

PRUDNIKOVA, Regina
Lithuania Documentation Project
Lithuanian
RG-50.473*0076

In this interview, Regina Prudnikova, maiden name Kirvelaitytė, born in 1925, a resident of the town of Pilviškiai, discusses prewar relationships between ethnic Lithuanians and Jews in Pilviškiai, mentioning blood libel myths that she believed. She goes on to talk about the persecution of Jews and the looting of their property after the arrival of the Germans, confides that she participated in looting the property, and identifies the items she brought home. Mrs. Prudnikova describes witnessing the torture of Jewish youths and talks about incidents involving the rape of Jewish girls by Germans. She claims to have seen only one German in the convoy to the massacre site, stating that the other executioners were local Lithuanians. She provides a long list of perpetrators. When asked about the fate of valuables that belonged to the Jews, she bares a golden tooth and claims that she bought it from a woman who was the wife of a perpetrator. Mrs. Prudnikova talks about the participation of Mr. Baltūsis, a renowned Lithuanian nationalist, in the executions.

File 1 of 3

[01:] 00:41:10 – [01:] 35:32:22
00:51 – 37:10

[01:] 00:41:10 – [01:] 02:47:17
00:51 – 03:03

Q: Mrs. Regina, first of all, please tell me your first name and your surname.

A: Should I tell you the maiden name, or the current one?

Q: Please tell me both.

A: Both. Kirvelaitytė, Regina. I married Vladimiras Prudnikovas, so now I am Regina Prudnikova.

Q: What year were you born?

A: 1925.

Q: And where were you born, where did you grow up, where did you live?

A: In Pilviškiai town, Dvarnieji village, it was a suburb. And—and—and I was born here, grew up here, studied, went to school, and was here when the Germans came—in short, I was here the whole time, and have never left Lithuania.

Q: Tell me, what did Pilviškiai look like before the war?

A: Well—

Q: What kind of people lived here? What was here? What happened here?

A: Well, the town center was entirely populated by people of Jewish ethnicity. They—well, they lived here and got along well with the Lithuanians. We were friends with the Jewish children, and when they celebrated their holidays, Shabbat, on Saturday, they gave us some matzos, you know.

Q: Did the older ones or the younger ones give you matzos?

A: The older ones and the young. Well, the older people mostly. And when we shopped at the Jewish stores, if we helped them maintain their clientele, then, when Christmas or Easter came, the Jews would always give us presents, you know. And they let us buy on credit. You paid back when you had money, you know. That's just the way they were, you know. Many Lithuanians, who lived poorly—they did not have something to live on—served at Jewish homes. They brought water for them because, during the Sabbath, they could not bring water themselves, you know, they didn't work at all then, so Lithuanians had to do the work. People would go, you know, women mostly. Men worked at Jewish bakeries. Well, Jews were compassionate people.

[01:] 02:47:18 – [01:] 06:08:10

03:04 – 06:32

Q: Have you ever worked for the Jews?

A: I did serve for a short time. I went to take care of a small child, but then I was told—I was very young, and had a very red and full face and everything, you know. I was told that Jews cut you and take your blood, put you in a basement, in a vat with nails that stab you—so I left everything, because I was afraid that I would be stabbed. *[laughs]*

Q: You believed that?

A: Yeah, well, you know. I was young and believed it. I know that they say that that Jews can't live without Christian blood, that during their holidays they had to have at least a drop of that blood to taste, or something like that.

Q: What do you think now, could this be the truth?

A: No, no. You know, I think these were only delusions.

Q: Who was saying this?

A: Well, local people used to talk like this, those local people. So I left everything and went away, did not stay. I was afraid that they would stab me. *[laughs]*

Q: Well, and where did you work then?

A: Well, then I went to study. I enrolled under the Germans, oh no, under those—

Q: Under the Russians, right?

A: Under the Russians—

Q: Under Soviet rule.

A: In 1940, I worked in a canteen. And before that, under Smetona (President of the Republic of Lithuania 1926-1940), I worked for a farmer named Lozoraitis – he was the one on whose land the Jews were shot. My father also worked there, our entire family, we all used to go and work there, you know. Because we didn't have anything to survive on, our father had worked 18 years for him on that farm. He was an alcoholic, that Lozoraitis, no, he was drowning in bills and debts. And our entire family would go. Herd the cows, pigs, you know. And would receive one hundred “litas” (Lithuanian currency) in currency and the rest, in produce. Oil, bread, you know, potatoes, and wool, well, and rye and wheat. Well, we were given all sorts of things. Well, when a steer or a sheep was slaughtered, they would give us stomachs and heads, you know. I'm telling you, there were seven of us children, and we lived very poorly. Well, and then, when the Russians came, Tomas **Liobys**, the chairman of the trade union, got me a job at the restaurant of **Lipké** in [19]40—and that **Lipké – Liurija** was his last name, but people called him **Lipké**—had a daughter, who worked at the restaurant as—you know, during nationalization, when the restaurants were taken away from the rich, his daughter remained a shift manager, while the manager of the other shift was Magdalena Paleckienė—Justė *[Mrs. Prudnikova's sister]* probably took you to her—she's old now and she was the manager of the second shift. Well, so the manager of the first shift was this **Rokytė** (the diminutive form of the name **Rokė**) *[Liurija's daughter]*. Her parents were very—her mother would make kugel and tea—she would treat us to some, too. So I worked there until the war started. The the front arrived and the war started, everything was dissolved by the Germans.

[01:] 06:08:11 – [01:] 07:56:24

06:33 – 08:25

Q: Madam, tell me, when the Soviet government arrived in [19]40, did your life become easier?

A: Yeah, easier.

Q: Why?

A: Well, you know, my sisters started going to school, you know. My father was granted some of the Lozoraitis land, 10 hectares, because he had—you know, if not my father, then somebody else would have gotten it—it was going to be distributed anyway.

Q: But Lozoraitis was given the better, that is, it was—

A: Yes. Well, we were also given a couple of horses, a couple of cows, you know, and we plan—sowed and planted everything ourselves, and harvested it too. But how long did it last? The Germans came and took everything away. That farmer—

Q: Your land was also taken away?

A: They took the land and the animals, everything. And then things were bad for us.

Q: The land was returned to Lozoraitis?

A: Yeah, the land was returned to Lozoraitis, with all that we had sowed on it. And he said, “Help us harvest it and we will give you some.” And they didn’t give us anything.

Q: The Lozoraitis family?

A: Yes. They gave us nothing. She [*the wife*] was a good person, but he—she was a teacher—you know, she would come back from work and strain herself, because none of the maids stayed long, because they were never compensated. Because we accepted it in the form of produce, it was easier for us to claim our pay. My father would—he would weigh the grain and everything. [*Lozoraitis*] trusted him, because he was very loyal, but the maids, you know, they requested money, and there was no money. So they would stay for a month or so, and when they were not compensated, they would leave. So she [*Lozoraitis’s wife*] would run home in between her classes, you know, to feed those pigs herself, she would do everything herself.

[01:] 07:56:25 – [01:] 10:03:13

08:26 – 10:37

Q: Madam, tell me, what do you think, for the Jews, the Jews of Pilviškiai, when was it easier for them, when was it better for them to live? Under Smetona (President of Lithuania 1926-1940) or in [19]40, when the Soviets arrived?

A: Well, I think they lived pretty well under Smetona, but they also lived well after those [*Soviets*] had arrived, you know. Only four Jewish families were deported from Pilviškiai.

Q: Who was deported?

A: Šimbergas was deported, and then, I think, Mau—maybe not Mauškė also. They returned after the war, you know, from deportation. They came back after the war, under

the Russians, they even visited my father, you know. My father used to deliver goods to him—I have forgotten the last name of that Jew.

Q: So **Mauškė**

A: **Mauškė**.

Q: So **Mauškė**, **Šimbergas**. Who else was deported, do you remember? Two more?

A: Well, two more. I cannot tell you now—

Q: You don't remember—

A: I know that it was four families, that four families were deported. Yeah—

Q: So they were lucky to have been deported.

A: Well, yeah, they remained alive, they remained alive. I'm telling you, they returned, one and the other one returned to Lithuania.

Q: Do you remember how they were deported?

A: Well, they were deported, you know. Well, they were summoned, allowed to take what they needed on the trains, well, you know, on the train cars, and there were Lithuanians being deported, too. Teachers from the rural areas, you know, who were educated, enlightened people, those kinds of people were deported.

Q: So the Jews and the Lithuanians were deported at the same time?—

A: At the same time, at the same time. The Jews and the Lithuanians were deported at the same time.

Q: Did you see how they were deported?

A: Well, I saw them boarding the trains, but nothing else, you know. Otherwise, you know I did not see this.

Q: How did the Jews feel when they were being deported? Were they very upset or did they go calmly?

A: Well, they were sad, you know, they were sad. Everyone was sad. The Lithuanians as well as the people of Jewish ethnicity.

[01:] 10:03:14 – [01:] 12:08:06

10:38 – 12:47

Q: Well, and then, when the Germans came, when those things began—then how did the troubles start escalating for the Jews, how was it? How did it all start?

A: Well, when the Germans arrived, the Jews sensed that something bad would happen to them, you know. So the shops and everything else were looted, you know, the Lithuanians took everything away. The headman, this Vincas **Ambrasas**, took everything, did this, you know. And the Lithuanians were taking everything home. I did as well, but my brother told me to return it, you know. There was this Petras Ilgūnas, who worked as clerk at the police station. He did not shoot the Jews; he was not there, you know, although he later served a sentence in prison. So I went there, but he didn't. You see, he told my brother that I should return everything, because there was a complaint filed against me, that I had brought clothes home.

Q: What did you take?

A: Some fabric, shoes and the like, you know. The shoes were not of the same pair, so my brother told me to return them. So I went and returned them.

Q: Where did you take them from?

A: From a store.

Q: Whose?

A: From Jewish stores, from a Jewish store. When I arrived, everything was looted—all the stores were. And the Jews had no right to anything anymore.

Q: So what was a Jew supposed to do when his store was being looted? He can't do anything, defend himself?

A: He could do nothing. The Germans are walking around with weapons, walking around, so they couldn't show themselves. They were hiding, they were afraid, they knew what the German would do.

Q: So the Jewish stores were left open?

A: Yes, yes, well. They had been locked, so the doors and the windows were torn out, and they went in, you see. There was a store called "Metropolis," and we brought back a box of vodka, you know, with Antanas **Masaitis**, who is gone now. He was also there and knew everything.

[01:] 12:08:07 – [01:] 14:17:22

12:48 – 15:02

Q: So they tore out the doors. During the day, or?—

- A: During the day. Everything happened in the daytime—everything in the daytime. As soon as they arrived, they shot **Mauškė**, a Jew, he was fat and short. He was running across the road, they [*Germans*] asked, “Who is this?” Someone said, “**Jude**” (GERMAN: Jew), he was shot right away and he fell down.
- Q: So who shot him?
- A: A German, a German. This was during the first days of the war, when, when the Germans arrived, this was during the first days.
- Q: So did you see how **Moškė** was shot?
- A: Yes, yes. I was on the corner next to **Rybakas** and saw it. He was lying unconscious on the pavement, right here, in the square.
- Q: So you saw him when he had already been shot?
- A: Yeah, yeah.
- Q: And how was he shot?
- A: Well, how—he [*the German*] shot, bang! And that’s it. The man fell down.
- Q: So the German asked him who he was?
- A: Yeah, the German. I don’t know who he asked—who said “**Juden**,” Jew, and then he fired.
- Q: So that was the first one you saw?
- A: The first, the first one, and it was on the first day, after they arrived and this is how it was.
- Q: And then the looting started, that is, all of it.
- A: Yes, yes, yes, the looting started. Everyone was going, everyone was carrying whatever they could life, you see.
- Q: Were the Germans also carrying?
- A: No, the Germans did not carry things. How could they carry anything, they were on their way, how could they carry? They did not. Lithuanians took everything.
- Q: The locals, from Pilviškiai?

A: The locals, from Pilviškiai, yeah. Well, it was mostly people from surrounding areas, from the estates—because the town was mostly populated by Jews. You see, there was this one Mikalavičius, he lived, and then this Rinkevičius, this **Žibrauskaitė** [**Žydrauskaitė**]. And all the others were living elsewhere—a little farther, where the street ends, there were some Lithuanians, so they—from the Jews—they were tenants—they rented from the Jews, who lived here, in the center, but owned other houses over there.

[01:] 14:17:23 – [01:] 16:16:14

15:03 – 17:06

Q: So, what did the looting look like? Well, if the door is torn out and opened, so where was the Jew, was he standing in the store when everything?—

A: No, no. He was not at the store at all. He lived like **Nėmarkas** [**Neimarkas**] did, he was upstairs, they had rooms upstairs, on the first floor, and he was there. He did not even come downstairs, nothing, he didn't show up. Well, in short, the Jews were hiding from the Germans. They were scared.

Q: So the stores were empty?

A: Yes, empty. There wasn't a single Jew, not one, no one.

Q: Well, and then, what happened then, a massacre started?

A: Well, then, first of all, they rounded up the active, those who were activists, you know. Who were the Communist Youth, and the youth, you know, and they would be taken to sleep at the barn.

Q: What barn did they sleep in?

A: The barn belonged to a German, this one [*pause*]—Jesus—**Kromas**, it belonged to a German named **Kromas**, you know—there was a mill and a huge barn nearby. So, they would take them to sleep there in the barn, all of them. Not the elderly. They could not walk on the sidewalks, they had to walk on the pavement. A five-pointed yellow star in front and on the back was to be sewn on the clothes, and they were not allowed. If they were seen walking on the sidewalk, they were kicked and beaten up.

Q: Who was kicking them?

A: Well, Lithuanians, Lithuanians did. **Laurynaitukas** (diminutive form) [**Laurynaitis; Laurinaitis**] would kick, this Petras **Strimas** [**Štrimas**], you know, there was this Jurgis Štūra, he was a murderer, and Ramanauskas. Well, all of those, you see, who were active in the town, so they all did this.

Q: So they rounded up the activists. And now, the activists were Jews and Lithuanians, or only Jews?

A: Jews, Jews. They were all Jews.

[01:] 16:16:15 – [01:] 18:27:05

17:07 – 19:22

Q: And what about the Lithuanians who had Communist leanings, the Communists and the Communist Youth members?

A: Well, so this one, **Maraškaukas**, had already been executed earlier. **Maraškaukas**. And **Kairiūkštis** was executed together with the Jews. He was led away from the Baltrušiai dairy and shot together with the Jews. They also came to Lozoraitis's, to take our father away, when the Jews were being massacred. Kaminskas and Ramanauskas came. Kaminskas suspected my father of—he worked with pigs, at the station, you know, well, he used to weigh the pigs, you know, put them on the scales there, so they had had an argument there or something, I don't know. So they came for him and went directly to the barn, but my father's heart had sensed this, and he left. There was a garden, and then a kind of a trench, a big channel, and as he went outside, he went into that channel, you know, and watched from there. There was a path leading to the barn through the apple trees, and another one to the house of Lozoraitis, you know. The barn stood here [*motions to the left*] and the house, right here [*motions to the right*]. So when they came for my father, they didn't go to the house, but directly to the barn. And my father walked around the trench and in the direction of Barzdai, almost eight kilometers. He walked around it [*the town*] and came back home at dawn, then asked my mother, "Elžbiečiukė (diminutive/endeared form of the name Elžbieta), did anyone come looking for me?" She said, "No." So he went upstairs and said, "If anyone comes for me, tell them that I am not home." Well, nobody came, except for Mrs. Lozoraitienė, the farmer's wife, to ask my father to return to work, because there was no one else there to work, you know. But my father did not go. He said, "You sent them to execute me, so I will not go." So, later, **Lazorius** [*Lozoraitis*] came to plead with him. He made guarantees that nobody would shoot him and everything. So then he returned to work again.

[01:] 18:27:06 – [01:] 20:50:23

19:23 – 21:51

Q: So when did this happen, before the massacre or?—

A: When the Jews were being executed.

Q: The same day?

A: The same day, the same day. In the afternoon, they were taken there and then they all were, you know.

Q: Well, we were there, at that place. The execution took place right next to Lozoraitis's home.

A: Yes, yes. Yeah, on Lozoraitis's land. And Lozoraitis even said this, "Now the Jews [*are murdered*] and then the next hill is designated for the beggars." That is what he said.

Q: So they thought that they could also shoot your father as well.

A: Yes, yes, my father. They came and summoned my father, to take him away, you know. You see, only us, his children, know what he knew.

Q: Well, and what happened to the first ones who were rounded up? You said they were only Jews?

A: The activists.

Q: How many of them were there, of those Jews?

A: Well, you know, there were maybe 20 or 30 of them.

Q: Guys and girls?

A: Yes, yes, yes. I told you that **Rokė Liurija**, the one whose sister left for Israel and America, as I mentioned—was among the first ones to be shot. Then, I don't know, a few days later, I cannot remember. You know, had we known it, we would have written it all down, you know, had we known that someone might need it. So, you know, they probably thought that maybe the activist youth would try to resist or will do something, while the rest – women, the elderly – were taken later.

Q: Maybe you remember some of the activists? Who else was in that group of activists?

A: So I'm telling you, **Ražanskis [Ražanskas]** was there and **Liurija, Rokė Liurija**, was also there. Well, these two I can remember, you know. **Ražanskis** was the secretary of the Communist Youth, so I knew him well, you know. Because we would go at night with those—we would carry those—sticks that we would light, you see. We would carry them through the town singing the song "**Starana maja Rasija**" (RUSSIAN: My country Russia). They taught us, and I haven't forgotten it, so we would sing, we would walk down the street and we would sing.

[01:] 20:50:24 – [01:] 22:58:18

21:52 – 24:04

Q: You would go too?

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Q: So you belonged to the Communist Youth?

A: I had enrolled, but I had not received my ticket yet, you know. I am telling you, I was called to the Security Forces and threatened with me—do you want a pistol or a machine

gun, and I started crying. They said, ordered me:”Do not even look at the church as you pass by.” And I say, “Nobody told me anything and I don’t know anything.” I say, “I don’t know what this organization means.” I say, “I belonged to the Scouts and the Angels,” (Lithuanian Catholic youth organizations) I say. “There are all kinds,” I say, “and I don’t understand what it means.” They say, “This is a Communist organization.” I say, “I don’t know what the word ‘Communist’ means.”

Q: So who was threatening you?

A: Well, a Lithuanian, but no—you know. They came here from the Security Forces in Vilkaviškis, you know, so I don’t know.

Q: Was he in uniform or in civilian clothes?

A: Civilian, he was a civilian, civilian.

Q: So nothing else happened to you then?

A: We—I was ordered not to meet with my two girlfriends. They ordered this Julė Kalinauskaitė and Ona Šiupailaitė [Čiupailaitė] that we not see one another, because they suspected us of organizing some kind of meetings, this is what they told us. But when we were friends, we would always walk together to the town, and everything. None of my sisters were as active as I was—always on the go. Justė was much younger and Milė Juškevičienė was a little slower, while I was more adventurous in everything. I was friends with Regina Vereškaitė, and studied together with Julė Kalinauskaitė. We would go together, walk in the town together at night, you know. Well, so they accused us of organizing some kind of meetings.

Q: So nothing happened to you. And what happened to the Jews, the Jewish Communist Youth?

A: What?

Q: What did they do to the Jewish Communist Youth?

A: Well, I told you, they were arrested and sent to lie in the Šešupė Rive—into the Pilvė River. They were sent to sleep in the barn, all of those activists. And then they were the first ones to be executed.

[01:] 22:58:19 – [01:] 25:07:07

24:05 – 26:18

Q: So how long were they kept there, in that barn? Before the massacre—

A: Well, I don’t know. Maybe about a month, maybe a little more. They were taken into the Pilvė River and made to lie down in it and then stand up again, with their pillows and their blankets, and then sent to sleep all soaked in the barn.

Q: So you saw this once?

A: Every time I walked from work—I was apprenticed to the tailor Juozas Janulaitis and as I walked home, I always saw this, you know. They were taken in the early evening, it wasn't dark yet, in the early evening, maybe around six. And each time they were taken—taken. And then, in the morning, they had to go and clean the streets or something, you know, to do some kind of work. To clean where the horses shat and tidy everything up.

Q: So when they were taken to the Pilvė River, what did they do to them?

A: Well, they were told to lie down—get up, lie down—get up, so they lay down and stood up with their bedcovers. Then, all soaked, they were sent to spend the night in the barn.

Q: So they had to sleep through the night all soaked?

A: Yes, yes, yes. Yes, yes. Yes.

Q: So what did they look like after a while?

A: Well, so now you tell me, tell me. They were tortured horribly. And then they were made to lie down on the gravel—listen, where the office of the collective farm later stood—on the gravel, you see, and beaten with rubber batons, you see, they were beaten up. This Ramanauskas and Kaminskas would come on their bicycles and ram into them, you know. They did not care—on their heads, their legs, beat them everywhere with those rubber, you know.

Q: Who would take them into the Pilvė River?

A: Well, the Lithuanians. So, Ramanauskas, Kaminskas, **Strimaitis**, **Laurynaitis** would—also Jurgis Štūra. Well, there were a lot, you know, all of those, who had joined the white stripers, “**baltaraiščiai**” they were the ones who led and did everything.

[01:] 25:07:08 – [01:] 27:09:08
26:19 – 28:25

Q: When did they organize themselves into those, as you said, white stripers, with those bands?—

A: Well, they did right away, as soon as those [*Germans*] arrived, they formed the white stripers.

Q: And when they tortured those Communist Youth, were they armed?

A: They walked with guns, they walked with guns.

Q: What kind of weapons did they have?

A: Well, guns, those kinds of guns, those kinds. They were those kinds of guns. I don't know what they were called, you know. I was a girl, a young girl, I had not seen weapons before and I don't know, you know. Some were long, and the other ones were short. These were shorter ones.

Q: So those Jews, did they obey, when they were ordered to do something?

A: They did, they did, how could they not obey? Of course they did.

Q: And when you said that they were forced to lie on the gravel and beaten up, was that during the day?

A: In the daytime, in the daytime. I would be walking home for lunch, and they would be lying there. Lying there silently. How—who—could they resist?

Q: Well, and how did other people view this? Still, you were passing by—

A: Well, it was horrible, it was really horrible, you know. There were some who were happy about what was going on.

Q: There were some who were happy?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: They thought that this was right?

A: Yeah.

Q: So why were they happy?

A: Well, because the Jews were businessmen and had more of everything, and everything. They had houses, you know, and more land, factories. This **Užpitas [Ožpitas]** had one, you know, while **Frydmanas** had a tannery near the station. And a shop, where he sold furs and clothes—these cloths.

Q: And when were they executed, the ones who had been held in the barn, the Communist Youth?

A: Well, they were executed before the massacre of the Jews. This was in August, you know, I cannot tell you the date. And they also dug the pits for the others. The pits also.

[01:] 27:09:09 – [01:] 29:08:20

28:26 – 30:30

Q: How do you know, madam, that they dug the pits for the others?

- A: Well, you know, they also saw it. My father saw it, how the pits were dug. But on that land—listen, it is now covered with bushes, there were no bushes in those days, only fields, you know. Only, there was a moor near our home right next to the road. But here everything was even fields, nothing else, you know. When the grass was mowed, we could see everything.
- Q: We have been there.
- A: Well, you were there, well, yeah, so there—
- Q: So did you see how the Communist Youth were executed?
- A: No, only how they were taken.
- Q: How the Communist Youth were taken?
- A: Yeah, yeah, how the Communist Youth were taken. All of those activists, basically.
- Q: Where were you when they were being taken?
- A: What?
- Q: Where were you, when they were being taken?
- A: This was around noon. I was walking home to eat lunch, because I would go back and forth four times a day. In the morning, I would walk to Janulaitis, the one who executed the Jews, and I would return home for lunch. And then, after lunch, I would go again, and return home in the afternoon. So I would see everything, what was happening during that entire time.
- Q: And what did you see the day that they were taken to be executed?
- A: Well, they were all lined up, **Pikčius** was leading them, they were all lined up, you know, near the police station, and then they were all taken.
- Q: Who was shooting? Did Janulaitis shoot, did he participate in the shooting?
- A: Yes. Yes, yes, he participated.
- Q: So Janulaitis shot everyone?
- A: Yes. He shot these and then the others. I am telling you, I was a witness during his trial. He told them that he didn't recognize me at all.

Q: What did you see in those days if—what did you see, what was he doing, how did you conclude that he was shooting?

A: Well, he was given a gun. Once and another time it was brought by the police chief, Kazys **Lietuvninkas**, who is in America still alive maybe, he is, you know. So he—

[01:] 29:08:21 – [01:] 30:52:06

30:31 – 32:18

Q: So he would bring Janulaitis a gun? Only—

A: He would bring a gun, they talked, and then he [*the police chief*] left. And then later, I was walking past, and they were all standing here: this Petras Strimas, Buragas. They were all there when they were taking those—when they took the activists to be executed, there were less of them, but when they took the elderly—some were taken on carts, you know, and pregnant women too. This is how it was. I'm telling you, I counted 27, but there were even more of them. Some had come from the villages, you know.

Q: You counted 27 of whom?

A: Of those who were leading—and this is only the ones that I can remember. I cannot remember the rest, you know.

Q: Tell me, madam, when the Communist Youth were taunted and beaten up, were the Germans there, did they approach?

A: No, no. No, no, no.

Q: Not once?

A: They weren't there, they weren't there. There wasn't a single German. And in the police—if they were called, there was not a single German there, they were only Lithuanians, all of them.

Q: Were the policemen who were beating them [*the activists*] up wearing uniforms?

A: Yes, some were in uniform, but the others were civilians. When the Jews were taken to be executed, they were all civilians.

Q: When the Communist Youth were taken to be executed?

A: All of them. The Communist Youth and the others, they were dressed in civilian clothes.

Q: So the policemen would dress in civilian clothes?

A: Yes, yes, yes.

Q: They would not in police uniforms?

A: No, I'm telling you, when they were taking all of those Jews to be executed, there was only one German in the car, and there were machine guns. You now, a German open car. Well, but there was only one German there.

[01:] 30:52:07 – [01:] 33:06:22

32:19 – 34:38

Q: And when the Communist Youth were taken to be executed, was there a machine gun there?

A: No, there was not. There was no car either. Only when they all were taken.

Q: So well, this means that the Communist Youth they took the Communist Youth, executed them. Did you know they had been executed?

A: Yes, yes, yes we knew.

Q: You knew that they were going to be executed?

A: Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

Q: So when did the main massacre take place?

A: Well, it was August, toward the end. The rye had already been harvested, you know, there were stacks, like this. I cannot tell you the exact date, only that it was August.

Q: But how much time approximately had passed after the execution of those Communist Youth?

A: Well, I don't know this, maybe around—a week had not passed yet, had not passed. I am telling you, had we known this, you know, then we would have written all of this down, you know. But so many years have passed now, you know.

Q: Well, but this is basically clear—

A: Yes, yes—

Q: They still executed the Communist Youth—

A: Yes, yes—

Q: A few days and from—

A: Yes, yes, well yeah. I'm telling you, they did not even let us give them food or anything. It was horrible. Only later, here, Antanas Kalinauskas, you know, would bring food for

Lipkė, that **Liurija**, you know, because they were not allowed to go to the store to buy anything, they were not allowed. Not allowed.

Q: And how, what did the people who were in the barn eat? Still, if they were there for a month, so they had to eat something. A person cannot survive a month [*without food*].

A: Well, they were allowed to leave, escorted, in short, to their homes, so they were allowed to take things. They would all be escorted home, given things, allowed to, you know.

Q: They would bring them home so they would take food?

A: Food, yes. They were not kept there through the day, only at night, so there. In the late afternoon, they were taken into that Viša—the Pilvė River, so, first, and then, I am saying, all soaked. I am telling you, there is no one left alive—this **Barzda** also lived nearby—he was the head of communications and he saw everything and knew everything, you know, but his wife was Jewish, but she had converted to Catholicism, so they did not take her. They were very scared.

[01:] 33:06:23 – [01:] 35:01:11

34:39 – 36:37

Q: Well, so then, after all of the Communist Youth had been executed, and the rest were being killed, so they executed everyone there. There were men, women children?

A: Yes, yes, everyone, everyone—

Q: There they—

A: Small children, all, all together. I don't even know. My sister went, it seems, and someone else, who told me there was bloody foam seeping through the soil on top of that pit.

Q: She told us. We recorded it—

A: Because, you know, my sister, Mrs. Juškevičienė, she would go to milk the cows there, you know, to the **Lazorius** (Lozoraitis) farm.

Q: Oh, so it was Emilija who told you?

A: Yeah, Emilija, yeah, yeah. Well, you know, it was horrible.

Q: Well, we will try—yeah, we will try to record Emilija as well. What she—

A: Yeah. And then after everything, there was a funeral reception, a party, at the **Šimbergas** restaurant. So, they all passed by us—we lived next to Juozas Janulevičius, so as we were walking down the street, you know, and they are walking—it was sunny and warm. My mother says, “So where are you going, Uršulikė?” And she responded, “To the funeral.”

They sang and drank at the **Šimbergas** restaurant until dawn, and were all entertained for their participation in the execution.

Q: They were all gathered?

A: Yes, all of them.

Q: Well, and the day that they were shooting, what did you see, what do you remember?

A: Well, I only saw—I didn't see how they were shooting, but those who were all leading them, they all said that they shot them, you know. I only saw them being taken. When I was walking home for lunch, I saw everything, how they were taken. And I also saw ___ was there. I knew him. You probably have the list that I gave you earlier, of those 27 who were taking [*the Jews*].

[01:] 35:01:12 – [01:] 35:32:22

36:38 – 37:10

Q: So you were in Pilviškiai at that time?

A: In Pilviškiai. I was walking after lunch, I came back, I went at around one or two o'clock. That is when I saw everything.

Q: So what did you see, madam, tell me?

A: Well, I saw them being taken. Those who couldn't walk anymore were beaten with rubber batons, you know. They were attacked, others were screaming, you know, everything.

Q: Did everyone walk on foot, or were others driven?

A: They drove others. The ones who were very old were driven.

File 2 of 3

[02:] 00:43:13 – [02:] 35:23:08

00:46 – 36:52

[02:] 00:43:13 - [02:] 02:31:17

00:46 – 02:39

Q: So now, madam, I want to ask you, that is, they rounded up the Jews from their homes. The Jews had not been taken out of their homes, had they?

A: No, they were—all of these Jews lived at their homes. Then they all surrounded the homes.

Camera Operator: Stop

[new frame]

Q: So the Jews lived at their homes.

A: Yes, and all of those people who had guns surrounded their homes, took them from their homes, and led them there. They led to the square, where they were made to stand in lines, basically, everyone was taken.

Q: Madam, I would like to ask you this. So, while the Jews were still living in their homes, did those “white stripers” take advantage of them in any way? Did they make any use of them, while the Jews were not yet executed, not locked up?

A: No.

Q: Maybe they took their belongings, or maybe they mistreated the girls in any way or did something else?

A: Well, this, no, you know. Though, there were two Jewish girls from Antanavas, (a town) very pretty, blond. So here, you know, the Germans brought them to the commandant headquarters, so they were raped and everything, and later they were handed over to my father—well, they were brought to **Lazorius** (Lozoraitis). So my father drove them to the countryside, but he was caught by—I cannot tell you whether it was by a German or by Lithuanians—and the girls were taken away to Vilkaviškis and executed, after the Jews of Pilviškiai had already been killed.

Q: Perhaps you remember the surnames of those girls?

A: I cannot tell you, you know, they were from Antanavas. Two Jewish girls from Antanavas, very pretty.

Q: So they were held in the commandant headquarters?

A: Yes, they were held in the commandant headquarters and taken advantage of by whoever wanted to.

Q: By German or the locals, our people?

A: What?

Q: Our people or the Germans?

A: The commandant was German, German.

[02:] 02:31:18 – [02:] 04:12:24

02:40 – 04:26

Q: Well, and then, when they were taken, so there, these ones. Well, which of the “white strippers” from Pilviškiai did you see leading the Jews?

A: Well, there were not only “white strippers” there, some were simply going, because they were promised some belongings, you know. They were given houses, apartments, homes, and they lived there. A man named Pijušas Buraga lived in one, then Petras **Strimaitis**, then Norkevičius, Janulaitis, then this **Besusparis [Besasparis]** lived off Jewish property, and so did Baltūsis. Well, many of them did. I have a list of all those who lived off Jewish property, you know. They all went to live in their homes. Some of those, who did not shoot, went to live there as well.

Q: But the ones that you mentioned were shooting?

A: Yes, yes, they shot. I am also telling you, the Juška family, this Totoraitis, also two Kalasevičius brothers from Piliūnai village, this Janulevičius, Adomaitis. Well, I am telling you, I counted 27 of those who were shooting.

Q: So how did you know that they were shooting?

A: Well, because they were leading them. Those who led, they also shot. They had guns when they were leading them, and then, you see, we heard the gunshots.

[02:] 04:12:25 – [02:] 07:16:22

04:27 – 07:36

Q: Were there any Germans among them?

A: I’m telling you, there was only one German who was behind the wheel of the truck with the machine gun in it, and besides him, there were no others, no one else.

Q: So the German was sitting—

A: Yes, in German clothes, and Ramanauskas, Kaminskas and also Antanas Baltūsis sat over here.

Q: In that car?

A: In that car, yeah.

Q: Was that car in front or at the back of the column of Jews?

A: Behind, behind, they drove from behind.

Q: So that they could shoot them with the machine gun if anybody tried to escape?

A: If anybody tries to run, yes, yes.

Q: Well and when they were taken, were they beaten, the Jews?

A: Well, I was told that the ones who could not walk anymore were beaten.

Q: And what did you see?

A: No, I didn't see it, but people from Dvarnai—they were led straight through, you know, when you drive, there are houses, houses. So people saw them, you know. They said there were terrible screams, cries.

Q: Well, madam, you said that two of your brothers were also there—

A: Yes, I had two brothers. They did not participate [*in the killing of*] the Jews, though. This Alius, or Algirdas Kirvelaitis, joined those “white stripers” in the first days after they were established. So, he joined them, tied a white band around his arm and went to, you know to this—Trumpikis, Trumpikis, but I don't know his surname—you know, to perform a search and that is it, to take it, when he [*Trumpikis*] brought things home from the shop, you know, to search for things. Well, and he [*Trumpikis*] knew German very well. And a German happened to be there, you know. He [*the German*] asked, “What do they want?” So he [*Trumpikis*] says, “They came to conduct a search”. So he [*the German*] shot Baltrušaitukas (diminutive form of the surname Baltrušaitis) [*who had come with the brother*]. Then my brother gave it all up, you know, returned his gun and didn't participate in anything anymore. And this one, my brother Liudas, was a guard. Not really a guard, but he was at the electric power station. We had an electric power station, you know, on the bank of the Šešupė River, so he was on duty there. So he was given a gun and told that if anybody tries to cross the bridge next to the electric power station, he must shoot. Well, **Kirilovskis** [*a Jewish man*] passed and he [*the brother*] let him go, and he did not participate in anything. But when the Russians came, the counterintelligence, you know, the counterintelligence was informed that they [*the brothers*] had been collaborating with the Germans, and they both were arrested. Later, everyone around was questioned and everything, and they could not build a case against them, because they had not participated in the shooting of the Jews, so they were released. One spent two and a half years in the Molotovskaja oblast, while the other one was near Moscow, at the Tarav station. One of my sisters, the eldest, had gone to visit him there. And later they were released and returned home.

[02:] 07:16:23 – [02:] 09:15:18

07:37 – 09:40

Q: Well, and what did they tell you? They probably told you what they saw on the day, when the Jews were shot.

A: Well, so that Alius, my brother, what did he see—he didn't see anything. He was scared. He used to hide under the bed and put a pillow over his head when a pig was being slaughtered, so he didn't see anything, didn't go anywhere.

Q: And Liudas?

A: Well, Liudas, he was working in town, you know, at that power station, so he also—he knew Laurynaitis and the others, they knew them all. You know, they were friends, would hang out together in the town—well, so in the town they all—but first used to be—I'm telling you, the town has died out—expatriates and political prisoners have replaced the locals. And of the locals—I'm telling you, when Lukošienė, Antanas Kalinauskas, and I die, the only ones remaining will be those who don't know anything.

Q: So that is why we want to record everything. So that it survives—

A: And no one will remain, you know—

Q: Yes, yes—

A: Nothing will remain, nobody will know. Because everybody has died out. If our father was alive, he would tell you so much! And our mother, when she went and saw—and everybody. I'm telling you, there is no one left. In the direction of **Dvarnai**, there lived the **Akelaitis** family, and Žukas family, many of them, but they're not here anymore. And the ones who served at Jewish homes are also gone. I'm telling you, they're gone. I'm telling you, wherever you look here, everyone is gone.

Q: And now tell me, were you angry when your brothers donned those armbands and started carrying guns?

A: Well, our brother Liudas did not have an armband, he did not wear one.

Q: So what was the difference, why did some wear armbands, while the others did not?

A: Well, he didn't participate at all. He didn't participate. He only guarded the power station, well, he worked as an electrician there. He was given a gun to prevent the fleeing Jews from passing, you know. That was all he did, and he didn't have a gun afterwards, he returned it and that's all.

[02:] 09:15:19 – [02:] 11:02:21

09:41 – 11:31

Q: And Algirdas?

A: Algirdas did have *[a gun]*, so when the other one *[the person with whom he went to conduct a search]* was shot, he dropped it and fled. He was done. You see, he was a real coward.

Q: So you probably were happy that he was no longer walking around with his gun.

A: Well, yeah. Oh well, you know, we do not get along. Even though he is my brother, I would not attend his funeral if he died.

Q: Why? Because he was a “white striper?”

A: Not because he was a “white striper,” but because he is stupid *[laughs]*.

Q: *[laughs]* Why do you dislike him so much?

A: Yeah, I don't like him, because he speaks and does everything contrary to the truth. Nowadays he is going around with that Laurynaitis and asking people to testify that he did not participate in the execution of the Jews, that he was not there and did not participate in anything, that he was not in the Gestapo or anywhere else. So you tell me, where else have you heard such nonsense? How can I not say anything, when we were in the same group, we would go out together? When they asked me at the police, I told them, but they didn't write much down. I will call the prosecutor Antanaitis and will tell him—he's on vacation now, and has entrusted some girl to write everything down, but she didn't ask anything, you see, didn't ask anything! She writes down what you say and then, “If the prosecutor's office needs to find out more, they will summon you.” She asked me if I knew Laurynaitis, so I say, “How could I not know this Gestapo man?” I know. If I did not know, I would not say anything, but I do know and that's all. We would go everywhere together, to dances and parties. Everybody would gather at Ramanauskas' – the greatest murderer of them all—everybody was there – Kaminskas and Lietuvninkas and all. Well, and me too, with my girlfriends, we would go there and dance. We went to dance parties and everything.

[02:] 11:02:22 – [02:] 13:01:20

11:32 – 13:35

Q: So the prosecutor's office did it on purpose – they questioned you so that no suspicions are left hanging. Well, they took a formal approach, like, “We questioned ten or twenty people and nobody said anything,” and that is it.

A: Yes. Yes.

Q: But you could have told them everything. You remember everything.

A: Exactly. That is what I told them, but they responded, “We don't need that.” And Lukošienė was summoned too, but they didn't need anything—a couple of words and it's over.

Q: Laurynaitukas (the diminutive form of the surname). So what was Laurynaitukas's full name?

A: Laurynaitis.

Q: And his first name?

A: Vytautas.

Q: So what do you remember about him?

A: Well, I already told you what he was like. Well, he was a “white striper” and participated in the killing of Jews and later he was with the—with those, he joined the—he would come home from Kaunas, where he was stationed, wearing a uniform. My aunt lived in Kaunas and his mother had a business selling flour here in Pilviškiai, so she would transport her cargo in trains when the Germans were here. He would obtain permission from the commandant headquarters—you were not allowed to travel on trains without those permissions, you see. So he would obtain those permissions and she could travel. I had to travel once, so I had to get one as well. I had kidney problems and was sent by doctor Paškevičiūtė (surname indicates she is the unmarried daughter of Mr. Paškevičius) to Kaunas. I had to obtain permission at the commandant’s headquarters, you see, to go to a doctor, while she was traveling around and selling flour. And he would obtain those documents, the permission to travel, you know.

Q: And what uniform would he be wearing during those visits?

A: Well, it was green, or rather, moss colored, and black armbands, like strings, and a skull over here [*points to her forehead*]. Well, he belonged to the hit men unit (killing unit). That is the uniform of the hit men units – not the Wehrmacht or anything, but the hit men unit, because there was a skull. He wore a belt, a gun, and boots and he walk around with pride, you know.

[02:] 13:01:21 – [02:] 15:01:03

13:36 – 15:39

Q: Would he talk about what he was doing in Kaunas, when he visited home?

A: Well, I once visited the home of the Macaitis family—they are not alive anymore, their son, Antanas Macaitis, died recently—well, it’s been a year since he died. I had gone to buy sausage, because Macaitis was a butcher, and Laurynaitukas happened to be there. So the old Mrs. Macaitienė (wife of Mr. Macaitis) asks him, “What are you thinking, Vytelis (diminutive form of the name Vytautas), shooting those Jews – children, and everything?” “Well,” he responds, “it’s like shooting into a fence.” That’s how he put it: “Like shooting into a fence.”

Q: So he was shooting in Kaunas?

A: In Kaunas, in Kaunas. He went there after Pilviškiai. But the execution in Pilviškiai took place later.

Q: So he was a civilian in Pilviškiai?

A: Yeah, he was civilian, civilian, and only later, when he would visit home, he would wear that uniform.

Q: So, then he disappeared and when he returned, he was wearing a uniform?

A: Yes, yes, then he was already wearing a uniform.

Q: And where would he go to shoot, after he disappeared from Pilviškiai, he wouldn't tell anyone?

A: No, no, no. He wouldn't mention it at all. And we didn't ask, you know, we didn't talk about such things.

Q: Tell me now, there were two times when the Jews of Pilviškiai were led to be executed. First the Communist Youth, the Communist Youth, and then the rest.

A: Yes.

Q: So which of those times did you see Laurynaitukas among the ones who were leading?

A: I saw him both times, but it all lasted maybe a week, you know. A week, not more. First they dug the pits—I'm telling you, my father, my mother and my sister Juškevičienė would go to milk the cows and saw how it happened—saw the pits being prepared, ready.

Q: And you saw him both times leading the Jews?

A: Yeah.

Q: And what else did he do? Did he beat them?

A: Well, he would kick them. One time an old woman was walking on the sidewalk, so he kicked her hard, because she wasn't allowed to walk on the sidewalk.

[02:] 15:01:04 – [02:] 16:56:17

15:40 – 17:40

Q: And what about when those Communist youth were taken into the Pilvė River?

A: Yeah. He was there, too. It was him, Petras Štrimas, Ramanauskas, Jurgis Štūra – they all were there. Also Kaminskas—those kind of people, and Jonas Baršaukas too.

Q: And what about your Janulaitis?

A: What?

Q: Did he participate?

- A: No, no. He wasn't there. He only participated in leading the Jews to be executed.
- Q: Both times?
- A: Yes, Janulaitis was there both times.
- Q: Well and what did he do, that Janulaitis? He took them to the place, shot them, and—
- A: After the massacre, in the afternoon, he brought back a cart full of clothes. He brought them back to his yard and unloaded in the barn. I was watching his baby inside and everything. And the next day, Janulaitis—I had come over again to study sewing and watch his baby—brought me a beige coat, all covered in blood, you know, and he handed it to me, saying I should wash it for myself. You see, we were very poor, so I took it, and he said, "I will tailor it for you." I brought it home, my mother washed it, and I brought it back to him. So he fixed the coat for me. And there was Barzda, who lived nearby. And so Barzda asks me—because he was the godfather of my sister Justina—he asks me, "Where did you get this new coat?" So I told him where I got it, how Janulaitis brought clothes and put them in the barn. I say, "And I was given a coat covered in blood, I washed it, and he tailored it for me," and that is it, that is how it was. Well, and then later when he [*Janulaitis*] was arrested, I was summoned to the Security forces in Kybartai and I told them. He claimed that he didn't know me at all.

[02:] 16:56:18 – [02:] 19:05:23

17:41 – 19:54

- Q: Well, and then did he come back to Pilviškiai? Did he serve time in prison?
- A: Yes, he served time in prison, but then later, you know, after Stalin had died, huge amnesties were declared, so he came back. He lived in Marijampolė, not in Pilviškiai, but in Marijampolė.
- Q: And is he still alive?
- A: No, he is dead, only his son—I was travelling with his brother's wife—you see. He has a brother who lives in Antanavas. So I was travelling with his wife to Marijampolė, and I asked, "How is Juozas?" "He died," she says. "And how is his son?" She says, "Why wouldn't he be well. He receives rehabilitation (compensation) for his father, and also a car," she says, "everything." Like that.
- Q: Well and when he gave you the coat, what did he say? Did he tell you where the coat was from?
- A: No, he didn't. What can he say, when he saw that I that I was there when the cart entered the yard, then the barn, and when the bloody clothes were piled together.
- Q: So there were more clothes that were covered in blood there?

- A: A lot, well, a full cart. Everybody was doing it, you see.
- Q: So what did he do with the clothes later?
- A: I don't know what he did with them.
- Q: Did the pile [*of clothes*] disappear later?
- A: Yes. I don't know what he did with the clothes.
- Q: Did he discuss anything about the massacre at all, how he?—
- A: No, no, nothing, nothing.
- Q: He was quiet about it, right?—
- A: Yeah, yeah, he was quiet, didn't say anything at all.
- Q: Well, and his family – his wife, his children – what do you think, do they know what he did?
- A: I don't know. The wife later went to live with another man, you know, and now I don't even know where she is at all, whether she is dead or alive, I don't know.
- Q: So after that massacre many Jewish possessions appeared here, right? Were many Jewish possessions were brought here?
- A: Oh, there was an auction, and people were buying—tearing apart, elbowing each other, you know.
- Q: Did you see the auction?
- A: Yeah, they were throwing things out of the window. People were grabbing whatever they could lay their hands on. Jesus, what was going on here. **Lipké's** restaurant was loaded with those clothes that had been brought with horses, oh my, Jesus what was going on, it was horrible.
- [02:] 19:05:24 – [02:] 21:03:03**
19:55 – 21:56
- Q: So the auction took place next to **Lipké's** restaurant?
- A: Yeah, yes. And in other places they were throwing bedding – pillows, blankets – all kinds of bed linens out of the windows, you see. They were throwing things out of the windows, and people were grabbing them. People had come from surrounding villages.
- Q: So was it all free or did people have to pay?

A: For free, for free, for free. For free.

Q: And who was distributing those things? Who was throwing them?

A: Well, they were all the same people who had participated in the massacre. They were the ones who were throwing, all of them. They kept the more valuable things for themselves, such as furniture, you know, and they went on to live in Jewish homes. I've told you already that some of those who did not shoot, also went to live in Jewish homes.

Kazlovas [Kozlovas] went to live in that house, over here [*motions in the direction of the street*] there was a narrow street, that is where he went to live. There was furniture in the house. It was fully furnished.

Q: So when you would come to visit them, you would see the Jewish furniture standing there, right?

A: Well, I came over, and I knew that they had nothing—they were beggars, you see—nothing. And then the wife of **Kazlovas** donned an astrakhan coat! How much did it cost, where could they have gotten it, the coat that **Kazlovas's** wife was wearing? Just think about it! I'm telling you, there was a pile of shoes, so I took a pair, but they noticed and came after and took them away from me.

Q: Who came after you?

A: **Kazlovas's** mother-in-law. **Kazlovas** was my cousin.

Q: And where was that pile of shoes located?

A: It was in the hallway, the hallway. There was a big hallway as you entered, the size of half of this room. I went to visit them, and as I was leaving, I took a pair of dark red suede shoes [*laughs*]. Well, she looked around and noticed that they were gone after I had left, so she ran after me and took them away.

Q: So what did she say when she took them away?

A: She said, "Give it back! You took ours." I responded, "They aren't yours. They belong to the Jews."

Q: And what did she say?

A: I gave them back. She said nothing.

[02:] 21:03:04 – [02:] 23:06:09

21:57 – 24:05

Q: Well, but the Jews—they must have had all kind of golden rings.

- A: Well yeah, they did. They probably were searched at the spot, because they were forced to undress until they were naked there, you see. Some of them, the richer ones, were undressed naked and their teeth were extracted too. Even I bought one tooth, because I needed an implant.
- Q: You bought a tooth!
- A: Yeah. Yes.
- Q: Oh, so one could buy a tooth?
- A: Yes, a gold one. I don't know how much I paid, but not much. When the Russians came, I bought the tooth from a woman named Didžiūnienė (surname indicates she is the wife of Mr. Didžiūnas).
- Q: And where is that tooth now?
- A: Here *[Interviewee points to a gold tooth in her mouth.]*, here *[Camera focuses on her mouth and remains focused for the next few minutes]*.
- Q: So was it recast, or was it put in the way it was?
- A: No, no, it was melted down. *[Camera is in close focus on the interviewee's mouth.]* When the war started, a dentist's office was established in our building to provide services at the rear front for soldiers who may have hurt their teeth or something. And a Ukrainian woman named Vera worked there. We were very good friends, so when I got this tooth, she put it in for me for free. And then there was—she also put in a silver tooth for free over here *[points to the other side of her mouth]* you know, and she also cast all the teeth for my mother—my mother did not have a tooth, but the gums had not healed so the tooth would not hold.
- Q: So your mother also had Jewish teeth in her mouth?
- A: No. She had ones made of her own osseous tissue. But when I needed a crown—my tooth had plenty of cavities, so she says, “It would be good to put a crown on it.” So then later she told me that she knew some a woman named Adomaitienė (wife of Mr. Adomatis)—her husband had shot the Jews—who had a tooth, and so I bought it. I just cannot remember how much I paid for it.
- Q: So when you went to Adomaitienė to buy it, you could choose the tooth you wanted?
- A: No. I say, “Do you have a tooth?” So she brought me one and said, “I do.” And she gave me the crown.
- Q: The crown? Was there a tooth inside?

A: There was, there was. It was coated [*in gold*].

[02:] 23:06:10 – [02:] 25:15:24

24:06 – 26:20

Q: So she brought it with the whole tooth?

A: Yeah, yeah. The tooth was coated. Well, teeth were being punched out, they were taking them out, by those—there was a doctor named **Dimbovskis**. All of his front teeth were made of gold, so I heard that they punched all of them.

Q: Were the people alive or dead [*when the teeth were removed*]?

A: Alive, alive, they were punching the teeth of living people.

Q: Where did it take place? Did it happen when they had already been undressed, or when they were still being driven?

A: Oh, I was told that it was after they had been bathed. They were bathed before the execution. They were sent to the Višakis River. And the others, who were old, you see, were shot with their clothes on.

Q: So how did they punch those teeth out? Well, when a person—if a person is still alive and you want to punch out a tooth, you'll have to restrain him.

A: Well, what does it mean for a murderer to punch out teeth, you tell me? Like nowadays criminals and bandits walk around and they can punch, take [*the teeth*] out and that's it, you see. And my sisters would tell me: "When you're going somewhere, don't laugh"—because my teeth here in front [*shows her teeth*] were all golden, only later they snapped, so I had them taken off. I had Rumalon injected three times—for my spine, you know—so it melted my bones and they deteriorated. So I had [*teeth*] implanted at a private clinic in Kaunas, and then later, I bought five Russian rubles that were recast [*into teeth*] for me.

Q: So you could buy those teeth only from Adomaitienė, or you could also buy them somewhere else?

A: Well, there were more—everybody had them. They said that they did, you know.

Q: Did you see it yourself, that people had teeth?

A: Well, I saw it when she brought them. So she had them for sure, but people said that many had them. There was Kupčinskas, but I don't know about him, you know—he was not denounced—you know, he had children, was poor and everything. So he also was—you see, after the war, when I worked at the shop, I bought a gold watch from her [*his wife*]. Where did she get it? How could they have a gold watch, when they were so poor?

[02:] 25:15:25 – [02:] 26:18:13

26:21 – 27:25

Q: Well, and what did she tell you. Where did they get the watch, according to her?

A: Well, she said, “I bought it under Smetona (President of Lithuania, 1926-1940).” She had gold under Smetona—how was one able to buy it?

Q: Well, and when you bought that tooth from Adomaitienė, did you ask her where was it from? Did she explain to you where she got that tooth?

A: No, no. She didn’t say anything. I went there and said, “I’ve heard you have a gold tooth—that you have gold teeth, that is.” She says, “I do.” So I say, “I would like to buy one.” She says, “Good.” I cannot remember now how much I paid then, I just cannot remember. Maybe I paid in ten-ruble notes, or maybe in [German] marks. No, it was ten-ruble notes, it was ten-ruble notes, because I bought it under the Russians. Yeah, in ten-ruble notes. I think I gave her three ten-ruble notes, but I cannot tell you now, you know. The rubles weren’t there yet, it was only the ten-ruble notes in the beginning.

Q: And where was her husband, Adomaitis?

A: He, well, he had shot the Jews, but he was a shoemaker.

[02:] 26:18:14 – [02:] 28:19:20

27:26 – 29:31

Q: And [where was he] when you bought the tooth?

A: He was working—he fixed shoes. He had served time in prison for many years. He wasn’t there then—right, he wasn’t there. He was in prison, not there, he had just been sentenced for fifteen or so years. Kaminskas had been hiding for seven years in this—in Veiveriai (town), very close to here, you see. So there was **Besuspariukas** (diminutive form of Besusparis), who was passing by on the way from Kaunas, where he had taken the car from brickyard. So he went to the canteen to drink a beer in Veiveriai. He [Kaminskas] had grown a beard. And so, he [Besusparis] recognized him and informed the police, and he [Kaminskas] was arrested immediately. Yeah, and then this—I was hospitalized in Veiveriai, and his daughter [Kaminskas’s daughter] worked there, so I was talking to this woman from Veiveriai—they didn’t know about him there—and they told me, “There is one person from Pilviškiai, who lives here.” And I asked, “Who?” She says, “Kaminskas.” And I say, “Oh, this Jew killer.” “Why do you say so?” she asks. “Oh my, what a murderer,” I say, “He shot the Jews and beat them, and everything, and he went on to live on their property.” “What are you saying?” And I say, “Well, yes.” And then another time I was travelling from Marijampolė with another woman, I say, “Where are you going?” Oh no—she says to me, “Move over.” I ask her, “Where are you going?” “To Veiveriai.” I say, “I am going to Pilviškiai. I will get off in Vinčai, because I have to change to a car that is going my way.” So she asks, “So you’re from Pilviškiai?” I say “Yes,” she says, “there is a Kaminskas who lives in our town. He is a very devout man, takes Communion every day, and Confession and everything.” I say, “That Jew killer,

that murderer?” “What are you saying, what are you saying?” She says, “He really did not kill anyone.” And then she says, “Oh, God has forgiven him.” I say, “Don’t you know the Ten Commandments of God? ‘Don’t kill’ and ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself?’” So she fell silent and did not talk to me anymore.

[02:] 28:19:21 – [02:] 30:42:02

29:32 – 31:59

Q: So, tell me now, those Jew killers, did they get rich after those massacres? With all that gold that they had plundered?

A: They didn’t get rich. They squandered everything on alcohol, parties, and were left with nothing.

Q: Well, but the same Adomaitis—if his wife was selling gold, it still was—

A: Oh well, what did they get for it? You see, they did not get rich at all. They did not get rich. We, although we had nothing, had the same as—and that is it.

Q: So they did not start building homes and everything?

A: No, no. Well, their children went to school. They had a son, you know. But in general—you know, other people’s wealth does not last, you don’t get to use it for long.

Q: Well, but you also have another person’s tooth.

A: Yeah, but I bought it. *[laughs]*. I bought it for money.

Q: Well, but it was cheap, so that means you benefited from it.

A: Well, yes, it was cheap, cheap.

Q: So that means you benefited from it.

A: Well, yeah.

Q: Weren’t you afraid to put that tooth in?

A: Who knows. It was recast. They did not put the same one in. It was recast, you know, it was melted down and cast again.

Q: *[pause]* But still, I can imagine, the person from whom the tooth was taken, must have been tortured.

A: Well, yes, that’s true, yes. In order to take it out, one was probably smashed with a hammer or something, maybe the butt of the gun or something like it, you see.

Q: So that tooth—

A: There is plenty of gold buried under the ground in Pilviškiai. Because some buried it, you see. They thought that maybe they would come back. They didn't think they were being taken to be shot, you see, they didn't think that. Had they thought that, things would have been different. I'm telling you, that **Gita Liurija** stayed locked up in between the walls for a few days at **Ulickienė's**. And then she heard that she was going to be denounced, you see, that people know about her. So she was sent to the countryside. And she stayed alive.

[02:] 30:42:03 – [02:] 32:50:15

32:00 – 34:13

Q: Well, and now tell me, after all those Jews had been killed, did you see any other Jews being taken to be massacred?

A: Well, I saw them being taken on the train, because later I went to—when the Janulevičius family moved to a Jewish house, completely, and everything, I stopped working for them. So I went to work at the railway station as a laborer, you know. We would weed the grass, when the army stopped, you know. The water supplies were here—nowhere in Kybartai—all the cargo trains with soldiers on them would stop here in Pilviškiai to get water. So those soldiers, you see, if they had to take a leak or something, they would get out on the railway and do everything there. Then we would go and clean everything after them, you see.

Q: Which station was it?

A: In Pilviškiai, the Pilviškiai train station. So well, **Levukas** with his family was living there. And, you see, he could speak German. So he [*talked*] to those women through the barbed wire window. You see, they were locked in and were asking for water, so we—the soldiers were walking around, we couldn't, you see. So he [*Levukas*] asked them, "Where are you coming from?" And she responded, "From Bulgaria." They were from Bulgaria. They were brought from Bulgaria. So they say.

Q: Did you hear them talking?

A: Yeah. Well he, that Levukas told me later that—well, we were friends with his two daughters who were also working there, at the railway—that they were brought from Bulgaria. So then [*he asked*] "Where to?" And [*she responded*] "We don't know where we are being taken," like that. They say, "We"—

Q: What language were they communicating in?

A: Jewish (Yiddish). German and Jewish languages are similar, very similar, you see. And he knew German, so Jewish—he could communicate in. So well, but later it was said that they were taken to Paneriai (Ponery). Paneriai is in Vilnius, right? So they were being taken to Vilnius.

[02:] 32:50:16 – [02:] 34:31:14

34:14 – 35:59

Q: How is this known? This is very important, you see.

A: Well, I don't know. Well, many say that [*they were taken*] not to Kaunas, but to—well, people say so.

Q: So when did this meeting take place?

A: Well it was, you know, it probably took place, you know, probably in [19]42.

Q: So it means after that first winter.

A: Yes, yes, then, that is when it took place.

Q: The first winter under the Germans passed and then—

A: Yes, yes. It was in [19]42, you see.

Q: And what month was it?

A: Well, it was summer, maybe closer to the fall.

Q: What train car were those people transported in?

A: Well, the cattle cars, the cattle cars. The windows were very high, you know, and they had bars on them. And then, when there is a train car, you know, there is a passage, a small staircase, so the Germans soldiers stood on them.

Q: How many times did you see trains like these pass?

A: Well, maybe four times. But not only from Bulgaria, people said they were brought from other places too.

Q: Through the Pilviškiai station.

A: Yes, through the Pilviškiai station, yes.

Q: And how many times did you see [*trains*] from Bulgaria?

A: From Bulgaria I only saw that one time. Well, the others may also have been from Bulgaria, you see, I don't know and cannot tell you, only about that one time. Later they were transporting people in trains with boarded windows, and I don't know what nationalities were there.

[02:] 34:31:15 – [02:] 35:23:08
36:00 – 36:52

Q: But maybe you know about other countries – what other countries were people brought from through Pilviškiai?

A: I don't know. Some said they were from France. Can this be true, or not?

Q: This is possible.

A: Could they have been brought from France? Well, it was said that maybe they were from France, you see. I'm telling you, we only talked to those—**Levukas** talked to only those, so that I can tell you for sure. But the rest, you know, there were more laborers and they were saying that people were brought from France, but you know, that's only what they said, but myself—but his—he talked to them himself and they told him – Bulgaria. So I understood that “Bulgaria” meant they were from Bulgaria. Because “Bulgaria”—no matter if you speak Russian or Germans—is still Bulgaria. Yeah.

File 3 of 3

[03:] 00:41:07 – [03:] 25:06:13
00:47 – 26:13

[03:] 00:41:07 – [03:] 02:39:20
00:47 – 02:50

Q: So now, madam, I want to ask you more about the trains that you saw. Now, that train—the one that people said were from Bulgaria—was it the first train that you saw, or did you see any before or after?

A: No, it was the first one, it was the first train [*that I saw*]. But later I was told—the other laborers were talking—that supposedly there had been another train from France. But I'm telling you that I cannot say anything, because they came at night. You see, trains passed Pilviškiai at night.

Q: And they stopped at night too?

A: Yes, they stopped at night too, while we worked there during the day, from eight to six, you see. So we only saw that one, I'm telling you.

Q: So, you saw that Bulgarian train?

A: That Bulgarian one, and he [**Levukas**] talked [*to the people on the train*], but others said that...they were talking that it had been from France, that—they had talked to those [*people on the train*] in French. Well, we laborers were working separately: some of us were cleaning one section, the others were elsewhere, you know. So, you see, not

everybody—we, for example, did not know the language, so we could not talk to them, we could not understand each other, you see. Well, but those, when they were passing, they said clearly “Bulgaria, Bulgaria.” They were asking in the Jewish language. So then **Levukas**—he was also a railway worker and lived in the barracks right next to the railroad—it is still there—so he lived there and asked [*the women on the train*] in German, and they told him. They asked for water. They say, “They’re taking us from France, we’re Jewish.” Well, in short, they said [*that they were*] Jews.

Q: And they said that they had been brought from France?

A: No, from Bulgaria, and [*that they were*] Jews. From Bulgaria.

Q: So that is the one that you heard.

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: And did you see that French train?

A: No, I did not see it.

Q: You only saw the Bulgarian one?

A: Yeah, yeah.

[03:] 02:39:21 – [03:] 04:50:17

02:51 – 05:06

Q: How many train cars were there [*on that train*], madam?

A: Well, many. It was a long train. Well, there were other [*trains cars*] attached to it. It was a long train, you know, maybe 30 or more cars, maybe 40. It was a long train. My sister was next to the water supply and could see the end of it beyond the station. There were many. It was a long train.

Q: How many train cars did you approach closer?

A: Well, we were approximately in the middle. Because the water supply was maybe 300 meters away, at the barracks. So we were near the barracks, so—so, you know, so—we were right next to the train cars, near the railroad. One track and then the other track. Here was the first track, which led to Kaunas. And the second one was for trains coming from Kaunas. So we were at the first track.

Q: Did all the cars look the same?

A: The same, the same.

Q: And, you know how on the cargo trains all kinds of train cars are attached sometimes—

A: No, no. In this case they all were the same—the same shape.

Q: Only [*train cars*] with people [*in them*].

A: Only with people, only with people. I'm telling you, we saw barbed wires and heads. they [*the women*] were climbing over each other's heads, or maybe they were standing there on something, you see, women were asking for water.

Q: There were only women there?

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: What age?

A: Well, there were women of all ages. They were 20, 25, even 30 years old, you know.

Q: There were no older women among them?

A: Well, the older ones could not climb over the others, you see.

Q: And now, how many small windows like the ones you described and through which they could look out were there?

A: There were two in each train car: a sliding door, then a small window on one end and on the other end. And the same from the other side.

Q: Were there bars?

A: The window was made—you know, open, with no glass and with barbed wires.

[03:] 04:50:18 – [03:] 07:21:08

05:07 – 07:43

Q: And next to that window probably—how was it: was there a face or two, or many heads?

A: No, there were many. Many many, maybe six next to that tiny window. And others behind them. Maybe they were lifted by others or something, you know. They wanted to know where they were being taken. They tried to look out.

Q: So it was a head over a head, right?

A: Yeah. Yeah, I'm telling you, maybe six, you know, the window was only this wide [*shows the width*], but, you know, the heads were all squeezed together.

Q: What do you think, how full were the train cars?

A: So well—they were packed, you know, when people are transported—

Q: Well, were you allowed to give them some water?

A: No, no. No, no. When they began talking, when they were taken past us, they told us to go away.

Q: So they didn't get any water?

A: No.

Q: *[pause]* Did you try to give them any water?

A: No, no. Well, we didn't even try, because we knew that the Germans were walking around and would not let us, no. We may have been shot. No one would take the risk in such cases.

Q: Well, and how long did the train stay there?

A: Well, they would usually stand there for about half an hour, until the water is pumped up, you see. And if another *[train]* had gone before it, one had to wait until it reached Kazlı Rūda, and only then the next train would be allowed to leave.

Q: Well, and then the train left?

A: Yeah, it left.

Q: Who was guarding the train?

A: Germans.

Q: And the German soldiers were going on the same train?

A: Yes, yes, yeah. And at the end *[of the train]* there was a separate train car for the guards. You see, they probably ate there, had a kitchen or something. It was passenger car. And here they were standing, you know, when there is a train car, and then like a passing under a tiny roof, you know, a staircase to go up. So they *[the German soldiers]* were standing there, to make sure that they *[the Jewish women]* don't escape, you know.

Q: And in that last car people were probably rotating: some were sleeping, the others guarding, right?

A: Yeah, yes, yes. First ones then the others, yes. Yes, they were rotating.

[03:] 07:21:09 – [03:] 09:22:06

07:44 – 09:49

Q: Well, ok, madam, so now I want to ask you about Baltūsis. So Baltūsis—did you know him before the Germans arrived?

A: I did. He was a student at a seminary. Then he left for—to study at a military school, you see. And we didn't see him around anymore. Then, when the Germans came, he appeared again. He was a “white striper” and a police chief.

Q: Was he wearing a uniform?

A: At first he was dressed in civilian clothes, and later he wore a uniform.

Q: So he participated at both of the massacres?

A: He did, he did, he did. Well, they were just a week apart. Why wouldn't he, you know? He did. I'm telling you, and then went to live on the Jewish property.

Q: And then he went on to live in a Jewish house?

A: Yeah, yeah, he did. He chose the richest Jews and went to live on their property and lived there, but later he—later he disappeared from here and—people say he was in Poland.

Q: And where did he live before the massacre of the Jews?

A: Before the massacre of the Jews he lived at his homestead, near Pilviškiai.

Q: So when the Jews still lived here, he would visit Pilviškiai from his homestead?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: How big was his family?

A: He had a boy and a girl – two.

Q: And a wife, right?

A: Yeah.

Q: What kind of house did they move to?

A: But his wife, she may have betrayed him—he—she married someone else and went to live in Barzdai—people say he was a “sribas” (a member of a paramilitary organization in the western Soviet Union, which fulfilled tasks of internal security in the Eastern Front during and after World War II), you know. And neither of them was killed. [*Telephone rings.*]

Q: Well, hold on.

A: I will not pick it up.

Q: Don't.

[03:] 09:22:07 – [03:] 11:38:17

09:50 – 12:11

Q: So he had been a student at a seminary. Where was the seminary?

A: Well, it probably was in Marijampolė, you see. And then later was expelled from the seminary for indulging in debauchery.

Q: Did you see him indulging in debauchery?

A: Yeah, he would fool around with girls during the outings on the fields of the parsonage. Oh Jesus, what was happening here!

Q: When he was still studying at the seminary?

A: Yeah, when he visited here, oh my. So then he was expelled from there, and then, you see—and then he went to study in Kaunas or somewhere—I don't even know. To a military school or something. Well, and then, when the Germans arrived, he returned here.

Q: Oh, so only after the Germans had arrived?

A: Yeah. Yes, yes.

Q: He was not here the year before the Germans arrived?

A: No, no. He was not, he was not. He was in Kaunas or somewhere. Well, and then he returned here and married a girl who worked at the bar, he married her. A girl from the bar.

Q: When did he marry her?

A: Well, I cannot tell you now. *[pause]*

Q: But it was after the massacre?

A: Before. Before.

Q: Before.

A: Before. Before. Before the massacre, before the massacre.

Q: So when he was still living at his homestead?

A: Yes, at his homestead home. He was living at his homestead. At his homestead, at his homestead.

Q: Well, and then later they moved to the—

A: To the Jewish house. They went to live on their property. And that wife lived here the entire time, until—until the war—until—he came back. Well, from Poland, you know. The Russians were approaching, so he returned to Pilviškiai.

Q: And when did Baltūsis disappear from Pilviškiai?

A: Well I'm telling you, as the war was ending—as the war was—as the Russians were approaching in [19]44. You see, he appeared here, and then disappeared again.

Q: I see.

A: He went to the woods.

Q: I see.

A: Already.

Q: And throughout the German occupation, was he in Pilviškiai or not?

A: No, he was not, he was—they shot the Jews, and then right after the massacre, he left for Poland.

[03:] 11:38:18 – [03:] 13:36:08

12:12 – 14:14

Q: And how do you know that he was in Poland?

A: Well, people were talking. Everybody was saying that he was in Poland. Everybody in Pilviškiai was saying that Baltūsis was in Poland. And later he would come back with a—how to—like—not moss color, not green, but a brownish uniform. It was different.

Q: He was wearing a uniform? How long would he stay, when he returned?

A: Well, I don't know. He spent a week or so here, you know.

Q: So it was a kind of vacation?

A: Well, yeah.

Q: Well, and what would people say, what did he go to Poland for, what was he doing there?

A: Well, people said that he was burning the Jews in some kind of furnaces or something. That's what they said. That's what they talked about, you know.

Q: Did people know what his position was or something?

A: Well, they said that maybe he was—the—the deputy head of the camp where he worked.

Q: Would they mention the name of the camp?

A: No, they would only mention the name of the town it was in – **Svencimas** [*She is mispronouncing Osvencimas: Osvencim, Auschwitz*] or something like that. **Svencimas** I think it was called. I don't know exactly.

Q: You're right, there is such a town.

A: So there, that's what it was. So that's where he was. Everything happened there.

Q: So people knew the name of the town while the Germans were still here?

A: They did, they did. That is what people talked, you know. I'm telling you, I—well, neither Baltūsis, nor anyone else had told me directly, but people talked, you know, that Baltūsis was going there, they would say, "He is there and there, burning people in Poland," they would say. That is it. That is all I know.

[03:] 13:36:09 – [03:] 15:11:14

14:15 – 15:33

Q: So he would come back home. Did his wife stay live here the entire time, in that Jewish house?

A: Well, yes, she did. Well, they had gold and everything. He had amassed some assets. Because he was the chief of the police, he could take as much as he liked. Maybe he would break into people's homes at night, robbing the Jews of their possessions.

Q: Well, and when did you see him again, at the end of the war?

A: At the end of the war I saw him—in 1944, I cannot tell you the exact month. In [19]44, yeah. When the Russians were already approaching.

Q: Was he wearing a uniform?

A: Yes, he was wearing a uniform. And then—after that, I did not see him again.

Q: And did his wife stay to live in that house?

A: Well, she did. Then she left, when the war—everything was shattered and she left. She was originally from Barzdai, I think. So she went somewhere else.

Q: And then later you only heard that he—already—

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: Well, tell me, when he returned, how was it that people want to honor him and build a monument? Where did you heard all about that? I am talking about now, the present. When did it all start?—

A: Well, there was—there was—well, there was an election to Seimas (the Parliament of Lithuania), so now—when the Seimas election was going on, you know—

Q: In which year?

A: Well—it [*Seimas*] was elected four years ago, right?

Q: So the last election?

A: Yes. [19]46, right? Yes.

Q: No. In [19]96, right.

[03:] 15:11:15 – [03:] 17:33:04

15:34 – 18:21

A: So, because I am the chairmen of the disabled persons [*association*], we get the district newspaper for free, you know. And now I am reading the paper *Santaka* and it is written there that: “The [*district*] council in Vilkaviškis has decided to immortalize the memory of Baltūsis, a member of the Tauras County (a territorial unit of the Lithuanian underground resistance movement) in Pilviškiai town.” Like that. So now I’m thinking, how could they decide to build a monument for such a murderer? And in our backyard, over here, where the coat of arms of Pilviškiai is standing now, you know. Well, and then people come from Vilnius. And Greimas—he’s from Vilkaviškis, you know, the chairman—and they invite—they invite everybody to a meeting. Well, I also went, you know. I cut out that newspaper article and—and I asked them—some historians from Vilnius had come—three or four. Or maybe—there were five of them in total, I think. So I asked, “When you’re elected to government, will you build a monument for murderers like Baltūsis?” I mentioned the article that I had read in the newspaper, so later they took that article from me, you know. I say, “We are not against [*honoring*] those, who have not done anything, who have not killed people – let’s build for them.” I say, “Teacher Gičiūtė, and then teacher Budraitienė. Build a monument to them,” I say. They were only disseminating—well, they were only typing proclamations. I say, “We’re not against that.” I say, “Pardon me, but not for those kinds [*of people*].” Well, and then Greimas, the leader of the Vilkaviškis branch of Lithuanian Democratic Party, “Lietuvos demokratų partija” (LDP) escalated the issue. Well, and my sister contributed. We were asked to

gather the information. And so we started gathering and escalating everything. We wrote to that—**Aparavičius**, or something.

Q: Yeah, to Alperovičius.

A: Yes, to him. You know, I even called him. I was given his number, you see. And I say this and that and—he says, “We will take measures.” My sister Justė wrote to the government. You know, she knows how to write, while me—you see, I only finished four grades under Smetona, so I could not do much, while both of them [*her sisters*] have higher education.

[03:] 17:33:05 – [03:] 19:42:05

18:22 – 20:35

Q: But you can corroborate, and that is also very important.

A: Yes, yes, yeah. So later we wrote everything down and sent it. It was sent—well, Greimas took it straight to the government, you know, and everything. Well, and then everything here—so then, to honor the day that he died, there was—there was a mass held in his name, you know, and—the “Šauliai” (Lithuanian Riflemen Union, a nationalistic paramilitary organization) from Marijampolė, Šakiai, and Vilkaviškis led a procession through Pilviškiai. With flags and shouts, you know. It looked like the Gestapo murderers were passing by. That is what it looked like, you know. I was scared. My sister heard everything from her home. I was looking through the window, you know. So they went to the district [*office*]. And they partied in the parish offices, you know. They were partying, drinking to honor the memory.

Q: So what year did all of this take place?

A: Oh it was maybe—maybe three years ago—and now they built that—they built a monument—no, a cross, in the churchyard with “Tauras” (the name of the unit of the underground resistance movement that Baltūsis belonged to) inscribed on it, well—“In memory of the partisans of Tauras district”—on a cross. So now one [*organization*] issues a newspaper called *Kronika*. So, I asked my sister to write and she is going to write that we have nothing against the cross that has been built—to commemorate these—but let’s look from another perspective: let’s build something for those infants and people who were killed by them. Build something for them, too, to stand next to the cross. So my sister is preparing to write, I don’t know if she will dare or not.

Q: But now the threat has passed [*of the monument being constructed*]?

A: Yeah. No, no, not yet. Greimas, when I talked to him last time, said that [*the decision*] has not been repealed. But he said, “We will repeal that decision.” The decision to raise a monument that has been adopted.

[03:] 19:42:06 – [03:] 21:24:12

20:36 – 22:22

Q: Well, and when they wanted—

A: They also wanted to rename the school after Baltūsis. Our high school.

Q: So how did they explain it? Why did want to honor him in that way?

A: Well, that he was a partisan and he was killed.

Q: That he fought the Communists?

A: Yes. But how many people and innocent children did he burn in Apšrutai! I have nothing against people whose hands are not dirty – let it be. Well, we can talk openly: what did the [*Soviet*] partisans do under the Germans? They overturned trains and exploded commandant headquarters. That is what they did. But they did not go and kill people, you see. And these [*Lithuanian nationalists*], they killed the postman Olekas from Pilviškiai, you know – **Maurutis, Grapkaitis** and the like. And also—they killed a man named **Seniukaitis**. It's all their work.

Q: They were afraid of fighting the army.

A: Yes, they were afraid. They were afraid, right. They didn't do anything against the army. They killed innocent people, you see.

Q: Madam, I want to ask you this, when all of those horrible things were happening under the Germans, when the Jew were also—tortured, harassed and then the first group was killed, then the other—the church was still there. What was said about it at church?

A: Nothing at all.

Q: Why?

A: Nothing at all.

Q: But the priest is obliged to tell the people that—how they are supposed to behave.

A: Nothing, nothing.

Q: That is why people go to church.

A: They probably did it with blessings from the priests. Not all of the priests, but there were some, who also put their hands on it. Like this **Stravinskas—Stravinskas**, the priest, do you see what he is saying and doing?

Q: Svarinskas (Alfonsas Svarinskas, a prominent figure in the Catholic Church of Lithuania, associated with the Lithuanian nationalist movement against the Soviets, while studying at a seminary in Kaunas), right?

A: Yeah, Svarinskas, yes. What is he saying—can you call him a priest?

[03:] 21:24:13 – [03:] 23:48:09

22:23 – 24:52

Q: And what were the priests doing here?

A: Well, there was priest here named **Pėstininkas**. Then there was the old **Švilpa**, also Dovydaitis, you know. I wouldn't say they were—**Pėstininkas** was also innocent. He was a very good priest, you see. He was transferred somewhere else and then—and so those bandits stored their guns there. And when they were found, he was sentenced, you see. He was a really good priest. I cannot say anything bad about him. When he returned from jail, he was a priest here, in Pilviškiai, you see. Not all of them. There are some priests who have their hands dirty, you know. Not all of them are saints.

Q: So, this is what I think, because the people of Pilviškiai were involved in torturing and killing, the priest should have come out and told people that they should not do it.

A: No, oh no. He should have, he should have. So well—there was a man named Radvilauskas. So he was a really bad priest, you see, Jesus. He was very bad.

Q: Radvilauskas.

A: Radvinauskas.

Q: Radvinauskas?

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: In Pilviškiai.

A: Yes, he was in Pilviškiai. Degutis—he was a holy man and a very good priest. Nothing. He is still living and working as a priest in Bagotoji (village). While Radvinauskas—he was very, you know—but in general, you see, what could have the priests said? What could they say? The priests themselves were afraid of the Germans.

Q: Well, and that Radvinauskas. Was he here when the Germans arrived?

A: Yeah, when the Germans arrived.

Q: So why do you say that he was bad? What did he do?

A: Well, he would be—you know, in his sermon he would scold people, saying, “You’re not working and not going anywhere,” meaning, well, “You have to work and serve,” meaning work for the farmers or something. “And you only want to live in the city.” Like

that, you know Or: “You come to church with make-up and try to seduce the men, look at them,” like that. Well, he mostly talked about debauchery.

Q: But did he say anything against the Jews?

A: No, no, nothing about the Jews. It was as though everyone was dead – nobody even mentioned the Jews, that they [*the killers*] were behaving badly or anything. Nothing at all.

[03:] 23:48:10 – [03:] 25:06:13

24:53 – 26:13

Q: Well, and did the Jew killers go to church?

A: They did, why wouldn't they?

Q: Even though everyone knew that they were killing people?

A: They did go, why wouldn't they go? They did, they did. Ramanauskas went, and Kaminskas did too. I'm telling you, Kaminskas went for Communion every single day. “He's a saint,” she said. I only responded, “You don't know the Ten Commandments of God: ‘Do not kill’ and ‘Love your neighbor like you love yourself.’”

Q: So they would go for Confession and get absolution?

A: Well, yes. The priest can do that. I'm telling you, a priest can. But I say that if God exists, he will not forgive them. I say that we will find out after death who is guilty and who is innocent. If there is anything out there.

Q: Well, the priest is not obliged to give absolution to everyone. He must decide for himself.

A: Yes.

Q: He probably could have refused to give them absolution.

A: Well, but then the next time when they come for Communion, he cannot give it. He could not give.

Q: So he shouldn't give it.

A: Well, yes.

Q: [*long pause*] Stop.

[03:] 25:06:13

26:13

Conclusion of Interview.