁹ Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania, "Nevyriausybinų Organizacijų Politika [Policy of Non-Governmental Organizations]," My Government, accessed September 29, 2023, <https://socmin.lrv.lt/lt/veiklos-sritys/nevyriausybinu-organizaciju-politika>.

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