Edward Blank YIVO Vilna Online Collections project-Testimonials

“The future of our people is based on knowing our past. The YIVO Vilna Project is essential to building the future of the Jewish people.”
- Yitzhak Arad

“The YIVO Vilna Project is very special. It's one of the most ambitious preservation initiatives in Jewish history. This is the work of a lifetime which will have multiple benefits for generations to come.”
- Stuart Eizenstadt

“YIVO's Vilna Project, by making YIVO's invaluable holdings universally, digitally available will open this history to the world and contribute immeasurably to its preservation and its study.”
- Anne Derse

“I should like most strongly and enthusiastically to support this important and path-breaking project...the creation of the digital archive will certainly cement ties between Lithuania and world Jewry.”
- Antony Polonsky MA, DPhil (Oxon) FRHistS, Doc. h.c. (Vars.) Albert Abramson Professor of Holocaust Studies at Brandeis University and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Chief historian, permanent exhibition at the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Warsaw

“The YIVO archive is a unique resource and the creation of a unified digital library and archive will be a boon to scholars of Jewish Eastern Europe throughout the world.”
- Antony Polonsky MA, DPhil (Oxon) FRHistS, Doc. h.c. (Vars.) Albert Abramson Professor of Holocaust Studies at Brandeis University and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Chief historian, permanent exhibition at the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Warsaw

“The YIVO Vilna Legacy Project is an exciting giant step forward in making original archival materials available in a form that will not only be educational to the broad public but also useful to serious researchers worldwide.”
- Daniel Soyer, PhD, MA Professor of History, Fordham University Department of History

“That some of the long lost remnants of the Vilna collection will be virtually reunited with the main body of material in New York and made digitally available to researchers is good news for scholars and profoundly gratifying to those who love and respect YIVO’s tradition of engaged Jewish scholarship.”
- Daniel Soyer, PhD, MA Professor of History, Fordham University Department of History
“YIVO’s project, which will preserve the prewar materials in both cities, and which will make these materials vastly more accessible than is presently the case, is of major consequence.”

- Jack Jacobs, PhD, MPhil, MA
  Professor of Political Science, John Jay College and the CUNY Graduate Center

“The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research should be recognized for their creative forward thinking not only about solving the problem of reuniting separated collections, but also about using modern technology to make the materials available to scholars. The YIVO Vilna Legacy Project speaks to YIVO’s commitment to further public access to scholarly research.”

- Magda Teter, PhD, MPhil, MA
  Professor of History, Jeremy Zwelling Professor of Jewish Studies, Wesleyan University

“The digitization of this unique and diverse collection of social, historical and cultural material from the Russian Empire and interwar Poland and Lithuania promises to open this resource to scholars in a new way, affording them with the capability of making new connections between documents, of ferreting out information previously buried in paper guides and catalogs.”

- Gary Saul Morson, PhD
  Professor of Slavic Languages, Frances Hooper Professor of the Arts and Humanities, North Western University
  Member, American Academy of Arts and Sciences

“I am so proud to be able to help ensure the survival and accessibility of these historical records of Jewish civilization in Eastern Europe for future generations. This is my story, this is your story, this is everyone’s story – one that has had a broad impact on our world.”

- Edward Blank, donor

“[The Edward Blank YIVO Vilna Collections Project] will transform the historiography of Eastern European and Russian Jewish history by giving scholars and the general public access to little-known and often completely unknown documents and books.”

- The Jewish Week, February 4, 2015

“Like a survivor, these materials were controlled by the Germans. Like a survivor, they were in hiding. The fact that they were saved is miraculous.”

- Haaretz, October 6, 2014

“Over several years Sutzkever, Kaczerginski and others stuffed thousands of books and documents ... inside their clothing and smuggled them into the Nazi-demarcated Jewish ghetto... But they had to rescue them all over again because the Soviets under Stalin, trying to wipe out any ethnic chauvinism, started to destroy the collection.”

- The New York Times, October 2, 2014

“After seven decades holed up in a Catholic church basement in the Lithuanian capital, thousands of Yiddish manuscripts that survived the Holocaust and Stalin’s anti-Jewish onslaught are finally seeing the light of day.”
“As I lifted each piece, skimmed or read as many as I could, it felt incredible to me that I was seeing these artifacts of my history, actually holding them in my hands.”

- Ami Magazine, March 25, 2015

“Le petit bureau est caché, loin, au fond des Archives centrales d’Etat de Lituanie. Pour y accéder, il faut traverser un long bâtiment de style soviétique de la banlieue de Vilnius, franchir plusieurs couloirs sans âme, emprunter un ascenseur à la lumière chiche. La clé tourne, on écarte les stores et une lumière blanche jaillit sur des centaines, des milliers de pages, de livres, de classeurs et de cartons : le trésor des archives de l’Institut YIVO...”

- Le Monde, April 27, 2015