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OCCUPATIONAL ADJUSTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL REFUGEES A Case Study of Lithuanian Professionals in the United States

The Lithuanian Refugees

Immigration by Lithuanians to the United States took place in two general periods. The first period includes the latter part of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth ; it ended when World War I began. Between World War I and World War II, comparatively few Lithuanians settled in the United States. During the second period of immigration, in the late forties and early fifties, the number of immigrants was much smaller than during the first period. The two groups of immigrants differed considerably. The first consisted predominantly of economically underprivileged unmarried persons of both sexes, mostly farm laborers, looking for better opportunities; the second group was composed of refugees from Soviet tyranny, both families and unattached individuals. A large proportion of these refugees consisted of professional persons and their families. As the refugees fled their country in order to escape persecution, various groups of the population of Lithuania were represented among them in direct proportion to the perceived probability of being persecuted. The more prominent members of a persecuted group are more likely to attract the attention of the persecutors; therefore, it is natural that professional people would be overrepresented among the refugees. Persons belonging to other occupations, all the way down the socio - economic scale, were also found among them, but were proportionally less numerous.

Once the refugees arrived in the United States, whatever their previous occupation, all had to start anew. Almost all, except those possessing easily transferable skills, had to take any work they were able to obtain, usually that of unskilled laborers. Manual labor did not have the same implication for various strata of the refugees. Those who had done such work all their lives resumed their previous occupation, with the difference that now their work was much better paid. Their position was comparable to that of the earlier immigrants who had entered this country for economic reasons. The situation of the professionals, however, was quite different: their occupational status declined and, usually, so did their income. Some of them were eventually able to resume either their former occupation or some similar work, but the majority, especially the older generation, could only slightly better their positions during the first half-a-dozen years of their lives in the United States.

A study of occupational adjustments of Lithuanian professionals was conducted in Chicago, where a large group of Lithuanians-settled.¹ The occupational adjustments of the Lithuanian refugees are described as they were found to be at a particular moment, late in 1954, when most of the refugees had lived in the United States for two to five years. At that time, the factors determining the occupational adjustments of various professional groups had already become apparent, and there has been no basic change since then. During the period of ten years that has elapsed since the completion of this study, many persons included in the study have either retired or died; many others, especially among the younger ones, have improved their occupational status by acquiring new skills or a new profession. However, the very fact that some professionals had to change their profession or to repeat their graduate work in American universities in order to improve their job opportunities lends support to the differences in occupational potentialities of different professional groups as described here. In 1954 the specific occupational potentialities had already become clear, but few persons had yet had the

opportunity to acquire and use new professional or semiprofessional skills. Hence, for those interested in the fate of individual professional groups as such, the situation in 1954 is more interesting than that at a later date. Moreover, information about the occupational potentialities of the Lithuanian refugee professionals may apply to other refugee groups, past or future, possible differences in adjustment may be due to different levels of prestige enjoyed by the cultures of various nations and to the type of welcome various groups of refugees receive in this country.

Collection of Data

The population of the study was limited to graduates of universities, other institutions of higher learning, ecclesiastic seminaries, and army officers' schools. Moreover, the study dealt only with persons who had received their degrees before leaving Lithuania, i.e., not later than in 1944, the year most refugees left their native country.

The data were gathered in two distinct phases: first, lists were prepared of all persons belonging to the above-defined population, then a sample of four professional groups was interviewed. In each professional group of refugees, there were one or more individuals in a central position, having either extensive information about other members of their profession, or ready-made lists, as many such groups had their associations.

Eventually, lists of nineteen professional groups were compiled, indicating (1) the name, (2) the address, (3) the age, and (4) the present occupation of each individual, although in some cases the information was not complete. The lists comprised 757 persons, belonging to the following professions: 111 lawyers; 84 gymnasium teachers; 82 army officers; 78 physicians; 60 engineers, architects, and chemists; 60 economists; 46 dentists; 46 agronomists; 40 priests; 31 university professors; 23 pharmacists; 17 musicians; 15 business school graduates; 14 actors; 14 writers; 13 veterinarians; 11 artists; 10 foresters; 2 captains of the merchant fleet.

The present occupation of the respondents was classified into four categories: (1) work in their original profession; (2) semiprofessional work in a profession similar to the original one, but on a lower level (here, the typical cases were lawyers working as real estate salesmen, physicians working as hospital interns, and engineers employed as draftsmen); (3) white collar work, including office clerks, sales clerks, and self-employed small businessmen; (4) manual labor. It was not possible to ascertain whether these lists were exhaustive, but in view of the close ties between fellow professionals, it can be assumed that the number of those who were omitted was small.

Each professional group had its own adjustment problems; the more intensive investigation, therefore, had to be limited to several selected groups. Since the present occupation of almost all 757 persons was known, it was decided to concentrate on the two extremes: those occupationally best adjusted and those least well adjusted. Four professional groups were selected: for the best adjusted groups, the physicians and engineers, and for the least well adjusted, the gymnasium teachers and lawyers. Random samples of 40 were taken of the physicians and of the lawyers, and those 80 persons were contacted personally, while questionnaires were mailed to all engineers and teachers whose addresses were available.

The fieldwork was facilitated by the fact that most respondents lived in Lithuanian neighborhoods and usually several of them dwelt within walking distance of one another. All respondents were cooperative, and eventually 146 questionnaires were filled out. According to their profession, 40 respondents were lawyers, 40 were physicians, 36 teachers and 32 engineers, but only the lawyers and physicians constituted probability samples.

Occupational History

Before December 1, 1948, the immigration of refugees was hampered by legal requirements, such as quotas and affidavits. The yearly quotas of most East European countries, including Lithuania, were small; it would have taken many years to bring over the numerous refugees who lived mostly in Germany, in Displaced Persons' Camps. Moreover, most of the so-called "DP's" had no money to pay for transportation. With the passage of the Displaced Persons Act by Congress, the flow of refugees into this country began in December of 1948, ending on January 1, 1952. Out of the sample of 146 persons, 126, or 86.3 per cent, came to the United States between December 1, 1948, and January 1, 1952. Eighteen persons, or 12.5 per cent, came before December 1, 1948, as regular immigrants, and two (1.5 per cent) came after January 1, 1952. The newcomers, arriving almost penniless, had to take any job they could find in order to earn a living. They did not know about life in the United States and usually had nobody to advise them. People they first met were either pre-World War I immigrants from their native country, mostly common laborers, who could only help in getting factory jobs, or their fellow refugees who had arrived some months earlier and were almost as ignorant of the occupational opportunities in the United States as they themselves were. Naturally, after living in Chicago long enough to become acquainted with the opportunities for employment, the refugees started to search for more permanent occupations. After a year or two, this period of searching for a more satisfactory occupation could be considered completed, and the rate of change slowed down markedly.

There were some deviations from this pattern of adjustment. A very small number of persons did not need to start work immediately after arriving, because they were helped by other members of their family and could leisurely look around for a better job. Despite the fact that almost all newcomers tried to obtain employment immediately upon arrival, not all were successful. Several respondents reported that it took them considerable time to get their first job in Chicago. This period encompassed a few weeks or months, and in one case it lasted almost half a year. Outside Chicago, jobs were scarce in

the late forties, and some refugees who originally came to other cities eventually moved to Chicago in search of better job opportunities.

Persons belonging to professions that have a special routine for adjustment, such as physicians, engineers, or priests, and those who had good advisors, or were especially lucky, found more satisfactory occupations from the beginning. A number of persons, while working at undesirable jobs, took courses, examinations, studied, and otherwise tried to improve their occupational opportunities. Ninety, or 62 per cent, of the respondents, used this method, and in 62 cases some improvement had already taken place when this study was conducted.

The great majority, 118 respondents, had held two to four jobs since arriving in Chicago. However, the differences between the professions were marked: thirty-six physicians had changed jobs (90 per cent), but only 29 lawyers (72 per cent). This difference can be explained by the institutionalized pattern of occupational mobility of the physicians.

Table 1 gives a concise picture of differences between occupational histories of the four professional groups. Practically no lawyer and no teacher escaped manual work, but almost no physician was ever engaged in this type of occupation. Among the 5 physicians who ever worked as manual laborers, 2 switched to labor in order to earn money while preparing for the Medical State Board examination, when all other introductory steps leading to the resumption of their professional work were already completed. Hence, only three physicians out of 40 started their career as laborers, while 37 started either as white collar workers or in an occupation similar to their profession (usually as hospital interns) ; on the other hand, the first occupation of 37 out of 40 lawyers was manual labor. The engineers were almost exactly half-way between these two extremes. Slightly more than one-half of their group began their work experience in the United States with blue collar work.

**TABLE 1. TYPES OF OCCUPATION EVER HELD BY THE RESPONDENTS:
SAMPLE OF FOUR PROFESSIONAL GROUPS, CHICAGO, 1964**

(All jobs of the same type held by the same respondent are counted as one.

Percentages indicate the number of respondents who ever held one or more jobs belonging to a given type, and do not necessarily add up to 100.0 per cent.)

	TYPE OF OCCUPATION											
	Persons in the Sample		Laborers		White Collar		Semi-Professional		Professional		Self-Employed	
Profession	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	146	100.0	93	63.7	33	22.6	70	47.9	39	26.7	31	21.2
Lawyers	40	100.0	37	92.5	13	32.5	4	10.0	---	---	6	15.0
Teachers	34	100.0	33	97.1	13	38.2	---	---	---	---	1	2.9
Engineers	32	100.0	18	56.2	1	3.1	29	90.6	11	34.4	3	9.4
Physicians	40	100.0	5	12.5	6	15.0	37	92.5	28	70.0	21	52.5

White collar work was the peak of the career for teachers and for most lawyers at the time of the investigation, but was quite an unimportant step for most engineers and physicians. No teachers worked in their old profession nor in a semiprofessional occupation, and only four lawyers had an occupation similar to their profession, namely, working as real estate brokers. On the other hand, all but three physicians and all but three engineers had worked in an occupation similar to their profession; for most physicians, this was but a step toward full professional status, already achieved by 70 per cent of the group, and this percentage continued to increase. The engineers were the second best adjusted group, as one-third of them were working in their profession.

The physicians' group included not only the highest proportion of persons professionally employed, but also the highest proportion of self-employed. Twenty-one physicians and 3 engineers, working in their respective professions, were self-employed, whereas the only one self-employed teacher was the owner of a grocery store, and among the five self-employed lawyers were three real estate brokers and two grocers.

In conjunction with the discussion of the occupational history of Lithuanian refugee professionals, it must be mentioned that a limited number came to this country in order to occupy various professional jobs that had been offered them while they were still living in Europe. Most of these were teaching positions in colleges and universities. However, only few such persons lived in Chicago and none of these cases were included in the sample.

Variables Associated With Occupational Adjustment

All data indicated that the occupational adjustment of refugee professionals was associated, as expected, with the type of professional skill and, within the limits of each professional group, with age.

Not all professional skills can be transplanted from one country to another; transplanting depends on two main factors: (1) the nature of the skill, and (2) the laws and regulations of each country. Certain professional skills are more culture-bound than others. Some professions are entirely dependent on the cultural context in which they arise, whereas others include

skills which should, at least theoretically, be the same throughout the world. The possibility of transplanting the first type of profession depends on the cultural similarities between the country in which it was acquired and the country of resettlement; in our case, between Lithuania and the United States. The culturebound professions, as represented in this sample by lawyers and teachers, can be practiced in a country only by persons who know its language almost perfectly and are extremely familiar with the specific social forms conditioning the practical application of the professional skills. To practice law in the U. S., for example, a Lithuanian lawyer must know English well enough to speak it in court and to impress judges and jurors, must know the laws of a given State, and also must acquire all the contacts, learn all the informal ways of behavior and thinking of lawyers in the United States on which professional success may depend.

On the other hand, professions based on the natural sciences should, theoretically, be the same everywhere. It was found, however, that some professional groups of refugees were unable to work in their profession because the practical application of their knowledge differed considerably between the United States and the European countries, including Lithuania. The foresters and the agronomists belonged to this category — they found no opportunity for using their professional skills in this country. More fortunate were those refugees whose professions were more easily transferable, as in the case of physicians. The transplanting of their skills is well institutionalized, since both the nature of their skills and the regulations of most States make it comparatively easy for foreign - educated physicians to practice medicine. However, some closely related professional groups were not as fortunate as the physicians. Though the skills of a dentist do not seem to be more difficult to transfer from one country to another than are those of the physician, regulations made the transfer almost impossible, because dentists are required to complete anew their graduate studies.

The occupational adjustments of the nineteen professional groups living in the Chicago area in the fall of 1954, i. e., 2 to 6 years after arriving to this country, are shown in Table 2.

**TABLE 2. OCCUPATIONAL POSITIONS OF LITHUANIAN REFUGEE PROFESSIONALS:
19 PROFESSIONAL GROUPS, CHICAGO, 1954**

Former Profession	Total		Profes- sional		Semipro- fessional		White Collar		Business		Laborers		House- wives		Unknown	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	757	100.0	114	15.0	138	18.2	86	11.3	37	5.0	274	36.2	34	4.5	74	9.8
Physicians	78	100.0	36	46.2	34	43.5	5	6.4	—	—	2	2.6	1	1.3	—	—
Priests	40	100.0	26	65.0	11	27.5	—	—	—	—	3	7.5	—	—	—	—
Engineers	60	100.0	19	31.7	30	50.0	—	—	1	1.7	2	3.3	1	1.7	7	11.7
Artist	11	100.0	5	45.5	2	18.2	1	9.1	1	9.1	1	9.1	1	9.1	—	—
Veterinarians	13	100.0	6	46.1	3	23.1	2	15.4	—	—	2	15.4	—	—	—	—
Univ. Professors	31	100.0	7	22.6	9	29.0	6	19.4	1	3.2	5	16.1	—	—	3	9.7
Musicians	17	100.0	8	47.1	3	17.6	1	6.9	—	—	5	29.4	—	—	—	—
Dentists	46	100.0	5	10.9	17	37.0	—	—	4	8.7	10	21.7	10	21.7	—	—
Pharmacists	23	100.0	1	4.3	6	26.1	—	—	2	8.7	4	17.4	1	4.3	9	39.1
Business School Grad.	15	100.0	1	6.7	2	13.3	5	33.3	—	—	2	13.3	—	—	5	33.3
Economists	60	100.0	—	—	12	20.0	9	15.0	5	8.3	20	33.3	2	3.3	12	20.0
Teachers	84	100.0	—	—	—	—	21	25.0	2	2.4	38	45.2	13	15.5	10	11.9
Lawyers	111	100.0	—	—	9	8.1	14	12.6	10	9.0	66	59.5	—	—	12	10.8
Actors	14	100.0	—	—	—	—	3	21.4	—	—	8	57.1	3	21.4	—	—
Agronomists	46	100.0	—	—	—	—	10	21.7	2	4.3	34	73.9	—	—	—	—
Foresters	10	100.0	—	—	—	—	2	20.0	—	—	8	80.0	—	—	—	—
Army Officers	82	100.0	—	—	—	—	6	7.3	9	11.0	51	62.2	—	—	16	19.5
Writers	14	100.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	7.1	11	78.6	2	14.3	—	—
Ship Captains	2	100.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	100.0	—	—	—	—

Further analysis of the data showed great differences in occupational adjustments between age groups (Table 3). Since 1944 was the last year in which the refugees could graduate from institutions of higher learning in their native country and since they usually were in their middle twenties at graduation time, the youngest group among the population investigated was in the middle thirties. In each profession the chances for the younger generation were better than those for the older. It is more difficult for older people to learn, to forget the past, and to get used to new conditions; the ways of behavior, attitudes, and convictions are more difficult to change. Moreover, older persons have presumably less time left to live, and consequently they are less willing to spend time and energy to acquire a position which they are not sure they will be able to enjoy for long. The great stress laid upon youth in the United States makes a more advanced age even more of a handicap.

**TABLE 3. OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE:
TOTAL OF 9 SELECTED PROFESSIONAL GROUPS, CHICAGO, 1954**

(Data include only 9 more numerous professional groups: army officers, agronomists, lawyers, teachers, economists, university professors, engineers, priests, and physicians. Therefore, percentages differ slightly from those in table 2.)

OCCUPATION

Age	Total		Profes- sional		Semipro- fessional		White Collar		Business		Laborers		House- wives		Unknown	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	592	100.0	86	14.5	104	17.6	70	11.8	31	5.2	221	37.3	16	2.7	64	10.8
Under 40	71	100.0	19	26.8	18	25.3	6	8.4	—	—	9	12.7	7	9.9	12	16.9
40-49	257	100.0	40	15.6	45	17.5	50	19.4	9	3.5	97	37.7	4	1.6	12	4.7
50-59	169	100.0	22	13.0	21	12.4	8	4.7	16	9.5	84	49.7	4	2.4	14	8.3
60 and over	61	100.0	4	6.6	13	21.3	6	9.8	5	8.2	28	45.9	—	—	5	8.2
Unknown	34	100.0	1	2.9	7	20.6	—	—	1	2.9	3	8.8	1	2.9	21	61.7

The percentage of younger persons working in their original profession was much higher than that of older ones. This percentage consistently declined with age, from 27 per cent for persons under 40 to 7 per cent for those over 60. On the other hand, the combined percentage of laborers and owners of small business enterprises increased with age, from 13 per cent for persons under 40 to over 50 per cent for the older age group. The comparison of white collar workers and small businessmen yields an interesting insight into the cultural values held by the refugees, since younger age groups, which had better opportunity to choose their occupation, preferred to do clerical work in offices and stores, while older people, who had poorer occupational opportunities, were more inclined to acquire a grocery store or a similar small business.

A question concerning occupational plans was included in the questionnaire; the replies are summarized in Table 4, where the respondents are classified according to three different criteria, to clarify the differences in the reactions of various subgroups of the population. The distribution of answers indicates that the great majority of respondents answered this question keeping in mind their own occupational potentialities. The percentage of persons planning to achieve a given type of occupation was highly associated with the proportion of the group that had already achieved this occupation. Almost all physicians and two - thirds of the engineers planned to resume their old profession or to continue working in that profession, but only a small proportion of lawyers and teachers did so. This answer was given by more than one - half of the younger age group, but by less than one - fourth of the older one; by 100.0 per cent of those who were already working in their original profession, but by less than 4 per cent of those working as laborers.

**TABLE 4. OCCUPATIONAL PLANS:
SAMPLE OF FOUR PROFESSIONAL GROUPS, CHICAGO, 1954**

OCCUPATIONAL PLANS														
Subgroup	Total		Old Profession		New Specialty		Better and/or Easier Job		Self- employment		To Continue in Present Occupation		None	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	146	100.0	65	44.5	14	9.6	8	5.5	3	2.1	25	17.1	31	21.2
Former Profession														
Lawyers	40	100.0	2	5.0	10	25.0	5	12.5	2	5.0	9	22.5	12	30.0
Teachers	34	100.0	4	11.8	4	11.8	3	8.8	1	2.9	8	23.5	14	41.2
Engineers	32	100.0	21	65.6	---	---	---	---	---	---	6	18.8	5	15.6
Physicians	40	100.0	38	95.0	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Age														
Under 50	94	100.0	53	56.4	10	10.6	3	3.2	1	1.1	9	9.6	18	19.1
Over 50	52	100.0	12	23.1	4	7.7	5	9.6	2	3.8	16	30.8	13	25.0
Present Occupation														
Professional	39	100.0	39	100.0	---	---	---	---	---	---	5	15.6	---	---
Semiprofessional	32	100.0	20	62.5	2	6.2	---	---	---	---	8	34.8	5	15.6
White Collar	23	100.0	4	17.4	6	21.7	2	8.7	3	5.8	12	23.1	4	17.4
Labor	52	100.0	2	3.8	7	13.5	6	11.5	---	---	---	---	22	42.3

At the other extreme we find two closely related response categories: those who planned to continue indefinitely in their present nonprofessional occupation and those who made no plans for the future. Almost 40 per cent of all respondents

belonged to these two combined categories, including almost two - thirds of the teachers and of the laborers, more that one-half of the lawyers, of persons over 50 years old, and of the white collar workers. On the other hand, only two physicians gave this response.

The Economic Situation

Most former Displaced Persons arrived in the United States penniless, for they were not permitted to bring into this country any German marks, the only Eusopean currency most refugees had. The agency sponsoring their immigration (most Lithuanians were sponsored by the National Catholic Welfare Conference) provided small loans enabling the immigrants to reach their places of destination and to survive for a few days, until they would obtain work; these loans, of course, had to be repaid as soon as possible. It follows that all refugees had to start a new economic life, based entirely on what they were able to earn in this country. Almost without exception, all previous achievements had to be discounted. During the first years after coming to this country, both husbands and wives usually were gainfully employed. In our sample of 146 refugees there were 95 married men living with their wives, and of these, 61 wives (64.1 per cent) were working at the time the study was conducted. Childless wives were employed almost without exception, 19 out of 23, but the majority of mothers also helped to support the family—40 worked outside of their homes, but 30 did not. All husbands of the women included in our sample worked. Consequently, in many cases the economic status of the family depended on the earnings of two persons. While discussing their economic status, some respondents pointed out that their economic position in the United States was achieved as a result of earnings by both the husband and the wife, whereas their former position in Lithuania was due to the earnings of the husband alone.

The respondents were asked to compare their economic status in the United States with that in the native country. Many of them pointed out that such a question was impossible to answer, since the official value of the currencies differed from their real buying power, various commodities varied in price, and symbols of economic status were different. For example, only a few of the respondents had owned a car in their native country, or had various other technological appliances so popular in the United States, but all those who had their own household had been able to hire a full-time maid. The youngest age group among the respondents presented a special case. These individuals had acquired their professional status only a short time before leaving Lithuania. There they had been beginners, single, living in a country under an economically disastrous foreign occupation, usually sharing the household with their parents or other people. In Chicago, most of them had a family and a household of their own and were living in a prosperous country. It was not easy for them to give meaningful replies. The respondents were right in pointing out these difficulties, but the purpose of the question was to elicit information about their attitudes rather than about objective facts.

Each of the ten subgroups listed in Table 5 had at least a few members indicating that their economic situation was "much worse" than it had been in Lithuania, while 6 subgroups had not one single member stating that he was financially in a "much better" situation. Persons working in their profession comprised, as expected, the highest percentage stating that their economic position had improved — 36 per cent of this group said so; however, exactly the same percentage, 36, felt that their economic situation had deteriorated, while 28 per cent claimed no change. At the other extreme, 79 per cent of the professionals employed as manual laborers claimed that they were less well off at the time of the survey than they had been before leaving Lithuania, and only one individual out of 52 claimed that his financial position had slightly improved. Marked differences were also found between the different professional groups and between age groups.

**TABLE 5. PRESENT AND FORMER ECONOMIC STATUS COMPARED:
SAMPLE OF FOUR PROFESSIONAL GROUPS, CHICAGO, 1954**

Subgroup	PRESENT STATUS					
	Total No. %	Much Better No. %	Better No. %	Same No. %	Worse No. %	Much Worse No. %
Total	146 100.0	4 2.7	24 16.4	35 24.0	54 37.0	29 19.9
Former Profession						
Lawyers	40 100.0	---	1 2.5	5 12.5	19 47.5	15 37.5
Teachers	34 100.0	---	1 2.9	10 29.4	18 52.9	5 14.7
Engineers	32 100.0	---	15 46.9	8 25.0	5 15.6	4 12.5
Physicians	40 100.0	4 10.0	7 17.5	12 30.0	12 30.0	5 12.5
Age						
Under 50	94 100.0	4 4.3	23 24.5	27 28.7	31 33.0	9 9.6
50 and more	52 100.0	---	1 1.9	8 15.4	23 44.2	20 38.5
Present Occupation						
Professional	39 100.0	3 7.7	11 28.2	11 28.2	11 28.2	3 7.7
Semiprofessional	32 100.0	1 3.1	10 31.3	9 28.1	9 28.1	3 9.4
White Collar	23 100.0	---	2 8.7	5 21.7	10 43.5	6 26.1
Laborers	52 100.0	---	1 1.9	10 19.2	24 46.2	17 32.7

In Lithuania, older professionals were, as a rule, economically better situated than younger ones, while in the United States, this older group held less well-paid jobs; hence, the difference between their former economic level and that in 1954 was extremely pronounced. This applied especially to the formerly most successful group, such as full professors, justices of various higher courts, army generals, etc. At the time of the survey many of them were employed as janitors in various Chicago factories.

Several factors tended to diminish the impact of the changes in the lives of refugees, particularly changes in their occupational and economic level. For the former displaced persons, the end of their old life in Lithuania and the beginning of the new one in the United States were separated by several years spent in Germany, first as foreign workers during the war and later as residents of Displaced Persons' Camps. The memories of these years were still vivid in the minds of the respondents, and the overwhelming majority felt that any free occupation, any work, was preferable to the dreary life in the camps. Hence, the jobs they were able to obtain in the United States, though often much lower than their former professional work, were still felt to be a great improvement when compared with camp life. Consequently, the attitude of the refugee professionals towards their new occupation and their new social setting as a whole was quite different from what it would have been if the less rewarding new jobs had immediately followed the better old ones, i.e., if the refugees had come to Chicago immediately after the first Soviet invasion of Lithuania, without the interlude in post-war Germany.

The second factor was an economic one. The difference between the standard of living in this country and that in most other civilized countries before World War II is difficult to describe. The Lithuanian professional class had been rather poor by American standards. Consequently, it was impossible to compare the financial rewards of an occupation in Lithuania and in the United States. Because of the high pay received by the American manual workers, the decline of the social and occupational status was felt less strongly than it would have been if the economic status had declined in the same proportion as the occupational one. The extreme indigence of the life in the camps made the American prosperity even more strongly appreciated.

The third factor helping to facilitate the adjustment to the new circumstances was the large number of Lithuanians already living in Chicago and in most other large American cities, and the important role played by the better - educated stratum of refugees in the Lithuanian - American community. In Chicago, there are extensive areas where a person can live for years using a minimum of any language other than Lithuanian. The refugees transplanted to the United States many voluntary Lithuanian organizations and formed new ones. Almost all professional groups set - up their own organizations which united fellow members of their original profession. Since the decline in occupational status was a mass phenomenon due to political causes and not something for which the individual could be blamed even indirectly, a person's status within the refugee group depended mostly on achievements in Lithuania rather than on his occupation in the United States.

Another factor was the ability to provide higher education for the young generation. People who are unable to achieve their goals frequently transfer their frustrated hopes to their children and try to make possible for them what they themselves were unable to attain. The prestige of education was high in Lithuania and it continued to be so among the refugees. Professional persons were at least as eager to educate their children as the rest of the refugee population, and probably more so. Since Illinois law requires all youngsters to attend school up to the age of 16, the occupation of young people over that age is of interest in this connection. The respondents reported 31 children over 16 years of age, living in the same household with their parents. Of this number, 3 individuals had already acquired a profession, 29 were students, 4 were white collar workers, and 1 was a manual laborer. Thus, almost 90 per cent of the children of refugee professionals had either already achieved professional status or were in the process of achieving it. A very high percentage of the children of Lithuanian refugees seek college education, irrespective of the actual occupation of their parents.

All the above factors facilitated the transition of refugee professionals to their new way of life.

Lithuanians and Other Refugees

What has been said about the life of Lithuanian refugees could be repeated with little change to describe the adjustments of political refugees belonging to other national groups, who left their countries because of the establishment of Communist tyranny during and after World War II: the Latvians, Estonians, Poles, Hungarians, Ukrainians, and others. The fate of this broad group of refugees may be compared with that of refugees who fled from the domination of National Socialism in various countries, primarily in Germany and Austria. Several books have been written about anti - Nazi refugees.² The occupational attainments of professional persons belonging to this group, when compared with what has been said about the Lithuanian professionals, indicates that Germans and Austrians made better adjustments than did Lithuanians of the same professions. This is especially conspicuous in the case of culture - bound professions difficult to transplant to a foreign country, such as those of lawyers and teachers. The percentage of persons belonging to these two professions who made successful occupational adjustments, as given by Davie and Kent,³ was many times higher than that of their Lithuanian fellows. This difference can be explained by 1) the higher prestige of the culture of German - speaking countries as compared with that of other Middle and East European nations; 2) better connections and influential protection of the German - speaking groups; 3) more sympathy shown by influential persons in America to the anti - Nazi than to anti - Communist refugees.

NOTES

- 1 The materials of this article are derived from a study which was submitted as a Master's Thesis to the University of Chicago.
- 2 Davie, Maurice R., *Refugees in America*, New York: Harper and Bros., 1947.
Fields, Harold, *The Refugee in the United States*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1938.
Kent, Donald Peterson, *The Refugee Intellectual — the Americanization of immigrants of 1933-1941*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1953.
- 3 Davie, *op cit.*, pp. 278, 299 and 320; Kent, *op. cit.*, p. 301.