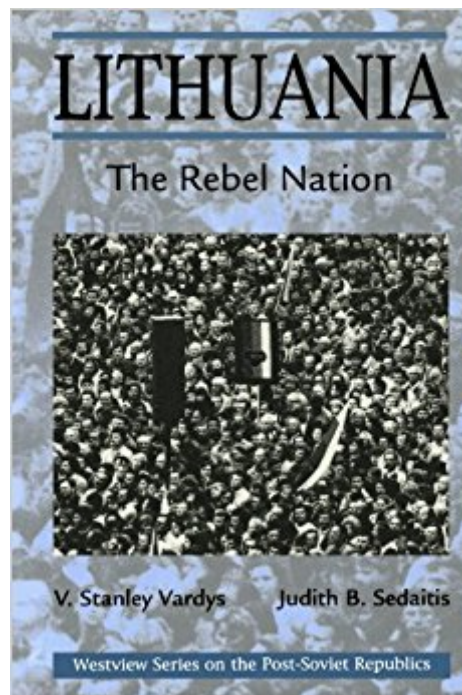




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Lithuania: The Rebel Nation (Westview Series On The Post-Soviet Republics)



Synopsis

In 1990, Lithuania became the first Soviet republic to break with the communist empire by declaring the restitution of political independence. Depicting a country at the crossroads of imperial designs, Vardys and Sedaitis trace the history, development, and ultimate triumph of the Lithuanian nation. They begin by exploring Lithuania's pagan ancestry and epochal struggles with Germanic and Russian states, with special emphasis on the first period of political independence between the two World Wars and on the effort to regain freedom in the wake of the perestroika reforms. The authors conclude by examining Lithuania's struggle with the legacy of Soviet rule as it strives to establish democracy and economic prosperity.

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Customer Reviews

The late V. Stanley Vardys was professor of political science at the University of Oklahoma. Judith B. Sedaitis is research associate with the Center for International Security and Arms Control at Stanford University. The late V. Stanley Vardys was professor of political science at the University of Oklahoma. Judith B. Sedaitis is research associate with the Center for International Security and Arms Control at Stanford University. The late V. Stanley Vardys was professor of political science at the University of Oklahoma. Judith B. Sedaitis is research associate with the Center for International Security and Arms Control at Stanford University.

This is a great book, one especially meaningful to those of us who are of Lithuanian descent. Of

course if you are of Estonian or Latvian descent the book will hold special meaning for you also. You see that even though the book is now already thirteen (13) years old (published in 1997), the facts that it uncovers were hidden for years by the Soviet occupiers of the Baltic republics. I, for one, the daughter of Lithuanian refugees who left Lithuania in 1944 to escape the extreme deportations that were being enforced at the time felt that it was important that I know as much of the truth as I could. The book begins with a brief description of the early history of Lithuania reminding us that "Lithuanians appear as a nation in the pages of historical writings when the Grand Duke Mindaugas integrated the Lithuanian tribes into a single state around 1230." In Chapter 2 the authors write of Lithuania's first "Taste of Independence" between 1918 and 1940 before they describe the terrible days of Soviet occupation in Chapters 3 and 4: "Foreign Rule: Invasion from the East" and "Resistance, Survival and Reform." Chapter 4 already begins to describe the Sajudis movement which is detailed in Chapter 5 "Sajudis and the Party: The March Towards Independence". Vardys and Sedaitis tell us "What started as Gorbachev's intended 'pluralistic socialism' in Lithuania turned into a struggle for democratic pluralism as well as national liberation. The Lithuanian Movement for Restructuring (Lietuvos Persitvarkymo Sajudis) or simply Sajudis (Movement), quickly became the main focal point of the emerging groups and was the engine that drove social and political change in the republic." The book concludes with Chapters 6 and 7: "Between the Kremlin and the West: Securing Independence" and "New Beginnings: The Politics of Transition." Although not an easy read (the book is extremely detailed), it is nonetheless a very important book historically which makes it very interesting. Evidence of extensive research is everywhere. Even if you are not a Lithuanian you would be impressed at the tenacity of the Lithuanian spirit. A Lithuanian may lose battle after battle but he will NEVER lose the war!

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