

MAŽUIKA, Petras
Lithuania Documentation Project
Lithuanian
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Tape 1 of 1

In this interview, Petras Mažuika, born in 1929 and a local of Nemunėlio Radviliškiai (Radviliškiai), discusses experiences during his teenage years when local Jews began to be murdered. He recounts his family's unsuccessful departure from Lithuania and the later shooting of his own father committed by a local band of "white-strippers." He goes on to describe the Jewish ghetto of about 100 people, and the day when all of them were shot. He also recounts particular stories, including the rape of a girl, the killing of a baby, and the priest of his church allowing various killings, as well as some information on the lives of "white-strippers" after the war.

[01:] 00:30:11 – [01:] 09:15:06

He introduces himself, mentioning his birth in 1929 in the town of Nemunėlio Radviliškiai; remembers first hearing about the war; explains his dad drove to Biržai (Biržus) to learn more and was advised to flee to Russia; remembers Dr. **Meizeris**, a member of one of the Jewish families they traveled with; explains Germans found them near Pskov (a Russian town near Estonia) and brought them back to Lithuania; names the two German commanders, **Ruoseki** and **Rasmieso**, who brought them; elaborates that his family was advised to leave because his father worked for the Lithuanian government; recounts that his father was handed over to the "white-strippers" and kept in custody for a while in Biržus, but was ultimately shot; adds that he too traveled with his family to Russia but was allowed to return home after his father's arrest; mentions that six other men from his town were shot along with his father and names two of them—**Dabaitis** and **Vaselis**; explains "white-strippers" wore a white band on their sleeves as a symbol of their affiliation and clarifies they were civilians; remembers the uniforms were only worn by some police officers, such as **Imbrasas** and **Kiela**; recounts how his mother found out about his father's death when she travelled to Biržus and spoke to his boss, **Kryžonauskas**; explains that **Kryžonauskas** took the food and clothing she offered but lied and said he did not know the status of the father; names some of the shooters: **Dumbra**, **Imbrasas**, **Kiela**, **Adomas Žemaitis**, **Kazienas**; describes how they got drunk before the shooting; elaborates that the men were shot near the forest, so as to fall into previously dug trenches; explains that he knows all of this because the shooters would tell these stories later; tells how **Kazienas**, who was in the army with his father's brother, casually recounted shooting his father while they both rode together on a train.

[01:] 09:15:07 – [01:] 14:28:12

He estimates about 100 Jews lived in Nemunėlio Radviliškiai; names the Jewish **Baciviai** [**Baciviū**, **Bacivas**] family; discusses how the Jews were forced into a ghetto; describes Kriauklių road, which served as the ghetto and contained a synagogue, Jewish homes, and a bathhouse; recounts that some Jews were allowed to work on farms outside of the ghetto; names the **Kučinskū** [**Kučinskai**] family, who lived on a farm; recounts how his mother advised them to run away after reports of shootings of Jews in Biržai, but the family said they would await whatever outcome was God's will; recounts how that family was shot a few days later; names **Tankinas** [**Stankinas**] as a Jewish man who ran away; remembers two Jewish teenagers who ran away and hid in a barn, but were handed over by the farmer and shot; recounts how **Tankinas** stayed with **Vykšteina**, who gave him away; recounts that **Tankinas** was shot by the "white-strippers;" describes a Jewish medic with a young family—they had a baby and the parents pleaded for its life; says the baby was taken and baptized, but then put in a bag and handed to **Zylinis**, a white-striper; recounts how **Zylinis** was on his way to dump the baby in the trench with other Jewish bodies, and when the baby started crying, he hit it against a tree until it died.

[01:] 14:28:13 – [01:] 20:09:13

He describes the ghetto; says that it was like a small town, and that they put the Jewish families mostly in their homes and in the bathhouse; talks about the shooting of the Jews; says he heard the shooting; recalls his mother had seen the trenches being dug the day before, and therefore got drunk so she fell asleep and did not hear the shooting; says the shooting took an hour and about 80 Jews were shot; remembers his impressions on visiting the site of the shootings later; remembers another story about a man, **Kaikelis Vainoris**, who grabbed a man named **Braumanas** by the neck and shot him, pulling him into the trench; talks about the life of the shooters after the war ended; explains some fled to Germany; names **Timukas** and **Dabaitis**, who both fled to America, and **Zemaitis**, who fled to England; recalls that the **Timukas** family stayed in Lithuania, and his son was barred from entry into higher education, so he denounced his father; mentions that many shooters were found and arrested, and some returned to Lithuania after ten years in prison.

[01:] 20:09:14 – [01:] 28:41:03

He talks about church; describes Father **Vinkšnelis** as a sort of town judge; mentions that **Vinkšnelis** probably okayed the killing of his father; explains that **Vinkšnelis** ran away and was hated when he was found and brought back to Nemunėlio Radviliškiai; describes **Vinkšnelis** as the head of the "white-strippers;" mentions an argument between a Latvian worker named **Eglis** and the priest; relays various other "white-striper" activities; mentions his friends **Šakalauskas** and **Sležas**; recalls a young Jewish woman named **Faktorytė** [**Faktoras**], who was raped by **Braumanas**; remembers how Jewish belongings were divided among town members and how his mother refused to take the clothing.