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# Baltic studies newsletter

## *Impressions on the 2010 Conference on Baltic Studies*

Vėjas Liulevičius

Over the years, each conference leaves its own impressions and lasting memories. My recollections of our most recent AABS meeting in Seattle in April 2010 include the marvelous backdrop of Seattle itself, a perfect setting for the conference; the friendly hospitality of local Balts in the community; walking through the uncompromisingly futuristic corridors of the public library downtown, where some sessions were held; and meeting again friends not seen since the last AABS conference. But even more than all these, my memories of the Seattle conference will above all center on three observations:

ADAPTABILITY, FRIENDSHIP, and POTENTIAL.

Who will ever forget the challenges that faced Dr. Aldis Purs and his team of organizers, as they scrambled hour by hour to revise the program as the Icelandic volcanic disruptions to travel plans of participants unfolded?

What struck me as a triumph was the adaptability they showed in such trying circumstances. I believe that this creative flexibility is an attribute of our organization as a whole over the decades.

Another vital impression was left by this, our first joint conference with the scholars of Scandinavian Studies. I will recall as especially useful and friendly those panels I attended where Baltic and Scandinavian topics intermingled and challenged us all to comparisons and contrasts over broader horizons.

Finally, I most appreciated the potential for the future which was showcased at the conference. It appeared in many guises: the innovative formats that the organizers experimented with, including book panels, discipline and geographic specific lunches, and the abstract database;

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Vėjas Liulevičius,  
photo by Irena Blekys

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## Report on the 22nd Conference on Baltic Studies, Seattle, 2010

Aldis Purs, AABS Vice President-Conferences, 2008-2012



Aldis Purs, photo by Andris Rogainis

In the months and weeks before the first ever joint conference of the AABS and the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study (SASS), the joint organizing committee's work betrayed a sense of excitement and achievement about the upcoming conference. The expected number of papers was considerable, the caliber even more outstanding, and happily the process of assigning panels proved

more simple than anticipated. The similarities between topics, approaches, and concerns shared by Scandinavian and Baltic specialists fostered the creation of an exciting list of interdisciplinary and transnational panels. In the last weeks before the conference, all of the extracurricular activities, the organized lunches, the film evenings, the receptions, and book fairs, also seemed to come together seamlessly. This sense of impending accomplishment was suddenly overwhelmed by the prolonged eruption of the Eyjafjallajökull volcano in Iceland. The volcano's initial rumblings were met by a nervous response from the organizing committee as we hoped and prayed that a volcanic eruption would not seriously impact upon transatlantic flights. As our worst fears seemed to materialize and the panel committee seemed to meet on an hourly basis to deal with the constant flood of academics forced to withdraw from the conference as the volcano paralyzed European airspace for days, our earlier anticipated accomplishments seemed to wither in the face of impending doom.

The ash cloud of doom, however, did not materialize, or rather, the hard work of the organizing committee and the boundless enthusiasm, good spirits and true camaraderie of academic community shone through the potential cloud. AABS may have expected 140 panelists to present at 40 panels, but the 27 panels with over a 100 panelists delivered rousing, thoughtful papers. Many of the papers pushed Baltic studies onto new paths while others highlighted the excellent work in Baltic Studies past. The two book panels managed to do both. The discussion of Vejas Liulevicius' recent *The German Myth of the East* placed the book and the topic in Baltic studies, East European studies, and Germanic studies. Anton Weiss-Wendt's *Murder Without Hatred* added important new contributions to the historiography of the Holocaust in the Baltic States and also allowed the esteemed Andrievs Ezergailis a chance to participate in the conversation, even if at times by a technically plagued tele-conference. The volcano may have kept Pauls Raudseps from presenting to the Baltic luncheon (Guntis Smidchens filled in admirably), but did not keep Rasa Miškinytė from screening her wonderful *The Bug Trainer* at the Baltic film evening. The evening also included the short films *Little Bird's Diary* and *Krokodil*. The conference succeeded in providing the venue for a cross-pollination of ideas across Baltic and Scandinavian Studies. This conference's or-

*Mark your calendars:*

*AABS Conference on Baltic Studies  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
April 26-29, 2012*

*AABS-SASS joint conference on Baltic  
and Scandinavian Studies  
Yale University  
March 13-16, 2014*

ganizing committee eagerly awaits these results as well as the opportunity to try it all again in the future (volcanos need not apply).

Even the fear of a financial cloud over the conference did not materialize. Prior to the volcano, the conference expected to return modest profits for the two learned societies. The volcano cast serious doubts on these early hopes. Our darkest fears, however, dissipated in large part to the excellent work of the SASS side of the organizing committee. Although our profits were not as large as hoped pre-Volcano, the conference still



Book exhibit at AABS-SASS conference, photo by Andris Rogainis



Maren Anderson and Kristi Tinkus, AABS-SASS conference staff, photo by A. Rogainis

## Substitute speech, Baltic Studies luncheon, April 24, 2010

Guntis Šmidchens

*Bolts of volcanic lightning, explosions of burning lava,  
gusts of Nordic wind  
dispersing clouds of ash across the continent...*

Other elderly AABS members will recognize in these lines a paraphrase of the first poem in a series of twenty "Baltic Elegies" written by our past president, Ivar Ivask, recited by the poet for the first time, and I think also the last time, twenty years ago at this conference, in this city.

I adapted Ivar Ivask's poem to make a point. Our situation today was made for poetry. We need a poet who can set our experience to musical words. That's why today I'm invoking the AABS's poet of poets. For those of us who joined AABS in the post-Ivar-Ivask era, I'll remember that his "elegies" were most certainly not "eulogies" praising the dead, but rather, they were somber musical reflections, a lament over the deeply tragic history of Baltic people, poetry which nonetheless did not leave its audience feeling helpless and resigned to fate, but rather, full of life energy. And that's why we need a poet today.

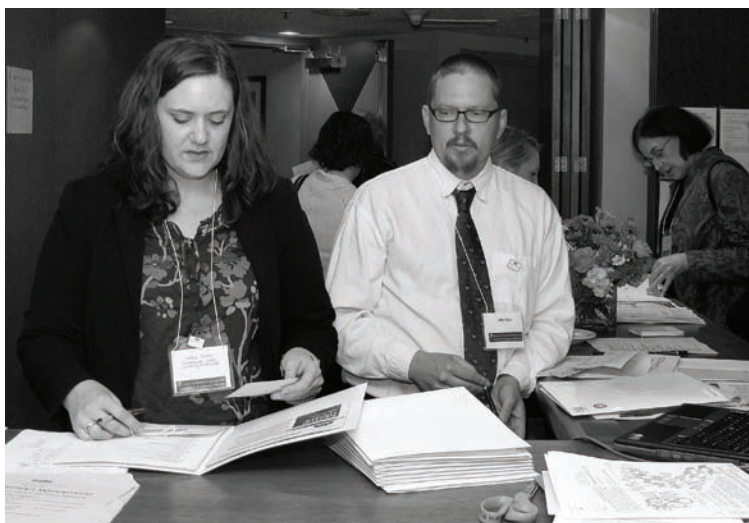
The first impulse of an American speaker addressing a conference luncheon is to begin with humor, and on this particular day, to "break the ice" with a joke at the expense of Iceland. But I'm not inclined to do so. Pauls Raudseps was to speak today about the "Cliff-Hanger Nation Latvia," revisiting critical moments in that country's history—the 1990 declaration



Jason Lavery (President, SASS) and Guntis Smidchens (President, AABS), photo by Andris Rogainis

managed to stay in the black and return more than \$2,500.00 to AABS coffers.

In summary, the conference, despite the best efforts of an Icelandic volcano, reinforced that a joint conference with SASS was a venture worthwhile and worth organizing again. The conference also introduced book panels, and discipline and geography specific luncheons that proved popular and successful. Finally, I must express my endless gratitude to those whose constant and devoted work made the conference possible (in no particular order): Lotta Gavel-Adams, Christine Ingebritsen, Terje Leiren, Maren Anderson, Debbie Mercer, Tina Swenson, Peter Leonard, Amanda Swain, Irena Blekys, and Guntis Šmidchens. If Giedrius Subačius has helpers half as capable, the Chicago conference will be a resounding success.



Debbie Mercer and Aldis Purs at the 2010 AABS-SASS conference, photo by Andris Rogainis

of independence, the near-victory of dictatorship in 1996, applications for NATO and EU membership, banking crises etc., where our hero, Latvia, finds itself again and again in dangerous situations, hanging above the abyss, but somehow always emerging from its predicament, alive. With all due respect to my friend Pauls Raudseps, the true "cliff-hanger nation," if ever there was one, is Iceland, its population nearly exterminated several times in history by famine and plague, and more recently a state threatened by financial collapse. And on top of everything, the eruption of Mount Eyja. It is a country that grips our sympathies, having as it does the oldest parliament in the world, more than two centuries of near-universal literacy, a nation of 300,000 poets, the first country in the world with the gumption to formally recognize the renewed independence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. We know that Iceland and the countries we study are today on the same island; "Ei saa me läbi Islandita," an Estonian poet might say. All of these north European countries are cliff-hangers, and it is natural that we are here today, lamenting a volcano's eruption, together with the Scandinavians.

So, what next? Continuing on the theme of elegy, a lament about a meeting that almost was, we can ask, "What would Ivar Ivask say" if he came to a Conference on Baltic Studies and found out that half of his colleagues in Baltic Studies, and a third of his friends in Scandinavian Studies, were suddenly, unexpectedly absent.





*Audience at AABS conference, photo by Andris Rogainis*

*Nothing else can be done now  
but to be reborn in the same configuration*

he would say. And today we really have spiraled back to where we were in 1990: A convergence of chiefly North American scholars, joyful to have in our midst a handful of Europeans, among whom there are a couple of symbolic Balts. And an Australasian. Convergences of continents then, as again now, were a thing of the future.

We have at this conference elements of the “same configuration” which we saw back in 1990: Our first President from 1968, Gundar King, is again presenting a paper today, and Andrejs Plakans, the 1990 AABS President who gave the keynote address about “Convergences” twenty years ago, is here at our luncheon. Back then, our convergence with Europe was still hidden in the mists of the future; the essays in our latest newsletter document developments from 1968 to 1990 to 2010 and beyond: “Our Association,” by founding president Gundar King; “Present at the Creation” by mythology scholar Jaan Puhvel, Vaira Viķe Freiberga’s “AABS Recollections,” Tomas Venclova’s “In Times of Great Change,” Rein Taagepera’s “Thoughts on Baltic Studies since the Fall of the Iron Curtain,” Thomas Salumets’s “Beyond Baltic Borders,” among others, and, of course, Andrejs Plakans’s “Reflections on Convergences Twenty Years Later.” These past AABS presidents are friends and colleagues who help us reconstruct our association’s historical memory, ensuring that the past remains an invigorating inspiration to the present.

For Ivask, of course, history never reverts to an earlier stage, it moves in spirals, revisiting old experiences, but always with new content. That’s also the nature of the AABS conference. In 2010 as in 1990 and in 1968, a fresh group of graduate students is eager to embark on the journey, excited to meet the people who set out on the path a few years or decades earlier. And the prospect of novel discoveries and interpretations, ideas brim-

ming with new energy, is as stimulating today as it has always been in the past and will be in the future.

This conference and the meetings with Europeans which did not occur here (this time around) help us see our situation with particular clarity. The fact that today many of us lament the absence of some of our colleagues testifies that the convergences discussed by Andrejs Plakans in 1990 have, indeed, happened. We need these scholars with whom we have converged over the decades: in personal contacts, in administrative structures, and, yes, also in intellectual frameworks. Luckily, today we have alternative means of meeting them and discussing our ideas, in a new era “where the only distance is from computer to computer.” That line paraphrases another of Ivar Ivask’s elegies, a view of the Baltic from the window of a departing airplane,

*Native earth crumbles  
in brown rows of wool.  
Natal waters flow  
into linen sheen.  
Fire from the hearth  
makes the pattern glow:  
stands of birches  
in a net of field,  
our own passing  
woven into roads.  
A geometry of ages  
envelops you and me  
where the only distance  
is from tree to tree.*

The image of flight above the native land, during which there emerges a vision of history and one’s place within that history, is not unique to the Baltic, of course. Many of us have read Selma Lagerlöf’s book about the adventures of Nils Holgersson, the boy who is turned into an elf and travels with a flock of geese; through his eyes we’ve acquired an empathetic familiarity with the landscape of Sweden, too. Such bridges across the Baltic Sea, convergences with Scandinavia, illuminate a connection to this particular conference, where we confirm the value of cross-fertilization and friendship between scholars of our two geographical regions.

Ivar Ivask inscribed my copy of the Baltic Elegies with a short note: “Balti sõpruses,” “In Baltic Friendship.” This certainly was the context in which he wrote the Baltic Elegies, to be recited among friends and colleagues, expressing



*Panelists on the Business of Baltic Studies: March Hyman (AABS Treasurer) and Gundar King (Founding President of AABS), photo by Andris Rogainis*

in art the cultural references that he shared with this particular community of scholars. And so, in this spirit of Baltic friendship, but with a Scandinavian flair, I'd like to transition from my talk into a tradition we have learned from the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study. SASS conference luncheons like this one bring together subgroups of people—historians, women, Finns, Norwegians, etc...

and, here today, scholars of Baltic studies. SASS luncheons sometimes have keynote speakers and sometimes not, but they always include an institutionalized, formal moment of making new acquaintances and contacts. I'd like to invite each person to say their name, affiliation, research interests, and a sentence or two about their past participation in AABS conferences.

## Thoughts about the 2010 AABS – SASS Conference

Jordan Kuck, AABS Student Representative

When thinking back to last April's AABS conference in Seattle and the planning nightmare that Aldis Purs and the other organizers encountered thanks to the eruption of Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull volcano and the resulting blanket cancellation of flights in Europe, I cannot help but to compare it to a number of recent Christmases back in Nebraska, my native state. Take last year for example. On Christmas Eve night, my grandmother was cooking up a storm, or so we would soon find out, and even already had the prized turkey in the oven. But to her and everyone else's dismay, we arose the following morning to a Nebraska blizzard of frigid temperatures, snow, and 70 mph winds. And then there was the holiday season of 2006, when the ice storm of the century swept in and dropped so much freezing rain that it not only made travel impossible, but even knocked out power for a couple of weeks due to the high number of downed power lines. In both cases we had to postpone Christmas, and even then not everyone could make it to the rescheduled holiday festivities.

Why do I think that this is both a fitting and telling comparison? Well, for two reasons: first, because like those two Christmases, the 2010 AABS conference was certainly memorable but yet somehow felt different since so many of our members were unable to attend; and second, because it seems to me that AABS is a lot like a family, with our conference serving as a festive gathering of the Baltic studies community. So, despite Mother Nature's obstacles, I for one am of the opinion that the conference was nevertheless a great success. From the wide array of research topics, to the well-attended film night, and the general all-around sense of Baltic camaraderie, 2010 AABS was both intellectually stimulating and great fun. In fact, if I can offer my graduate student perspective, I would like to say that what makes the AABS family so special is that senior scholars genuinely take an active



*Ivars Ijabs (University of Latvia) at AABS-SASS conference, photo by Andris Rogainis*

interest in graduate students' work. This is something that should be cherished and preserved. And in that vein, I am pleased that among my current graduate student colleagues, this intellectual atmosphere seems to be trickling down, as evidenced by the well-attended graduate student social events in Seattle that were organized by the previous AABS Graduate Student Representative, Amanda Swain. As the current student representative then, I would like to say thank you to the entire AABS community for fostering such a unique scholarly environment, and for your commitment to seeking out and aiding the next generation of Baltic scholars. I hope to see everyone at the 2012 AABS conference in Chicago, and let's hope that Mother Nature agrees to cooperate.

## A Look at the 2010 Conference from Down Under

Delaney Skerrett, AABS Australasian Section Representative, d.skerrett@uq.edu.au



"Baltic studies will never be the same again!" has been my immediate response to anyone who has asked about the joint Baltic and Scandinavian conference held in Seattle this year. Initially my excitement was motivated by the vigour and enthusiasm that our Scandinavian colleagues brought to the conference dinner. I was especially impressed by those that came prepared with a change of clothes for the after-dinner dancing session! The local Baltic gradu-

ate students, under the expert guidance of student representative Amanda Swain, also came to the party, so to speak, in arranging an enjoyable series of social events.

But it wasn't all about partying, of course. We were able to share our thoughts and ideas with our Nordic neighbours as well as present our research to them. We also had the privilege of attending many of their

presentations. What struck me most about this joint academic endeavour was—dancing skills aside—how much we have in common. This may come as quite a surprise to the outsider—perhaps, also, to many of the Scandinavians themselves. National and regional borders may be "imaginary" but they can have very real effects. For the period of the Soviet occupation and many years thereafter, we from the three Baltic states were on the other side, removed from the North and banished to the East. This effectively denied the existence of our historical, cultural, and linguistic ties with the countries around the Baltic Sea that weren't part of the Communist Bloc. The relationships with the other countries from the North are, as we know, being revived and once again being given legitimacy. Baltic studies—and that's Baltic in the broader sense—is a big thing, with several MA programs on offer in the region (and by that I mean not just in the Baltic states themselves). I am a graduate of such a program at Tartu University.

*(continued on p. 13)*



# News and Notes, Baltic Studies in North America

## *Baltic Studies: Incorporating the Baltic region into Western Civ courses*

Glenn Eric Kranking, Assistant Professor of History and Scandinavian Studies, Gustavus Adolphus College

As a new teacher, I routinely seek ways to incorporate my research areas into my teaching, which includes my focus on the Baltic states (and the position of minorities). In developing my Modern European history course I developed an active learning exercise with my students that focused on the development of new states with many challenges following the First World War. The outline of the exercise was Estonia.

For the exercise, students play the role of the leaders of the new state of Estonia. I begin with a brief overview of Estonian history until the declaration of independence. They then split up into groups. One member plays the position of a Baltic German, and one is a Russian, while the rest are Estonians. The first decision the students have to make is to determine what type of government they will have, and who gets to participate (women, minorities). As the simulation progresses, the group is asked to consider minority rights, land distribution, economic partners, and foreign

policy. Periodically, they will be faced with challenges, and asked to reconsider previous positions: negotiations over League of Nations membership, a failed communist coup, the Great Depression.

The purpose of the simulation is not to follow the same path as Estonia; actually, I feel the simulation works better if they have no knowledge of Estonian interwar history because it forces them to come up with the answers themselves. Rather, the purpose is to get the students to realize the challenges new states faced, and to see the connections between domestic and international policy, the economy and foreign relations.

I do go around the class to give them reality checks (it is not feasible to conquer Germany, the United States is not looking to form an alliance) and to serve as a resource on the region. I push them to not only consider what they desire internationally, but also to consider whether or not the other states would have similar sentiments.

The final question for the group to con-

sider is whether to allow Soviet military bases or not. In all of the times I have run to simulation, the decision is evenly split. But I then make it clear that regardless of which decision they made, the Soviet Union would come in and occupy the region. While some students see this as a futile exercise, I want them to realize that for small states, regardless of their intentions and aspirations, it ultimately comes down to the decisions of the large states that surround them. After the simulation has concluded, I go through the questions they considered and state how the Estonian state handled each of those decisions.

On the whole, students have responded quite highly to the simulation. I often follow up the exercise with some question about it on the final exam, which demonstrates that they retained many of the goals I had intended. And by the end of the course, the vast majority of the class can correctly locate Estonia on a map.

## *News from the Chair of Lithuanian Studies, University of Illinois at Chicago*

Giedrius Subačius

Daiva Litvinskaitė, under the supervision of prof. Violeta Kelertas, has very successfully completed and defended her dissertation "From Objects to Subjects: Body Symbolism in Contemporary Lithuanian Women's Prose" on October 18, 2010 (University of Illinois at Chicago; dissertation committee: Vainis Aleksa, Violeta Kelertas, Daiva Markelis, Giedrius Subačius, and Astrida Tantillo). Litvinskaitė has studied at the Endowed chair of Lithuanian studies first for her master degree (2003–2005), then for her doctoral degree (2006–2010). While studying at UIC as a teaching assistant Litvinskaitė taught the Lithuanian language courses (Lith 101 to Lith 104), Lithuanian Literature (Lith 103), and Lithuanian Culture courses (Lith 115); for several summers she also taught BALSSI courses at the University of Cali-

fornia in Los Angeles, Indiana University in Bloomington, University of Wisconsin in Madison, etc.). She conducted research in the field of sociolinguistics and historical sociolinguistics as well. She wrote published articles in scholarly journals: *Archivum Lithuanicum*, *Lituanus*, *Metmenys*.

Aurelija Tamošiūnaitė, a doctoral student in UIC, continues work on her dissertation "Private Lithuanian Language in Letters and Other Handwritten Sources," under supervision of prof. Giedrius Subačius. This fall (September 8–27) she received a grant from the government of Republic of Lithuania to go for two weeks to Lithuania (1) to research archives for her dissertation and (2) to gather materials for the database of electronic copies of Private Lithuanian Language (Letters, Diaries, and other manuscripts).

Tamošiūnaitė also took part in the International Conference of Applied Linguistics (Vilnius University, September 23–24) and delivered a paper "Languages and People: Dialogues and Contacts". By now Tamošiūnaitė has published at least six scholarly articles in scholarly journals: *Archivum Lithuanicum* and *Lituanus*. Tamošiūnaitė also actively participates in daily newspapers (*Draugas*, Chicago) and Internet news portals (*Bernardinai.lt*, Vilnius) to discuss her research and various topical linguistic issues. Tamošiūnaitė has taught the Lithuanian Culture course in UIC (Spring 2010), and Lithuanian language courses for several semesters. During the summer of 2010 Tamošiūnaitė has also taught the BALSSI Lithuanian language course at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

## *Baltic Studies at Indiana University, Bloomington*

Toivo Raun

Baltic studies at Indiana University, Bloomington (IUB) has a long and well-established history, reaching back some six decades to the mid-20th cen-

tury. The Estonian language was first taught in 1952 and has been offered on a regular basis on three levels (elementary, intermediate, and advanced) since

1963. Baltic studies at IUB took off in the early 1950s with the arrival of two displaced Estonian scholars, the folklorist and Slavist Felix Oinas (1911–2004)

and the Finno-Ugric linguist Alo Raun (1905-2004), both of whom had studied at the University of Tartu. For the next four decades they supervised the teaching of Estonian and trained a number of new specialists in their respective fields. Their work was nicely complemented by the historian Leonard Lundin, who taught Baltic history for several decades until his retirement in 1977. These pioneers were followed by a second generation of Baltic scholars, folklorist Inta Carpenter and historian Toivo Raun, both past presidents of the AABS who have promoted Baltic studies in Bloomington during the past twenty years. The Baltic Studies Summer Institute (BALSSI) was held at IUB during the summers of 1998, 1999, 2005, and 2006, and the AABS biennial conferences took place there in both 1998 and 2008.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Baltic studies at IUB is the range of disciplines and programs in which emerging scholars have been trained. The teaching of Estonian language has been based in the Department of Central Eurasian Studies (until 1993, Uralic and Altaic Studies), but students pursuing advanced degrees have been able to choose numerous options for an academic home. In addition to Central Eur-

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### 2011 Baltic Conference in Europe

The 9th Baltic Conference in Europe -- Transitions, Visions and Beyond -- will be held at Södertörn University, Huddinge, Stockholm on 12-15 June 2011.

It is time to take stock of the transition process, to reflect and summarize, but also to look ahead. The Baltic Sea region has found its place inside Europe. Since 2008, the economic crisis has been a dominating issue not only in the Baltic countries but in Europe as a whole. The implications of the crisis for politics, social life, culture and environment are widespread. Every country is developing its own strategy to overcome the crisis and we need to reflect upon the commonalities and differences in how the crisis is being handled. There is also a need to look ahead, beyond the problems at hand, and to discuss visions and opportunities. The conference "Transitions, Visions and Beyond" aims to bring together representatives of academic communities who share an interest in exploring the Baltic region from multiple perspectives. Baltic region studies are considered a particular historical, political, linguistic, social, cultural and ideological contact zone where the meanings of identities, languages and relationships are renegotiated.

Researchers from all disciplines and stages in their careers are invited to send in abstracts of a maximum of 500 words to one of the sections listed below. All paper proposals indicating the respective section should be sent to Anne Kaun ([anne.kaun@sh.se](mailto:anne.kaun@sh.se)) by 1 February 2011.

asian/Uralic and Altaic Studies, MA and Ph.D recipients in Baltic studies have obtained degrees in History, Folklore, Linguistics, and Education as well as at the Russian and East European Institute (interdisciplinary MA). These wide-rang-

ing possibilities help to explain why IUB has been the leading grantor of Ph.Ds in Baltic studies in the United States during the past century (28 in the period 1911-2006) and also in the recent past (13 in 1991-2006).

## ***Indiana University Students Organize***

Piibi-Kai Kivik, Estonian Language Instructor at IU, BaFSA founding member  
Zachary Kelly, BaFSA president 2010-11

The Baltic and Finnish Studies Association (BaFSA) was founded at Indiana University in 1999 after the Baltic Studies Summer Institute was hosted there. The group of participants from IU decided to continue the events and activities celebrated in the summer and formed the student organization. BaFSA is open to everyone interested in Finland, Estonia, Latvia or Lithuania; the members are mostly students and scholars in Baltic Studies. The current officers represent the variety of interests that bring people to BaFSA: the President, Zachary Kelly, is a Master's student in the Russian and East European Institute focusing on Estonia; the Vice-President, Bart Pushaw, is an undergraduate in Art History planning to add Estonian and Finnish art to his background in Scandinavian Studies; and the Treasurer, Bethany Dusseau, is a Master's student working on a dual degree in West European Studies and the School of Pub-

lic and Environmental Affairs focusing on Finland.

BaFSA organizes and helps to curate events, such as Independence Day celebrations for each country, lectures, concerts, film showings, picnics and trips. BaFSA maintains an email list and a webpage. Members meet regularly to discuss upcoming events as well as to share news from the Baltics. The organization benefits from the presence of two leading Baltic scholars on campus: Dr. Toivo Raun (BaFSA Academic Advisor) and Dr. Inta Carpenter; regular Finnish and Estonian language courses; and visiting scholars from the region. The 2010-2011 academic year welcomes Elina Pallasvirta, a PhD student from Helsinki University, who is at Indiana University researching the history of Finno-Ugric studies in the United States.

Baltic and Finno-Ugric studies have a long and vibrant history at Indiana University. Modern forms of communication

help bring the Baltic world virtually to the Bloomington campus. On November 17, 2010, BaFSA hosted Latvian Independence Day. The guest speaker, Latvian Ambassador to the United States, Andrejs Pildegovics, spoke to guests via Skype from Washington, D.C. He was able to interact with guests during a Q&A session and even joined the Latvian choir in singing popular folksongs. Other BaFSA-supported events from the fall semester included a weekend in October celebrating the 75th jubilee of Arvo Pärt, which was hosted by the Department of Central Eurasian Studies and the IU Jacobs School of Music, as well as the recent Finnish Independence Day on December 6, hosted by the Department of Central Eurasian Studies. Future BaFSA events for the spring include Estonian as well as Lithuanian Independence Day celebrations, a mini Baltic film festival, and several invited talks.



## ***Baltic Choral Studies at the University of Washington, Seattle***

Geoffrey Boers

In the Spring of 1998 I received a phone call from Guntis Smidchens of the UW Baltic Studies Program to sing some Latvian music at an upcoming event for a Latvian dignitary and some of the Latvian community in Seattle. I was new to the University of Washington, and was somewhat taken aback, as having grown up in the region, I was unaware of a Latvian community in Seattle. I had been a fan of the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir since they had burst onto the scene in 1991, but that was my only access to the Baltic region. Not knowing any Latvian music I asked for suggestions. Guntis offered a few and said "close with *Pūt, vējiņi*."

I agreed, unwittingly, and the choir performed at the event. Nothing could have prepared me for the reaction to our singing of *Pūt, vējiņi* -- the tears, the singing, the thanks. The choir and I instantly fell in love with the culture and a new relationship was born. I was soon to learn about the rich and important Baltic Studies program here at the University of Washington. We were proud of their love of choral music, and honored to partner with such a prestigious program, unique in the United States.

The next Spring the choir performed an entire program of Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian repertoire, with our first efforts in these languages. A vast repertoire of folk-inspired and serious art music opened up before us--music that has never been heard in the United States, and except for a couple of scholars is unknown. We followed in June of 2000 with our first tour of the region beginning in Vilnius and ending in Tallinn, with stops in Klaipėda, Liepāja, Riga, and Tartu. We loved the people, the culture, the singing, the sharing with choirs, and of course, the reaction to *Pūt, vējiņi*. The area was still recovering from Soviet times, and evidence of the pillage and the bitterness was still fresh during that visit. Yet the beauty of the culture shined brightly. I remember a poor farmer sit-

ting at the gate of a rest stop. As we sang for him, he fell to his knees and wept. Our choir also proudly took part in the Estonian Songfest that June. Marching in makeshift order, and lacking an ethnic costume or group song, we took part in the parade to the festival grounds carrying our smallest soprano on our shoulders as our banner and singing, When the Saints Go Marching In. We longed to return again.

I was deeply struck during our tour of the strong relationships and deep respect held for our own Guntis Smidchens, by the people of the Baltic region. He was seen as an ambassador of their culture, loved and trusted for his work regarding folk singing in the area. I felt it was important to add a musical component to the important bridges that Guntis has already built. In 2004 Guntis and I applied for a Royalty Research Grant for us to return to the Baltic to build relationships with National Libraries, Music Services, Composers Unions, Conservatories, and Universities. We met with professors and librarians, and composers Pēteris Vasks and Veljo Tormis. The result of these relationships was to build the first ever Baltic Choral Library. My desire was to bring this vast and beautiful repertoire to conductors in the United States and to provide a library of both published and manuscript scores. We also built relationships to create opportunities for the library system and the University of Washington to trade books and resources with libraries in that region, to both support them and to build our own Baltic collections.

Tormis came to the campus in the fall of 2004, and then the choir returned to the region on its second tour in the summer of 2005, we remarked at how much healing and rebuilding had occurred in those short five years since we were last there. Perhaps the highlight of the trip was a concert out on the Livonian coast, in a small town hall. The

eldest surviving full-blooded Livonian speaker was in attendance, we were deeply touched as we sang selections from Tormis' *Forgotten Peoples* in this humble setting.

Upon return to Seattle, students and I set about to catalogue the hundreds of scores, recordings, and manuscripts we collected. Over the ensuing years, hundreds more have been added to this library, the first of its kind in the United States. Numerous of our choral students have returned to the region for study. One student, Heather MacLaughlin Garbes wrote a dissertation on the music of Ester Mägi, and others received special awards for international study there. Still other students were inspired by "Guntii" as they lovingly called him, to study Baltic languages. On numerous occasions choirs from the area have toured to Seattle, being hosted and performing with choirs from the University of Washington.

Most recently, in the Spring of 2010, my colleague Giselle Wyers and I brought members of two University Choirs, a group eighty strong, to return to the Baltic. Exchanges each night with choirs, long concerts and continued social singing at the pub each night made this tour the most song-filled of all. As a result, we received an invitation to return as an international guest to the 2013 Latvian Song Festival, so plans are already underway for our fourth tour.

The relationship between the University of Washington's Choral and Baltic Studies programs, now in its sixteenth year, is a little-known treasure to our University and between Seattle and the Baltic countries. We have sung for Presidents and dignitaries, composer laureates and conductors, brought music to choirs in the United States, and created a home away from home for traveling choirs from the region. We continue to look forward to the unfolding of this musical and cultural effort--magic always seems to happen!

## ***University of Washington, Seattle: Endowing Baltic Studies***

Guntis Šmidchens

The University of Washington Baltic Studies Program (est. 1994) set as its priority the teaching of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian language. Over the program's sixteen years, about three hun-

dred students have enrolled in language courses. Latvian language instruction expanded in 2004, when the UW and the government of Latvia established a jointly-funded lectureship. Since 1996,

the program has also offered courses taught in English about Baltic cultures, history and society. Graduate students have completed thirty MA theses, and seven dissertations on Baltic topics.

Financial support for the program has come partly from Title VI National Resource Center grants, and partly from "soft" money at the Department of Scandinavian Studies and the UW College of Arts and Sciences. An endowment established by community representatives provides a third, permanent source of funding. Thanks to generous gifts from several hun-

dred individuals, and grants from the American Latvian Association, the Kazickas Family Foundation, the Raišys and Liffick family, the Zigrida and Arnolds Langins Trust, the Bernice Kellogg Trust, the Lithuanian Foundation, and many others, the endowment today has grown to over two million dollars. Annual endowment proceeds of eighty thousand dollars make up a

large portion of the program's instruction budget. The Baltic Program's current fundraising priority is the UW Libraries Baltic acquisitions endowment, which stands at \$60,000. The fundraising goal is \$300,000, to provide permanent support for the acquisition of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian books and journals, films, and choral music scores and recordings.

## ***Western Michigan University to offer Baltic Studies Course at Latvian Center Garezers***

Irene Elksnis Geisler

In Summer 2011, Western Michigan University's department of history is working on plans to offer a course in Baltic Studies at the Latvian Center *Garezers*. The course, tentatively scheduled for June 30 through August 19, 2011, is entitled "Introduction to Oral History: Latvian-American Culture and Traditions."

Western Michigan University (WMU) is the largest higher learning institution

in southwest Michigan and has a long-established history with the Latvian-American community. From 1966 Western Michigan University provided Latvian language courses as part of their curriculum. In 1981 the university established a Latvian-American Studies Program. Latvian Studies was offered at WMU for 3 decades but was discontinued in 1996. If this summer's offering is successful,

planners hope to introduce in future years a more extensive curriculum in Baltic Studies. The projected program would be designed for individuals interested in pursuing jobs in Baltic related fields and seeking general knowledge in the heritage and culture of the Baltic region.

For more information, please contact Irene Elksnis Geisler:

[irene.e.geisler@wmich.edu](mailto:irene.e.geisler@wmich.edu).

## ***20 Years of Baltic Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire***

Paulis Lazda, Professor of History

On August 22nd, 1991, the telephone of the designated Resident Director started ringing. Counter intuitively, each one of the 17 students who had signed up for the first UW-Eau Claire Semester Abroad in Latvia pleaded for confirmation that the program would go as scheduled in just ten days in spite of the attempted coup against the government of Mikhail Gorbachev reported in the news. That enthusiasm and commitment became typical of participants in all of the subsequent semesters for the longest-running American study abroad program in Latvia.

After a two-week political and social acclimatization tour of post-Communist East Europe from Budapest to Prague, Cracow, and Warsaw, the participants arrived in Riga. The introductory travel has become a permanent, independent History Travel Seminar and part of the program. From its beginnings, the two parts have had more than 200 participants including students from Wisconsin universities, Brown, Brandeis, UCLA, University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Washington and others. All participants also learned conversational Latvian, but the language of instruction was English. In the first years, the professors came from the Foreign Language faculty at the University of Latvia. Later

we contracted history, economics and political science faculty to offer specific courses for our students. A special and very successful part of the program included guest lectures from the shapers of politics and history. They included Eduards Berklāvs, Georgs Andrejevs, Tatiana Ždanoka, Visvaldis Lācis, Juris Bojārs and a number of diplomats and ambassadors accredited to Latvia. The resident directors taught courses in their area of specialization open also to Latvian university students, as well offering their services to the University of Latvia for specific lectures. Visits to the Saeima were a regular part of the semester program. The out-of-classroom activities included academic tours to Moscow, St.Petersburg, Vilnius and Tallinn. Memorable lengthy meetings were held with Vladimir Zhirnovsky, President Meri and Algimantas Čekuolis. Professor Guntis Brumelis in the Biology Department led students on tours that focused on the ecology of Latvia. Eye-opening for students in the early years was the ecological damage caused by Soviet disregard for the environment. The program received favorable mention in the Chronicle of Higher Education. A distinctive feature of the program was semester-long stays for the students in the homes of Latvian families instead of dormitory residenc-

es. This strengthened the cultural and social immersion part of the Program.

The Program also measures itself by the academic success of its participants. From the program four students have earned Ph.D's and joined the academia, Janis Čakars, Will Prigge, Scott Hegardy, Bryan Mc Quid and an ABD, Laura Dean. The Semester program in 1993 switched to the spring Semester for reasons of the cold and dark in early Fall. The resident director wrote a project for the Museum of the Occupation for the Ministry of Culture. The original purpose was to have an additional learning place for the student participants. No museums of history (except for the "War" museum) existed. So, we lit a candle which now enlightens literally 100,000 visitors locals, tourists and visiting dignitaries. Connected to the Latvia Semester is a scholarship Program for Latvian (Baltic) students initiated by Dr. Aina Galejs to study at UWEC. The scholarship (including an out-of-state tuition remission granted by the University) covers all expenses except the flight to Wisconsin. Dr. Galejs, the generous benefactor has donated a record \$500,000 to the University for the students over the last 20 years. More than 45 Latvian students plus a handful of Estonians and Lithuanians have studied at the university with this scholarship. The scholarship students and vet-



erans of the Riga Study program have formed a club, the Baltic Student Organization, that remains socially active on the Campus with round-table events and an International Students Fair. Each year for the last 20 they have presented exhibits of Baltic history, customs, and traditional celebrations.

An important function the club is to heighten the visibility of the Riga study program. Over the years BSO has presented to the campus Baltic film showings, art exchanges with the Academy of Culture in Riga and brought to the campus Latvian Art historian Helena Demakova, musical ensemble Putni, Liv Folklorist/singer Julgi Stalte and U. of Latvia Professor of Political Science Žaneta Ozoliņa. The Latvia Semester program also expanded to include a Biannual Symposium on East Europe, a two day program with participation by some of the major European and national figures in politics, diplomacy and academia. Among the keynoters and presenters have been Assistant Secretary of State Ron Asmus, Ambassadors Jack Matlock, Maciej Kozłowski, Imants Lieģis, Sandra Kalniete, Foreign Minister Andrejevs, Andreas Adahl, Sven Jorgensen, Valdis Krastīņš, Paul Goble, Prime Ministers Mart Laar and Guntars Krasts and Professors Frederick Starr, Charles Jelavich, Toivo Raun, Andrejs Plakans, Rasma Kārklīņa and Andrzej Bryk.

In 1998 a new director of the Office of Studies Abroad was hired by the University. Very quickly it became apparent that the Latvia program was degraded as requiring too much effort. In spite of a stellar endorsement by the Dean of Arts and Sciences who personally inspected the program in Latvia in 1996, the Director argued in the pages of the AABS Newsletter that all U.S.-Baltic programs were failing, including the program at UWEC. He was right about the work required in the programs. Some of the other early initiatives in the 1990's attempted to run programs from home campuses. Inevitably they failed. Once a "director" of a program asked me "trou-

ble shoot" his program at a Baltic university. When I arrived at a meeting with the students they had just one question, "how do we sue the s.o.b.?" So, long distance administration does not work. But hands-on administration means Work! From its beginnings the program attracted a variety of students from many other universities, "nontraditional" (post 60) adult students, and graduate students. The mix invariably increased the academic rigor and performance of the program. It also made the program vulnerable to administrative pressures and manipulations.

Following the negative report in the March 2001 Newsletter there came announcements that the UWEC program did not attract sufficient numbers to justify the work and overhead expense. Yet, the director did not trust his own prediction and began a policy of culling the numbers of interested students. First denied were the students from other universities. Next excluded were graduate students in spite of the academic success of Will Prigge and others. The last designated pariahs were "non-traditional" students (in the process violating university-wide policy and offending the taxpayer community.) The policy raised some questions about motives. After all, the non-traditional students brought income for the university, and students from other campuses paid \$900 in out-of-state tuition. The piece *de resistance* was an enrollment deadline in November. Many students failing to meet that date enrolled in a successful program in another university in the state which has a well established program in Poland, a deadline in May and enrollment of students across the nation. The deadline at UWEC moreover is applied flexibly, at will for other programs. In competition with the modest Latvia program were programs where the numbers were significantly larger, among them the Australia program, with students numbering at least twice the cohort going to Riga. Students have reported that the "down under" program is "better than

Spring Break." With the cold and snow, Latvia was out of the running. The dire prediction of diminishing numbers and "confusing Baltics and the Balkans" was made more likely when an informative announcement in a national newspaper was canceled. Unaware of the opportunities for cultural immersion, easy credit transfer, and true diversity in study opportunities, the negative predictions became self-fulfilling prophecy. In 2005, manipulating its numbers, the International Education Office cancelled the 15 year program. It now directs individual students to a Baltic studies program that has been developed by the U of Latvia, which unfortunately is significantly more expensive, lacks home stays (of course, requiring greater effort), academic travel to Moscow, Zagorsk, St.Petersburg, Tallinn, and Vilnius, and guest speakers and other immersion features. The last UWEC student participated in 2009.

The University of Latvia, faithful to the 20 year old agreements, has indicated interest in resuming the full program. A positive policy also appears to be developing on this side of the Atlantic. Since the start of 2008, the Director has a new policy of permitting non-UWEC students to participate in our programs for credit, to make them viable. The return to the original full program with a resident director, accompanying extended academic travel, and guest speakers will become possible with interested emeriti faculty (veterans of the Latvia semester) and others. The more than four dozen Dr. Galejs scholarship students who have returned to Latvia will make home stay arrangements easier. The home stays, by the way, not only serve the immersion part of the program but has always had very good "reviews" from students. Some off-campus students will likely come from the national Area Studies programs with their own East European component in place as colleagues have suggested. As we conclude our report, it is gratifying to finish on a positive note and look to an active second decade of the 21st Century.

## ***Baltic Studies Program at Yale University***

Bradley D. Woodworth

The Baltic Studies Program at Yale is an interdisciplinary forum for the study of the Baltic Sea region, with an emphasis on the lands that comprise contemporary Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The program sponsors workshops, symposia, and lec-

tures, and serves as a resource for and liaison among students and scholars at Yale whose work involves the Baltic region.

Recent events sponsored by the Program include the following talks given on the Yale campus:

Guntis Šmidchens, Head of Baltic Studies, University of Washington, Seattle, and Director-At-Large of the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, who spoke on "Non-Violent Baltic Cultures and the Almost Non-Violent

End of the Soviet Union" on September 20, 2010.

Valdas Adamkus, President of Lithuania, 1998-2003, 2004-2009, who spoke on "The Role of Education in Post-Soviet Political Development" on April 14, 2010. This event was co-sponsored by the European Studies Council at Yale.

Elina Gertsman, art historian from Southern Illinois University, who spoke on "The Body of Medieval Reval" on March 22, 2010.

Valdis Zatlers, President of Latvia 2007-present, who spoke on "Transatlantic Dynamics after the Global Economic Crisis" on September 21, 2009. This event was co-sponsored by the European Studies Council at Yale.

The Baltic Studies Program has also sponsored research by Yale students in the Baltic region. Prominent has been the research conducted by Yale Ph.D. student Yakov Klots on the activity of the poet Joseph Brodsky in Lithuania.

Yale University Library has provided

internships to library professionals from the three Baltic countries since 1999. These library professionals have made significant contributions to the Yale Library collections and have been valuable sources of information and networking after their return to their home countries. So far, five librarians from Latvia and five from Estonia have completed internships at Yale University Library, as have two from Lithuania. Funding for these internships has come from Department of Education Title VI grants and several other funds, including the Dr. Kristaps Keggi Fund.

In 2014, Yale University and New Haven will be the site of a joint AABS-SASS conference.

The Baltic Studies Program at Yale is supported through the generosity of

Dr. Kristaps J. Keggi, M.D. (Yale College, 1955); Mr. Juris Padegs (Yale College, 1954); and Mr. Joseph Kazickas (Ph.D. 1951).

*For further information, contact Bradley D. Woodworth, Coordinator, email: [bradley.woodworth@yale.edu](mailto:bradley.woodworth@yale.edu), and phone: 203-932-7121.*



*2010 Librarian exchange partner Maira Kreislere, National Library of Latvia Dr. Kristaps J. Keggi, and Slavic and East European Collections Curator Tatjana Lorkovic, Yale University*

## **Ilse Lehiste: In Memoriam**

31.01.1922 – 25.12.2010



Ilse Lehiste belonged to the generation of Baltic scholars who began their education in the Baltic states during independence but finished their university studies in the U.S. or other western universities. Individuals in this generation were able to gain academic positions at universities in North America and begin their scholarly careers outside the Baltic states. As a result, they were able to live a life of learning and scholarship and intertwine their special areas of scholarly activity with Baltic subjects and themes. As conditions began to change in the Baltics, they were able to establish relations with their colleagues in their specialties. With the re-establishment of independent Baltic states some were indeed able to participate in the restoration of ties that had been broken between universities and scholarship in the Baltic states with the scholarly activity in the rest of the world. Ilse Lehiste lived through all of the above.

Ilse Lehiste was born in Tallinn, Estonia in 1922, finished her secondary school in Tallinn, and began her university studies at Tartu University in 1942. She fled to Germany in 1944 and participated in the work and life of the Baltic University (that common project of Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian university faculties in exile) in Pinneburg-Hamburg. She also defended a dissertation in literature at Hamburg university in 1948. In 1949 she emigrated to the United States where she continued her studies and finished a second doctorate in linguistics at the University of Michigan in 1959. She went on to teach linguistics (serving also for a time as department chair) at Ohio State University in Columbus from 1963 until her retirement in 1987.

Ilse Lehiste authored at least ten books, two hundred articles and a hundred reviews. Her special area in linguistics was acoustic phonetics. She was awarded honorary doctorates by Essex, Lund, and Tartu universities. She was also elected to membership by the Finnish Academy of Sciences and the Estonian Academy of Sciences.

Ilse Lehiste was present at the first AABS conference in College Park, Maryland and continued as an active member of the AABS in organizing panels in linguistics as well as presenting papers at AABS conferences. She belonged to that generation of Baltic scholars who made the AABS into a respected learned society in North America and indeed the rest of the world. She served with distinction as the president of the AABS in 1974-1976. Those of us who met her regularly at conferences remember her optimism, her sense of humor, and her words of encouragement to graduate students and younger scholars. She would attend sessions in literature, history, and political science, as well as linguistics and could be counted upon to ask probing questions and participate in the discussions that followed. Her loyalty and interest in AABS activities continued right to the present time.



## ***Look at the 2010 Conference from Down Under*** (continued from page 6)

Joint conferences such as our last one are, put simply, a great idea. Rigid regional borders only serve to keep our ideas in and those of others out. Intellectual cooperation with our neighbours helps promote and maintain cultures from across the regions. It fosters both tolerance and diversity and helps our research reach the wider academic world. In two years' time we will hold the next Baltic Studies conference of the Australasian chapter. It would be my hope that we too could work together with those researching matters related to our neighbouring countries—both East and West—in order to stimulate the scholarship that will be on offer. Both Baltic and Scandinavian Studies are reasonably small affairs Down Under; we can only but benefit from greater cooperation. So, calling all Scandinavian scholars: welcome to our conference in Australia in 2012! Don't forget your dancing shoes.



*AABS President-Elect Ain Haas moderating a panel at 2010 conference.  
Photo by Andris Rogainis*

## ***AABS Australasian Section: 15th BALTIC STUDIES CONFERENCE, 2010***

Dr. Edward Reilly

The conference was conducted at Lithuanian House, Melbourne, on Saturday 4 September, 2010. Initial organization was provided by Dr. Paul Kabaila (President) & Dr. A. Blumbergs (Secretary) with Dr. U. Ozoliņš (Treasurer) & Dr. E. Reilly (Committee) providing technical equipment & registration facilities.

The first set of papers focused on question of language & linguistics. Emeritus Prof. Trevor Fennell (Flinders U) commenced proceedings with an account of the "Vortrab" to Liborius Depkin's Latvian-German Dictionary. L. Depkin (1652 – 1708) was a Latvian-born Lutheran pastor who compiled some 3000 pages of this dictionary. Prof. Fennell has managed to edit and publish four volumes so far, and as he pointed out, there is still much work to be done, and here is a field of endeavour open to students with suitable linguistic aptitudes & skills. Dr. Kristina Brazaitis (Heidelberg & Melbourne U) has for some years been researching the life, poetry & prose of J. Bobrowski (Tilsit 1917 – OstBerlin 1965). Her paper, 'Johannes Bobrowski: Pruzzische Vokabeln (Old Prussian Glossary)' gave an account into her investigations into a copybook containing a list of 583 words in Old Prussian which may be seen as being inspirational and enriching in both his OP and Lithuanian themes. She demonstrated the Glossary's importance for encoding of experience and creation of his poetry collections *Sarmatische Zeit* (1961) and the novel *Litauische Claviere* (1966). Dr. Brazaitis' edition of PV has now been published by Otago German Studies, edited by A. Obermayer of the University of Otago, New Zealand.

Whilst Dr. Algimantas Taškūnas OAM (U of Tasmania) was unable to attend, his paper, "Teaching Lithuanian Language in Tasmania", was read by Mrs. Dana Baltutienė. Even if there may only be some 40 native Lithuanian speakers living now in Tasmania, a notable number of students of various ethnic origins are attracted to the 2-Semester Lithuanian Language at the University of Tasmania. Dr. Taškūnas made some interesting points about teaching techniques and the need for critically prepared teaching materials suitable for tertiary studies. Rasa Sasnauskaitė (MA, Mainz U), currently working as a German teacher at a Melbourne High School and as a German tutor at Melbourne Uni., gave a paper 'Lithuanian Surname Genealogy – A Mirror to the History of a Nation'. This was based on investigations into the origins of Lithuanian surnames in the three major cities, Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipėda. Native Lithuanian names are formed on the two-part principle, e.g., Tautginas and Visvaldis, but did not form the bases of clan appellation, or of the family names introduced only in the late C81 – C19, the era of

Polish occupation. New names originated from two sources, from translations of words into Polish such as Lt. oželis to Po. kozioł giving Kazlauskas, the most frequent surname in the study, and from mass baptisms which yielded derivatives of Greek apostolic names, e.g., Gk. Gregorios which gives Lt. Grigonis, and Gk. Petros yielding Petraitis, Petravičius, with Petrauskas the second most common surname. The paper prompted a number of enquiries regarding native surnames, such as Butkevičius, Butkus.

Dr. Edward Reilly (Victoria U) gave a critical appraisal of the commemorative text, *Baltų Menas / The Art of the Balts*. This is a magnificent volume, weighing some 6 kg., richly illustrated & edited by Prof. Adomas Butrimas (Rector, Vilnius Arts Academy), published in conjunction with the 2009 commemoration of Lithuania's naming on the Quedlinburg Chronicle (1009). The artistic theme was continued by Ms. Biruta Flood (PhD cand.), who presented her paper 'Nostalgic Pathways through Livonian Landscapes: the 18th & 20th Centuries'. She explored the pictorial reflexes of the Sturm & Drang movement, initiated by Kant & Herder in Königsberg in the late 1700s, in the development of a specifically Latvian national iconography. Ms. Flood showed a series of images to clearly demonstrated the connections between the two eras in both secular & ecclesiastic art.



*AABS Australasian Section Conference presenters. Front Row: T. Fennell, B. Flood, D. Baltutienė. Back Row: U. Ozoliņš, G. Pranauskas, E. Reilly, R. Sasnauskaitė.  
Photo by J. Reilly*

Gražina Pranauskas (PhD cand.) spoke on 'Lithuanians in Diaspora 1940s – 2000s', and read sections of her novel *Going Home*, which is being prepared as part of her thesis. The text draws upon materials previously collected and explores the intertwined problems of place, language and identity.

The final paper, 'The Trials of Kononov' was given by Adjunct Assoc. Prof. Uldis Ozoliņš (U of Western Sydney). Vassilij Kononov (b. 1923) was a Soviet partisan. The nature of his actions, including the murder of an 8-month pregnant woman, gave cause for the Latvian government to arraign him. Dr. Ozoliņš outlined the exhaustive trial as the case has moved from Latvian courts to the highest tribunals in the EU, where the final judgement came down 14:3 in favour of the Latvian government prosecutor's case. Whilst valorized during the Soviet period, and noisily supported by the Riga Russians, Kononov has found his post-court support far more muted.

While the number in the audience never exceeded twenty, as it turned out we probably had four or five world-class papers. The books presented at the conference, Fennell's edition of the Latvian-German Dictionary, Brazaitis' *Johannes Bobrowski: Pruzzische Vokabeln* and Butrimas's *Baltų Menas*, were later toasted with a welcome glass of champagne! After the close of conference six of us had dinner that night in the Rubicon Café downstairs, with nice food and plentiful wine.

A new committee is being formed since Dr. P. Kabaila & Dr. A. Blumbergs are retiring. It is planned to hold the next conference in 2012. AABS annual membership fees can be paid in Australia: Student \$29, Emeritus (rtd) \$40, Regular \$69, Sponsor \$100, Patron \$500 & Life \$2000. Baltic residents \$25. Initial inquiries should be sent to Dr. U. Ozoliņš @ uldis@languagesolutions.com.au

## AABS Panel at ASEES conference

Joerg Hackmann, joerg.hackmann@univ.szczecin.pl



Joerg Hackmann,  
photo by A. Rogainis

"Windows, Bridges, Gateways and more: Defining Baltic Space in the 20th Century" was the title of an AABS sponsored panel at the 42nd Annual Convention of ASEES – the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (formerly known as AAASS) - in Los Angeles on November 22, 2010.

This panel originated as a result of an agreement between AABS and ASEES to organize one panel each at the partner's 2010 convention. Whereas ASEES was unable to organize a panel for the AABS conference in Seattle, the AABS proposal was actualized by a predominantly German-Lithuanian group of historians and one geographer in cooperation with the Herder Institute in Marburg, Germany, which has a longstanding record of research in Baltic history. The idea for the panel emerged from the observation that since the ending of the dichotomy between East and West that appeared on the horizon in the 1980s, the Baltic Sea region has occupied a major space in political and scholarly discourses. In almost every contribution, whether political, economic or sociological, reference is being made to the common history or the natural unity of the region which contributed to political, economic and cultural cooperation. With this as background the intention of the panel was to discuss spatial notions of the Baltic (Sea) region and to locate them between East and West and between Northern and Central Europe.

The panel, which was chaired by Peter Haslinger, director of the Herder Institute and consisted of papers by Ralph Tuchtenhagen and Jan Hecker-Stampehl (both Humboldt U, Berlin), and by Jörg Hackmann (Szczecin U, Poland). The discussants were Laimonas Briedis (member of the AABS board) and Vytautas Petronis (Herder Institute).

Ralph Tuchtenhagen presented the German discourse on the Baltic as a "Germanic Sea" as a counterpoint to recent debates and highlighted the imperial notions of "Weltgeltung" and "Lebensraum" inherent to the geopolitical nations shaped by Friedrich Ratzel and others. Jan Hecker-Stampehl pointed out that debates on Nordic unity not only increased during World War II, but also took shape in limiting themselves to Scandinavia and Finland. This was not only done by references to the common history, but also as it connected to modernization and a clear distancing from Germany and Russia. Jörg Hackmann, finally, focused on the "return" of Baltic history since the 1980s and analyzed the idea of a "New

Hansa". Its success was not so much due to a convincing reference to Baltic history, but rather based on the fact that it coincided with North European ideas of a post-modernist regionalism beyond sovereign nation states. Such an approach was regarded with some suspicion by politicians from the three Baltic states, who tended to conceive security (from Russia) in conventional terms.

The discussion inspired by the comments of Laimonas Briedis and Vytautas Petronis, who focused on the relation of those debates to power, touched upon some of the crucial points of Baltic spatial discourses: first the political background of the German geopolitical approach, and, second, the Russian perspective on the Baltic Sea region. Furthermore the perspective of the Baltic nations on region building was addressed, and the question was raised whether there are common every-day experiences related to the Baltic. One issue that Briedis addressed was the identification of access to the Baltic with freedom – and by the same token – the prohibition of the access to the beaches with being locked in.

All in all, the discussion revealed that Baltic spatial discourses transcend the traditional boundaries between North, West and East and are shaped by an intensity hardly existing elsewhere outside the region. If we may conclude that the discussion of spatial notions has been an important field of Baltic studies, we could expect that there would be similar debates in Slavic studies, in particular as a result of the recent renaming of the regional description of the association.

The interest in discussing such topics, however, seems to be more limited in ASEES than within AABS. The trip to Los Angeles, thus, was a nice and fruitful experience, but it also showed that smaller conferences have their value with regard to the intellectual quality of debates.



Fig. 1.  
Die kartographische Synthese Baltoskandias.  
(Nach Sten De Geer.)

Die Zahlen zeigen die nach Gebieten zusammen auftretenden Faktoren, d. h. die Intensität der einzelnen Gebiete. Die fünfte synthetische Linie ist die Mittellinie und von allen neun Linien in praktischer Hinsicht zur Bezeichnung der Grenze des geographischen Nordeuropas, d. h. Baltoskandias, die geeignetste.

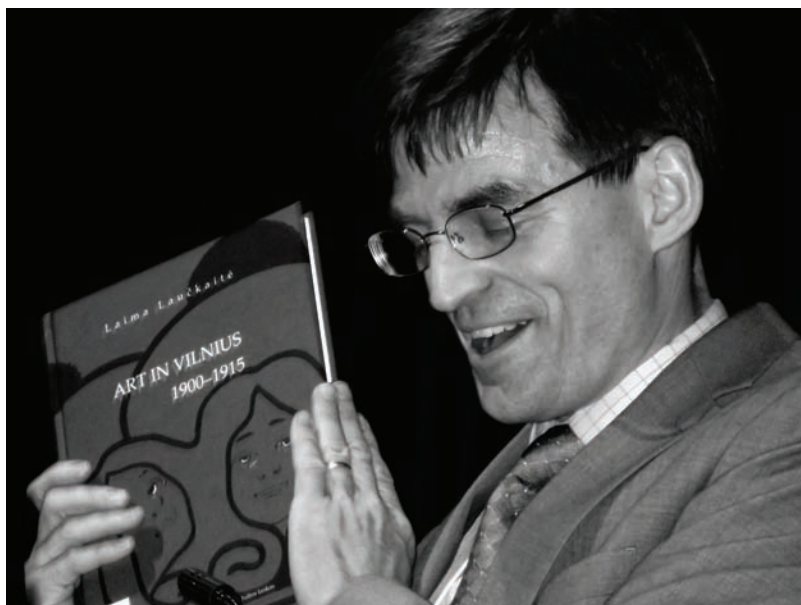
Edgar Kant's depiction of various delimitations of Baltic space, illustrated that there were quite a lot of such definitions already in the 1930s.



## 2008-09 Book Prize

Laima Laučkaitė received the AABS 2008-2009 Book Prize for the volume *Art in Vilnius 1900-1915*, published by Baltos lankos in 2008.

According to the recommendation by reviewers, *Art in Vilnius* is a "pioneering study in art history and the city of Vilnius. It presents Vilnius as a multicultural city in which different ethnic-national cultures overlap but also pursue their own agendas, and it is beautifully illustrated." The review noted that the period 1900-1915 is a crucial one both for the development of art and for the development of national identity in the city. "What is particularly interesting is the book's sophisticated approach which begins with different national groups producing art in the city (Poles, Lithuanians, Jews, Russians), then goes into specific artists in more depth (two Poles and one Lithuanian), followed by a discussion of the "Avant-Garde" and "Belle Époque" in Vilnius. It is a informative, stimulating, and engrossing read."



Bradley Woodworth, AABS Vice-President, Publications, presenting the award winning book *Art in Vilnius 1900-1915*, photo by Irena Blekys

## 2009-2010 Student Representative Report

Amanda Swain

The highlight of my second year as the AABS Board Student Representative was the opportunity to help plan the AABS Conference in Seattle. Local Baltic Studies students and young adult members of the local Baltic communities assisted with conference planning and at the conference. After a planning meeting in February, one group of volunteers researched Seattle activities to include in the conference packet and a second group of volunteers researched locations to hold a graduate student social after the film event. These and other local young

people served as greeters at the film program and the graduate student social. I also volunteered to coordinate the film program at the conference, which was held in partnership with Northwest Film Forum. The program included the animated Estonian film *Krokodill*, the animated Latvian film *Little Bird's Diary*, and the Lithuanian documentary *The Bug Trainer* about pioneering animator Ladislav Starevich. Rasa Miškinytė, director of *The Bug Trainer*, held a Q&A with the audience after the film program.



Baltic Studies Graduate students at the 2010 AABS-SASS conference, photo by Irena Blekys

## *Journal of Baltic Studies* Editor's report, December 2010

Terry D. Clark

Creighton University has graciously provided the support promised by the President, Academic Vice President, and Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The JBS has its own (small) editorial office on Creighton's campus, several very talented graduate and undergraduate students are working as assistant editors, and I have enlisted the assistance of Julija Sukys, a long-time AABS member and past board member, as Technical Editor.

In my view, we are the net beneficiaries from our partnership with Routledge. In my short tenure, Routledge has helped to increase the efficiency of JBS operations, and the publisher has done an exceptional job of expanding the visibility and availability of the JBS. Permit me to expand on each of these points a bit.

The Routledge staff have shown themselves eager to help on any all issues I have brought to them. One of those issues was moving the JBS to an online submission system. We were placed at the head of the queue; and JBS is now taking full advantage of the ScholarOne online submission system, which represents an extraordinary savings in time for the editorial staff. It is a terrific tool for efficient management, and in due course it will generate statistical reports (once enough manuscripts are processed). It will also make future transitions of editors far easier and almost seamless.

Routledge has worked aggressively to increase the visibility of the JBS. The Thomson Reuters Impact Factor (IF score) for the JBS has once again increased resulting in a relative positioning of 13th among 44 area journals. Much of the continued increase owes to the journal's standing in Estonia. I have begun conversations with Routledge on how to establish the JBS as the journal of choice among scholars in Lithuania and Latvia.

It is possible to criticize the Thomson Reuters IF as a measure of success. After all, it does not constitute a measure of the reach of the journal outside of academia. Indeed, its singular focus is on scholarly citations. But that seems to me to constitute the value of the IF. It gives an indication of the journal's reputation among scholars. As that reputation increases, the JBS becomes an increasingly important vehicle for effecting scholarship and the standards of scholarship on Baltic studies, particularly within the Baltic states. In my view, one of the most important contributions that the AABS can make is to the development of serious scholarly work. The JBS is arguably the association's most important instrument for advancing that goal by mentoring generations of young Balts.

The Routledge staff is also working to increase the availability of the JBS to scholars across the globe. An April 2010 Routledge report to the AABS, "Confidential Publishing Report: Journal of Baltic Studies," reports that the JBS was in 763 libraries world-wide in 2008 and 1,417 in 2009 (p. 4). Furthermore, the number of downloads increased from 4,845 in 2007, to 5,207 in 2008, and 7,719 in 2009 (p. 5), indicating the journal is enjoying greater visibility. All of this owes to Routledge's aggressive marketing strategy, a strategy that neither I nor the AABS have the time or personal resources to replicate.

Finally, Routledge has committed resources to move us into otherwise difficult to reach markets. For instance, the pub-

lisher has a program in which scholars in developing countries can obtain free access to the JBS (and other journals) to support their research.

Of course, Routledge's efforts alone will not assure the continued expansion of the scholarly reputation and visibility of the JBS. David Smith was quite keen on special issues, and I am as well. In my short tenure, it has proven an important vehicle for attracting high quality submissions from more senior scholars. Routledge's eagerness subsequently to publish special issues as books adds greatly to the incentivizing such submissions. At present, I am in communication with scholars concerning 11 special issues, at various stages of conceptualization and development. Of course, the special issues have helped to create a bit of a backlog, but that is not unhealthy as it has permitted me to be a bit more discerning in publication decisions. As of the end of September, I had committed to publishing 16 articles; 19 manuscripts were in various stages of review; and 7 submissions had been rejected (since I assumed responsibility as editor in April 2010).

One way to alleviate the backlog is to expand the page count (number of articles) in each issue, a decision that would increase the revenue stream to the AABS. David Smith was considering this prior to stepping down as editor. I have yet to come to a conclusion on the matter, but should I think it wise to pursue, I will bring the issue to the board for approval.

Let me conclude by commenting on some focus areas for expansion. The JBS enjoys a strong base in the US, UK, and Estonia. I would like to expand into several target countries: Lithuania, Sweden, Germany, France, and Latvia (in the order in which I think expansion is possible). The JBS has the potential to be the journal of choice in Lithuania and Latvia, in much the same way it has become in Estonia. Scholars in Lithuania and Latvia have limited access to journals. However, in my view, access is not the problem. The real issue is uneven familiarity with and a lack of access to means for

*(continued on page 21)*



*Terry D. Clark (right) and Journal of Baltic Studies staff*



## ***Baltic Studies Summer Institute 2010***

Nancy Heingartner, BALSSI Program Coordinator Jennifer Tishler, CREECA Associate Director

The seventeenth annual Baltic Studies Summer Institute took place at the University of Wisconsin-Madison from June 14 - August 6, 2010. BALSSI was co-sponsored on campus by the Department of Scandinavian Studies and the Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia (CREECA). In all, sixteen students were enrolled in five language courses. The faculty director for BALSSI 2010 was Tom DuBois, the Birgit Baldwin Professor of Scandinavian Studies.

BALSSI 2010 offered five intensive language courses: elementary Latvian, intermediate Latvian, elementary Lithuanian, intermediate Lithuanian, and elementary Estonian (Scandinavian 404: Languages of Northern Europe). Five undergraduates,

seven graduate students, and four non-students participated in BALSSI 2010. Two students completed the beginning Latvian course, which was taught by Dr. Dzidra Rodins of DePaul University; two students completed the intermediate Latvian course,



*Lithuanian BALSSI 2010 students with instructors, photo by Iveta Grinberga*

which was taught by Iveta Grinberga, formerly of the University of Washington. Four students completed the beginning Lithuanian course, which was taught by Daiva Litvinskaite of the University of Illinois-Chicago, and four students completed the intermediate Lithuanian course, which was taught by Aurelija Tamosiunaite of the University of Illinois-Chicago. Four students completed the beginning Estonian course, which was taught by Mall Pesti, author of several Estonian textbooks and materials.

Among the topics the 2010 graduate participants are researching are: Estonian choral music; library and information science; Karlis Ulmanis and interwar Latvia; Lithuanian folklore



*Latvian BALSSI 2010 students with instructors, photo by Iveta Grinberga*

and traditional music; Estonian-Finnish comparative linguistics; heritage identity, foreign language literacy, and discourse communities; and German-Estonian comparative historical linguistics.

BALSSI 2010 was enhanced significantly by the rich program of lectures and cultural offerings that accompanied it. All of these events were free and open to the public. Attendance ranged from fifteen to ninety people. (See list below.) In addition to the public events, there was a welcome picnic on June 13th hosted by the Madison-Vilnius Sister Cities organization, a July 25th field trip to the Balzekas Museum in Chicago and to Grand Duke's Lithuanian Restaurant in Summit, IL, the annual Madison-Vilnius Sister Cities picnic (to which all BALSSI-affiliated people were invited) on August 1st, and a BALSSI farewell picnic for all students and staff on August 5th.

In 2010, BALSSI received generous financial support from fifteen Title VI Area Studies Centers at thirteen universities:



*Estonian BALSSI 2010 students with instructor, photo by Iveta Grinberga*



- UCLA (Center for European and Eurasian Studies)
- University of Chicago (Center for East European and Russian/Eurasian Studies)
- Columbia University (East Central European Center)
- Harvard University (Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies)
- University of Illinois (European Union Center; and Russian, East European and Eurasian Center)
- Indiana University (Inner Asian & Uralic National Resource Center; and Russian & East European Institute)
- University of Michigan (Center for Russian and East European Studies)
- University of Pittsburgh (Center for Russian and East European Studies; and European Studies Center/European Union Center for Excellence)
- Stanford University (Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies)
- University of Texas (Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies)
- University of Washington (Ellison Center for Russian, East European & Central Asian Studies)
- University of Wisconsin (Center for Russia, East Europe & Central Asia)

BALSSI also received generous financial support from the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, and two external grants from ACLS and the Lithuanian Foundation.

### ***Journal of Baltic Studies Editor's report, December 2010*** (continued from page 19)

socialization in the canon, standards, and expectations of research. This is the case for scholars in the three Baltic states, although it is less so for Estonia. One of my goals is to employ JBS in a manner to help deal with this issue.

I should note in this regard that I have thus far rejected two manuscripts on the basis of copy right infringement. They were both previously published in part or in whole. Both scholars responded that they were not aware that the general expectation is that professional journals publish original research. I believe them.

Finally, I am keen to expand coverage in disciplines and topical areas that have received little attention on the pages of the JBS. Among these are library science, pre-XX century history, and the arts.

### ***ACLS Annual Meeting (May 6-8, 2010)***

Olavi Arens, AABS Academic Executive Director

The 2010 American Council of Learned Societies annual meeting took place in Philadelphia on May 6-8. Inta Carpenter attended as the AABS delegate; Olavi Arens as the administrative officer.

During the regular business meeting of the Council on Saturday morning (May 7) the Treasurer in her report indicated that despite the downturn in the stock market and a resulting lower return on the ACLS endowment, more than \$15 million in fellowship money was awarded during the past year. Besides the regular ACLS fellowships, the ACLS also administers a number of fellowship programs funded by major foundations. Five international programs award fellowships specifically for areas outside the U.S.: Africa; Eastern Europe; Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus; East Asia; and Southeast Asia. The East European Studies program is described below. As is the general practice, three recipients of ACLS fellowships during the past year discussed their research projects at the general meeting. ACLS

#### **BALSSI EVENTS**

June 15, Lecture. Katrina Schwartz, Assistant Professor of Political Science, University of Florida: "Contesting Nature and Nation in Latvia"

June 23, BALSSI Mid-Summer Celebration

June 29, Lecture. Maria Ogrydziak, Independent architect and Chair of the Board of Directors, U.S.-Baltic Foundation: "Why Estonia Should Exist"

July 6, Lecture. Ted Gerber, Professor of Sociology, UW-Madison: "Caught in Between: Citizenship, Identity, and Young Ethnic Russians in Estonia"

July 10, Concert. Martynas Levickis, Accordionist, in honor of Lithuania's Statehood Day

July 13, Lecture. Agate Nesaule, Author and Professor Emerita of English and Women's Studies, UW-Whitewater "Writing on the Threshold between Cultures"

July 20, Lecture. Vilte Kazlauskaitė "Archaic Felt and Its Tradition in Lithuania"

July 21, Lecture/Demo. Žaibas Lithuanian dancers, Lithuanian Dance Demonstration and Lesson

July 26, Film Screening. "The Singing Revolution" Introduction and discussion by Piibi-Kai Kivik

July 27, Lecture/Discussion. Iveta Grinberga and Mall Pesti, "The Singing Revolution: Discussion and Reflection"

July 29, Baltic Film Festival. "Duburys," Lithuania, 2009

July 30, Baltic Film Festival. "Vogelfrei," Latvia 2007, plus two shorts, "Baltic Way," Lithuania 1990, and "Noroutine," Lithuania 2009

July 31, Baltic Film Festival. "Balkonas," Lithuania, 2008 "Par dzimteni" (Three Men and a Fishpond), Latvia, 2008 "Disko ja tuumasōda" (Disco & Atomic War), Estonia, 2009

August 3, Lecture. Amanda Swain, Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History, University of Washington, "We Were Hippies Too: Youth Protest and Lithuanian Nationalism in Kaunas, 1972"

President Pauline Yu in her annual address reviewed the past year of ACLS activity – by-and-large a year of accomplishments but also a time of vigilance to ward off attempts to marginalize humanities study at U.S. universities. One new society – the Society for Military History – was accepted into membership.

During the afternoon session a panel of experts examined, "The Google Book Settlement: Implications for Scholarship." Here the discussion revolved around benefits to scholarship from greater access and ease of access to digitized material vs. protection for copyrighted books. The issues have not yet been resolved. The Thursday evening session before the main meeting discussed the establishment of ARTstor, an image database of art and architecture that can be accessed by scholars and teachers. Another panel discussed humanities scholarship in Africa and the establishment of the African Humanities Program to award fellowships for study within Africa.



The usual Saturday morning meeting of administrative officers met to discuss current issues facing the societies. Among the issues discussed were the hiring of legal counsel, issues connected with conferences (rising cost of audio-visual equipment), rising cost of mailing outside the U.S., and the need to collect more information. The nominating committee chaired by O. Arens nominated three new members to the Executive Committee of Administrative Officers. The Executive Committee makes recommendations on topics that are discussed at future meeting.

Among the fellowship programs administered by the ACLS is the East European Studies Program. The funding of the program is appropriated by the U.S. Congress and administered by the U.S. Department of State under the Research and Training for Eastern Europe and the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union Act of 1983 as amended (Title VIII). Title VIII supports both language study and research related to East European countries.

The ACLS *Annual Report, 2008-2009* lists the following ACLS supported grants under the East European Studies Program to individuals and programs related to Baltic Studies:

1. Dissertation Fellowships (Individuals – 10 in all)  
Rima Praspaliauskiene, Doctoral Student, Anthropology, University of California, Davis: *"Thank you, Doctor": Informed Patients, Healthcare, and Ethics in Post-Socialist Lithuania.*
2. Language Training Grants (Institutions – 5 in all)  
Baltic Studies Summer Institute for summer 2009 and

- summer 2010 courses on first-year Estonian
  3. Language Training Grants (Individuals – 9 in all)  
David C. McVey, Doctoral Candidate, Literature, Ohio State University: to study Estonian
  4. Heritage Speakers Research Grants (1 in all)  
Kim J. Potowski, Associate Professor, Linguistics, University of Illinois, Chicago: *Heritage Lithuanian and Polish in Chicago: Digital Oral Corpus and Proficiency Exam Project.*
- Awards for 2009-2010 in the East European Studies Program include:

1. Travel Grants (7 in all)
  - (1) Andrew Stefan Dombrowski, Graduate Student, Slavic Linguistics, Univ. of Chicago: "Baltic Influence on Slavic Spread: the Case of North Russian." *Societas Linguistica Europaea*; Workshop 'Baltic Languages in an Areal-Typological Perspective', 9/2/2010—9/5/2010, Vilnius, Lithuania.
  - (2) Lauren Rhodes, Ph.D. Candidate, Anthropology, Univ. of Washington: "A Private Performance Turned Public: An Ethnography of Black Bodies in Latvia." *Psi#16 (Performance Studies International 16)*, *Performing Publics*, 6/9/2010—6/13/2010, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
2. Language Grants to Institutions for Summer Study (summer 2011- 7 in all):  
The Baltic Studies Summer Institute at University of Wisconsin, Madison: Estonian I and Latvian II.

## ***Mini-Retreat at the AABS Board Meeting of October 9, 2010***

Olavi Arens, AABS Academic Executive Director

The AABS Board conducted a mini-retreat at the end of its business meeting at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville on Oct. 9, 2010.

The American Council of Learned Societies periodically conducts retreats at its fall meetings of administrative officers. A theme is chosen for the retreat and then participants are requested to prepare for it with written materials. Discussion at the retreat is based on the prepared material. Usually something appears in print afterwards. The three retreats in the past 15 years have been on the following topics: internationalization of the activity and membership of the learned societies; the state of health of the learned societies; and the relationship of individual societies with each other, with universities, and with the public.

The fall 2001 retreat in Boise, Idaho, was centered on a discussion of the state of health of individual societies. In preparation for the retreat members were asked to conduct a census of their society covering the last 10 years. The census collected data on membership, attendance at conferences, governance of societies, staff positions at societies, endowments, financial stability, etc. The AABS was one of 49 (of 63) societies that participated in providing data for the census. A second activity involved a survey of selected members of the societies by an outside agency to ask individual members their reason for joining, maintaining their membership, and the level of their activity in the association. Fewer societies (41) participated in the survey of their members. The AABS did not participate, because of a long-standing tradition of not releasing information on members of the association. As a result of these two surveys a great deal of data was collected on existing learned societies and their members.

Catherine Rudder, the executive director of the American Political Science Association, analyzed this data in a paper, "Scholarly Societies and their Members: Incentives, Motives and Policy Implications," which she presented at an ACLS meeting. Members of the AABS Board were asked to read Rudder's article in preparation for the October mini-retreat.

The overall conclusion of Rudder, based on the census data was that the learned societies were financially healthy, that most exhibited growth in membership and had established organizational stability. In other words the societies were coping well with the changing environment. Rudder also discussed the data on membership by first providing a theoretical framework for her discussion that revolved around the issue of why people join and remain members of learned societies. One theoretical approach (M. Olsen) argues that societies in order to survive need to provide selective benefits (journals, newsletters, etc.) for their members, otherwise, if the benefits a society produces are available to everyone (online, for example) there is no incentive for individuals to maintain their membership in the society.

Other theorists (P. Clark and J. Wilson and then also D. Knoke) argue that tangible benefits of membership are just one of the reasons people join. Other considerations include, first, solidarity incentives or social interactions of members and second, agreement with the stated goals of the association or with the political goals of the organization. Rudder makes the point that learned societies need to be consciously aware of what motivates members and would-be members to effectively plan for the future.

The survey of members showed that most members join and remain members in order to keep abreast of research in their field, maintain professional relationships, and express their pro-



2010-2012 AABS board: Ain Haas, Irena Blekys, Jordan Kuck, Tom Napa, Marc Hyman, Janis Chakars, Vejas Liulevicius, Terry Clark, Guntis Smidchens, Bradley Woodworth, Giedrius Subacius, and Olavi Arens. Absent: Andres Kasekamp

fessional identity. When asked how they participated in the society, at the top of the list were reading the Newsletter (45.7% of members) and reading the Journal (37.3%). Only 12.2% noted presenting a paper regularly at the society conference as a frequent activity.

Among Rudder's recommendations at the end of the article is that societies should pay greater attention to the Newsletter than most of them have been doing. The data suggests that more members engage in reading at least parts of the Newsletter on a regular basis than any other activity. Another activity, attendance at conferences, is important as the place where members interact, meet each other, and present papers. Rudder suggests that more attention needs to be paid to increasing conference participation. If members are not there as presenters of papers, then they should be invited to chair sessions or act as commentators. The conference as a selective benefit for members can be reinforced by a difference in registration fees for members and non-members. Rudder regards the recruiting of new members as extremely important for smaller societies.

Partly in response to Rudder's article, the Board engaged in a lengthy discussion on the Newsletter and at the same time the web-page of the Association during the business meeting. As a result, the mini-retreat discussion at the end of the business meeting focused on other issues confronting the Association. The first was on institution building, a response to a report from Giedrius Subacius on the status of Lithuanian Studies at the University of Illinois, Chicago. After discussion it was

agreed that this fell in the purview of the mission of the society – to maintain or establish a number of university centers where aspects of Baltic Studies would be taught at the academic level in North America. The Lithuanian Community in Chicago had endowed a program in Lithuanian Studies at the University. Yet it was now in jeopardy. It was decided to appoint a committee of Ain Haas, Guntis Smidchens, and Olavi Arens to collect the facts of the situation and present a report to the Board for further action.

The other topic discussed at the mini-retreat was the need to adopt a policy with regard to the receipt of endowments funds to provide scholarships and fellowships. Two questions were raised—one was the question of the appropriateness of the AABS to serve as a grant-administering agency. The second question was that the earmarking of the money in the bequests did not necessarily dovetail with the mission of the AABS to further Baltic Studies. For example, at the present time, a need existed to provide monetary support to graduate students and faculty to conduct research at libraries and archives that would be consonant with the mission of the AABS to further the study of the Baltic region. But, it was not easy to channel the money of the bequests to needs that the association felt would most likely aid the advancement of Baltic Studies.

The mini-retreat began a discussion of some issues facing the association. It was understood that the discussion will continue. It was good to have a little time at the end of the business meeting to reflect on long-term concerns of the Association.

### ***Impressions on the 2010 Conference on Baltic Studies*** (continued from page 1)

the varied and splendid papers given by graduate students and junior faculty engaged in Baltic Studies; and those friendly discussions which participants began in Seattle which we hope to continue at our next conference, in Chicago in 2012! To Seattle and our able conference organizers--thanks for the memories!

In the meantime, to tide us over until the next conference in Chicago, this newsletter offers a rich overview of Baltic Studies activity today. It includes reports from programs in our field,

photographs of the Seattle conference and Dr. Smidchens' talk from the Baltic Studies luncheon, an overall report on the conference from the organizers and impressions from participants, overviews of Baltic Studies panels sent to the conferences of other scholarly societies, reports from officers of AABS, and an exciting article on incorporating Baltic perspectives into survey courses. Like our conference, this newsletter's contents show our organization to be vital, dynamic, and growing.



AABS, University of Washington,  
Box 353420, Seattle WA 98195-3420

**POSTMASTER: Address Correction Requested**

The AABS is an international educational and scholarly non-profit organization. The purpose of the Association is the promotion of research and education in Baltic Studies. Its activities include sponsoring meetings and conferences for the exchange of scholarly views, the evaluation of research in Baltic Studies and supporting the publication of research and other information about Baltic Studies. Membership is open to anyone wishing to support these endeavors. All AABS memberships include complimentary subscriptions to the quarterly *Journal of Baltic Studies* and the *Baltic Studies Newsletter*. Membership dues are not tax deductible as charitable contributions but may be deductible, depending on individual circumstances, as miscellaneous professional expenses. All donations to the Baltic Studies Fund are deductible in the United States as provided by law.

To communicate with us, detach the entire sheet including your address and send it to the return address printed above.

- ☐ Please note my address correction above.
- ☐ Please send me additional information about the AABS including a membership application.
- ☐ Please send me information about the Baltic Studies Fund.
- ☐ Please send me additional information about the AABS, including a membership application (Membership forms may \*also be downloaded at the AABS website, <http://depts.washington.edu/aabs/>)

Check the type of membership desired (annual dues in parentheses):

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|---|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> student (\$25.00)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Baltic resident (\$25.00) | <input type="checkbox"/> retired (\$35.00)           | <input type="checkbox"/> regular (\$60.00) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sponsor (\$100.00) | <input type="checkbox"/> patron (\$500.00)         | <input type="checkbox"/> life membership (\$2000.00) |  |

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