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Apathy and/or Radicalism: Green Politics in Lithuania

Master's Final Degree Project

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Summary

Apathy and/or Radicalism: Green Politics in Lithuania aims to analyse the reasons behind apathy towards ecosophical issues; to investigate the topic of, as well as to suggest a certain type of radicalism as a base for effective green politics, and a way out of the culture of apathy in Lithuania. The ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine and genocide in Gaza is threatening to redraw the (conceptual and actual) map of the world as we know it today. And yet, Katy Perry is going to space in disguise of promoting feminist values and brands are happily selling us fast production packaged in rough cardboard packaging, ticking the imaginary boxes of sustainability and social responsibility. As overlapping global and local crises combine, citizens face not only material hardship but also an existential fatigue that breeds apathy towards any active participation, mostly importantly, the political one.

The first chapter explored this apathy in both individual and institutional dimensions, revealing it not only as passive disinterest, but as a product of overload of information, prevailing historical narratives, and a shift in perception of reality due to geopolitical changes. The second chapter investigates radicalism, exposing a double standard in its perception. While youth-led actions, particularly when emotionally expressive or digital-first, are frequently mocked or dismissed as immature, at the same time figures like Kaunas mayor Matijošaitis are able to wield regressive radicalism under the guise of efficiency and stability – an apolitical authoritarianism that echoes Soviet control mechanisms. This contrast highlights the danger of normalized radicalism: political figures with economic and social capital can disguise power consolidation as progress. The final part of the thesis mapped out a radical praxis appropriate to Lithuanian political culture, calling for a turn from ecological theory as mysticism toward embodied, shared, and consistent action. Inspired by Sultana's work on political ecology, MacIntyre's virtue ethics, and Braidotti's call for affirmative futures, it argued that practice must become central to any political or ecological project. While Ismail warns that degrowth may alienate those already living in scarcity, a deeper, de-traumatized model of self-reliance based on cooperation rather than survivalism could offer a way forward. Reclaiming leftist ideas, divorced from authoritarian legacy and rooted in mutual aid, can allow Lithuania to construct a radical green politics that is both locally grounded and globally relevant.

Furhter research within this topic could be in the intersection of ecology and post-colonial context. As current perspectives that see Soviet occupation as colonialism, and thus applies the corresponding theory, is lacking. Apart from referenced Violeta Kelertas "Baltic poscolonialism" (2006), there are no modern works of philosophy of Lithuanian post-colonialism in such volume, apart from a few theses from Baltic students. Furthermore, the topic of left trauma is still being discussed quite

sparsely. If the discussed green political alternatives would be considered legitimate and plausible to implement, then the reconceptualization of Marx, should happen widely within academia first, and then transform to public discourse too. The same can be applied to in-depth anthropological studies within the topic of cultural-political narratives, that currently stops us from implementing truly inclusive, participatory approaches to policy-making and over all societal formations.

Santrauka

Apatija ir/arba radikalumas: žalioji politika Lietuvoje siekia analizuoti apatijos ekosofinėms temoms priežastis, tirti radikalizmo sampratą Lietuvos kontekste ir siūlyti tam tikrą radikalumo formą kaip pagrindą veiksmingai žaliajai politikai bei kaip būdą išeiti iš apatijos kultūros Lietuvoje. Rusijos invazija į Ukrainą ir genocidas Gazoje grasina iš naujo perbraižyti pasaulio (tiek konceptualų, tiek realų) žemėlapį, kokį jį pažįstame šiandien. To akivaizdoje, Katy Perry vis dėlto skrenda į kosmosą prisidengdama feministinių vertybių reklama, o prekės ženklai su malonumu mums parduoda greitos gamybos produktus, supakuotus į grublėtą kartoną, tarsi pažymėdami įsivaizduojamus tvarumo ir socialinės atsakomybės langelius. Susikertant pasaulinėms ir vietinėms krizėms, piliečiai susiduria ne tik su materialiniais sunkumais, bet ir su egzistenciniu nuovargiu, kuris gimdo apatiją bet kokiam aktyviam dalyvavimui – ypač politiniam.

Pirmasis skyrius tyrinėjo šią apatiją tiek individualiame, tiek instituciniame lygmenyje, atskleisdamas ją ne kaip paprastą abejingumą, o kaip informacijos pertekliaus, vyraujančių istorinių naratyvų ir suvokimo apie realybę pokyčių, kuriuos lemia geopolitiniai procesai, pasekmę.Antrasis skyrius gilinosi į radikalizmo sampratą, atskleisdamas visuomenėje taikomus dvigubus standartus. Nors jaunimo inicijuoti veiksmai, ypač emocingi ar skaitmeninėje erdvėje vykstantys, dažnai yra išjuokiami ar nurašomi kaip nebrandūs, tuo pačiu metu tokie veikėjai kaip Kauno meras Matijošaitis sugeba taikyti regresyvų radikalumą prisidengdami efektyvumo ir stabilumo kauke – taip įgalinamas apolitinis autoritarizmas, primenantis sovietinės kontrolės mechanizmus. Šis kontrastas atskleidžia normalizuoto radikalizmo pavojų: politiniai veikėjai, turintys ekonominį ir socialinį kapitalą, gali konsoliduoti galią ir pateikti tai kaip pažangą. Baigiamojoje darbo dalyje pateikiamas radikalios praktikos žemėlapis, pritaikytas Lietuvos politinei kultūrai, kviečiantis atsitraukti nuo ekologinės teorijos kaip mistikos ir pereiti prie įkūnyto, bendro ir nuoseklaus veiksmo/praktikos. Remiantis Sultanos politinės ekologijos samprata, MacIntyre dorybių etika ir Braidotti raginimu kurti afirmatyvią ateitį, teigiama, kad praktika turi tapti bet kokio politinio ar ekologinio projekto ašimi. Nors Ismail perspėja, kad mažinimo (degrowth) politika gali atstumti jau dabar stokojančias visuomenės grupes, gilesnis, nuo traumų išlaisvintas savarankiškumo modelis, grįstas bendradarbiavimu, o ne išlikimu, galėtų tapti tikru žingsniu į priekį. Kairiųjų idėjų reabilitacija, atskirta nuo autoritarinio paveldo ir grįsta abipuse pagalba, gali leisti Lietuvai kurti radikalią žalią politiką, kuri būtų tiek lokali, tiek globaliai reikšminga.

Tolesni tyrimai šia tema galėtų būti plėtojami ekologijos ir postkolonializmo sankirtoje. Šiuo metu trūksta perspektyvų, kurios sovietinę okupaciją matytų kaip kolonializmo formą ir taikytų atitinkamą teoriją. Išskyrus Violetos Kelertas sudarytą rinkinį Baltic Postcolonialism (2006), šiuo metu nėra plataus masto filosofinių Lietuvos postkolonializmo studijų, nebent pavieniai Baltijos šalių studentų

darbai. Be to, kairiųjų traumos tema vis dar analizuojama labai fragmentiškai. Jei siūlomos žaliosios politinės alternatyvos būtų pripažintos kaip realiai įgyvendinamos, tuomet iš naujo permąstyta Marx'o koncepcija pirmiausia turėtų įsitvirtinti akademinėje aplinkoje, o po to pereiti ir į viešąjį diskursą. Tas pats pasakytina ir apie giluminius antropologinius tyrimus kultūrinių-politinių naratyvų srityje – tų, kurie šiuo metu stabdo mus nuo tikrai įtraukiančių, dalyvavimu grįstų politikos formavimo procesų ir platesnių visuomenės struktūrų kūrimo.

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Introduction

In the age of ecological collapse, the gap between political rhetoric and actual change grows wider. Across the globe, we see signals of environmental neglect: the current president of the United States Donald Trump's withdrawal from Paris Climate Agreement and proud chants of "drill, baby, drill", promoting extractivist energy politics, does not seem like a light-handed populist marketing strategy anymore, but rather as an intentional attempt to destroy the ever so fragile state of nature worldwide. Social stability and human rights are increasingly eroding too, with frightful examples like anti-democratic and discrimination-induced politics of Hungary and far-right governance in Germany. In the background of all of this, the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine and genocide in Gaza is threatening to redraw the (conceptual and actual) map of the world as we know it today. And yet, in the face of all of this, Katy Perry is going to space in disguise of promoting feminist values and brands are happily selling us fast production packaged in rough cardboard packaging, ticking the imaginary boxes of sustainability and social responsibility.

These contradictions are surely not just international phenomena, they echo sharply in Lithuania too. Genuine green movement, such as "Lietuvos žaliųjų partija" (en. Lithuanian Green Party), in the last parliament elections of 2024 were left in the bottom of the political party pool, higher in popularity only than alt-right, nationalist, Euro-sceptical populists with criminal records. Destroyed by the agrarian, sobriety-preaching technocrats from "Lietuvos valstiečių ir žaliųjų sąjunga" (Lithuanian Union of Peasants and Greens) in the previous government, the idea of green politics in Lithuania seems misinterpreted, exhausted by wrong means or simply non-existent. Meanwhile, current government is bedazzled with gems like fur-farming enthusiasts and attempts to legalise heavy deforestation, while not forgetting the international representation too, with non-English speaking members in European Parliament, confidently promoting woman's place in this world as a thing of beauty and grace, not heavy labour (15min.lt, 2025).

As overlapping global and local crises combine, citizens face not only material hardship but also an existential fatigue that breeds apathy towards any active participation, most importantly, the political one. For example, the post-Covid rise of borderline-fascist movement, which combines the whole spectre of pro-Russian, anti-LGBTQ+, anti-vaccine and anti-anything-modern-democracy-related marginals, has distorted the idea of street activism from a purposeful citizen practice into a circus, livestreamed in local online propaganda channels. Thus, the disassociation from such groups, labelled publicly as radical, can lead to quiet reconciliation and decrease in reasonable fights for justice.

In terms of systematic change, local governmental policies, business strategies and school programmes undergo reformations to fit to European Union sustainability standards, but the true meaning of that seems to be lost in the bureaucratic regulations on paper, while not being neither understood by operators fully, nor implemented effectively in practice. The European Green Competence framework ironically acknowledges that "sustainability means different things to different groups of people at different times". (European Commision, 2022) From this, a question arises: what does sustainability mean in Lithuania, culturally and politically? And most importantly, what are we trying to sustain, and at what cost?

Such turmoil, while seeming tragically funny at first, does not fail to deepen the despair and proposes questions of how are we ignoring all this and how will this ignorance affect our future? If sustainability is all about clever resources, respectful discussions and long-term, low risk, balanced

effectiveness, then it is a perfect opposition of political radicalism, in which lies the heated arguments over exaggerated plots, reactive public behaviour and high-risk short-term practical decisions. But if we believe the latter to be the only way to wake up from this ignorant post-political bliss, perhaps we need to separate ecology from sustainability, and re-associate it with radicalism.

This thesis aims to analyse the reasons behind apathy towards ecosophical issues on levels of self-identity, social relations and bureaucratic systems; to investigate the topic of radicalism – the current manifestations of and people's reaction towards it – as well as to suggest a certain type of radicalism as a base for effective green politics, and a way out of the culture of apathy in Lithuania.

Following the key problematics suggested above, the research objectives are as follows:

1. To investigate the cultural, historical, and psychological roots of individual and systemic apathy towards ecosophical thinking and green politics in Lithuania.

2. To examine how radicalism is perceived, suppressed, or manipulated in Lithuanian political discourse, and how it can be redefined as a positive political force.

3. To identify the intersections of ecological theory and practice, and to propose an alternative, democratically grounded green radicalism as a response to national and planetary crises.

4. To provide suggestions for futher research within this topic.

The main philosophical directions in the background of this thesis and key authors are: psychoanalyst and political philosopher Felix Guattari, with his essay "The Three Ecologies" (1989) and some of his work with Gilles Deleuze in "Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia"; Andrew Dobson and his dark green politics from "Green Political Thought" (3rd edition, 2000); notions of praxis and crucial insights on colonialism in several papers of feminist political ecologist Farhana Sultana; Lithuanian philosophers Gintautas Mažeikis, Andrius Bielskis, as well as other scholars.

To avoid the confusion, described by Dobson, between **ecologism** (as in itself ideological and deep green) and **environmentalism** (as technocratic, and by this mean surface-level light green); and to provide more depth to the basic **ecology**, which in my mind does not illustrate the interconnectedness of the issues well enough, the umbrella term mostly used in this work is Guatarri's **ecosophy**. According to the author of the term, it is integrated (so we do not need to repeat the weight of green actions towards a whole spectre of areas) and harmonious (so we can assume this term to be a balanced middle ground in a polarised topic), and it combines all three – environmental, social, and mental – ecologies. Thus, ecosophy in this thesis defines a mindset and a behaviour that is proactive and aimed at the benefit of the physical natural environment, the spiritual and material common good, and democracy as a way to run international governance. At the same time, when the word **political** is used, it already has in itself the ecosophical aspect, as policies do not operate in vacuum and are always related to cultural formations.

Due to personal inclination towards posthumanist philosophy, the following work is presented from a perspective of pity, shame, and guilt towards current social, mental and environmental ecologies worldwide and in the local context, and a blame directed towards a self-concerned species of humans, so talented in justifying any damage for the sake of their own good (or equally talented in bluntly objecting any damage being made). At the same time, while understanding that unprecedented times open up a playground for both destructive and creative approaches, this research still focuses on the

last glimpses of hope of sudden enlightenments, or forced rational cooperation and mobilisation for the sake of common good, even in the most unorthodox ways. So that if worse comes to worst, at least we know we tried.

1. Apathy

The idea to start the analysis of the local green political scene from the individual, originated from Dobson's statement that

> "Central to the theoretical canon of green politics is the belief that our social, political and problems are substantially caused by our intellectual relationship with the world and the practices that stem from it." (2000, p. 36).

Even though the notion of **starting from within**, commonly used by various spiritual leaders, motivators and mentors of growth, is faulty in the context of systematic problems, such as the environmental catastrophe in question, personal perspective towards questions of ecosophy is still crucial in understanding the national situation within this topic and implementing interdisciplinary green change. In addition to the aforementioned canon of green politics, Historian Yuval Noah Harari said that "the greatest crimes in modern history resulted not just from hatred and greed, but even more so from ignorance and indifference" (2018, p. 240). These thoughts will be applied to the current political culture of Lithuania to suggest that apathy towards anything other than reflection in the mirror is one of the biggest reasons for ineffective green strategies and political turmoil.

The concept of apathy, in this thesis, means both a conscious ignorance for, and a programmed unwillingness to partaking in political activism. This applies to both the theoretical interest (general grasp of national politics and its' relation to the global scene) and practical means (voting, participating in protests and demonstrations, joining petitions, doing community work, initiating actions of systematic change in other fields). Sociologist and professor in political philosophy Greg Yudin, while describing the intricacies of the (lack of) Russian opposition, even goes to state that distancing oneself from political participation creates the conditions for a ruling of fascist power (Bielskis, 2022). So, what is intended to be an act of difference for **both sides**, a performative statement of **being above all this** (which oftentimes masks the laziness to think about polarising topics and choose sides), can become a reverse act of contributing to the **wrong** side. Thus, analysing the patterns for political apathy can contribute to the demolition of social movements that are putting national safety at risk.

Although the Greek word *apatheia* (freedom from suffering), was originally considered to be a positive quality of a person (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.), in the current global **situation** (for the lack of a better term to describe the creeping feeling of the end of everything), apathy looks like stupidity at best, and intentional evil at worst. It would seem logical that if the room around you is burning, you would do something to stop the fire from spreading or save yourself from burning. Harari's "blessed ignorance" (p. 240) could perhaps be seen as an appropriate approach to political turbulence if we were talking about minor inconveniences and heated debates in a local town election. Now, the global room of democratic, environmental, social and economic stability is burning with an open fire, and yet we still hear the proudly announced "I am not into politics". So, the questions arise: where is this coming from? How willing for action Lithuanians are in times of crisis? (How) does the relationship between citizens and institutions affect green initiatives?

1.1. Individual apathy

Philosophically, it could be stated that individual apathy manifests itself as a result of a universal overload of information that people today are exposed to. Although this argument could probably be

used to explain apathy towards any other complex topic nowadays, but the never-ending stream of updates, opportunities, discounts and worldviews capitalism is throwing against a modern person is unprecedented and should be considered as a reason for specific (in)activities. Harari states that the idea that the problems of humankind kind were always the same (usually used to undermine the emotional suffering expressed by the current generation) cannot be true (p. 172): our ancestors had to deal with hardships that were limited to one community, one village, one town, while the issues of people today are interconnected, complex and global. If we were to put a condensed and heavily generalised view of what reality we live in today, then that picture is of a person so bombarded by new worldwide trends and tragedies every second of everyday, that the only way not to lose their mind is to grasp opposite ends of every spectrum. No matter what background a person comes from or what political views does one have, it is difficult to avoid contradictions both in thought and in action. People around us are both meditating with pacifist shamans and crowdfunding for military equipment, juicing celery and campaigning for vaccines, wearing second-hand clothing and posting the pictures of it with latest devices, promoting zero-waste lifestyle but traveling to the other side of the world a few times a year.

It does not become easier in the deeper layers of construction of self either. Spiritually, individual apathy towards ecology in Lithuania may be built on the paradox that most citizen already considers to be caring for the environment. The local context for green issues inevitably touches the area of identity and symbols that Lithuanians tend to associate with. Nature, both as an intangible concept, that carries folk mythology, ethnology, traditional arts, culture and crafts within it, as well as tangible practices of garden-keeping, mushroom picking and booking every single water-front accommodation-site from May till September, is an important part of life for the average Lithuanian. So, do Lithuanians care about nature? – yes. But when it comes to care that actually makes a positive impact towards its' preservation in a broader sense, it is important to separate the theoretical care (as in, do you **like** nature?) and the practical care (do you take any **actions** to protect it?). If so, then tackling the questions of deep green politics tackles the very core of what it means to be Lithuanian and adds another subtle layer to the construction of a new lifestyle.

Practically, individual apathy towards ecosophical activism could possibly be rooted in the recent history of pursuits of independence. It could be argued that the current political culture of Lithuania is based on such chronological narrative: years ago, our brave politicians, with a help of our selfless grandparents and parents, have fought for independence and won, and now we have to **upkeep** it. Making bold protest signs, singing songs near the Parliament and demolishing of sculptures of authoritarian leaders are things of the past. The thing of the present is the peaceful maintenance. However, as the peaceful **now** has changed, the respect for the previous generation that brought us freedom has to be accompanied by the preparation to do the same, so that the next generation can have chance at an equally peaceful **now**. Thus, it can be stated that during the times of political unrest, an attempt of deep green activism reshapes the narratives of both individual and national memory too (and does not make it any easier to implement greening strategies nationwide).

Combining all of these stirrings, it becomes clear that the weight of the interconnectedness of the changing personal, geographical, political reality is one of the reasons for the apathy towards ecosophy: trying to stay mentally and physically well does not leave much room for dismantling the oppressive systems. But is it a reason substantial enough to justify the avoidance of political participation? Is the leisure-in-nature-oriented, but not-a-crazy-vegan citizen balanced or hypocritical? Is the apolitical-for-their-mental-health-sake person rational or self-conflicted?

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1.1.1. Civic empowerment

One way to evaluate the state of individual apathy towards ecology is from the perspective of civic activities. If, in the framework of a posthumanist and eco-centric (as a direct opposition of egocentric) approach, we take the Aristotelian Self, who is political (involved in community work for the common good) by nature, as a role model, we see that the current situation does not quite match this ideal and the idea of dirty, corrupted and to-be-avoided politics still occurs publicly as a common narrative. And we see the manifestation of this narrative in election seasons too: political analyst Paulius Gritėnas, reflecting on Lithuania's 2020 parliamentary elections, remarked that "our politics has been permeated by boredom", and the cliché rhetoric of politicians no longer inspires trust, nor does it motivate civic participation. The noise of electoral campaigning, he argues, "just rushes past you and never really touches you" (nara.lt, 2020). Yudin, while discussing the strategies that enables authoritarian ruling, says that such narrative of "people in power will still do what they want to do, and they will achieve their goals, whether you oppose it or not" (Bielskis, 2022) creates conditions for passive agreement with the authoritarian power. What is precisely why apathy of civic participation should be considered not only as a topic for philosophical discussions, but as a real threat towards national safety, even if the substantial effects would only become visible after a long term.

It seems that the seeds of such non-participation are already sown. The dynamics between citizens and the governing institutions are illustrated quite well by the annual Civic Power Index (CPI), conducted by the Institute of Civic Society. Results of the last couple of years are similar and reveals intricate details about power dynamics in Lithuania, namely citizen attitude towards governmental bodies and towards their own civic power. It appears that the way people evaluate the importance of their personal initiative has a shade of apathy too – CPI 2023 showed that the general belief among people that they can make a difference has decreased in recent years. Lithuanian citizens feel like **others** are making decisions for them, so they no longer believe in their own power and importance of their will. This long excerpt from the CPI 2023 report is provided below to give this situation a few more intricate layers:

> "The only one of the four dimensions of the Civic Power Index that saw a negative change in 2023 was civic activity. 8 out of the 20 activities mentioned in the survey, residents' activity decreased: for example, 6 percentage points fewer participated in local community activities than in 2022, 4 percentage points fewer in the activities of public organizations and movements, another 4 percentage points fewer in public and civic campaigns, and 3 percentage points fewer respondents signed non-online petitions, communicated with journalists and other opinion leaders or themselves wrote or spoke in the press, television, radio, online media, and participated in demonstrations, support actions, rallies, or pickets. Over the year, only the proportion of those who donated to charity increased (6 percentage points more respondents)". (Račkauskaitė, 2024)

It is interesting to observe this dynamic between a high mistrust of governance and high levels of charity donations at the same time. People do not believe their input matters in national policy-making, but actively contribute to non-governmental organisations that suit their personal areas of importance. Harari insists that donation is the highest form of devotion for a cause, and that feeling the physical or financial weight of the concern strengthens the mystical alchemy of donation (p. 299). Based on his theory, it seems that the potential for a commonly believed vision of good is definitely

plausible in Lithuanian political scene, but the low levels of personal power and that of local communities and NGO's show that a positive impact of political will is rather sparse.

It could be argued that the common phrase "I'm not into politics" nowadays is, in fact, a direct reflection of a comfortable life and generally favourable political circumstances nationwide. We do not need to look far back in history to find examples where political engagement was not a matter of taste or interest. During Lithuania's liberation from the Soviet Union, political activism was not exhibitionist (more on that in chapters on social media activism) – it was crucial for survival. Citizens needed no linguistic conceptualisation of the "common good" for that either. As a dissident and Sąjūdis leader Antanas Terleckas recalls, when being asked what his or his peers' vision of a free state was, he replied without hesitation: *"We didn't have one. First—independence. Then we'll see."* (lrt.lt, 2023, translated by K. Lenkauskaitė). Choosing to stay away from active political life is a direct signal of privilege: social, economic, geographic, gender-based, sexual-orientation-based, or other. Moreover, Bielskis states that "narcissistic images of ourselves often spring from privileged material conditions" (2022, p. 225) and a link between proud political indifference and narcissism is quite direct.

This Lithuanian focus on personal difference and performative individualism unlocks the territory of fighting the ordinary, exiting the enforced routine, and in terms of the 21st century, staying woke. It could be argued that this anti-standardisation is what Guatarri, together with Gilles Deleuze, were talking about in "Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia". Moreover, if we apply their theory to Lithuanian scene, then we need to evalute Soviet occupation as colonization. While this topic will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, let us seed the seed of this idea here. They say that

> "the colonized remained a typical example of resistance to Oedipus: in fact, that's where the Oedipal structure does not manage to close itself, and where the terms of the structure remained stuck to the agents of oppressive social reproduction, either in a struggle or in a complicity: the White Man, the missionary, the tax collector, the exporter of goods, the person with standing in the village who becomes the agent of the administration, the elders who curse the White Man, the young people who enter into a political struggle, etc. Both are true: the colonized resists oedipalization, and oedipalization tends to close around him again." (2013, p. 169)

But, if we agree that active civic participation is a standard, to be followed by all members of society, (how) can we align it with anti-oedipalization? If fighting the system is good, then why political apathy is bad? To this, Deleuze and Guattari adds: "Oedipus is always colonization pursued by other means, it is the interior colony, and we shall see that even here at home, where we Europeans are concerned, it is our intimate colonial education." (p. 170) In Bielskis' terms, these "politics of identity" (which, we could say, the focus on the political outlooks and practices of a single citizen, instead of looking into patterns of a bigger community/state, is), are a "more sinister neoliberal form of anti-authoritarian […] individualism" (p. 234), with a purpose of sustaining the unique, personalised capitalism. In such case, the ultimate Lithuanian Oedipus is the indifferent, apolitical, colonised-mentality civilian, waiting for approval for their act of political will.

It needs to be taken into account though, that the close proximity of war, with the psychological baggage and distortions in the overall outlook on things that come with it, is really new to the current

generation, especially young people. American community activist and political theorist Saul Alinsky, in his "Rules for Radicals" says "the outcome of the hopelessness and despair is morbidity" (1971, p. xv), and we can see the accuracy of his statement. The national narrative of a newly independent country and the sweet times of freedom, financial stability and overall wellbeing is not easy to give up, both on a mental and physical, future-planning and routine-changing levels. Keeping that in mind, the latest civil campaigns, such as fund-raising games, art auctions and cultural happenings to support Ukraine, deserve some recognition and respect. Another positive change to be appreciated is the drastic decline of fear, revealed in the risk assessment measure of CPI. Compared to 2007, Lithuanian people are 25% less scared of being persecuted, fired from their workplace, or gossiped about for partaking in civic initiatives in 2025. (Pilietinės visuomenės institutas, 2025) Lithuanians see civic participation as a more mundane activity now, which is great. What is not great, is that despite that, the levels of such participation are still dropping.

On the topic of fear of sanctions, in the context of Russian opposition to the war in Ukraine, Yudin says that fear is not a reason for lack of political resistance, but rather the **disbelief** that the current situation can be changed for the better. In this we once again see the importance of the commonly believed myth, an unwritten communal narrative that is just **there**, and that is strong enough to drive people for action. Perhaps for this we can listen to Harari and suggest that to break away from the general apathy, the common civic narrative needs to be changed from seeking for deeper meaning or purpose and instead focus on **stopping the suffering**. (p. 281-290) Once you focus on **who** is **actually** suffering in certain political debates, then the polarising fights on human rights, animal rights, forest preservation would lose the surrounding fuss, full of fights over ethics, economic calculations or pure whataboutism for whataboutism's sake.

This is also backed by the theoretical background that "The Three Ecologies" is providing. Accepting the polarisation and the ambivalence of all our actions and surroundings is what Guattari's mental ecology demands from us. In his view, he should see "individuals and social segments as a whole", so to have an understanding about the whole ecosystem, rather than wasting out energy on emotional triggers of a single side of things. By doing so, Guattari suggests, we would question more effectively the "phantasms" of violence and aggression and see that they evolve from childhood backgrounds (p. 57). In other words, we would see the eventuality, the long-term effects of certain ideas, as mentioned above in the example of political apathy that slowly paves the way to fascism.

Moreover, Guattari links the transformation of one's subjectivity (will) to political and ecological activism. He argues that by engaging in transformative practices and questioning established norms, individuals can contribute to reshaping subjectivity to align with a more ecological vision of life. A healthy subjectivity is created collectively through shared experiences, cultural practices, and social interactions. To complement that, in the context of climate activism, climate justice activist and researcher Farhana Sultana says that a "sense of despair, suffocation, stagnation, abandonment, and regression co-exist with that of revolutionary potentiality, alternative possibilities, collectivizing, worldmaking, and critical hope." (2022, p. 2) This gives us a potential for a new perspective in evaluating this poorly expressed civic empowerment – not as an area of dead political activism, but as a fresh area for a **new kind** of one.

1.1.2. Purchasing power as self-identity of post colonial Lithuanians

Another perspective for the analysis of personal apathy to environmental issues is materialism. The historical aspect of Lithuania cannot be ignored in this instance, as material wealth of the country has changed drastically in a fairly short period of time. Although the habit of blaming the Soviet occupation for every single issue of this country has already been criticized by public thinkers to be a low-hanging fruit of an excuse, if we reshape the narrative from occupation to colonisation, which is a perspective rejected for ideological, political, psychological and moral reasons (Laurušaitė, 2007, psl. 123), we can propose the damage of colonialism as a more layered obstacle for adapting deep green politics in Lithuania. In this case, an ability to spend money and have wide access to products and services, and an exploitation of such ability, can be seen as an important part of Lithuanian identity, rather than just a reflection of country's economic state.

During the Soviet occupation, private property was limited and the state was controlling all natural resources. For the citizens, this imprinted a habit of not feeling responsible for both material and immaterial surroundings, and acting accordingly. When everything belongs to everyone, then nothing belongs to no one. After redeeming the independence in 1991, Lithuanian mindset has shifted to a complete opposite – buying, owning and claiming one's private property can be seen as one of the main features of the economy in the early nineties. The new possibility of ownership, however small, was fuelled by the notion of exploitation, rather than a sense of responsibility. It suggests that a result that comes from this economic background is self-identity based on one's purchasing power. The following chapter will provide examples on how it is still prominent in Lithuanian mindsets, making it difficult to implement any initiatives of deep ecologism – it still feels too empowering to buy stuff, own stuff, dispose of stuff and then buy some more.

The practices that we consider sustainable and eco-friendly in 2025, were inevitable actions of everyday life in an occupied country, but not as an action of environmental awareness, but simply a result of poverty and deficit-driven market. Costume designer dr. Liucija Kvašytė-Starinskienė, while examining the moral and material sustainability interconnections of Soviet and post-Soviet Lithuanian reality, elaborates on the everyday practices that were completely normative for the generations that lived during that time:

> "People would wash plastic bags, mend clothes, and when the colours faded, they would repaint them. Yet no one called it sustainability or spoke of it as a conscious effort, an extra step taken out of care or concern. Often, such actions were not motivated by environmental awareness or human values. [...] However, as the period of scarcity ended and capitalism expanded from the West, the need to preserve and reuse things in such a way disappeared. Cheap products that met a wide range of needs became available, and as consumer culture grew, various forms of it spread, encouraging people to devote more time to consumption— replacing the creative, once-inevitable practices of the earlier era." (2023, p. 94–95, translated by K. Lenkauskaitė)

This **unaware** sustainability, as an embodied habit and a broader philosophy of caring for household resources, in a practical sense makes the generations who experienced the colonisation deep green ecologists. Whether the reasons behind ecological actions and the unawareness part makes a

difference for implementing true ecosophy, will be discussed in the chapter on communication in green strategies.

To further extend Kvašytė-Starinskienė's ideas, capitalism did not just expand – people have built capitalist lifestyle by their own hands precisely by mentally unsubscribing from the practices of their colonial past. The disassociation was completely intentional – of course the commonly believed myth, in Hararian terms, of capitalism (the shiny and the oh-so-longed capitalism) could not include carrying your own jar to buy sour cream. Escaping the material poverty and the poverty mindset was important in building a new self-identity, both individually and as a nation. Kvašytė-Starinskienė even says that this newly adapted love for new items, renovations and plastic surgeries acted as a way of fighting death, as if a new purchase will bring you a brand-new life (p. 93). Harari adds that we believe buying things will make us happy, because we saw the heaven of capitalism on television (p. 247), and the hundreds of Lithuanian homes with same sets of tableware bought from ordering-catalogues would prove his point perfectly. Thus, understanding these circumstances and the desire for a brand-new reality, the first generation of independent Lithuanians cannot be blamed for a lifestyle that is now considered wasteful, but it is interesting to see the re-occurence of those practices in a form of new trends. I believe that the people coming from the same backgrounds of unaware sustainability are rolling their eyes when they see trends like "Underconsumption core" or "Recession meals" in social media in 2025, as if it is something of a novelty, rather than basic home-economics knowledge (for those who grew up in households where washing plastic bags did not disappear after the independence, anyway).

Within the framework of deep green politics, this pro-active withdrawal from material deprivation bumps into a paradox, since Soviet "communism" (as an ideology, yet not quite as a mundane reality that Lithuanians lived in) is considered philosophically to be similar to capitalism, since they

> "both are dedicated to industrial growth, to the expansion of the means of production, to a materialist ethic as the best means of meeting people's needs, and to unimpeded technological development. Both rely on increasing centralisation and large-scale bureaucratic control and co-ordination. From a viewpoint of narrow scientific rationalism, both insist that the planet is there to be conquered, that big is self-evidently beautiful, and that what cannot be measured is of no importance." (Porritt in Dobson, p. 26-27)

Yet, what can, or cannot, be measured, becomes important when we want to evaluate the impact that such "I buy, therefore I am" identity formation has on environmental level.

The focus on material wealth also affects the overall use of one's time. The commonly used narrative, when comparing the habits and the material situations of the colonised and the independent generations of Lithuania, goes somewhere along the lines of "we did not have anything, children spent all their time outside, and we did not have any problems, we were happy and not depressed at all". Before the following ideas unfold, it needs to be clarified that there is zero intention here to glorify the times of oppression, neither to deny the hidden psychological issues, abuse, and a mental aftermath that those people brought to this side of history. But! If we take the Aristotelian thought, proposed by Bielskis, strictly in the field of time-spending comparison in these two different backgrounds, that "having no natural end, the activity of money-making (*kapilikē*) impoverishes our lives: instead of living *well*, money-making reduces people's lives to *mere* living." (p. 225, emphasis

in original), then the plastic-bag-washing, potato-eating, materially daunting time was actually attributing to images of themselves (and, therefore, their identity) in a positive way. Since buying and consuming was not even on the table of possibilities, identities could be formed around other realms, and material wealth did not play that much importance towards overall happiness, as opposed to today.

It is crucial though, when talking about the ecosophical indifference of a modern man, to separate the intangibilities (informed-ness, awareness, education) and tangibilities (actions, practices, habits) one has or exercises, because the surface level understanding is leaning towards a light green environmentalism, which is criticized for not being enough in the current crisis. While it is too easy to enhance the stereotypes and automatically prescribe, for example, a liberal and well-travelled woman in her thirties to be more ecological than a lower-class senior man smoking his life away in the suburbs as the less ecological one, to evaluate which one is lighter and which one is deeper green is not as easy. Which is more important, the awareness or the behaviour? Are they even comparable? Guattari's ecosophy would vote for the integrity of both, but reality shows that it is not that simple. The professor of sociology Audronė Telešienė specialises in environmental behaviour research in Lithuania, and a beautifully complex dichotomy of theory and practice found there crushes the simplicity of the stereotypes pictured above. She says that when it comes to evaluating the ecological impact, one cannot homogenize the whole country into one single target group and need to differentiate at least five different Lithuanias (Klimatosaugos briaunos, 2024). Telešienė's research highlights the important difference between a sustainable mindset and sustainable lifestyle, which can be lost in the overly generalised statements on both promoters of capitalism and the opposing side.

Telešienė's research is based on the analysis of energy consumption in housing, mobility, consumerism, eating habits and leisure activities, and it identifies five different categories of Lithuanians, which later translates into five different ways to approach such groups in an attempt for a positive change in their behaviour. The "Consumer" type is typically a 18-29-year-old man from mid-to-large cities, who lives in a bigger household. Approximately 7 hours a week are spent while driving a car, his flat uses central heating and he enjoys lamb or beef in his meals few times a week. His hobbies (such as skiing or padel or flying to Barcelona for the weekend) requires special equipment (and, consequentially, renewal of it) and/or infrastructure. This person type is **well aware** about the current ecological state, but the welfare he created for himself is way too precious for it to be altered by the crumbling climate. This citizen type is an example of a **wide gap between awareness and behaviour** – he knows the problematics, but does not act accordingly. To add to that, in this citizen type we also see the **unaware** joy of capitalism – born in independent Lithuania, he is not familiar with any other reality, than that of a relative financial freedom and the national narrative of upkeeping the welfare, which he believes his **ambition for growth** is attributing positively to.

On the contrary, there is a "Saver", or "Frugal" type: people who save their resources, but not necessarily for environmental reasons. An example of this personality type could be a 70-year-old woman, who lives in a smaller city, in a small household, possibly inhabited just by her and heated by solid fuel. She drives her car 2 hours a week and eats red meat more rarely. She wears her clothes for a long time, and buys them second-hand too. She spends her free time reading by a lamp light, so no additional electronics, equipment or travelling is needed for that. Telešienė uses her either as an example of **closely connected environmental mindset and behaviour**, or as a case **where the reasons behind actions are not as important**. Adding the cultural layer into that, we could insist

that this type of citizen balances the (practical and/or mindset) colonial past and the capitalistic present well.

In between these too ends of the spectrum, we find "Hobbyists", "Travelers" and "Homebodies", which show a variety of combinations of different kinds of informedness and everyday practices, that complicates the question of the weight of one's thoughts and actions even more. These five types of citizens help to see the nuances of practical and theoretical ecology and they will be important when discussing the success of ecosophical communication, and the problems of why bringing people to transformations of practice is not always straightforward or uniform.

When discussions on conscious lifestyle reaches the topic of material responsibility or lack thereof, the usual Lithuanian instantly gets defensive: should we go back to the woods? I created this prosperity by my own hard work! And, as mentioned before, they are absolutely right in claiming their authorship in the process of un-becoming the post-colonial poverty identities. But if we could justify the starving overconsumption of early 2000's as a psychological/economic "need" of newly independent Lithuanians, we can surely state that by 2025 such a lifestyle is constructed of "satisfier" behaviour and should be criticized in the framework of green politics. But Dobson rightly doubts the relevance of such distinction between things that are necessary and things that are simply wanted and quotes Porritt with a remark that illustrate the desire for that sweet capitalism, no matter the circumstances:

> "We all need to get from A to B; some people insist they can manage such a feat only in the back of a Rolls Royce" (p. 80)

And capitalistic habits can be integrated so deeply, that it even makes citizens bearers of Stockholm Syndrome, blinded by the current welfare so much that they start sympathizing for their oppressive past. Post-colonial Lithuanians see value in comfort, accept dictators in municipalities in exchange of pretty glass buildings, turn a blind eye on kitsch sculptures and the cutting down of old trees because they like the status of a reborn-country so much, and a tiny wooden hut (private, of course) in the woods is still a dream too sweet to say no to. They are still in the stage of **savouring** capitalism.

Although the ignorance and the material exploitation is predefined by a traumatic past, it is time to accept the responsibility of the current lifestyle and "reevaluate the purpose of work and of human activities according to different criteria than those of profit and yield" (Guattari, p. 57), thus transforming our personal human value from the aforementioned "I buy, therefore I am" mentality, to "What I buy makes a difference to the whole environment, so I can slightly alter my decision and not lose my true self."

To sum up the sub-chapter, individual apathy toward environmental issues in Lithuania stems from many factors. An overload of global information creates general disinterest, while a deeply ingrained national identity tied to nature ironically doesn't translate into practical environmental action. Historically, the fight for independence fostered a culture of peaceful maintenance, making current deep green activism seem out of place. Furthermore, a pervasive belief that politics are dirty has led to a decline in civic engagement. This political indifference often signifies privilege, a stark contrast to past eras where activism was vital for survival. Finally, Lithuania's recent transition from Soviet scarcity to capitalist abundance plays a major role. The newfound ability to consume and own became central to national identity, hindering the adoption of eco-friendly practices. While past unaware sustainability due to poverty is now ironically trending in social media, the ingrained desire for

material wealth makes it difficult to prioritize environmental well-being over consumption. Understanding these complex layers is crucial for addressing ecological apathy in Lithuania.

1.2. Systematic apathy towards ecologism

On a systematic level, apathy towards ecosophy can easily disguise itself as activism in a form of project-report-documentation-theater. On paper, sustainability-oriented strategies are abundant, especially in European Union, but in the framework of dark green ecologism their true effectiveness can be questioned.

When it comes to multidisciplinary regulations for implementing green politics on a state level, the European Green Deal, with action plans in climate, energy, environment and oceans, agriculture, transport, industry, research and innovation, finance and regional development and New European Bauhaus areas, sounds like a solid candidate for a truly ecosophical initiative, covering both technical and philosophical aspects of ecology. But the aforementioned differences between practical and theoretical ecology remind us that the importance to evaluate the implementations of such strategies. On top of that, assuming that the local social, economic, cultural and political scenes would impact such processes, the evaluation should be localised in a discussed area. And the local overview is illustrative indeed: a 2022 ex-ante evaluation of the Green Deal implementation measures in Lithuania shows that although relevance, coherence, impact and sustainability criteria were met or partially met, the efficiency and effectiveness, which could be seen as the most tangible or practical criteria, were not (Pelikšienė, 2022, p. 84-85).

A particularly thought-provoking detail in Pelikšienė's research is the lack of **ambition** in green strategies in Lithuania, which, she argues, results in the limited (even though positive) impact of Green Deal implementation measures. (p. 85) And we can draw the line from the lack of ambition to apathy quite easily. This proposes a discussion beyond office dynamics and makes us question why are we not excited to take action even when we agree to the initiatives? What is it that stops us from implementing good ideas in tangible reality?

1.2.1. Hierarchical dynamics in decision-making

In search for the reasons of incapability to implement green changes, we can look into the overall power dynamics of governing bodies. In these bodies, we usually find an exclusive approach to decision-making, lacking of community consideration and detached from practical reality by the wall of unquestioned authority. In posthumanist terms, our current "ecologies of belonging" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 193) are permeated by fluctuating power dynamics within our own consciousness and within its relationships with "the system" – a bigger network of people responsible for any kind of "important" decision-making, be it politicians, lawyers, public institutions. These dynamics brings us back to matters of colonialism. In the "Baltic Postcolonialism", literary scholar Violeta Kelertas mentions "expression of the master-slave dichotomy, self-defense vs. victimization, falsity vs. a search for the truth of the native's condition" (2006, p. 253) as evidences of a colonial experience, and it could be argued that all of these can be detected in the current systems of power. And the effects of such disturbed power relationships can be seen inside the managements structures of companies or governmental bodies, within the outlook individual has on the "system", and within the outlook the "system" accepts/rejects/ignores the individual.

Becoming a member of the European Union in 2004 was significant for a newly independent Lithuania, as it verified it as a (more or less) equal to the older and bigger countries of the continent, provided a sense of community of the free world, as well created a sense of security and accountability. On a local cultural level though, this accountability had, in some sense, replaced the role of the Big Brother and became a new father figure. A one that does not beat you anymore, but still keeps you on your toes, on your way to reaching a certain threshold of political, cultural, economic education and overall respect among the peers. This tendency is apparent to this day – in terms of receiving the benefits of being a part of the consortium, EU is both a subject of aspiration and slight irritation. When it comes to greening policies specifically, the following research on Green Deal implementation measures in Lithuania reveals super illustrative results:

> "in Lithuania, the Green Deal is primarily perceived as an EU project and priority, rather than a national strategy. The evaluation showed that most of the EU Green Deal provisions and principles are incorporated into Lithuanian strategic documents through a 'top-down' approach [...]. This approach is also evident in terms of financing, since approximately half of the funding intended for the implementation of Green Deal measures is expected to come from EU funds." (Pelikšienė, p. 85)

Such attitude towards the fulfilment of regulations, when the oh-so-clever European Union should be the one paying for the implementation of the new green rules it came up with, perfectly illustrates the remnants of the authoritarian ruling, which is still alive in the form of dry bureaucratic mentality, individually and institutionally embedded in Lithuanian tradition. An enthusiastic and pro-active participation in project development for the sake of the common (European) good would require a lot of energy, personal responsibility and would for sure create additional organisational challenges. And who has the emotional capacity for all of this? Definitely not the members of the Byung Chul-Han's burnout society. From this we can give another face to the current political apathy – that of a through-gritted-teeth submission to the feared and respected body of power. An even though Pelikšienė confirms "despite internal political inconsistency in Lithuania, the EU's influence currently acts as a stabilizing force" (p. 86), the fact that such dynamics work does not mean that they can be considered sustainable in long-term.

On the other hand, perhaps it is not all apathetic – a local effort to address the global challenge and create local strategy for mitigating climate change, demographic imbalances, rapid technological transformation, geopolitical unease and decline of democracy, was the state progress strategy "Lithuania's Vision for the Future "Lithuania 2050"". It is prepared by the Office of the Committee for the Future of the Seimas (admittedly a very inspiring committee!) and it is full of uplifting wording like "We need to be bold and far-sighted so that Lithuania maintains the growth in prosperity" (Viliūnas, p. 9), "Guiding Light" (p. 30) and "society of free and responsible individuals" (p. 32), which reads like a truly considerate an open-minded document. But a philosopher and cultural theorist Gintautas Mažeikis points to a more abstract pattern of the local politics that this vision represents, stating that it is

> "not a political vision, but a managerial one, because it lacks the radicalism that is worth fighting and arguing for. The document was written in a way that most parliamentarians living in safety would agree with. This has made the document as faceless as the election winners." (lrt.lt, 2024)

What is the main problem of this managerial decision making? It is long (so, must be clever), clearly worded and uplifting – all attributes of a good piece of literature, what's not to love? What Mažeikis might be unveiling here, is our love for the pathos rhetorics, the layer of well-enough sounding promises to keep us satisfied, but too twisted to search for the actual meaning behind it, or to evaluate the likelihood of realisation of those words. Interestingly though, on one hand, there is the aforementioned narrative of dirty politicians, and on the other, the adoration when the same politicians tell romantic tales to the crowd. And thus, here we circle back to the dichotomy of identity of the colonised, where the hate for the oppressing power is interchanging with the desire to be in that position at the same time.

This idea of politicians as givers, and voters as receivers is another obstacle on our way towards Dobson's sustainable society, and the lack of individual political confidence must be looked into. The Civic Readiness part of the latest Civic Power Index 2024 shows that only ten percent of Lithuanians would surely volunteer in crisis management activities. Even though two hundred thousand people is not a small number, but when broken down according to the type involvement, it leads us to a bigger problem. Two thirds of those activists say they would contribute individually or with their family members, which leaves only one third, so just over 3% of citizens, who are aware of any official ways of contributing for the better if their country is in serious need. So, even though the civic potential is not that bad, there is a real lack of institutional coordination of such individual involvements, and this potential cannot be fully implemented without its effect on bigger masses. In the study on Green Deal measure implementation in Lithuania, Pelikšienė proves the same point from the institutional perspective, and says that when it comes to activities aimed at increasing public engagement and awareness on the topic of green politics, there are barely any actions towards it on the strategical level (p. 84), and the measures are focused on economic dimensions more than on the environmental and social ones.

This data suggests a disappointing conclusion that the apathy of civic (therefore political, therefore ecosophical) participation could partially be a result of institutional neglect. The difference between environmental awareness and environmental behaviour that Telešienė talks about, might not be a sign of simple laziness, carelessness or ignorance, but instead of a tired effort for some feedback or encouragement from the state officials. When the voices of people are not being responded to, or at least heard by, the governing bodies, then citizens do not return the favour of contributing to the good of the country. Alternatively, they do that in their own ways, which can be not powerful enough to make a substantial difference, or even contradicting to each other and harmful. As it will be discussed in the chapter on youth activism, listening to your electees is not the same as fulfilling their needs, so it can be stated that such detached policy-making does not reflect actual needs of citizens and could not be considered ecosophical.

On top of the remnants of authoritarian ruling, the current geopolitical situation Lithuania is facing plays an important role in national strategical thinking too. It could be argued that this stagnation is a natural human reaction to danger, and therefore affects both sides of governance – the voters and the electees – in a similar way. The fear of uncertainty tends to make people close up, look inwards, trust only their closest circle and not take big risks. But that is the opposite of a sustainable way of survival, of a reliable network, where every member knows their strengths and contributes to the strength of the whole ecosystem. Social fragmentation is also exactly what the aggressor is trying to achieve with its propaganda tactics, and in the times of online activism the "divide and rule" is even easier to implement. Trusting the neighbour, the officer and the president should bring more safety than

building a border around your household. That is exactly why the governing bodies need to step down from the pedestals (or the ones on the ground should be dragging them down, but more on that will be discussed in the chapter on radicalism), so that in the face of an emerging war, the levels of power amongst the country are more equal, and the trust, as well as political engagement, would be reciprocal. As discussed before, intention does not always translate into action, and forcing it to be one hundred percent effective would lose the point of voluntary political participation, but if the state wants to keep its citizens engaged for its own long-term stability and wellness, then non-subordinate organisation methods must be included in a strategy for an ecosophical future. Borrowing the formula from Dobson, "no decision should be taken at a higher level that can be taken at a lower level" (p. 106) would be a good starting point for the redistribution of power.

These insights suggest one more point of view for the problematics of political apathy – a lack of future-oriented (which all of the dark green politics essentially are) mentality, possibly influenced by historically embodied hegemonic power dynamics and the instability created by the closest proximity of war in the last three decades, as another reason for ineffective green strategies in Lithuania. If the future needs to be green, and people are afraid to think about the future, then they are afraid of the green politics too. Feminist theoretician Rosi Braidotti in "The Posthuman", when drawing a map for posthuman ethics, says that wanting a better future is what pushes us to take action now and that

> "yearning for sustainable futures can construct a liveable present. […] **A prophetic or visionary dimension is necessary in order to secure an affirmative hold over the present,** as the launching pad for sustainable becoming or qualitative transformations of the negativity and the injustices of the present." (p. 192, emphasis added)

Her stressing over the fact that it is not a "leap of faith", but a pro-active transformation of the current reality, is what makes it convincible and easily adaptable to Lithuanian political culture. In a tradition of obedient (to real and imagined oppressors), reserved and hierarchical decision-making, a bravery of imagining a prosperous future combined with a serious preparation for the worst, could bring positive results. If "the motivation for the social construction of hope is grounded in a sense of responsibility and inter-generational accountability" (Braidotti, p. 192), then our governing bodies must do their best in creating a sense of unity, respect and collaboration, not that of ignorance.

Summing up these examples, it can be stated that a dry, bureaucratical, managerial approach to the implementation of green strategies and the colonial-inherited mentality of a scary power is leading Lithuanian culture towards a lighter green in Dobson's terms, and towards a safe procedural environmentalism, rather than a personally and institutionally challenging ecologism.

1.2.2. The technocracy behind Green Skills

In the recent public vocabulary of all-things-sustainability, green gkills is a buzzing keyword in the area of corporation policies, employee training and modern children and adult education. While some sources explain the term in a more philosophical way, underlining the interconnectedness of topics and the need for a mindset shift, in the area of job market, green skills are usually described along the lines of "engineering skills for the design and production of technology, and managerial skills for implementing and monitoring environmental organizational practices." (Vona et al., p. 1) Despite the direction of explanation, the whole terminology is quite vague, and yet the adaptation of those skills is underlined as crucial. It proposes a doubt, whether green skills, in aforementioned description,

actually help in training society for ecosophical practices, or are they just a sign of an overly technological outlook towards a sustainable future, and therefore, is yet another obstacle in implementing dark green change? What are the actual green skills that equip and empower people for a future built on posthuman values?

A research project "Strengthening and developing green skills in Lithuania in response to the needs of the green economy" (further referred to as Green Skills Project, GSP), conducted by "Kurk Lietuvai" (eng. "Create Lithuania") in 2024-2025, provides a deeper context for the (lack of) implementation of greening activities in Lithuania and localises the topic of green skills. Confirming the aforementioned problem of vague terminology, project report states that

> "green skills in the government's program and other strategic documents are "hidden" under terms such as circularity, green energy, green technologies, green economy, twin green and digital transition, and sustainability." (kurklt.lt, p. 7)

Although project manager Lijana Dienaitė points to communication as the biggest obstacle in reaching greening goals in Lithuania, the proposed solution of clear definition of green skills and their incorporation into national legal systems can be highly doubtful. Such a measure would be helpful in terms of applying penalties for defective execution of green skill training, but it is unlikely that that it will make citizens reorganise their way of thinking, working and living.

As one of the solutions for strengthening green skills, project is proposing continuous monitoring and process analysis, carried out by the Government Strategic Analysis Centre (STRATA), as a way of forecasting green jobs, which is now not being done in Lithuania. It is based on the idea that "**for an economy based on advanced innovations, scientific knowledge, and technologies**, it is essential to continuously monitor the mismatch between the supply and demand of skills." (p. 8, emphasis added) But in the framework of deep green politics, this unquestioned focus on technologies is exactly what needs to be challenged in a pursuit for a more sustainable society. Dobson uses the example of recycling – arguably the first thing everyone mentions when asked about eco practices – as a mental and practical focus on the wrong thing, the right one being the reduction of consumption. Illustrating it even more clearly, Porritt in Dobson says

> "'limitless recycling' is more characteristic of the technocratic vision than of an ecological one, […] it's just an industrial activity like all the other. Recycling is both useful and necessary – but it is an illusion to imagine that it provides any basic answers." (p. 85)

Exactly such illusion, it could be argued, is the GSP's focus on the creation of new digital tools in their action plan too. Among them, is a platform for community networking and information sharing in the topic of green skills; a job-searching and skill-testing platform for career enhancements in the field of green technologies; and a digital twin tool for business, that helps modelling strategies and the installation of green technologies in an online simulation. (p. 15) All of these tools sound like curse words from a point of view of deep green ecologism and can be questioned from the perspectives of digital access (and social/economic issues that follow the topic of digital literacy divide); economic resources for the development of such platforms and the hierarchy of urgency of such initiatives. Is another chat platform really a priority for a burning environment and a society in smokes? While it is cleverly organised and personalised for individual and business use, Dobson

clearly put that "although much attention has been focused on green attitudes to technology, greens are likely to want the spotlight turned elsewhere" (p. 84)

Although GSP stresses that unimplemented green policies is a result of lack of clear identification of green skills as a priority (p. 8), perhaps the narrow and overly bureaucratical attitude towards them is a bigger problem. Andy Scerri, theorist of environmental politics, points to the irony of a common practice of adopting ecological ideas (in the framework of Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility reglamentations, for instance) in work culture as a way to boost productivity and profitability, thus contradicting the very thing that deep ecology is fighting against (šaltinis), while Stroud et al. criticizes the whole notion of pre-defined green skills as such, saying

> "Whether a specific practice or activity (the execution/application of a skill) really is "green", and, for example, contributes to net-zero, is not something that can or should be declared *a priori*, but has to be assessed *a posteriori* within a wider context." (2024, p. 344, emphasis in original)

We could apply the same pattern this to the creation of digital tools too. Instead of jumping straight to costly, doubtedly-objective, algorithm-biased and focused-on-digital-savvy-user digital tools for fostering green changes, the focus should be put first on the activities on community level. Understanding their current informedness on the issue, their personal version of the universal problem and their suggestions for change, could not only save policy makers and trainers money for useless initiatives, but would make the strategies far more inclusive, democratic and both mentally and practically accepted by the employees and students.

In a broader sense, such a strong focus on managerial distribution of meaning and digital measures, according to ecofeminist philosopher Val Plumwood, highlights our adopted western rationalist tradition, a culture and an economic system that praises reason over emotions. A meticulously organised smart strategy, that aims for meticulously organised smart results is exactly the illustration for a normative culture, focused on accountable logics as its main key performance indicator. The following excerpt from her "Environmental Culture" beautifully links the systematic rationalism back to individual personal experience, which this thesis was started from:

> "The economic rationalist imaginary draws on typical rationalist metaphors and oppositions which are highly gendered: reason requires the rule of a pure, detached and impartial rational calculus, 'soft' emotions such as sympathy and ethical concepts of social care are opposed to its own 'hard' discipline of economic mathematisation and quantification. Rational decisions must be made 'by the head and not by the heart', and to describe someone's statements or positions as 'emotional' becomes a form of abuse." (2001, p. 31)

From this, we further draw the line not only to the emotional scope of human perception, but also to the suppression of the whole emotional realm during the Soviet occupation (as a colonisation). If we focused our attention on the decolonisation of Lithuanian society on all levels, which would include the mental/emotional/reactional one, then the skills needed for a better future would be that of emotional intelligence, respectful expression of one's own and reception of the other's opinion, and the restored ability to trust one's peers. The ideas of supressed spiritual sorrows, "minding your own business" in the face of injustice and the fear of reporting crimes to not become a snitch, are all signs of the manipulative and divisive social culture, imprinted by the oppressor.

If we believe the human species, as all other animals, to be emotionally sensitive creatures, then the angst in response to unfavourable political decisions is completely reasonable and should be expressed accordingly. If we also believe humans to be naturally prone to bonding and building social networks (not in the digital sense, although that could be a symbol of a similar inclination too), then the skill most needed for a sustainable future would be to unlearn the prejudice, suspicion and mistrust, engraved into social practice by the colonizer. This also brings us to the territory of posthuman theory, as Braidotti says it "bases the ethical relation on positive grounds of joint projects and activities, not on the negative or reactive grounds of shared vulnerability." (p. 190) When emotions are supressed, people turn their focus inwards, so, on the opposite, when emotions can be released, more mental space will be available for seeing others, respecting their perspective and looking for ways to work together.

All of this critique does not necessarily mean that projects, such as the recommendations, compiled by "Kurk Lietuvai", are completely useless though. On the contrary, the conducted research does an excellent job in pinpointing the key problems and assigning the institutional bodies that would be fit to solve them. Dienaitė confirmed that based on their research, The Ministry of Education is already preparing an official strategy for incorporating green skills in national education curriculum. If the current Lithuanian political culture, as discussed before, in the process of decolonisation and the search for correct institutional power dynamics, needs to be told what to do, when, and it what means, then this research is perfectly supplying this bureaucratical demand. Moreover, this research reinforces the philosophical and practical problematics of local political culture mentioned earlier. GSP highlights the lack of horizontal collaboration in decision making, between different ministries, municipalities, and other institutions, thus making it difficult to coordinate issues that arise from green skill training (p. 9) – this further reiterates the troubled dynamics of authority.

To bring back some tiredness-induced nihilism into this chapter, Scerri puts the ecosophical idealism aside and reminds us of our deeply rooted grain of dumbness, which makes us consciously or unconsciously immune to any kind of stimulation for change. According to him, even if green ecologists all oppose any ideas that are ambivalent an opposing each other, and replace them with integrated, holistic alternative (2016, p. 528), they still sometimes fail to consider inevitable human ignorance and their unaware contribution "to reproducing structural conditions that sustain environmental and human exploitation." (p. 531) So it could be argued (with sadness) that it does not really matter, whether the approach to implementing green changes through a new skill set is purely methodological and dry, or spiritual, if citizens simply cannot see the bigger purpose of this over-preached environmentally friendly behaviour.

To sum up the sub-chapter, it could be said that systematic apathy towards environmentalism in Lithuania hides behind bureaucratic processes and a lack of real ambition. Despite EU initiatives like the Green Deal, practical implementation lags due to a top-down approach and a perception that environmental action is an "EU project" rather than a national priority. This is strengthened even more by hierarchical decision-making and a lingering to a master-slave dichotomy from a strong remnant form Lithuania's colonial past, fostering a culture of grudging compliance instead of proactive engagement. Current geopolitical fears further contribute to this inward focus, hindering collective action. Finally, a strong emphasis on technocratic green skills and digital solutions often misses the core issue of overconsumption, prioritizing measurable outcomes over genuine behavioural shifts. This reason-based focus on "what can be measured", rather

than addressing deeper emotional and cultural barriers, ultimately limits effective environmental change.

2. Radicalism

Induced by the societal, mental and cultural fragmentations of the Covid-19 pandemic, the rise in public initiatives of radical right activists in Lithuania is quite an obvious one. On one hand, it could be argued that in a short-term perspective, such activities do not result in any serious damage. A couple of times a year, a group of people roughly generalised under the umbrella of "Maršistai" (eng. Marchers, after the biggest event of "The Grand March of Family Protection", organised for the first time on May 15th, 2021 in Vilnius) organises legal protests, supervised by the police, or disrupts national commemoration events, attracts attention on traditional and social media for a couple of days, and that is as far as the impact of such movements go. However, having this movement simmering offline and online for a few years now, it is clear that the damage of their activities becomes visible in the longer-term. The rising popularity of figures like Remigijus Žemaitaitis and the overrule of "Lietuvos socialdemokratų partija" (eng. Social Democratic Party of Lithuania, a "supposedly left-wing political party" built by ex-Communist party capitalists (Bielskis, 2020, p. 298) over "Tėvynės sąjunga-Lietuvos krikščionys demokratai" (eng. Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Democrats), who lost their majority in the Parliament for the first time in 16 years, shows at least a shift in citizen perspective towards the national vision, as well as the growing influence of the radical movements.

One of the possible reasons for this rise is the lack of contra-movement from the supporters of the left wing, or any other spectre in this case. A general consensus, reinforced by a few popular social media "politicians", circulating around the liberal-ish social media bubble (the same who you see posting their "I voted" stickers online), is to not react sensitively to these provocations – to let the marchers march, and to not get caught in the webs of their propaganda-flavoured narratives. But the decision to **stay above** radical right movements and a preference to vote for "bland administrators over bold politicians" (Mažeikis, 2024) leaves a deeper trace. While reflecting on the Lithuanian political scene after the parliament elections in October of 2024, Mažeikis underlines the negative effect of such absence of diversity in overall interdisciplinary culture of the state:

> "Strong democratic state is not based on order and unity, but strong forces, powerful counterbalances, and a tension created by those struggles that stimulates art, creativity, and daring projects. […] Strong and powerful opposition, as we see in Greece, France and Italy, greatly expands the field of civic courage and determination, which in Lithuania has been reduced to a sluggish revolving around the central political pole." (lrt.lt, 2024)

In his view, this fear of the radical politics and the love for technical bureaucracy, discussed also in the previous chapter, is demolishing the local political scene, leaving the public leadership in crisis. Mažeikis points out to the great paradox of radicalism: the more radical ideas we discuss on theoretical level, the better we are prepared for those scenarios in the future, whether they will manifest themselves to be true or not. Involving the worst possible scenarios into the safe normative discourse challenges us with a complicated mental experiment, which we can, in turn, transform into political decisions, and those into conscious and useful individual and collective practices. This works in the opposite way too: missing out on, or purposely ignoring the radical revolutions can attract the enemy, whether it is a despotic neighbour or an unliveable weather temperature.

Suggesting radicalism as a possible solution to apathy follows the idea that "philosophy, when necessary, needs to be conservative […]; while politics, when things are bad, should be revolutionary." (Bielskis, p. 234). And things are bad indeed.

This chapter aims to dismantle the solely negative connotation of radicalism, and see how it can be a positive drive for change in a stagnated political culture. Abstract generalisations of "good" and "bad" radicalism might be too loose, since the general understanding of the holy and the evil will be subject to one's cultural background, upbringing and education, positioning on the political scale, religion, and other factors that shape one's mindset. However, looking for a pattern between radicalised (or not radicalised enough) political spheres might suggest a specific type of categorisation of different kinds of radicalisms in Lithuania.

2.1. Perceptions of radicalism in Lithuania

Keeping in mind the overall fragmentation of Lithuanian social sphere, it can be proposed that perceptions towards radicalism are not universal either. While some bold political moves are shredded to pieces by pro-active digital activists, using the tools of cancel culture for the common good and the health of online communities, other considerably radical acts get unnoticed or even considered a reasonable practice. Remembering Yudin's perspective towards **the impossibility of neutrality of non-activism**, the appropriation of negative radicalism should not be left unexamined in the current geopolitical context.

The supressed emotional realm in during the period of Soviet Union, briefly mentioned in the context of green skills, could be tackled in the context of rejecting radicalism too. During the colonisation, any behaviour that crossed the borders of ideological standards of Homo Sovieticus, was not only discouraged, but heavily punished. Homosexuality as a crime, long hair for men and excessive glamour for women as rebellion and any nuances of mental health as non-existent (because hidden), imprinted a habit of conservative, subdued, constricted way of living and perceiving other lives. Not to forget, of course, the intentional mistrust and scepticism, as a recruitment strategy for KGB. All of these manifestations of oppressive regime, in Anti-Oedipus terms, resulted in a culture of psychoanalytical normativity.

Deleuze and Guattari, while proposing the way out of a mentality structured in precise boxes with predetermined meaning, said that a schizophrenic in the streets is less dangerous than a client in a chaise-longue in a psychiatrist's cabinet. (p. 1-9) Applying the same sentiment for anti-normativism, this chapter will suggest that a radical deep green citizen is less dangerous than an apathetic conformist and will attempt to illustrate it with recent political events.

2.1.1. Youth political participation: reluctance from the inside or rejection from the outside?

Whether to mock them for their naivety or blame them for carelessness, youngsters are always in the spotlight in the conversations regarding the future. The general public opinion usually balances between two opposing poles. On one hand, it is easy to blame the generic **liberal youth** for demolishing the stable foundation built by generic **hardworking, tradition-loving, purpose-driven elders** (see above for traumas of repressive regime). On the other hand, if in the times of environmental catastrophes people still chose to have children, then the hope of them saving the world from a total collapse is still there. In a political sense, rioting youngsters is what indicates a crisis is real. From the student movement in the 60's, to pro-Palestinian protest on university campuses today,

enraged children have always been an important part of political revolutions and have always been prone to become symbols of rebellion, hope and inspiration. In Lithuanian context, the self-inflammation of a 19-year-old Romas Kalanta, in response to the unliveable Soviet regime, continues to be one of the, if not the most, radical and (thus) significant political acts (for a lack of a better term) to this day.

While for the student revolutionists of the 60s "the only tools of their struggle were militant anger, poetry, and liberated sexual desire" (Bielskis, p. 230), the tools of a current politically engaged young citizens are also the digital ones. Digital media channels, and the significance of them in shaping the worldviews, influencing the election process and transforming global political culture cannot be ignored in the topic of participation. While accepting the claim of generalisation, the link between digital activism and youth is quite direct, since the generation of digital nomads are using both the platforms far differently than people who used to rely on radio or television broadcasters to hear the political news of the day. As a result, political participation in the digital age is becoming an increasingly ambiguous phenomenon. Despite the easy access to international coverage of key political events (oftentimes live from the scene), most people still remain passive in non-digital sense, refraining from active involvement in the political life. This ambiguity underlines the differences between expressing opinion and actively participating in politics, and gives a base for discussion whether online activism be considered real activism.

If we believe youth participation to be an important indicator of the health of local and global political scenes, then the Lithuanian one is in need of some holistic treatments. The latest parliament election in 2024 received a turnout of only 35,69% of voters in the age of 18-29, while the most active voters where 55-75-year-olds and older (lrs.lt, 2024). Despite the slight rise of young voters since 2015, the gap between percentage of active youngster and elders remains significant. After the first tour of the election, an Instagram post with these statistics was shared massively and bombarded with comments of disgust, shame, or, on the other hand, accusations from the youngsters themselves for technical difficulties of voting. Ironically, the biggest buzz was made by the people of this exact age group. The fact that the Lithuanian youth is both the passive voters and the active haters of the passive voters raises a question of why is this matter left to the hands of the youngsters themselves.

Vilnius University lecturer Ieva Petronytė-Urbonavičienė says that the passivity of Lithuanian youngsters is distinctive compared to other European countries, showing low levels in both conventional participation (voting in elections, involvement in party activities) and non-conventional participation (demonstrations, protests, signing petitions, boycotts, activities on social networks, the internet, etc.) (Račkauskaitė, 2024). In the same article, dr. Edita Stumbraitė-Vilkišienė from Klaipėda University says this rise in alternative (usually online) ways of political participation only indicates the rising levels of economic condition, education and information technology development. It could be argued that is a rather naive perspective, keeping in mind the wide array of negative outcomes this digital advancement (digital detachment, more like) is bringing with it. The dangers of a fake reality that we (precisely "we", not "them", remember, this is not a game of blame-the-young-ones) form inside our social bubbles is just one of them. Coming from my personal experience, the low youth participation statistics shocked me, as **everyone I know** was posting the mandatory post-election Instagram stories with "I voted" sticker and a happy face of an engaged citizen. But who is this "everyone"? When you break it down to numbers and geographics – it is the "happiest twentysomethings in the world" from

the widely discussed The Guardian article on Lithuania's ranking on Worlds Happiness record (McCusker, 2024). Such performative activism, while, of course, being positive and encouraged, shapes a distorted picture of a political scene already sorted – **everyone** votes, **everyone** promotes same sex marriage, **everyone** stands against fascism. But I fear that the people seen in protests, political debates and Pride marches is always the same one third of the youngsters. If that is **everyone**, then where is **everyone else**? How should we invite to active political participation the ones who are not friends of our friends of our friends?

The same generalised bubbles of distorted reality can be seen within the topic of environmental activism, since youngsters are exactly those who we see protesting against deforestation and spreading awareness online. But, making a direct link from ecological activism to the youth and accepting this as a standard narrative might move the focus for the big systematic change makers, and the concrete demands children present to the leaders might lose some of their urgency. In an article ""Gen Z Will Save Us": Applauded and Dismissed as a Gen Z Climate Activist", Tobias Hess says such generational generalisations are disserving climate activism in both the personal and governmental levels,

> "while this generational portrait of Gen Z as being politically savvy and morally courageous may give hope to some, this narrative is ultimately simplistic and reductive. […] If the narrative of Gen Z activists is as simple as "Gen Z activists are already changing the world and will soon solve entrenched political crises," then why should those in power feel compelled to change their policies and practices?" (2021, p. 2)

Also, here goes the answer to the earlier proposed question "why is this matter left to the hands of the youngsters themselves?". When society paints a picture of quirky, English-speaking (which in Lithuania still carries a taste of anti-patriotism), coloured-hair children, crying about the turtles with plastic straws in their noses, then it is all too easy to put the whole idea of environmental activism as over-sensitive, solely spiritual (irrelevant in the practical sense) and unserious.

On a level of public, young political enthusiasts are celebrated when their enthusiasm manifests itself in a clean and safe, debate-competition-wining and fifteen-year-olds-in-smart-suits kind of way, but is taken for granted, or worse, laughed at, when it takes a radical turn and runs in the streets. To illustrate that, an example from recent Lithuanian social media discourse will be used. In June 2020, when a police officer in USA brutally killed George Floyd, thus fuelling an international Black Lives Matter movement on-and-offline, a protest demonstration was organised in Vilnius too, with a few hundred youngsters, moved deeply by an such act of unfairness, in solidarity to their international community (whether that community is made of people they actually know, or are they just connected by the same algorithm on TikTok, is beside the point, since the rage and empathy it resulted in was very much real), as well as a few local politicians, sympathising with a young crowd. A journalist and a mainstream-acclaimed intellectual Rytis Zemkauskas has posted a picture from the event (See Figure 1), where young girls are holding a poster that says "Fuck the police", and a following comment:

> "Vilnius, today. "Fuck the Police"? – In a country where an officer was just killed? And to the protesting kids – please, be so kind as to translate your slogans into Lithuanian. You're not as modern or original as you think you are." (Zemkauskas, 2020, translated by K. Lenkauskaitė)

Fig. 1. Rytis Zemkauskas Facebook post (Figure is a creenshot from:
https://www.facebook.com/Rytis.Zemkauskas/posts/10158768399408291?ref=embed_post)

Regardless of the commentary for interviews in press later that day, where Zemkauskas claimed his support for such politically engaged young people, the initial damage was done – the post has generated thousands of comments, ranging from "Let the girl play at revolution" to "I spent some time living in America, and I didn't notice any racism", all accompanied by open homophobia, xenophobia and racism, as well as comments about the irrelevance of such protest in Lithuanian context. In one single caption of Zemkauskas we see the whole beautiful range of troubles of generational political divide and avoidance of radicalism. "Vilnius, today" – as in, "look, the sensitive liberals crossed the borders of a capital of a proudly conservative country". To put his patronisation in stone, he, a "well-established senior", asks "kids" to translate the internationally recognised protest slogan and not pretend to be a part of something bigger. For a finishing touch, he adds something that young people love so much – a moral! What could have been a conversation about public spirit or the intricacies of this global crisis of human rights, or simply an encouragement of activism, was instead an arrogant statement, that reads not far from "go back to your place, we have expressed anger before you were born and the politics are not that easy to understand."

This only shows that people like creating scapegoats. An unusually brave, committed and well opinionated child becomes a subject of both admiration and critique. Conceptualizing someone like Greta Thunberg into a symbol of rebellion, an idol even, creates a hot conversation topic and shifts the focus from personal contribution of everyone who talks about her. Only when her declarations become too aggressive (or simply direct) for the masses too handle, one becomes concerned about her absence from school, and a low-hanging blame of a young age can be brought to the scene, as well as a stamp of radicalism. Was "Fuck the Police" poster slightly tone-deaf in a local context of that time? Sure, but that stands beside the point. A quickly organised demonstration as a reaction to a raw social wound is neither an academic paper, nor a carefully constructed debate argument. Youth eagerness makes best sense from the inside of that group and is a borderline-spiritual activity of shared concern. Regardless if it results in any concrete positive results or not, it is significant just as such.

In times of global distress, I would choose Bielskis' "banality of oversensitive young adults" (p. 231) over pure ignorance every time. Reactive, easily offended, over-confident know-it-alls are better than indifferent, apolitical, could-not-be-bothered doom-scrollers of their context-less reality. The bittersweet ability to take advice, say sorry and fact-check will (should, hopefully) come with age, puberty-driven cringe or any experience of **real life**, which is, spoiler alert, not always right or as easy as a slogan on a t-shirt. Taking the risk of sounding like a boomer, I will claim that in times of emojis, **real** youth emotions (as in, heard on the streets, seen on the news, read in words and letters instead of symbols) would be a sign of a healing political culture.

This is not to say that social media and other digital tools are not suited for effective social activism, on the contrary, they can be used in extremely smart ways to fight propaganda, educate communities or organize large strategies of physical activism. This is to underline that online activism cannot be the only type of youth activism, and that keeping "radicals" online is not a safer option, but possibly a more dangerous one.

What would be a perfect scenario for a greener future, is if the youth would learn to transform their sassy, confrontational, creative radicalism to the physical space of political representation and community work. We can take 30-39-year-olds, who, based on CPI 2024, feel like the most

empowered citizens, as a proof that balancing the mediums of activism works. Proficient in the use of social media, but having spent half of their lives without it, they are capable of balancing both realms and strengthening their sense of civic pride (possibly) as a result of it. We are not all living in a metaverse just yet (or are we?) and the face to face, ink on paper, roundtable, offline methods are sometimes still crucial for implementing the so wanted change for the better. Though it is important to stress the interconnectedness here – the **elders**, for the lack of a better term, need the **youngsters** at the decision-making table just as the latter need the former, and they should learn how to face their radicalism too. Despite the predicted eye rolling (on both sides), multigenerational political co-creation would bring the wider range of perspectives for the less-radicalised political scene.

Hess rightfully stressed that "being seen as a beacon of hope is quite different from being truly listened to." (p. 3), and this could absolutely be applied to this topic of youth radicalism versus the established apathy of the experienced ones. If youth radicalism will be rejected, then they are likely to stay online. It must be remembered that their radicalism is completely justified, as "with each passing year, the possibility of avoiding an irreversibly warmer planet becomes more difficult, and thus there is little time for distant hope." (Hess, p. 4) So, a step to be taken towards a greener future, would be to accept political youth radicalism as a natural stage of the developing civic practice.

2.1.2. Radicalism dissolved into normativity: the case of Kaunas municipality

If in the case of youth participation, we discovered a case of an apathetic system that rejects the radicals, in the following case we see the opposite, an example of an apathetic civic community making peace with systematic radicalism. The last ten years of governance of Kaunas, second biggest city in Lithuania, can be used as an illustration of legacies of colonial ruling, mentioned in this work so far: the untouchable politics, left solely to the man of the house (the man being an authoritarian leader); the self-proving love for the material wealth and the blindness towards the natural environment; the hierarchical approach towards any community work and possibly more.

Visvaldas Matijošaitis, a mayor in charge of Kaunas municipality for the third term in a row, came into Lithuanian political scene from business. Not just any business, a global producer and supplier of food products "Vičiūnai Group", which has long held strong commercial ties with the Russian market, even after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Despite public pressure and official sanctions, Matijošaitis' business continued operations in Russia under subsidiary names, drawing widespread criticism and sparking (some) political backlash, but not enough to make an impact on his ruling in Kaunas. Even though "Vičiūnai Group" officially announced its complete withdrawal from the Russian market in April 2024, independent investigations and media reports indicated that the company continued operations in Russia through intermediaries or affiliated companies.

Throughout these years of full-scale invasion of Ukraine, many social happenings were organised to show the disagreement, in light terms, towards his interconnected business and political deals. From stickers stating company's sponsorship of the Bucha massacre spread in grocery shops, to a birthday of political hypocrisy celebrated in front of municipality and an open-call for alternative sculptures of Algirdas Brazauskas, there were many social happenings in opposition of this nonsense, however none of it seemed to make any difference to the mayor and his team. The latest confrontations can be highlighted as significant exactly because of the shift in his own tactics.

On November 22, 2024, during a basketball game in Žalgiris Arena in Kaunas, a full tribune of Žalgiris fans saw the mayor passing by them and started chanting "Krabas yra rusų kekšė" (eng. Crab is a Russian slut), which, by then, was not the first time the fan club has used this chant publicly. Seeing such an uproar, Matijošaitis got closer to the frontman of the crowd, trying to explain how life works, and in response received an either wilder scream of the citizens. He walked away in outraged matter, and, the a few days after this confrontation, **sued** the fan club. If a mayor taking satire songs to court is not illustrative enough, he issued an official statement, which, in the context of ideological formation, could be studied as a standard.

> "Today I reached out to the officers myself, asking them to assess Friday's events, because bullying and chauvinism should have no tolerance in our city. […] This time I didn't bring my grandchildren to the match, but as a man, I feel ashamed for those who shouted with their fingers outstretched, because there were more children around, and my wife was standing next to me. "Žalgiris" victories should bring joy to everyone, and not encourage confrontation and division. I would not want the growing generation in Kaunas to ever see such attacks of aggression again. This act is drunken interpretations without any facts. If we tolerate this, then they could throw stones at anyone on the street. Today's Western-like Kaunas is maintained too well, and such outbursts have nothing to do with democracy. The times of bandits are long gone." (lrt.lt, 2024, translated by K. Lenkauskaitė)

The statement is checking every box on the list of ideological manipulations, that trigger citizens in terms of personal and communal consciousness: a hurt honour of a man in power; prioritising the protection of children an women; condemning sports as an apolitical game; imposing the narrative of a blooming city; speculating on the mistrust of public statements; threatening on the decline of freedom of speech and democracy; foreshadowing physical abuse and a confirmation of the historical narrative of current political bliss.

A commonly used manipulative discourse that surrounds any attempts at social awareness is "do not mix sports with politics", "do not mix sports with culture", "Eurovision is a song contest, why are you crying about Israel in the comments?". While at the same time strengthening the aforementioned narrative of untouchable politics (in this case, not so much dirty, but rather above all, separate, saint-like), it also aims to separate each social and cultural field into its own box. This is a painting of a king with his wife painted too times smaller than him, but it has nothing to do women's cultural (in)significance and rights violations of that historic period; and this is just a game of basketball, and the citizen representation, cultural wars and decades-long community that follow the game are beside the point. What is being done here by authoritarian ruling, is exactly opposing the interconnectedness of all spheres, promoted by Guattari and other political and environmental ecologists. If the understanding that **everything and everyone depends on everyone and everything else** is ecosophical and aspiring, then such communicational-ideological separation of every sphere of human activities is anti-ecosophical, and within the framework of sustainable society should be criticized as anti-green. Meanwhile, the actions of social critique, that help connecting the dots between renovated streets and the head of municipality who does not show up to public city events, free concerts on public holidays (bread and circuses!) and a growing profit of his business, can be considered truly ecosphical.

In the context of this sub-chapter, we must remember that for activism to be ecosophical, is does not need to be concerned directly with the topics that are traditionally (thus, usually, narrowly) considered ecological (nature preservation, veganism and animal rights, etc). In a deep green sense, protesting against a dictator is directly connected to all three ecologies. Mentally, it promotes dismantling the inner hypocrisy and questioning the convenience of apathy and quiet support (remember, non-participation is not neutral). Socially, it strengthens social bonds through joint happenings and enhances communal power. Environmentally, specifically in this case, since Matijošaitis is directly involved with Russia, and by supporting Russian economy supports the war crimes in Ukraine, anti-war-criminal actions are promoting the end of the war, which protect the environment in the physical sense, in the sense of human lives and in the whole sense of philosophical ecology.

Moreover, Matijošaitis is a pure symbol of neoliberal, detached capitalism, both in his persona and in his role of the unstoppable money-making-machine. And if we compare the weight of consequences that individual citizen consumption carries compared to the big-bosses of production, then we can collect our jaws from the ground and agree that none of our veganism and second-hand shopping is relevant, if

> "the bottom 50% of the world population emitted 12% of global emissions in 2019, whereas the top 10% emitted 48% of the total. Since 1990, the bottom 50% of the world population has been responsible for only 16% of all emissions growth, whereas the top 1% has been responsible for 23% of the total." (Chancel, 2022, abstract)

More on that will be discussed in the third chapter, but for now it is crucial to understand why resisting such authoritarian figures are in its' essence deep green.

Mažeikis says we can recognise an apocalypse by the people who do not contemplate their key life questions anymore, and are not expecting anything good nor bad from their limbo-like reality. (lrt.lt, 2024) Exactly this limbo, philosopher argues, is the metaphor for the welfare state politics, presently active in Lithuania. Such strategy revolves around maintaining and enhancing the well-being of citizens, enabling sustainable processes, fostering balanced discussions. So, the passive, careful, sleepy central discourse has a perfect excuse – we simply do not want to mess up the current welfare.

To conclude on a positive note, it should be mentioned that Matijošaitis popularity among citizens is decreasing. Starting his victory in 2015 with 62.68% of votes, peaking in 2019 with 80,75% and whoping 101 938 voters, in 2023, amongst the publicity of the remained ties to Russia, he won by receiving 59,66% of votes (kaunas.kasvyksta.lt, 2023). But even though this decrease is promising, even the remaining half of citizens obedient to oppressive structures, in return savouring the surface-level joy of common-wealth in a form of new glass buildings which hide the mayor-businessman maneuvers beneficial only to his wealth, in Deleuzian-Guattarian terms, is our "interior colony" (p. 170) and thus an illustration for destructive radicalism dissolved into normativity.

This sub-chapter argues that embracing radicalism, often misunderstood, is vital for shaking up Lithuania's apathetic political scene. Ignoring radical ideas, especially from the left, actually weakens democracy. The rise of radical right movements, despite liberal dismissiveness, shows the dangers of this void. Lithuania's historical suppression of emotion under Soviet ruling also contributes to its cautious approach to radicalism. However, following Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy it can be suggested that a radical deep green citizen is less dangerous than an apathetic conformist. Moreover,

the low youth political participation (only 35.69% voting in 2024 for 18-29-year-olds), despite online activism, highlights a key issue. While young people are often admired for their creativity, their more radical expressions are often dismissed within public discourse, undermining their potential impact on environmental and social issues and increasing the chances of them staying only as online activists, if any at all. Finally, the case of Kaunas mayor Visvaldas Matijošaitis exemplifies radicalism dissolved into normativity. Despite his company's continued ties to Russia, his popularity persists, showcasing how material comfort can blind citizens to accountability. His attempts to separate politics from other spheres, like sports, are seen as anti-ecosophical. Resisting such figures, this sub-chapter argues, is fundamentally deep green because the actions of major capitalistic producers far outweigh individual consumer choices. Such welfare state politics normalizes destructive radicalism, reinforcing a vicious cycle of apathy.

2.2. Progressive and regressive radicalisms?

Having observed the examples from the previous sub-chapter, the feeling that some radical political acts are more meaningful, less anger-inducing and more thought-provoking than others is still there. It can be also argued that the term radicalism carries a suspicious weight in Lithuanian political culture – what is being **called** radical can differ from visual distress, to bold and creative self-expression or a direct expression of one's opinion. As this thesis has already explored, these different perceptions are informed by inherited narratives, material conditions and social fatigue. If ethics are too complicated to make a distinction between "good" and "bad" radicalism, perhaps we can divide it into progressive and regressive radicalism, to describe their inclinations either for change, or for stubborn upkeep of the current situation.

In the face of environmental and social crises, calls for radical action grow louder, but so does the societal backlash. In post-Soviet societies, any whiff of collectivism or systemic rethinking can immediately trigger accusations of Marxist revivalism, as if a single phrase in favour of shared ownership could unlock a hidden door to nineteen-forties. And yet, if we take ecological politics seriously (not just as a branding strategy for sustainability), it becomes impossible to avoid the radical. This chapter will explore the distinction between radicalisms that aim to expand democratic horizons, challenge oppressive power structures, and promote ecological justice, and those that disguise authoritarianism, and how should we judge these differences within the framework of dark green politics.

2.2.1. The ghost of communism: is a left-left possible in post-colonial Lithuania?

Even though "individual parties might deviate from the reactions typical to their ideological affiliation depending on whether they are part of the government coalition or part of the opposition" (Berker, Pollex p. 169), 2021), Dobson's deep green politics are aligning best with the values of the left. Meanwhile,

> "The consensus of the general public in Lithuania was to privilege the liberal-democratic-capitalist-West over the socialist-authoritarian-East. This unarticulated distinction—the pro-Western, capitalist patriotic Lithuania versus the pro-Russian communist Lithuania—has become so prevalent since the early 1990s that even today, any authentic attempt to revive the ideas of the European left is met with great resistance and suspicion." (Bielskis, p. 296)

On top of that, modern day philosophers like Kohei Saito, who say that in the face of "the irrationality of the current economic system, Marxism now has a chance of revival" (2023, p. 2), truly send shivers down the spines of Lithuanians (those in approval of its' independence, anyway).

This "great resistance and suspicion" should not be taken lightly. To the generations that experienced Soviet colonisation directly, their offspring and empathetic and historically-sensitive citizens, both "Marx" and "Left" are symbols in a broader sense, not just cultural indicators of philosophical and political directions, but rather bodily, unconscious, embedded symbols in the mindset and the very experience of living. Those symbols, which will differ for different colonies based on their specific experiences, are active not only in the intellectual level of rational worldview formation, but on the embodied physical, inherited traditional, historical-narrative ones too, and therefore, cannot be eliminated or convinced to be a new role model easily.

Within the discourse of inter-generational oppositions, the idea of "waiting for the old generation to die" still appears in political discussions. Although not so directly macabre, the implication that the traumatized are not capable of modern changes is still prevailing more often than not. Not only in an obvious sense of compassion, such a "decision" is anti-green too, as it is not only discriminating and ageist, but celebrates the inability for constructive discussions and productive arguments between opposing opinions too.

In post-colonial sense, older generations are not simply sharing similar worldviews, but such worldviews are formed by their shared traumatic past. Mažeikis says that cultural bonds are strengthen by the conflict between the "the forbidden and the permitted", and the meaning-making during such borderline-illegal, but trust-building acts. While this observation can be an inspiration for an upcoming generation of (both digital and non-digital) activists, it is also crucial in explaining the visceral reactions towards leftist ideas, since the invaluable bonding between peers

> "occurs during forbidden protests, strikes, revolutions, or wartime. Being between the forbidden and the permitted, the transgression of boundaries, a crisis at such a time, is what forms trust, solidarity, a responsible and disobedient consideration of the state of culture, about which we spoke when discussing experiences of exile. Friendship in this regard is tainted by crime, for example, that of a dissident" (2020, p. 46, translated by K. Lenkauskaitė)

Moreover, he says that organisations (in this sense we can surely see the "state" as one), bonded by "dramatic trust" (to this I would also add dramatic mistrust) and "existential self-determination" are unique in their content and form, and cannot be explained in mathematical terms. (p. 47) In this we also find the explanation for the strong resistance to any remotely socialist revolutions – people who collectively (even though not necessarily directly "together") went through the horrors of Marxist ideology are righteously suspicious, and the fact that some of the current activists did not participate in the Soviet-resistance and any amount of rationality will not do the justice in understanding that pain, is adding to the suspicion too. Such resistance for Marxist-and-left-anything, keeping in mind the importance of those political directions among greens, imposes a discussion whether a left-left movement is a realistic strategy to (re)build post-colonial Lithuania, and whether the new generation of left thinkers will not slip on the traumatic ground of Soviet "communism" and fail, or will not unconsciously integrate those faulty ideas as suitable for a green future.

Dobson says that ecologism (ideological green politics) leans strongly to the left in the political spectrum, especially if we underline the difference between the aims of ecologism and the fundamental principles than informs it. There are opposing opinions about this, from theorists who focus on the objective of sustainability and thus blames the greens for choosing that objective over the method for reaching it, and even stretches those blames by suggesting that "if it could be shown that authoritarianism was more effective in this sense than democracy, then that would be enough to privilege authoritarianism ahead of democracy". (p. 73) But Dobson argues that the self-determination which deep green underlines, "outlaws authoritarianism as a matter of principle" (p. 73), even though there is some room for debate over the most suitable way of governance within ecologism.

To oppose the validity of Dobson proposed thoroughly in this thesis though, lecturer in global policy and activism dr. Feyzi Ismail insists that degrowth (strictly highlighted as an ideology by Dobson in his concept of ecologism)

> "fails to equip us with a strategy that can bring about the ideals it raises. This strategy must entail a confrontation with those who are obstacles to the realisation of those ideals, and therefore must take seriously the sphere of production, where workers have power and without whom the struggle for transforming the mode of production is meaningless." (2023, p. 1339)

So, while the degrowth politics might be suitable for a Lithuanian political culture, even with ideas that sound quite radical for a traditional citizen, they might not be **radical enough** to really make an impact on prevailing capitalism system. Ismail further elaborates that the focus on

> "knowledge and information about the science and spreading that knowledge, persuading the public and authorities about the impact of the crisis [basically what this whole thesis is about] – largely reflect the class position of those at the forefront of the movement" (p. 1340),

meaning that the ways, discussed above, out of this crisis reveals our position as that of a "capitalist class" (p. 1340), which has at least a theoretical level of accessibility to the governing bodies. And for the working-class, who, as mentioned before, are mostly affected by this polycrisis (even though their carbon footprint is the smallest one), the only way to truly disrupt the hegemonic system is by using their power as a collective force of workers.

But then, in a discussion about such upheaval of the working-class, surprise surprise, the keyword "trade-union" is a sensitive one in Lithuanian political culture too. Carrying the institutional remnants of workers enslaved in building the socialist empire and reaping no fruits out of it themselves, plus the inherited dynamics of hierarchical power, discussed about in the chapter of institutional apathy, paints the members of trade-unions as annoying applicants for extra benefits to this day. When the Lithuanian Education Employees Trade Union (LEETU) organised the Teachers Strike for the first time in 2018 (which included a three-week occupation of Ministry of Science and education) and a less radical one in 2023, the prevailing issue in the basic social media level was that children of those protesting teachers cannot attend classes. Although the support for the unfairness of education system was there too, the anger focused on the lack of lectures, instead of the dehumanising working conditions of arguably the most important worker of the country, once again proves the sad reality of the socialist imprints. In such interruption of the system, the fact that children cannot have lessons is

the whole point! Ismail underlines that "if we are talking about disruption, working people have an unparalleled power to disrupt." (p. 1341)

From this we can extend that the chapter on post-colonial Lithuanian identity, built on the newly-independent purchasing power, is an indication of the reasons behind apathy, but not a subject for blame, nor the main focus of deep green strategies. The re-evaluation of self-worth will help, in Guattarian terms, in the realm of mental and social ecologies, and finding joy and fulfilment in things other than brand-new-anything will for sure benefit the overall health of the society, but environmental ecology would benefit the greatest from a radical movement of the working class.

So, while from Dobson we receive an assurance that the proposed strategy of degrowth will not turn into communism 2.0, there are authors who persist that it would be exactly what the worlds needs right now. Ismail is giving subtle hints towards it, Saito invites for a re-conceptualisation of Marx and Bielskis (Lūžis, 2025) goes straight to it and proposes a new, feminist, bottom-up, arts-and-culture enhancing communism as strategy for anti-capitalist way of life!

While my conservative-cost-colonial-Lithuanian-self wraps her head around such atrocities, let's go back to the title of this sub-chapter and rethink what progress and regress would really mean for a current state. Progress is a move forward, a level-up, away out of historical, habitual, sentimental, economic, systematic suppressions. Then if the first thing we mentioned while talking about the risks of implementing radical ideas was this obstacle, perhaps it is time to look into ways of dismantling it. The aftereffects of Marxism-Leninism in Lithuania are still there, only proving the damage that colonisers imprinted on their victims for a few generations forward. But if we are in agreement that a radical greening movement is needed, then familiarising ourselves with the perspective of post-colonialism and accepting the (even a smallest) possibility to revisit left scholars would be a move of the most progressive radicalism.

2.2.2. Non-alternative radicalism as a risk to democracy

Following from the previous sub-chapter, we can see that regressive radicalism can be described as the one that does not leave people option to choose from anything else. In such case, that is why left politics (or at least a version of them) is considered radical by Lithuanians – it was imposed on them as a synthetic way of living, leaving them no other choice but to obey. So, the democracy-informed radicalism should let people choose their sides, without the oppression of single pre-supposed correct ideology. Of course, the aim of green radicalism in this case, is that a majority of people would subscribe to it out of their passion for ecosophical change, but equally strong opposition of forces is vital nevertheless.

Such non-alternative oppressive structures are surely not just a thing of the past. The case of Kaunas municipality can be used to illustrate exactly the situation where a weak and sporadic political community without activated public can easily be supressed by a non-alternative propaganda machine. (Mažeikis, p. 64) Coming into the office in 2015 after Andrius Kupčinskas, who was criticized for being stagnant and abandoning the city, Matijošaitis waved his flag of a business-savvy non-politician, who will not be stopped by any bureaucratical nonsense. This way, "the diversity of opinions is being replaced by consistent, repetitive persuasion, targeted information, […] strengthens alienation." (Mažeikis, 2006, p. 64, translated by K. Lenkauskaitė) It is important, in the current geopolitical situation, to talk about this non-alternative propaganda, also confirming Yudin's warnings in the beginning of this thesis, because "driven by targeted, non-alternative manipulation

and fear, public interest actors are happy to support demoralized political regimes." (Mažeikis, p. 67, translated by K. Lenkauskaitė)

Mažeikis also points to the privatisation of public spaces tendency in 1992-2000, which lead to the erosion of democracy and decrease in the political power of community gatherings. If physical spaces that do not belong to the citizens anymore is the proof of bureaucratized governing (p. 62), then we have another proof of crumbling democracy in the aforementioned case of Matijošaitis, who, together with his family and close circle of fellow businessmen, is reshaping Kaunas to a polished (but authoritarian) (but polished!) version of a city. And not only in terms of urbanistic aesthetics, but in terms of citizen apathy too.

Such lack of reciprocal political interest and social ties between citizens and their governance can be highlighted as a bright red flag and a threat to such young democracy as Lithuania. Mažeikis underlined that "dialogicity is a fundamental condition of human expression, dictated by democracy. But it is not a given, and appears only when crucial public conditions for an equal dialogue are created." (p. 64) so, the reciprocity is a crucial aspect. As discussed in the sub-chapter on youth political participation, it is not only about what the supposedly radical youth is saying or doing, but also about how the "others" are receiving and responding to that. And the lack of adequate reception of citizen action can often lead to a drastic radicalisation of that group. This formula of **radicalism growing bigger when ignored**, can be seen in both the activities of unregulated officials, and the ignored citizens, who's rights and desires are non-negotiable.

In the distinction between regressive and progressive radicalisms is important to underline that it is differentiating by the aim, not by the methods of radical moves. In other words, it does not mean that progressive radicalism is all about rainbows, butterflies and respectful conversations, at the same time, regressive radicalism is not necessarily the repulsive one. For example, the social campaigns organised by NGO "Tušti narvai" (eng. Empty cages) are always visually brutal. Their latest communication performance, aimed for highlighting the unethical laws of animal farming looked like a horror movie (See Figure 2), but should still be considered progressive, as animal rights activism is supporting deep green values.

If in terms of deep green politics, we can conceptualize that radicalism can only be considered progressive when it is built on democratic values, and when it is in active opposition of another political powers. But does that suppose that the current stagnation, apathy and non-participation is a vital condition for green radicalism? If so, is it worth risking with any kind of radicalism at all? If there are so many subtleties that can turn the originally well-intended activism into fascism, why bother ruining your reputation? Especially in times of such environmental instability and social fragmentation, perhaps we can turn to pacifism, daily breathing exercises and the unconditional love for the despot? While radical activism can seem unsustainable (in both material and mental terms), the surrender to authoritarianism is undemocratic. One can wear the badge of pacifism proudly only in the face of peace, because in times of war such blindness to prevailing killings and crimes would indicate one's privilege of safety (which cannot be one hundred percent true in today's world anyway).

Fig. 2. "Tušti narvai" performace for animal rights in Vilnius (Figure is a photo by Greta Skaraitienė BNS, saved from: https://www.15min.lt/naujiena/aktualu/lietuva/tusti-narvai-vilniuje-surenge-protesta-raginanti-imtis-pokyciu-kastruojant-parselius-56-2447854#_)

Furthermore, analysis of supposedly different type or radicalisms and their reception within society, as well as ecosophical impact, lead us to a great suspicion: is what we called regressive radicalism, radical at all? Can a political move, not directed for any real change and only organised to

have content for social media, even be considered a political act? Deleuze and Guattari, in "What is philosophy?" say that "those who criticize without creating, those who are content to defend the vanished concept without being able to give it the forces it needs to return to life, are the plague of philosophy." (1994, p. 28) And if we believe green politics firstly to be a philosophical revolution, and if believe practice to be the ultimate progressive force, while an apathetic stagnation as a regressive one, then we reach the conclusion that regressive radicalism is not radicalism after all. If deep green politics' main objective is to dismantle the neoliberal mentality and transform the society for a more integrated, natural, political way of life, then regressive radicalism starts looking a lot like a random act of unexpressed creativity, rather than a political force with clear direction.

To sum up, regressive radicalism poses a threat to democracy by eliminating alternative choices and imposing a single ideological narrative, as seen in how Lithuanians associate leftist politics with the authoritarianism for the traumatic past. The example of Kaunas municipality illustrates how weak civic engagement can be overtaken by non-alternative propaganda and centralized power. Progressive radicalism, in contrast, must be rooted in democratic values and open dialogue, not in coercion. Ultimately, if radicalism does not aim for genuine change and societal transformation, it risks becoming mere spectacle rather than a meaningful political force.

This subchapter explored radicalism in Lithuania, differentiating between progressive actions that drive positive change and regressive ones that maintain the status quo; and acknowledged the subjective nature of what is considered radical. A significant barrier to progressive radicalism in post-colonial Lithuania is the deep-seated fear of communism and anything associated with the political left. Generations scarred by Soviet rule view "Marx" and "Left" as multilayered symbols of trauma, making any revival of leftist ideas incredibly difficult, particularly for older generations. This provokes questions whether a left-left movement is feasible and if it can avoid faulty tendencies of the past. It also considers if the philosophy of degrowth, while seemingly radical, is truly disruptive enough to challenge capitalism, especially given the historical stigma against trade unions. Sub-chapter defines regressive radicalism as a force that imitates voluntary citizen choice. The case of Kaunas Mayor Visvaldas Matijošaitis exemplifies this; despite his company's ties to Russia, his popularity persists, showing how material comfort can overshadow accountability. His attempts to isolate politics from other spheres are seen as anti-ecosophical. The text concludes that progressive radicalism is democratic and actively opposes other political powers, whereas regressive radicalism is not genuinely radical, but merely a superficial act lacking real political direction.

3. What kind of greening strategy is needed?

All of the dynamics, interconnections and case studies discussed in the previous chapters can lead to a confusion: if a post-capitalist view of the world calls, essentially, for a step back, for an abstinence of desires and a better focus on true needs; and radicalism, on the other hand, calls for a brave, under-rationalised, system-breaking and normativity-shaking practical activity, then are they not contradicting each other? Exactly for this reason, a philosophical map needs to be provided, to propose a strategy for a truly (not in a discussed managerial manner) sustainable society.

While the posthumanist approach for greener future

> "enforces the necessity to think again and to think harder about the status of the human, the importance of recasting subjectivity accordingly, and the need to invent forms of ethical relations, norms and values worthy of the complexity of our times" (Braidotti, p. 186),

Dobson argues that genuinely transformative ecologism, which seeks to change human attitudes and behaviours, requires confronting anthropocentrism (human-centeredness) directly. If posthumanists call for de-centralisation of human position within the ecosystem of species, Dobson argues that opposing speciesism and human chauvinism "will involve working with the concept of anthropocentrism rather than without it." (p. 57)

Whatever the preferred stance or an ideology may be, a new greening strategy for Lithuania is needed simply because "the excitement as well as the horrors of our times" (Braidotti, p. 186) call for truly creative (and, preferably, quick) reformulation of the current political culture. The following thematic chapters will try to supress the aforementioned mix of interrelations and provide specific concepts to be applied in an attempt for a healthier way of green political participation.

3.1. There is nothing to say, but everything to do

If apathy is firstly a mental load, which transforms into practice (non-practice rather, non-participation), then perhaps one of the ways to fight this indifference is to reverse the formula and suggest radicalism which puts practice first, expecting it to transform mentality afterwards.

On a level of citizen empowerment, this suggests involving political practices into basic routine. The same way as doing sports is good for both mental and physical health (and not necessarily needs to lead into competitive field), art and culture fulfils aesthetic needs and enriches critical thinking, the same way political acts (voting in elections, involvement in party activities, attending demonstrations and protests, signing petitions, supporting and initiating boycotts, contributing to digital activism on social media, volunteering and doing community work) forms a habit of political engagement, strengthens societal bonds and thus increases resilience (both in a personal mental way and in a very practical one in terms of community organisation and trust-building).
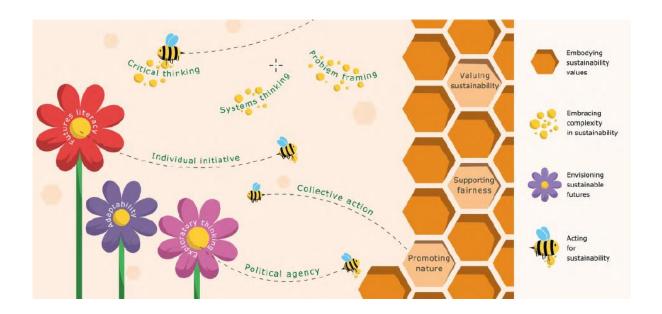
On an institutional systematic level, radical shift of importance to praxis would mean to move the focus from bureaucratic back-and-forth-manoeuvres of yet another redefined vocabulary of sustainability and wasted human and economic resources on additional documentation, to decision-making practices that involve opinion and information exchange between different stakeholders and local communities. As academia is a huge systematic apparatus, often forgot about in discussions on society formation and future tendencies, it is important to define deep green practices there too.

Interdisciplinary research field of political ecology aims to "produce knowledge with, and for, communities and to influence better policy-making." (Sultana, 2023 p. 728) It is a relevant approach of knowledge formation, because it focuses on how ideas (theory) and action (practice) are deeply interconnected, it does not treat academic work and activism as totally separate things. Instead, it sees all research and action as political (so, not neutral), and believes that power influences every part of the research process. (Sultana, p. 729)

On top of delaying the real implementations of green strategies, managerial over-production of reasonable documents also creates a layer of mysticism around all-things-ecology. Since people fail to see what green strategies really mean in terms of familiar spaces, legal positions and lifestyle, ecology remains an abstract concept and thus, the distance between citizens and such concept widens even more. Dobson elaborates well while explaining the insufficiency of ecophilosophy, as a strictly theoretical field:

> "Perhaps I can make this clearer by referring to Karl Marx's *Eighth Thesis on Feuerbach*, which runs as follow: 'Social life is essentially practical. All mysteries which mislead theory to mysticism find their solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice' (in Feuer, 1976, p. 285; emphasis in original). While not wanting to endorse everything Marx has to say I think Marx's thought here points us in the right direction. […] In our present context, I would argue that the environmental crisis is the 'mystery' and that ecophilosophy – in all its various forms – is the 'mysticism'." (p. 60-61)

In Lihtuanian political culture, it could be argued, **the mysticism is the bureaucratical apparatus**, apathetic to the people it should be able to create beneficial living conditions for. So, a meaningful systematic radicalism would be to stop illustrating ecological crisis in flowers and bees, (much like, The European sustainability competence framework GreenComp (See Figure 3), for example) and acknowledge the dignity of citizens enough to talk to them in a straight, serious, clear manner. Because possibly the infantile depiction of anything sustainability-related is what keeps the ordinary Jonas and Janina, who take themselves seriously, from thinking that this topic is addressed to them in any way.

Fig. 3. GreenComp: The European sustainability competence framework report illustration (Figure is a screenshot from: https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/greencomp-european-sustainability-competence-framework_en)

Going back to Sultana's political ecology, she highlights the power of storytelling (which you receive by working directly with communities) and narratives (the weight of which to Lithuanian culture was discussed in the context of identity formation, practice building and resistance tendencies). Sultana underlines that

> "narratives tell stories of peoples and places in their own voice, **giving agency to communities** that political ecologist research with, demonstrating connections to wider political economy. […] Storytelling is argued to be "a deliberate counter-hegemonic strategy with explicit political aim" (Armiero er al., 2019)". (p. 730, emphasis added)

On a philosophical level of inhabited shared narratives, it could be argued that the concept of "think before you act", especially within this context of green politics, but not only, creates unnecessary stagnation, as overthinking, over-conceptualisation, and over-contemplation more often than not does not reach the "act" stage. These suggestions might wave a few red flags towards us, like would this encourage violence, cause public havoc and would lead to an unruled society? Remembering the interconnectedness of things within theories of ecosophy and other communal greening strategies, it needs to be underlined that such narrative shift would (ideally) not happen on its' own, and it would be accompanied by changes in systematic and social levels too. The idea is that such changes, all happening simultaneously, would influence one another – for example, bottom-up institutional discussions could help transform personal mentality of participants of such events; trade-union strike of one production sphere could inspire community formations in another; increased political awareness and activism of citizens could make election participants tweak their agitation rhetoric; etc. Remembering the metaphor of equally strong opponents than create dynamics to move forward, it is expected that the transformation from reason-based lifestyle to a practice-based one, in several actors at once in similar intensity, would work as a self-regulated system of political improvement.

Moreover, to further acknowledge the inner dynamics of practice that make it as much of a "philosophy" and a way of "understanding" one's own life, as a reasonable theoretical study of a

field, we can turn to Alasdair MacIntyre, who in "After Virtue" (2007) provided a clear of explanation of what it really takes for a person to enter into practice, and how a simple "doing" of a pre-defined practice is in itself also thinking about it, flowing into a system, connecting to a network:

> "A practice involves standards of excellence and obedience to rules as well as the achievement of goods. **To enter into a practice is to accept the authority of those standards and the inadequacy of my own performance as judged by them.** It is to subject my own attitudes, choices, preferences and tastes to the standards which currently and partially define the practice. Practices of course, as I have just noticed, have a history: games, sciences and arts all have histories. Thus, the standards are not themselves immune from criticism, but nonetheless we cannot be initiated into a practice without accepting the authority of the best standards realized so far. […] **In the realm of practices, the authority of both goods and standards operates in such a way as to rule out all subjectivist and emotivist analyses of judgment.**" (p. 190, emphasis added)

And so, the most radical act of freeing ourselves from the normativity of dry bureaucracy, which takes a long time to finalise the theoretical part of projects and then even more time for them to reach tangible results, would be to **open up for experimentation**, not be afraid of failure and then **use that failure for the improvement of systems**, rather than build a wall of guilt and never look into that trial again. If we agree that "war-geared planned economies laid the structural foundations for post-war bureaucratised welfare states." (Bielskis, p. 229), then a post-capitalist way of policy and decision-making should include the dismantling of pomp rhetorics of sustainability-regulation-check-point document-making and replace it with inclusive (and therefore open to subjectivity, mistakes and disagreements, but thus richer in content, thought-provoking and localised-personalised) processes. Or as Braidotti has put in a shorter way – "there is nothing to say, but everything to do." (p. 190)

3.2. Social propaganda or radicalism as trickery?

However, if we agree that in terms of impact, practice is more valuable than theory, it does not make the theoretical part disappear. If from the research in previous chapter we see that the problems of ecosophy dissemination can be related with **perception and reception of radical ideas or groups**, then the area of communication is an important one to tackle.

Most strategic documents and policies, as well as community initiatives and other manifestations of ecological movements in Lithuania, up until now focused on **sustainability** as the setting stone and the most important keyword. If, among other shifts in public philosophy, a new vocabulary is needed to reshape life as a whole (not in a shape of another website for new terms, but in a more abstract way of what this whole eco-crisis means), then such re-wording of environmental activism will include a change in communication, in the broadest sense. If the individual, systematic and historical fear of radicalism in green (among other) consciousness, activism and policy-making results in a lukewarm welfare state, restricted by its own internalised Oedipus, then there is no space and time for "sustainability", simply because the current state of being is not to be sustained, but to be shaken drastically.

Alinsky stressed that

"communication with other takes place **when they understand what you're trying to get across to them**. […] Further, communication is a two-way process. If you try to get your ideas across to others without paying attention to what they have to say to you, you can forget about the whole thing." (p. 81, emphasis added)

Although that is an obvious observation, but in the context of radical activists, it can lose its' importance in the usual moralising tone and a focus on evoking sadness and guilt. An empirical study of climate activist communication in Lithuania reveals that it is dominated by messages that use the language of unavoidable danger and disaster. Negative emotions, such as fear, anger, and disappointment, is the prevailing background of their material. (Uldinskaitė, 2024) Furthermore, the main narratives of the social media among the activists fall under such thematic categories: "You are destroying our future," "Political struggle," "Nature is suffering because of us," "Catastrophe is inevitable," and "Someone is profiting from this." To prove the validity of those blames, they frequently rely on scientific data, highlighting critical issues such as threats to human life, climate-induced migration, environmental damage, and rising temperatures. (p. 77-78) In a sphere of plant-based diet, another research has highlighted that people in Lithuania are less willing to buy vegan food if the label indicates "vegan" (VšĮ Gyvi gali, 2022).

The stagnant scene of green politics makes us question whether doomsday rhetoric is effective in a deeper sense though. It also makes us believe in Harari when he says that "it is a mistake, however, to put so much trust in the rational individual", "our emotions and heuristics were perhaps suitable for dealing with life in the Stone Age, they are woefully inadequate in the Silicon Age." (p. 192), and that "most people don't like too many facts, and they certainly don't like to feel stupid." (p. 194). Alinsky said the same thing too, just fifty years earlier than him: "**it does not matter what you know about anything if you cannot communicate to your people**. In that event you are not even a failure. You're just not there." (p. 81, emphasis added) Does it mean that the apathy and the overall human ignorance to scientific facts stop the environmental activism from any positive progress? Or does the current activism have wrong objectives?

Researches in different areas of studies show that neither targeting care, nor anger, works effectively, and that seemingly direct explanations are not convincing enough, it can be suggested that a way to overcome those obstacles would be to not focus on emotions as a currency for dramatic communication, but instead to look for ways to encourage citizens to do the ecosophical **act,** without the preconditioned emotional (arguably also a spiritual) **mindset** layer.

Lithuanian deposit system for beverage containers can be examined as a successful example of an **act-directed society reshaping project**. At first glance, it appears to be just a machine that counts returned bottles – a digitalized waste container – but looking at its operational statistics over several years, this system has initiated changes on social, economic, and cultural levels. This household waste recycling system integrates all three ecologies. One of the most evident aspects is environmental: plastic, glass, and metal containers returned to designated collection points do not end up in landfills or scattered across public spaces. According to Gintaras Varnas, director of the public institution "Deposit System Administrator" (USAD), which is responsible for sorting and preparing collected waste for recycling, the efficiency of the deposit return system is determined by the clarity of the user experience: "The closer the location where the container can be returned is, the bigger the public engagement." (Platūkytė, 2020). It seems that in this regard, Guattari was absolutely right: ecological results will not be

achieved by imposing strict laws but by creating an environment that facilitates such actions, allowing people to develop new behavioural models themselves. It is the embodied habit and repeated practice that creates a new reality, in this case, a cleaner environment and the mental integration of a more sustainable lifestyle. Moreover, according to a survey conducted in December 2019 at the request of USAD, 90% of the population uses the deposit system, 94% are satisfied with its operation, and 85% state that participating in the deposit system has encouraged them to sort all other types of waste. (Platūkytė, 2020).

However, the enthusiasm and determination to care for the environment, mentioned by the USAD director in his interviews, are not entirely convincing as the main motivation for using the deposit system. In my opinion, the primary incentive for users of this waste-sorting system is the economic factor – the financial return for the returned container, essentially a reward for changing a habit. This monetary motivation is a clear expression of social ecology: the deposit return system helps improve the living conditions of all social groups, at least to some extent. That being said, this raises a question of what means are truly suitable for achieving comprehensive ecological thinking: can sorting waste for financial gain be considered an authentically embodied eco-logical mindset? Would positive tangible results justify the means by which they are encouraged?

This tricky approach to effective implementations of change in social practice sounds very close to social propaganda, described by Mažeikis as a manipulative act of consolidation, mobilisation, and direction of different societal groups towards implementing plans of future wellness. (p. 56) Parallel to social propaganda, among other tools of social engineering, is social marketing, and the difference between these two could be important to us, similarly to the difference between dark and light green politics. Social marketing works in initiatives like charity actions and other one time, surface level "help" for those in need during that specific time, while social propaganda looks into relationship between social institutions and proposes new ways of living and thinking, and ways to make these changes last. (p. 57) In essence, marketing is manipulation for profit, while propaganda is manipulation for a deeper societal shift. Within the framework of Dobson's ecologism, then, we can say that social marketing is a matter of light green, technocratic environmentalism, while social propaganda is an ideological tool for building a dark green sustainable society. Therefore, in the context of this thesis, we could focus on the latter, as a strategy for implementing greening initiatives in Lithuania. Mažeikis also underlines that social propaganda can feel pointless in short-term, but contributes to positive shifts after a long, consistent run. On the opposite, while social marketing can look effective and exciting in short-term (donating charity for a suffering country, for example), repeating it for a long time only citizen motivation and leads to passivity. (p. 59)

If red flags of lying and propaganda are flashing while reading this, it should be mentioned that the capitalist system has been using this manipulative sugarcoating strategy for years. Selling exploitation as opportunity, calling consumption freedom and successfully convincing us that endless growth will bring us closer to happiness. If a move forward is possible only in between two equally strong forces, and if we already apply this strategy in terms of preparation for war, when the best response to a growing enemy's army is to strengthen your own, then maybe we can try fighting capitalism with its own weapons too.

Lithuania is in need of a dark green social propaganda, not in a shape of idealistic slogans, but in a personalised way of responding to different variations of environmental awareness and environmental

behaviour (described by Telešienė in the first chapter). If the doubts of a broken spirit of truly honest ecosophy persists, we can remember that in the 90's, when Guattari was writing "The Three Ecologies", the environmental crisis was nowhere near as extreme as it is today, even if the roots of it probably lies in that period. But it could be argued that the polarized current times would benefit more from a non-ideal, personalised ecosophy more, instead of waiting for the perfect one to be conceptualized. Contrary to the position that climate activists usually talk from, not-perfect environmental behaviour would be more beneficial, than none. Moreover, radical stands would actually benefit the theoretical discourse more, as discussed earlier, when Mažeikis insists that radical scenarios, "realized" in communicational level (a conversation at least) would highly prevent the tragedies from happening in real life. This concept of social propaganda sound very similar to Ideological State Apparatuses, developed by Louis Althusser to describe the programming of society through different channels and subconsciously subscribing them to follow the ruling discourse. But if in terms of Dobson's green politics, the ideological weight of ecologism is considered positive, then social propaganda could pass as a justified mean.

3.3. Breaking down hierarchies and enjoying work again

"There is nothing new in the claim that capitalism generates inequalities, yet the unprecedented growth of inequality over the past seventy-five years is well documented." (Bielskis, p.227) Keeping that as the main focus of a truly green Lithuania, then, it should be underlined that systematic institutional apathy is more relevant than individual one in this context of inadequate inequality. Therefore, the personal and communal shits in behaviours, heavily discussed in this thesis, are still crucially needed as a philosophical background, but the main focus of green radicalism should be the disruption of systems of production. For too long, environmental policy in Lithuania has strangled by the legacy of post-Soviet neoliberalism and a misappropriated leftist rhetoric born from a nationalist-capitalist foundation. A true anti-capitalist green strategy would begin with a profound transformation in how we understand production, power, and agency.

In terms of citizens relation with production, we can take Dobson's sustainable society as a starting point. While examining different methods of such relationships, he (using the works of Paul Ekins, professor in sustainable economics, and sociologist Johan Galtung) elaborates between the differences between self-sufficiency and self-reliance. While self-sufficiency means being completely independent without the help from anyone else, self-reliance stands for using your own resources to meet your needs; accepting the challenges that come from doing things yourself and overcoming those challenges, without passing the problems to others; and understanding that your needs may come as challenges for others, therefore solving them on your own is more considerate. (p. 89) While such a way

When discussing the question of consumption in the framework of de-growth mindset, Dobson, quoting agrees to the arguably poetic formulations from other authors, such as "an attitude of "enough" must replace that of "more", "the economics of enough", "voluntary simplicity" and "middle way between indulgence and poverty" (p. 78). To that, Ismail clearly contradicts:

> "Focused as it is on consumption and reducing consumption, however, degrowth understandably fails to resonate with a working-class majority whose lived experience has always beer austerity." (p. 1339)

As with the aforementioned example of expressing one's existence through the purchasing power, the "voluntary simplicity" could for sure work as a wonderful mantra for individual character building and re-shaping of one's attitude towards wealth, self-worth, and questions regarding all ecologies, but as a theoretical philosophy it is not enough to dismantle the disbalance of environmental footprint and political inequalities. The working class, already affected by historical and economic trauma, is unlikely to embrace degrowth framed as sacrifice. Therefore, a leftist green politics in Lithuania must not only reverse-engineer environmental consciousness by suggesting a practice-over-reason reconceptualization, but must also de-traumatize the political narrative that equates leftist ideals with authoritarian past.

The misinterpreted dynamics of trade-unions could be transformed into a healthier outlook towards them if we followed Dobson's idea about the separation of work from paid labour though:

> "dominant tendency to associate work with paid employment. Such an association can lead us to believe that if a person is not in paid employment then they are not working. This, for greens, is simply untrue, and their regeneration of the meaning of work lead them to suggest ways of 'freeing' it from what they see as restrictions founded on the modern (and archaic) sense what work is just paid employment." (Dobson, p. 91-92)

If apply this concept to Lithuanian work culture, then perhaps the annoyance towards trade-union members would dissolve, after realising that they are not demanding for "extra" benefits, but rather simply for the ones they deserved in the first place. The respect for trade-unions would also become greater as a result of the bottom-up decision-making approaches, discussed above. When an employer is not seen as a cruel despot of single-handed power, and an employee is not seen as a less intelligent, slave-mentality subordinate without personal opinion, then the work culture could heal from the current state of praised super-motivation and over-delivering, to a more subdued practice of everyday life, but not necessarily the most important one.

In a country where working and being busy is generally perceived as a positive trait, even considerably on a national level, Dobson's emphasis on labor-heavy sustainable society could potentially find particularly fertile ground. A process central to his vision of self-reliance returning agriculture into daily practice. He argues that

> "agricultural practices in the green society are charged with the essential task of providing the site at which our rifts with the 'natural' world are to be healed […]. Spirituality ghosts dark-green politics; green politics is a filling of the spiritual vacuum at the centre of late-industrial society, and the land itself is the cathedral at which we are urged to worship. Peter Bunyard's message is instructive: 'The search for self-sufficiency is, I believe, as much spiritual and ideological as it is one of trying to reap the basic necessities of life out of the bare minimum of our surroundings' (in Allaby and Bunyard, 1980, p. 26)." (p. 102)

When it comes to reprograming ourselves within the topic of communism, in the light of new research by modern philosophers, who first and foremost state their disapproval of Marxism-Leninism, Lithuania needs a green educational project that would help to unlearn capitalist realism and reclaim the potential of collective political agency. That would require establishing educational models that actively break hierarchies between teacher and learner, academic and activist, theory and practice.

Such an approach to education could counteract the hierarchical and traumatized frameworks inherited from both Soviet authoritarianism and neoliberal market logic. The aim should be to build a culture of Dobson's self-reliance, not as survivalism but as cooperation, as mutual aid, as a rejection of both dependency on the state and subservience to capital. In this way, **the citizen's relationship with production would become political again**, as active members of local communities, skilled and equipped well enough to contribute to their own and common goods (those being deeply interrelated).

Although this sounds inspiring at first, the shade of doubt overcomes this beautiful dream nevertheless. According to Ismail, one of the challenges that needs to be face in a pursuit for a greener future, is that "pessimism and defeat can overwhelm the best organisers" (p. 1341). And indeed, in the face of all of the heavy issues, and their interconnectedness that increases their mental, cultural, historical weight, the ever-returning pessimism is not to be taken lightly. Perhaps in search for hope in this sense, we can turn to Alasdair MacIntyre, who, in his book chapter "Irrelevance of Ethics" (2016), said that one of the characteristics of developed morality is no understand one's place within history, and to focus not on the quality and responsibility of every single smallest action, but rather on the whole life, lived either well or badly. (p. 10) In terms of this arguably naïve and restless resistance to polycrisis, perhaps we can remember that what matters is

> **"to prefer honourable failure to dishonest success** and to know what to do next when one fails. **It is to understand the importance of contributing to projects that began before one was born** and that will flourish long after one's death. It is to know to what history one belongs." (Dixon & Wilson, 10 psl., emphasis added)

And the project of fighting for environmental fairness has started way before we were born. Extending this string of optimism, Dobson quoted John Stuart Mill, who said that "the opinion which is attempted to suppress by authority may possibly be true." (p. 120) So if we take this truthfulness of the radical resistance and its' constant (systematic or individual) opposition as equally strong forces, we can be sure that it generates positive progress.

To sum up, this chapter tried to work with the apparent contradiction between stepping back (abstinence from desires, focus on needs) and a radical, system-breaking action, ultimately proposing a strategy for a truly sustainable society. It argued that a new greening approach for Lithuania must prioritize praxis (practice over theory), moving beyond bureaucratic mysticism of ecology and adopting social propaganda as a tool for deep systemic change. This chapter emphasizes that institutional apathy is a more significant sphere than individual indifference, calling for a radical shift in how we understand production, power, and agency, particularly given Lithuania's post-colonial Soviet neoliberal legacy. Based on Dobson's theory, it suggests that reconnecting with agricultural practices could heal our rift with nature, and that the Lithuanian work ethic could be fertile ground for a positively-labor-heavy sustainable society. Finally, it stresses the need for a modern leftist green education to de-traumatize political narratives and dismantle hierarchical structures, fostering a culture of collective political agency and encouraging participation towards a goal that stretches far into the future, beyond our individual existences.

Conclusions

1. This thesis began with the recognition that the disconnection between ecological rhetoric and green policy implementation in Lithuania results in widespread apathy. The first chapter explored this apathy in both individual and institutional dimensions, revealing it not only as passive disinterest, but as a product of overload of information, prevailing historical narratives, and a shift in perception of reality due to geopolitical changes. Individually, people feel paralyzed by too much information and too little perceived political agency from the governing bodiees. Psychologically, the contradiction between a deep-rooted cultural affinity for nature (e.g. folk traditions, mushroom foraging) and the failure to translate that affinity into meaningful action for the protection of the environment reflects a fractured identity. Civic disempowerment further deepens this gap: despite active participation in charity, public trust in political processes remains low, as confirmed by the Civic Power Index. Drawing on Guattari's mental ecology, Harari's concept of meaning-making through the lense of suffering, the thesis proposed that individual transformation is political, and thefore, necessary. Meanwhile, systematic apathy is reinforced by top-down, hierarchical structures, especially visible in how the EU's Green Deal is perceived more as foreign imposition than national vision. Inherited post-Soviet distrust in authority, coupled with contemporary bureaucratic detachment and geopolitical fear, fragments public trust and reinforces a soul-less environmentalism. Ultimately, Lithuanian apathy is rooted not in laziness but in cultural trauma, faulty institutional design, and a system that asks for compliance without offering ownership.

2. The second part of this thesis investigated radicalism, exposing a double standard in its perception. Youth-led actions, particularly when emotionally expressive or digital-first, are frequently mocked or dismissed as immature, even when grounded in global solidarity and local urgency, as seen in the reaction to the 2020 Black Lives Matter protest in Vilnius. Drawing on Deleuze, Guattari, and Hess, the thesis argued that youth radicalism is not inherently unserious, but becomes trivialized in public discourse shaped by trauma, conservatism, and hierarchical norms. At the same time, seemingly "apolitical" figures like Kaunas mayor Matijošaitis are able to wield regressive radicalism under the guise of efficiency and stability – an apolitical authoritarianism that echoes Soviet control mechanisms. This contrast highlights the danger of normalized radicalism: political figures with economic and social capital can disguise power consolidation as progress. Mažeikis' and Yudin's critiques of non-alternative propaganda underline the risks of systems where dialogue and disagreement are structurally discouraged. The thesis categorizes radicalism into progressive (dialogue-oriented, justice-driven and democratic) and regressive (power-maintaining, spectacle-based an authoritarian) forms, and insists that only the former is compatible with ecosophy. Dobson's dark green politics emphasize this point by rejecting authoritarian shortcuts in favour of decentralised, collective agency. Ismail's critique of degrowth raises the question of working-class agency and lack thereof. The usual philosophical focus on decreasing desires and needs for a greener future, should not be put on the shoulders of people who are already the most disadvantaged ones, both historically and now. True radicalism, then, requires confronting faulty historical formations, integrating youth voices, and resisting both nostalgic authoritarianism and aestheticized pseudo-rebellion.

3. The final part of the thesis mapped out a radical praxis appropriate to Lithuanian political culture, calling for a turn from ecological theory as mysticism toward embodied, shared, and consistent action. Inspired by Sultana's work on political ecology, MacIntyre's virtue ethics, and Braidotti's call for affirmative futures, it argued that practice must become central to any political or

ecological project. The Lithuanian deposit return system served as a local example of practice-first engagement: not ideologically radical on the surface, but transformative in terms of behavioural habit. Drawing on Mažeikis, the thesis proposes social propaganda, understood as long-term systemic meaning-making rather than manipulation, as a dark green tool for sustained ecosophical change. This stands in contrast to short-term emotional appeals or managerial fixes. Crucially, the thesis argues that Lithuanian green politics must also challenge dominant structures of production and labour, not just consumption. Echoing Dobson's reframing of "work," it encourages a cultural shift from over-delivery and burnout to meaningfully engaged collective labour, especially through reimagining trade unions, horizontal education, and everyday civic action. While Ismail warns that degrowth may alienate those already living in scarcity, a deeper, de-traumatized model of self-reliance based on cooperation rather than survivalism could offer a way forward. Reclaiming leftist ideas, divorced from authoritarian legacy and rooted in mutual aid, can allow Lithuania to construct a radical green politics that is both locally grounded and globally relevant.

4. Furhter research within this topic could be in the intersection of ecology and post-colonial context. As current perspectives that see Soviet occupation as colonialism, and thus applies the corresponding theory, is lacking. Apart from referenced Violeta Kelertas "Baltic poscolonialism" (2006), there are no modern works of philosophy of Lithuanian post-colonialism in such volume, apart from a few theses from Baltic students. Furthermore, the topic of left trauma is still being discussed quite sparsely. If the discussed green political alternatives would be considered legitimate and plausible to implement, then the reconceptualization of Marx, should happen widely within academia first, and then transform to public discourse too. The same can be applied to in-depth anthropological studies within the topic of cultural-political narratives, that currently stops us from implementing truly inclusive, participatory approaches to policy-making and over all societal formations.

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