

Opening Gates to the West: Lithuanian and Jewish Migrations from the Lithuanian Provinces, 1867–1914

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S U M M A R Y : This article compares the transatlantic emigration of Lithuanians and Jews from the Lithuanian provinces of Russia to the West during 1867–1914. It explores the socio-economic and political changes that induced the mass migration and examines its dynamics, social profiles, agent networks, routes and ways of emigration. The article is based on a variety of sources including some archival documents and a rich body of secondary literature. By suggesting a degree of shared migratory experience and interdependence of these two migrations, the author calls for a comparative approach in studying the emigration experiences of different ethnic groups.

K e y w o r d s : MIGRATION, JEWS, LITHUANIANS, RUSSIAN EMPIRE, COMPARATIVE HISTORY.

Introduction: migration as a shared experience

In the fall of 1891 a 21-year-old Lithuanian peasant from Kovno province, Tadas Kubilius, packed his few belongings and left for England. Born into a farmer's family of modest means, yet able to acquire some cobbling skills, the young lad refused to serve in the tsar's army. Instead, he decided to try his luck in a distant land. Upon his arrival, he left an account of his journey that included bribing a border guard; crossing a Russian–German border illegally; taking a train to Berlin and finally, a boat from Hamburg to London. Luckily, on the first day of his journey, in Prussia he met a Jewish companion from Lithuania who turned out to be traveling to England as well. Besides, he appeared to be “a good guide” helping him to secure transport to the nearest Prussian town and also showing Kubilius the way to his cousin's house through the labyrinth of London's streets (Wolkovich-Valkavicius, 1981: 42-43).

There is nothing unusual about their journey from the East to the West, except perhaps their companionship.¹ Between the 1880s and the Great War their trajectory was followed by more than four million Russian subjects of various nationalities.² Yet traditional migration accounts do not tell us much

¹ For a similar account of an emigrant journey see Eidintas (2003: 29).

² The largest emigrant groups from Russia were Poles, Jews, Lithuanians and Finns. See Kuznets (1975: 45, 51).

about the shared experiences of emigrants. Instead, they tell us migration stories of particular ethnic groups, as if ethnicity was a primary factor in their emigration experience. Today's politics of population movement are clearly international, yet they are still dominantly framed in local and often nationalist terms (Van der Veer, 1995: 6–7). These migration narratives (as well as those of population displacement) are strongly rooted in the nation-state rhetoric and are traditionally compartmentalised by ethnic-group experiences (Makki, 1992: 25–27). Until recently, they were also heavily dominated by issues of immigration, assimilation or “ethnic renaissance”, rather than emigration. Nancy Green (2005) and Aristide Zolberg (2006) were one of the first to address this imbalance in migration literature and they aimed to shift our attention from arrival to departure. One of the key premises of their perspective is that political and social attitudes towards an emigrant's departure matter as much as structural and economic changes that induce people to leave.

This article will follow the emigrational perspective by trying to compare the transoceanic emigration of two ethnic groups from Russia. My aim is to broaden our understanding of the way by which migrants from the same geographical region develop exit routes and migratory networks that later are shared by other groups. For this purpose, I will compare the late nineteenth – early twentieth century emigrations of Jews and Lithuanians from the three Lithuanian provinces (Vilna, Kovno and Suvalki) to the West.³

Ewa Morawska (1985) claims that between 1860 and 1914 combined migration from all Polish territories totaled approximately nine million people.⁴ Congress Poland (with more than 2.5 million emigrants) was one of the first western fringes of the Russian empire that experienced mass emigration.⁵ Another key area of the heavy exodus was Lithuania which lost almost a quarter (635,000) of its population during 1868–1914 (Truska, 1961: 84). Compared with the size of its population, this rate of emigration was one of the highest in Europe at the time (Kuznets, 1975: 48–49) with Jews and Lithuanians comprising the majority of the migrants from the Lithuanian provinces. By following their migratory flows and routes, I will explore the

³ Although Suvalki province was administratively part of Congress Poland, and Kovno and Vilna belonged to the Russian North West, all three provinces contained the largest numbers of ethnic Lithuanians. They also formed the nucleus of independent Lithuania in 1918. The reference period is chosen due to the scale and intensity of the emigration. For the sake of convenience my further references to “Lithuania” will imply the Lithuanian provinces of Suvalki, Vilna and Kovno.

⁴ “All Polish territories” refers to the lands of the former Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth.

⁵ This number also includes Polish peasants (more than 50,000 annually) who as seasonal labourers migrated to Eastern Prussia. See Morawska (1985: 29).

commonalities and differences of their movement to suggest a degree of shared migratory experience and interdependence between these two migrations. Hopefully, this approach will contribute to the existing literature on the early emigration from the Russian empire and will shed new light on the contemporary East–West migrations notable for their massive numbers and migratory networks that often are shared by various groups or populations.⁶

Socio-economic and political setting of the Lithuanian provinces

Although late nineteenth-century Russia was an empire in transition, its socio-demographic structure was still deeply traditional. In the late 1880s, 75 per cent of the empire's population still worked in agriculture (Kukushkin, 2007: 14). According to the first all-Russian census of 1897, peasants made up 71 per cent of the population in Kovno; 86 per cent in Suvalki; and 75 per cent in Vilna provinces (Первая всеобщая, 1904: 42; 59). The positions of Lithuanians and Jews within this social structure were largely inherited from the historical Polish-Lithuanian state. In the mid-nineteenth century tsarist reforms unleashed new forces of modernisation, but they failed to develop a new socio-economic setting that would successfully accommodate them.

In 1897 there was approximately 1.6 million Lithuanians in Russia of whom more than 60,000 lived outside Lithuania. Yet, Lithuanians formed a clear majority of the population only in Kovno province (66 per cent). In Suvalki they made up 52 per cent and in Vilna province only 18 per cent of population. At the same time, in Vilna and Kovno provinces the density of Jewish population was one of the highest in the whole Pale of Settlement. The Pale roughly approximated historical boundaries of the defunct Poland-Lithuania and contained more than four million of Russia's Jews. They represented the largest concentration (about 40 per cent) of the world's Jewish population. Of them almost 417,000 were found in the three Lithuanian provinces (Levin, 2000: 77).⁷ Their number was highest in Kovno (14 per cent), while Suvalki and Vilna provinces had 10 and 13 per cent respectively.

⁶ For the emigration of Jews from Russia, see Kuznets (1975); emigrations from the Ukraine and Belarus are discussed by Kukushkin (2007); and emigration from Poland is examined by Klier (2008), Будницкий (2008), and Morawska (1985). The most authoritative work on the emigration of Lithuanians is Eidintas (2003).

⁷ Truska claims there were only 360,000 Jews in ethnic Lithuanian lands at this time (2005: 18).

Local cities and towns had significantly higher numbers of Jews than Lithuanians, of whom more than 90 per cent resided primarily in the countryside. Only about 8 per cent of Lithuanians lived in cities. A minority of Jews resided in the countryside, while the bulk of them lived in towns and cities (Truska, 1961: 18). In Vilna province Lithuanians made up a tiny 2 per cent of urban population in comparison with 43 per cent of Jews (Truska, 1961: 21). In Kovno province Lithuanians formed 11 per cent of the urban population, while in Suvalki their percentage was only 9 per cent. The only larger cities in the region, Vilna (155,000) and Kovno (70,000), were thus predominantly Jewish and Polish.

This clear-cut urban-country divide spoke of radically different social make-ups of both groups. The majority of Lithuanians were Catholic peasants living off the land. In Kovno province, where most Lithuanians resided, only 8 per cent were involved in crafts and manufacturing, while their presence in trade was negligent 0.6 per cent (Levin, 2000: 85). Among Lithuanians, social divisions largely exhibited those differences that emerged as a result of the 1861 land reform. After the reform a substantial number of Lithuanian peasants became increasingly well-to-do by acquiring more land (Ochmanski, 1965: 107). The land was also made available by government confiscations from participants of the two Polish uprisings (1831 and 1863) as well as the 1865 ban on the land purchases by “persons of Polish origins” in the Lithuanian provinces. In the wake of the reform, peasant land possession increased by 46 per cent in Kovno and by 29 and 12 per cent in Vilna and Suvalki provinces (Ochmanski, 1965: 107). As a result of this land transfer, by the 1880s Lithuanian peasantry became increasingly stratified.

Hence, the second part of the century witnessed gradually improving material conditions in the life of some of the peasantry, among whom there emerged a strong group of well-to-do farmers. This process was particularly visible in Suvalki where serfdom was abolished earlier (in 1807) than in the rest of Lithuania (1861). In the first decade of the twentieth century peasants owned about one-third of the land in the province. Small-holders whose land possessions were between three and ten *desiatiny*⁸ (9–27 acres) constituted about 38 per cent of all peasant landowners in Suvalki. Also there were 34 per cent of those who owned more than ten *desiatiny* (Tyla, 1968: 39).

By the 1880s Suvalki also became a hotbed of the newly born Lithuanian nationalist movement led by a young cohort of educated peasants whose parents were able to afford their university studies (Hroch, 1985: 86–88). Kovno province also exhibited high numbers of medium-sized small-holders

⁸ One *desiatina* equals about 2.7 acres.

of whom almost half owned more than ten *desiatiny*. In Vilna, due to poorer soil conditions, only a quarter of peasants had land properties larger than ten *desiatiny* (Tyla, 1968: 39).

Yet the process of social stratification also increased the ranks of landless peasantry who in 1900 formed about 22 per cent of all peasants in Suvalki, 15 per cent in Kovno and 8 per cent in Vilna provinces (Truska, 1961: 73). The highest numbers of landless peasants were in those areas where large-scale peasant farms predominated, namely in Telshi (26 per cent), Shavli (25 per cent), Volkovishki (20 per cent) and Marijampol (18 per cent) districts (Tyla, 1968: 41). In total, there were nearly 300,000 landless peasants in the three Lithuanian provinces – which were a large pool of potential emigrants.

Despite tsarist repressions that followed the Polish uprisings (1831, 1863), as late as 1905 Lithuanian nobility constituted less than 10 per cent of the population but owned 33 per cent of land in Vilna, 40 per cent in Kovno and 25 per cent in Suvalki provinces (Gudavičius, 2004: 241). Except for a few individuals, politically and culturally it was heavily Polonised and considered Lithuania a constituent part of historical Poland. Meanwhile, the native Lithuanian bourgeoisie was almost non-existent before 1905. Some observers accounted its absence as “an incomplete social structure” that hindered the development of a national movement among Lithuanians (Hroch, 1985: 8–9; Kappeler, 2001: 289).

Throughout the late nineteenth century the Jewish population in Lithuania also underwent a process of rapid social stratification. Yet this process was more visibly marked by pauperisation of the majority of Jews rather than social stratification. A Jewish labour historian, Lederhendler views it as “social declassing” of Russian Jewry (2008: 522). By the end of the century the vast majority of the Jews in the Pale became “part of one sub-class” – made up of the mass of artisans, journeymen and petty traders – “and stood little chance of being integrated within the surrounding political economy” (Lederhendler, 2008: 534). These three groups accounted for more than 70 per cent of the whole Jewish labour force (Lederhendler, 2008: 515). This clustering of Jews in a few occupations was produced by their peculiar “intermediary” economic position rooted in the old social structure of Poland-Lithuania and a set of discriminatory laws imposed by the Russian government.

Over the course of the century overcrowding in petty commerce and falling agricultural prices led to a shift towards manufacturing occupations among the Jews. If in the 1820s Russian Jewry included only 18 per cent of those who were artisans, by the end of the century almost 38 per cent of Jews were employed in small-scale manufacturing (Feldman, 1994: 150). This shift was particularly prominent in the Lithuanian provinces where manufacturing accounted for 44 per cent of those employed in gainful

occupations (Rubinow, 1975: 502). Yet among the Jewish artisans just less than half worked in the production of textiles and footwear selling their home-made goods directly to peasants (Kahan, 1986: 52–53). The second largest occupational group (34 per cent) was made up of petty traders who dominated about 90 per cent of commerce in Lithuania (Feldman, 1994: 150). In 1897 almost half of Jewish traders dealt in agricultural products (Rubinow, 1975: 556).

The two remaining social groups of Jews, harbingers of the approaching capitalist era, industrial workers and bourgeoisie, were considerably smaller. Since the major industrial centers of the empire were outside the Pale, only about 40,000 Jews were able to find employment in large factories (Lederhendler, 2008: 515). Vilna and Kovno were the only cities in the region that had any significant working classes.⁹ Yet Jewish workers made up more than half of the workers in the north-west. Meanwhile, Jewish bourgeoisie numbered approximately 65,000 people and constituted less than 2 per cent of Russian Jewry (Lederhendler, 2008: 515).

The peasant settlement pattern differed substantially across Lithuania: by mid-century in Suvalki and Kovno provinces most peasants lived on individual farms, while in Vilna province they resided mostly in villages (Ūdrėnas, 2000: 51). Accordingly, there were more large and medium-sized farms in the first two than in Vilna province. Individual farming allowed peasants to increase the productivity of their land gradually, which was held as inheritable family property. This land holding pattern was also a heritage of the old Poland-Lithuania. It differed sharply from the one prevalent in Central Russia and Southern Ukraine where the land was a property of the peasant community and subject to communal tenure laws (Kukushkin, 2007: 19).

The social and cultural life of peasant Lithuanians evolved around a vast network of parish churches. Starting with the last decades the nineteenth century they had to cope with official persecution and growing tensions between the Polish Catholic hierarchy and the grass root religious interests supported by local Lithuanian-speaking priests. Alongside the parish church, the second most important landmark of peasants' life was a local town with its marketplace and shops that catered for their social, material and cultural needs.

The economic and social life of Lithuanian Jews also evolved around small towns (*shtetlekh*). Through their active marketplaces *shtetlekh* dominated county economies as trade hubs by absorbing locally produced agricultural

⁹ In Vilnius and Kaunas there were 12,000 and 3,500 Jewish workers respectively. The number of Lithuanian workers in both cities was negligible (600 people). See, Merkys (1969: 365).

products. Often Jews formed the majority of populations in the *shtetlekh*. They were also centers of their spiritual and cultural life based on numerous religious, educational and charitable institutions. A typical Lithuanian *shtetl* such as Kražiai (in Yiddish “Krozhe”) in Kovno province had a population of 1,125 Jews out of a total of about 3,500 in 1897. About 40 per cent of the former were artisans, a few being farmers and gardeners. Besides several charitable organisations, Kražiai had two synagogues, two prayer-houses, and about ten different circles for the study of the Bible and the Talmud. Even if by 1897 almost half of the Jews no longer lived in *shtetlekh* but moved to cities and larger towns, their social and economic life was still heavily affected by the old communal ties developed in these small towns (Sorin, 1992: 9–10).

Lithuanians and Jews were closely tied economically to local town marketplaces serving as hot-spots of mutual contact. The urban Jews exchanged their manufacturing goods and services for the agricultural products of peasants. They also served as moneylenders and intermediaries (clerks and letter writers) between peasants and the government. Meanwhile, Jewish-owned taverns and inns served as places of leisure and entertainment for peasants. As a site of inter-ethnic economic contact, a *shtetl* was more vibrant than a large city where Jews lived in much higher numbers, most often in separate urban quarters and had fewer economic contacts with non-Jews (Vareikis, 2000: 31). By the last decades of the nineteenth century this small-town economy was in crisis as an increase in population, falling agricultural prices, expansion of modern networks of transportation, and industrialisation forced many into the cities.

Politically, both Lithuanians and Jews were disenfranchised within the power structure of late imperial Russia. Yet the trajectories of their political mobilisation followed different routes. Starting from the failed January uprising of 1863, the Lithuanians were subject to rigid administrative and cultural *Russification*.¹⁰ Its most visible feature was the 1864–1904 ban on the Lithuanian publications in a Latin and Gothic script. From the 1860s the ban stimulated the emergence of an illegal network of book smugglers operating from Eastern Prussia. This was one of the reasons why local Russian bureaucrats “discovered” Lithuanians as a group bearing a distinct ethnic and linguistic identity. With the birth of their national movement in the early 1880s and the growing Polish–Lithuanian tensions the Russian authorities came to view them as a peasant folk who needed to be protected against the corrupting influence of their Polish lords and assimilated into

¹⁰ On Russification in the Russian north-west see, Kappeler, 2001: 248–261; Staliūnas, 2007; Weeks, 1996.

the vast body of Russian peasantry (Weeks, 2001: 110–113). Yet only after the removal of the language ban in 1904 and the first open showing of Lithuanian political parties in 1905, were Lithuanians allowed to develop their national culture without persecution.

Meanwhile, the Jewish issue never left an agenda of the government which reflected Russia's indecision in shaping its Jewish policy. Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century the policy included a series of often self-contradictory measures that ranged from forceful assimilation to complete isolation and emigration (Stein, 2004: 11–12). This policy was most visible in official measures such as the 1861 ban in acquiring lands which belonged to noble estates, the infamous May Laws of 1882, which prohibited the Jews from living in rural areas and working on Sundays; the 1887 educational quotas that limited their numbers in state schools, universities and denied them jobs in the civil sector; and the 1892 prohibition on the election of Jews to town councils (Klier, 1995: 301).

Lithuanian Jews (or the “Litvaks” as they called themselves) differed from other Russian Jews by their strong adherence to *misnagdic* (that is, anti-Hasidic) Orthodox Judaism as well as their sympathies to the *Haskalah* (Jewish Enlightenment). The tension between the religious leadership of the majority of local Jews who remained Orthodox, and an increasing secular minority, produced an entire spectrum of political groupings that spoke with a multiplicity of voices. On the secular front, the major split was between the socialist Bund and nationalist Zionists.¹¹

If Lithuanian socialists and nationalists agreed to seek federal autonomy for Lithuania as defined by its ethnic borders, only the Bund and some other Jewish left-wing groups similarly advocated national and cultural autonomy for the Jews within the framework of the Russian state. The idea of an independent nation-state of Lithuania emerged in the ensuing chaos of the First World War (Senn, 1975: 23). In contrast, Zionists largely sought political outcomes outside the borders of the Russian empire. These included calls for Jewish emigration to Palestine and the creation of a Jewish national state there. Among Lithuanians there were some attempts to politically mobilise a sizeable Lithuanian émigré community in the USA.

Yet before 1905 both Jewish and in particular Lithuanian parties were small political clubs rather than genuine mass-based representative bodies. Bund, which also served as a labour union, perhaps was an exception, but its influence was limited mostly among Jewish workers in the cities. Despite the growing activity of political parties and the increasing secularisation,

¹¹ There were some Socialist Zionists too. They offered a way for the supporters of socialist revolution to seek their ideals while retaining their own national identity.

the majority of Jews and Lithuanians, particularly those who resided in small towns and countryside, continued to lead their traditional lives and remained outside the grasp of party politics.

Some researchers emphasize that Lithuanians and Jews lived in isolated and distant social and cultural worlds and, as a result, developed negative stereotypes of each other (Vareikis, 2000: 28, 41; Römer, 1908: 108–109, 178–179).¹² One of the key features of this estrangement is mentioned as being almost a complete absence of Jewish assimilation into Lithuanian society, while it was more prevalent in other Eastern European societies (Vareikis, 2000: 31). Presumably this distance was one of main factors that facilitated the rise of mutual suspicions and anti-Semitism that violently exploded in the mid-twentieth century.

Yet in the late nineteenth – early twentieth century Lithuanian provinces were an area with relatively low levels of anti-Semitic violence.¹³ In Lithuania there were several pogroms in 1882, 1900 and 1905.¹⁴ Yet their numbers, intensity and geographical distribution pale in comparison with the waves of anti-Semitic violence that swept Congress Poland, Moldova and the Ukraine in 1881–1882, 1903 and 1905–1906 (Mendelsohn, 1981: 21). Some suggest that this was due to the low level of national consciousness among the Lithuanians and the weakness of the Lithuanian-speaking commercial class but this remains a hypothesis (Mendelsohn, 1983: 216).

The low degree of anti-Jewish violence in the region did not mean there were no tensions between Lithuanians and Jews. However, these tensions emanated more from the political élites rather than masses. The Lithuanian version of anti-Semitism came alive in the last decade of the nineteenth century with the emergence of a positivist trend within the nationalist movement. This trend was partly an intellectual import from the Polish National Democrats (*Endecja*). Yet it was also a by-product of local economic competition for limited economic resources between Lithuanians and Jews. As a rule, the Lithuanian anti-Semites came from the right-wing parties such as the National Democrats and the Christian Democrats, but they also included some prominent national leaders such as liberal Vincas Kudirka who called for “Lithuanisation” of local cities as early as the last decade of the nineteenth century.

¹² A similar opinion was expressed by some other Lithuanian historians including Zenonas Ivinskis and Mykolas Biržiška.

¹³ This does not deny the presence of anti-Jewish prejudices and negative cultural-religious stereotypes common among the Catholic peasantry in Lithuania.

¹⁴ Regarding the pogroms in Lithuania, see Truska (2005: 41); Ūdrėnas (2000: 351); Sirutavičius and Staliūnas (2005: 10).

Since middle-class occupations in the Lithuanian provinces were heavily dominated by the Jews, Lithuanians found it difficult to settle in towns and cities. Thus some of the Lithuanian intelligentsia eagerly assumed the role of the defenders of Lithuanians vis-à-vis “exploitative Jews”. Yet both groups clearly suffered from limited economic opportunities available to them, though this did not help to assuage the anti-Semitic tensions.

Migration motives

Starting from the 1860s this stagnant socio-economic picture was considerably changed by the impact of various forces of modernisation. Among them a drastic demographic increase in population, agrarian underdevelopment, increasing competition for limited economic resources, lack of internal migration and slow industrialization were the key “objective” factors that created conditions for the population exit.¹⁵

There is considerable consensus that the key motive for their emigration was the lack of economic opportunity (Feldman, 1994; Kukushkin, 2007; Sorin, 1992; and Kuznets, 1975). Yet in the case of the Jews (and less among Lithuanians) the political pressure from the authorities served as an additional “push factor”. Thus the differing degree of political persecution was responsible for the fact that a greater number of Jews than Lithuanians emigrated for good. The development of a national identity among Lithuanians around the turn of the century with its emphasis on the ties with the “homeland” stimulated circular rather than permanent emigration among them. Among the Jews, the political divisions over the future of the Jewish nation and its territorial homeland were more conducive to permanent emigration.

The lack of economic opportunity for both groups was produced, first of all, by a combination of a massive demographic increase in population and the sluggish development of the agrarian economy. According to Jacob Lestchinsky, between 1825 and 1900, in Lithuania and Belarus, the Jewish population grew from 0.55 to 1.45 million at a rate higher than that of the total population (Kuznets, 1975: 61). Meanwhile, between 1867 and 1909 the population of the Lithuanian provinces increased from two to almost

¹⁵ This not to say that these adverse socio-economic factors simply “pushed out” people from their homes. Their final decision to emigrate, as has been pointed out by many researchers, relied also on their ambition for self-improvement and on their hope for a better livelihood. See Morawska (1985: 63).

three million (Truska, 1961: 78). The Jews' natural growth rate was higher than that of their neighbors – 14.2 as opposed to 12.7 (Levin, 2000: 78). Among the Jews, the higher growth rate was induced by falling mortality rates among children, a tendency towards early marriage, larger families and a propensity towards moderation in the drinking of alcohol.

Meanwhile, in the second half of the nineteenth century, falling agricultural prices and rising rents and taxes forced many Jews and Lithuanians to leave their homes in search of a better livelihood. A lack of opportunities in petty commerce, traditionally dominated by the Jews, induced many to relocate to Vilna and Kovno. Yet, in 1897, in the Pale one half of Jewish merchants still dealt in agricultural products (Feldman, 1994: 149). At the same time, the shortage of available land and an increasing labour surplus in the countryside compelled peasants to migrate in search of new sources of income. Around the turn of the century more than 60 per cent of rural workers could not be gainfully employed in agriculture in Lithuania (Eidintas, 2003: 23), while in European Russia the average rural labour surplus was over 50 per cent (Kukushkin, 2007: 17). The grouping of Lithuanian peasant migrants was made up largely of farm labourers and small-holders who in places like Suvalki, were the majority among other groups of peasants. Since the Pale cities were overcrowded with Jews, Poles and Russians, many Lithuanians found it easier to settle in Riga, Libava, Odessa, Saint Petersburg and Moscow. A notable case was the emergence of a sizable Lithuanian émigré community in Saint Petersburg which between 1897 and 1914 grew from 3,800 to almost 30,000 (Truska, 1961: 79).

The development of large-scale factories, though able to offer some new jobs for migrants, weakened the traditional town markets by making available cheap manufactured goods locally. The local markets also suffered from the disruption caused by the emergence of the railway network between 1866–75 and 1893–1905. Since more than 7,000 Jews worked as carriers and coachmen in the Lithuanian provinces, their jobs were threatened by the cheaper and more efficient ways of transportation (Kahan, 1986, Appendix, Table A11). The above mentioned shift from petty commerce to small-scale manufacturing which came along the country-city migration did not ease the economic competition among small manufacturers. Among its consequences were underemployment, falling wages and a growing number of wage earners as opposed to independent artisans (Rubinow, 1975: 523). According to one estimate, in 1898 half of Jewish artisans in the Pale were wage-earners (Feldman, 1994: 151).

In the countryside the practice of impartible land inheritance prompted peasant migration. It meant that the eldest son usually inherited all family

land and had to buy out his siblings in cash or farm stock (Kukushkin, 2007: 17). Peasant reluctance to divide their land among all siblings combined with agricultural overpopulation, and the shortage of available land prompted the displacement of non-inheriting children (Vėbra, 1990: 166). As a result, many Lithuanian-speaking Catholic priests, members of the new intelligentsia and émigrés came from the ranks of non-inheriting sons.¹⁶ Yet some authors also note that impartible land inheritance, besides prompting social and spatial mobility and the spirit of entrepreneurship also produced social inequality by increasing the numbers of those non-inheriting children who had to become wage labourers and emigrants (Kukushkin, 2007: 20).

The industrial underdevelopment of the Lithuanian provinces and a surplus of the cheap unskilled rural labour were chiefly responsible for low wages – another key factor that prompted migration from the region. At the turn of the century the monthly wage for a rural male labourer during high season in Lithuania was about 15–17 roubles (Truska, 1961: 74–75). Meanwhile, in the USA, the monthly wage for an unskilled labourer was the equivalent of 70 roubles per month, and in England more than 41 roubles (Филипов, 1906: 29). The sharp wage differences were also evident in other parts of Russia: an industrial worker in Saint Petersburg could earn about 24 roubles, while in Riga this rose to almost 38 roubles (Города Росийской, 1914: 118). The low wage rate was given as a key reason for the high emigration from Kovno province by all regional representatives to the general governor of Vilna in 1900 (Truska, 1961: 75).

The sharp wage differences also prompted internal labour migration to other Russian provinces. For Lithuanians, their key destinations for migration were the major industrial cities in the north: Mitau, Riga, Saint Petersburg and Moscow; industrial centers in the South: Kiev and Odessa; as well as the agricultural labour markets of Southern Ukraine, Courland and Eastern Prussia. Meanwhile, the Jews, besides movement from *shtetlekh* to local cities, migrated from Lithuania and Belarus to Poland and Southern Ukraine (Feldman, 1994: 153). Yet these internal migration opportunities were too few for the impoverished mass of labourers from the north-western periphery (Kukushkin, 2007: 25–26; Truska, 1961: 80).

The Lithuanian population migrated internally at a much slower rate than populations from Congress Poland, Ukraine or central Russia. At the end of the nineteenth century seasonal migration from central Russia to other provinces was between 7 and 14 per cent of the total population, in Kovno

¹⁶ An example is one of the leaders of the Lithuanian national movement and a prominent émigré activist Jonas Šliūpas (1861–1944) who was one of non-inheriting sons in his father's family.

Province it reached only 2 to 3 per cent (Truska, 1961: 80). In 1908 Suwalki had the lowest seasonal migration rate to Germany (38 per cent) among all other Polish provinces (Rocznik Statystyczny, 1914: 49). By the end of the 1910s even the thriving south could not absorb all the labour migrants from the north-west, which prompted the government to make Siberian colonisation a strategic priority (Kukushkin, 2007: 26). Yet, the far east of Russia did not seem an attractive place for the majority of migrants from Lithuania. Thus the lack of nearby and easily available internal migration destinations could prompt them to choose emigration from Russia as the only option.

Routes and flows

The first trickle of migrants (largely Jews, but also some Lithuanians) from Lithuania to the West started as early as 1868. It was triggered by the crop failure of 1867 and the starvation and cholera outbreak that followed. This was most seriously felt in Suwalki and Kovno, both provinces with particularly large numbers of small and medium-sized peasant holdings. As a result, the annual death rate increased by almost 40 per cent in Kovno in 1867 (Truska, 1961: 76). Local officials also noted the spread of the rumors about America among the population that year. The most intense early migration started from the districts of Kalvarija and Volkovishki in Suwalki: both losing 300 and 250 emigrants respectively. Almost two-thirds of the migrants were town dwellers and overwhelmingly Jewish (Jučas, 1975: 153). Most of these early Jewish migrants traveled no further than Prussia or other parts of Germany where they settled permanently (Levin, 2000: 82). Meanwhile, in Suwalki the local government faced the requests from the region's peasants to move them to the presumably freely available land in Siberia. As a result of this early migration, the early 1870s saw the emergence of the first settlements of ethnic Lithuanians in the coal-mining region of Pennsylvania (Truska, 1961: 76–77).

The second incentive to emigrate (which particularly found a response among the Jews) came with the Russian military reform of 1874 that introduced universal military service. According to the Nicolas I's military law of 1827, the Jews were to provide a limited number of recruits each year (about 2,000–3,000). These quotas traditionally were fulfilled by the communal leaders of the *kahal*. This allowed them in practice to exempt the heads of tax-paying middle-class families from military service and to draft "single Jews, as well as heretics (maskilic-minded individuals), beggars, outcasts, and orphaned children" (Petrvsky-Shtern, 2008: 230). After 1874 suddenly all male Jews irrespective of their social estate became subject of

the recruitment, while the powers of the *kahal* were sharply reduced. Between 1874 and 1914, there were more Jews in the Russian Army than non-Jews in proportion to the general population.¹⁷

As a result of the 1874 reform, growing numbers of males (particularly town people) tried to escape the military draft by leaving Lithuania. If between 1869 and 1871 only 1,400 recruits failed to report to the army in Suvalki, throughout 1886–1890 about 1,300 draftees disappeared in Kovno province annually. The peak of evasions was reached in 1896–1900 when about 2,400 males failed to report each year in Kovno (Truska, 1961: 75). Before the turn of the century in the district of Rosieny (Kovno province), local officials complained that the deserters constituted between 15 and 18 per cent of all emigrants (Lithuanian State History Archive (LSHA) f. 378, PS, 1900, b. 21, ll. 28, 185a). The annual desertion rate of 18 per cent among all emigrants was also reported in Vilna province between 1895 and 1900 (Эйдинтас, 1989: 37). The evasion of army service was among the key factors that helped to form a social image of the migrant as a young, uneducated, single male. Yet those who escaped from the military service, such as peasant Tadas Kubilius, most often were destined to become permanent emigrants.

The 1881–1882 pogroms that swept the Ukraine and Poland had a direct bearing on the further increase in Jewish migrants from the Pale of Settlement. In the immediate aftermath of the pogroms almost 13,000 Jews left Russia for the USA, almost half the number that had gone to America in the entire 1870s (Sorin, 1992: 32–33). The second massive exit came in 1892. It occurred due to a combination of factors of which the most significant were the legalisation in 1890 and the rapid spread of Jewish Colonisation Society offices throughout the Pale (they provided extensive information on how to emigrate). In 1890 Germany also ended its five-year ban on Russian seasonal migration and sharp limits on transmigration overseas through Hamburg and Bremen. In its place, Germany created a tightly controlled emigration system aimed at maximising shipping profits while ensuring emigrants did not stay permanently in Germany. In addition, the infamous *numerus clausus* in 1886–1887 and the expulsions of the Jews from Moscow in 1891 also stimulated the exit.¹⁸ As a result, in 1892 the Jews virtually monopolised the emigration from Russia reaching more than 90 per cent of the 64,200 total for that year (Pearson, 1983: 101; Joseph, 1914: 93).

¹⁷ During the First World War almost 300,000 Jews served in the Russian Army. See Petrovsky-Shtern (2008: 229).

¹⁸ *Numerus clausus* refers to the educational quotas imposed on those Jews who entered Russian universities. Its aim was to reduce and limit the number of Jewish students in higher education.

Although the Lithuanian provinces had a relatively low level of anti-Semitic violence, the apprehension induced by the pogroms against the Jews combined with bleak economic prospects and official pressure became a potent incentive to emigrate. According to official data, between 1882 and 1888 almost 5,000 emigrants left Suvalki province alone. Of them, more than half were Jews, while the remaining were Lithuanian peasants (Truska, 1961: 77). The ratio of Jewish versus Lithuanian emigration was even higher in the eastern part of Vilna province from where 1,600 townspeople emigrated in comparison with 660 peasants before 1890 (LSHA, f. 378, BS, 1890, b. 103, ll. 13, 17). In Lithuania the largest number of Jewish emigrants (almost 50,000) came from Kovno province between 1881 and 1897 (Levin, 2000: 148).

Yet, the anti-Semitic violence was not the only motive for this early increase in emigration. It only provided an additional impetus for economic migration that had already begun. As mentioned, the 1880s also saw an increase in internal migration among Jews from Lithuania to the western and southern provinces of Russia, the area that was an epicenter of anti-Jewish violence (Feldman, 1994: 148). Thus the growing economic pressure exacerbated by the restrictive legislation remained the primary motive for the movement.

The mid-1880s–early 1890s witnessed the transformation of Jewish emigration from a steady stream to a massive flood. The peak came in the years 1905–1906. The second wave of pogroms that swept Russia in 1903–1906 helped to stage the culmination of the exodus, while the economic disruptions caused by the Russian–Japanese war and the 1905 revolution served as additional push factors. In 1905 more than 92,400 Jews left Russia for the USA, while in 1906 this number increased to its absolute highest of more than 125,000 (Sorin, 1992: 34). Of about 1.6 million Russian Jews who emigrated during 1880–1914 almost two-thirds left between 1903 and 1914 (Kuznets, 1975: 42). Jews made up close to 50 per cent of the Russian emigrant stream during the peak period of 1903–1907 (Sorin, 1992: 35; Kuznets, 1975: 43). Only the approach of the First World War reduced their mass migration to more moderate levels.

Overall, the flow dynamics of the emigration of Lithuanians followed the Jewish pattern with a slight delay of a few years. The height of Lithuanian emigration was reached on the eve of the First World War. We can get more reliable figures on Lithuanians only from 1899 when the US authorities started registering them as a separate group. This year was a low point of Lithuanian emigration with 6,800 people leaving for the USA. Peasant unrest in the Lithuanian country-side in 1905 and the punitive actions of the Russians that followed forced into emigration 18,600 Lithuanians (an increase of more than 30 per cent from 1904). The culmination of post-revolutionary

emigration came in 1907 when 25,800 Lithuanians left for the USA. Yet the highest point of Lithuanian emigration was reached in 1913–1914 with 46,200 leaving in those years (Annual Report, 1915: 122). Overall, more than 250,000 Lithuanians emigrated to the USA during 1899–1914 (Truska, 1961: 78).

The return rates of Lithuanian and Jewish migrants differed sharply, reflecting their contrasting social profiles and attitudes to their homeland. The Jews had the lowest rate of return (about 8 per cent) among all Russian emigrant groups (Joseph, 1914: 183). Overall, this testified to their low social and economic expectations in Russia, concern regarding possible persecutions and diasporic views on the Jewish question. If the turn of the century saw a rapid expansion of Zionism in the Pale, the emigration of Lithuanians coincided with a process of an intense nation-making among Lithuanians. From the early 1880s onwards the intelligentsia actively mobilised peasants in support of the cause of Lithuanian nationalism.

Although Pearson (1983:101) claims that Lithuanians “had little commitment to [their] native land” since their return rate was only 14 per cent during 1899–1910 (in comparison, the Polish rate was 22 per cent), this claim needs to be revised in light of the political mobilisation. More recent research shows that the return rate among Lithuanians was higher and increased with the time. Thus of 9,400 peasants who emigrated from Kovno province between 1895 and 1899 about 16 per cent returned home. Yet re-emigration really took off with an increase in emigration after 1905. Thus, in 1907, for 6,600 peasants who left, 3,100 (almost half!) returned to Kovno province (Эйдинтас, 1989: 76). Throughout 1895–1910 almost 29 per cent of peasant emigrants returned to the province (Эйдинтас, 1989: 76). The high return rates were also reported by numerous local officials who noted that the majority of Kovno peasants went to America for a few years only to allow them to raise enough money to repay their debts (LHSA, f. 378, PS, 1900, b. 21 ll. 15, 28, 31, 44). In Suvalki, the return rate was also relatively high reaching more than 20 per cent in 1911 (Обзор Сувалкской, 1912).

The sojourner’s mentality was clearly reflected in the official reports confirming the desire of peasants to save and send money back to their relatives as soon as they arrived at their emigration destinations (LHSA, f. 378, PS, 1900, b. 21, ll. 171–172). In this respect, Lithuanians barely differed from Ukrainian and Belarusian peasants whose migration to the New World, as Kukushkin (2007: 191–192) shows, was also largely sojournal. In the year 1911 peasants sent back 3.3 million roubles to Kovno Province alone (Eidintas, 1989: 77). This intake of cash had a considerable impact on the local economy in the regions of high emigration such as in Pajuriskii County (Rosieny district, Kovno province). There peasants claimed that the presence

of their American money saved them from local Jewish lenders charging higher interest rates (Merkys, 1965: 287–291). Many Lithuanian emigrants were able to return as late as 1920–1922, buy cheap land and become prosperous farmers in inter-war Lithuania.

The sojourn nature of Lithuanian emigration was also reflected in the high number of Lithuanians who having returned, emigrated again. In the period 1899–1915 there were almost 35,000 such people in the USA (almost 14 per cent of all emigrants). This high figure suggests that their key motive for emigration was to save money to improve their economic condition in Lithuania (Эйдинтас, 1989: 79). Yet, despite this intense return movement, the majority of Lithuanian emigrants never returned to their homeland.

The commitment to view emigration as a temporary solution to economic hardships was reflected in the social profile of Lithuanian migrants and sharply differed from that of the Jewish. Among the Lithuanians, landless peasants and small-holders predominated among the emigrants. Some data from Suvalki province shows that in the period of 1893–1903 landless peasants constituted about 56 per cent of all emigrants, while there were 27 per cent landholders (Truska, 1961: 80). Similar numbers stand for the year 1908 with 63 per cent landless and 27 per cent landholders. There are claims that almost 90 per cent of all Lithuanian migrants may have been landless peasants or small-holders (Эйдинтас, 1989: 32). The USA immigration data also confirms that only about 4 per cent of all Lithuanian immigrants had more than the required minimum of \$30 upon their arrival to the US during 1899–1915 (Эйдинтас, 1989: 38).

For the period of 1899–1910 among Lithuanian immigrants to the USA almost 76 per cent claimed to be labourers and only 7 per cent had skilled occupations. For the Jews, these figures were respectively 14 and 67 per cent (Joseph, 1914: 190). Tailors, carpenters, dress-makers and shoemakers made up almost 63 per cent of all skilled Jewish immigrants. Overall, the social make up of Jewish migrants reflected their social profile in the Pale where the majority of Jews (38 per cent) were involved in manufacturing and mechanical occupations (Feldman, 1994: 160–161).

Another difference between the two migrant groups was their male-female ratios and the role of the family in the migration. Single and young males formed the majority of Lithuanian migrants of whom almost a quarter migrated back. In the period 1899–1910 male Lithuanians made up 71 per cent and females 29 per cent, while these figures for the Jews were 57 and 43 per cent (Joseph, 1914: 178). The age of Jewish migrants was more variable than that of Lithuanians of whom almost 90 per cent were aged between 14 and 44. Among the Jews, 70 per cent were aged 14–44. This also points to the different role of chain migration among the two groups: considerably more Jewish

family members traveled together or to join their relatives in emigration than Lithuanians. Of course, this reflected differing attitudes of both groups towards migration and their future prospects in their homeland versus their destination country.

A considerable difference between both groups was their literacy rates. Interestingly, in 1899 illiteracy among Jewish migrants (26 per cent) was lower than among the resident population (51 per cent). There were considerably more illiterates among Lithuanian migrants (49 per cent), which also reflected their resident illiteracy (48 per cent) (Pearson, 1983: 101–102). Overall, this difference mirrored the general literacy rates in Russia, where Jews and Protestant nationalities such as Estonians and Finns had higher than average literacy rates than other groups. Yet, it may also be explained by the fact that the social profile of Jewish migrants was more wide-ranging because it included people of various social backgrounds as opposed to Lithuanians. The propensity of Jews to emigrate for good, with their entire family and all their property also pointed to the fact that during 1905–1909 the average amount of money brought by each emigrant to the USA was only \$13 for a Lithuanian as opposed to \$31 for a Jew (Eidintas, 2003: 63).

Besides the self-explanatory foreign border and sea port proximity that facilitated emigration, it was also made easier by a number of regional factors that shaped the routes and ways of exit. Among the key factors were rapid development of railways in the Lithuanian provinces, an inefficient Russian emigration policy and the corrupt and porous Russian–German border security. With an expansion of migration into a mass exodus after 1882, it became also heavily fueled by a vast network of emigration agents and steamship companies who viewed migration as a profitable business and competed for those who wanted to leave.

The routes of migrants closely followed the major railway and river transportation lines. From Lithuania, the mass migration was greatly facilitated after the emergence of three major railways: St. Petersburg – Vilna – Warsaw (built in 1862), Libava – Shavli – Romny (1873), and Tilsit – Bajorai – Memel (1875). These railways allowed easy access to the Russian–German border. Once in Eastern Prussia, the migrants could easily reach their two major destinations of continental exit: the seaports of Hamburg and Bremen. Between 1892 and 1903 these two German ports alone shipped the majority of Russian migrants (more than 580,000) (Eidintas, 2003: 45). The other two most popular destinations were Antwerp and Rotterdam.

Within Lithuania, the migrants took the four major routes that let them near and across the Russian–German border. The northern route, Libava – Kretinga – Bajorai – Tilsit, attracted those who departed mainly from Kovno, Courland and Livland provinces. The second route went along the Ri-

ver Nemunas from Kovno through Jurbarkas to Bajorai. Meanwhile, two southern routes started in Alytus and Grodno and converged in the German town, Eydtkuhnen, from where all migrants traveled to Tilsit. These routes were taken largely by migrants from Vilna, Grodno, Minsk and Vitebsk provinces. While in Prussia, all migrants were sent to Bajorai and Tilsit where their health was inspected in special quarantines. The last stage of their continental travel was by rail or steamer to the northern German and Dutch seaports.

Since emigration from Russia was unlawful and a receipt of a foreign Russian passport was heavily bureaucratic, expensive and could take up to a half year, the vast majority of emigrants preferred to cross the border illegally. The crossing was made relatively easy by a large network of emigration agents and local peasants living from human and goods' trafficking. This network grew alongside the traffic of smuggled goods and the so-called movement of book-smugglers who from 1860s to 1904 supplied Greater Lithuania with illegal Lithuanian publications from Prussia. Within Lithuania, the hotbed of migrant recruitment became the city of Vilna where dozens of agents operated. Other major cities where they worked were Kovno, Minsk, Libava, Odessa and Yekaterinoslav (Эйдintas, 1989: 53). Yet the network of agents sprawled all over Lithuania including towns of Sventzani (Švenčionys), Jashune (Jašiūnai), Olitta (Alytus), Širvintos, Vilkomir (Ukmergė) and many others. In fact, according to one official observer, almost every town in Lithuania had one or two secret Jewish emigration agents (Офросимов, 1912: 10–11). The agent network was significant for both Jews and Lithuanians looking for an exit.

The Russian government showed its first serious concern with these illegal agents only with the rise of mass peasant emigration after 1890 when the Vilna general governor issued an order warning peasants about penalties for leaving Russia (LSHA, f. 378, PS. 1900, b. 21, l. 246). This was followed with the ban on emigration ads and the policy of persecution that resulted in the arrest of almost 500 illegal agents during 1888–1915 (Eidintas, 1987a: 46). The police records confirm that of those, the majority (316) were Jews, while the remaining were largely Lithuanians. In 1898 an arrest of the emigration agency run by Leizer Gershenovich and Israel Krisovsky in Vilna showed it had one of the largest networks of agents that included 56 people: 21 in Vilna, 5 in Olkeniki (Valkininkai), 4 in the rest of Vilna province, 4 in Kovno, 10 in various towns of Kovno province, 4 in Minsk province and many other places. The investigation revealed a staggering fact that in 1900 the agency alone shipped more than 10,000 people from Russia to the West. Some of them were sent not only through Germany, but also through St Petersburg and even the Finnish port, Hanko (Eidintas, 2003: 49).

The network of illegal agents had a high degree of labour specialisation. If the majority of agents involved in recruitment, liaisons with steamship companies and paperwork were townspeople (largely Jews), the agents who helped them to cross the border were a mixture of Lithuanian peasants and local Jewish traders and carriers. The actual crossing was facilitated by the corruption of Russian border officials, relatively mild penalties for those who were caught while crossing illegally and particularly by the abuse of the system of passes issued for borderland population (so called “legitimation tickets”).¹⁹ The dominance of the Jews in the emigration “business” may be explained by their vast commercial contacts and a relative ease with which they adapted to the use of German in their contacts with the steamship companies and German officials.

The role of German steamship companies cannot be underestimated in the transformation of the migration from a trickle into a flood. After the reduction in German migration in the 1870s–1880s, they sought to keep alive their profits by opening new markets in the East. *Hamburg-America Line*, based in Hamburg, and *North German Lloyd*, operating from Bremen, dominated the shipping business that was also encouraged by the protectionist policies of Germany. The government allowed the two companies to build sanitation and storage facilities in East Prussia and removed major restrictions for the travel of Russian migrants once they reached Germany. In Lithuania, the majority of illegal agents sold the “shipcards” of these two German companies.

Once emigration reached its peak after 1905, the Russian government tried to chip into the transatlantic shipping by opening at least one of its seaports to native steamship companies. In 1906 the state-owned *Volunteer Fleet* launched its direct passenger line from Libava to New York. To facilitate the passenger traffic the government of Courland province was even allowed to issue passports to all Russian subjects at the port of departure, and the ban on emigration propaganda was temporarily lifted (Kukushkin, 2007: 73). On the one hand, this was Russia’s attempt to fight illegal emigration by opening a legal channel. On the other hand, it was also a safety-valve for population groups unsettled by the 1905 revolution (Эйдинтас, 1989: 46). Due to financial losses, the *Volunteer Fleet* was forced to close in 1908, but its successor the *Russian America Line*, which in 1912 launched a popular line Libava – Halifax, was more successful. Although it failed to outperform the German lines, it provided significant competition. If in 1907

¹⁹ The ‘legitimation tickets’ originally were issued as temporary cross-border passes to be used by local borderland residents. Since they were easily obtainable from corrupt officials, the agents used them to smuggle emigrants across the border. See Eidintas (1987b: 54).

more than 110,000 Russia's emigrants left from Hamburg and 130,000 from Bremen, initially only 10,000 left from Libava. Yet the gap between Libava and the German ports started closing in 1908, when 14,000 left from Libava, 30,000 from Hamburg and 25,000 from Bremen (Тизенко, 1909: 34–35, 45–46). In 1913 almost 58,000 chose Libava as their port of departure, which constituted about 40 per cent of all Russian migrants to the USA for the year (cf. Эйдintas, 1989: 47; Kukushkin, 2007: 53).²⁰ This confirms that the emergence of Libava as another exit point considerably reshuffled the traditional migrant routes from Russia (and Lithuania). Throughout 1911–1912 more than 16,000 people from Lithuania left through Libava, of those more than 6,000 were ethnic Lithuanians (Эйдintas, 1989: 47).

In 1910 the Russian government conducted its first wide-ranging survey of emigration from various parts of empire. It showed that the majority of its migrants were young peasants who intended to return to Russia having made some money. The clear exception was the Jews who favored permanent emigration (Kukushkin, 2007: 75). Yet the draft of the Russian emigration law that was prepared on the basis of this survey in February 1914 and was written with the view that Russia's temporary emigrants should retain their citizenship privileges while all permanent emigration was explicitly banned never received a Duma hearing due to the onset of war (Kukushkin, 2007: 74–75).

The end to the mass migration from Lithuania (and Russia as a whole) to the West came with the shutting of borders and the breaking of political and commercial ties between Germany and the Entente in 1914. This disrupted the established routes of migration and forced potential migrants to reconsider or postpone their journeys. Thus in 1915 only 2,600 Lithuanians arrived to the USA in comparison with 21,500 in the previous year (Annual Report, 1915: 122). Although the war did not stop the flow of migrants' remittances and letters from the West, it turned the potential migrants into a valuable economic and particularly military resource sought out by all belligerents. Thus the movement of migrants was replaced by the movement of marching armies.

Conclusions

Both Lithuanian and Jewish migrations from the Lithuanian provinces were part of the massive transatlantic population movement from the East to the West. Yet a particular feature of the emigration from Lithuania, along the

²⁰ The main catchment areas for Libava were not the Lithuanian, but the Belarusian and Ukrainian provinces. See Kuznets (1975: 43).

early emigration from Congress Poland, was that they opened the first gates of exit from Russia. Starting from the 1860s emigration from the Lithuanian provinces set a transoceanic migratory pattern to be followed by other population groups of the Russian empire.

Due to a series of economic hardships in the late 1860s, the Jews from Suvalki and Kovno provinces were the first to emigrate in increasing numbers. They established early exit routes and illegal channels of migration across the German–Russian border. The emergence of the population group with a developed migratory culture greatly facilitated the exit of others from the north-western rim of the Russian empire. An increasing number of Lithuanian peasants emigrated in the wake of the Jews soon to be followed by other non-Russian groups such as Belarusians and Ukrainians.

Other key factors that helped to set off the emigration were the proximity of German seaports, the German–Russian border, cross-border smuggling network, and the expanding railways and river transport. Areas that were most seriously affected by emigration were the ones facing the imperial border (Rosieny in Kovno and Marijampol in Suvalki provinces) which also had a dense network of railway and river routes.

The three Lithuanian provinces were also one of the biggest agrarian backwaters of the Russian north-west with small cities, negligent industries, oversized town populations, high numbers of landless peasants and smallholders, falling agricultural prices, and, most importantly, very few economic resources. The hereditary land system in Lithuania prevented the partition of peasant landholdings and severely limited a number of resources available for non-inheriting peasant children. Meanwhile, the growing demographic pressure on the few available resources prompted the population movement outside the affected area.

Another key factor that stimulated emigration was the lack of opportunities for internal migration. Due to religious and linguistic barriers, Lithuanians, unlike some Ukrainians and Russians, were barely tempted to migrate to the eastern outskirts of Russia. Meanwhile, the Jewish internal migration was strictly confined to the Pale of Settlement. Thus, the key motive for the emigration of both Jews and Lithuanians was the shortage of economic opportunities, though both groups also experienced varying degrees of political persecution.

Political persecution served as an additional push factor that stimulated emigration of the Jews. Yet their emigration had started at least 15 years before the anti-Semitic bloodshed in Russia. The three waves of Russian pogroms (1881–1882, 1902–1903 and 1905–1906) were the key moments that substantially increased the numbers of Jewish emigrants, though the

Lithuanian provinces had a low degree of anti-Semitic violence. Yet, perhaps more significantly, the violence helped transform the Jewish emigration from temporary to permanent. The policy of Russification and the persecution of the Lithuanian national movement forced into emigration largely the members of the Lithuanian intelligentsia.

The temporal view of emigration differed among the two groups of migrants. At least initially, Lithuanians saw emigration as a short-term economic strategy. If the Jews usually left with their entire families with an intention of permanent settlement in their destination countries, the emigration of Lithuanians was dominated by single, young, male peasants who wanted to return and to extend their family landholdings and property. This difference was reflected in the higher return rate of Lithuanians as opposed to the Jews. Meanwhile, the ranks of permanent emigrants on both sides were also expanded by army escapees who made up almost one-sixth of all emigrants.

Yet emigration from Lithuania reached its peak only after the creation of the migratory network that could supply potential emigrants with the knowledge and means needed to make the journey. Although Lithuanian and Jewish migrants had different social profiles and varying migratory expectations, both used the same migration network and routes of exit. Starting from the early 1880s their movement was also fueled by an increasing competition among German steamship companies and their local emigration agents. From 1906 the Russian government managed to modify these routes by opening its own seaport of Libava for legal population exit from Russia. Yet this policy due to Russia's reluctance to legalise at least some of emigration and make it part of the legal constitutional structure of the state did not have a significant impact on emigration beyond providing another alternative for leaving. As Kukushkin (2007: 192) points out, "the formal strictness of tsarist emigration laws was never matched out by consistency in their formal application".

As a result of this massive migration, between late 1860s and 1914 Lithuania lost almost one-quarter of its population. It is still an open question how this and similar massive migrations from Russia affected the empire's economy, war performance and the political transformation after 1917–1918. The impact of these migrations also needs to be set in light of the processes of nation-making that transformed the Russian empire into a number of independent nation-states after the First World War. The scale and nature of this early emigration should be also viewed as a historical precedent for the massive migration from Eastern Europe to the West in a continuing emigration flow since 1990.

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Vartai į Vakarus: lietuvių ir žydų emigracija iš lietuviškųjų gubernijų, 1867–1914 m.

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S A N T R A U K A . Straipsnyje lyginama tarptatlatinė lietuvių ir žydų emigracija iš lietuviškųjų Rusijos gubernijų į Vakarus 1867–1914 metais. Jame tiriama emigraciją sukėlę socialiniai, ekonominiai ir politiniai pokyčiai, taip pat emigracijos dinamika, socialiniai profiliai, agentų tinklai, kryptys ir būdai. Straipsnis remiasi kai kuriais archyviniais dokumentais, gausia antrine literatūra. Autorius atskleidžia dviejų gyventojų grupių emigracijų priklausomybę, jų bendrą emigracinę patirtį. Tokiu būdu siūloma lyginamoji skirtingų grupių emigracijos tyrimų perspektyva.

P a g r i n d i n i a i ž o d ž i a i : MIGRACIJA, ŽYDAI, LIETUVIAI, LYGINAMOJI ISTORIJA, RUSIJOS IMPERIJA.