



Collections of Baltic Vernacular-Language Publications at Some North American Libraries: An Attempt at a Survey

Janis A. Kreslins

To cite this article: Janis A. Kreslins (2002) Collections of Baltic Vernacular-Language Publications at Some North American Libraries: An Attempt at a Survey, *Slavic & East European Information Resources*, 3:2-3, 201-216, DOI: [10.1300/J167v03n02_21](https://doi.org/10.1300/J167v03n02_21)

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1300/J167v03n02_21



Published online: 28 May 2010.



[Submit your article to this journal](#)



Article views: 35



[View related articles](#)



Citing articles: 1 [View citing articles](#)

*BALTIC COLLECTIONS
OUTSIDE THE BALTIC COUNTRIES*

Collections of Baltic
Vernacular-Language Publications
at Some North American Libraries:
An Attempt at a Survey

Janis A. Kreslins

SUMMARY. The article begins with a discussion of some of the methodological issues encountered in preparing a survey of the past, present, and future of Baltica collections in the United States and Canada. Baltica is understood to mean collections from and about Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The survey presented encompasses selected research, university, public, governmental, museum, and private libraries, from the nineteenth century to the present. The author stresses the important role that

Janis A. Kreslins is Consultant on Baltic Collections, Slavic & Baltic Division, New York Public Library, 5th Avenue and 42nd Street, New York, NY 10018-2788 USA (E-mail: JKreslins@aol.com).

The author would like to acknowledge the assistance of both Edward Kasinec and Robert Davis from the Slavic and Baltic Division, New York Public Library, in the preparation of this paper.

[Haworth co-indexing entry note]: "Collections of Baltic Vernacular-Language Publications at Some North American Libraries: An Attempt at a Survey." Kreslins, Janis A. Co-published simultaneously in *Slavic & East European Information Resources* (The Haworth Information Press, an imprint of The Haworth Press, Inc.) Vol. 3, No. 2/3, 2002, pp. 201-216; and: *Libraries in Open Societies: Proceedings of the Fifth International Slavic Librarians' Conference* (ed: Harold M. Leich) The Haworth Information Press, an imprint of The Haworth Press, Inc., 2002, pp. 201-216. Single or multiple copies of this article are available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service [1-800-HAWORTH, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (EST). E-mail address: getinfo@haworthpressinc.com].

North American institutions have played as collectors and disseminators of the publishing output of the post-World War II Baltic diaspora in the Western world. The paper concludes with reflections on the impact of revolutionary technological and institutional developments in the Baltic countries, and their concurrent impact on the further development of these collections in North America. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-HAWORTH. E-mail address: <getinfo@haworthpressinc.com> Website: <http://www.HaworthPress.com> © 2002 by The Haworth Press, Inc. All rights reserved.]*

KEYWORDS. Baltic collections, Lithuanian collections, Latvian collections, Estonian collections, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, library collections in Canada, library collections in the United States, American, Canadian

INTRODUCTION

More than a year ago, in my capacity as Baltic Consultant for the Slavic and Baltic Division of the New York Public Library, I initiated a survey of Baltica—that is, Estonica, Lettica, and Lituanica—at major North American university, public, and government libraries and selected scholarly and research institutes. Although not, in my opinion, a pioneering effort, earlier surveys are now clearly outdated. Furthermore, these earlier surveys very often concentrated on holdings of publications in only one of the Baltic languages.¹ The present survey, based on reports from the libraries themselves, and without any pretensions to completeness, attempts to quantify and assess the current status of Baltic language resources in North America.

The survey provided here did not specifically examine any of the many private collections assembled over the past century by ethnic, fraternal, or religious organizations, or by individuals. However, it is important to provide brief background on their history and current status.

For the relatively small number of Baltic immigrants in the New World, collecting literature in the native languages has been a priority since the closing years of the nineteenth century, when Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian immigrant social, political, and religious organizations were first established and began publishing newspapers, periodicals, and books in their adopted country, primarily in the United States.² By way of example, from 1896 to 1945 forty-eight Latvian

newspapers and periodicals published in the U.S. and Canada were registered in the official bibliography of Latvian periodical literature.³ After 1945, the influx of a new wave of Baltic immigrants significantly expanded organizational and publishing activities. According to Benjamiņš Jēgers' series of bibliographies of Latvian émigré publications,⁴ more than 6,000 Latvian titles were published in emigration, and yet regrettably no university, public, governmental, or other library holds even a fraction of these publications which, in part, constitute a portion of America's multicultural history and heritage.

The Lithuanian immigration in North America, particularly in the United States, was much larger than the Estonian and Latvian immigration and began earlier, so that by the late nineteenth century its members were sufficiently well-established to play an important role in international efforts to advance the political rights of Lithuanians in the home country. After the Polish rebellions of the 1860s, the Russian government prohibited publication of books and periodicals in the Roman alphabet in Lithuania. Therefore, important Lithuanian periodicals and books were published in the U.S. and smuggled to Lithuania.⁵

Having arrived in North America, the Baltic immigrants established various political, social, and religious organizations which often had libraries.⁶ Most of these libraries were poorly organized, their collections unsystematic and very seldom in the hands of professional or knowledgeable caretakers. Most of these libraries are now defunct, and over the years their collections either made their way into larger institutional libraries or were scattered to the four winds. A number of those that have disbanded since the re-establishment of Baltic independence have sent their holdings, émigré and otherwise, to libraries in the homelands. However, there are still a number of Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian ethnic organizations in North America with libraries and archives with impressive collections of publications and archival materials documenting not only the history of the Baltic immigration to North America, but also the cultural, social, and political developments of the historical provinces of the pre-1918 period, through inter-war independence and the post-war Soviet period.

One example of such a collection is the Estonian Archives in the United States in Lakewood, New Jersey, an outstanding repository of both printed and manuscript materials whose purpose is to document the Estonian experience in the United States. This organization is preparing a two-volume history of the Estonian immigration in the U.S.⁷ Other treasure troves of Estonian publications include the Tartu Insti-

tute Library in Toronto, Canada, with approximately 20,000 books, periodicals, and archival materials, of which about 8,000 have been cataloged; and the Estonian Central Archives in Toronto, with important holdings of publications and archival materials of the Estonian diaspora in the Western world after World War II.

The oldest Latvian library in the United States is the Library of the Society of the Free Letts, established in Philadelphia in 1892. It is still in existence, with holdings of approximately 8,000 volumes. Unfortunately, some of its earliest acquisitions perished in a combination of natural calamities and misguided "weeding" of materials after World War II.

Until very recently, there was an important Latvian library at the Latvian Studies Center in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Unfortunately, a few years ago it was liquidated, but some of its holdings were transferred to the University of Washington Library, others to various libraries in Latvia and to the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota. There are also large Latvian libraries in Toronto, at the Latvian Center, and at some Latvian Lutheran parishes in the U.S. (e.g., in New York).

An outstanding depository of Lithuanian publications, archival materials, and various memorabilia is found at the Lithuanian American Cultural Archives (*Amerikos Lietuvių Kultūros Archyvas*) in Putnam, Connecticut. It includes about 10,000 cataloged publications and around 50,000 uncataloged items. Important holdings of Lithuanian materials are also at the World Lithuanian Archive in Chicago and at the Lithuanian Museum Library in Toronto. An outstanding collection in Brooklyn, New York, is presently imperiled in a dispute between the Franciscan Brotherhood and the Lithuanian community.

As noted at the outset of these remarks, this survey focuses on Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian collections and collecting at North American public, academic, and research libraries. While the acquisition of Baltic materials has never been a priority at any North American institution, nevertheless quite a few have assembled significant collections of Baltica, some formed already at the end of the 19th century and at the very beginning of the 20th. Such collections have provided, and continue to provide, important materials for scholars in both the West and in the homelands. We should recall that, during the Soviet period, libraries in the Baltic states were in many respects closed to scholars from abroad, and many publications published during the short-lived period of independence in the inter-war years or produced by the Baltic diaspora were either destroyed, kept in largely inaccessible special collec-

tions, or never acquired systematically. Holdings of Baltic materials in North America provided source material for writers who for many years after the end of World War II reminded the world that the loss of freedom in the homelands was a consequence of Nazi and Soviet collusion.

These collections were built in North America through various means. Some were acquired as part of purchased or donated collections. For example, there are significant early Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian imprints at the Newberry Library in Chicago, purchased in 1901 as part of the Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte Collection. The Lenox Collection, one of the foundation collections of the New York Public Library, included the first Latvian translation of the Bible, printed in 1685. Some North American libraries, primarily public libraries in cities with large ethnic populations, acquired the publications of Baltic immigrants in the U.S. as a matter of course.

Greater attention was paid to the acquisition of Baltic materials after the establishment of the Baltic states' independence after World War I, as well as the development of linguistics programs at American academic institutions. Yet in general, few institutions carried out any systematic collection development activities for Baltic language materials. In the inter-war period, the New York Public Library was one of only a handful of libraries in the Western world that regularly received publications from Latvia and, consequently, has one of the best collections of Latvian inter-war publications outside of Latvia. In the early 1920s, Harry Miller Lydenberg, a future director of the library, traveled to Riga (and beyond) on an extended book buying trip, where he helped refine exchange relations, acquired current Latvian publications, and purchased earlier, retrospective materials published in German, the official language of education and administration in the provinces of Courland, Livland, and Estland until the second half of the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, the Chicago Public Library, which once had an extensive collection of Baltic imprints, deaccessioned most of them sometime after World War II.⁸ Parenthetically, I should note that I have one of their discards in my personal library.

Beginning in the late 1950s and early 1960s, quite a few North American libraries began systematically to collect Soviet Baltic publications, usually as part of exchange agreements. Soviet area studies and language programs sprang up across the continent. Suddenly, the political, social, and cultural problems of the Baltic countries took on geopolitical significance. This activity was reinforced by the arrival in the United States and Canada of a new wave of Baltic immigrants, including many intellectuals and academically educated professionals. Also, the Baltic diaspora in the

Western world published a great number of books and periodical publications, acquired selectively by North American libraries.

The Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, established in 1966, has played an important role in promoting interest in various aspects of the history of the Baltic states and the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian diasporas, including their book culture. It publishes two quarterly periodicals, *The Journal of Baltic Studies* and the *Baltic Studies Newsletter*, and regularly holds conferences (the seventeenth Conference of Baltic Studies, "Baltic Countries and Their Baltic Neighbors: Redefining Relationships," took place in June 2000 at Georgetown University in Washington, DC).

THE SURVEY

The survey of Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian language materials that was conducted over the past year is based on replies to requests for information from approximately thirty libraries and archives in the U.S. and Canada, as well as from numerous individual researchers familiar with these collections. Each library surveyed was asked to provide historical background on the development of the collections, quantitative and qualitative assessments, and a report on the current status of collecting in these languages.

First, let me begin with some caveats. While some institutions were very fulsome in providing information about holdings, many were not. It is clear that many of the collections are, in essence, running on "autopilot," without the regular involvement of a selection officer. Others have stopped collecting completely. The statistical information on holdings is not always reliable and of course says nothing about the *qualitative* value of the materials. This study asked specifically about Baltic *vernacular language* holdings, but in many cases materials in other languages, most especially German and Russian, appear to have been included. This leads to yet another point, and another needed survey: namely, those library and archival materials in these other languages directly pertinent to the Baltic lands and peoples. For example, the Dobuzhinskii archives at the New York Public Library contain a wealth of material pertinent to Baltic studies, but in other languages as well. Rare German, Polish, Latin, and Yiddish seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth century imprints from Vilnius, Dorpat, Reval, Riga, and Mitau represent significant strengths in North American library holdings. Non-Baltic vernacular imprints and ephemera, such as,

for example, German World War I posters from occupied Latvia, really should be included in a more extensive future survey as well.

In this survey, I have also provided summaries of what I have gleaned from correspondence or conversations with representatives of each of the institutions surveyed.

Boston Public Library

This library owns a minor collection of Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian publications. It also has a large uncataloged microfilm collection of Latvian plays (several thousand items) and some rare Latvian and Lithuanian immigrant periodicals published before World War II in Massachusetts. This was a collection situated in the midst of a fairly large Baltic community before and after World War II, but appears not to have been supplemented in recent years.

Harvard University Library

Harvard College Library holdings in Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian number 11,000-12,000 volumes, not including serial publications. Publications in these languages have also been selectively acquired by the Andover-Harvard Theological Library, the Houghton Library for Rare Books and Manuscripts, the Harvard Business School Baker Library, the Fine Arts Library, the Law School Library, the Harvard Theater Collection, the Music Library, and the Tozzer Library, the last specializing in cultural and biological anthropology and archeology.

Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford University

The Hoover Institution provides an outstanding depository of Baltic archival materials and publications, for which the foundation was laid in the 1920s by Professors Frank A. Golder and Harold H. Fisher, Stanford University Department of History, while they were in the Baltic states as representatives of the American Relief Administration. Presently the Baltic collection includes approximately 5,000 volumes, some 500 periodicals, and 100 newspapers. There are excellent guides to the holdings at the Hoover Institution.⁹ Quite a few important and rare Baltic language publications are included in the various separately cataloged archival collections, for example the Boris I. Nicolaevsky Collection.¹⁰

Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota

This collection has rich holdings of Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian archival materials and publications, including a sizeable collection

of Latvian materials transferred to the IHRC from the former Latvian Studies Center Library in Kalamazoo, Michigan.¹¹

Indiana University Library

This library has holdings of Baltic publications; the strong Finno-Ugric collection includes Estonian publications.

Kent State University Library

KSU Library has approximately 2,500 Latvian titles, 5,400 Lithuanian titles, and more than 500 Estonian titles. Approximately 1,250 items are pre-World War II publications. There are about fifty nineteenth century items, mostly Lithuanian publications issued in the United States. The Lithuanian collection is particularly strong; the library's Department of Special Collections and Archives holds several collections of Lithuanian archival materials. Most of the Baltic materials were donated to Kent State through the 1970s by members of the Latvian, Lithuanian, and Estonian communities. Currently, Kent State is not actively seeking additions to its ethnic collections.

The Library of Congress

Figures for Baltic-language publications and their imprint dates at the Library of Congress can be found in Table 1. LC had formal exchange programs with libraries in the Baltic countries already in the 1920s and 1930s, including a 1921 inter-governmental agreement with Latvia to exchange government publications. There were similar agreements with the Estonian government and with the University of Tartu. Post-World War II publications from the Baltic countries arrived from the national libraries of the Baltic republics. For many years until 1983, Lithuanian, Estonian, and Latvian publishing activity outside the Soviet Union was monitored by a Lithuanian staff member at LC. Since 1983 the acquisition of such publications has been sporadic. Holdings of Baltic diaspora publications were considerably improved with a special \$25,000 grant in 1998.

The Library's Geography & Map Division holds a number of topographical and detailed maps printed in, and of, the Baltic countries. Some of these materials were captured from the German army during World War II. The Library's National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped holds cassette recordings and tapes of fiction and non-fiction Latvian and Lithuanian books.

TABLE 1. Publications in the Baltic Languages in LC Collections, by Date of Imprint

	Before 1940	1941-1991	1992+	Diaspora	TOTAL
Estonian	254	2,808	1,092	(1,713)	5,867
Latvian	497	3,838	1,846	(2,272)	8,453
Lithuanian	370	5,191	1,982	(2,185)	9,728

(The numbers for diaspora publications are estimates.)

Newberry Library

In 1901, the Newberry Library in Chicago acquired the collection of the amateur comparative linguist Louis Lucien Bonaparte (1815-1891), a nephew of the Emperor Napoleon. Numbering some 18,000 items, the Bonaparte collections include sizeable holdings of very rare eighteenth and nineteenth century Estonian, Liv, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Old Prussian publications. There is a printed catalog of the collection¹² as well as a checklist of Newberry's pre-1904 Lithuanian publications.¹³

New York Public Library

The New York Public Library's holdings of Baltic materials, published in Latvian, Lithuanian, Estonian, German, Russian, Polish, English, Yiddish, and other languages, are found in various divisions of the library. The Slavic and Baltic Division is the locus of the single largest concentration of materials in Latvian and Lithuanian. As of January 1999, there were 10,173 volumes in the Division's Latvian collection, and 8,657 volumes in its Lithuanian collection. Estonian publications, numbering several thousand volumes, are kept in the General Research Division of the Library, and the Slavic and Baltic Division's former Chief Librarian, Viktor Koressaar, continues as selection officer for these collections. Holdings of publications in Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian are also located in other divisions of the Library (Economics, Art, Music, Maps, Theater, Rare Books, etc.).

The Latvian collection is particularly strong for materials published between the world wars. Both the Latvian and Lithuanian collections include a representative selection of materials published after World War II in Latvia, Lithuania, and the West. An important addition to the Latvian collection was the donation in 1993 by the publisher Helmars Rudzītis of his library. Helmars Rudzītis established his publishing

house, Grāmatu Draugs, in Riga in 1926, and continued to publish books after World War II in the displaced person camps in Germany. He arrived in the United States in 1949, and in 1951 resumed his publishing activities in New York, issuing the Latvian newspaper *Laiks*, the leading Latvian newspaper in the diaspora. The 565 books he published in New York between 1951 and 1992 are kept together in their original wrappers as a special archival unit. The NYPL also owns the first edition of the Latvian edition of the Bible (1685-1689), the first book published in Latvian in Riga (1615), microfilms of many early Latvian newspapers, and also films of 221 Latvian exile periodicals published from 1944 to 1952.

In regard to these collections at NYPL, and to the New York Metropolitan Area generally, including those in private hands, I would call your attention to an as yet unpublished typescript of some six hundred pages, held by the Library, which includes detailed information on retrospective holdings and highlights in these languages.¹⁴

Currently, the Latvian and Lithuanian collections annually add approximately four hundred titles in these languages combined.

University of Chicago Library

There are approximately 15,000 volumes in Latvian, Lithuanian, and Estonian. Before 1990, the library received approximately three hundred titles annually from each of the Baltic republics, but at present very few additional items are acquired.

University of Illinois at Chicago Library

The UIC Library, together with the departmental library of the university's Lithuanian Studies Program, has in its Baltic holdings approximately 12,000 items, primarily in Lithuanian. It contains the important donation of 3,000 items from Dr. Kostas Ostrauskas, a prominent Lithuanian writer and for many years a librarian at the University of Pennsylvania. There is at UIC the Lithuanian World Community Endowed Chair of Lithuanian Studies, presently held by Professor Violeta Kelertas. UIC is the only North American university granting B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees in Lithuanian.

University of Pennsylvania Library

This library has about 10,000 titles in Lithuanian and in other languages pertaining to Lithuania. The holdings of Latvian and Estonian publications are negligible. In 1952 the library acquired a major part

(ca. 1,750 titles, including periodicals and pamphlets) of the private library of the late Lithuanian diplomat Dr. Jurgis Saulys, who was active in the establishment of the Lithuanian state and co-signer of the Lithuanian Declaration of Independence. A description of the collection, one of the most voluminous of Lituania outside Lithuania, is available,¹⁵ as is an outdated but still very useful list of Lituania acquired by the library before 1962.¹⁶

University of Toronto Library

UTL has one of the largest collections of Baltic publications in North America, comprising approximately 50,000 volumes, including even a few seventeenth century imprints. A second edition of a major annotated bibliography of their holdings was published in 1978.¹⁷ Particularly strong is the Estonian collection, partly due also to the establishment of a Chair of Estonian Studies in 1986 at the University of Toronto, and to the very sizeable and well-educated Estonian community in Toronto.

The smaller Latvian and Lithuanian collections have been developed since 1967 and the acquisition pattern for collecting Latvian books has been rather uneven, largely because this area of study is not part of the university's curriculum. In 1997 a collection of approximately 1,000 Latvian books was acquired from the Latvian Studies Center Library in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The library is buying selective current and retrospective Baltic publications from various dealers. It has an interesting collection of underground publications from Lithuania.

University of Washington Library

Collection development for the Baltic countries at the University of Washington Library began in a systematic, if limited, way in the early 1970s, with focus mostly on Russian-language imprints, when exchange agreements were established with the academy of sciences libraries in Vilnius and Tallinn, and with the State (now National) Library in Riga. In the 1980s a fourth exchange was established, with Tartu University Library. By 1994, UWL's limited Baltic collections numbered about 2,000 volumes. In the late 1990s the library's fully cataloged shelf count for Baltic publications had grown to over 8,000 volumes. The impetus for this growth was the establishment at the university in the mid 1990s of a new Baltic Studies Program under the joint auspices of the university's Scandinavian Department and the Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies Center. Beginning

in 1995, the library greatly intensified its acquisitions efforts for Baltic materials. In 1996 the Baltic Studies Program and library jointly negotiated the transfer to UWL of a collection of some 12,000 books, serial volumes, and microfilm reels from the Latvian Studies Center Library in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Currently, the library acquires approximately 500 new monographs per year from Latvia and Lithuania; some 100 monographs per year from Estonia; and about 150 current serial subscriptions from all three Baltic countries combined. This is in turn regularly supplemented by donations from private individuals, which serve to supplement the retrospective holdings of the library.¹⁸

Yale University Library

Significant holdings of Latvian and Estonian materials were acquired by the Slavic and East European collections under the leadership of the Estonian poet and scholar Alexis Rannit and Latvian bibliographer and cataloger Benjamiņš Jēgers. Yale maintains exchanges with the leading libraries in each Baltic country, and tries to acquire the most significant materials in the social sciences and humanities. Beinecke Library includes the archives and libraries of a number of important artists, scholars, and public figures born in the Baltic states, including forty-one boxes of Rannit's correspondence with leading Baltic and Russian figures in the arts, written in various languages.

YIVO Institute

The institute has a rich collection of archival materials and publications documenting the history of the Jews in the Baltic countries, particularly Lithuania, including World War II era Baltic underground publications and very rare Latvian-language publications dating from the 1905 revolution.

CONCLUSION

Clearly, even from the limited survey information provided here, there are significant holdings of Baltic vernacular materials at North American libraries. Leaving aside for the moment holdings of post-war, Soviet-era publications, which were collected by a number of institutions, one may discern the following collection strengths: first, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Estonian publications produced by North American diaspora communities from the late nineteenth cen-

tury through the post-World War II emigrations. As these were often very localized publications, with limited circulation beyond a particular community, such materials are especially rare, and carry importance both for co-ethnics living in the homelands and for the multicultural histories of the U.S. and Canada. Particularly impressive are holdings of post-World War II émigré imprints, such as the entire publishing output of New York Latvian publisher Helmars Rudzītis at the New York Public Library. Second in size and importance are holdings of inter-war publications in these languages produced during the period of independence.

Finally, many North American libraries have acquired, and are continuing to acquire, a significant number of Baltic language vernacular imprints on history, economics, society, scientific and cultural developments published since the re-establishment of independence.

What of the future of these collections? To my mind, there are two aspects of this question. First, what will established academic and research libraries do to develop collections of current materials; and second (and obviously a related question), what will happen to the precious collections of Baltic language materials produced by diaspora communities in North America?

As to the first question, it is clear that the picture is decidedly mixed. Clearly, many libraries simply followed the money available in the Cold War period until it dried up, at which time collecting ceased. The older, larger research institutions will likely continue to augment their holdings. However, one wonders whether they will have the budgets or the will to provide the kind of human touch needed for nuanced selection, or whether they will simply take in what is sent them, leading to the homogenization of collections. Presently at the Library of Congress, for example, there is no Baltic Specialist in the European Division, and the Baltic “recommending officers” are really full-time catalogers. It is encouraging to see the efforts at the University of Washington, which hopefully will be sustained, and at the University of Toronto. The New York Public Library, by virtue of its location and collecting traditions, will likely continue to maintain its intake of new publications and its eager receptivity to gifts from the émigré communities. However, here and elsewhere one comes to the issue of staff—who will be doing the selecting of these materials after the present generation retires? It is the opinion of the compiler of this survey that a way should be found to do so, because such materials provide insights not only into local developments in the Baltics, but into the historical processes of broader Euro-

pean, Russian, and American significance as well. One should recall that the peoples of the Baltics were in the forefront of developments that signaled the collapse of the Soviet empire.

This brings me to my final point. Just a few weeks ago the *New York Times* carried an article on an Armenian historian, a man who had actually fled into the Syrian desert in 1915, bemoaning the erosion of Armenian language and culture in subsequent generations of Armenian Americans.¹⁹ The article relates how, for example, the 15,000 volume Zohrab Library in New York is little used, and in one particularly sad tale how unique manuscript materials documenting the history of one Armenian village assembled by an immigrant were put in the trash by his heirs, who couldn't read or appreciate the content. Alas, such tragedies happen every day. My biggest concern is the fate of the many small, private organizational and individual collections scattered around North America. Some, like the Latvian Studies Center Library in Michigan, have found other homes in the United States. Others, like the Rudzītis Collection, have been welcomed to the New York Public Library. Some are likely destined to be transferred to libraries in the homelands which, in the case of materials produced by diaspora communities, may be unfortunate, as they have really become part of North America's immigrant heritage. The 97-year-old Hagup Assadourian, the focus of the aforementioned *New York Times* article, is sending his library to Armenia after his death, because "at least they still speak Armenian." Whether the older generations of Baltic immigrants in North America choose to send materials to the newly independent homelands or to existing libraries here is really in the hands of curators and administrators on both sides of the Atlantic. Who will make the better case, in words and deeds?

NOTES

1. Among the extant surveys are the following: Adam and Filomena Kantautas, *A Lithuanian Bibliography: A Check-List of Books and Articles Held by the Major Libraries of Canada and the United States* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1975); Adam and Filomena Kantautas, *Supplement to A Lithuanian Bibliography: A Further Checklist of Books and Articles Held by the Major Libraries of Canada and the United States* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1979); Jonas Balys, *Lithuanian Periodicals in American Libraries: A Union List* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1982); Jonas Balys, *Lithuania and Lithuanians: A Selected Bibliography* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger for the Lithuanian Research Institute, 1961). The last

title cited is a union list of selected items held at major American libraries and other institutions.

2. On the emigrations, see, for example, *Eestlased Kanadas* (Toronto: Kanada Eestlaste Ajaloo Komisjon, 1975-1997), 3 vols.; Karl Aun, *The Political Refugees: A History of Estonians in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1985); Osvalds Akmentiņš, *Latvians in Bicentennial America* (Waverly, IA: Latvju Grāmata, 1976); *Encyclopedia Lituanica* (Boston: J. Kapočius, 1970-1978); Paul Robert Magocsi, ed., *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press for the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1999); Stephan Thernstrom, ed., *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1980); Kenneth T. Jackson, editor, *Encyclopedia of New York City* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

3. *Latviešu periodika: bibliogrāfisks rādītājs* (Riga: Zinātne, 1976-1995). 4 vols.

4. Benjamiņš Jēgers, *Latviešu trimdas izdevumu bibliogrāfija, 1940-1960* (Stockholm: Daugava, 1968-1972), 2 vols.; Benjamiņš Jēgers, *Latviešu trimdas izdevumu bibliogrāfija, 1961-1970* (Stockholm: Daugava, 1977); Benjamiņš Jēgers, *Latviešu trimdas izdevumu bibliogrāfija, 1971-1980* (Stockholm: Daugava, 1988); Benjamiņš Jēgers, *Latviešu trimdas izdevumu bibliogrāfija, 1981-1991* (Stockholm: Daugava, 1994).

5. Vaclovas Biržiška, *Lithuanian Publications in the United States, 1874-1910: A Bibliography* (Chicago: Institute of Lithuanian Studies, 1994).

6. An early and very informative account of the Lithuanian, and also of the Latvian and Estonian, immigrant press from 1884 to 1920, is provided in Robert Ezra Park, *The Immigrant Press and Its Control* (Montclair, NJ: Patterson Smith, 1922; reprint, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1970).

7. Wilford S. Shamlin, "We Have Done Great Things: Recording Estonian-American History," *Asbury Park Press*, 12 March 2000; Joseph Berger, "Grasping Life After War, They Celebrate Rewards," *The New York Times*, 15 January 2000.

8. See, for example, the 63-page booklet, *Latvian Books: Čikagas Publiskās Bibliotēkas latviešu grāmatas* (Chicago: Chicago Public Library, 1929).

9. For example, Joseph D. Dwyer, ed., *Russia, the Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe: A Survey of Holdings at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1980).

10. Anna M. Bourguina and Michael Jakobson, *Guide to the Boris L. Nicolaevsky Collection in the Hoover Institution Archives* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, Stanford University, 1989).

11. Suzanna Moody and Joel Wurl, *The Immigration History Research Center: A Guide to Collections* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991).

12. Victor Collins, *Attempt at a Catalogue of the Library of the Late Prince Louis-Lucien Bonaparte* (London: H. Sotheran & Co., 1894).

13. Giedra Subačienė, *Čikagos Newberry Bibliotekos Lituaniščių ir Prūsistinių Knygų Katalogas = Books of Lithuanian and Old Prussian Interest at the Newberry Library* (Chicago: Lithuanian American Community, Inc., 1999).

14. *Guide to East European Scholarly Resources in the New York Metropolitan Area*. Manuscript (New York: New York Public Library, 1997).

15. Vincas Mačiūnas and Kostas Ostrauskas, "The Šaulys Collection: Books on Lithuania," *The Library Chronicle* (Friends of the Library, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia) 20, no. 1 (Winter 1954): 35-46.

16. Vincas Mačiūnas, *Lituanistika Pensilvanijos Universiteto Bibliotekoje = Lithuanian Books and Books in Foreign Languages Concerning Lithuania in the University of Pennsylvania Library* (Chicago: Lietuvių Profesorių Draugija Amerikoje, 1964).

17. Emilija Ziplans et al., *Baltic Material in the University Library* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978).

18. For a good summary of past and present collecting efforts, see Michael Biggins, "Baltic Collections at the University of Washington Libraries," *REECAS Newsletter*, Winter 1999/2000.

19. Chris Hedges, "Severing a Link, Word by Word: As Language Erodes, Armenian Exiles Fear a Bigger Loss," *The New York Times*, 6 July 2000, section B, pages 1, 5.