Centre for West Lithuanian and Prussian History, Klaipeda.

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Established in 1992, the Centre carries out research in the history of Western Lithuania (Žemaitija), the Klaipeda (Memel) Region and Eastern Prussia. Because it was founded in a place which lacks both academic traditions and, for the most part, local records, the Centre faces certain inevitable complications in its work. Local records were either destroyed during the Second World War or removed from the region. The reconstruction of the Klaipeda Archive (in computerised form) is just one of the Centre's tasks. It is also planned to scan the Court Records of Žemaitija which date from the second half of the sixteenth century. These have suffered from the ravages of climate and war. The somewhat delicate condition of the manuscripts means that the texts which are of importance for local economic, legal and genealogical history have not been used as widely as they ought. Work on copying the manuscripts in a computerised form has begun slowly, and we are only gradually discovering which are the best programs to use and avoid re-inventing the wheel.

Work on the Court Records began before the First World War, concentrating on the forty volumes which survive from the second half of the sixteenth century – records of cases, sentences and the Žemaitijan Castle Law. The Records of the Succamerarius' Court have not been catalogued so far. Obviously research has been hampered by the lack even of indexes of places and persons and summaries of cases.

The Centre is at work, cataloguing the records and providing by computer an index of people and places which would facilitate local prosopographical studies. Thus far little work has been carried out on local landholdings, local politics and their connection with national life, and the interrelationship of various local families. The experience of the *COEL* project is of considerable interest to us. We are familiar with the Orbis program used by the Central University's 'Angevin Legendary' Project and are planning to examine the Borland dBase IV and V for Windows programs.