



Intangible Cultural Heritage in Family Photographs

*Druskininkai "RYTO" gymnasium
Lithuania*



Types of Intangible Cultural Heritage according to the UNESCO Convention

- Oral traditions and expressions. This can mean proverbs, riddles, tales, legends, myths, epic songs and poems, charms, chants, songs, and more.
- Performing arts. This can include music, dance and theatre, pantomime, songs and other forms of artistic expression that are passed down from generation to generation.
- Social practices, rituals and festive events. These are the activities that structure the lives of communities and are shared by members — for example, initiation rites, burial ceremonies, seasonal carnivals and harvest celebrations.
- Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe. These refer to know-how and skills that communities have developed by interacting with their natural environments, and may be expressed through language, memories, spirituality or worldviews. Traditional methods of architecture, agriculture, cattle-breeding, and cuisine are among the related elements.
- Traditional craftsmanship. This may sound “tangible,” but it really refers to the skills and knowledge involved in craftsmanship than the products themselves. Examples include pottery, wood work, jewelry and precious stones, embroidery, carpet weaving, musical instrument production, weaving and fabric production, etc.
- <https://ich.unesco.org/>

Lithuanian Elements on the Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage

- *Sutartinės, Lithuanian multipart songs (Year 2010)*
- *Cross-crafting and its symbolism (Year 2008)*
- *Baltic song and dance celebrations (Year 2008)*
- <https://ich.unesco.org/en/state/lithuania-LT?info=elements-on-the-lists>

Valerija Obakevičiūtė (18 years old) and Antanas Matijošaitis (34 years old) got married in Pasvalys district, Joniškėlis small town in 1939. At that time my grandmother was studying at Šiauliai Teachers' Seminary and my grandfather had graduated a forestry school and was working as a forestry officer.
What a nice couple!

*Family photo album
Teacher Eglė Aurylienė*



In the photo – the wedding day of my grandmother Anelė Sadauskaitė in 1936. In the photo you can see Anelė and her husband Balys, behind the happy couple are witnesses to the wedding – Anelė's sister Bronislava and Balys' friend. My grandmother has been dead for 20 years, so the information about the day that was important to them and this photo remained very poor.

Advice: talk to your dear ones before they pass away...

*Family photo album
Teacher Gitana Stukienė*





“It was 8 July, 1950. I remember that day as if it was today, we were celebrating my mother’s Elzbieta Zizyte – Nemunaitiene’s name day. My mother was about 50 at the time. Her sister with her children came, home was full of bustle. After festive dinner my mother suggested taking a photo in Lithuanian national clothes, in a dark room with the curtains shut so that nobody could see it. We knew that my mother had original Lithuanian national clothes which she kept in secret and did not let us tell anybody about it. This name day which was celebrated at the post-war period remained in our memories for a long time...”

(From grandfather’s Algirdas Nemunaitis’ memories).

Family photo album

Teacher Edita Nevulienė-Nemunaitienė



Even the biggest adversities in life cannot preclude people from love and marriage. The photo depicts the wedding ceremony of my great-grandmother's brother Pranas Bagdonas in exile. Though it was winter and the weather was cold, the participants of the wedding ceremony were dressed in summer clothes. Maybe those were the smartest clothes they had.

Lithuanians in Irkutsk, Russia,
02.01.1958

*Family photo album
Student Ignas Dumbliauskas*



In the photo – Ricieliai village youth folk dance group. They travelled half of Lithuania by truck, participated in many festivals and competitions, and won prizes. This photo was taken in Alytus after a festival in 1967, and it is precious to me because I remember some of these young people very well since they were the parents of my friends, and now they rest in peace. And the most important in this photo is my husband's mother Danutė Paulėkaitė Urbonienė, who is alive and still very vibrant and has a good memory.

*Family photo album
Teacher Dalė Urbonienė*



The summer of 1965. Song Festival in Druskininkai Valley of Songs. My grandmother Tatjana was a dancer in sanatorium “Belorus” dance club. She was working for the sanatorium as she hadn’t managed to enter the institute after school graduation. In the photo, my grandmother (straight in the puddle 😊) was 19 years old. On her left we can see her best friend (it is eleven years since she is not with us). The photo is precious as a recollection of those times (as it is known, at that period people rarely took photographs). Song and dance festivals were always very important in Lithuania.

*Family photo album
Student Darija Belkina*



The photo is a youth hike in Liškiava district. It was a students' outing after finishing the school year. The photo shows that it was really fun to hike. The students were supervised by my grandmother because she was an enthusiastic tourist. She enjoyed travelling around Lithuania a lot. There is no date on the photo, but it was around 1965.

*Family photo album
Student Eglė Sadauskaitė*



In this photo, my grandmother, Valerija Obakevičiūtė, performs the role of the robber's daughter in "The Snow Queen". The action takes place most probably at school in Pasvalys district, Joniškėlis small town in 1931. It is not a carnival as the date is April 23rd. My granny died a long time ago and the photo is very precious as a recollection.

*Family photo album
Teacher Eglė Aurylienė*



The photo which shows the young girls standing is a photo from my grandmother's youth. She studied in Marijampolė girls' gymnasium and had her photo taken together with her classmates, their homeroom teacher and the gymnasium principal. This photo is important to me as it is patriotic, I am fascinated by *Vytis* in the principal's hands. The photo was taken before World War II. Unfortunately, there is no date on the photo.

*Family photo album
Student Eglė Sadauskaitė*



I can only guess that the photo was taken from 1945 to 1960. The photo depicts a bee in the peat bog. The people are posing near the steam machine which presses and transports peat. Near a big wheel, a bit lower, you can see my father standing with his hands behind the back. Though the photo is battered, it has its charm and is emotionally precious to my family.

*Family photo album
Teacher Virginijus Sutkus*

The photo was taken in 1952 (if my mother remembers well). At that time, my grandmother's family lived in Lazdijai district (about 5 km. from Lazdijai town).

In the foreground, my mother, an eight-year-old girl, is feeding the hens. Maybe she has just come home from school (she is dressed in a school uniform). Next to her you can see her little sister (my aunt) and a young woman – my grandmother (my mother's mother).

My mother has told me that their family used to keep not only birds, such as geese, ducks, turkeys and hens, but also rabbits.

Family photo album
Principal Egidija Vilkienė





In the photo – my Granny and other women of Seirijai village before WW II. They are threshing flax and preparing it for combing. The oldest method of removing flax heads, which has survived in Vilnius region since the beginning of the 20th century there was threshing of the club on the sole. In Suwalki, central and south-eastern Lithuania, flax was sown in cracklings. In the larger part of Aukštaitija and Žemaitija, flax heads were heated with iron single-row and double-row brushes or comb-combs. They used to knock them out so that the flax could unfold before the snow.

*Family album photo
Teacher Danutė Šlajuvienė*

The information about the photo is very poor because there is no mother to tell me more about that period of her life. From our previous conversations I still remember that my mom was in her early twenties in the photo, around 1949. After WW II, young people went to earn money in the nearby towns. My mother also went to the newly opened peat factory in Kazlų Rūda. There she met her future husband, my father, but he is not in the photo.

*Family photo album
Teacher Danute Šlajuvienė*





My mom's dad, my grandfather was a carpenter and had his own workshop where he made spinning wheels. In those days, a spinning wheel was a necessary tool in every home to twist a fibre into yarn. The grandfather taught this craft his son, my uncle. In the picture you can see my mother, a fifteen-year-old girl at the time. The photo faded over the years, but to me it is dear as a memory of my skilled grandfather.

Family photo album
Teacher Danutė Šlajuvienė

Two people exhausted by work and life, but still with a look expressive of happiness. They are my great-grandparents Marija and Juozas Urbonas. My great-grandfather was a smith and my great-grandmother was a housewife who spent her time bringing up their children, maintaining vegetable gardens and taking care of domestic animals. This photo is very dear to me as I can see in it that happiness is not brought by expensive things, it is brought by feeling good in the place where you are.

Gudeliai, Marijampolė district,
1970

Family photo album
Student Ignas Dumbliauskas





Four brothers: Pijus and Jonas, Antanas and Vincentas Urbonas. They are my grandfather Romas' brothers. All of them were musicians. The ones played the violin, the others played the accordion and all of them were excellent singers. These skills were of service when having completed daily chores, the youth gathered in a cottage to sing and dance.

Gudeliai, Marijampolė district,
05-08-1951

Family photo album
Student Ignas Dumbliauskas

First Holy Communion is one of the most important Catholic ceremonies in a person's life. On that occasion, girls always dress in white and wear rue wreaths around their heads. In the hands a candle is held which, according to Christian traditions, should be used three times in a person's life – during Baptism Ceremony, First Communion and when the person is dying.

On the left we can see my grandmother Vincenta Bumblauskaitė-Urbonienė (a nice girl, isn't she?). The girl with a candle is her sister Elvyra (it is her celebration). The girls' mother, Stefanija Bumblauskienė is sitting and her sister Julija is standing. The priest is in the middle.

Lauksoda, Telšiai district, approximately 1952

*Family photo album
Student Ignas Dumbliauskas*





My great-grandmother Marija Urbonienė. Having finished all the chores, she sat on her loom and wove. That way she both relaxed and provided her family with woven articles. This photo is dear to me as we still have the spread which is seen being woven.

Gudeliai, Marijampolė district,
1970

*Family photo album
Student Ignas Dumbliauskas*



A summer day suitable for reaping. My grandfather Romualdas, a sixth-former at that time, and his brother, already a student, Pijus Urbonas. A good way of keeping fit, isn't it? At that time it was not, because it was hard work under hot sun.

Gudeliai, Marijampolė district, 1956

*Family photo album
Student Ignas Dumbliauskas*

The photo shows people from the villages of Purpliai, Mardasavas and Bingeliai planting trees around 1957. People used to plant the forest in pairs: the first used to go backwards with a tool called “sword”, he used to stab the ground with it and form the planting hole for the sapling. The second tree planter used to carry a bucket with saplings and used to plant a tree. It was common to replant burnt down forests. Later, when the Forest farm was established, the forest was planted in new places as well. The work was seasonal, it was in spring.

Family photo album
Teacher Laima Zdančiuvienė



Village festival. Those gatherings were attended by the elderly and younger children. The youth generally gathered separately. Among the participants you can see my great-grandparents Marija and Juozas Urbonas together with my grandfather Romualdas (a little boy in the foreground). It is fun to look at such a little grandfather keeping in mind that now I am older than him. Gudeliai, Marijampolė district, 1950

Family photo album
Student Ignas Dumbliauskas





“The Last Lunch in the Artillery Range of Lithuanian Officers. 30-11-1927” is written on the reverse side of this photo by my great-grandfather Juozas Urbonas, who was a young man at that time. This photo will turn 100 years old soon. It is like a link among the people who are dear to me: the man depicted in the photo who is already dead and my family who were not even born at that time. The precise place is unknown.

*Family photo album
Student Ignas Dumbliauskas*

All my childhood was spent at my grandmother and grandfather's in Kaminciskes, not far from Merkinė, Varena district. St Rokas religious feast celebrated at the end of summer was an especially awaited day not only by children, but by adults as well. All our family used to prepare for the feast beforehand. I remember my aunt Maryte Lukaseviciene, my mother's sister-in-law, choosing the best clothes, my mother Elena Cepulienė tried to keep up with her. (My aunt was especially loved and respected, she was more educated than others, she was a real role model for me as a girl, I tried to copy her and to learn from her). The men, my father and uncle (the names of both were Pranai), also dressed up. On the feast eve my father used to iron his and my uncle's trousers so that they would have stiff, knife-edge creases. The women cooked lots of tastiest meals, my grandmother Genovefa Lukoseviciene baked wonderfully tasty „Bulvinės bandos“, a flat potato dish, roasted on cabbage leaves (I can still feel the taste, it is unique).





In the morning we used to go to church in Merkine all together. We, children, cared for sweets of the religious feast more than for Mass and of course we cared more for numerous guests who used to come for a festive meal to our place in the village of Kaminciskes. There were no telephones in the village at that time, so all our cousins, uncles and aunts used to see each other just once a year. As there were many people and on 16 August it was still warm, we used to place tables outside, next to the house. After having a festive meal, all the relatives used to talk, sing and entertain themselves.

In the photo on a bench next to the house, from left to right, are sitting: my cousin Irena Zukauskaitė, my grandfather's sister-in-law Janina Lukaseviciene, her daughter-in-law Maryte Lukaseviciene, both sons-in-law Antanas Kaleda and Juozas Kaleda, my cousin Rima Lukaseviciute, I am dancing with my father Pranas Cepulis. I consider my father to be my greatest teacher, who used to say that a girl has to know how to dance. My uncle Antanas Lukasevicius is playing the accordion for us. This photo reminds of the tradition of family reunions which is now extinct, dear people who are not longer alive. The photo was taken in 1970 or even earlier...

Family photo album
Teacher Lina Dudulienė



In the photo of 1967 - my mother Antanina, holding me in her hands, near the decorated Christmas tree in our house in Druskininkai. It's my first Christmas since I was born a month before the holidays. I myself was so small that I really don't remember anything, but my mother often told me how happy she was with me as a Christmas present. The Christmas tree was decorated only on the Christmas Eve – we hung colorful ornaments, used cotton to create the image of snow on the branches of the tree and placed a toy Santa Claus under it, then waited for gifts. This photo is dear to me because it is my very first photo, and my mom is especially beautiful here!

*Family photo album
Teacher Gitana Stukienė*



Spring 1960, Celebration of May 1st.

In Soviet times, this day was marked by demonstrations and gatherings in all Lithuanian cities and villages, marches and slogans about the unity of working people. In the center of the photo is my dad Juozas riding his first scooter. He kept telling me how he dreamed of buying it, maybe that's why he looks so happy in this photo. If I didn't know the story of the photo, I would think it was a shot from a movie of that time!

*Family photo album
Teacher Gitana Stukienė*



Palanga, the Baltic seaside coast, approximately in 1960-1970s. In the photo - my grandfather Ipolitas Pratkionis. A real vacationer with a straw hat and a bottle of lemonade "Buratinas" in his hand! Holidays at the Lithuanian seaside were one of the leisure activities and often Lithuanian families, if they had the opportunity, went on holiday to Palanga. This photo is precious as a memory of the grandfather I remember from my childhood.

*Family photo album
Teacher Gitana Stukienė*



In the photo you can see my granny with brothers, sisters and relatives celebrating the Assumption in approximately 1925-1930. They all lived in Panevėžys district, where the church of Krekenava was famous for The Assumption Feast, which took place on August 15th. On that occasion, after Mass our relatives always gathered in my great-grandparents' house. There were always prepared a lot of different dishes there as all sisters were excellent cooks. The culmination of the feast was a bread and poppy cake. Though I lost my granny in my teenage years, I still remember the fluffiness of her cakes as well as the smell of her pies and refinement of her cakes.

*Family photo album
Teacher Rovena Kvaraciejūtė*

Visiting my grandmother in approximately 1930-1935. In the picture you can see my grandfather's sister with her children and mother (my great-grandmother, the baby stroller for tots and the wooden horse for the boy were grandparents' presents. My grandfather died in the year I was born, so my mother, who was born in 1940, told me the history of this photo. That stroller seemed very special to her. Even now she remembers watching this photo in her childhood and asking her father why they could not have the same one for younger brothers. It was difficult for her to understand that her parents had much more important things to worry about – having left their belongings, they had to constantly change their place of living to avoid exile. This topic in the Soviet era was a taboo even within families. My mother understood it much later. It is interesting that such a domestic photo at a first sight tells the history of our country.

Family photo album
Teacher Rovena Kvaraciejūtė



The photo was taken in 1956, in the performance “Voyage de la Pérouse”, directed by J. Rinkevičius.

On the right – Vytautas Valentukevičius, my grandfather who played the leading role.

The performance took place in the former recreation centre of Druskininkai which was located in 5 Lenin’s Street. At present, one of Druskininkai Municipality’s buildings is standing in the place of that centre.

Neither of the people in the photo were professional actors. They were invited to play by director J. Rinkevičius. Despite that, the hall was crowded with spectators.

This photo is precious to me because my grandfather, whom I consider to be an authority, is depicted there. From the early age he was extremely active and eager to learn something new. One of his interests, which sprang up in his childhood and has continued for a long time, is acting.



Family photo album

Student Pijus Domantas Valentukevičius

A little girl with astonishment in her eyes and flowers in her hands. This is my grandmother Vincenta Bumblauskaitė – Urbonienė. A lovely photo showing that at all times all children are similar.

Muitaičiai, Telšiai district, 1950

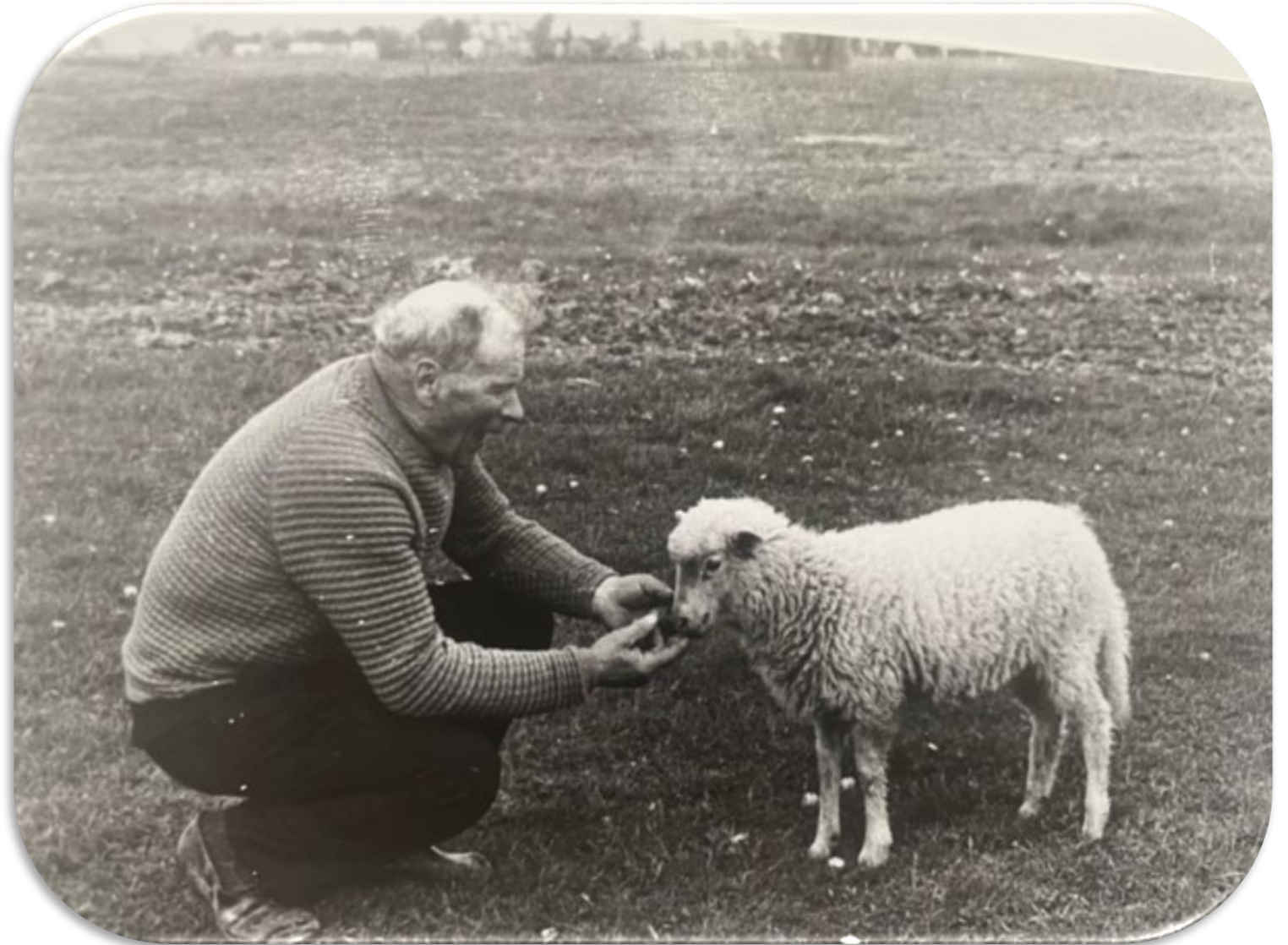
Family photo album
Student Ignas Dumbliauskas



Lambs do not approach everyone. I think that animals feel who is a good person 😊 In the photo - my great-grandfather Juozas Urbonas who spent all his life in the village, and animals were very important to the villagers.

Gudeliai,
Marijampolė district, 1970

*Family photo album
Student Ignas Dumbliauskas*





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