

**IN MEMORIAM**

---

**Adolf Sprudz  
1922-2003**



**President of the  
International Association of Law Libraries  
1986-1992**

**Adolf Sprudz\***  
**Foreign Law Librarian and Lecturer in Legal Bibliography**  
**University of Chicago Law School, 1955-1992**

Mr. Sprudz had a long and distinguished career as a foreign and international law librarian at the University of Chicago Law School, where he developed one of the premier foreign and international law collections in the United States. He was a leader among a generation of foreign and international law librarians who emigrated to the United States after World War II and were responsible for the collections and expertise that now exist in this country.

Mr. Sprudz was born in 1922 in Sakstagals, Latvia, a small, rural community. The youngest of three sons, he enrolled at the University of Riga in Latvia's capital to study law. Five years after the Soviet Union annexed Latvia in 1940, Mr. Sprudz and his nearest brother, Aleksandrs, fled the country, before the Soviets had a chance to deport him to a Siberian labor camp as they did his older brother, Janis. He spent several years in a displaced-persons camp, and then studied law at Tübingen University in West Germany. He moved to England, where he worked as a restaurant maitre d' and taught English as a second language to displaced persons coming from Eastern Europe to work in the coal mines.

He then moved to Belgium, where he earned bachelor's and master's degrees in economics and international relations from the Catholic University of Louvain. While taking a train from Louvain to Tübingen for a student meeting, he encountered a fellow Latvian refugee, Janina Strods, who later became his wife. In 1956, Janina and he settled in Chicago. Mr. Sprudz worked and supported his family while earning a library science degree from Dominican University.

Besides Latvian and English, Mr. Sprudz spoke fluent German and French and had a reading knowledge of several other languages. His educational background, early interest in law, and fluency in foreign languages made him perfectly qualified to be a foreign law librarian. He began his career at Northwestern University Law School, moved to the Defense Information Office, and then to the University of Illinois College of Law at Urbana-

---

\* Tributes to Adolf Sprudz by his American colleagues will be published simultaneously in the upcoming issue, v. 95:3, 2003, of the *Law Library Journal*, the official publication of the American Association of Law Libraries. Some, but not all, of the articles appearing in these pages will also be included there.

Champaign. In 1965, he joined the University of Chicago Law School, where he stayed until his retirement in 1992.

When he joined the University of Chicago Law School, the Law School was expanding the foreign law collection for the European Economic Community countries along with the international law collection. Mr. Sprudz worked with Professor Max Rheinstein to develop an outstanding collection. Many generations of future scholars will reap the benefits of the foreign and international law collections that Mr. Sprudz developed at the University of Chicago. He established book exchange programs with the Baltic national libraries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, which greatly assisted those libraries during a time when it was almost impossible for them to acquire books from the United States.

Mr. Sprudz was a founding member of the *International Association of Law Libraries (IALL)* in 1959 and an active member of the *American Association of Law Libraries*. He served on the IALL Executive Board for many years, as president twice, and was elected an IALL life member. He is best known for his work in treaty research and his *UST Cumulative Indexing Service* is indispensable for treaty research. He was Associate Editor of the *International Journal of Legal Information* for many years.

Latvia never left his heart, and his scholarly work also exposed the unlawful Soviet occupation and annexation of Latvia. He edited *Baltic Path to Independence: An International Reader of Selected Articles* and more recently wrote "Rebuilding Democracy in Latvia: Overcoming a Dual Legacy" published in *Democratic Consolidation in Eastern Europe*, Oxford Press, 2001. A collection of essays titled *Ardievas Laikmetam Rakstu un Runu Atlase 1947-1989 (Latvia: Recollections of an Era)* was published on the Internet in 2002.

In 2001 Mr. Sprudz was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the Latvian Academy of Sciences and in 2000 he received the *American Association of Law Libraries Marian Gould Gallagher Distinguished Service Award* for his lifelong accomplishments as a foreign and international law librarian and his publications on the Baltic nations.

In 2002 the *Latvian Special Presidential Council of the Order* awarded Mr. Sprudz the *Order of Three Stars, 5<sup>th</sup> Class*. The council is appointed by Latvian President Vaira Vike Freiberga to honor civilians worldwide who have benefited Latvia. The *Order* recognizes Mr. Sprudz' scholarly accomplishments throughout his career.

In addition to his outstanding professional and scholarly career Mr. Sprudz, Dolf to his many friends, leaves a legacy of librarians who valued his expertise and willingness to share his knowledge. Even though he retired in 1992, he came into his office frequently and still cared about developments in civil and international law. I found him a valuable and supportive friend for

over 30 years. From my first days as a new reference librarian through my years as a library director he was a mentor, a role model, and a wise and discreet advisor.

Mr. Sprudz is survived by his wife Janina Sprudz, two daughters, Ilze and Rita, two sons, Ugis and Peteris, and six grandchildren. He will be missed by his many friends and colleagues at the University of Chicago.

*Judith Wright*  
*Associate Dean for Library & Information Services*  
*D'Angelo Law Library, University of Chicago*  
*Chicago, Illinois*

\*\*\*

I met Dolf Sprudz on a number of occasions, and four of these produced a lasting impression on me.

The first meeting dates back to the Summer of 1981, when Adolf Sprudz served on a panel which had the task to devise a classification system for the newly founded Swiss Institute of Comparative Law in Lausanne. The Institute had hired me as deputy librarian then. I had heard the name of Dolf Sprudz before, so I was very curious to meet the man in person. The first impression was a feeling of disappointment: I encountered a rather small man, not very elegantly dressed, and wearing old-fashioned glasses dating back to the 1960s which were later to become his brand mark. The second impression made the whole difference, and it gave me an opportunity to experience the man behind the glasses and to witness a lucid and brilliant analysis of the pros and cons of the existing foreign, international, and comparative law classifications in the context of a demand for a better system. This analysis was based on a surprising and admirable knowledge of law, and of law librarianship. It was a day of glory.

The second meeting happened one year later. I had a chance to visit Dolf Sprudz in Chicago, on my way to the annual convention of AALL that took place in Detroit in 1982. Even though I was a young and unknown librarian then, Dolf took a whole day to lead me around in his library, to invite me for lunch (I incidentally never had a chance to pay this debt back), and to deliver an unforgettable 'privatissimum' on all professional aspects. That was a very rewarding day that shall rest in my memory forever.

The third occasion I want to mention was *IALL's Course* in Washington in 1987. I had to deliver a paper at the conference, but arrived only some few

hours before, owing to air traffic congestion. I was tired, suffering from jet lag, and didn't have a chance to change my clothes. Yet Dolf Sprudz, who was chairing the session, cheered me up with his remarkably dry humor, guided me very well through the session and finally shared a feeling of common success with me. I shall never forget this very special assistance of his.

The last time I met Dolf Sprudz was in 1998 during *IALL's Course* in Rome. He had heart problems, wasn't feeling well, and suffered from the heat. But he didn't complain and rather talked about new ideas and fresh projects. Even though his appearance was frail, it was a delight to talk and to listen to him. The good old Dolf Sprudz, as ever!

It was a privilege to have met this pioneer and giant of librarianship, and to experience his very human touch, and his outstanding knowledge. I shall miss Dolf Sprudz very much.

*Holger Knudsen*  
*President, IALL*  
*Max Planck Institute*  
*Hamburg, Germany*

\*\*\*

I do not recall if I had ever met Dolf Sprudz prior to the *International Association of Law Libraries* conference in Freiburg, Germany, in 1984. Freiburg was my first *IALL* conference and my first visit to a country where English was not the official language. Many of us can recall a first professional conference, sometimes painfully, and the discomfort of feeling that one was the only person who did not know everyone else in the room, and, as in my case with *IALL*, who lacked the ability to speak multiple languages as well.

Dolf was the perfect antidote to all that. He had the ability to not only seem to have more than enough time to greet old friends, but, what still seems uncanny, a knack to find and welcome those new to the *Association*. This is one of my favorite recollections of Dolf – remembering him seeking out and making new members feel welcome. Regardless of where in the world they had arrived from, their professional experience, or their language abilities, Dolf made each one welcome, comfortable, and feeling that it was absolutely natural that they should be there and participating in the conference.

A bibliography of Dolf's writing is notable by almost any standard, much more so for an individual who was also a senior member of the staff of

one of America's premier law school libraries. Yet, I think that his non-public, behind the scenes work, must have imposed equally heavy, if not greater, demands on his time. Those who have planned a conference – small or large – or who has been involved in the work of a library or other similar organization, are well aware of the time commitments such work entails: the correspondence, meetings, phone calls and all the rest. Dolf did such work as a matter of course in connection with his *Association* responsibilities over the years. But he did much more, and we can be grateful that the *IALL* was one of Dolf's principal interests. His involvement began early, as one of our founding members. During the intervening years, he served the *Association* in a variety of ways, and while I cannot confirm this, I suspect that there was not a time period when he did not have a significant role to play: he was a member of the Board of Directors from 1974 until the early 1990's, Secretary at one time, served two terms as President, and was for many years on the Editorial Board of the *International Journal of Legal Information*. Whether holding a formal position or not, Dolf was constantly thinking of the *Association* and of ways to improve and expand its activities.

In 1982, and at a time when much of Dolf's work on behalf of *IALL* was being done behind the scenes, and therefore unknown to many within and outside the *Association*, the Editors of the *International Journal of Legal Information* dedicated a special issue of volume 10 to him in recognition of his 60th birthday. Although the Editors noted that "dedications are usually thought of in connection with those traditional events where recapitulations of careers seem to be in order, neither this event [Dolf's birthday] nor this dedication are to be regarded in this sense." The Editors later in the dedication continued "(T)his celebration also recognizes and confirms the fact that the vitality of professional organizations such as the *IALL* is only sustained through the continuing participation and active contributions of its individual members. As the *IALL* approaches its 25th anniversary in 1984, we recognize that Adolf Sprudz has served our organization in countless ways since 1959 and today continues to sustain the *IALL* with ever greater energy and dedication."

In retrospect, one can view this work on behalf of the organization from a number of perspectives. First and foremost, I would suggest, was Dolf's interest in the collegial aspects of the *Association*: the opportunities to meet and share ideas at conferences and the development of friendships that would enrich and further the professional efforts of members. Testimonials of the roles of teacher, advisor, and mentor to those who had occasion to draw on him for assistance, reflect this same commitment.

A close second was his strong emphasis on the scholarly role that *IALL* should play. As others have noted, Dolf epitomized the scholar librarian, and that commitment to supporting and facilitating the research process was a

theme that was constant for as long as I knew him. Reading his articles on the history of *IALL* in the *Law Librarian*, on the occasions of the *Association's* 25th and 40th anniversaries, shows his pride in the *Journal* and in the diversity and quality of contributions to the *IALL's* institutes. It was not only that the *Association* had successfully held a conference in Jerusalem, or Barcelona, or Tokyo that was important. It was the scholarly, substantive presentations and discussions – and the subsequent appearance of the best of the papers in *IJLI*, so that they could be shared – that were crucial to him. The fact that the *Association's* Conference programs continue to be notable for focusing on substantive issues such as human rights, comparative constitutional law, or international efforts to develop uniform law, is at least in part due to Dolf's influence.

Last, Dolf was concerned with insuring that *IALL* was a truly international organization. He worried as the *Association* went through periods when membership and participation in regions of the world declined, for example when this occurred in Australia – a country traditionally well represented – or at the relative lack of participation by Asian law librarians – again after a long period of extensive involvement. Dolf wanted the *IALL* to be international in every sense of the word. This concern also extended to seeking out, advising, and encouraging the participation of librarians from countries not represented among the *Association's* membership. In this, his commitment to Latvia was only part of an ongoing effort to encourage and support law librarians in the Baltic countries, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere as they sought to develop law libraries and a professional role for themselves.

In addition to his work on behalf of the *Association*, Dolf was also an advisor, mentor, and friend. Dolf was followed as *IALL* President by Katalin Balasz-Veredy, and I in turn followed Katalin. For both of us, Dolf was a constant source of support. His calls and notes, done with impeccable timing, with suggestions – or more often in my case, reminders – of ideas to be considered, and individuals or libraries to be pursued regarding membership. He was in many ways the *Association's* memory, and for me he also served as the unofficial guide to *Association* policies and procedures. He was, in short, accessible when one needed assistance, thoughtful. A conversation with him was as enjoyable as it was informative. It is in these ways that I remember him best, and I still find it difficult to not have him a phone call away, to ask advice, talk shop, and reminisce.

Larry B. Wenger  
Immediate Past President, *IALL*  
University of Virginia Law School  
Charlottesville, Virginia

\*\*\*

Mr. Sprudz was a mentor and a role model for me. I first got to know Mr. Sprudz when I apprenticed with him early on in my career as a new foreign and international legal reference librarian at the University of Minnesota. The Law Library Director at the University of Minnesota at the time, Kathie Price, arranged this practicum for me with Mr. Sprudz at the University of Chicago Law Library so that I could learn the ropes. Mr. Sprudz had me look through foreign and international legal reference works and write notes on cards about them. Then, every day, I would go up to his office on the sixth floor of the library and we would discuss these works. I started out by reviewing the *Yearbook of International Organizations*, then a print-only publication. He also showed me how he did foreign law selection - the tools he used, what he looked for. He would pull journal issues from a book truck and explain to me why he had these journals routed to him, and show me how to use book reviews and lists of books received to select books. As I continued in the profession, I used many of the tools he taught me about, including several that he had written on how to find treaties and how to find foreign legal abbreviations.

I worked at the University of Minnesota from 1986 to 1992. When I accepted the offer in 1992 to replace Mr. Sprudz as foreign and international law librarian at the University of Chicago, I got a chance to know him better as a person and as a librarian because, though retired, he continued to come to work every day to pursue his scholarship. But he would come down from his sixth floor office regularly to ask how I was doing and what new things I was up to. Invariably, I would mention some new electronic resource for finding foreign and international legal information, he would shake his head in wonder at the resources available now, and we would both bemoan the fact that these electronic resources didn't make access to current treaty information that much easier.

He would always ask me about *IALL* — was I going to the next meeting? had I heard news of some *IALL* member? He had started a newsletter for members of the *International Association of Law Libraries* called the *IALL Messenger* when he was President of *IALL* and was really pleased to discover that we now had an electronic mailing list to share *IALL* news with members and for members to communicate with each other throughout the year ([IALLMembers@lists.law.duke.edu](mailto:IALLMembers@lists.law.duke.edu)). He was still keeping up with what was going on in the law library profession and in particular, how people were doing.

Mr. Sprudz would also update me on his doings. And they were impressive. Since I've been at the University of Chicago (essentially the ten

years since he'd been retired), Mr. Sprudz wrote a major book, *The Baltic Path to Independence*, and several chapters in collections of essays, helped build several library collections, and received several prestigious service awards. And he continued to be up-to-date on new print resources in the field. He was what I admired the most — a scholarly law librarian. He had substantive knowledge of the field and wrote bibliographic and substantive works on foreign and international law topics. He did not hoard information, but shared his knowledge with us all.

From working with Mr. Sprudz, I've realized what a feat it was to create the research tools he created at a time of typewriters and no computers. And those guides he created for us are still relevant to foreign and international legal research today. He also had foresight and knowledge about the collections that I appreciate more and more each day. Recently, when I evaluated our holdings of core and classic materials on international relations, I realized what a good historical collection we already had. Mr. Sprudz had built our collection to include materials on U.S. foreign policy and international relations. He realized early on the importance of international relations to international law scholars and started building a collection that continues to serve our patrons well today.

Mr. Sprudz' scholarly output and the legacy he leaves is an inspiration. I hope that I can achieve half as much as he did in his lifetime and have the kind of contribution to the profession that he did.

Nu ar Dievu, Mr. Sprūdžs!

*Lyonette Louis-Jacques*  
*Foreign and International Law Librarian*  
*and Lecturer in Law*  
*D'Angelo Law Library, University of Chicago*  
*Chicago, Illinois*

\*\*\*

A man's life cannot be considered apart from that of his fellow-citizens. People meet in ordinary and expected ways over the course of life, but occasionally they can meet with unanticipated results. Such encounters may be brief or longer, and they may be directly and not so directly related to one's expectations. They may often be episodic, connected with a job or some event, thus staying in your memories as one little moment or encounter. When these moments and encounters cover years and develop into friendship and mutual understanding, it is a great pleasure.

My successful co-operation and sincere friendship with Adolf Sprudz provided this kind of pleasure. My acquaintance with Adolf goes back to June of 1994 when I was participating in the *14th Baltic Studies Conference* here in Chicago. During this business trip I stayed with the Sprudz's family in their apartment at South Shore Drive and our heart-to-heart talks continued late at night. I felt great respect for Adolf's deep knowledge, his true love towards his native land, Latvia, and his great interest regarding historical, legal and economic aspects of events in Latvia.

Broad knowledge, very active professional and social activities, a high level of intelligence, sincerity and goodness of his heart - these are the most characteristic features of Adolf's personality.

The first links between Adolf Sprudz and the National Library of Latvia started in the 70's. He was actually the first Latvian exile who established contacts with the Latvian Librarians' Society and introduced it into the international community, *IFLA* conferences especially. Almost all of his publications (books, articles, reviews, etc.) are to be found in the National Library of Latvia collections and they are accessible to library patrons.

Later, when Riga Graduate Law School was founded and its Law Library opened, the *Soros Foundation* (Riga) invited Adolf Sprudz as a consultant in collection development policies at the Law Library. His contributions there included literature on law, different dictionaries, full sets of the *International Journal of Legal Information* and the *East European Constitutional Review*. My personal contacts with Adolf and his family continued in 1994/95 when I was in Chicago as a Fellows Program student at the library of the University of Illinois and when Adolf's professional and practical assistance was of especially great need and importance. Adolf has always shared his knowledge, experience, and even his means, with Latvia and its people. His publications are evidence of his lifelong work and dedication to studying international legal aspects of the Soviet occupation and annexation of Latvia.

My colleagues in Latvia and I will miss his friendly support, helping hand and the charm of his great personality. We will always highly appreciate his commitment: TO BE AND REMAIN A LATVIAN IN HIS HEART.

*Kaiva Jansone, Chief Librarian  
Foreign Literature Acquisitions Department  
National Library of Latvia*

\*\*\*

In an article on the "International Association of Law Libraries," Adolf Sprudz wrote in 1984 "I should refrain from singing our own praises" [15 *The Law Librarian* 53 (1984)]. Dolf, as he is known by his friends, did refrain and this modesty is characteristic of him. But those who mourn his death, have sufficient reason to praise him and his accomplishments.

Dolf Sprudz leaves a painful gap. He combined librarianship with scholarship in a most fruitful way. As a librarian he created the international law library at the University of Chicago Law School which could serve as a model. As a legal scholar he is known as author and editor of many widely used works. His publication list includes some 20 books and many articles, bibliographies and book reviews. His work on the "jungle" of international treaties has become a standard research tool. The readers of this journal remember Adolf Sprudz also as one of those who successfully contributed to the achievements of the "International Association of Law Libraries." He served on its Board of Directors since 1974, as its Secretary from 1980-1983 and as its President from 1986-1992. He was a dynamic and effective *primus inter pares*, endowed with a touch of fine humor.

Born in 1922, Sprudz lived to see the Soviet Empire at the peak of its power as well as at its downfall in the 1990s. Being a native of Latvia, he was personally affected by these turns of history. After the Soviet takeover of Latvia in 1940, he fled to the West and became a staunch defender of the rights of the Baltic states under international law. His published legacy bears witness to this. One example is *Res Baltica*, co-edited with Armins Ruis of the Library of Congress (1968), which opens up with a preface by Roy Henderson, a leading official of the US Department of State in the fateful year of 1940. It was Roy Henderson who had prepared the draft of the memorable statement of the US Government which inaugurated its policy of not recognizing the annexation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. After regaining independence in 1991, Latvia paid her tribute to Adolf Sprudz. He was awarded the degree of Honorary Doctor of Law of the Latvian Academy of Sciences and received the Three-Stars-Order.

Dolf Sprudz was talented and productive, reliable and upright, faithful and warm. I learned of his death with great sadness. I shall miss him as a good friend.

Adolf Sprudz lived a harmonious life with his wife Janina, four children and grandchildren. The couple celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 2001 in Chicago.

*Dietrich André Loeber*  
*Emeritus Professor of Law*  
*Hamburg/Riga*