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# SILENCED MEMORY: THE SUPPRESSION OF THE PARTISAN WAR NARRATIVE IN SOVIET LITHUANIA

### Abstract

This article examines how the Lithuanian partisan war narrative was suppressed during the Soviet occupation, and how it nevertheless survived in partisan families. Drawing on partisan documents, the underground press, Soviet propaganda and oral history interviews with the children of former partisans, it explores the competing interpretations of the resistance, and the mechanisms of memory transmission. The study argues that, although the Soviet authorities systematically delegitimised the partisan struggle in the public discourse, the narrative endured in private, through silence, fragmented stories, emotional memory and everyday practices, later contributing to the restoration of public memory after Lithuania achieved independence.

KEY WORDS: Lithuanian partisan war, narrative suppression, intergenerational memory.

### Anotacija

Straipsnyje nagrinėjama, kaip sovietinės okupacijos metais buvo slopinamas Lietuvos partizaninio karo pasakojimas ir kaip jis vis dėlto išliko partizanų šeimose. Remiantis partizanų dokumentais, pagrindžio spauda, sovietinės propagandos šaltiniais ir buvusių partizanų vaikų sakytinės istorijos interviu, analizuojamos konkuruojančios pasipriešinimo interpretacijos ir atminties perdavimo būdai. Tyrimas rodo, kad, nors sovietų valdžia kryptingai delegitimavo partizaninę kovą viešajame diskurse, šis pasakojimas buvo perduodamas per tylą, fragmentiškus pasakojimus, emocinę atmintį ir kasdienes praktikas, o vėliau prisidėjo prie viešosios atminties atkūrimo nepriklausomoje Lietuvoje.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: Lietuvos partizaninis karas, pasakojimo slopinimas, tarpgeneracinė atmintis.

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## Introduction

Today, the topic of the anti-Soviet partisan war (1944–1953) occupies an important place both in public life and in the academic discourse in Lithuania. The partisan war, which emerged as a response to the Soviet Union's re-occupation of the country during the Second World War, remains relevant across the generations. In recent years, scholars from various fields – archaeologists, historians, legal scholars, ethnologists and others – have been fundamentally rethinking the significance of the partisan war, and seeking new and meaningful approaches to this topic. Such approaches aim not only to identify the main military confrontations or the political nature of the resistance, but also to shed a light on the everyday life and world-view of the partisans (see: Vaitkevičius 2020, 15–21). One characteristic of war history is that more open discussions about past military conflicts in a state typically emerge only once a new generation has grown up, or when new military action begins (Jackson 2013, 66). In this regard, Lithuania's anti-Soviet partisan war stands out: after the end of the resistance, the structures of the occupying authorities, which had a monopoly over the repressive system, remained in place and suppressed the memories of the armed resistance and the persecution experienced by the partisans, thereby preventing their spread in society (Šutinienė 2008, 131). It is noteworthy that Soviet propaganda entrenched the fact of the country's occupation not only politically and territorially, but also mentally, altering people's self-perception and their relationship with an independent Lithuania (Gailius 2008, 93).

Significant changes in the public discourse began to emerge around 1988, as the political circumstances started to shift. According to the US researchers of psychological trauma Jacob D. Lindy and Robert J. Lifton, even grief and mourning were 'arrested' in occupied Lithuania, with consequences that lasted several generations (Gailienė 2021, 96), including those born after the period of resistance and the persecution of partisans (arrest, exile and imprisonment in labour camps).

After the restoration of independence, assessing the scale of the damage caused by the occupation entered the political agenda, and became a focus of public interest. Thousands of memorials were erected at sites where partisans had fallen, extensive searches for and burials of partisan remains were initiated, and numerous autobiographical and biographical works were published. Contemporary texts related to the partisan war, including the periodical press, documents and art, were made available, and historians and local scholars released works devoted to specific individuals or local stories. Of particular significance was the opening to the public of the KGB archives, the initiation of the legal rehabilitation process for those persecuted during the Soviet occupation, and the enrichment of

the public discourse with authentic testimonies, an especially important development for the partisan community and their families.

The renewed interest in the anti-Soviet partisan war provided an opportunity for former partisans to speak out and revive their own interpretations of the armed resistance, bringing back the forgotten and silenced narratives that had once been shaped by the fighters themselves. However, research across various disciplines, particularly in psychology, highlights the fact that the radically changed political circumstances, which allowed the partisan war narrative to re-emerge in the public sphere, also brought to light previously unhealed psychological traumas in repressed communities and their families. It became evident that the severe shocks characteristic of the partisan war years – arrest, interrogation, exile, labour camps, the death of comrades and the loss of relatives – have long-lasting consequences. Regardless of whether these experiences are discussed in the family, their effects are transmitted from generation to generation (e.g. Vaskeļienė et al. 2013; Mažulytė, Rakovas 2014; Gailienė 2021). Understanding this phenomenon allows for a deeper comprehension of the processes through which the partisan war narrative was created, nurtured under conditions of occupation, and transmitted to future generations.

Based on documents from the leadership of the partisan war and ego-documents, the official Soviet press and archive materials, as well as testimonies collected by the author between 2019 and 2025 from the children of participants in the partisan war (the second generation), this article aims to provide a comprehensive assessment of the circumstances surrounding the formation and preservation of the partisan war narrative in families.

The article will further analyse several key aspects: the narrative created by the partisans about themselves and the war, the Soviet authorities' stance and the repressions imposed on the resistance, both physical and psychological, and, finally, the transmission of this narrative within families.

### Wartime narratives: the partisan perspective and Soviet propaganda (1944–1953)

Participants in the partisan war (armed fighters, messengers and active supporters) can be understood as a community bound by shared experience, value orientation and an identity shaped by similar symbolic representations (e.g. Pilipavičius 2007, 84). In the context of the resistance, shared experience was closely linked to the conditions of opposition and repression, which not only established certain principles of partisan action during the war, but also, after the restoration of independence, encouraged community members to come together

and develop new practices for commemorating and preserving the memory of the resistance. While the number of participants in the resistance was too large to establish close interpersonal ties among all members, the experience of the partisan war provided a solid foundation for the emergence and consolidation of this community, and for sustaining relevant symbols and narratives. In other words, social frameworks were created (Anderson 1999, 21) which structured the fighters' world-view, their approach to the resistance, and their efforts to sustain the collective memory.

Participants in the partisan war began to construct their own narratives while the fighting was still going on. Aware that achieving a physical victory was essentially impossible, the partisan leadership placed a particular emphasis on the ideological struggle, encouraging the publication of the underground press, fostering patriotic feeling among both members of the resistance and the civilian population, and seeking to intimidate representatives of the Soviet occupation and the repressive structures, as well as local collaborators. Surviving documents from the partisan leadership, correspondence, press material and fighters' ego-documents indicate that the participants consciously sought to create their own history of the resistance, one intended to influence their contemporaries, and to serve as a foundation for the history of the partisan war once Lithuania regained its independence.

In February 1949, the Lithuanian Freedom Fight Movement was established, a unifying organisation for partisans operating across Lithuania. The supreme leadership encouraged fighters to document their experiences and preserve them by various means. Until then, efforts by partisans to gather information on the size of the resistance, the objectives of the struggle and Soviet repressions had been spontaneous and uncoordinated. The fact that partisans actively maintained archives demonstrates their desire to become authors of the history of the resistance, recording facts and circumstances that were suppressed by Soviet propaganda (e.g. Petrauskienė 2017, 205). In this way, a distinct partisan legend was being created, a portrayal of an unyielding, fearless, and self-sacrificing individual, willing to forego personal well-being in the pursuit of freedom.

The underground press played a particularly important role in the partisan narrative, being read by both the partisans themselves and the local population. In seeking material and moral support from civilians, the partisans looked for ways to foster the national consciousness and the spirit of resistance through various texts. It is estimated that more than 100 periodical publications were issued during the partisan war (see Ruzgas 2010). In addition to periodicals, various proclamations, works of fiction and other printed materials contributed to shaping and sustaining the image of the resistance in society.

Partisan publications were rich in political news about life in the Soviet Union and events abroad, as well as reports on the illegal activities of the occupying and repressive structures in the occupied territory, alongside coverage of other current affairs. Texts of historical significance were particularly important for shaping the partisans' self-perception and identity. Frequently highlighted were interwar Lithuanian state holidays, such as 16 February (Independence Day, commemorating the 1918 separation from tsarist Russia), 8 September (the planned coronation day of Grand Duke Vytautas the Great, celebrated during independence as a national holiday), and 23 November (Army Day, commemorating the independent Lithuanian armed forces established during the interwar period) (e.g. Petrauskienė 2018).

The partisans also chose to commemorate state holidays as a way of legitimising their actions. Their writings emphasised the historical connections between participants in the resistance and the past, particularly with the era of the grand dukes of Lithuania, the network of book smugglers who distributed Lithuanian publications during the tsarist ban, and the volunteer soldiers who defended Lithuania's independence in the interwar period (see Paskočiumaitė 2020). These historical periods, along with selected figures and their achievements, allowed the partisans to claim that they were the heirs and continuers of Lithuania's centuries-long struggle for freedom.

A distinct partisan narrative about themselves and their struggle also emerges from ego-documents: letters to comrades and family members, diaries, memoirs, and similar writing. For the fighters who had the opportunity to record their personal experiences during the resistance, this practice could serve as a way of coping with thoughts of persecution that constantly threatened not only the partisans themselves but also their families (e.g. Jackson 2013, 57). The ego-documents of the Lithuanian partisans reveal a deeply personal and multifaceted narrative of their struggle, one understood not only as armed resistance against occupation, but also as a moral duty to continue the nation's long-standing struggle for freedom. In their diaries, the partisans sought to encourage themselves and others, to justify their choices, and to give meaning to the suffering, losses and sacrifices they endured. These writings are filled with reflections on death, duty and honour, and yet they also capture the ordinary realities of daily life, moments of doubt, loneliness, and longing for their family. Personal accounts illustrate how the act of writing became both a form of self-preservation and a conscious attempt to leave behind a testimony for future generations (Paskočiumaitė 2024, 32–38).

It is important to recognise that, whether consciously or unconsciously, the partisans responded to the messages spread about them in Soviet propaganda.

Shortly after the beginning of the second Soviet occupation in the summer of 1944, the NKVD of the Lithuanian SSR established a Department for Combating Banditry, which defined the partisan resistance as the activity of criminal offenders (Truska et al. 1999. 26). The term ‘bandit’ was widely used in Soviet documents and the media to describe the partisans. In addition, they were labelled as bourgeois nationalists, who defied the ideals of ‘the people’s unity’, Hitlerites collaborating with Nazi Germany, and were otherwise vilified and dehumanised through a range of derogatory terms designed to portray them as untrustworthy and unworthy of support.

In essence, the goal of the Soviet occupying authorities was to demonstrate that the armed conflict between the partisans and the new regime was not a struggle for Lithuania’s independence, but merely a contest for political power (Gailius 2004, 234–235). An alternative history of the partisan war was constructed in the public discourse, one based entirely on Marxist historical logic, which deliberately excluded the perspective of the resistance fighters themselves (Jurkutė 2016, 77–78). Myths, particularly those emphasising alleged partisan abuses, such as the seizure by force of food, clothing or household goods from civilians, had the strongest impact on those segments of society whose personal experiences had already fostered a negative attitude towards the resistance (Gailius 2004, 235). It is evident that this reinforced negative image of the partisans in the public space affected profoundly not only the fighters themselves but also their families.

Summarising the formation and dissemination of the partisan war narrative during the resistance, it becomes clear that the process was complex and multi-layered. Public partisan writings constructed an idealised image of the fighters as selfless heroes representing the entire Lithuanian nation, portraying their struggle as an act of heroic sacrifice, and a conscious embrace of the ideals of freedom. But personal writings reveal a more human dimension: the challenge of preserving family ties, the psychological and physical hardships, and other deeply traumatic experiences. In contrast, Soviet narratives depicted the partisans as tools of foreign powers, or as self-serving individuals seeking political dominance rather than Lithuania’s independence. These opposing interpretations coexisted throughout the years of the resistance, and continued to shape the collective memory long after the armed struggle had ended.

### The postwar narrative: memory under Soviet rule

The partisan resistance, which lasted for nearly a decade, ultimately ended without achieving its primary goal: the country remained under occupation, and

those who had participated in the resistance suffered severe persecution. Yet even after the armed struggle ceased, the battle over the memory persisted both in the public sphere and in private life. In the public discourse, the partisans' narrative was largely impossible to express, due to its ideological opposition to the Soviet regime and its conflicting interpretation of historical events. Similarly, the transmission of memory in families was hindered: former partisans and their relatives had to process their experiences, come to terms with the loss of many comrades, and cope with grief and the long-lasting effects of persecution.

Given the scale, intensity and duration of the armed resistance, the Soviet authorities could not simply erase this part of history. Instead, they sought to construct and disseminate their own version of events among the population. The Soviet narrative can be described as pseudo-history: it presented the partisan war as an internal conflict, deliberately omitting the crucial context of Lithuania's occupation, and the existence of an active repressive apparatus, which had, in fact, provoked the resistance itself (Gailius 2008, 94). Thus, two competing interpretations of the past coexisted, two sets of reasoning and values, a phenomenon observed across other communist-ruled countries at the time as well (Tismaneanu 2015, 165).

Soviet law enforcement and security institutions implemented preventive measures aimed at suppressing any potential armed or unarmed resistance in the future. In other words, they sought to re-educate society (Burinskaitė 2010, 101). According to Soviet ideology, the population was expected to view any opposition to the regime as hostile, while former participants in the resistance were also compelled to publicly repent for their previous involvement in the partisan movement (Burinskaitė, Okuličiūtė 2011, 379).

The Soviet-endorsed version of the partisan war was based on archival documents, material evidence and witness testimonies, all intended to portray the resistance as 'anti-people, driven by bourgeois nationalist politics, cruelty, and malfeasance' (Jurkutė 2016, 66). As during the war itself, the official narrative presented two opposing sides: the Soviet authorities, embodying goodness and progress; and on the other, 'imperialists', 'bourgeois nationalists' and 'Hitlerites', seeking to restore capitalism (Gailius 2004, 234; Rubavičius 2020, 73). It was clear which side a properly behaving inhabitant of the occupied territory was expected to support in order to avoid attracting the attention of the repressive structures.

Despite Nikita Khrushchev's 1956 speech at the 20th Congress of the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union), which condemned Stalinist crimes and initiated the release of political prisoners, former participants in the resistance still had no opportunity to publicly recount their experiences. The public dis-

course continued to suppress any discussion of the partisan war as a conflict between local inhabitants and occupying forces. It can be said that until 1958, the narrative remained intertwined with silence, deliberately avoiding a clear identification of who was really behind the term ‘enemies of the people’ (Jurkutė 2016, 82). In subsequent years, targeted efforts to reinterpret the partisan war emerged. For example, in 1958 the Central Committee of the LCP (Lithuanian Communist Party) issued a decree ‘on the use of archival documents to compromise former active participants in the resistance’. Earlier, in 1957, agreements recorded during meetings of the Party organisation at the State History–Revolution Museum initiated the collection of material related to the ‘cruelties of bourgeois nationalists’ and the deaths of ‘Soviet activists’ (Ibidem: 63). These measures reflected a clear intention to discredit the partisans, reinforced by the museum’s exhibits serving as a model for others across the republic.

In January 1960, Juozas Obukauskas, head of the 4th Directorate of the LSSR KGB, prepared a detailed memo on the ‘exposure of resistance participants through the press and radio’, outlining the tools and channels used. By early 1959, special editorial offices had been established to collect and systematise compromising information for public dissemination. The output included over 260 articles and documentary sketches in republic newspapers, such as *Tiesa*, *Sovetskaja Litva*, *Literatūra ir menas*, *Komjaunimo tiesa*, the committee’s newspaper *Tėvynės balsas*, magazines (*Šluota*, *Švyturys*, *Jaunimo gretos*), seven radio reports, four radio sketches, 13 Lithuanian radio programmes, two film sketches, five film journals, and photographs depicting goods seized from partisans by state security organs (Burinskaitė, Okuličiūtė 2011, 382–399). A notable example is the documentary sketch *Vanagai iš anapus*, which portrayed the leaders of the Lithuanian émigré bourgeoisie as ‘enemies of the people’ and exposed ‘the terrorist activities of nationalist bandits’ (Ibidem).

The narrative also incorporated anti-clerical elements, portraying priests as partisan accomplices who allegedly blessed acts of terrorism, thereby undermining the authority of the Church (Jurkutė 2016, 88; Burinskaitė, Okuličiūtė 2011, 391). Soviet propaganda claimed to be based on archival evidence and witness testimony, often drawn from partisan criminal cases, but ignored the scholarly conventions of source publication (Jurkutė 2016, 72). The best-known book series, ‘*Faktai kaltina*’, published nine volumes between 1960 and 1968 that reinforced the message that any struggle for Lithuania’s independence was futile and ideologically misguided.

Over the following decades, the content of the Soviet narrative remained largely unchanged, even as the frequency of publications varied with domestic and international political developments. By the late 1960s, under the KGB

chief Yuri Andropov, and following events such as the Prague Spring, the KGB intensified its surveillance and ideological efforts to monitor participants in the resistance and shape public opinion (Burinskaitė 2012, 116, 120). Propaganda aimed to create a society that was unwilling to resist or remember historic experiences. The partisan memory was also suppressed through cultural channels: eight feature films portrayed partisans as ‘bandits’, and Soviet activists as heroic; while any tangible traces of the partisan struggle were removed or destroyed, forcing veterans and their families to navigate a climate of fear and self-censorship (Petrauskienė 2017, 29).

The Soviet authorities not only sought to control the public narrative of the partisan war, but also continued to monitor and restrict the lives of former members of the resistance after the armed struggle ended. The broader system of persecution and propaganda directly shaped the conditions under which these individuals and their families could return, reintegrate, and recount their experiences. During Khrushchev’s destalinisation, political prisoners and deportees, including many former partisans and their families, were allowed to return to Lithuania. Between 1953 and 1970, around 80,000 persecuted individuals returned (Burinskaitė 2008, 121), but many faced new restrictions: some needed special permits, were barred from their home towns, were denied property restitution, or were monitored by the authorities (Anušauskas 2012, 273; Šutinienė 2022, 44–47). Even after the armed resistance ended, partisans were still seen as ‘disturbers of freedom’ rather than as loyal citizens (Ritter 2003, 92), but their personal accounts remained largely ‘untainted by Soviet fiction’, preserving authentic experiences (Gailius 2008, 99).

Persecuted individuals were further pressured by compromising materials collected by the state to coerce collaboration and information sharing (Burinskaitė, Okuličiūtė 2011, 379), which reshaped their identities and caused repeated trauma (Skultans 2005, 132; Vaskelienė 2012, 61; Gailienė 2021, 10). Coping often depended on faith, the support of fellow survivors, and family networks (Vaskelienė 2012, 118; Kazlauskas 2006). Those able to maintain a positive self-image were typically those with strong social ties or marriages within the persecuted community, which provided validation and understanding of their experiences (Šutinienė 2008, 131).

To conclude, Soviet public narratives shaped not only societal perceptions, but also how former partisans and their families engaged with memory, influencing what was said or left unsaid at home.

## Silence and narrative: the partisan memory at home

Following the end of the armed resistance, the transmission of the partisan memory shifted from the public space to the private sphere of the family. As scholars note, the traumatic experience of arrest, torture, exile, and the constant threat of surveillance, shaped how former participants and their relatives related to the past (Gailienė 2021; Vaskelienė 2012; Mažulytė, Rakovas 2014). Silence frequently became a protective strategy, intended to shield children from danger, prevent accidental disclosure, or avoid reawakening painful memories (Šutinienė 2008, 131). Yet, as Jackson argues, the lack of public recognition can leave those who resisted ‘stuck in a post-traumatic condition’, when the primary pathway out of trauma – telling one’s story – remains blocked (Jackson 2013, 66). Thus, in many partisan families, memory persisted not through direct narration, but through the atmosphere, emotional cues, gestures and fragmented statements.

For those who grew up during the resistance, knowledge often came through participation rather than storytelling. Children found themselves near partisan activity, even when adults did not explain its meaning. One interviewee recalled: ‘We would go “for mushrooms”, but we were carrying food in our baskets to leave in a hiding place under a spruce tree’ (Marija, b. 1937). Another remembered the sensory familiarity of the partisan presence in the home: ‘There was a big kitchen outside, and they were there. We, the children, were behind the wooden wall. I heard everything, what they said about politics, about the future, about the Soviet Union’ (Juozas, b. 1927). Such memories show that silence did not erase the past; rather, children absorbed it indirectly, through their surroundings, and through the emotional tensions in the household.

In some cases, contact with partisans was experienced as play or as everyday interaction, blurring the boundary between wartime danger and childhood. ‘A partisan took me and let me shoot. The gun recoiled and bruised my hand. I cried. My mother scolded him, and I shouted that it didn’t hurt’ (Arvydas, b. 1943). But the same respondent recalled hiding from gunfire and carrying a lifelong scar: ‘Shots, broken glass, and a bullet hit the stove door ... I still have the scar’ (Arvydas, b. 1943). These details show how the partisan experience became embedded, not as a coherent story, but as embodied memory, felt physically and emotionally, long before it could be understood.

However, silence did not always mean an absence of knowledge. Children often sensed the loss even when adults concealed it. ‘They hid the news from me that he had been killed, but I felt it. People looked at me differently’ (Arvydas, b. 1943). The inability to name events did not prevent their psychological impact. As Šutinienė notes, such unspoken yet present memories could shape the

identity and the emotional climate across generations (Šutinienė 2022, 44–47). In these households, memory lived in what was avoided, in the pauses in conversations, and in the emotional reaction to sights or sounds, such as a fear of uniforms or loud knocks on the door.

Other families chose gradual and natural transmission, where the partisan past became part of everyday understanding. ‘It was not that we ever sat down and she told everything. It was just life. By the time I understood the world, I already knew what partisans were’ (Kostas, b. 1957). Memory could also be passed allegorically: ‘Mother told a story about little mice in a beautiful place, attacked by big ugly rats from the East. That was how we learned about the Soviet invasion’ (Margarita, b. 1960). In such cases, storytelling served not only to preserve history, but to maintain moral orientation and cultural identity under occupation (see Gailius 2008).

Still others grew up in households where trauma remained partly hidden, emerging later, sometimes only after the parent’s death. ‘There was a scar. I asked “What is it?” She said “Nothing.” I learned the story only after she died’ (Danguolė, b. 1962). In these families, memory survived not through narrative clarity but through emotional residue: fear, pride, grief, unresolved longing. Such dynamics align with findings that the consequences of the partisan war reverberated across generations, regardless of whether the events were spoken about openly (Vaskelienė et al. 2013; Gailienė 2021).

Taken together, these patterns of selective speech, embodied memory and protective silence show that the partisan narrative did not disappear in Soviet Lithuania; rather, it was sustained in intimate and often fragile forms, carried within the emotional life of the family, and transmitted as much through what was *felt* as through what was spoken.

## Conclusions

This study has shown that the narrative of Lithuania’s anti-Soviet partisan war was shaped and reshaped across three interrelated arenas: during the armed resistance itself, in the Soviet political and ideological system that sought to suppress it, and in families who inherited the memory under conditions of silence, fear and care. While the partisans consciously constructed a heroic and morally grounded account of their struggle, the Soviet regime countered it with a narrative of criminality and betrayal, using propaganda, legal restrictions and cultural production to marginalise and delegitimise their experience. Yet this state-imposed narrative never fully erased the memory of resistance. In many families, the partisan past survived in subtle, embodied and emotionally charged

ways, transmitted not only through words, but also through atmosphere, gesture, absence and unresolved grief. Such forms of memory reveal the endurance of the partisan narrative despite systematic suppression, and offer an insight into how historical experiences of violence and resistance reverberate across generations. Ultimately, the persistence of these stories, however fractured or whispered, underscores the resilience of the cultural memory, and the enduring significance of the partisan struggle in shaping the collective Lithuanian identity.

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### NUTILDYTA ATMINTIS: PARTIZANINIO KARO PASAKOJIMO SLOPINIMAS SOVIETŲ OKUPUOTOJE LIETUVOJE

#### Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamas Lietuvos partizaninio karo pasakojimo formavimasis, jo slopinimas sovietinės okupacijos metais ir perdavimas tarp kartų. Tyrimo aktualumą lemia tai, kad nors sovietinės propagandos pastangos diskredituoti partizaninį pasipriešinimą yra plačiai nagrinėtos istorikų darbuose, gerokai mažiau dėmesio skirta tam, kaip partizaninio karo pasakojimas išliko šeimose ir kokiais būdais buvo perduodamas okupacijos sąlygomis. Tyrimo tikslas – atskleisti, kaip buvo kuriamas partizaninio karo pasakojimas, kokiomis priemonėmis sovietų valdžia siekė jį paneigti ir kaip jis buvo išsaugotas partizaninio karo dalyvių šeimose.

Tyrimas atliktas remiantis partizanų vadovybės dokumentais, pagrindžio spauda, partizanų egodokumentais, sovietinės propagandos ir archyviniais šaltiniais bei 2019–2025 m. autorės surinktais buvusių partizanų vaikų pasakojimais. Šie skirtingų tipų šaltiniai leido palyginti partizanų ir sovietų kuriamus pasakojimus bei įvertinti šeimos atminties vaidmenį perduodant partizaninio karo patirtis vėlesnėms kartoms.

Pirmojoje straipsnio dalyje analizuojama, kaip partizanai kūrė savo kovos pasakojimą. Nagrinėjama partizanų spauda, dokumentai ir asmeniniai tekstai rodo, kad partizanai sąmoningai siekė įprasmiti savo kovą kaip Lietuvos valstybingu-

mo tradicijos tąsą, pabrėždami pasiaukojimą, moralinę pareigą ir istorinį ryšį su ankstesnėmis laisvės kovomis.

Antrojoje straipsnio dalyje aptariama sovietinės valdžios vykdyta partizaninio karo pasakojimo slopinimo politika. Parodoma, kad sovietų režimas nuosekliai kūrė alternatyvų pasakojimą, kuriame partizanai vaizduoti kaip „banditai“, „buržuaziniai nacionalistai“ ar išskirtinai asmeninių tikslų siekiantys „ramybės drumstėjai“, o tokia interpretacija buvo įtvirtinama per švietimo sistemą, spaudą, muziejus, kino filmus ir kitus propagandos kanalus.

Trečiojoje straipsnio dalyje analizuojama partizaninio karo atmintis šeimoje. Sakytinės istorijos interviu atskleidžia, kad okupacijos sąlygomis partizaninio karo patirtys dažniausiai buvo perduodamos ne nuosekliais pasakojimais, bet per tylą, fragmentiškus prisiminimus, emocinę atmintį ir kasdienes praktikas. Tokios atminties formos atliko apsauginę funkciją, tačiau kartu leido išsaugoti alternatyvų istorinį pasakojimą net ir viešojoje erdvėje dominuojant sovietinei interpretacijai.

Tyrimas leidžia daryti išvadą, kad sovietų valdžiai nepavyko sunaikinti partizaninio karo pasakojimo – jis buvo perkeltas iš viešosios erdvės į šeimos aplinką, kur įgijo naujas perdavimo formas. Atkūrus Lietuvos nepriklausomybę, būtent šiose šeimose išsaugota atmintis tapo svarbiu šaltiniu gaivinant viešąjį partizaninio karo pasakojimą ir kolektyvinę istorinę atmintį.