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Problems of Standard Latvian in the 19th century: Changes in Language Planning and Changes in Planners, from Baltic Germans to Latvians

1.

The very beginnings of the written Latvian language are found at the start of the 16th century, during the Reformation, in Livonia. Almost all the authors of Latvian texts from the first written works until those of the beginning of the 19th century were Germans, who to a greater or lesser degree acquired Latvian as a second language. Both this linguistic aspect and the fact that most of the works were either translated from the German or based on German works meant that, in the 16th–18th centuries, the written Latvian language took shape and developed under the very strong influence of the German language. The written language was thus considerably different from the spoken language, not only in terms of subject matter, content and vocabulary, but also in terms of grammar – morphology, and especially syntax.

By the 17th century, but especially in the 18th century, the authors of Latvian works – those who knew the Latvian language best – understood that written Latvian had to be standardised and nurtured: one had to know how the language was used by the people, one had to avoid being too greatly influenced by the German language, one had to create one's own means of expression. In these centuries, however, this was mainly the concern of a few individuals, although it reflected the mood of the times. Among the earliest caretakers of the Latvian language one should mention Georg Mancelius¹ and Christopher Fuerecker² in the 17th century, and Jakob Lange,³ Gotthard Friedrich Stender,⁴ and Christoph Harder⁵ in the 18th century. Other authors also expressed purist views on the Latvian language. Another interesting example was the 18th-century author Friedrich Bernhard Blaufuss (1697-1756) and his work “Stāsti no tās vecas un jaunas būšanas to Vidzemes ļaužu” [“Livonian folk

1 Arturs Ozols, *Veclatviešu rakstu valoda* [Old Latvian Written Language]. Rīga 1965, pp. 158-162.

2 Ludis Bērziņš, *Kristofors Firekers un viņa nozīme latviešu literatūrā* [Kristofors Firekers and his Significance in Latvian Literature], in: *Filologu Biedrības raksti VIII* (1928), pp. 145-224, here pp. 160-166.

3 Ozols, *Veclatviešu rakstu valoda* (see fn. 1), pp. 351-366.

4 Ibidem, pp. 367-416; Zigrīda Frīde, *Latvis. Gothards Frīdrihs Stenders* [Gothard Friedrich Stender]. Rīga 2003, pp. 212-224.

5 Aleksejs Apinis, “Šķietami vientulīgā darbības lokā”. *Kristofs Harders un viņa tipogrāfija Latvijas kultūras vēsturē* [“In a seemingly lonely field of endeavour”. Kristofs Harders and His Typography in the Cultural History of Latvia]. Rīga 1997 (*Bibliotēku zinātnes aspekti. I* [VI]), pp. 95-133, here pp. 115 ff.

tales of the old and the new”] (1753), which was written in Latvian.⁶ These works reflected the German purist viewpoint, which was associated with the concern, very characteristic of the time, about the purity of the German language and the avoidance of too great French influence. Thus, from the beginning, the Germans themselves transferred their purist ideas to the formation and development of the Latvian language.

Along with political, economic and cultural developments, a situation arose at the beginning of the 19th century where the Latvian language – its study, and also the development of the written language – no longer concerned just a few individuals, but a fairly widespread group of Baltic Germans that had day-to-day contact with Latvians. They were mainly Lutheran ministers, for whom the Latvian language was not just an object of interest but a matter of practical importance. With the Enlightenment and the rise of rationalism, there developed an interest in the various European peoples and their culture. By the end of the 18th century, local people, including the Latvians, were the object of such interest in the Baltic region. The first folk songs, riddles and sayings were collected.⁷ Plans were made to publish educational matter in Latvian, first of all about agriculture and medicine. This meant that the language had to be developed, for the language of the people lacked the appropriate vocabulary to express concepts found in the German language texts that were to be translated. Thus, one had to answer the question of how to expand the vocabulary of Latvian – with loanwords or by creating new ones. This in turn led to a whole range of further linguistic questions – about the orthography of loanwords and their phonetic and morphological adaptation, not to mention the principles of new word formation.

An alternative to the development of Latvian was the idea of conducting education only in the German language, i.e., the idea that in the end Latvians would become Germanized. This was actually proposed. It was justified on the purely linguistic grounds that the Latvian language was very impoverished and that it was not necessary to develop it, for higher education was possible only with the German language and culture. An early instance of this Germanization approach took place in the early 1800s, when the “Kurländische Gesellschaft für Literatur und Kunst” discussed the question in 1819.⁸ In the discussion pastor Adam Conradi, a defender of Germanization, expressly mentioned the impoverishment of the Latvian language as one of the bases for his views: “ihre Sprache sei arm un die Literatur gering.” However, the opposite view was also expressed by Karl Friedrich Watson and Karl Gotthard Elverfeld, who were themselves engaged in the promotion and development of the Latvian language and culture.

The idea of Germanizing Latvians was also discussed from the 1840s in the Lutheran church’s synods in Livonia and Kurland.⁹ Here too the impoverishment of the Latvian language was mentioned among other arguments, averring that it was not suitable for express-

6 Alvis Augstkalns, Blaufūsa “Stāsti no tās vecas un jaunas būšanas to Vidzemes ļaužu” [Blaufuss’ “Tales from the Past and Present of the Livonian People”], in: Latvijas Vēstures institūta žurnāls (1938), No. 4, pp. 677-696.

7 Ojārs Ambainis, Latviešu folkloristikas vēsture [History of Latvian folkloristics]. Rīga 1989, pp. 18-35.

8 Horst Garve, Konfession und Nationalität. Ein Beitrag zum Verhältnis von Kirche und Gesellschaft in Livland im 19. Jahrhundert. Marburg a.d.L. 1978, pp. 30-33.

9 Ibidem, pp. 95-105.

ing higher concepts and culture, for example: “Lettensprache = Bauernsprache” [Christian August Berkholz].¹⁰

2.

However, the idea of Germanization was not on the whole widely supported or actively pursued, and the development of the Latvian language continued. In the first half of the 19th century, Latvians needed more and more works on various subjects in their own language. But it was not possible to provide these without first better understanding the unique characteristics of Latvian grammar and vocabulary. This understanding was fostered by the development and rapid spread of comparative linguistics at the beginning of the 19th century and its introduction into the Baltic area. To further all these ideas and goals, by the end of the 18th century there was talk of forming a special research society,¹¹ which took shape when a group of ministers and other educated Germans formed the “Latvian Literary Society” (“Lettisch-literarische Gesellschaft”) in 1824, in its statutes setting down the broad tasks of research and development of the Latvian language.

Besides theoretical linguistic and ethnographic tasks, the statutes also mentioned several practical tasks. The Society decided:

- “a) die ganze Sprache einer genauen Revision zu unterwerfen, die einzelnen und undeutlichen Regeln so viel möglich deutlich und genau zu bestimmen, und besonders den Syntax, die Orthographie und Wortfolge auf feste Prinzipien zurückzuführen;
- b) für mangelhafte Ausdrücke, für Abstracte und für wissenschaftliche Terminologien eine Wortbildung nach dem Genius und Idiom der Letten zu versuchen, und zum Besten der Schriftsprache, so wie des Kanzlei- und des höhern Geschäfts-Styls, zum gemeinsamen Gebrauche festzustellen.”¹²

This was gradually accomplished by means of the journal “Magazin der lettisch-literarischen Gesellschaft”, which was published from 1828. In the words of the pastor Christian Wilhelm Brockhusen, the members of the Society saw its founding as “prieças dienu visiē tiem, kas latviešus mīlo...” [“a joyful day for all who love the Latvians...”],¹³ and “latviešu valodas goda dienu” [“a day to celebrate the Latvian language”].¹⁴

In keeping with the times, the members of the “Latvian Literary Society” considered themselves not only as the caretakers of the Latvian language, but also as the guardians of Latvians and the Latvian language, and considered themselves to be the only ones able

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 99.

¹¹ Matīss Arons, *Latviešu literāriskā (latviešu draugu) biedrība savā simts gadu darbā* [The Latvian Literary (Friends of Latvian) Society in its Hundred Years of Work]. Rīga 1929; Jürgen von Hehn, *Die lettisch-literarische Gesellschaft und das Lettentum*. Königsberg/Berlin 1938.

¹² Manuscript in Latvian Academic Library: *Latviešu Literārā biedrība*. 1.1. = LAB 9908 [“to study the entire language in detail, lay down clear and detailed language rules, give orthography, then word order and syntax a firm foundation; ...try to form truly Latvian word combinations for missing abstract and scientific concepts and thus develop the necessary written language in its entirety.”]. See Ārons, *Latviešu literāriskā* (see fn. 11), pp. 114 f.

¹³ *Magazin*, ed. by the Latvian Literary Society 1 (1829), No. 1, p. 1.

¹⁴ *Magazin* 1 (1829), No. 1, p. 3.

to decide on the Latvian language, its past as well as its future. As this situation at the beginning of the century was not and could not be doubted, there was no particular reason to proclaim it. This was a result of their work and viewpoint as a whole. There were open and robust discussions in the Society's journal and in other works about the problems of Latvian orthography, at times offering even radical innovations. Material was collected for the most comprehensive linguistic work of the time – additions to Gotthard Friedrich Stender's grammar and dictionary. The journal published criticism about Stender's views on the Latvian language, as well as criticism of other authors' works. The undesirable influence of German in Latvian works was openly criticised: "Trotz dem, daß die lettische Bibelübersetzung im reinsten Dialect verfaßt ist, ist sie doch voller Germanismen, und Ebräischer und Griechischer Wortfügungen."¹⁵ Authors were also attacked for their poor and insufficient knowledge of Latvian, for example, "Bisher erschien uns das Verwechseln des conditionalis mit dem conjunct. oder mod. referens auf oht fast als ein sicheres Zeichen davon, daß Jemand sein Lettisch nur aus Büchern gelernt, jedenfalls nicht im lebendigen Umgange mit dem Volke regenerirt hatte."¹⁶

There are reminders that it is necessary to learn the Latvian language from the mouths of the people: "Wenn es Grundsatz bei dem Studium der Fortbildung einer jeden Sprache, besonders aber einer noch rohen, sein muß, die Eigenheiten derselben aus dem Munde des Volkes zu erforschen, so wird das auch gewiß im Lettischen..."¹⁷

Possibly the most severe judgment on the language used in this early period in Latvian works and in the church is the one stating that Latvians divide their spoken language, their "māju valoda" ["home language"], from the church's language, calling the latter the "svēta valoda" ["holy language"],¹⁸ and citing the Latvian view of a sermon: "gan svēti Dieva vārdi, bet vells var saprast." ["God's word is holy, but only the devil can understand it."].¹⁹

This is the atmosphere of open discussion and different viewpoints in which the Latvian Literary Society began and continued its work in the 1820s and 1830s.

3.

This situation, peaceful at least on the surface, continued until the 1850s. In the 1840s, a few Latvians appeared among the authors writing in or about Latvian – the most important were Ansis Līvontāls, Ernests Dinsbergs, Ansis Leitāns, Jānis Ruģēns, Krišjānis Valdemārs,²⁰ and Juris Bārs,²¹ but on the whole they played a subordinate role.

At the same time, it should be noted that the number of books published in Latvian continued to rise rapidly. From 1755 to 1835, over 700 works were published in Latvian;

15 Magazin 2 (1830), No. 2, p. 25.

16 Magazin 5 (1835), No. 1, p. 98.

17 Magazin 1 (1829), No. 1, p. 22.

18 Magazin 2 (1830), No. 2, p. 27.

19 Magazin 2 (1830), No. 2, p. 30.

20 Oto Čakars, Arvīds Grigulis, Milda Losberga, *Latviešu literatūras vēsture no pirmsākumiem līdz XIX gadsimta 80. gadiem* [The History of Latvian Literature From the Beginning Until the 1880s]. Rīga 1987, pp. 137-166.

21 Ludis Bērziņš, Juris Bārs, in: *Izglītības Ministrija mēnešraksts* 7/8 (1930), pp. 33-53.

from 1835 to 1855, the number was over 650, with over 200 in the period between 1851 and 1855 alone.²² The number of copies also increased significantly. From 1820 to 1835, the total number of copies of all books published is estimated at about 480 000 to 500 000, but from 1835 to 1855, at about 1 to 1.5 million.²³ This testifies to both the growing literacy of the Latvians and the growing demand for reading matter.

At this time, along with economic and social changes, there was the gradual beginning of the Latvian national awakening, in which the question of the written Latvian language played a significant part. Various positions and views on the Latvian language question were expressed. Most of the German ministers considered that the Latvian language was not and in the near future would not be suitable for expressing intellectual and cultural achievements.²⁴ But the new Latvian intelligentsia did not accept this position and quickly tried to develop new forms of expression in Latvian.

A turning point in the gradual transfer of the development of the written Latvian language to the Latvians themselves was in 1856, with the publication of Juris Alunāns' poetry collection "Dziesmiņas" ["Little Songs"] and the resultant polemic between the Latvian intelligentsia and members of the Latvian Literary Society.²⁵ Alunāns was the first Latvian to state that: "Lielākā grāmatu daļa, kas līdz šim ļaudīs izgājušas, valoda ļoti pārgrozīta un sajaukta." ["In most of the books that to date have been made available to the people, the language has been very much altered and mixed."]²⁶ In addition, in the book's postscript "Kāds vārds par latviešu valodu" ["Some words on the Latvian language"], he criticized (without naming names) the newest Latvian works of an influential person – Rudolf Schultz, who was the president of the Latvian Literary Society and editor of the newspaper "Latviešu Avīzes" ["Latvian Newspaper"]. These works were geographical maps (with names in Latvian) and an article published in the Society's journal "Magazin" – Über die in die lettische Sprache aufzunehmenden Fremdwörter.²⁷ Alunāns wrote about his views in detail, explaining how new lexical borrowings are to be written and adapted into Latvian and how to form foreign names.²⁸ In his work he also indirectly criticized another Society member, its later president August Bielenstein and his "Thesen über die lettische Orthographie",²⁹ by publishing examples of his own simplified and improved Latvian orthography.

Alunāns' criticism of such prominent persons' works and denial of their achievements drew a reaction. This reaction was probably intensified by another criticism at the same time in the newspaper "Das Inland", (1856, No. 21), published anonymously but thought to be by Krišjānis Valdemārs, which was a reply to Ernst Christian von Trautvetter's article in

22 Aleksejs Apinis, *Grāmata un latviešu sabiedrība līdz 19. gadsimta vidum* [The Book and Latvian Society Until the Mid 19th Century]. Rīga 1991, p. 117, 142.

23 Ibidem.

24 Hehn, Gesellschaft (see fn. 11), pp. 46 f.

25 Krišjānis Ancītis, *Kādas valodnieciskas polemikas simtgadu piemiņai. Rakstu krājums. Veltījums akadēmiķim profesoram Dr. Jānim Endzelīnam viņa 85 dzīves un 65 darba gadu atcerei* [A Century of Linguistic Polemics. A Collection. Dedicated to Academician Professor Dr. Janis Endzelins in Honor of His 85 Birthday and 65 Years of Work]. Rīga 1959, pp. 269-303.

26 Juris Alunāns, *Dziesmiņas* [Little Songs]. Rīga 1981, p. 7.

27 Magazin 11 (1856), No. 2, pp. 13-30.

28 Alunāns, *Dziesmiņas* (see fn. 26), pp. 74-80.

29 Magazin 11 (1856), No. 2, pp. 1-13.

the No. 19, "Leistungen und Aussichten für das Lettische abseiten der lettisch-literarischen Gesellschaft". Among other things this article also criticized Rudolf Schultz's maps.

Probably the most significant attack on the Society and those associated with it at that time was the publication of a new Latvian newspaper that was independent of them.³⁰ "Mājas Viesis" ["Home Guest"] started publication on 2 July 1856. Later (1857/58) this newspaper also published Alunāns' articles on the Latvian language.

On 10 September, 1856 "Das Inland" in its issue No. 37 published Gustav Brasche's review of Alunāns' "Dziesmiņas".³¹ Besides some more justified comments about one or two words or forms used in the poetry, the review at greater length talked specifically about the linguistic postscript in the book, for example, wondering why it was written in Latvian, not German. The German attitude towards Latvians was also openly expressed: "Sollte denn Hr. A... sich doch darüber wundern wollen, wenn der Deutsche, der in lettischer Sprache doch nur geben, und nichts erhalten konnte, nicht so schnell die Eigenthümlichkeiten des Lettischen auffand?"³²

On the whole the author was disturbed by the views of Alunāns and others and their wish to be free of German guardianship. The review is also significant in that it for the first time mentioned the phrase "junges Lettland" in describing the national viewpoint. From there the name "jaunlatvieši" ["young Latvians"] quickly established itself in both the German and Latvian languages.

Brasche's review again provoked an answer from Krišjānis Valdemārs, and with that this polemic ended. But this moment in 1856 was the start of the transfer of ownership of the development of Latvian to Latvians themselves. Juris Alunāns continued to write about the Latvian language for some years (1857–1863), developing and introducing new vocabulary for the written language and developing ways of creating new words. At the same time, he unremittingly tried to raise the language's prestige in the eyes of the Latvians, for example, "Ja tik kāds ar latviešu valodu iepazīnīs, tad tam vis nebūs jāšūdzas, ka tā nabaga" ["If one only gets to know the Latvian language, he will not have complain that the language is impoverished"] (1857);³³ "Tāpēc mūsu padoms ir šāds: turiet savu tēvu valodu godā un cienā, un jums labi klāsies virs zemes. Jo, kas sevi pašu negodā, to arī citi negodās." ["And so our advice is, honor and respect the language of your fathers, that your days may be long upon the land. For what you do not honor yourself, others will also not honor."] (1858).³⁴ Alunāns was also the first (1862) to speak against the idea, widespread in German authors' works, that "Eine Sprache, in der man für's Volk schreiben will, erlernt man nicht aus Grammatik und Lexikon, sondern aus dem Munde des Volkes".³⁵

30 Hehn, Gesellschaft (see fn. 11), pp. 40-52.

31 Ancītis, Kādas valodnieciskās polemikas (see fn. 25), pp. 293-296; Juris Alunāns, Izlase [Selected Works]. Rīga 1956, pp. 327 f.

32 Das Inland. Eine Wochenschrift für Liv-, Esth- und Curlands Geschichte, Geographie, Statistik und Litteratur 37 (1856), p. 603: "It is not surprising that a German – who in Latvian can only give, not receive – cannot quickly comprehend the unique characteristics of the Latvian language."

33 Alunāns, Izlase (see fn. 31), p. 143.

34 Ibidem, p. 54.

35 Juris Alunāns, Kopoti raksti trijos sējumos. Otrais sējums [Collected Works in Three Volumes. Vol. 2]. Rīga 1931, p. 270 – from "Baltische Monatsschrift": "One does not learn a language in

In this new period, “so sind es namentlich die Schriftsteller, die eine Sprache bilden und regeln, weniger das Volk selbst.” [“it is precisely the writers that care for and develop the language, more so than the people themselves”].³⁶

In the late 1850s and early 1860s, Juris Alunāns clearly stated several postulates of the “young Latvian” movement, widely accepted by Latvian authors:

- 1) the Latvian language was not an impoverished language, but perfectly well suited for writing not just about everyday things, but also about higher economic, cultural and scientific matters;
- 2) the existing works of German authors writing in Latvian were for the most part not Latvian in either content or form; therefore, the Latvian language was to be cleansed of the excessive and undesirable influence of the German language;
- 3) the Latvian language could be made richer using language resources existing in the language of the people and especially in the language of folklore, as well as by freely introducing foreign words used by the major European languages.

4.

At the same time as these views were being formulated and published, there occurred the first attempt to officially compete with the former guardians of the Latvian language, the Latvian Literary Society. On 7 September 1861 the statutes of the new “Latvian Language and Literature Society” were submitted to the general governor of the Baltic region for approval.³⁷ They were signed by Bernhard Dīriķis, who submitted them, and 20 others, mostly Latvians, including Juris Alunāns, Krišjānis Valdemārs, Kaspars Biezbārdis, Ansis Leitāns and Juris Caunīte.³⁸

It is significant that the first paragraph of the statutes is essentially a criticism of the German Latvian Literary Society and its work. It mentions that one of the reasons for founding a new society is the fact that the German Society amended its statutes on 8 December 1854 to state that in the future the Society would give awards only to works written not for its members and the educated public, but only in Latvian and only for Latvians. These aims were narrow, and so a new society had to be founded, whose aim was: „zabotit’sja obo vsem tom, čto nevozmožno dlja nemcev i čego ot nix vovse nel’zja trebovat’, imenno, o dal’nejšix interesax v obrazovanii prirodnoago latyšskago jazyka”.³⁹ Can

which one wants to write for the people using a grammar and a dictionary, but from the mouth of the people.”

36 Ibidem, p. 271.

37 Augusts Deglavs, *Latviešu attīstības solis* [A Step in Latvian Development]. Rīga 1893, pp. 48-52; Ansis Bandrevičs, *Notikumi dzimtenē latviešu atmošanās laikmetā* [Events in the Homeland During the Period of the Latvian Awakening]. Rīga 1925, p. 14; Hehn, Gesellschaft (see fn. 11), pp. 41 ff.

38 *Latvijas vēstures avoti*. Vol. 5: Dokumenti par tautas atmodas laikmetu 1856.–1867. g. [Documents on the People’s Awakening Period 1856–1867]. Rīga 1939, pp. 138-144.

39 Ibidem, p. 140: “to be concerned with everything that the Germans cannot be concerned about and that one cannot even ask them to be concerned about, namely, to be concerned with the future interest in the natural development of the Latvian language”.

one express the views of the new Latvian intelligentsia on the Latvian language question more clearly!

The statute's second paragraph also has at least two points that were quite openly directed against those associated with the German Latvian Literary Society: „podvergnut' ves' jazyk osnovatel'nomu peresmotru i tščatel'no očistit' jego ot mnogix barbarizmov, kotorye vkralis' v nego pod rukami pestunov – nemcev”;⁴⁰ and „zanimat'sja razborom i ocenkoj latyšskoj pis'mennosti”.⁴¹

It is no wonder that a society with these statutes was not approved by the authorities, as they had provoked a strong reaction from the Latvian Literary Society in the form of a memorandum written in September–November 1861. It quite harshly denied the need for a new society and denied the charges expressed in the statutes, for example, casting doubt on the submitters' knowledge of Latvian: “Leute, die sich wohl Letten heissen, unter denen aber vielleicht keiner oder doch nur einer und der andere noch fähig ist, von Seite ganz reines Lettisch zu schreiben.”⁴²

It is easy to understand that the two sides had nothing more in common after such mutual denigrations and insults.

Of course, one has to keep in mind that the question of the use, caretaking and development of the Latvian language was part of the much wider national question, which required Latvians to free themselves from German patronage and prove themselves equal in rights and worth to the Germans, the German language and culture, and other cultures.

5.

1861 was the date of the first, in the event unsuccessful, attempt to establish a “Latvian Language and Literature Society” with Latvian members. Some years later, in 1868, the “Riga Latvian Society” [“Rīgas Latviešu biedrība”] was founded, including also a Knowledge Commission, which started publishing works in 1876.⁴³ One of the questions continually discussed in meetings and in publications was precisely that of the caretaking and development of the Latvian language.⁴⁴

Significantly, writing and publication in Latvian were by now also more and more in the hands of Latvians themselves. The newspaper “Pēterburgas Avīzes”, edited by Krišjānis Valdemārs, Juris Alunāns and Krišjānis Barons, was published in St. Petersburg from 1862 to 1865. Another important Latvian language newspaper, “Baltijas Vēstnesis”, started publication in 1869 in Riga. The Latvian press and the publication of books grew dramatically. About 60 books were published in 1860, in 1870 – about 76, in 1875 – about 105, in 1880 –

40 Ibidem: “to subject the language to a thorough inspection and carefully cleanse it of the many barbarisms that entered it while it was watched over by the German caretakers”.

41 Ibidem: “be concerned with the cleansing and evaluation of Latvian orthography”.

42 Ibidem, p. 151.

43 Viesturs Zanders, Rīgas Latviešu biedrība (1868–1940) kā nacionālās grāmatniecības centrs [The Riga Latvian Society (1868–1940) as a National Center of Publishing]. Rīga 2006, esp. pp. 67 ff.

44 Kristine Wohlfart, Der Rigaer Letten Verein und die lettische Nationalbewegung von 1868 bis 1905. Marburg 2006, pp. 244–252.

about 141, and by 1890 – more than 200 books per year were being published. The total number of copies of books published in the 1880s reached around half a million per year.⁴⁵ Latvians were now writing for themselves, and they themselves now also determined their orthography and written language.⁴⁶

Only religious literature remained, partially, in German hands, as most ministers still were German, patronage was in the hands of the knights and the landed gentry, and there was a 300-year tradition of written church texts.⁴⁷ This is precisely the part of the Latvian language where even now one can see the strongest influence of the earlier periods. The Latvian Literary Society also continued to exist, although its literary and linguistic output diminished considerably. Various articles still tried to emphasize the German contribution to the development of written Latvian and point out shortcomings in the new written language,⁴⁸ but on the whole at the end of the 19th century, in relation to the language question, the Baltic Germans were reconciled to the fact that the Latvians themselves were responsible for the development of written Latvian.

The final blow to the German role as caretakers of Latvian was probably the withdrawal from circulation in 1883 of “Case Law”, translated by August Bielenstein, who was then president of the Latvian Literary Society and a prominent Latvian language researcher and author of a widely-used Latvian grammar – on the grounds of its very poor Latvian. The next translator of laws was the Latvian lawyer Andrejs Stērste, who translated “*Ķeizera Aleksandra II Tiesu ustavi*” (1889).⁴⁹

So ended the German era in the history of the standardization of written Latvian, and this was acknowledged – voluntarily or not – by both sides.⁵⁰

45 Aleksejs Apinis, *Latviešu grāmatniecība no pirmsākumiem līdz 19. gadsimta beigām* [The Latvian Book History from the Beginnings until the End of the 19th Century]. Rīga 1977, p. 162, 240, 297.

46 Cf. Matīss Kaudzīte, *Atmiņas no tautiskā laikmeta* [Memoir of the National Time]. Rīga 1994, pp. 132-135; Anna Bergmane, Aina Blinkena, *Latviešu rakstības attīstība* [The Development of Latvian Writing]. Rīga 1986, pp. 24 ff.; Aina Blinkena, *The Role of the Neo-Latvians in Forming the Latvian Literary Language*, in: *National Movements in the Baltic Countries during the 19th Century*, ed. by Aleksander Loit. Uppsala 1985 (Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis. Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia. 2), pp. 337-343.

47 Hehn, *Gesellschaft* (see fn. 11), pp. 83-86.

48 E.g. *Magazin* 19 (1896), No. 3, pp. 32-51; cf. Hehn, *Gesellschaft* (see fn. 11), pp. 88 f., 91 f., 126 f.

49 Kaudzīte, *Atmiņas* (see fn. 46), p. 419; Hehn, *Gesellschaft* (see fn. 11), pp. 101 f.; Ozols, *Vec-latviešu rakstu valoda* (see fn. 1), pp. 561 ff.; Wohlfart, *Der Rigaer Letten Verein* (see fn. 44), p. 247.

50 Hehn, *Gesellschaft* (see fn. 11), pp. 144 ff.