

After WWII Lithuania was occupied by the Soviet Union and was incorporated as one of the Soviet states. Lithuania reasserted its independence in 1990. During that time period, there was very strict censorship of all materials brought into the country from abroad.

In a recent article published in the quarterly journal Lituanus, there is an article detailing this time period, and the essential role that the émigré community played in keeping the flow of printed material entering Lithuania. This activity was very similar to the Lithuanian book smugglers (knygnesiai) during the 19th century.

At the end of this article, in an editorial comment, another publication is cited which listed the individuals who contributed the greatest amount of books and journals for this cause. In this list, appears the name of Ramute Plioplys.

This article details how individuals who helped provide western information to people living in the Lithuanian “republic”, were incorrectly ridiculed as being pro-communistic. After many years of being derided, finally, Ramute’s efforts and accomplishments are being recognized.

(There is a typographical error in that Ramute was misspelled as Ramune. In Lithuanian, a woman’s last name is modified based on her marital status. For an unmarried Plioplys, this is Plioplyte.)

LITUANUS

THE LITHUANIAN QUARTERLY

VOLUME 55:3 (2009)

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**JONAS MEKAS EXHIBIT:
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ART BY JONAS MEKAS

BOOK REVIEWS

KGB Censorship and Surveillance of Publications by Lithuanian Émigrés in North America During Five Decades of the Cold War

SILVIJA VĖLAVIČIENĖ

The second Soviet occupation (1944–1990) at the end of World War II resulted in an unprecedented exodus of Lithuanian intelligentsia to the West, where, by its very existence, it constituted an ideological enemy of the totalitarian Soviet regime imposed upon Lithuania. Viewing themselves as political refugees, the refugees formed a strong anti-Communist bloc that was of special interest to the Soviet authorities.

Congregating in the Displaced Persons (DP) camps in Germany, the refugees resumed cultural activities as soon as circumstances allowed and began publishing Lithuanian newspapers, magazines and books as early as 1945. Soviet authorities had already labeled them as “enemies of the people” even before they had printed anything, so the first publishing activities in the camps created true alarm as “weapons of hostile ideology.” From the very beginning, each publication was watched, collected, and scrutinized. Since it was a main source of information about the life and activities of the refugees, the Soviet government used various strategies to make these publications inaccessible to the Lithuanian public back home. Thus began the nearly fifty-year-long press ban that, to some extent, parallels the infamous press ban imposed by the Tsarist authorities upon Lithuanian publishing a hundred years earlier.

During the first postwar years, the Soviet authorities developed an enormous propaganda effort to return the refugees to Soviet Lithuania. One strategy was to convince the

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tions reach the Special Collections, and where are all the other publications mentioned in the book or cited by Soviet emigran-
tologists in their writings? We have not had enough time so far
to solve this and other pressing questions. One can only hope
that a detailed analysis of the documents in the Special Collec-
tions will disclose more than one still unknown fact that will
help us understand the effects of censorship imposed by the
totalitarian regime, which was not shorter than the infamous
Tsarist press ban of the nineteenth century. Nor have we had
enough time to study and analyze the wide variety of publica-
tions produced in exile, although it is a significant part of our
national heritage that was kept secret from us and is respon-
sible for many "blank spots" in our cultural and literary history
that will be with us for many a decade to come.

Adapted and translated by M.G. Slavėnas

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Birutė Butkevičienė, the then-director of the Vilnius University Sci-
ence Library, published in *Mokslas ir Gyvenimas* (Life and science)
names some individuals who sent books and periodicals as one-time
donations or on a permanent basis. According to this article, the li-
brary received substantial donations from Antanas Mažiulis, Valdas
Adamkus, V.O. Virkau, Bronius Kviklys, K. Kliorys, K. Bobelis, R.
Misiūnas, J. Gimbutas, J. Vaišnys, P. Rabikauskas and numerous oth-
ers. Of the permanent supporters she mentions Liūtas Mockūnas,
Ramunė Plioplytė, A. Gustainis, M. Stankuvienė, K. Varnelis, Violeta
Kelertienė. Birutė Butkevičienė. "Dovanos Vilniaus Universiteto Mok-
slinei Bibliotekai" *Mokslas ir Gyvenimas*. 1990. No. 6 (June), 30-31.