

EASTERN EUROPEAN FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH

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Getting Started

Genealogical research in Eastern Europe is actually easier than American research. This is because Europe has a strong tradition of record keeping. Civil and ecclesiastical laws required that all births, marriages, and deaths be recorded. Thus Eastern Europe has a far greater pool of resources to draw from for research. To successfully do your research you must answer several Key questions. The basic steps of research in Eastern Europe are:

- Who was the emigrant ancestor? Do the American part of your research first to learn as much about your heritage as possible, including who actually came from the old country.
- Where was he from? Because records were kept on a local basis you must determine where your ancestor was from. Some of the best sources to do this are where he settled, including such things as marriage records, death records, obituaries, naturalization, etc. Passenger lists of arrivals may give a birthplace. Many eastern Europeans sailed from Hamburg. The passenger departure records of Hamburg still exist, are indexed and are available on microfilm through the Family History Library.
- Where is that? Once you determine where your ancestor was from you must verify the spelling, determine where it is now (eastern Europe has had a lot of border changes), and where the records were kept. Gazetteers are the best way to solve these problems along with maps. The Family History Library has an excellent collection of eastern European gazetteers. The most significant gazetteers for eastern Europe are listed at the end of this section.
- Where are the records? This can be the toughest question of all. For some of the eastern European nations it is very difficult to get access to the records. Others are accessible by writing or in person. In many cases the records are easily accessible on microfilm through the Family

History Library. Available records are listed in the Family History Library Catalog™ and may be ordered at the Family History Library or family history centers. Not all records are in the permanent collection at the main library. All newly acquired films must be ordered which can sometimes take several weeks. It is best to call ahead (801) 240-2334 to order needed films a few weeks before your visit. When records have not been microfilmed you will need to write for information. The following pages give details about microfilming and writing for each country.

Sources for Genealogical Research

Europe has many excellent sources for research. Researchers accustomed to genealogical research in the U.S. and Canada often rely heavily on census records, land records, wills and probates to build a pedigree of their families in North America. This is because there often is nothing better available. But in Europe the availability of vital records greatly improves the research climate.

Church Records and Civil Registration: These are records of births, christenings, marriages, deaths, and burials made by church priests and pastors and government officials. They are excellent sources of accurate information on names, dates, and places of births, marriages, and deaths. They are the single, most significant source of genealogical information in the eastern European countries and are essential for genealogical research. In most cases civil registration did not begin until the late 1800s.

The earliest Catholic church records begin in the late 1500s. In general, church records began to be kept on a consistent basis in the mid to late 1600s. By the 1800s laws were enacted in most areas requiring the churches to keep church records in a specified format and to make transcripts of the records for the benefit of the civil government. In

certificate and it takes 2 to 3 months. Write to:

The Embassy of the Hungarian Republic
3910 Shoemaker Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

Slovakia: The Family History Library is presently microfilming the church records of Slovakia. Most of eastern Slovakia is already filmed and in the Family History Library Catalog. The collection continues to grow, but until records are listed in the catalog they are not available. The Slovak archives also provides a research service which is especially helpful when the records you need haven't yet been filmed. All records of genealogical value in the Slovakia were nationalized. Records from before 1900 are kept in state regional archives [*statní oblastní archivy*]. These records are accessible by writing or in person. The Ministry of the Interior and Environment is responsible for the administration of archives. Their archival administration department processes genealogical research requests. This same agency can grant permission for you to visit the archives in person.

If your ancestor was from Slovakia (formerly by Hungary), send your application directly to:

Slovak Ministry of Interior and Environment
Archivná Správa
Križková 7
811 04 Bratislava
SLOVAKIA

The archival administration will arrange for searches of records (such as birth, marriage, and death registers) before 1900. They will send your request for research to the appropriate archive in Slovakia. Qualified archival researchers there will do the actual research and they will send you a report of the research done. With rare exceptions, the only records available for genealogical research by mail are parish registers [*matriky*] of births, marriages, and deaths. Other records such as land records and census records exist and you can use them for research if you visit the archives yourself, but they are difficult to access by writing.

Republics of the Former Soviet Union: The acquisition of records from these republics varies considerably from republic to republic. In most cases the process is proceeding very slowly.

Records filmed by the Family History Library are not available from these republics until they appear in the Family History Library Catalog. Look for the specific place for which you need records. In some cases it is possible to do research in person but this is no simple matter and not recommended unless you have considerable experience and have clear assurances that you will be allowed in the archives. Until such time as records have been microfilmed the only practical ways to get information is through one of the several genealogical research organizations that have been formed. The most best known of these are:

RAGAS - The Russian American Genealogical Archive Service: This organization was formerly with the National Archives Volunteer service in Washington D.C. It is now an independent self-supporting (for profit) organization. They work with archivists in Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine.

RAGAS
1929 18th Street NW
Suite 1112
Washington, DC 20009

PROBAND - This is a new self-supporting organization which assists people in tracing ancestry in the former USSR (especially Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova). For more information contact:

PROBAND-GENEALOGICAL BUREAU
ul. Bekhtereva 35/2, 128
115516 Moscow
RUSSIA

FAST - This is a private firm with connections in Lithuania, Latvia and Belarus. Contrary to the implications of the name this company is not any faster than any other research company. All companies that do research in the former Soviet Union are painfully slow because the sources are very difficult to find and use.

FAST Genealogy Service
8510 Wild Olive Drive
Potomac, MD 20854

Other genealogical organizations and firms are emerging and many advertize or are referred to on the pages of various Jewish genealogical periodicals. One of the leading Jewish

genealogical periodicals is:

Avotaynu
155 North Washington Avenue
Bergenfield, NJ 07621

Russia: The Russian Republic is vast. Microfilming began several years ago, but it will be many years before many areas are represented in the collection of the Family History Library. There are as yet no significant Jewish records in the collection. Many genealogical researchers are interested in the records of German colonists who settled in Russia and the Ukraine. No records are yet available from the Volga. Transcripts of the records of Protestant communities in the Ukraine (Black Sea and Volhynia), Belarus and the vicinity of St. Petersburg were stored at the Lutheran Consistory in St. Petersburg; and these records have been microfilmed. Localities and film numbers for this set of records are listed in *The Lutherans of Russia; Vol. I Parish index to the churchbooks of the Evangelical Lutherans Consistory of St. Petersburg* compiled by Tom Edlund, published 1995 by the Germanic Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 16312 St. Paul, Minnesota 55116. Not yet microfilmed.

Belarus: The Family History Library is presently acquiring microfilmed records from archives in Grodno and Minsk.

National Archives of Belarus
22038 Minsk
vul. Kozlova, 26
BELARUS

Central State Historical Archive of Belarus
23023 Grodno
pl. Lenina, 2
BELARUS

Baltic States: Most records of Estonia have been microfilmed and are available through the Family History Library. Many Latvian protestant records have been filmed. A few Lithuanian records are being microfilmed. For records not yet filmed contact FAST or write directly to the Lithuanian State Archives:

Lietuvos Valstybinis Archyvas
Gerosios Vilties, 10
2015 Vilnius
LITHUANIA

Moldova: Microfilming recently began in this republic which has close cultural ties with Romania. For records not yet filmed try writing directly to the Moldovan State Archives:

Central State Archives of Moldova
27028 Kishinev
Georgi Assaki Str. 67B
MOLDOVA

Ukraine: The Family History Library is presently acquiring microfilms of records from Ukraine but the process will take many years. Presently filming is ongoing at archives in Kiev, L'viv, and Chernigov. For records not yet filmed contact RAGAS or write directly to the archives in Ukraine.

Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine
252601 Kiev - 110
Solomyanskaya vul. 24
Ukraine

Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine
290008 L'viv
pl. Vozziednannya 3A
UKRAINE

State Archive of Transcarpathian Oblast
294008 Beregovo
vul. Geroev 4A
UKRAINE

The Family History Library is also acquiring records from the former Soviet republics of Armenia and Georgia.

Poland: Many church records and civil transcripts of church records from Poland have been microfilmed. In many cases however, they are filmed only up through the 1880s. Later records and records of communities that are not filmed can be obtained by writing. You can often get information by writing in Polish directly to the Catholic parish [*parafia Rzymsko-katolicka*] in the town where your ancestor lived. For non-Catholics or when you receive no response from the church you can write to Polish state archives.

Naczelna Dyrekcja Archiwów Państwowych
Skr. Pocz. 1005
00-950 Warszawa
POLAND

Poland was partitioned in 1795 between Russia, Austria, and Germany. The style of record keeping varies considerably in each of these three areas.

Romania: Some records of German communities in Romania have been microfilmed in archives in Germany and Hungary. But no records have been filmed in Romanian archives. There is no specific information on where to write in Romania. The former government rarely replied to genealogical questions, and the new government does not seem much better. Hopefully, the chances for response will improve. You can try writing to the local parish [*parohie*] or to the local civil records office [*Oficiul Stării Civile*]. The following is the new address for the state archives.

Arhivelor Statului din România
București, sect. 5
Bdul Kogălniceanu no. 29
ROMANIA

Former Yugoslavia: Records have been microfilmed only in the republics of Croatia and Slovenia. The process of filming continues in those republics even now. It is difficult to get genealogical information from former Yugoslav republics by mail. You may be able to get information by writing to the archive of the appropriate Yugoslav Republic.

Croatia
Arhiv Hrvatske
Marulićev trg br. 21
41001 Zagreb
CROATIA

Serbia
Arhiv Srbije
Ul. Karnedžijeva br. 2
11000 Beograd
YUGOSLAVIA

Slovenia
Arhiv Slovenije
Ul. Levstikov trg br. 3
61001 Ljubljana
SLOVENIA

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Major Gazetteers for Eastern Europe

Gazetteer of Austria

Gemeindelexikon der in Reichsrath vertretenen Königreiche und Länder [Gazetteer of the crownlands and territories represented in the imperial council]. Vienna: K.K. Statistisches Zentralkommission, 1903-1908. (Family History Library call number: European Collection Ref Q 943.6 E5g; also on microfilm).

1187925 item 2	Vol 1	Niederösterreich	1187926 item 5	Vol 8	Tirol und Vorarlberg
1187925 item 3	Vol 2	Oberösterreich	1187927 item 1	Vol 9	Böhmen
1187925 item 4	Vol 3	Salzburg	924736 item 1	Vol 10	Mähren
1187926 item 1	Vol 4	Steiermark	1187927 item 2	Vol 11	Schlesien
1187926 item 2	Vol 5	Kärnten	1187928 item 1	Vol 12	Galizien
1187926 item 3	Vol 6	Krain	1187928 item 2	Vol 13	Bukowina
1187926 item 4	Vol 7	Küstenland	1187928 item 3	Vol 14	Dalmatien

Based on the 1900 census. The volume for each province is arranged by district with an index to both German and local place names. If you do not find the town on the page listed in the index check the footnotes. The parish or synagogue location is not listed in the main text but is given in an appendix, located between the main text and the index of each volume. The appendix is arranged alphabetically by district and sub-district. The parish and synagogue are given in the last column: Standort der röm.-kath., gr.-kath. und isr. Matrikelstellen.

Gazetteer of Hungary

Magyarország Helységnévtára [Gazetteer of Hungary], János Dvorzák, comp. Budapest: "Havi Füzetek," 1877. (Family History Library call number: European Collection Ref. 943.9 E5d; also on microfilm, Vol. I on Film 599564 and Vol. II on Film 973041).

Volume I includes a 610 page index. It lists all place names in alphabetical order. Entries in the index are followed by the name of the old Hungarian county, and a set of numbers. These numbers refer to the gazetteer entry in Volume II. The first number is the sequential number of the county; the second is the consecutive number of the district; the last is the number of the locality.

Volume II has more details. Volume II is arranged by county and districts. Use the numbers from the index to find the entry for your town. Additional names the locality was known by are listed in parentheses. Population figures are given according to religion. The following abbreviations are used:

rk. - Római Katolikus - Roman Catholic	ref. - Reformatus - Reformed
gk. - Görög Katolikus - Greek Catholic	un. - Unitarius - Unitarian
kg. - Keleti Görög - Greek Orthodox	izr. - Izraelita - Jewish
ag. - ágostai - Augsburg Evangelical Lutheran	

If the village had its own parish church (or synagogue, for Jews), the abbreviation for the religion will be in **boldface** capital letters. The diocese will follow, also in **boldface** type. If the people attended church elsewhere, the abbreviation of the religion will be in lower case.

The name of the parish location follows the population figure. If a dash (22) follows the population figure, it means members of that religion belong to no particular parish.

Gazetter of the German Empire

Uetrecht, E., comp. *Meyers Orts- und Verkehrs- Lexikon des Deutschen Reichs* [Meyer's gazetteer and directory of the German Empire]. Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1912. (Family History Library call number: European Collection Ref. 943 E5mo; also on microfilm, Film 496640 - for places A-K, Film 496641 - for places L-Z; also on Fiche 6,000,001-6,000029)).

Towns are listed alphabetically. This gazetteer is written in the old Gothic script. This gazetteer gives the 1871-1918 political jurisdictions and indicates whether the locality had its own parish or synagogue. The following abbreviations are used:

Evangelical parish: **EvPfk.** Catholic parish: **KPfk.** Jewish synagogue: **Syn.**

Gazetteer of Prussia

Gemeindelexikon für das Königreich Preussen [Gazetteer for the Kingdom of Prussia]. Berlin: Verlag des Königlichen statistischen Landesamts, 1907-1909. (Family History Library call number: European Collection Ref 943 E5kp; also on microfilms listed below).

Vol 1 *Ostpreussen* (Film 1186701 item 3)
Vol 2 *Westpreussen* (Film 1186701 item 4)
Vol 3 *Brandenburg* (Film 806635 item 1)

Vol 4 *Pommern* (Film 806634 item 4)
Vol 5 *Posen* (Film 806635 item 3)
Vol 6 *Schlesien* (Film 806633 item 4)

Each volume has an index at the end listing in alphabetical order all localities in the province. In the index, there are two numbers given after each place-name. The first number refers to the "Kreis" (district) to which the locality belonged. These numbers can be found at the top of the page in the body of the book. The second number refers to the town. Thus "21 17" refers to the 17th town listed in district 21. The parish is given in the columns marked as "Kirchspiel"; "Evangelisch" (Lutheran) in column 25 and "Katolisch" (Catholic) in column 26. Note: If the town in question is not listed in column two, refer to the footnotes in the gazetteer.

Gazetteer of the Russian Empire

Sulimierski, Filip, ed. *Słownik Geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego i Innych Krajów Słowiańskich* [Geographical dictionary of the Kingdom of Poland and other Slavic countries]. 15 Vol. Warsaw: Sulimierski i Walewski, 1880-1902. (Family History Library call number: European Collection 943.8 E5c; also on microfilm).

Film numbers are as follows:

920,957	vol. 1	Aa-Dereneczna	920,967	vol. 11	Sochaczew-Szlurbowska Wola
920,958	vol. 2	Derenek-Gżack	920,968	vol. 12	Szlurpkiszki-Warlynka
920,959	vol. 3	Haag-Kepy	920,969	vol. 13	Warmbrunn-Worowo
920,960	vol. 4	Kes-Kutno	920,970	vol. 14	Worowo-żyżyn
920,961	vol. 5	Kutowa-Malczyce	920,971	vol. 15	Ababi-Januszowo (addendum)
920,962	vol. 6	Malczyce-Netreba	920,972	vol. 15	Januszipol-Sniatyn (addendum)
920,963	vol. 7	Netreba-Perepiat	Arranged alphabetically with text in Polish.		
920,964	vol. 8	Perepiatycha-Pozajscie			
920,965	vol. 9	Pozajscie-Rukszenice			
920,966	vol. 10	Rukszenice-Sochaczew			

Poland

Bystrzycki, Tadeusz. *Skorowidz Miejscowości Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* [Listing of Localities of the Polish Republic]. Przemyśl: Wydawnictwa księżnicy naukowej, 1934. (Family History Library book 943.8 E5sm; also on microfilm, Film 1343868).

Gazetteer of the early republic of Poland from 1918 to 1939. Arranged alphabetically with information in columns. Localities are listed alphabetically down the page in the first column. Township, district, province (voivodship), post office, railway station, bus station, local and regional courts, and Christian parish for the locality are listed in successive columns to the right. The nearest synagogue is not listed.

Yugoslavia

Imenik mēsta u Jugoslaviji [Place names in Yugoslavia]. Beograd: Novinska Ustanova Službeni List SFRJ, 1972 (Family History Library call number: 949.7 E5im, also on microfiche, Fiche no. 6053513)

From pages 45 to 452 all Yugoslav localities are listed alphabetically down the page in the first column. District, republic, and post office, are listed in successive columns to the right. Post office towns are listed with postal codes on pages 456-473.

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LIFE IN THE BALTIC STATES BEFORE THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

On a map of eighteenth century Europe our eyes move eastward from England and France across the patchwork quilt that was Germany, and eventually encounter an immense and uniformly colored area labeled "The Russian Empire." Normally only European Russia would be depicted on such a map, for the Asian territory of the empire was too vast to be included. In the eighteenth century the empire was still expanding, and its European acquisitions included the provinces of the eastern Baltic littoral.¹ The provinces of Livland and Estland were obtained at the beginning of the century, when Peter the Great triumphed over Sweden. Later in the century, as part of the territorial settlement accompanying the Third Partition of Poland, Catherine the Great added the province of Kurland (1795). Thus, by the end of the 1790s Russia had succeeded in establishing itself as the dominant power in northeastern Europe, replacing Sweden; and the inhabitants of the Baltic Provinces--nobles, burghers, and peasants alike--were now obliged to accept the sovereignty of a new ruler. The historical documents of the area would reflect these changes. The student of Baltic history would now need to be able to read Russian language sources, in addition to the Latin, German, Swedish, Danish, and Polish that are needed to understand Baltic historical events prior to the triumph of Russian hegemony.

THE BALTIC GERMANS

In spite of the change of sovereign rulers, certain things remained unaltered in the Baltic region, and one of these

was the elites--the landowning nobles and the city-dwelling burghers--who were primarily German speaking. The Baltic Germans (Baltendeutsche) had arrived in the area during the medieval centuries in various capacities: as representatives of the medieval church, which wanted to Christianize the remaining "pagans" of the European continent through the so-called Baltic Crusade in the fourteenth century; as military adventurers who went wherever warfare and booty were to be found; as land-hungry younger sons of German nobles who were unable to acquire property in the lands of their birth; and as merchants who wanted to include the eastern Baltic littoral in the trading area being built up by the Hanseatic League.² Having arrived, most of them stayed to form over the centuries the upper layers of Baltic society, which were still very much in control by the time the area joined the Russian Empire. In due course they were joined by hundreds of other people migrating north-eastward from Central Europe: estate functionaries, artisans, some peasants, some clergy, and tutors for the children of noble families. In spite of this substantial immigration, the German speakers of the Baltic area remained no more than about 5 to 6 percent of the total population, the great bulk of the Baltic inhabitants being the successors of the original Latvian and Estonian populations. The Baltic Germans exercised their dominance through the corporations of the nobility (Ritterschaften), the Lutheran Church after the Protestant Reformation, and the guilds in the towns; as well as through the recognition they were given as the mainstays of local and regional government by the succession of monarchs in Warsaw, Stockholm, Moscow,

and St. Petersburg. Not surprisingly, the Baltic Germans eventually came to think of themselves as much "native" to the regions as the original Latvian and Estonian inhabitants of it. To the extent that they were indeed the principal figures of local and regional administration, they kept their records in the language which they themselves spoke. The historical records left by the administrators of landed estates, tradesmen and merchants in the towns, and the court system are therefore mostly in the German language.

Having consolidated this power locally, the Baltic Germans were not willing to surrender it to the distant monarchs who periodically gained ascendancy over the Baltic area. In the seventeenth century, when Sweden possessed the region, the Vasa dynasty had a hard time extending its authority to the local level.³ The relations between the Swedish monarch across the Baltic Sea and the nobilities in the Baltic had to be carried on through a series of compromises. When Peter the Great defeated Sweden in the Great Northern War, he found that in order to secure the loyalty of the Baltic nobles in Livland and Estland, he had to guarantee the continuation of their privileges to rule the Baltic undisturbed. When the last of the provinces—Kurland—became part of Russia in 1795 in the partitions of Poland, the Kurlandic nobility demanded similar privileges, and Tsar Paul had to agree to them. Thus, by the end of the eighteenth century, in terms of the distribution of power, the Baltic German situation had not changed dramatically: they were, to be sure, now the loyal subjects of the Russian tsar rather than of the Swedish king, but their loyalty could be counted on only as long as the Russian tsar did not try to introduce too many Imperial officials into the Baltic area or try to interfere in the affairs of local administration. From the Imperial government's viewpoint, this was hardly a satisfactory situation, but the Russian government was at this point not willing to undertake military challenges to regional nobles.⁴ In the absence of regional officials directly

responsible to the crown's wishes, St. Petersburg had to rely on the local nobilities to govern, to collect taxes, and to provide military assistance in times of need. There was also the fact that many Baltic nobles became officials in St. Petersburg and officers in the Imperial Army, and thus were well placed to fight against efforts to diminish their authority in the Baltic area. Then, too, the mercantile sector of the Baltic economy was well developed, creating a substantial proportion of the trade moving across the borders of the empire. Tranquility in this region would ensure its economic prosperity.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND NATIONALITIES

The social structure in each of the Baltic provinces, as in the empire and in the rest of Europe, was conceived of by contemporaries as consisting not of social classes, as we use the term, but of a hierarchy of social orders (or Stände) each of which was defined as a separate entity in the law, and indeed had laws applicable only to its members. The main orders were the nobles (Adelstand), burghers (Bürgerstand), and peasants (Bauernstand). Each resident in the Baltic was identified as belonging to one order or another. Usually membership was acquired through birth; that is, a person was a member of the order to which his parents belonged; and throughout an individual's lifetime, privileges, rights, responsibilities, and generally life opportunities were defined by the position of that order in the hierarchy of orders. This society was therefore radically inegalitarian. This does not mean that the population was entirely frozen into place, but it did mean that movement upwards in the social orders (social mobility) was minimal. There were individual exceptions to this general rule, but these tended to be statistically insignificant.

One of the interesting aspects of social life in the Baltic was that the line demarcating the higher orders (nobilities and the burghers) from lower order (the

peasants) coincided also with the principal nationality division within the population. The upper orders were made up almost entirely of German speakers, whereas the lowest social order--the peasantry--was made up almost entirely of either Latvian speakers or Estonian speakers, depending on the province.⁵ In Kurland, the peasantry was almost entirely Latvian; in Livland, the peasantry was Estonian in the north and Latvian in the south; and in Estland, it was entirely Estonian. In all cases, it was the peasantry that made up the vast bulk of a provincial population, more than 90 percent; also, in all three provinces in the eighteenth century very few Latvian or Estonian speaking individuals were living in the cities and towns. It was a situation in which the social structure (as defined through the idea of orders) had as its internal boundaries not only the different laws that regulated the life of each order, but also the nationality division which separated the peasantries from the rest of the members of the social hierarchy. By contrast, in Russia proper, or, for that matter in Western Europe, where a society based on orders also existed, social structure did not include the problem of nationality divisions; there, the nobilities, burghers, and peasants generally spoke the same language and could think of themselves as having originated from the same earlier population.

When we speak of "nationality" in the eighteenth century, we must be very careful not to read too much into that word. At that time, nationality differences normally did not mean much more than language differences. The philosophy of nationalism was still a matter of the future. Germans--the Georges of Hannover--occupied the throne of England; Catherine the Great of Russia was herself a German; and the idea that a particular nationality group, however defined, should have its own state and should be governed by persons from within its own ranks had not yet taken hold of the European mind. The Baltic peoples were conscious of linguistic differences, of course, but it is not likely that they

held them to be of major significance. Thus, in the eighteenth century membership in a nationality group did not yet entail a national consciousness. If there was friction between German speakers, on the one hand, and the Estonian and Latvian speakers on the other, it grew out of the fact that the former were estate owners, nobles, and merchants, and the latter highly vulnerable peasants, and less out of the circumstances that each spoke a different language.⁶ The life of peasants was locally oriented and they normally defined their "world" in terms of the landed estate in which they and their forefathers had lived. The idea that all residents of the Baltic provinces who spoke Latvian, for instance, should think of themselves in terms of a national community with common interests would not enter the Baltic area until the second half of the nineteenth century. At the same time, however, the language communities were a social fact, and their distribution in the way I have mentioned an important characteristic of the social structure.

SERFDOM

In addition to being peasants, that is, agriculturalists and farmers, the Latvian and Estonian speakers of the Baltic provinces were also serfs. The institution of serfdom had nearly disappeared in the western parts of Europe, and the peasants of England, France, and the western parts of Germany were legally free to move where they pleased, not being bound to any particular piece of land or to a particular person. In the same centuries when serfdom had disappeared from western Europe, however, it had experienced a resurgence in the east, and by the end of the eighteenth century, the institution of serfdom was a major social fact of the rural areas. Technically speaking, to be classified as a serf (erbuntertan; leibeigener), meant either that one was bound to live on a particular peasant holding in a particular estate, or, alternately, that one was the serf of a particular landowner and therefore bound

to live where that landowner commanded. Moreover, serf status had become hereditary; so that rural people were not only born into a particular social order (the peasantry), but also into a particular subgroup of a social order, the enserfed peasantry. There were free peasants even in the Baltic, but they were relatively few in number. By the end of the eighteenth century, to be a peasant in the Baltic provinces meant that one was also a serf, and as I have mentioned, these peasant-serfs were nearly always either Latvian or Estonian speakers, depending on the province.

Conditions of serfdom varied greatly from province to province and between regions within Russia, and there is very little utility in thinking of all peasant-serfs as living in the same kind of undifferentiated misery. Nonetheless the peasant-serfs of the Baltic were subject to a host of restrictions and obligations which, in the western part of Europe, would have been thought intolerable and in England, probably judged to be violations of rights. Apart from the limitation on movement, peasant-serfs were also obligated to yield up part of their crop to the estate owner, and part of their time to working that section of the estate's fields which was set aside for the landowner himself. Peasant-serfs also performed other labor duties, from repairing roads to hauling goods to market. In addition, they were subject to the authority of the landowner sitting as judge in the manorial court, and to rulings that included corporal punishment. In return, the peasant-serf had use rights to a particular piece of the estate (a holding) and certain common rights of grazing. He also depended on the landowner to champion him against the outside world, whether against invading enemies or usurpations practiced by neighboring landowners. No one would argue that this system of rights and obligations, as experienced by the peasant-serf, ensured a principle of equality; but, at the same time, fear of condemnation by their peers kept most landowners from practicing the worst abuses. Not infrequently, serfs fled to

escape life under a particularly harsh landowner.

FAMILY LIFE OF SERFS

Family life of peasants was conducted in the context of the serf estate, and the regulations governing the estate naturally impinged upon family life as well. One regulation which appears to have had considerable impact was the restriction on movement, which serfs could undertake only with the express permission of the landowner. In practice this restriction could not be enforced quite as stringently as it was conceived of in the law, since landowners did not have a large enough police force to keep a tight control over everybody. Moreover there was an advantage to allowing females to marry out, in exchange for some kind of payment; and males to marry in, since in this arrangement the estate gained additional labor. The subject of local movements under these conditions has not been studied very well, but the studies that have been done suggest that in the Baltic area, as elsewhere in pre-industrial Europe, we should not conceive of the peasant populations as totally immobilized. Even if peasants did not move in large numbers in and out of the estate there was considerable movement within the estate. In a study of a single estate between the years 1797 and 1811 it was found that only about 22 percent of the peasants of the first census who were alive by the second were still living in the farmsteads in which they had been found in 1797. While it was probably true that most peasants died within the estate into which they had been born, it was not necessarily true that they always lived in the same farmstead.

Studies have shown that peasant-serfs tried to ensure that a holding would remain in the same family over generations. The farmstead, to which a plot of land was attached, was the smallest subunit in the estate economy. The landowner depended upon the farmstead and its inhabitants not only for the upkeep

of the farmstead's lands but also for a supply of labor to work the landowner's land, the demesne. In the Baltic it appears that farmsteads were almost permanent institutions, which, once built, continued to house generation after generation of peasants with little change in the physical premises. Moreover, landowners were apparently unwilling to allow peasants to build additional structures, so that new marriages did not necessarily mean the creation of new farmsteads. What was more likely was that if he could not find an open farmstead to take over, he remained living with his father, or with his married brother who had taken over. This meant that the proportion of farmsteads on which joint families of various kinds could be found was very large, far larger than could be found in western European rural areas.¹⁰ The different combinations of related married couples who were living in a single farmstead was quite great, and the varieties could include not only the usual "parent-married offspring" and "married brother" combinations, but also sons-in-law, and married sisters co-residing with married brothers. The discussion of family types in the Baltic, therefore, involves a discussion of the joint family system as a significant fact of family life.

Relatively restricted migration across estate boundaries also meant that Baltic peasants were likely to encounter within the estate of their residence large numbers of relatives beyond those included in their families of birth and marriage. Census records show that the relatives who were living with an individual in a farmstead were not the only important ones he had in the entire community; and consequently, for the Baltic area, the old observation that "in this village all persons are related," while not entirely true, was also not entirely erroneous. This does not mean, of course, that the entire population lived in peace and harmony; but it does suggest that there was a kinship basis for treating incomers and perhaps even the landowner as "outsiders." The kinship rules in these Baltic communities

appear to have been patrilineal, emphasizing the father's line where inheritance was concerned, and bilateral, recruiting relatives from both sides,¹¹ as far as co-residence was concerned.

One interesting aspect of family life was that in spite of a household structure which resembled that of other eastern European areas, the marriage patterns were definitely more like those in Sweden and other Scandinavian countries than like the Russian marriage patterns to the east.¹² The Baltic peasants married at a later age than did Russian peasants—probably in their early twenties rather than in their late teens—and there was a higher proportion of peasants in the Baltic who never married at all. This is likely to have meant a somewhat lower fertility rate in this area, even though that matter has not been thoroughly studied. What accounts for this unusual pattern of relatively high ages at first marriage is not very clear. The landowners had every interest in seeing to it that the female serfs they owned married as early as possible, so that the number of children born on the estate and the number likely to survive would be higher. In the serf estates for Russia, peasant fathers could be fined if their daughters had not yet married by age eighteen or nineteen. Yet in the Baltic this kind of interference was apparently not regular if it existed at all. Apparently, peasant families were freer to exercise choice in the matter, and the statistics show very few women or men in the married state before their twentieth year. One factor may have been the shortage of farmsteads mentioned earlier. If the estate had allowed a new farmstead to be built and new holdings to be claimed by each newly married couple, the chances of a young couple being able to manage on its own might have been greater. As it was, however, very young couples had to live with their parents, or with married older siblings, since, judging by statistics, there appears to have been a prohibition against farmstead heads who were younger than twenty. It is therefore possible that peasant parents did not give their offspring permission to marry

early, knowing full well that that would mean either new mouths to feed in their own farmsteads or that the young couple would have to start their married life as farmhands in the farmsteads of other peasants.

CHANGING CONDITIONS

At the end of the eighteenth century, certain changes in Baltic areas began to point toward the alteration of these long-standing arrangements and patterns. One very important change was a new attitude by landowners toward their land: they had started to think of their properties less in terms of self-sufficiency and more in terms of profit, since the grain they grew could be and was exported to a wider foreign market. Landowners were always short of capital, however, since their wealth was fixed rather than fluid; consequently, many estates were mortgaged and remortgaged until the nobility as a whole, in spite of the visible luxuries it enjoyed, was in heavy debt.¹³ Along this same line, efforts were made to alter the traditional settlement patterns on the land, so as to enlarge the arable and to make it more efficient for yielding a larger crop. One way of doing this was for landowners to reduce the number of peasant holdings by adding the holding to the demesne if it fell vacant, by forcing the current occupant to leave and become a hired hand on another holding, or by shifting peasant families to other estates which the landholder owned. The long-term result of these changes, coupled with population growth, was an increase in the number of entirely landless peasant-serfs, and an expansion in the number of persons living on those farmsteads which continued to exist. The average number of peasants per farmstead by the end of the eighteenth century had risen to about fifteen persons. The landowner still depended on these serfs for labor, but increasingly peasants were no longer tied to particular holdings and resided on the estate either in the direct employ, for wages, of the owner or in employ of other wealthier peasants.

There were both advantages and disadvantages for the landowner in this situation. He still had a labor force, it is true, but at the same time there had developed an unhealthy situation of overcrowding and possibly also a force of surplus labor. Moreover, the landowner was still responsible in the eyes of regional law, and in the eyes of his peers, for seeing to it that his serfs were not starving and at least had a place to live.

ABOLITION OF SERFDOM

One way of changing this situation was to abolish serfdom and thus to transform at one stroke the entire relationship that existed between landowners and peasants. This was, of course, a very radical move, and few landowners wanted to take so dramatic a step, especially since it could not be directly proven that it would indeed benefit them materially. Abolition conjured up images of vast numbers of landless persons wandering about the countryside, ripe for various kinds of unrest. On the other hand, now, in the early nineteenth century, with Tsar Alexander I on the Russian throne, abolition of serfdom was being discussed for the empire as a whole, and therefore it began to seem much less a radical idea. And, indeed, several decades of discussion and deliberation eventually led to the abolition of serfdom in the Baltic provinces--Kurland, Livland and Estland--in the period from 1817 to 1820, forty years earlier than in the rest of the Russian Empire.¹⁴ The reform was carried out in a way that most clearly benefited landowners and reduced the possibility of major social dislocation. First of all, as compensation for losing a labor force, the nobility's ownership of all land was confirmed. Thus even after emancipation, the peasants were not much more capable of owning agricultural real estate than they had been before. Ownership for peasants was possible in theory in individual instances, but not as a characteristic of the entire peasant order. Also, the transformation of serfs into freemen was carried out for segments

of the entire serf population at a time in the expectation that this would avoid the excesses of rural dislocation. As a consequence of emancipation, it is true, the peasants became free subjects of the Tsar; on the other hand, since for most of them it was materially impossible to leave the areas in which they had been born, they occupied their holdings now on the basis of labor rents. That is, the introduction of money rent was very slow in coming, since the landowners wanted to preserve as much of the labor force as they had had before the emancipation. In practical terms, this meant that the vast majority of the Latvian and Estonian speaking peasants were still bound by the labor obligations of the property they now rented, but now this relationship was a fixed legal one, rather than being defined by custom, and the landowner could be brought into court if he tried to violate it. The landowners sought to improve their positions in other ways in the emancipation document.¹⁵ Local affairs were now to be run by the peasant community itself; whatever funds were needed for setting up poorhouses, orphanages, storehouses for times of famine and so forth had to be established and run by the peasant community. The landowner could not be obligated any longer to help peasants in times of hardship, nor to aid if they needed protection. The road system had to be paid for by the community; and such taxes as were owed to the government were the community's responsibility. Thus the landowner had extricated himself from a host of obligations which had been part of his role before the emancipation decrees. Freedom had been bought for quite a heavy price.

CHANGING SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND NATIONALISM

In spite of the hardships that the new situation created for the peasants, there is no doubt that the general atmosphere of the Baltic area had been altered to provide them with new opportunities. It is from the 1830s, by which time the emancipation process had concluded, that we begin to date the appearance of

Latvian and Estonian speakers in various urban and rural occupations and positions in which such people had never been found before. These positions were of course still low as far as income and prestige were concerned, but their existence cannot be denied. There also appears to have taken place a change in attitude among some Baltic Germans toward the peasant populations over which they still had such power and control. This period saw the founding of learned societies which had as their main objective the study of Latvian and Estonian folk culture, and these were responsible for establishing the first newspaper (1821) in the Latvian language.¹⁶ Generally such efforts were still in the old tradition of the Baltic German clergy and men of letters looking after the education of the masses, an obligation that had been taken very seriously, especially among the Protestant clergy for centuries before this. But at the same time these efforts came to involve an increasingly larger number (though still small in absolute terms) of sons of Latvian peasants, as these received education at the community level and became capable of serving as rural school teachers and minor journalists. They could not aspire to much more than this at the moment, but even this limited mobility carried them into positions in the provinces which Latvians and Estonians had not occupied before. The end result of this process was that by the 1850s there began to appear calls among the Latvians and Estonians for a "national awakening," and for a wholesale restructuring of the relationships between Baltic Germans and the Latvian and Estonian speaking populations. Nationalism had come to the Baltic from the west, and it had touched the imaginations of these first few generations of peasant offspring in a dramatic fashion.¹⁷

Above all, the "national awakening" meant that from this point onward, in the total corpus of written historical records in the Baltic, there would be a small but ever increasing segment which was being produced by the traditional underclasses and would reflect their point of view.

Official records, of course, continued to be generated by Baltic German and Russian functionaries, in their capacity of administrators of the provinces. But belletristic literature was another matter. Initially, this new literature was experimental since the languages—Latvian and Estonian—in which it was expressed fell short of being full-fledged literary Latvian and Estonian languages. They had to be sharpened as literary tools, since they lacked a vocabulary to discuss the Baltic world of the nineteenth century and were full of all sorts of Germanisms and Russianisms as a result of the fact that the Latvian and Estonian authors frequently spoke German and Russian at home.

NATIVE LANGUAGE LITERATURE

The new writing was of two distinct types. There was, first, the works which were openly polemical and challenged on a broad front the hegemony of the Baltic Germans over the cultural life of the Baltic, as well as their control of political and economic institutions. This literature took the form of newspapers, such as Peterburgas avizes, and lengthy examinations of the conditions of the Baltic area.¹⁸ The Latvian and Estonian writers could not be as thoroughly critical of the Baltic Germans as they wished to be, since all publications had to be approved by government censors, and any attacks which were too harsh would be forbidden as "subversive." Thus political and economic commentary was always walking a tightrope: it had to be acceptable to the crown yet at the same time critical enough of Baltic German ways to accomplish its purpose of raising the consciousness of the Latvian and Estonian masses. It should be noted that in these decades Latvian and Estonian nationalists were not calling for total control over Baltic institutions; instead, they asked for a sharing of power between themselves and the Baltic Germans. Moreover, they were not separatists either and continued to believe that a greater share in political control of the Baltic could be obtained while the provinces stayed as constituent

parts of the Russian Empire. To a great extent, these attitudes coincide with those of a segment of Russian intellectual opinion—namely, Slavophilism—which held that the government should not allow non-Russian minorities to dominate any part of the Empire. Consequently, the Latvian, and to a lesser extent, the Estonian nationalists received aid from journalists and other officials in St. Petersburg and Moscow. On the other hand, Baltic German influence in official circles remained strong as well, so that the Baltic nationalists could not really count on absolutely unqualified support from these quarters in their struggles for cultural and economic autonomy. The crown was, of course, concerned lest Latvian and Estonian nationalism lead to subversion and create in the Baltic area a situation like in Poland, where nationalists attitudes led to the insurrection in 1863. In such a context, for a period of twenty years or so, the Latvian and Estonian nationalists were able to launch and institutionalize a nationalistic movement which, once begun, showed no signs of losing support either in the masses of the people or among the ever-expanding ranks of the educated in the two nationality groups.

This institutionalization of nationalism took the form of the establishment of societies, such as the Riga Latvian Association (1868),¹⁹ which meant that alongside the German language historical records kept by the official provincial institutions there would be other records which reflected the deliberations and problems of the Latvian and Estonian national communities. In addition to associations, there were also newspapers which, after the first run of Peterburgas avizes, continued to appear with considerable regularity. Besides these Latvian and Estonian language materials, there also existed a considerable body of writings by Latvian and Estonian nationalists in Russian and German, published in the periodical presses of these languages. The character of this early writing was hardly scholarly, since neither of the two nationality groups were represented in the scholarly

disciplines in the Baltic area. But it did represent a new viewpoint and therefore a new type of historical source.

Much more numerous were Latvian and Estonian belletristic writings, since in the area of fictional literature censorship was not as heavy and the Baltic Germans did not perceive such activities as threatening their control over the Baltic. Consequently Latvian and Estonian writers were relatively free to experiment in a wide range of genres, starting with poetry, and extending over novels, novellas, short stories, and dramatic literature. The overall guiding concern of these writers was to have a "national literature" and this meant, in their thinking, that there should be Latvian and Estonian language materials available in all literary genres. The principal characteristic of the writings of the 1850s and 1860s was its experimental nature, since the writers of this period were still feeling their way into this kind of intellectual activity.²⁰ Moreover, the total amount of this writing was still relatively small; no Latvian and Estonian writer could make a living by writing, and therefore most of them had to write in their spare time as they carried on their regular professions, usually schoolteaching. Nonetheless, as in the case of the polemic literature, the total number of belletristic works continued to grow. The greatest success came in the writing of novels, which were written in a realistic vein and sought to portray the Latvian countryside in a period of rapid change. Some of this writing continued to have a didactic purpose: it explicitly sought to educate its readership not only in the use of the Latvian language but also in the thought that the Latvian dimension of life was worthy of being written about. It was not until the 1890s that Latvian and Estonian belletristic literature lost this didactic content and was written primarily by reference to aesthetic considerations.

FOLKLORE

One major question the Latvian and

Estonian nationalists faced was how to view the oral traditions of the two peoples. If, as they claimed, a new era of the imagination had begun, what was to be the status of the older creative traditions? Nationalist theory said that the oral tradition was an outpouring of the "national soul" of the people and therefore constituted a basis on which all written literature had to be built. But the nationalists eventually discovered that the oral tradition could not really serve these goals because of its relatively restricted forms and the almost entirely rural basis of its content. Nonetheless the oral tradition was considered to be extremely valuable, and therefore a major effort was launched by both Latvians and Estonians to record as much of it as was still alive and being recited. The collection effort turned out to require far more time than was thought, and the final publication of the oral tradition did not take place until after the turn of the twentieth century.²¹ By that time, however, belletristic writers had begun to take their inspiration from a society that had become relatively more complicated.

LANDOWNERSHIP

As the diversity of Baltic literary efforts grew the social, economic, and political context in which it was set continued to change. The Latvian and Estonian nationalist movements, having passed through a generation of fiery and dedicated founders, became more sober and turned increasingly to matters of economics. By the 1800s all of the major cities of the Baltic provinces had substantial communities of Latvians and Estonians, who now constituted important elements in the economic life of each of these cities.²² Having a residential and economic base, Latvians and Estonians sought to consolidate their position by gaining political power as well, but success in this venture was very slow in coming. Defining politics in a broad sense, it can be said that the Latvians and Estonians, by the 1800s, already

possessed considerable power in rural areas. But in cities and towns success was minimal. In rural areas, changing laws had enabled Latvian and Estonian peasants to buy land outright, so that by the 1800s there had come into being a substantial segment of peasant landowners, many of them well-to-do. Yet even by the turn of the century, half the rural land in the two provinces was still in the hands of Baltic Germans. Thus there was insufficient rural property for all of those who wanted to own it.²³ The rural population was expanding, and this meant in the long run that rural areas would be overpopulated. Alongside the strata of relatively well-to-do Latvian and Estonian landowners, and the smallholders of these nationalities, there was also a growing subpopulation of landless peasants, who had the minimal choice of earning their living as hired laborers or emigrating. Landlessness remained a serious problem, and emigration was a characteristic of the provincial populations well into the twentieth century. It has been estimated that by the turn of the century some 10 percent of both the Latvian and Estonian speaking populations in the Russian Empire were living outside of the boundaries of the Baltic provinces.²⁴

AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

By the 1890s life in the Baltic area had come to resemble that of much of the rest of Europe. The provinces now had all of the same social problems that characterized other regions of a continent undergoing the strains of industrialization. The continuing conflict between

nationalities, however, made for sharper division in the social realm. The "national awakening" period was long over, but the Latvian and Estonian populations were still politically powerless in comparison to the Baltic Germans. The economic wealth of these two subject nationalities had increased, to be sure, but this had not been accompanied by any relaxation on the part of the Baltic Germans of their hold over regional political institutions. For a time, the Latvians and Estonians thought that this situation could be reversed if they supported the russification efforts of the Imperial government, which started in earnest during the later 1880s.²⁵ The belief was that the introduction of additional Imperial Bureaucrats and Russian institutions into the provinces would weaken Baltic German control and allow the Latvians and Estonians at least a small amount of autonomy. But the Russian government, despite grandiose plans, managed to implement only a few russification measures, mostly to the detriment of the Latvian and Estonian national aspirations. By the end of the century, nationalism among the subject nationalities was as strong as it had ever been; and now there was the added dimension of resentment against the crown of attempting to russify the newly emerging national cultures. Moreover, within the nationalities, other divisions had appeared, especially between those who remained willing to work for slow reform and those who had become adherents of Marxism and looked for a revolution. The earlier unity which Latvians and Estonians had felt as they first struck out against Baltic German overlordship was not threatening to disappear.

NOTES

¹See Reinhardt Wittram, *Baltische Geschichte* (Munich, 1954) for the best general introduction to the political history of the Baltic area.

²William Urban, The Baltic Crusade (DeKalb: Southern Illinois University Press, 1975).

³J. Vasar, Die grosse livländische Güterreduktion. Acta et commentationes universitatis Tartuensis. Vol. XXII (Tartu, 1931).

⁴Friedrich Bienemann, Die Staathalterschaftszeit in Liv- und Estland (Leipzig, 1886).

⁵Edgars Dunsdorfs, Latvijas vesture 1710-1800 (Stockholm: Daugava, 1973), pp. 275-314.

⁶Dunsdorfs, Latvijas vesture 1710-1800, Chapter 4.

⁷Jerome Blum, "The Rise of Serfdom in Eastern Europe," American Historical Review LXII (1957), pp. 826-33.

⁸Some of these are described in Garlieb Merkel, Die Letten (Leipzig, 1800). Merkel was one of a handful of Baltic German intellectuals who polemicized against serfdom, especially in its Baltic form.

⁹Andrejs Plakans, "Population Turnover in a Serf Estate 1797-1811," paper given at History of the Family Conference, Brigham Young University, March 1978.

¹⁰Andrejs Plakans, "Seigneurial Authority and Peasant Family Life: The Baltic Area in the Eighteenth Century," Journal of Interdisciplinary History IV (1975), pp. 629-54.

¹¹Andrejs Plakans, "Identifying Kinfolk Beyond the Household," Journal of Family History II (1977), pp. 3-26.

¹²Ansley J. Coale, Barbara Anderson and Erna Härm, Human Fertility in Russia Since the Nineteenth Century (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), Chapter 2.

¹³Dunsdorfs, Latvijas vesture 1710-1800, pp. 315-85.

¹⁴Herbert Creutzburg, Die Entwicklung der kurländischen Agrarverhältnisse seit Aufhebung der Leibeigenschaft (Königsberg, 1910).

¹⁵Arveds Svabe, Grundriss der Agrargeschichte Lettlands (Riga: B. Lamey, 1928).

¹⁶Andrejs Plakans, "The National Awakening in Latvia 1850-1900," unpublished dissertation, Harvard University, 1969, Chapters 4 and 5.

¹⁷Andrejs Plakans, "Peasants, Intellectuals, and Nationalism in the Russian Baltic Provinces, 1820-1890," Journal of Modern History 46 (1974), pp. 445-75.

¹⁸For a description of some of the authors of this early literature see Margarete Lindemuth, "Krisjanis Valdemars und Atis Kronvalds: Zwei lettische Volkstumskämpfer," Baltische Hefte XIII (1967), pp. 84-107.

¹⁹Plakans, "Peasants, Intellectuals, and Nationalism," pp. 464-65.

²⁰For a general history of Latvian literature see Janis Andrupis and Vitauts Kalve, Latvian literature: Essays (Stockholm: Zelta Abele, 1954).

²¹The first major collection was Krisjanis Barons and Henri Wissendorffs, Latwju dainas (Moscow and St. Petersburg, 1894-1905).

²²Arnolds Spekke, History of Latvia (Stockholm: Zelta Abele, 1957), pp. 316.

²³Alfreds Bilmanis, Baltic Essays (Washington, D.C.: Latvian Legation), p. 96.

²⁴Retabulation of populations statistics concerning Latvians and Estonians, as presented in the 1897 Imperial census, can be found in Margeris Skujenieks, "Iecelosana un izcelosana Latvija," Domas X (1913), p. 1156 ff.

²⁵See Edward Thaden, ed., Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland 1850-1914, in press, Princeton University Press, January, 1981.

The Baltic States



English	Lithuanian	Latvian,	Albanian,	Greek	/// Hungarian	Estonian	Finnish
January	<i>sausio menuo</i>	<i>janvaris</i>	<i>Kallnuer or Janar</i>	Ἰανουάριος Janoyarios	<i>január</i> <i>boldog asszony</i> <i>hava</i>	<i>jaanuar</i> <i>näirikuu</i>	<i>tammikuu</i>
February	<i>vasario menuo</i>	<i>februaris</i>	<i>Frner or Shkurt</i>	Φεβρουάριος Febroyarios	<i>február</i> <i>böjtelő</i> <i>hava</i>	<i>veebruár</i> <i>kuunlakuu</i>	<i>helmikuu</i>
March	<i>kovo menuo</i>	<i>marts</i>	<i>Mars</i>	Μάρτιος Martios	<i>március</i> <i>bötnás</i> <i>hava</i>	<i>märts</i> <i>paastukuu</i>	<i>maaliskuu</i>
April	<i>balandžio menuo</i>	<i>aprilis</i>	<i>Prill</i>	Ἀπρίλιος Aprilios	<i>április</i> <i>szent György</i> <i>hava</i>	<i>aprill</i> <i>jürikuu</i>	<i>huhtikuu</i>
May	<i>gegužes menuo</i>	<i>maijs</i>	<i>Maj</i>	Μάιος Maios	<i>május</i> <i>pünkösöd</i> <i>hava</i>	<i>mai</i> <i>lehekuu</i>	<i>toukokuu</i>
June	<i>birželio menuo</i>	<i>junijs</i>	<i>Qershuer</i>	Ἰούνιος Ioynios	<i>jūnius</i> <i>szent Ivan</i> <i>hava</i>	<i>juuni</i> <i>jaanikuu</i>	<i>kesäkuu</i>
July	<i>liepās menuo</i>	<i>julijs</i>	<i>Korrik</i>	Ἰούλιος Ioyllos	<i>jūlius</i> <i>szent Jakob</i> <i>hava</i>	<i>juuli</i> <i>heinakuu</i>	<i>heinäkuu</i>
August	<i>rugpiučio menuo</i>	<i>augusts</i>	<i>Gusht</i>	Αύγουστος Aygoystos	<i>augusztus</i> <i>kis asszony</i> <i>hava</i>	<i>august</i> <i>lõikuskuu</i>	<i>elokuu</i>
September	<i>rugsejo menuo</i>	<i>septembris</i>	<i>Shtatuer</i>	Σεπτέμβριος Septembrios	<i>szeptember</i> <i>szent Mihaly</i> <i>hava</i>	<i>september</i> <i>mihklikuu</i>	<i>syyskuu</i>
October	<i>spalio menuo</i>	<i>oktobris</i>	<i>Tetuer</i>	Ὀκτώβριος Oktōbrios	<i>október</i> <i>mindszent</i> <i>hava</i>	<i>oktoober</i> <i>viinakuu</i>	<i>lokakuu</i>
November	<i>lapričio menuo</i>	<i>novembris</i>	<i>Nanduer</i>	Νοέμβριος Noembrios	<i>november</i> <i>szent András</i> <i>hava</i>	<i>november</i> <i>talvekuu</i>	<i>marra skuu</i>
December	<i>gruodžio menuo</i>	<i>decembris</i>	<i>Dhietuer</i>	Δεκέμβριος	<i>december</i> <i>karaesony</i>	<i>detsember</i>	<i>joulukuu</i>

THE PEOPLE OF THE BALTIC:
SOURCES THAT TELL THE STORY OF THEIR LIVES

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THE GOALS OF HISTORICAL DEMOGRAPHY

In recent decades European historical demographers have set for themselves two objectives.¹ First, they have tried to gather as much evidence as possible about the basic facts of birth, death, marriage, and migration, so as to be able to study long-term patterns and variations in patterns in the different European countries. Second, they have also tried to come to grips with the problem of social structure, conceiving structure as involving the study of families, households, and kin groups, as well as large, inclusive social classes. It cannot be said about any of these areas of research that the quest for basic information is now over. While we have a good idea about what was going on in the western parts of Europe, much of the rest of the continent remains unexplored in this sense. The portrait of the historic populations of Europe is being painted by means of very small brush strokes, and it will be some time before the entire portrait will be finished. At the same time, however, it has to be said that we now have a far better idea of what perspective and colors to use in such a portrait than did historians three or four decades ago.

The work has proceeded slowly because it has sought to build generalizations on the basis of population enumerations and surveys that have the form of lists of individuals, rather than on the basis of aggregated statistics. Because the origins, intentions, and procedures of such surveys are not always known, historians have had to proceed very

carefully in order to gain the best possible understanding of what the data in the sources really mean. It has been necessary to decide what communities are representative of regional populations, how missing data can be inferred from the evidence that is available, how to link individuals into larger units such as families and households, and how to obtain evidence about population changes over a period of time when only single-year enumerations are available. The time involved in such work has been reduced considerably by the availability of the computer to process the data that can be fed into it, but even the computer has not eliminated the hundreds of decisions and interpretations that have to be made in the data preparation stage.

THE SITUATION IN EASTERN EUROPE

Research concerning basic population patterns in eastern European history has not proceeded as quickly as such work for the western areas, for several inter-related reasons.² Generally speaking, eastern European scholars developed interests in demographic research only recently; and even now, far less research time in eastern European academies, institutes, and universities is devoted to demographic topics than in comparable institutions in the West. There is also the fact that in researching historical quantitative sources, eastern European scholars are far more likely to concentrate on economic matters, in the belief that changes in the economic substructure of past societies has produced demographic changes. In this conception,

demographic evidence is of secondary importance; and population studies that are not linked to economic changes are considered to have been inadequately researched. Since western scholars are not always guided by such a philosophy, they have been more free to concentrate on population questions as such in the expectation that in due course demographic and economic research will be integrated when the basic facts in each domain have been established. In any case, the work that has been done by western scholars on eastern European sources suggests very strongly that the potential of such sources for yielding extensive and accurate evidence is very great. What we know now about population changes in eastern Europe falls largely into the period from 1800 to the present. Evidence from the pre-nineteenth-century era is still sparse, and most of the basic work still needs to be done. Even so, because of the advances in the west, it is possible to use the western experience as a guide to evaluate eastern European sources. The availability of western evidence also allows substantive findings about the east to be stated in a comparative fashion.

THE MAJOR EASTERN EUROPEAN SOURCES

One of the problems facing eastern European population research in the premodern period is the unstable political history of the region. The authorities that collected population information changed frequently, and the areas their surveys covered were not likely to have the same boundaries for long periods of time. Even in a relatively limited geographical area, population sources can exist in several different languages and employ very different techniques of enumeration. In the Baltic provinces of the Russian Empire, for example, the best sources for the seventeenth century—cadasters—are in German or Swedish; the most detailed sources for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—the soul revisions—were carried out in German; and the first modern census of the Russian Empire, in

1897, was taken in the Russian language. Because of the territorial changes, the researcher can never be sure, in addition, that even the locality that shows up in all three sources included exactly the same area. Conversely, a local community may appear in one census and disappear in another because the census takers defined the region differently in each document. The discontinuities in language and geography, therefore, make long-term studies very difficult, especially on subjects that require consistent data. There also exist, in these sources, the normal problems of all premodern population documents: undercounting; imprecise ages; limited number of first names and surnames; and weak linking information, so that, for instance, two brothers living in different households cannot be identified as brothers. The list of such problems could be easily extended, and few of them are peculiar to the east. In any case, there are four major types of sources which are available for eastern Europe, and I will discuss their characteristics by reference to the concrete examples that are available from the history of the Russian Baltic provinces.

Cadasters

The land census, or cadaster, was usually initiated by a regional or national government that wanted to levy a new tax and needed information on how much land was available to be taxed. Within that general concern, a cadaster could be made to serve other purposes, depending upon what additional, more specialized information the authorities wanted at the time. They might be interested in how much livestock individuals possessed; what types of crops were being grown; how much land was in arable, in pasture, in waste, or how much was flooded; and, finally, who the people were who inhabited the land. I have placed people as the final concern, for, indeed, in cadasters the counting of human populations was deemed far less important than the measurement of material goods. This means that even though human

populations are dealt with in almost all cadasters that I have seen, we cannot expect too much precise information about them. In the Baltic province of Livland, for example, the Swedish authorities carried out cadastral surveys from 1601 to 1638, and again in 1688, in the course of which the Latvian-language peasantry of the area was caught up for the first time in history in a systematic counting of any sort.³ But in the cadastral record itself, as shown in figure 1, we find the information about human beings to be relatively imprecise. The survey expedition was interested in able-bodied males primarily; and in their ages only insofar as the male population needed to be divided between those below and over fifteen years. Moreover, the records of the expeditions indicate that systematic inquiry was not carried out in all of the inhabited parts of the province; and that the surveyors took information variously from peasants themselves, from estate authorities, and sometimes from peasants reporting about the conditions in the farmsteads of other peasants. While certain estimates can be made on this evidence about the total population of the province, these estimates have to remain guesswork.

Nonetheless, even relatively weak surveys such as the cadasters can be of some use for investigating human populations. Though we cannot expect to derive from them accurate statistics about birth, death, marriage, and migration, the enumeration in them of coresident males allows for inferences about family structure. Figure 1, which contains transcribed entries from the 1638 cadaster, shows how this is true. We first make note of all of the males mentioned in the entry and develop an ideograph on the basis of the relationships stated as existing among them. This yields what might be called the core of the male population, and the entire series of ideographs for a particular locality or region will reflect, however roughly, the distribution of structures based on kin links among males. The specific methodology by means of which the analyst can proceed from such ideo-

graph series to generalizations about aspects of family life has been worked out by the anthropologist Eugene A. Hammel, who faced similar problems in dealing with medieval documents from Serbia.⁴ An analysis based on the structure of coresident groups of males allows us to form a rough estimate about the relative frequency of simple and complex family groups, when complexity is defined as growing out of male links. Thus we should be able to tell approximately how frequently married sons were still in residence with their fathers, how many farmsteads had married brothers living in them, and how many were headed by simple families. It is understood in records of this kind that certain kinds of complexity will remain entirely undetected: widowed elderly mothers living with married sons, unmarried sisters living with married brothers who had become heads, and so forth. In the absence of anything better, however, even a record of males constitutes a step away from ignorance.

If the cadaster contains enough information on human populations to make an expanded inquiry worthwhile, the obvious next step is to link demographic data (in this case data about family structure) with the economic information available in the document. As other cadasters, the 1638 Livland survey contained a notation about the size of the peasant's land, which normally was an areal measure indirectly. That is, in Livland, peasant land was measured in Haken (Latin: *uncus*; Latvian: *arkls*), which meant the amount of land that could be worked with one horse and one plow.⁵ How much actual acreage a Haken represented apparently varied from place to place and from region to region. Nonetheless, premodern surveys often took the Haken (or some similar unit) as a basic measure not only for the holding size of peasants, but also as the unit on the basis of which the peasant's obligation to the landowner was determined. In the premodern centuries in the Baltic, a "typical" peasant holding was said to have consisted of $1/4$ Haken, as is the case with many of our examples in figure

1. In addition, the cadaster also stated the amount of different kinds of grain the peasant had sowed and the number of different types of livestock he possessed. On occasion, in the cadaster, it was also noted what dues in labor, money, or kind the peasant owed to the estate owner, but there were other estate documents that described this matter more precisely.

Experience with single-year surveys of any kind in other European countries has revealed the limits of the generalizations that can be based on them. Even if males-only ideographs are obtained, we still know that each ideograph does not exhibit the "structure" which that family had for the entirety of its developmental cycle.⁶ The absence of ages for farmstead heads in the 1638 cadaster prevents the simulation of developmental cycle, and consequently statements as to what the "typical" regional familial patterns might have been have to be made with great care. Moreover, the mention of very few proper names in the cadaster makes it impossible for genealogical searches to be carried out with any degree of accuracy; for that purpose other documents might be of greater assistance.

Manorial Rolls

The expansion of the importance of the landed estate as a basic unit in the rural economy of eastern Europe meant that the nature of the peasant labor force on each estate was of grave concern to the estate owner. Peasants, who were more often than not enserfed, were the only source of agricultural labor, and the farmsteads or village households in which they lived served as the basis of calculating the dues (in labor, money, and kind) that were owed to the landowner. Oftentimes these dues were a matter of customary, unwritten understanding; but as estate owners turned more to distant markets for the agricultural yield of their estates, record keeping became a more serious business. A clear record of what was owed by each peasant holding became

increasingly necessary, and one result was the creation of account books which, in English, have come to be referred to generically as "manorial rolls." In the Baltic provinces these documents were called Wackenbücher, and they figure prominently in the land records of estates until the early nineteenth century, when serfdom was abolished. The format and content of these sources varied greatly from estate to estate, and some estates had none at all. One obstacle to assuming that they reflected reality at a given point in time is that they could not be drawn up every year; and it is frequently impossible, even from internal evidence, to know precisely when they were created. Some Wackenbücher were updated continuously, and some were not; furthermore, in all the Wackenbücher that have survived, it is true that detailed information on human population was again not the principal concern. Consequently, the utility of a particular Wackenbuch for population history depends very much on the detail which was originally introduced in it by the agents of the landowner when it was first drawn up.

As can be seen from figures 2a and 2b, Wackenbücher formats could vary a great deal, sometimes having entirely handwritten formats and sometimes printed ones. The reason for their existence was to provide a record of dues, and thus most of the information in them revolves around that central concern. Some estates noted dues only (2b), while others used additional columns in which it was noted whether a particular holding had on it a full peasant family, whether that family had able-bodied males in it, whether there were present farmhands who could do work, and so forth (2a). The expectation that Wackenbücher will yield precise population statistics is again unwarranted, but the best of them do allow for the creation of family structure ideographs based on links between males, and for the use of the Hammel analysis mentioned in connection with the cadasters. As far as aggregated population figures are concerned, Wackenbücher are even poorer sources than the

cadasters. Cadasters were normally produced by expeditions of enumerators where assignment was to cover an entire region, while the Wackenbücher were concerned with the conditions on particular estates and owed their existence to the willingness of particular landowners to cover the costs (in man-hours) of drawing them up.

A very good Wackenbuch, however, in which at least the male members and the approximate size of the peasant family can be identified, will yield extremely important information about a dimension of peasant existence which is not recorded anywhere else. In a cadaster, we can obtain data about the actual "wealth" of a peasant family: the amounts of seed that were sown, the numbers of different kinds of livestock and working animals that were present, and the relative "size" (in Haken) of the holding. In the Wackenbuch, on the other hand, we have a record of how much of a peasant family's labor time, crop yield, and new animals had to be surrendered annually to the estate owner. If these records are linked, the possibility exists for calculating, however roughly, the material conditions of life of peasant families in relation to their size and membership. Such calculations will always be based on evidence which is less neat than we would like it to be; for instance, the linked records may not be from the same year. On the other hand, in the Baltic area, peasants' holdings and the physical structures on them had unique names, which did not change as their inhabitants came and went, thus creating some continuity in the data. The expectation that we will obtain a perfect record for individual peasant families in the premodern period is not likely ever to be fulfilled, but, as I suggested in connection with the cadasters, even poor information constitutes a step away from ignorance concerning populations which did not keep, and could not have kept, records of their own.

From the historian's viewpoint, the Wackenbücher differ from cadasters also in the time dimension that is implied in

the social statistics they provide. The picture yielded by a cadaster is a static picture; it is description of conditions at a point in time. In the cadaster we do not find any evidence that would allow us to infer the patterns of the chronological or agricultural year. But in Wackenbücher (e.g., figure 2b) there is a time dimension implied in the statistics on labor service. Thus in figure 2b, we note that the family of the peasant Skreies Jahnis had to send for work on the manor farm one man with a horse for 1-1/2 days a week during the entire year, one man without a horse 1-1/2 days a week from 23 April (St. George's Day) to 29 September (St. Michael's Day); and one man for 3/4 of a day each week from 29 September to 23 April, that is, during the winter months. In addition to these normal obligations (Ordinair-Gehorch), additional obligations (Hulfs-Gehorch) entailed thirty-two days of a man-horse team, and forty-eight days of a man alone, during the summer months; and a lesser amount of additional labor during the winter period. Assuming that each peasant family met its obligations regularly, it is possible (in theory) to calculate labor movement within the estate for the major periods of the cycle of the agricultural year: that is, to identify the most important framework of the minutiae of peasant existence. No such possibility is offered by a cadaster, nor by the other records we shall mention. Thus, in spite of the imprecise population figures, the manorial rolls can be used to add an important element to the portrait of the everyday life of the peasantry.

Parish Registers

In the Baltic, as elsewhere in eastern Europe, the parish clergy tried to keep continuous records of births, deaths, and marriages in their congregations, as well as information on who stood as godparents for baptized children, how much each worshipping family tithed, the expenses of the church, who was undergoing training for confirmation, who attended regularly, and who did not. These continuous records have come to be known generically

as "parish registers" in English; in the Baltic they were termed Kirchenbucher.⁸ Certain kinds of evidence from them—such as the records of births, deaths, and marriages—have been used widely in historical demographic analysis for deriving a wide variety of rates and measures: fertility and mortality rates, ages at first marriage, marriage rates, age differences between husbands and wives, ages of wives at first childbirth, the spacing of children, illegitimacy rates, and longevity rates. These measures have been extracted from parish registers by means of the method of family reconstitution, which was introduced into historical demographic research by French and English scholars.⁹ Because of the way these records were kept, with entries about individual members of a particular family being made over a long stretch of historical time, the entire demographic record of a family has to be reassembled by the analyst; it does not appear in any one place in the register. Moreover, there are certain kinds of crucial information which parish registers do not yield; for example, information on coresidence, or on the networks of kinship existing within a community at a particular point in time. Not all of the existing register information has been used systematically; for example, the analysis of godparenthood in the European setting remains to be accomplished. Nonetheless, the application of the family reconstitution procedure to parish registers has yielded an immense amount of precise demographic information about the "common" people of Europe, which has made it possible for their experiences to become a part of the total historical record.

The best parish registers in England and France reach back into the sixteenth century, while in the Baltic, registers do not become usable until the middle of the eighteenth.¹⁰ Apparently, precise record keeping at the parish level was not required of clergymen before that time; and, in the localities where parish registers were kept for earlier periods, documentary loss has been considerable through fires and other accidents.

Parish registers ceased to be kept in the traditional style in 1832, when a new kind of registration was introduced; and therefore, in the Baltic, family reconstitution for the peasantry can seldom be carried out for a period longer than a century, that is, perhaps three generations. This contrasts sharply with possibilities in the west, where the best registers (e.g., Colyton) have yielded continuous information for as long as three hundred years.¹¹ In the single instance of attempted reconstitution (in the Estonian-speaking area of the provinces) continuous records started in the last decades of the seventeenth century.¹²

One major obstacle to successful long-term family reconstitution projects in serf areas of eastern Europe, including the Baltic, is the highly irregular naming practices in the premodern period. The reconstitution method is based on the linking of names of individuals so that the analyst can gather onto a single form scattered entries about individuals belonging to the same family. But in the Baltic and other serf areas, the use of surnames to identify individuals was not a widespread practice. A register designation which appears to contain a surname may just as likely be the individual's Christian name together with the name of the farmstead on which that individual was residing. In the Baltic, the names of farmsteads did not change with changes of their residents; therefore, there is no guarantee that an individual can be unequivocally linked to any other individual if the linking is attempted on a name basis only. An individual A living on farmstead X would have his name listed as A-X in one year, but if he changed residences and started to live on farmstead Z in the following year, his name would change to A-Z. Ancillary sources, though helpful, are themselves subject to the same limitations.

Though the success of family reconstitution in the Baltic remains in doubt until more registers are experimented with, the registers can be a source of

other kinds of information valuable for understanding the family lives of enserfed peasants. On occasion, clergymen drew up household lists and entered these in the church records, apparently for their own reference.¹³ Lists of this kind, of course, can be analyzed for structural information. In some parishes, energetic clergymen kept relatively thorough records on the preparation of young people for confirmation, which involved an assessment of their level of literacy. Along this same line, at least one clergyman in the province of Kurland kept literacy statistics for his parish for the entire period of his service, producing tabular entries in the register about the number of persons in each peasant household who could read, who could write, and who had both of these skills.¹⁴ Some clergy kept continuous aggregated records on church attendance, as well as aggregated annual records on the number of births, deaths, and marriages among their parishioners. Finally, an underutilized type of evidence pertains to the practice of godparenthood or sponsorship, which can be interpreted as an aspect of social structure.¹⁵ Through sponsors, peasant parents tried to enlarge the number of adults who would have responsibility for the baptized child if the parents themselves happened to die, and this very significant practice can suggest the degree of importance attached to different kinds of kinfolk (if kin were chosen as sponsors) or to unrelated people who must have been linked with bonds of friendship to the parental couple. All of these different kinds of evidence cannot be expected to appear in any regular fashion, since with a change of the parish clergymen the condition of the registers could change dramatically. A series of responsible clergymen, however, could produce a continuous record of evidence about the structures of everyday life to which the analyst could not obtain an entry in any other way. The main immediate obstacle is the location of the Baltic parish records, the bulk of which are in Riga or Tallinn in the USSR and therefore not accessible for extended analysis.

Soul Revisions

Starting with the early eighteenth century and ending in 1859, the Imperial government of Russia carried out ten major tax censuses, which were supposed to create a basis for calculating the amount of head tax owed by localities to the Crown.¹⁶ Similar capitation tax censuses were carried out elsewhere in eastern Europe, but because the Russian census—the soul revision—is probably the best known I will discuss the potential of these sources in terms of the Russian example, particularly with reference to the revisions in the Baltic area. The Baltic provinces appeared relatively late in the series: Livland and Estland in the fourth revision, and Kurland in the fifth in 1797. The early revisions apparently enumerated only males, but depending on the region, coverage in time became better. The Kurland revision in 1797, for example, enumerated all persons regardless of sex or age; the next one, in 1811, fell back to the males-only procedure; but the next one after 1811, in 1833,¹⁷ again used the more thorough approach. There do not exist at this time complete inventories describing the contents of particular revisions in localities for any region of the empire, and the quantitative analyses of them carried out by Russian scholars have normally referred only to aggregated figures. Thus we do not yet know whether microanalysis of families, households, and kin groups is possible for a wide selection of localities or whether such possibilities exist for only a small number of sites.

In the final analysis the thoroughness of these enumerations depended very much on the trouble the local authorities wanted to go to. Apparently, only summary statistics were sent to St. Petersburg, and thus some local enumerators did no more than count individuals in order to get summary figures. Other officials, however, used the opportunity to obtain detailed information about the localities under their jurisdiction, and therefore left the historian with exceptionally fine records to analyze. In the Baltic

area, this was true of both the countryside and the city (see figures 3a and 3b), and the resulting documents provide evidence for answering a long series of historical demographic questions.

The format of the revisions was relatively simple. The enumerator was required to list all males of a particular inhabited locality, most often a serf estate, and to subdivide that list into groups of people who were not subject to the head tax, those who were, and special groupings such as Jews. These subdivisions varied from province to province, but the ultimate concern was a figure on the basis of which the necessary tax calculations could be made. Beyond these requirements, the enumerator was free to include as much (or as little) detail as he wished. It appears that in the Baltic area each revision became the basis for the next one, so that the revision after 1797 in Kurland and after 1782 in Livland usually contained three columns, as in figure 3a. The first of these listed individuals as they appeared in the last revision, the second a notation to what had happened to those persons since the last revision (whether they had died, or moved to another community, or were now living in another household in the same community), and the final column, if that person was still present, noted his or her name and age as of the year of the revision being carried out. The revisions were supposed to be made in intervals of fifteen years; in practice, this usually meant sixteen or seventeen years. In the Baltic, as a consequence of the early emancipation of serfs in the 1817-1820 period, there were additional revisions just before and during the emancipation so that in these provinces the sequence of available documents is somewhat different than elsewhere.

These records constitute, in essence, a series of household censuses, since in most areas the enumerators produced not only lists of undifferentiated names, but subdivided the lists, within each larger category, into the residential units in

which people actually lived. This means that each revision can be subjected to the kind of household list analysis that has been pioneered by Peter Laslett and his colleagues.¹⁸ Moreover, since a sequence of revisions exists, it is also possible to do population turnover studies, to obtain statistical measurements of the changes in local population for a series of years.¹⁹ Either of these two exercises can be carried out without reference to the names of particular individuals, if one chooses to focus on such matters as age structure and household structure and the movement of persons in or out of the estate, as in a turnover study. As far as the study of the life cycle of particular individuals is concerned, the possibilities are somewhat weaker, since the interval between revisions does not allow for an easy tracing of people from one revision to the next. Moreover, there is the problem of names, already mentioned in connection with the sources discussed earlier.

Most of the revisions list persons in the context of their residential groups, and very frequently they give the connection a person had to the head of that group. Consequently, these sources permit the analysis of the structure of a family as it existed at the moment of the revision. A few revision documents go beyond this, however, and thus enhance the possibility of identifying the composition of kin groups.²⁰ In a few revisions the enumerator added to the name of each listed individual the name of that individual's father, or some other senior relative, and indicated where that relative was living if the two were not coresidents. This added dimension of the data allows the analyst to produce, with a high degree of accuracy, a more complete genealogical record for each of the persons on the list, unless that person is a recent in-migrant.

If such additional information is not available, it is possible to attempt the linking of a revision and the parish register of a particular locality. In this manner the analyst can track down

the connections between people living in separate households, and can determine whether persons who are living alone, that is, without any relatives in the household, are indeed alone when examined in the context of the whole community. Without such a corrective one might misinterpret the data by assuming that the incidence of, for example, orphanhood was far larger than in reality.²¹ In the Baltic it was a characteristic of farmhand families that they put relatively young children out to work in other farmsteads.

In the Baltic area, a sharp break in the nature of personal identification came with the emancipation of serfs. With the acquisition of personal freedom, and with the possibility of migration within the province as well as beyond it, peasants were judged to be in need of surnames so that records about them could be kept more easily. The surnames enter the parish registers and the revision documents during the 1820s and in the revision of 1833.²² The reason for characterizing this as a sharp break is that the surname a peasant family acquired was not necessarily derived from the name of the farmstead in which they were living or by reference to the name they may have had before the emancipation. The procedures for granting surnames to peasants differed from place to place. In some cases peasants were asked by enumerators the surname they wished to adopt, and it turned out that some peasant families had already been using surnames even though these did not appear in official documents. In some cases, there was no match between new surnames and old ones, or between the new ones and the place-names in the locality in which the peasants lived. In some

cases, peasants were assigned surnames rather arbitrarily; for example, they might be assigned a Latvianized form of the German name of the estate owner on whose land the peasant lived. Sometimes, these surnames were created entirely ad hoc, being based on the peasant's physical appearance or some other factor. The consequence of this procedure was that the records after the emancipation cannot be matched very easily with those of the pre-emancipation period, if the record linking is conducted on a name basis only. Genealogical searches frequently have to stop with the emancipation, because there is no way of matching names before and after this period.

In terms of the development of documentary sources for the study of Baltic populations, the "premodern" period ends with the soul revision of 1859. The next enumeration, in 1881, was a modern census. In it, what the analyst loses in terms of data for the study of family and household structure, he gains in terms of evidence for exploring the variation in demographic patterns over the entire Baltic area. The original forms of the 1881 census may no longer exist, and therefore the 1859 revision is probably the last of the Baltic surveys in which structural evidence is obtainable. Similar shifts in the nature of population sources occurred in most of the eastern European countries in the second half of the nineteenth century, or in the decades immediately preceding World War I. The published results of modern censuses require very different procedures of analysis and therefore a discussion of them may be safely left for another occasion.²³

Haushalte für No. 66 im 2^{ten} Quartier der Stadt Mitau

253

Namen der Hausbewohner	Alter		Ob sie künftige Hände weiter sind oder nicht.	Zu welchem Lebensstande und zu welcher Stadt sie vorher angehörien ben gewesen, mit Bezeichnung der Blatt-, Nummer und des Datums der zuletzt erhaltenen Abgaben- Quittungen.	Bemerkungen.
	Ständige.	Wechselnde.			
Christian Wilhelm Reimers	46			A. Lange Blatt Nr 12 No 2 d. d. Mitau 213 & Sept 1833	
Liesau Loui Louise Margareta Reimers Johann Laurenstein	- 30				
Dr. Lindner Carl Ernst Julius Eduard Wilhelm	12	-			
Louis Edmund Eduard	6	-			
Adelbert	1/2	-			
Anna Sophia Matilde	- 9				
Eduard Schmalikopf A. B. S. J. J.	34			mit Rapasok Befreiung von Mitau f. d. Polyz amt d. d. 12. 7. 1833 Hoch 1833. Nr 850	
Griska Winikopf	13	-			
Lizette Heuman	- 18				
Mariane Syersky	- 18				
Anna Gutarna	- 20			mit Rapasok Nr 849. Mitau J. d. d. 12. 7. 1833. Nr 843. mit Selgerben J. d. d. 12. 7. 1833. Nr 746.	

Figure IIIb

Fragment of the 1833 soul revision in the
Kurland city of Mitau, showing the composition
of house No. 66 in the 2nd quarter of the city.

737

Credit.		Zage.		Geldbetrag.		Summen.		Transport-Summen.		
Wirt.	Gr.	zu Pferde.	zu Fuß.	Wirt.	Gr.	Wirt.	Gr.	Wirt.	Gr.	
10.	73.	Mrg. Jureis Juhnis								
Ordnung.	Vergütung.	Die Station beträgt .								
		1/2 Tage zu Pferde wöchentlich das ganze Jahr hindurch	78.		3.	1/2.				
		1/2 Tage zu Fuß wöchentlich von George bis Michaelis	34 1/2.		1.	13 1/2.				
Hilfs.	Vergütung.	2/3 Tage zu Fuß wöchentlich von Michaelis bis George	21 1/2.		1.	13 1/2.		5.	30 3/4	
		Von St. George bis Michaelis	37.	1/2.	3.	2.				
		Von George bis Michaelis	37.	1/2.	3.	2.				
Natural-Abgaben.		1 Morgen				1/2.				
		1 Gerste				1/2.				
		2 Hafer				11 1/2.				
		2 Kälbling				22 1/2.				
		1 jährig. Gans								
		1 jährig. Gans								
		1 Wiesel				3.				
		1 Wiesel				2 1/2.				
		1 Wiesel								
		1 Wiesel								
Debet oder Werth aller Leistungen								11.	75.	

Credit.		Zage.		Geldbetrag.		Summen.		Transport-Summen.		
Wirt.	Gr.	zu Pferde.	zu Fuß.	Wirt.	Gr.	Wirt.	Gr.	Wirt.	Gr.	
10.	73.	Mrg. Buschel Mattis Juhnis								
Ordnung.	Vergütung.	Die Station beträgt .								
		1/2 Tage zu Pferde wöchentlich das ganze Jahr hindurch	78.		3.	1/2.				
		1/2 Tage zu Fuß wöchentlich von George bis Michaelis	34 1/2.		1.	13 1/2.				
Hilfs.	Vergütung.	2/3 Tage zu Fuß wöchentlich von Michaelis bis George	21 1/2.		1.	13 1/2.		5.	30 3/4	
		Von St. George bis Michaelis	37.	1/2.	3.	2.				
		Von George bis Michaelis	37.	1/2.	3.	2.				
Natural-Abgaben.		1 Morgen				1/2.				
		1 Gerste				1/2.				
		2 Hafer				11 1/2.				
		2 Kälbling				22 1/2.				
		1 jährig. Gans								
		1 jährig. Gans								
		1 Wiesel				3.				
		1 Wiesel				2 1/2.				
		1 Wiesel								
		1 Wiesel								
Debet oder Werth aller Leistungen								11.	76.	

Figure IIb

Fragment of a printed Wacken-
 buch from an 18th century
 estate, detailing labor dues
 and money owed to the estate.

[illegible][illegible]

ausfall des Systems. Die
nicht so demnach als "zwei
moneten.
Kalt. Dienst in Kogn.
gehorcht dem Ginzle
afz

Figure IIa.

Fragment of a Wackenbuch from an 18-th century Livland estate. The first group of 5 columns concern the Haken size of the holding; the next column contains the name of the peasant occupant. The next 5 columns provide information about persons living with the head, some being identified by name and age. The next 15 columns specify the amount of dues in labor and in kind owed to the lord.

mit einem pferde zur arbeit gangen, nun aber sei er Eltester giebt darneben zur gerechtigkeit 1 k[il]l[me]it weizen 1 k. Erbsenn 1 l[ü]t flasch[ü], 1 l[ü]t henpfl. 1 l[ü]t h[ü]pfl. 1 Schaff, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ wackengelt für die andere kleine perschen giebt er 15 $\frac{1}{2}$. habe $4\frac{1}{2}$ l[ü]ffe gersten, 3 l[ü]ffe Roggen, 3 l[ü]ffe Habern 1 k. Weizen, 2 k. Erbsen, 1 l[ü]ff kricke 4 k. leinsahnen außgesetzt. habe einen Sohn Matties ohngefer von 4 Jahren 2 pferde, 2 kuche, 2 kleine Ochsen, Einwohnere habe er ganz nicht, sondern einen Bruder und 2 knechte.

2. Thomas Lautz ein erbpaur auß selbiger Wackenn hat 3 Jahre uff lande geseßenn, gebrauchet einen $\frac{1}{2}$ haken, giebet zur gerechtigkeit 1 l. $1\frac{1}{2}$ k. Roggen, Gersten und Habern imgleichen so viel, für die andere kleine perschen 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ vorgangen Herbst habe er den Anfang gemacht, solle umb die ander Woche zur Arbeit gehen dieselbe aber noch nicht geleistet, habe 2 l[ü]ffe wintersaat wie auch so viel Sommersaat (340) an gersten und habern außgesetzt, weizen habe er nicht auß[er] außgesetzt, Erbsenn 1 k. sein aber verfloren, Söhne habe er nicht, pferde 2, eine kueh ganz keinen Ochsen, lohstreibere habe er nicht, sondern sei nach dem Segewaldschenn gezogen, seinn Bruder aber sei lahm bei ihm.

3. Andreß Roetz ein Erbpaur hat von erobierung deß landes in dieser Wacken gewohnt, besitzt einen $\frac{1}{2}$ Haken landes, giebt auch gerechtigkeit nach landes gebrauch davon, und sendet die ganze Woche einen Arbeiter mit dem pferde, Saet thuet er 3 l[ü]ffe Roggen, und 3 l. gersten, habern 2 l[ü]ff, 1 k. Erbsenn, 1 k. Weizen, 1 k. leinsahnen, habe nur einen Sohn Jahn der gehe zur Arbeit, habe 3 pferde 2 kuche sonst keine Ochsen einwohnere habe er nicht sondern einen knecht allein.

4. Jahn Laetze ein Erbpaur und halbhücker giebet seine vollkommene gerechtigkeit und arbeit davon, Saet 3 l. Roggen, $2\frac{1}{2}$ l. gersten 2 l. habern 2 kl. leinsamen 1 kl. Erbsenn, Einwohnere sein bei ihm nicht, sondern sein Tochterman der habe nun allererst hochzeit gehalten.

5. Matz Preetz ein Erbpaur hat vor 13 Jahren schon lande gebraucht, besitzt $\frac{1}{2}$ haken und thuet vollkommene gerechtigkeit, gehet aber zue fuß zur arbeit denn Er nicht mehr als 1 pferdt hat, außset thuet er 2 l. roggen, 2 l. gersten 2 l. habern, Weizen 1 kl. leinsahnen 1 kl. ein kl. Erbsenn, hat seinen Sohn Matties bei sich der hat ein weib, 1 pferdt habe Er vom Schlosse gekriecht und habe 1 kueh, Ochsen aber keinen, imgleichen keinen Einwohner.

6. Matz Kaer ein Erbpaur ist einmahl weggewesen vor $4\frac{1}{2}$ Jahren aber sich wieder uf $\frac{1}{2}$ Haken landes gesetzt thut vollkommene gerechtigkeit und gehet eine Woche zue fuße, die Ander mit einem pferde zur arbeit, hat $1\frac{1}{2}$ l. roggen, wie auch so viel gersten 1 l. habern, 1 kl.

überflüssig.

Weitzenn, 1 kl. leinsahnen, 1 k. Erbsenn außgesetzt, Söhne hat er nicht 2 pferde, 1 kueh und ein kalb, einwohnere hat er auch nicht, sondern einen Bruder mit einem Weibe ohne kindern.

7. Bartelt Blodeneck ein Nietawischer Erbpaur hat aber lange im Wendischen gewohnt, besitzt $\frac{1}{2}$ Haken und zahlet vollkommene gerechtigkeit, thut auch vollkommene arbeit die ganze Woche mit einem pferde, hat 2 l. roggen, 2 l. gersten, 2 l. Habern 1 kl. Weizen, 1 kl. Erbsen $1\frac{1}{2}$ kl. leinsahnen außgesetzt, hat 2 vollwachsene Söhne, Matties unndt Jurke 2 pferde, 1 kueh und keinen Ochsen auch keinem Einwohner.

8. Jahn Hincken ein Erbpaur hat lang auff lande gewohnt besitzt einen haken landes, giebt davon seine gerechtigkeit und vollkommene Arbeit, die ganze Woche, hat $2\frac{1}{2}$ l[ü]ffe roggen, $2\frac{1}{2}$ l. gersten 2 l. habern, weizen 1 kl. Erbsen 1 k. leinsahnen 2 kl. außgesetzt, hat 3 vollwachsene Söhne, Hanß, Matties, undt Jahn, 3 pferde 2 kuche, undt keinen Ochsen, habe keinen Einwohner.

9. Marten Teich ein Erbpaur besitzt $\frac{1}{2}$ haken landes hat aber vorm Jahre allein vor $\frac{1}{4}$ gerechtigkeit bezahlet, gehet eine Woche mit dem pferde, die ander zue fuße zur Arbeit, Saet $1\frac{1}{2}$ l. roggen, $1\frac{1}{2}$ l[ü]ffe gersten $1\frac{1}{2}$ l[ü]ffe Habern, 1 kl. Weizen $1\frac{1}{2}$ kl. Erbsenn $1\frac{1}{2}$ k. leinsahnen habe keinen Sohn, pferde habe er 2, eine kueh, und keinen Ochsen, habe einen Einwohner der habe ein Weib und (341) Söhne die dienen aber andern, gebrauchte seine des Wirts lande.

10. Laurentz Rutky ein Erbpaur hat 13 Jahr uf lande geseßenn, besitzt $\frac{1}{2}$ Haken, thut vollkommene arbeit und gerechtigkeit davon, hat 3 l. roggen, 2 l. gersten 2 l. habern 2 kl. Weizen, 3 kl. leinsahnen 2 kl. Erbsen außgesetzt, hat 2 kleine Söhne, 2 pferde ein kueh aber keinen Ochsen hat einen Bruder bei sich Thomas genandt, sonst keinen Einwohner.

11. Jost Poletz ein Erbpaur ist lengst uff lande geseßenn, ist $\frac{1}{2}$ hücker thut vollkommene arbeit unndt gerechtigkeit Saet auß 3 l. roggen, 2 l. gersten 2 l. Habern 1 k. Weizen 1 k. Erbsen, 3 kl. leinsahnen, habe keine kinder, pferde 2, 2 kuche, keinen Ochsen, Einwohner aber nicht, wie auch keinen knecht.

12. Hanß Galfleck ein Erbpaur, sitzt auff seines vatters lande, brauchet mit seinem Bruder Matties einen gantzen haken und thue vollkommene Arbeit und gerechtigkeit davon, Saen zuesammenn auß 1 l. roggen, 4 l. gersten, 4 l. habern 3 kl. Weizen, 3 kl. Erbsenn 6 kl. leinsahnen, ist noch unbeweibet wie auch sein Bruder, seine Mutter hat hauß, hat 4 pferde, 2 kuche, ein Einwohner heit sich bei ihm auff Jannethlich Jahn, hat ein Weib und keinen Sohn, wie auch kein pferdt nehet sich auff des Wirts landt.

Figure I

Transcribed and printed fragment of the 1638 cadaster from Livland, with information about people underscored. The ideographs represent the stated or implied relationships among the mentioned persons; the darkened symbol stands for the head of each farmstead, i.e. the first person in each entry.

NOTES

¹A good survey of current developments in historical demography, especially as they pertain to the history of the family, is the special "Family" issue of Daedalus (Spring, 1977); see, in particular, the essay by E. A. Wrigley, pp. 71-86.

²Leszek A. Kosinski, "Sources of Demographic Statistics in East Central Europe," in L. A. Kosinski, ed., Demographic Developments in Eastern Europe (New York, 1977), pp. 64-75; and other essays in this volume.

³Edgars Dunsdorfs, Vidzemes arklu revizijas, 1601-1638 (Riga: University of Latvia, 1938); and by the same author, Der grosse schwedische Kataster in Livland, 1681-1710 (Stockholm: Wahlstrom and Widstrand, 1950).

⁴E. A. Hammel, "The Zadruga as Process," in Peter Laslett and Richard Wall, eds., Household and Family in Past Time (Cambridge, Engl.: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 335-73.

⁵E. Dunsdorfs, "Zum Hakenproblem," Commentationes Balticae I (1953), pp. 1-26.

⁶The use of the developmental cycle concept in analysis of European historical materials is discussed in Lutz K. Berkner, "The Stem Family and the Developmental Cycle of the Peasant Household: An Eighteenth-Century Austrian Example," American Historical Review LXXXVII (1972), pp. 398-418.

⁷A detailed analysis of this type of source can be found in Edgars Dunsdorfs, Uksensernas Vidzemes muizu saimniecibas gramatas, 1624-1654 (Riga, 1935).

⁸A discussion of record keeping in the Baltic Lutheran Church is to be found in B. Gruner-Salgahn, "Kirchenarchiv und Kirchenchronik," Baltische Monatschrift CVIII (1904), pp. 231-47.

⁹See E. A. Wrigley, "Family Reconstitution," in E. A. Wrigley, ed., An Introduction to English Historical Demography (New York: Basic Books, 1966), pp. 96-159; and M. Fleury and L. Henry, Des registers paroissiaux a l'histoire de la population (Paris: INED, 1956).

¹⁰Hermann von Bruiningk, "Die alteren Kirchenbuecher Livlands," Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft fur Geschichte und Altertumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands (1898), pp. 46-67.

¹¹E. A. Wrigley, "Mortality in Pre-industrial England: The Example of Colyton, Devon, over Three Centuries," Daedalus 97 (1968), pp. 546-80.

¹²Heldur Palli, "Parish Registers, Revisions of Land and Souls, Family Reconstitution and Household in 17th and 18th Century Estonia," in Sune Akerman, ed., Chance and Change (Odense, 1978), pp. 143-46.

¹³Examples of the different kinds of information that can be obtained in the Baltic parish registers can be found in the transcribed, edited, and printed excerpts of Livland registers in Lauma Sloka, ed., Vidzemes draudzu kronikas (Riga: Valsts arhivs, 1925-27).

- ¹⁴Lauma Sloka, ed., Kurzemes draudzu kronikas (Riga: Valsts arhivs, 1930), vol. 9, part 2, pp. 19, 25, 220, 246.
- ¹⁵See E. A. Hammel, Alternative Social Structures and Ritual Relations in the Balkans (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1968).
- ¹⁶V. M. Kabuzan, Izmeneniia v razmeshchenii naseleniia Rossii v XVIII - pervoi polovine XIX v., po materialam revizii (Moscow, 1971).
- ¹⁷A discussion of the revisions in the Baltic area can be found in Andrejs Plakans, "Peasant Farmsteads and Households in the Baltic Littoral, 1797," Comparative Studies in Society and History XVII (1975), pp. 2-35.
- ¹⁸Peter Laslett, "The Study of Society Structure from Listings of Inhabitants," in E. A. Wrigley, ed. An Introduction to English Historical Demography (New York: Basic Books, 1966), pp. 160-208.
- ¹⁹See the chapter on population turnover, "Clayworth and Cogenhoe," in Peter Laslett, Family Life and Illicit Love in Earlier Generations (Cambridge, Engl.: Cambridge University Press, 1977).
- ²⁰Andrejs Plakans, "Identifying Kinfolk Beyond the Household," Journal of Family History II (1977), pp. 3-27.
- ²¹Andrejs Plakans, "Parentless Children in the Soul Revisions," in David Ransel, ed., The Family in Imperial Russia (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978), pp. 77-102.
- ²²See Arveds Svabe, Latvijas vesture, 1800-1914 (Uppsala, 1958), pp. 114-62.
- ²³The kinds of systematic evaluation of nineteenth-century censuses that make them useful for the study of social structure and population are discussed in E. A. Wrigley, ed., Nineteenth Century Society (Cambridge, Engl.: Cambridge University Press, 1972). Similar evaluations need to be carried out on all of the eastern European censuses, but very few attempts have been made in that direction.

Other Resources Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

Baltic States Cindy's List Links

<http://www.cyndislist.com/baltic.htm>

Eastern Europe Resources

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/area/Slavic/resdirhome.html>

Estonian Historical Archives

<http://www.eha.ee/english/english.htm>

State Archives of Latvia

<http://www.arhivi.lv/index.php?&3>

Lithuanian State Archives

<http://www.archyvai.lt/archyvai/selectLanguage.do?language=en>

Lithuanian Global Genealogical Society

<http://www.lithuaniangenealogy.org/>

FamilySearch Wiki

https://wiki.familysearch.org/en/Main_Page