

## Sukaktis: Lietuvos psichologų sąjungai – 50

### LITHUANIAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION: 50 YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT

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Lithuania finds itself not only in an important geopolitical area, but also at the crossroads of Western and Eastern cultures. It is understandable, therefore, that its former primitive pagan cultural identity was occasionally drastically undermined and influenced by political and cultural invasions: Christianization, Polonization, Russification, a brief independence between the wars (having authoritarian leadership features), Sovietization, and finally a voluntary step towards Western cultures with the restoration of independence in 1990.

A vivid outcome of constantly shifting influences is Psychology in Lithuania, which we could not yet call Lithuanian psychology. Its most important characteristic is theoretical, empirical and practical eclecticism. However, that differentiated attempt to know reality (concepts, theories, views in psychic phenomena) gives Psychology in Lithuania a certain charm: it is very encompassing, multidimensional, not particularly tediously specialized or narrow.

The image of psychology depends on the level of professionalization, i. e. on how many

professionals are working in the area, how they organize and professionally engage in what is going on in the field of psychology. In Lithuania (like in many other countries), psychology began as a teaching subject (at first as a branch in Philosophy) and slowly developed into an independent field of study and professional practice. It is between the wars that the culture of Lithuanian psychology began to form. There emerged professional psychologists – J. Vabalas-Gudaitis, J. Steponavičius, V. Lazersonas, later A. Gučas, J. Laužikas and others. There was an attempt to continue the professionalization of psychology during the first years after the Second World War, however, this soon stopped until A. Gučas and J. Lapė reinitiated the education of psychologists at Vilnius University.

The recognition of a profession and its academic field depends on several criteria including accessible research methods, validated and effective evaluation of applied methods and their impact, authorization by society (practical recognition and trust), having local academic and professional terminology, the level of professional development and professional

self-regulation – testing, evaluation, intervention and professional competence self-control. Professional self-regulation and self-control are usually performed by professional scientific societies or associations. Psychologists, like all other professionals, tried to do so long ago. The crucial factor here was the number of professionals, although, as the development of Lithuanian psychology organizations shows, the strength and effectiveness of activities does not always depend on the number of members. During Soviet times, for instance, the number of professional psychologists was truly small, however, the number of members of the Fellowship of Lithuanian Psychologists (FLP) was sufficient and its range of activities was quite wide (in comparison to the years 1991–1995 when the new Psychological Association found itself in a deep crisis). At that time, Psychology had many supporters (particularly from the pedagogical community).

The purpose of this article is to present one aspect of the expansion of psychology in Lithuania – the joining of psychologists into professional organizations. Currently there are around 10 psychological organizations functioning in Lithuania, however, the most important unifying chain was and remains the linking line: the Lithuanian Fellowship of Psychotechnics and Professional Orientation (LFPPPO) – Fellowship of Lithuanian Psychologists (FLP – we nominate it this way, even though it was just a Republican Division of the Fellowship of Psychologists of the Soviet Union) – The Lithuanian Psychological Association (LPA).

The periodization of organizational development of Lithuanian psychologists does not require extensive research. It was determined by the then political context and Lithuanian sociopolitical and economical transformations: independence after World War I, followed by World War II and Soviet occupation, the col-

lapse of the Soviet Union and reestablishment of independence. It is for these reasons that the organized professional movement of Lithuanian psychologists was not internally consistent, with one developmental stage naturally flowing from the previous one. Along with these sociopolitical changes, it is possible to identify the following organizational stages of the Lithuanian Psychological Association:

- 1) pre-organizational (we will not delve into it here because there is a monograph by A. Gučas *Development of Psychology in Lithuania (1968)*, article of A. Bagdonas (1992));
- 2) Lithuanian Fellowship of Psychotechnics and Professional Orientation (LFPPPO);
- 3) the period of havoc and confusion – Russian, German and the second Russian occupation (during the years 1940–1958: there was no organized activities in psychology at that time, except lectures in psychology at institutes of higher education, and also preparation of psychologists at Vilnius University in 1945–1946 and at the Vilnius Pedagogical Institute in 1948–1955, and the 1943 doctoral dissertation by A. Gučas, which was not recognized by the Soviet authorities;
- 4) Fellowship of Lithuanian Psychologists (1958–1988);
- 5) the establishment of the Lithuanian Psychological Association (1988–1991);
- 6) crisis of the Lithuanian Psychological Association (“developmental pits” in 1991–1995; we will not talk about this period as there was no activity and absolutely no documentation);
- 7) the second birth of the Lithuanian Psychological Association (reestablishment – pulling out from the “developmental pit” since the fall of 1995).

## The Years 1931–1940: the Fellowship of Psychotechnics and Professional Orientation



*Jonas Šimkus*  
(1873–1944)

The first attempt of Lithuanian psychologists to unite could be considered October 3, 1931 when the Lithuanian Fellowship of Psychotechnics and Professional Orientation (LFPPPO) was established. Certain sources name August 27, 1931. LFPPPO was established by the initiative of

“Lithuanian mothers’ and children protection assembly” which was based at the Vytautas Magnus University (VDU) in Kaunas at the Experimental Psychology and Pedagogical Institute. It united representatives from various specializations: the Chairperson was the economist J. Šimkus, Vice-Chairperson being the psychologist J. Vabalas-Gudaitis, treasurer the psychiatrist J. Blažys, and secretary the psychologist and psychiatrist V. Lazersonas.

Most of the members of the LFPPPO were the VDU Department of Psychology staff and students. The LFPPPO’s goal was to “help youth find their calling, screen candidates for various professions, employment and schools; screen gifted, challenged and abnormal children and offer advice on how to teach and nurture them in a special way; seek the implementation of various jobs in the optimal way, methods and means; investigate the influence of various factors on job productivity” (Gučas, 1937). The Fellowship activated psychologists’ and specialists from other professions interested in psychology. The number of publications addressing psychological questions increased.

In 1937, A. Gučas’s booklet *Vocation and Employment* was published.

There were two committees that worked alongside: Committee of Professiography (head J. Šimkus) and Committee of Psychography (head J. Vabalas-Gudaitis). A few psychotechnical laboratories were operating at the war hospital, cadet corps, railway board, and after Vilnius was regained in 1939 also at the Vilnius municipality for school needs, and in 1939–1940 in the Psychotechnical consulting room which was headed by A. Gučas. The Fellowship carried out what were called psychotechnical expertises (what we would today call personality assessments). V. Lazersonas alone carried out around 400 children’s and adults individual psychotechnical expertises.

The Second World War and the switching occupations of the country put an end to the activity of the LFPPPO. After the war the activities of the Fellowship were not reestablished, however one active member, A. Gučas, was the new, long-term president of the Fellowship of Lithuanian Psychologists under Soviet occupation conditions. Thus, if the Lithuanian Psychologists’ professional movement is considered from the creation of the LFPPPO, then this movement has 77 years.

Regarding the Lithuanian psychologists’ professional movement during this period, we can arrive to the following conclusions:

1. First of all, this was the movement’s rudimentary beginning. There were only a few professional psychologists. The LFPPPO consisted of multidisciplinary specialists (from the medical, educational, economic, engineering spheres).
2. In spite of the few professional psychologists, personality assessment methodologies began to be created (for example, by J. Vabalas-Gudaitis), child and youth career consulting took place.
3. In general, this stage is considered to

be the first stage of Lithuanian psychologists' organized movement whose experience was prolonged in 1958 when the Fellowship of Lithuanian Psychologists was founded.

### **The Years 1958–1988: the Fellowship of Lithuanian Psychologists**



*Jonas Vabalas-  
Gudaitis  
(1881–1955)*

In the Soviet Union psychology was not popular. It was almost considered a pseudo-science, investigating phenomena that were difficult to quantify and explain materialistically. The negative outlook was augmented by errors made in the employment screening area,

where many worked without the necessary training and were incompetent. There was a strong physiologization of psychology, based on I. Pavlov's teaching about the higher nerve activity categories. Psychologists were being prepared only at a few university philosophy departments. There was no societies or associations of psychologists.

It is noteworthy that the LFPPO activity was not revived after the war. The preparation of psychologists was discontinued in 1946. The specialization of Psychology could only be acquired at the Vilnius State Pedagogical Institute along with the Lithuanian language teacher's specialization. Most people who completed this specialization became Lithuanian language teachers. Like in other fields, there was a feeling of general decline. However, scientific studies and their practical application did continue. In Lithuania, L. Jovaiša, S. Kregždė, and other psychologists

continued studies on childrens' and students' career and vocational choices. In 1967, these works provided a basis for founding the Interdepartmental Service of Professional Orientation at the Scientific Research Institute of Schools. Professional orientation consulting-rooms started to be established at cities and in the regions at the Educational Divisions and at certain factories (Kaunas Radio, Vilnius Radio Components, Panevėžys Sreens, etc.). There were about 50 such consulting-rooms. In some of them (for example, in Vilnius, Kaunas, Šilutė) the psychological assistance for schoolchildren was very valuable. In some places, however, professional orientation consulting activities were oriented only to those who had completed grade 7 and directed children further to general training at higher classes of secondary schools or technical (trade, professional) schools. It was not uncommon for a child's future to depend on their parents' position in the district or colletive farm. There was also curious cases when a veterinarian specialist would work at a psychologist's office.

In 1968, an interdepartmental Professional Orientation Institute was founded at the Ministry of Education and Higher Studies, operating with social underpinnings. At the republican professional orientation services and Professional Orientation Institute worked not only psychologists and pedagogues, but also specialists from other educational areas. However, the conditions for the development of psychologist's profession improved.

The approach to psychology in the Soviet Union slowly began to change. The advances in education and technology allowed automatization at work, creation of complex technical systems. There arose a need not only to prepare a person to work with complex technology, but also to take into account a person's possibilities when creating new

technical systems, coordinating the activities of groups of people in complex activity conditions. It became apparent that it was imperative to widen studies not only in communities, but also in separate professional learning, employment, engineering, social psychological branches. In 1957, the Institute of Psychology of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Soviet Russian Federation (APS of SRF) organized a symposium on work psychology problems. Professional employment, manufacturing and polytechnical training psychological problems were discussed. Views were exchanged, the critical state of work (employment, career, job, labour) in psychology was evaluated, relevant problems were raised. These factors had a positive influence on the future development of psychology. More literature was published, psychology laboratories were established, more scientific studies were carried out, in particular in work, engineering and social psychology. Psychological fellowships began to form. The Presidium of the APS of SRF ratified the regulations (general rules) of such fellowships of psychologists. In 1957, the Fellowship of Psychologists of the USSR (USSR FP) was founded.

On April 3, 1958, the Lithuanian Republic government decree No 173 allowed the Lithuanian Division of the USSR FP to get organized and endorsed the organizing committee: A. Gučas (Chairperson), L. M. Vekker (Vice-chairperson), J. Laužikas (treasurer), M. Garbačiauskienė (secretary), L. Jovaiša (member), A. Jacikevičius (member). The Lithuanian Division could operate only as a subdivision of the All-Union Fellowship of Psychologists. In Lithuania it was usually called Fellowship of Lithuanian Psychologists – FLP.

On May 10–11, 1958, the FLP constituent assembly meeting-congress took place. The

congress was opened by A. Gučas. The following presentations were made at the congress: M. V. Sokolov explained the state of psychology in the Soviet Union, L. M. Vekker familiarized with certain most relevant questions, A. Gučas – talked about child's mental development problems, J. Lapè – presented the state of teaching psychology at schools.

The first Congress accepted a resolution on the work guidelines of the FLP. The Congress elected the governing council. The chairperson of the assembly was Prof. A. Gučas who was always re-elected to these duties until his death in 1988. The first Congress also elected delegates to the constitutive Congress of the All-Union Fellowship of Psychologists: A. Gučas, A. Jacikevičius, L. Jovaiša, J. Palaima and L. M. Vekker. The scholarly presentations were confirmed for this meeting of psychologists of the USSR: M. Garbačiauskienė “How to differentiate morphological and syntax form development”, A. Jacikevičius “The dynamics of associations when learning a second language” and L. M. Vekker “On the issue of representations of sensory images“. Lithuanian psychologists actively participated in the All-Union Fellowship of Psychologists' activity. A. Gučas was permanently elected a member of its Central Council.

The highest FLP governing body was the Republican Congress which elected the Council, representatives to the Central Council, delegates to the All-Union Fellowship of Psychologists congresses, accepted members. Decisions on the most important questions were also made. The congresses were held every two years with a few exceptions. When necessary, special congresses were called (1971, 1988). In the period between the congresses, the FLP Council was invited to address more pressing questions, and the



*Participants of 1<sup>st</sup> Congress of Fellowship of Lithuanian Psychologists in 1958  
(in the centre of the 1<sup>st</sup> row A. Gučas; from the archive of M. Garbačiauskienė – at the right of the 1<sup>st</sup> row)*

Council Presidium organized it. All activities were carried out according to plans prepared and ratified at the congress.

The FLP membership grew and its activities became more active especially when the new generation of psychologists educated at Vilnius University after 1969 joined in.

One of the first FLP concerns was preparing psychology professionals. “Without creative and independent intelligence, psychologists will not go far in their work, which constantly requires creativity, reorientation to new conditions”, stated A. Gučas. In 1958, having secured the right to educate post-graduate students in psychology at Department of Psychology of Vilnius University (now equivalent to doctoral studies). The first such post-graduate student in psychology in Lithuania was J. Lapė, who in 1962 defended his dissertation. Later candidate (doctoral) dissertations were defended by other post-graduate psychologists: G. Mikšytė-Butkienė, A. Pen-

kauskas, E. Rimkutė, etc. Some psychologists were sent to or on their own initiative attended universities or research institutes of other republics of the USSR and defended their dissertations (A. Jacikevičius, S. Paužaitė-Pranckūnienė, etc.). A. Jacikevičius was the first at Vilnius University academic congregation who successfully defended a dissertation in psychology for the doctoral degree (now equivalent to a habilitated doctor). S. Kregždė successfully defended his post-graduate-candidate dissertation at Kiev University, and later also became a habilitated doctor.

Attention was given not only to training the academic staff, but also to educating professionals in psychology for industrial, educational and health agencies.

In 1969, when favourable conditions emerged, Vilnius University obtained the right to educate work and engineering psychology specialists. This was the start. Later, when the

opportunity arose, the education of pedagogical and clinical psychology specialists was initiated.

The FLP organized republican academic conferences. They would be held out not only in Vilnius, but also in Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai. The conferences were organized together with higher education institutions, research institutes and other organizations. Most of these conferences were organized by the Department of Psychology of Vilnius University: in 1967 with the Vilnius State Pedagogical institute (VVPI), in 1974 with VVPI, Professional Orientation Public Institute and Schools Research Institute. In 1986, the Lithuanian Fellowship of the Blinds and in 1972 the Lithuanian Research Institute of Scientific-Technical Information helped organize the conference.

One of the most meaningful undertakings by the FLP was inter-republican Baltic Psychology conferences. On April 17, 1959, the FLP Council delegated A. Gučas to negotiate with Estonian and Latvian psychologists. The first conference was proposed to take place in Vilnius. That initiative was supported by the Fellowship of Estonian Psychologists (K. Ramul) and the Fellowship of Latvian Psychologists (K. Velmers).

The first regional Baltic conference of psychologists was held in May 29–30, 1960 in Vilnius. Twenty scholarly presentations were given, of them 15 were Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian and 5 were from the other republics of the Soviet Union.

At the first conference, the further organizational questions were discussed. It was decided to hold conferences every two years in each republic in consecutive order. The second conference had to be held in Tartu, the third in Riga, etc. The conference honoured the oldest Baltic psychologist, Tartu University Professor Konstantine Ramul. The conferences were held systematically every two years as foreseen.

The number of participants of the Baltic and republican conferences grew, as did the analysed topics. Taking into consideration all the presentations at the conferences, we can see a very wide spectrum of the analysed psycholo-



*Alfonsas Gučas*  
(1907–1988)

gical issues, including the history of psychology, theoretical problems in general psychology and quantitative/experimental study results. All conferences widely presented psychological study results on thinking and language and their development, teaching, engineering, management, health, clinical, sports and other areas of psychological problems. Presentations analysed not only theoretical but also practical questions. The conferences were attended by scholars from higher education institutions, research institutes as well as by teachers, psychiatrists, manufacturing and construction officers and laboratory workers, other research agencies as well as by biophysics, psychophysicologists, neurophysiology laboratory workers whose work was related with psychological problems.

The Baltic Psychologists' conferences continued smoothly until 1974 when the Government of the Soviet Union issued a law according to which All-Union conferences were allowed to organize only if they were approved by the Soviet Governmental Planning Committee. This not only limited, but totally prohibited organizing Baltic psychologists' conferences which were assigned to the All-Union level. However, in 1975, the con-

ference organized by the Tartu University invited both Latvians and Lithuanians. The then chairperson of the Fellowship of Estonian Psychologists H. Liimets explained this in the following way: "Estonian psychologists are cooperating with Latvian and Lithuanian Psychologists, they are solving the same problems". The number of participants and the efforts should be a sufficient basis to acknowledge that conference as the Eighth Baltic Psychology conference. After this conference, the next one was organized only after the reestablishment of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian independence (in 1990 in Vilnius and later in Riga, and Tallin). However, it is unknown why the continuity of these conferences and their numbering after the 9<sup>th</sup> conference held in Vilnius began from the beginning (it is noteworthy that the conferences taking place during independence years were being organized in cooperation with Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian psychologists from overseas).

Lithuanian psychologists broadened their ties with other republican divisions, higher education, research institutes. There came opportunities to participate in All-Union, republican, and local education conferences. Lithuanian psychologists were being informed about international conferences. At the international congress in London in 1968, A. Gučas and E. Rimkutė made the presentation: "On the psychological analysis of visual perceptive search", A. Gučas and A. Penkauskas participated at the congress. A. Gučas also participated at the 22<sup>nd</sup> international congress of applied psychology in Liège (Belgium) in 1970 m. L. Jovaiša was the Soviet Union's delegate member at the UNESCO expert consultation for school and career oriented questions in Bratislava (1970); J. Laužikas also participated

at the international congress of pedagogics in Warsaw in 1969, etc.

Positive implications for raising the qualification of psychologists had the FLP divisions or sections that were being founded: industry (later organizational), educational, clinical, psychodynamic, humanistic, etc. At their own initiative seminars were being organized with participants from other Soviet republics and even psychologists from abroad (US, Czechoslovakia and others). The Clinical Psychology Division was particularly active and organized seminars with abundant attendance. The seminar themes varied: the psychologist working in the field of psycho-correction (1983), test application (1982), psychological counseling and psychotherapy – the reserves of individuals' self-realization (1988), psychologists working in applied settings, preparation and further qualification issues (1987), etc. FLP along with Vilnius University and the USSR APS council organized an expanded session "The Problems of Theory and History of Development of Psychology" (1973).

There was a proliferation of publications in psychology. They were not limited to just translated handbooks and booklets targeted to society. In 1962, a compilation of academic papers was published: "Pedagogical Psychological Issues", J. Laužikas' "Characteristics of student motivation development" (1965) and "Students' Learning and Teaching Differentiation" (1974), A. Gučas' "The Development of Psychology in Lithuania" (1968) and "Child's Psychology" (1980), A. Jacikevičius' "The Psychology of Bilingualism" (1970), L. Jovaiša's "Psychological Diagnostics" (1975) and "Personality and Profession" (1981), M. Garbačiauskienė's and L. Jovaiša's "Psychological Issues of Teaching and Fostering in the Classroom" (1975), S. Kregždė's "The Psycho-

logy of Career Interests” (1975), A. Bagdonas’ “Zoopsychology (*Animal Behaviour*)” (1983), J. Lapė’s “Work Psychology” (1980) and others. Many teaching tools were published at



*Juvencijus Lapė*  
(born. 1925, photo  
made in 2005)

Vilnius University and other institutions of higher learning. A group of authors formulated and published the original textbook for higher schools (universities) “General Psychology” (1986), the collective book “Dictionary of Psychology” (prepared in 1987, published

only in 1993).

Research articles addressing psychological problems were published in the academic periodical proceedings “Education and Psychology” (“Psychology” since 1980).

The FLP concerned itself with the relationship of school personnel with strengthening teaching psychology at schools, subscribing to psychological journals published overseas, psychologists’ participation at school tourist trips to Czechoslovakia (1968, 1972), Yugoslavia (1964), the 19<sup>th</sup> international congress of psychologists in London (1968), the 22<sup>nd</sup> International Congress in Leipzig (1980) and others.

According to the agreement between the Lithuanian Fellowship of Blinds and the Ministry of Higher and Special Secondary (college level) Education, the Laboratory of Special Psychology was established at Vilnius University in 1973, and the Laboratory of Medicine Psychology and Social Research – at the Kaunas Medical Institute (1973). In 1983, Special Psychology Laboratory of Vilnius

University became a collective member of the FLP and offered its financial support.

At the Vilnius Republican Psychoneurological Hospital, in 1983 psychological and psychotherapeutic consultations (crisis telephone) were organized. A. Gučas, D. Gailienė and E. Rimkutė arranged the “Ethical Code of Professional Psychologist”. It was a very important document providing guidelines for psychologists in practical psychology. On March 26, 1987, at the FLP Council meeting this document was endorsed and recommended to be published. The document was sent to the Central Committee of the Fellowship of Psychologists of the USSR and recommending it to be discussed and distributed (as is known, during that time Soviet psychologists did research and applied work without having any document on the values and professional ethical guidelines).

In 1988, Lithuanian psychologists lost their educator and leader, head of the FLP Prof. A. Gučas. A special congress of the FLP was called. Even before the congress there had been the idea to create an independent Lithuanian Psychological Association (LPA). A project of the LPA Statute was prepared.

On November 26, 1988, the FLP Congress began in an unusual way. E. Rimkutė presented her paper *Pro memoria* in the memory of A. Gučas. She talked about the work of people who become part of history, eternity, become the present. “It is with great regret that today when the whole country is uplifted with the revival, there is no person who did so much and whose whole life worked towards the revival”, – said E. Rimkutė.

This Congress was the stormiest of all the previous ones. In discussing the question of founding an independent LPA there were no objections. It was decided to form the steering

committee which would finally prepare the LPA Statute and declare the LPA an independent organization. A. Bagdonas was voted the Chairman. A new period of unifying Lithuanian psychologists into organizations began.

The FLP existed without any interruptions for 30 years. When summarizing this period, we can draw the following conclusions:

1. The influence of the FLP on the development of psychology in Lithuania was positive and significantly stronger than that of the LFPPO or the LPA. Like in many of the Lithuanian organizations at that time, there prevailed quiet resistance, accepting what coincided with the interests of the Lithuanian nation and rejecting (or accepting just formally) what did not meet those interests.
2. It could be argued that the larger FLP influence on the development of psychology in Lithuania would be explained by the fact that its leadership (Chairman, Council, Presidium) at that time also occupied leading positions at education and research institutions (were heads of institutions and university departments); the FLP ideas were transferred to research institutions without disruption, and from them to the FLP.
3. The periodical "Pedagogics and Psychology" (later "Psychology") began to be published as a result of a close cooperation between FLP and other institutions. In 1969, psychologists began to be prepared again at Vilnius University, there was a significant increase of related publications, and conferences became customary. In other words, the psychologists' movement obtained its professional image and began the realization of its most important, consistent,

professional aspects of development: research, teaching, professional communication and self-regulation.

### **The years 1988–1991: Lithuanian Psychological Association – becoming an independent organization**

The 7<sup>th</sup> FLP congress (stormy and emotional) was only designated to make a final decision on establishing an independent organization. The then Lithuanian dominating sociopolitical conditions helped shaping such a decision. Psychologists (particularly young ones) were not backstage in these processes. Only one month after Lithuania's Reorganizing Movement "Sąjūdis" had been created, the Group of Psychologists for "Sąjūdis" Support was formed (July 9, 1988). On October 21, 1988 there appeared the first humble (but at that time important) issue of "Lithuanian psychologist", which published matters of importance to us. From the third number it was being published as an LPA newspaper (however, its publication stopped after the 4<sup>th</sup> issue).

At the October 15, 1988 meeting, the Group of Psychologists for "Sąjūdis" Support announced the guidelines of its activities. In the first paragraph of these guidelines we find the following words: "We consider the main goal of our activity to be the reinstatement of a sovereign, lawful and democratic government, which is impossible without a fundamental change in the political, social and spiritual situation in the Republic".

In this document we find also other important declarations, including the statement: "Lithuanian psychologists keep the total organizational independence of Lithuanian psychology". In the issue of "Lithuanian Psychologist" R. Kočiūnas justifies the necessity of separating from the USSR

Fellowship of Psychologists and establishing an independent Lithuanian Psychological Association. It so happened that Lithuanian psychologists from the very beginning named their organization by an acronym which, by chance, coincided with the acronym of the Lithuanian Reorganizing Movement “Sąjūdis”. During the discussions, the use of both acronyms sometimes made it difficult to understand which organization was meant – one of all Lithuanians and the other of all Lithuanian psychologists – both LPS.

One event led to another, one needed to participate everywhere, however the idea of an independent Lithuanian Psychological Association also began rapidly circulating. Three alternatives were proposed at the 7<sup>th</sup> FLP congress:

- 1) to liquidate the FLP (as a division of the Fellowship of Psychologists of the Soviet Union) and to establish a new independent organization;
- 2) Lithuanian representatives offered to reorganize the Fellowship of Psychologists of the Soviet Union, allowing more independence for republican divisions or creating an independent Lithuanian Psychological Association;
- 3) not to wait for the Congress of the Fellowship of Psychologists of the Soviet Union, for creating an independent organization but to allow the republican FLP division to exist during the transitional time. The first offer was supported by only two delegates, whereas the second and third received similar amounts of votes – 46 and 49. The third proposal won. In this FLP Congress, delegates to the 7<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Fellowship of Psychologists of the Soviet Union were elected, the initiative group was formed to create the Lit-

huanian Psychological Association. The draft statute of the new Association’s (LPA) was prepared.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Fellowship of Psychologists of the Soviet Union was approaching. The active membership of Lithuanian psychologists sought, before this All-Union forum, to declare an independent organization and announce the Union’s participants about leaving the Fellowship of Psychologists of the Soviet Union. So, all 213 Lithuanian Psychologists came to its last, special 8th congress on January 21, 1989 and were particularly efficient and constructive. The Congress took one academic hour. In the agenda there was only one question – the fate of the FLP. It was unanimously decided on the basis of the FLP to establish a totally independent organization of psychologists – the Lithuanian Psychological Association (LPA).

Immediately thereafter the founding Congress of the Lithuanian Psychological Association was held. The LPA Statute was accepted, A. Bagdonas was elected the LPA President, R. Kočiūnas and D. Gailienė were elected Vice-presidents; 10 LPA council members were elected: and an address to the Fellowship of Psychologists of the Soviet Union was signed.

Eight days later a delegation of Lithuanian psychologists left for Moscow to the 7<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Fellowship of Psychologists of the Soviet Union. Information about this event, poorly organized and the last one for Lithuanian psychologists, A. Bagdonas submitted to Issue 3 of “Lithuanian Psychologist” (the article was called “Parting with Moscow”).

At the first plenary meeting, the announcement about creating the independent Lithuanian Psychologists’ Association was given to an audience of 1200 people. One of the authors of this text (A. Bagdonas) began

the announcement with the following preamble: “Venerable colleagues, we all see where blind centralization brought us... An excellent example of scholarly centralization is psychology. Muscovites comprise only 3% of the country’s population, but at that psychologists’ forum the presidium consists of 95% Muscovites. We are not envious of these nice seats. However, it is painful that there has come a time when in these nice chairs there is no one to sit from the periphery. They have very few highly qualified specialists. There are many reasons: beggarly finance, brain-drain, etc.” Particularly lively received was the part in the announcement where it was stated that “Lithuanian psychologists send their most sincere regards and wish success to colleagues in their renewal and on issues involving the reorganization of psychology”. At this point we announced that at the congress we were participating only with observer rights, and we renounced the 14 mandates assigned to us. We felt free and independent. During the recess, a Ukrainian delegate congratulated us and said that we were very courageous. Yes, there was still more than a year until the re-declaration of Lithuanian independence (freedom *de jure*) and more than two and half a year until the recognition of that independence (freedom *de facto*).

One year later, on October 15, 1990, in the issue of “Lithuanian psychologist” R. Želvys wrote: “If at the beginning of 1989 the creation of the independent Lithuanian Psychologists’ Association appeared a courageous, even a drastic step, a particular challenge to Moscow (there were also those who were afraid of our courage), today everything seems totally normal and a totally usual phenomenon. All kinds of organizations have become independent, starting with philatelists and up to the Lithuanian communist party. Even psychiatrists have turned in the direction of independence.”

It that same issue of “Lithuanian Psychologist” we find also sarcastic humour: in August 1989, a new type of hysteria was discovered – “nationalist”. The discoverer was the Central Committee of the Communist Party. “Lithuanian psychologist”, on behalf of all patients, thanks the Communist Party for their concern and asks to help solve another diagnostic problem: “party oligarchy” and “party oligophrenia” – are these two different diagnoses or one?

So, when it came to aspirations of freedom, we were one of the first (if not the very first) who practically became free. However, it is easier to become the first than to remain being the first – carrying out the daily organizational growth, strengthening it and the meaningful citizenship. After the inaugural LPA congress, there began days of toil. The LPA Statute was prepared, its stamp and the LPA coloured member cards were produced (a few hundred of cards were distributed to members), as well as various financial accounting documents and agreement forms were created (with the LPA there were a few groups of researchers who would make agreements with various organizations). Since we were the first, no one wanted to register us (because they were afraid that at that time there was no legal basis). It is because of this that the LPA became a collective member of the Lithuanian Association of Scientific and Technological Societies (LASTS). Thanks to this organization we became an official and registered Association, acquired the right to have our own stamp, letterhead and bank account. Immediately an accountant was hired (J. Laurinaitienė) who irreproachably took care of LPA assets, prepared financial statements for tax agencies. The LPA delegated two members to the LASTS. When privatization began, the LPA became a co-owner with the LASTS – like

other several smaller organizations, we were given shares (practically free), which were later sold and the received finances were used for the LPA needs.

Not only the LPA council and their commission members were active. The LPA very quickly grew up: new divisions, sections, groups, commissions appeared. The LPA membership grew very quickly, as did also the number of sponsors. In 1990, we had 410 LPA members with divisions in Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai, as well as the Clinical and Pedagogical Psychology and Psychophysiology divisions. Contacts grew very quickly with psychologists from Western countries – psychologists from overseas started coming and going (sometimes for a long period as psychoanalysts). The contacts with Lithuanian foreign psychologists became more frequent. In the middle of 1989 we had addresses of almost 50 Lithuanian psychologists living abroad (in the US alone we knew about 40 psychologists of Lithuanian ancestry).

Almost 10 days after the declaration of independence, Lennart Parknas, a practising Swedish psychologist, member of the Swedish Psychologists' Group Against Nuclear Weapons, visited us. Over the border he brought important documents and declarations about our independence, some announcements from our re-established political parties and presented them to the Swedish Foreign Ministry. Swedish newspapers wrote about this LPA envoy. At that time we had already formed close relationships between the LPA and the above Swedish psychologists' organization, and the exchange of delegations began. The Swedes financed our first trips.

As we can see, even during the Soviet time there was a close relationship between psychologists of the Baltic countries. During the time of revival, ties with the three Baltic

States weakened: in Latvia, in general, there were not many professional psychologists (in Moscow they were even annoyed by our drastic step); Estonian psychologists, whose relationships were really numerous, split (quite a large wing remained committed to the Soviet psychologists' assembly). Therefore, the LPA Council wanted to activate the cooperation among the psychologists of the three small countries – to renew the common conferences. One representative of Estonian psychologists, who had to distribute information on the 8<sup>th</sup> (actually the 9<sup>th</sup>, if the 1975 conference held in Estonia were to be counted) conference of the Baltic States, turned it out because he thought that this conference renewed some type of Soviet tradition. Because of this, only a few Estonian psychologists participated. However, this conference, in terms of participant numbers, outnumbered the conferences held before and after: the number of participants reached 189. The conference took place in January 11–12, 1990 during the bloody days in Vilnius and at the eve of January 13. There arose problems with the accelerated transportation of guests (Estonian, Latvian, Swedish, Georgian and even Russian) from Lithuania. Many had to lose tickets to purchased for a later time and to purchase new ones. Swedish psychologists were particularly panicked to return home, having never experienced such political warlike stressful situations. However, that did not stop conference participants from sending a telegram to Soviet president M. Gorbachev. Here is the content of the telegram: *Honoured President, we – Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Russian, Byelorussians, Georgian, Swedish – on January 9–11, 1991 were discussing the psychological problems of people, interpersonal and group relationships, cognition, impact on person, personality and society changes and stability. Our*

*professional competence allows us to recommend that you renounce the use of violence in the Baltic republics, in the chosen nationally decided road. Any type of decision for coercion is an illusion of problem solving.*

The LPA was an active organizer of the World Lithuanian 7<sup>th</sup> scholarly symposium of the Psychological Sector. Many LPA members prepared presentations, participated in discussions. The symposium took place in May 23–30, 1991.

In 1989–1991 many LPA members, individually and in groups, actively participated in the society's political life – quite a few worked as defenders of Parliament, helped Armenian earthquake evacuees (in the middle of 1989, in Palanga there were about 1000 of them).

On February 10, 1990 the first LPA Congress was held (the LPS Congress of January 21, 1989 is considered the inaugural). Evidences of the expanded LPA activities can be found in its schedule (whose certain questions remain relevant even in today's LPA congresses): the divisions' and sections' reports, committees of Research and Practical Activity Coordination, Psychodiagnostics, Information and Publication, Professional Ethics and Certification, International Relations, Finances and Auditing, and the LPA Honorary Court were approved. At this Congress, E. Rimkutė presented usage guidelines of psychodiagnostic methods which suggested Lithuanian psychologists to use methodologies, registered and approved by the LPA, contribute to the creation of methodologies, exchange the relevant information. A coordinating group was formed, which compiled a database on the methodologies used, and also temporary groups for working with concrete methodologies. Other committees attempted to work as broadly as well.

On March 9, 1991 the second LPA Con-

gress was held. Psychologists' professional ethical issues, issues of psychodiagnostics and financial activity were analysed. The divisions and sectors were active between the two Congresses. From the reports of the divisions it became clear that the Kaunas division had 65, Klaipėda 20 and Šiauliai 25 members. The Vilnius division was the largest. However, it was not registered as a separate division. During the Congress there arose problems of electing a new chairman: A. Bagdonas refused because he had served for two terms (recognizing that the LPA and the FLP continued, he was elected twice). Many asked R. Kočiūnas to be President, but he refused. Other candidates also refused, so the chairman was elected from one candidate: Z. Streikus, representing Druskininkai, was elected. The LPA Council worked further, however, the activity of 1988–1991 was no longer there. The LPA organizational crisis deepened until its activity ceased altogether. It was impossible even to gather the Congress quorum. This situation (a pit in the FLP–LPA existence) occurred for a number of reasons: 1) the everyday grind at workplaces began, and people had no time for societal activities; 2) the enthusiasm of the general political scene dissipated; 3) the LPA Chairman's and council members' contacts weakened because of living in different cities; 4) everything started to quickly become more expensive, so the LPA was unable to finance the planned initiatives; 5) with the weakening of the LPA activities, independent psychologists' organizations started to form with narrower interest groups (this was encouraged by objective factors: international specialized psychological associations accepted their members only according to the same profile of national associations). In the fall of 1995 there was an attempt to clearly revive (practically recreate) the LPA.

1988–1991 were years of essential transformation. The transformation was crowned by Independence. Lithuanian psychologists (very significantly grown in numbers as compared to 1958) started to become heard: they actively performed in health care, education and other areas. The main conclusions of this developmental stage would be the following:

1. Lithuanian psychologists' professional movement from the FLP to the LPA was reorganized very quickly, systematically and painlessly.
2. Already from January 1989, the LPA was the first Lithuanian organization to officially and loudly cut its ties with the Soviet psychologists' Assembly and become independent.
3. The first LPA years were rather structured: territorial divisions, sectors, important committees for professional activities were created, the membership grew to 410.
4. The inspired enthusiasm from recovered Independence quickly dissipated: people had to work with large loads at their main places of employment, to take on extra jobs to subsist, there was an increasing differentiation of professional interests (this encouraged the appearance of more specialized associations), and in 1995 the LPA had to be rebuilt.

### **The years 1995–2008: The Second Birth of the Lithuanian Psychologists' Association**

Because the LPA activities started to slow down after the 1991 Congress, a lot of various problems accumulated whose solving could no longer be postponed. Therefore, an initiative group (A. Bagdonas, V. Bieliauskas, D. Gai-

lienė, R. Kočiūnas and others) invited colleagues to a renewing LPA congress on November 10, 1995. One hundred and eight psychologists came to this Congress, who endorsed a new LPA Statute and elected a new LPA leadership (President G. Valickas, Vice-president R. Petronis and 7 council members).

The new LPA leadership actively threw themselves to work: taking into account the changed realities, the new LPA stamp and lead-head were prepared, the remaining LPA assets were audited, the psychologists' professional training foundations were outlined, psychodiagnostic, psychologists' professional ethics, psychologists' licensing and continued education committees as well as new contacts were established (with the European Federation of Professional Psychologists Associations – EFPPA). In 1996, the LPA Congress ratified two important documents: The Lithuanian Psychologists' Training Essential Requirements (i. e. certain standards, based on which future psychologists would grant professional qualification) and the Psychologist's Professional Code of Ethics, which was elaborated by the EFPPA ethical principles. Based on these Lithuanian psychologists' training essential requirements, the Studies in Psychology guidelines were prepared, which in 2004 were endorsed by the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science.

In 1997, the first important steps were taken in solving the licensing of psychological practice and psychodiagnostic questions: approving the Requirements for Practicing Psychologists to Receive License and Standardization Guidelines for Psychological Testing (because of the complex situation, for each it was seen a three year transitional time period). Thereafter, much effort was made to prepare psychologists for licensing: in 1998 there were elected LPA Clinical, Organizational and

Educational psychologists' licensing committees, in 1999 General Requirements for the Licensing of Psychologists Commissions Work, all three licensing commissions' working guidelines were prepared and endorsed, and the LPA Committee of Appeal was elected, to which individuals who did not receive license could appeal. In December 1999, there were organized the first Clinical and Educational Psychology licensing committee sessions (the Educational Psychology Licensing Committee granted an educational psychological practice certificate to 20 psychologists and the Clinical Psychology committee to 13 psychologists), as well as the Psychologists' practice certificate was prepared and certified. After a month, in January 2000, at the LPA Congress, solemnly the first psychologists' practice certificates (i.e. the first licenses) were presented. Thus, in 1999 all the necessary issues were completed and practically prepared to license psychologists. International organizations were also informed about that. In 1999, the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards was informed about the existing licensing procedure in Lithuania.

An other important question directly related with licensing was the upgrading of continued education for psychologists. Having decided to attend to developing a system for psychologists' upgrading, the LPA Council also carried out the first tasks in this area: in 1998 were approved the Requirements of Programs for Upgrading and the first program of Gestalt Therapy was registered (prepared by G. Gudaitė). In 1999, a few other psychologists' upgrading programs were prepared, discussed and registered by the LPA Council: Child Assessment (prepared by D. Gintilienė), Existential Therapy (prepared by R. Kočiūnas), Individual Psychology (according to A. Adler) (prepared by R. Bieliauskaitė, E. Zubienė and E. Briedienė).

In 1998, another strategic goal of the LPA was implemented – the Psychologists' Professional Activities Law project was prepared. The necessity of this legislation depends on the psychologists' professional specificity, as well as on the existing practice of psychological service, the preparation of psychologists and their employment practice (it simply became customary that psychological positions were not occupied by psychologists, psychological services are provided by persons not having the appropriate education and competency, and the like). The main goals of the Psychologist's Professional Activity Law are to ensure the quality of psychological services, guarantee the safety and wellbeing of clients, also strive for the practical work of psychologists in Lithuania to correspond to the international standards. A working group inviting psychologists, psychotherapists, lawyers was created in 1998 to prepare the aforementioned legislation. In the same year, at the initiative of Parliament member V. Čepas, this question was deliberated on by the Lithuanian Parliament administration who applied to the Lithuanian Government. In December 1998, the Lithuanian Republic Chancellery assistant applied to certain ministries (Social Security and Labour, Health, Education and Science) asking to submit recommendations for the appropriate legislation act. In October 1999, during the Health Ministry meeting (in which also Education and Science ministry, Parliamentary and LPA representatives participated) unanimously decided that the preparation of such legislation was essential. After that the Lithuanian Government Chancellery was approached, asking for mediation in forming an interdepartmental group to prepare the legislation. However, the aforementioned group never materialized and later the

legislative preparation initiative totally dissipated. Only after a few years, at the 2006 LPA Congress, the a working group was created again (which was changed in 2007) to prepare the legislation. In 2007, the Psychologist's Professional Activities legislation project was prepared, which received very conflicting evaluation of the Council members (this project was not submitted to wider consideration.) Thus, after 10 years of the Psychologist's Professional Activities legislation preparation, nothing actually happened.

The LPA continues the previous tradition of actively participating in the preparation of academic conferences and seminars.

In 1996, with the Vilnius University International Relations and Political Sciences Institute and Nauman's fund, an international seminar "Political Leader: Personality and Behavioural Peculiarities" was organized.

In 1997, with Vilnius University and Vytautas Magnus University, the conference "Lithuanian Psychology at a Juncture of Epochs" was organized to commemorate the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of A. Gučas.

In 1998, with the Institute of International Relations and Political Sciences and Adenauer's fund, the international seminar "Political Leader and Interaction with His Team" was organized, and with Vilnius University and the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Psychology the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Baltic Psychology Conference was held.

In 2002, with Vilnius University, the First World Lithuanian Psychologists' conference was organized.

In 2004, with Vilnius University the Second World Lithuanian Psychologists' conference was organized, and with Vilnius University and the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Psychology the 6<sup>th</sup> International Baltic Psychology Conference was held.

In 2006, with Vilnius University, the Third World Lithuanian Psychologists' Conference was organized.

In 2006, a celebratory commemoration was organized to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> birth of S. Freud.

In 2007, with Vilnius University, a celebratory commemoration was organized to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> birth of A. Gučas.

With the restitution of Lithuanian independence, contacts of Lithuanian psychologists with colleagues from Western countries really strengthened, however, the LPA was not yet officially recognized. So, seeking to integrate with the European psychologists' community, in 1997 all the necessary documents were submitted and a request was made to admit the LPA into the European Federation of Professional Psychologists' Associations. However, for a few irregularities (the formulation of the LPA Statute) the acceptance process took a while, and the LPA became a full member of this organization after two years. This happened at the Rome EFPPA General Assembly on July 1999. It may be added that in 1999, the American Psychological Association's newsletter "Psychology International" published the article about the development of psychology in Lithuania and the current situation (Country Profile: Lithuania // Psychology International, 1999, vol. 10, No 1).

In 1999, ties were established with the International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS) and documents were prepared for joining this organization. In July 2000, the LPA became a full member of the International Union of Psychological Science. In February 2001, negotiations began with the International Testing Committee and European Psychological Assessment Association for admission into these organizations, and in 2002 the LPA became a member of the International Testing Committee.

In seeking to encourage future psychologists, in June 1997, the LPA, Vilnius University and Vytautas Magnus University established the Prof. A. Gučas prize (to acknowledge the best papers of psychology students). In 1999, the first psychology students' competition was held; however, by 2002 this competition was discontinued. In 1997, the LPS established special diplomas and ratified its statute, according to which this diplomas could be designated to accomplished LPA members. The first psychologists who for their considerable contribution to the implementation of the goals of the Lithuanian Psychological Association were awarded LPA diplomas were: M. Garbačiauskienė, A. Jacikevičius, S. Kregždė and J. Lapė. In 1999, the LPA diploma was awarded to L. Jovaiša, L. M. Vekker and V. Viliūnas (and after that no more LPA diplomas were awarded). The LPA congress that took place in 1997 also elected the first LPA honorary members for contribution to Lithuanian psychology (V. Bieliauskas and I. Užgiriene). In June 2002, the LPS honorary names were given to J. Pikūnas and A. Šidlauskaitė and at the March 2007 Congress to M. Garbačiauskienė and J. Lapė.

One can also mention some other important LPA works from the previous years: at the January 2000 Congress the LPA Ethical Committee task guidelines were approved and the LPA Ethical Committee was elected. In the year 2000, a new LPA Internet homepage was made, and in 2006 the EuroPsy diplomas and the EFPA ethical meta-code were translated into Lithuanian, and the new LPA Statute was adopted taking into account changes in legislation. In 2007, four LPA committees were established: Ethics, Psychological Assessment, Licensing and EuroPsy, Mental Health (more specifically, ethical, psychological assessment and licensing committees were restored

because they had been operating before under the names of commissions), etc.

The aforementioned LPA congresses occur every year, the President and Board are elected every two years. The President may have two consecutive tenures. Since 1931, the LFPPO–FLP–LPA were headed by J. Šimkus (1931–1940), A. Gučas (1958–1988), A. Bagdonas (1988–1991), Z. Streikus (1991–1993), G. Valickas (1995–1999), B. Pociūtė (1999–2003), L. Bulotaitė (2003–2007), R. Povilaitis (from 2007).

To sum it up, the following conclusions could be drawn for the 1995–2008 period:

1. There was a rapid integration of of LPA into the European and world psychologists' community: in 1999 the LPA became a full member of the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (currently EFPA, EFPPA at that time), in 2000 – member of the International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS), in 2002 – member of the International Testing Commission.
2. Important documents for Lithuanian psychologists were prepared and certified:
  - 2.1. In 1996, Lithuanian psychologists' professional training requirements were outlined, and on this basis the Studies in Psychology Direction Guidelines were prepared.
  - 2.2. In 1996, the psychologist's profession ethical code was supplemented by the European Federation of Professional Psychologists' Associations (EFPPA) ethical principals.
  - 2.3. In 1997, the standardized psychological testing guidelines were prepared.
3. The practice of psychologists' was prepared for licensing: the requirements for receiving a licence for

psychological practice was approved, and in 1998 licensing committees for LPA Clinical, Organizational and Educational Psychology were elected. To assist in the committees' work, the general requirements for psychologists' licensing were approved, as well as guidelines for all three licensing committees were prepared. In 1999, an LPA Appellate Committee was elected. In 2000, the first educational and clinical psychologists' practice certificates were presented.

4. In 1998, the first tasks for creating a system of upgrading the qualification of psychologists were carried out. In 1999, the first four programs for raising the qualification of psychologists were registered.
5. In 1998, the first draft of legislation of the Psychologist's Professional Activities was prepared. This legislation was more broadly considered at the 2007.
6. Academic conferences and seminars were organized in cooperation with other partners.
7. In 1997, the LPA with Vilnius University

and Vytautas Magnus University established the Prof. A. Gučas award to acknowledge the best works of psychology students. The LPA diploma, intended for the most distinguished LPA members, for a contribution to Lithuanian psychology was established and the first LPA honorary members were chosen.

8. Like in the previous period, there were difficulties to guarantee the transition of LPA activity, and downturns were not avoided: the licensing of psychologists' practice was discontinued, as was also the system for raising psychologists' qualifications, legislation on the activities of professional psychologists, and others. These questions are being reconsidered.

In conclusion it should be noted that in January 1999 the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and in February 2008 the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the LPA were celebrated. Over the 50 years, experience has been accumulated and traditions have been forming (for example, tolerance of the views of others, openness to new experiences, professionalism); this is a good basis for solving today's problems and implementing the goals of Lithuanian psychologists.

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