The National Library of Finland in Helsinki was the host of Bibliotheca Baltica’s latest symposium in October 2010-11-29
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The General Director of the NLR (National Library of Russia), Vladimir Nikolaevich Zaitsev, passed away on October, 27th, 2010. He was the director of this library from September, 1st, 1985, a valued member of the Bibliotheca Baltica Board since 2008, and a dear friend who will be sadly missed by present and former Board members.

Owing to his efforts and energy the NLR navigated well through the demanding times of perestroika, was expanded into an impressive new building, and underwent extensive computerization. It was also under Zaitsev’s leadership that the library was given the status of the National Library of Russia.

Due to Vladimir Zaitsev's vigorous activity, the NLR extended its professional contacts to libraries all over the world, e.g. through the International Federation of Library Associations.

He was also the initiator of the Russian Library Association, in 1994. He became its president and in 2010 he had just been re-elected for a new term.

Zaitsev's work was marked with many government awards and decorations, in Russia and elsewhere, including "Medal for Services to the Fatherland», “Decoration for Services to Saint Petersburg », and the «Legion of Honour» of the French Republic.
The Helsinki conference and Baltic cooperation

The countries around the Baltic Sea border each other and have an ocean in common which unites them. We also have a history in common which goes several centuries back. Today's cooperation within the Baltic region is important from a political point of view for all these countries. We have a tradition of cooperating between ourselves in quite a few areas, e.g. trade and industry, education and research, and cultural activities.

Libraries are also involved. Bibliotheca Baltica is a small organisation, but the prospects look bright provided we work actively in the years to come. The task is about keeping up the good work we are doing today, but also to identify new areas of cooperation and new partners. We just recently started cooperating with the Baltic Writers' Union around translation and digitisation of fiction. In the next few years we will expand cooperation to other organisations.

The symposium in Helsinki was a success with exciting speakers and good interaction with the audience. There was a consistently nice atmosphere and plenty of time for socializing between the sessions. The National Library of Finland, generously hosting the symposium, actively contributed to its success.

Two members of the board terminated their work this year and I want to thank them both. Our treasurer, Lise Johannsen, and Irma Reijonen, who was responsible for planning and carrying through this year's symposium, have made valuable contributions to Baltic cooperation.

The next goal is the symposium in Estonia in 2012. But before that, there is a lot of work to be done. More members, and more cooperation with other organisations, is high on the agenda.

Gunnar Sahlin, president of the Bibliotheca Baltica Board
(Translated by Kjell Nilsson)
Liisa Savolainen, Function Director, Research Library, The National Library of Finland, born in 1964 in Tampere. Master of Arts, graduated from the University of Tampere in 1991 with the degree in European History, Library and Information Science and Administration Studies. She has further made supplementary studies in communication and management, especially in High-Education Management. She has diversified working history in all library sectors, starting as an information specialist in a high-technology company, continuing in the academic sector and in the local administration. By Espoo City she worked as a communication officer for the Sector of Education and Culture (1991 – 1997). From 1998 working by Espoo City Library she was a project manager for the new main library (Sello Library) opened in 2003. In the main library her responsibilities included information services for adult population and IT-services. She started at the National Library of Finland 2005, first as a head of public services, and from 2007 as a function director for the Research Library. Both collections and services are on her responsibility including legal deposit work and national bibliography. Her professional interests are management and organization theories and historical research. Out of duty she reads good literature, takes some Pilates-lessons and spurs junior ice-hockey. In the near future she may be a dog-owner, too.

Dr. Professor Renaldas Gudauskas, Director General of Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania.

On August 5, 2010 Dr. Professor Renaldas Gudauskas was appointed as the Director General of Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania after winning the administrative competition announced by the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture.
Born in 1957, Renaldas Gudauskas graduated from Vilnius University, Faculty of History, with a degree in library and information sciences. He began his professional career at Vilnius University in 1980. During the period of 1991-2002 he was the Dean of the Faculty of Communication, and has been professor at this faculty since 2002. From 1996 to 1998 he was Counsellor on information and communication to the President of the Republic of Lithuania. Since 1997 he has been holding the positions of the chairman of the Lithuanian Library Board and the chairman of the Information, Computer and Communications Committee of the Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO. From 1998 to 2000 he held a position of Vice-Minister at the Ministry of the Management Reforms and Municipal Affairs. From 2000 to 2003 he was Director of the Knowledge Management Centre at Vilnius University, and from 2003 to 2007 he was Director of the UNESCO International Centre of Knowledge Economy and Management at Vilnius University. Since 2001 he was Counsellor to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania on information society and knowledge economy, education, science and innovation policy issues. His previous career covered several areas, including information and knowledge management as well as university teaching. He was editor of several scientific journals, coordinator and expert at European Union projects. Dr. Gudauskas’ research interests are in the information society policy of the European Union, development of information society, knowledge management and knowledge economy. Dr. Gudauskas is a member of Herity International Committee (Rome, Italy), an expert at the European Science Foundation and Research Council of Lithuania.

From the Report Bibliotheca Baltica 2008-2010 (some paragraphs, e.g. the Mission and Goals, have been been omitted)

The Board of Bibliotheca Baltica has consisted of the following members in the period 2008-2010:
Gunnar Sahlin (president), Irma Reijonen, Vladimir Zaitsev, Asko Tamme, Lise Johannsen (treasurer), Jürgen Warmbrunn (secretary), Irina Lynden (co-opted).

Andris Vilks as past president and because of his involvement in several of the BB projects has attended several meetings of the Board as a guest.

Further guests at Board meetings were Klaus-Jürgen Liedtke (Virtual Baltic Sea Library) and Andrei Yakovlev of the Amber Bridge Foundation.
Subjects discussed at Board meetings:

The ambitions and role of BB were determined and the text of Bibliotheca Baltica’s mission updated and revised

The administration of the website has become easier thanks to technical support from the National Library of Latvia (host).

The yearly membership fee was increased to 60 Euro. No invoices were sent out for the calendar year 2008, however, because BB was not able to produce and distribute a newsletter in that year.

Because the number of member libraries has decreased over the past years discussions about how to get new members were held in the Board. In the coming months libraries and library associations which have been identified as potential members by members of the Board will be approached. It is also important to re-establish contact with some of the member libraries with which we have lost contact.

The Board of Bibliotheca Baltica is particularly aware of the fact that public libraries play a less prominent role in our group than they did before. It is therefore one of the aims for the next years to make public libraries more interested and involved in Bibliotheca Baltica.

Thanks to financial, logistical and staff support from the National Library of Russia at St Petersburg the outcome of the 2008 symposium in St Petersburg was prepared and distributed as Proceedings volume. Information was also made available in the Newsletter.

Much thought was given to the Symposium in Helsinki. Regarding the topic several possible subjects were discussed and in the end a decision was taken to hold the symposium under the motto: Cultural identity and diversity of the Baltic Sea Area. Flyers were distributed at the IFLA conference in Gothenburg in August this year and sent to all member libraries.

Bibliotheca Baltica as a volunteer organization depends to a large extent on the commitment and activities of its Board members. So the election of new Board members for the period 2010-2014 is of particular importance to the future of BB.

A revision of the Statutes (last adapted at the Stockholm Symposium in 1998) has proved necessary since the former Statutes are partly outdated and partly lack certain provisions and regulations that are important for the further development of Bibliotheca Baltica. Also the Board believes that it is important to put both the Treasurer and the Secretary on the same level as the other Board members by also having them elected by the General Assembly.

Regarding future Symposia Bibliotheca Baltica would be very happy to hold one of its next Symposia in the new building of the National Library of Latvia in Riga once this is completed. Furthermore Bibliotheca Baltica has already received an invitation to hold a symposium at Rostock University in 2019 when Rostock University will celebrate its 600th anniversary.
During the Symposium in Helsinki, an invitation from Estonia to host the Symposium in 2012 was expressed and thankfully accepted.

Much thought has been given to cooperation. Contacts have been established for example with the Virtual Baltic Sea Library and Klaus-Jürgen Liedtke. Unfortunately much work and little spare time at the “home libraries” have been a problem for closer contacts / work even if BB finds projects like it very interesting and worthy of involvement. BB has nevertheless been declared a “partner” of the Virtual Baltic Sea Library project. There are activities in Sweden and Finland that could be of relevance for the Virtual Baltic Sea Library (Litteraturbanken in Sweden and Bank of Literature at Helsinki University). The aim of BB in this context is among others to provide support for the integration of the Virtual Baltic Sea Library into TEL. One of the national libraries has to be aggregator for this.

Further cooperation projects (e.g. with Hibolire, the renewed Ars Baltica initiative or a publication project with the Amber Bridge Foundation) are being followed up and will be reported upon in future newsletters, on the website and at the next General Assembly.

A Best Practice Workshop on digitization is also still under consideration with the possibility of NORON (association of Nordic national librarians) and BB jointly organizing a common conference/symposium in 2011, thus creating a “bridge” between the bi-annual symposia. Digitization is nevertheless already a major topic at this symposium with the pre-symposium excursion to the Digitization Centre of the National Library of Finland at Mikkeli having been a particular success for all who participated.
The Bibliotheca Baltica X Symposium in Helsinki, Finland, was held 21-22 October 2010 and the theme was Cultural unity and diversity of the Baltic Sea Region - common history, different languages, mixed cultures.

The Board is most thankful for the hospitality and great work of the Finnish National Library and above all expresses its thanks to Kai Ekholm, Director of the National Library, and Irma Reijonen, member of the BB Board and responsible for planning and preparations.

The symposium was opened by Gunnar Sahlin, President of Bibliotheca Baltica, and the guests were welcomed by Kai Ekholm, Director of the Finnish National Library. The BB secretary Jürgen Warmbrunn then presented the programme for the two days.

The keynote speech of the first day was held by Senior Academic Librarian for Research Affairs at the National Library of Sweden, Jānis Krēslīņš. It is published on page 15.

Then followed presentations on Digital reunion of dispersed collections in the Baltic Sea Region. Unfortunately Andris Vilks, Director of the National Library of Latvia, could not attend because of illness. Also Deputy Director Ludmila Kiryukhina, National Library of Belorussia, and Nikolay Nikolayev, National Library of Russia, were not able to attend the symposium, but Irina Lynden, also National Library of Russia, presented the text of the latter, Materialy iz biblioteki Radzivillov v Sankt-Peterburge.

In the afternoon Sirkka Havu, Special Librarian at the National Library of Finland, gave a Survey of the Book Donations Helsinki University Library received from the Russian Universities and Gymnasia in the 1830s, and Laila Österlund, Dept. of Early printed Books and Special Collections, Uppsala University Library, showed how the Baltic Sea Area (is) represented in the Collections of the Uppsala University Library (page 24).
Finally, Ilkka Paatero gave the **Patron’s view on Digitisation of Dissertations**.

On the second day the keynote speech was held by Jan Lundin, Director General of the Council of the Baltic Sea States. His theme was **Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region - political and cultural Aspects** (page 31).

Writer and translator Klaus-Jürgen Liedtke talked about **Literatures in the Baltic Region - a common focus**, a presentation that was commented on by Professor Riho Grünthal, University of Helsinki (page 34).

The afternoon was dedicated to interesting presentations about digitization, its problems and opportunities and the importance of copyright. Tapani Sainio presented **National Digital Library of Finnish Libraries, Museums and Archives**, and Tiina Ison both **Digitisation Best Practice : a Strategic, Systematic and Holistic Approach** and **Metadata in the Digitisation Process**, all three on the web as well as the talk of Chief Legal Advisor Pekka Heikkinen on **Copyright issues in digitisation projects**.

Both days of the symposium was commented and summarized by Kjell Nilsson, Director of International Relations, National Library of Sweden.

At last, the pleasant and generous reception that concluded day one must be mentioned. The Friends of the National Library of Finland were invited and could together with the participants of the symposium delight in a spirited lecture by Klaus-Jürgen Liedtke, beautiful music performed by two baroque-costumed musicians, and a delicious buffet.

Furthermore, on the day before the symposium, some of the participants made a visit to the National Library’s digitisation centre in Mikkeli.

Sombre news reached us a few days after the end of the meeting: The General Director of the National Library of Russia, Vladimir Nicolaevich Zaitsev, passed away on October 27th, 2010. He was the director of this library since 1985 and a member of the Bibliotheca Baltica Board since 2008. He will be sadly missed.
When standing amidst the grandeur and luxuriousness of the Finnish National Library and speaking about the construction of a virtual library of Baltic Sea literature, it is difficult not to ask: how could such a project ever compete with this? Nevertheless, as comprehensive as such a library can be, when it comes to the ocean of literature there are always texts, ideas and interconnections that can slip through the net. In this sense, I think, there will always be a role for a forum that seeks to unite what is scattered and lost.

Some days back I was reading a Swedish article about the Wältic—the Second Writers’ and Literary Translators’ International Congress in Istanbul that took place several weeks ago—when I suddenly came across a reference to myself: “Den tyske författaren Klaus-Jürgen Liedtke talar med utgångspunkt i det virtuella Östersjöbiblioteket om ett ‘interkulturellt eko’ som utgår från det partikulära, alla egenarter och skillnader. Vi rör oss med Tomas Tranströmers ord ‘genom den underbara labyrinten av öar och vatten’.”

Yes, I thought, that sounds great, if that in fact was what I said: an intercultural echo starting from the particular, from all that is distinct and different. The act of translation cannot be seen as merely transporting the original; it maintains difference between the languages and adds something to the original by conveying it into new settings.

The language of music that surrounds us currently indicates the geopolitical changes we have undergone in recent history. In Copenhagen you are still celebrating the Nordic Music Days and in Stockholm you have successfully inaugurated the Baltic Sea Festival – since the fall of the Berlin wall the focus of such events has conspicuously widened to include the southern and eastern parts of the Baltic Sea, which in some languages is called the Eastern Sea, in a few others the Western Sea, and which, whatever name it is given, is situated east of the North Sea. In themselves these names indicate that we all have our own Baltic, and I think of this sea as a conglomerate of diverse impressions, a kaleidoscope of views and knowledge.

We are all travellers in time and space, reading and interpreting time in space, as Karl Schlögel said. So let me give you some glimpses of my own Baltic, different parts and aspects of which I have experienced at different times in my life. It was in fact only relatively recently I heard my mother’s account of her first concrete...
experience of this sea, which she remembered as imbued with a light that was totally different from the light she knew from her home in the inland village of Kermuschienen. The year was 1932.

There were two young teachers, Bagusat from Stobrigkehlen and Paslat from Broszaischen, and they had colleagues, friends in Samland. They organised a truck, which they loaded with chairs and benches. And the children sat up in the open air; Waltraud Steinke was not yet ten. They set off with two classes, without adults, only with her older sister Elfriede and Lisa Kaschewski and Martha Poschwatta as supervisors, a whole lot of kids, and they drove hour after hour through the hilly country. They drove through Königsberg. On the Galtgarben hill, a hundred and ten meters high, they were overwhelmed by the sight, the towers of the royal city were sparkling in the distance. At the coast in Rauschen they looked down across the steep shore and for the first time saw the Sea, with whitecaps: it was very green, the sun supernaturally bright. So different the sky was in Kermuschienen, clearer, and the clouds full of dragging white islands. They went swimming in black leotards. And didn't come home that day. In Drugehnen they stayed overnight with the other teachers in the hayloft, slept in all the hay, it pricked and tickled their skin, their eyes, with everything they would still experience.

Both an oral tale and a literary tale from the Baltic, from a lost Baltic I explored in my book *The Sunken World* about my mother's village in East Prussia before the Second World War. As I see it, a writer is, among other things, a collector of the lost past – one recalls Olavi Paavolainen's collection of images from a lost Karelia, *Muistojen maa*.

Even before the First World War, the Baltic proved a magnet for artists. It was around Nidden (today's Nida in Lithuania) that painters like Max Pechstein started to paint *plein air* in 1908, an approach also taken by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner at the same time on the island of Fehmarn in Holstein. On the peninsula of the Darß there was a painters' school for women, founded by Paul Müller-Kempf. Later his house, known as the Künstlerhaus Lukas, became a retreat for artists from different fields. And Akseli Gallén-Kallela travelled to Karelia and painted the black woodpecker in the green wilderness of Kuhmo.

I recall the huge stones and rocks on the island of Replot outside of Vaasa, rocks very similar, as I found out later, to those in the bay of Käsmu in northern Estonia with its picturesque wooden houses that once belonged to ships' captains. Another place that sticks in my mind is the island of Gråhara, in Finnish Harmaja, which I became acquainted with while translating Elmer Diktonius' *Janne Kubik*, in a chapter about smuggling in the Gulf of Finland (there is nothing like the task of translation to imprint a place on the mind). And who could forget the storm in Tove Jansson's *Norra Gåsskär*?

I recall the white sandy beaches of Palanga in Lithuania, of Nida on the Curonian Spit and in Courland, which is the setting of one the most famous of the many novels devoted to the northern summer, Eduard von Keyserling's *Waves*, a work written by a blind man in Munich in 1911 that intensely evokes scenes from life at a sea resort. And I recall the white villas of Heiligendamm in Mecklenburg where the first sea resort was built back in 1793. One of my trips around the Baltic started there and it took me from Rostock via Tallinn to Helsinki on my way to the Karelian Isthmus, St. Petersburg, Riga, Kaunas and Kaliningrad.
In Helsinki we met up Ingmar Svedberg to get some information on the location of the villa where Gunnar Ekelöf and Elmer Diktonius had stayed in 1938, which I knew had to be close to Kronstadt, because they reported hearing the guns over the water. We found Villa Golicke based on Ingmar’s instructions to proceed along the beach and look out for a blue roof.

“Man sieht nur, was man weiß”, Goethe is supposed to have said: you only see what you know. And without the knowledge and help we had found in Helsinki we would never have found the place. When we did at last find it, we stayed some days, paying quite an exorbitant sum for the privilege to the current Russian owner. As it turned out our quarters were not in the main house, but in a side-building where everything was the same as it was in 1938, even the mattresses in the beds. While there, I recalled some pictures taken outside the garden fence showing around a dozen pre-war Finnish writers on the beach of this Nordic Riviera.

Some years later the great Russian poet Gennady Aygi pointed out to me the fact how close of the homes of three of this decade’s most famous female poets had been to each other: with Edith Södergran in Raivola/Rosjtjino, Elena Guro in Uusikirkko and Anna Akhmatova in her budka in Komarovo.

I recall another trip 10 years earlier, a “Baltic Waves Cruise” made up of 300 writers that started from St. Petersburg. When we reached the island of Gotland, we agreed we should establish a residence of our own there, and it was less than a year later that, with the generous help of the Swedish government, the Baltic Centre for Writers and Translators was founded. Situated in Visby, the medieval town of ruins and roses, this retreat became associated with a saying at the end of nineties about writers from the Baltic countries: “He came like a ruin and left like a rose”.

One of the writers I met in the Baltic Centre in Visby, a young Norwegian by the name of Tor Eystein Överås, spent eight months travelling around the entire Baltic. As he wrote of his experiences: “Jeg vokste opp under den kalde krigen. Østersjøen var et hav som skilte. Østersjøen var et hav fly ble skutted over og et hav hvor ubåter fra et land gikk på grunn i skjærgården til et annet. Jeg kann ikke se den grense under vann.” His Baltic has no borders; it is language that puts up borders. He also speaks of tales that interconnect to form a collective memory. (“Fortellinger som sammen danner et kollektivt minne.”) And he discovers that landscape does not stop at national borders. It is not possible to understand the context of the whole if you don’t leave the national borders behind.

It is important to tell diverse stories of a sea we all share in order to dismantle one-sided memories by means of the memories of the other: “die jeweils einseitigen Erinnerungen an den Erinnerungen der anderen zu brechen”, as Götz Aly puts it. “Mapping the region” also means regaining a lost Europe with all its historical interconnections—in Austrian writer Karl-Michael Gauß’s phrase, the “Rückgewinnung des verlorenen Europa”.

Although we do not have a common identity—and here I refer finally to historian Matti Klinge—the sea unites us more than it has divided us. By gathering a corpus of texts from the Baltic region, will we just shape a collection of texts, connected by their
relationship to the sea, or does so-called “Balticness” mean something more, in the sense of constituting fragments of a collective consciousness?

The question is: what does the view of the other tell me about my own country? What kind of knowledge does literature convey to us? The knowledge of the other may be rather restricted and our curiosity limited, but what the other thinks and writes about us is of undeniable interest. The saying that characterizes the Finns as a people who are silent in two languages—where does it stem from? Let me give you Bertolt Brecht’s example, talking as an exiled writer about Finnish landscape and society with a sense of pathos that is highly unusual for his poetry.

Fischreiche Wässer! Schönbaumige Wälder!
Birken- und Beerenduft!
Vieltöniger Wind, durchschaukelnd eine Luft
So mild, als stünden jene eisernen Milchbehälter
Die dort vom weißen Gute rollen, offen!
Geruch und Ton und Bild und Sinn verschwimmt.
Der Flüchtling sitzt im Erlengrund und nimmt
Sein schwieriges Handwerk wieder auf: das Hoffen.

Er achtet gut der schöngehäuften Ähre
Und starker Kreatur, die sich zum Wasser neigt
Doch derer auch, die Korn und Milch nicht nährt.
Er fragt die Fähre, die mit Stämmen fährt:
Ist dies das Holz, ohn das kein Holzbein wäre?
Und sieht ein Volk, das in zwei Sprachen schweigt.

In John Willett’s translation from 1976:

Finnish Landscape
Those fish-stocked waters! Lovely trees as well!
Such scents of berries and of birches there!
Thick-chorded winds that softly cradle air
As mild as though the clanking iron churns
Trundled from the white farmhouse were all left open!
Dizzy with sight and sound and thought and smell
The refugee beneath the alders turns
To his laborious job: continued hoping.

He notes the corn stooks, spots which beasts have strayed
Towards the lake, hears moos from their strong lungs
But also sees who’s short of milk and corn.
He asks the boat that takes logs to be sawn:
Is that the way that wooden legs are made?
And sees a people silent in two tongues.

Today’s experience is of course quite different from the refugee’s experience during the war: once I travelled by train from the Finnish lake district back to Helsinki—and already before lunch the passengers were sitting in the smokers’ saloon (those were the days!), drinking and chatting, so full of joy that you might doubt why on earth Finland needed Nokia to connect people.
Reinventing Old Media - Rediscovering the Baltic.

The task of the opening address at any of these very special gatherings is to preach the gospel of the Baltic. But it is not without a sense of trepidation that I embark on this challenge here today. Many may contend that there is not all that much more that can be said about the Baltic. Yet, it seems that every time we preach this gospel, we reconfigure the Baltic. We find new meanings and move towards new understandings, which, in the end result, open new perspectives and new opportunities.

This is clearly borne out by my personal experience among you. I addressed the inaugural gathering of the Bibliotheca Baltica in Lübeck in 1992. The Bibliotheca Baltica was founded in the belief that by studying book culture we would gain new insights into the cultural history of the region, which, in turn, would enable us to rise to the challenges of the day. 18 years ago, the region was perceived against a spatial background that was predominantly historical and economic, we could almost claim Hanseatic, in character, a network which distinguished itself by laying the groundwork for the transfer and negotiation of culture for centuries. Today we are less interested in the legacies of economic structures (mirabile dictu!), more enthralled by the culture of communication - that is, more in the processes which enabled this transfer than in that which was transferred. For our purposes, in 1992 we were still predominantly interested in the book, in physical objects. Furthermore, we spoke German. We believed that the region exhibited a homogeneous identity despite the vicissitudes of history and that this identity even displayed a clear linguistic character.

Since then we have explored the Baltic from a number of prospects. We have apprehended aspectual and perspectival dimensions which otherwise may have remained hidden. Such dimensions have allowed us to discover new meanings for established terms. One such term is the Baltic. Perspective seldom is purely physical. The Baltic, as we use it in the expression Bibliotheca Baltica, is neither self-explanatory nor perspicuous. Unlike the Baltic Sea, which can be found on a map, the Baltic is hard to pinpoint. It is a complex network of territories, each with its own history and cultural markers, a conglomerate of heterogeneous parts, which have changed over time. Never has there been any real consensus on where the Baltic is located or agreement about its distinguishing features. The answers to these questions cannot be formulated in purely geographical terms. Though the Baltic Sea is an integral part of this region, it is not its defining element. The Baltic changes its character the moment we change our perspective.

The only way of acquiring the means of understanding or forming an opinion about the region is to search for a more comprehensive and penetrating understanding of this region as a cultural entity, albeit multifarious one. This understanding is not simple and straightforward since it shifts constantly in accordance with the change of perspectives. We recast the entire region every time we alter our temporal perspective. During the fourteenth and fifteenth century, the region included territories significantly east and west of the Baltic Sea, which were a part of the trading network of the Hanseatic League. In the early modern period, the Netherlands were a part of the region, both as an economic power and as a cultural force. In the seventeenth century, the Baltic stretched to the “shores of Bohemia.” In the eighteenth century, France was an integral part of the region. Time, however, is not independent of other dynamics. By changing perspectives, we change the complexion of the Baltic. Instead of looking for defining characteristics, we discover features. Instead of highlighting commonness and homogeneity, new geographic, historical, cultural and social meanings become manifest.
The Baltic requires a **willingness** on our part to suffer sudden shifts in topography, a **pliancy and flexibility** to withstand jolts and surges across time and a **readiness** to undertake a peregrination along the book’s migratory path in this region, a curiosity to discover new colour schemes.

My goal today shall be to reconfigure the geography of the region yet one more time, thereby even changing our preconceived notions of the Baltic. I shall introduce my musings with an image – an image that conjures and intermixes contradictory feelings. By doing so, I am opening the door to the Baltic which is as much an idea as a geopolitical entity.

The image before us, the representation of the Low Countries in the semblance of lion from the latter half of the 16th and the first half of the 17th century, is one with great suggestiveness, depicting a territory in search of and reaffirming its newfound identity by implying something that is not directly expressed. By literally transforming the geography of the provinces of the Low Countries after the revolt against the Spanish empire into a metaphor with its own political significations, the spin doctor behind this metaphoric coup, the Austrian born Michael Aitzinger, underscored the value and meaning of being able to launch notions of identity which are changeable, transferrable and fluid and which can be not only adapted to needs that arise, but can also be used to profoundly influence the course of events in some of the most remote corners of the European continent. The *Leo belgicus* which we see here before us clearly demonstrates that reading maps is not as straightforward a task as we sometimes imagine. We shall be looking at and imagining maps countless times during the course of this day – simultaneously, we shall be redrawing them. We shall be expanding and reducing them at will, so as to include or delete territories which, at first glance, do not seem to belong to those under our scrutiny; we shall also be introducing a diachronic perspective - that is transposing our contemporary perceptions into other styles of composition or modes of expression which we usually associate with different time periods and geographical experiences. By doing so, we all become time travellers and translators – as we sit here and ponder this very concrete lion, we are at the same time challenged to construct a number of mental maps.
The *Leo belgicus* is for us here today a symbol for the history, character and limitations of identity formation – and as such, it addresses a major issue in the history of ideas and one that, quite remarkably has yet to garner the level of attention it merits. This metaphorical map compels us not only to explore the essential nature of regional cultural identity and its shifting topography, but also to adopt a new methodology in studying how modern European cultural identity has been constructed, functioned and continues to remake itself.

One such attempt to construct a new methodology was coined more than one hundred years ago by the Afro-American historian William Edward Burghardt DuBois, who travelled through Europe in the search for European identity. DuBois was a young man when he undertook his European pilgrimage – later he was to become one of the most controversial interpreters of contemporary history due to his stringent political standards – as he remained a committed Stalinist to his death, unperturbed by the lurid revelations of Stalin’s culture of repression, which undoubtedly has cast a shadow on his own work. But as a young man DuBois reconfigured European geography in a way which opened new perspectives on the European experience. The map of Europe that Dubois construed did not posit its focal point in economic might, its internal market, its external borders, or security considerations. DuBois’s map did not consist of contiguous territories, but rather of nodes – Rome, Berlin, London, Paris and Vienna – each representing the constituent elements of an imagined European identity – Rome - the continuity of organization, Berlin - the authority of government, London - justice between men, Paris - individual freedom and Vienna - systematic knowledge.

Today, I shall launch the notion that the lion and all that it represents are vital to our understanding of the Baltic. In some ways, this may not seem so surprising. Few would discount the notion that Brussels is of vital importance to us today! But I shall be looking at this issue historically, from the perspective of a culture of communication, against the background of an imagined identity. I shall be defining the Baltic not using usual parameters, but using the Netherlands as my filter and my lens - an infinity focus, in other words.

This is not as outlandish as it may seem. Netherlandish print and book culture has been ubiquitous in the Baltic. Catalogues of institutional libraries as well as those of private collections reveal that access to Netherlandish books and book markets has been readily available for centuries. A quick survey of the catalogue of one of the more renowned private collections in the Baltic, that of Sweden’s diplomatic representative to Constantinople and allegedly one of the first from this region to have tasted coffee, Claes Rålamb, and a quick review of the catalogue of the Royal Collections prepared just before the greater part of the collection was destroyed by fire in 1697, reveals to what extent print and book culture from the Low Countries permeated the cultural milieu of the Baltic.
The catalogues also reveal a paradoxicality and ambivalence as regards this influx of materials from the Low Countries. At times, the *libri holandici*, are singled out as a distinct category of books, as a special import item. At others, they are not regarded as foreign at all.

Books did indeed change the way in which early modern citizens of the Baltic perceived the world. Book culture from the Low Countries was instrumental in this process. Today I would like to single out eight developments which by their conspicuousness and prominence arrest our attention, but for a variety of reasons have not garnered the attention they deserve. I shall be claiming that the Baltic and its book culture can best be understood by something that geographically lies outside of it.

First, book culture of the Low Countries radically altered the way in which books were collected and how they laid the foundation for new collections or were incorporated into already existing ones. With the evolution of Low Countries into one of the major book markets in Europe, books were no longer a secondary item on shopping lists, but items that captured the imagination of consumers in the Baltic in much the same way that luxury articles of merchandise or manufacture captivated the imagination of Continental connoisseurs of good taste. Prior to this juncture, books had been collected by students during their course of travel from one Continental seat of learning to another, by leading political and military figures for whom books could attest to their character and ability in worldly and ecclesiastical matters and by those who used books as direct demonstrations of commercial success. Books had also travelled in crates as part of war booty.

With the rise of the Low Countries as a center for book production and book trade a significant shift took place. Suddenly we witness the introduction of “mail order” as a means of procuring books. Catalogues are published and distributed widely; some Dutch catalogues are even published in the region, the most renowned being those of Jan Janssonius issued and distributed in Stockholm in 1651-1652. In addition to catalogues, entire networks of agents developed. They scoured the market and not only satisfied demand, but also created it. During 1650’s and 1660’s, the most prominent agent in the region was Peter Trotzig who whose clients include Magnus De la Gardie, Carl Gustaf Wrangel, Clas Tott and the family Rosenhane. Copious correspondence between Trotzig and his clients has been preserved, giving us a rare insight how books were ordered and transported together with building materials, landscape sculptures, maps, globes, instruments and even fruit trees. Of importance was the introduction of cash transactions – collecting meant buying. Newspapers with their countless advertisements played an important role in this trade. It was not necessary to immerse yourself in catalogues – it sufficed to quickly scrutinize advertisements. No longer was ordering material a time consuming endeavour, everything went quickly. Where cash was involved, quick delivery was not only desired, but also richly recompensed.
Collection development could be a rapid process. Books and printed materials did not need to be purchased separately. Just as war booty, which created large gaping holes in existing collections and new unwieldy and clumsy stockpiles elsewhere in the Baltic, even purchases could cumbersome. One such example is the extensive collection of Gerhard Johann Vossius, perhaps the largest private collection in Europe at this time which was purchased by Queen Christina through the mediacy and agency of the seller’s son, Isaac Vossius, who had come to Stockholm to oversee collection development for ambitious library which Christina had envisioned. Collections were targeted and through a number of various financial plans they were procured for Stockholm. In the same manner a sizeable number of Hugo Grotius’s books reached the Baltic.

Secondly, the nature and sheer number of all these transactions transformed the culture of reading in the region. A result of the networks built up between the suppliers and consumers, reading became a much more private endeavour. The more books, the more stratification! If one of the defining characteristics of the region had been its oral culture, in which it had been possible to communicate using Middle Low German idioms over vast territories, with the advent of print culture in the region (a 17th century phenomenon in the region) the need for conversation typical of oral culture began to recede. Instead of engaging others in an ongoing exchange, it was much more prevalent now to retire to one’s quarters and replace conversation with private reading. The private world of the private library was also instrumental in solidifying written culture in this region. One received news in written form, one encountered the world through the written word; one regarded text, not memory, as the best guarantee for spreading ideas and creating legacy. In this regard, book culture probably more than anything else altered the linguistic topography of the region and the century old patterns of communication, in which spontaneity had been preferred to script. Private reading had been the domain of devotional literature. With the influx of books from the Low Countries, destined to the privacy of cold living rooms, private reading spread to new domains and completely new types of reading experiences. Even technical literature could now be private.

Thirdly, the spread of print culture from the Low Countries also profoundly influenced the size of books, the nature of their use, and their symbolic value. As I reviewed historical catalogues and examined some typical early modern collections, I soon discovered among the works with a Netherlandish provenance a predominance of folio or duodecimo, that is, volumes where each leaf of a bound work was $1/12^{th}$ of the size of a whole sheet. Books were also much more ceremonial, with an attached symbolic value. In a hitherto unknown way, book culture was now associated with a “sense” of officiality. Charles XI could be presented with a map produced by Blaeu. Coffee table books abounded – dazzling us with their splendour and colourfulness, not necessarily with their subject matter. What previously had been reserved for dedicatory bibles had now spread to other subject areas and forms and became the embodiment of a particular world-view.
Fourthly, Netherlandish book culture opened windows to previously unknown worlds. All of a sudden it was possible to undertake long journeys without leaving the privacy of one’s own reading room. A print depicting a view of some distant location is just as a desired collector’s item as any other valuable book. We are no longer in the world of Sebastian Münster’s encyclopaedic, detailed and continual registers of events and places in time. Rather we are thrown into the world of snapshots – easily digestible, part decoration, part status symbol, etched in our short time memory, quickly forgotten, but just as easily retrievable. This material allowed the viewer to become a world traveller without leaving home. De la Gardie’s vast collection of urban landscapes allowed him on a daily basis to touch base with the most important cultural centers of Europe, even to the heavenly Jerusalem. This notion of virtual travel clearly defined cultural boundaries. The city, which primarily had evoked the notion of trade and economic vibrancy, now summoned a special cultural association. It was not the volume of trade which defined a city, but rather its ability to serve as a showcase for the arts, architecture, and most importantly, the written word. This city could also be relocated to the countryside, provided there was a broad band connection to the main server in Amsterdam, Antwerp or Leiden.

Book culture from the Low Countries also transformed regional identity, our fifth point. Besides opening the world, the influx of literature from the Low Countries also contributed to breaking down supra-national cultures into smaller units with clear national markers. Due to a culture of communication in place for hundreds of years, speakers and readers developed strategies to improve comprehension. Those ordering books from the Low Countries could understand Dutch in written form at a level equal or even higher to that than in oral form. Nonetheless, the appearance of a written form of that which previously had been regarded as a dialectal variant, hastened the development national idioms. Their easy accessibility created, interestingly enough, a hitherto missing awareness of otherness and difference. That which in oral culture led to enhanced communication, opened for a Verfremdungseffekt in cultures based in writing. Adaptability and accommodation which had worked so perfectly in oral cultures was now replaced by translation as the only means of overcoming this disjuncture. The continuous ingression of book culture only exacerbated this process of alienation. It became the new medium of communication. The Low Countries were a center for translation and the number of books reaching the Baltic which were translations was by no means insignificant.
One area in which this alienation was underscored was type, our sixth observation. The Baltic was historically the domain of Gothic type, from 1540 and onwards mostly Fraktur, the German style of black letter. Printed materials from the Low Countries presented a completely new aesthetic experience.

Suddenly the page itself became an identity bearer – the narrow margins, the head-pieces, compact pages of solid monotonous type which was Dutch and was intended to look so, the interspersed use of italic, which disrupted the flow of the predominant roman. Using these elements and combining them with 32mo format, a way of folding an uncut sheet into 32 leaves providing 64 pages when printed on both sides, an Elzevir came into being and could not be confused with anything else.

This very specific form could be encountered everywhere – not just reading something that could be regarded as characteristically Dutch. Ceasar's Gallic Wars could provide such an encounter, as we see in this very special and rare edition from 1635.

As we will shortly see, type also was adapted to the preferences of audiences and to divert the watchful eye of censors.

Despite these very strong identification markers, early modern book culture was much more complex than that. Buying something from a dealer in the Low Countries did not necessarily mean that one was getting something Dutch. Here we must introduce a new concept, without which it is hard to understand book culture of this period – that of intermediacy, our seventh point. By turning to the Low Countries one was also accessing the rich world of French and Italian book market.
Book culture of the Low Countries drew the client and reader yet further into the wide world. In a similar fashion, book production from the Low Countries reached the Baltic not only through dealers, but in other very circuitous paths. The Low Countries also catered to the needs of the Catholic world, with very special ties to the Hapsburg Empire. A significant number of books produced in the Low Countries reached the Baltic as war booty, as part of one of the more outstanding Jesuit libraries in Central Europe.

By opening itself up to the book culture of the Low Countries, the book collections of the region were upgraded yet in another way. A very palpable change can be observed in the way subject matter was systematized and ordered, our eighth point. More so than any other book market, the Netherlandish one was multi-disciplinary. This, in turn, led to collecting in subject areas which hardly had been represented at all previously. Areas which one usually associates with the Low Countries are mathematics (with its center in Leiden), architecture, building regulation, science and technology, fortification sciences.

Less noticed is the literature which reached the Baltic in philosophy and which by being, at times, radically anti-theological, introduced a new type of learning that we more readily associate with the world-view of 18th century enlightenment.
This special type of literature brings us to our ninth and final point. An integral part of book culture of the Low Countries was its contribution of the spread of forbidden ideas. The networks were by no means always perspicuous. On one level, it was a great theological battle. The appearance of works such as the *Atheismus devictus* of Johann Müller of 1672 bears witness to the acerbity of the conflict.

Müller openly addresses the problem of prohibited ideas in the "livres de Hollande". At times, they feign not to be Netherlandish to divert attention.

It is in Müller’s polemical treatise that we find out that Spinoza's *Tractatus*, allegedly published in Hamburg, was really the work of Netherlandish book producers and that its appearance was later adapted to a more Gothic style. Thus, on another level, it was a battle of artistic medium. Thus the World Bewitched by Balthasar Bekker, a controversial work, one of the key books of the early enlightenment, was not only translated, but even typographically adapted to enhance its impact on the German-speaking book market (236 yellow).

Müller exclaims in despair in his World Bewitched – *wer kan alle Scharteken erzehlen die aus Holland zu uns kommen*. The impact of the book culture of the Low Countries on the Baltic was truly profound. It introduced new colleting traits, enhanced the world of private reading, consciously used size for effect, opened the world from the privacy of one’s own living room, underscored the close connection between books and identity construction, altered the aesthetic experience in the encounter with the book, opened up completely new subject areas, and was actively enmeshed in creating new channels for the spread of ideas. Thanks be to God that this was so, and thanks be to you for listening.
Catechismus Catholicorum, a unique catechism from 1585, is considered one of the eldest known prints in the Latvian language. It is a translation of Petrus Canutius’ (1521-597) Parvus catechismus catholicorum or Institutiones christianae pietatis printed in Vilnius by Daniel Lancicius. The Jesuit scholar Ertmannus Tolgsdorf (d. 1620) is thought to be the translator.

The printing was initiated by Jesuits residing in Vilnius at the time. It’s a booklet in sexto (6to) format in total 36 folios (A-F6). This book – taken by the Swedes from the Jesuit College in Riga in 1621 as war booty – was entitled Catechismus catholicus in an inventory of books from this Jesuit College by Johannes Bothvidi, later Bishop of Linköping. The books from Riga were presented to Uppsala University in 1622. Catechismus catholicus is looked upon as a unique print that has been of great importance for the study of the Latvian language. Uppsala University Library (UUL) intends to scan it. It was also published in St. Petersburg in 1915 with comments by Professor E.A. Wolter.

Apart from the copy in Uppsala fragments from the catechism have been found in Skara Diocesan Library. The same Catholic text was translated into Swedish as early as 1579 by the Jesuit Pater Laurentius Nicolai Norvegus, active in Sweden – alias Kloster Lasse. The only known copy of this edition is held in Helsinki University.

Braniewo/Braunsberg 1626

On the last day of June 1626 the Swedish Army invaded Braniewo or Braunsberg in Varmia (Ermland), now a part of Poland, in order to take the books of the rich library of the Jesuit College. There were many reasons why King Gustavus Adolphus chose to lay his hands on these renowned book collections.

The king together with his Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna was keen to build up a Swedish university as Sweden was in the process of becoming a great European power. There was an urgent need of education for students and the growing corps of government officials. Another reason for plundering the library of the Jesuit College was its great importance as a religious centre for the counter-reformation. The result was that one of the treasures of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – the collections of the Jesuit College Library in Braniewo – was on its way to Sweden as war booty. The books were kept in barrels and cases when arriving in Stockholm. The valuable cargo was thereafter transported to Uppsala by boat on the River Fyris.
As time went on, the books were integrated according to subject with the existing holdings of UUL. The library was housed in the Gustavianum building from the end of the 17th century until 1841 when the new university library building, Carolina Rediviva, was inaugurated.

Cataloguing

In the beginning of the 20th Century a Polish library commission visited Sweden in order to trace Polish books that had been taken after the Thirty Years’ War. The Commission report is known as Sprawozdanie z poszukiwań w Szwecji dokonanych z ramienia Akademii Umiejętności.

Jesuit College Catalogue

- Polish library commission visited Sweden 1911
- The Commission Report known as Sprawozdanie
- The Jesuit College catalogue 2007

One of its main results was to initiate a reconstruction of this invaluable collection of books in catalogue form.

Józef Trypucko (1910-1983), a professor of Slavic languages at Uppsala University, worked on this project for many years. Following his death, the work was continued by other researchers, in recent years primarily by Michał Spandowski and Sławomir Szyller at the
National Library in Warsaw. The project was concluded in 2007, and as a result of this successful cooperation the Jesuit College Catalogue was published. The Jesuit College Library consisted primarily of printed works from the 16th and 17th centuries, but it also contained manuscripts and incunabula. The collection in Uppsala currently encompasses just over 63 manuscripts, 2,000 printed works and 335 incunabula.

The cooperation is ongoing - now dealing with adjustments of the records within the MARC 21 format. After that the records of the catalogue are to be exported to the Swedish national library catalogue LIBRIS.

Copernicana collection in UUB

- **De revolutionibus orbium coelestium** – probably a gift from the diocese chapter in Frombork to the Jesuit College in Braniewo

  *UUB: Cop.2*

- The Copernicana collection consists of 45 numbers

De revolutionibus orbium coelestium libri six

The picture shows Copernicus *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium libri six*, 1.ed. published in Nürnberg in 1543. Georg Joachim Rheticus – an Austrian astronomer - brought pressure on Copernicus to publish the heliocentric theory and he also supervised the printing from the beginning.

The first provenance on the title-page written by Rheticus is a dedication to Georgius Donder, Canon at the Chapter of Frombork. Copernicus himself was officially installed as a Canon in 1501. The second provenance indicates that the book later had been brought, possibly bequeathed, to the Jesuit College of Braniewo.

Only one day after entering Braniewo, the Swedish troops reached Frombork (Frauenburg), the diocesan capital of Varmia (Ermland). The Frombork Chapter Library was indeed an object of keen interest for the conquerors since it – like in the Braniewo Library - gloated over rich book collections - some of which were veritable treasures.

Nicolaus Copernicus had a 100 years earlier held various positions as canon, judge and administrator of Varmia. In 1543 his private library was bequeathed to the diocese. This is the simple explanation why so many books from The Copernicana Collection ended up in Uppsala University Library.
The Copernicana collection, today one of the University Library’s special collections, consists of 45 items. The criteria are, primarily, that the works either have been owned by or used by Copernicus. The Copernicana have been of great interest to many scholars and there is a comprehensive, scholarly description of the collection. The publications of Ludwig Birkenmajer belong to the fundamental works in this field. And of course the Polish expedition, mentioned before, which was sent in 1911 to Sweden to make a survey of Polonica in Sweden, did explore the collection. In addition there are two Copernicana works in the Astronomic Observatory Library in Uppsala, three in the Cathedral Library in Strängnäs, one in the Cathedral Library in Linköping and one in the National Library of Sweden.

A new project based at the University of London, consisting of a number of Copernicana specialists, will scan the whole Copernicana collection in UUL. The project is funded by the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine in London and is planned to start in January 2011. This means that the collection will eventually be accessible via the UUL website.

**The Alphonsine Tables**
The volume in the Copernicana collection with call number Cop. 4 contains two incunabula with astronomical tables. The first one is known as The Alphonsine tables after King Alfons X, King of Castile and Léon. There are two provenances on the title page: 1st Copernicus’ own signature and 2nd the provenance of Bibliotheca Varmiensis. A lot of his own annotations can be seen in the margins.

- Alphonsus, rex Hispaniae (1221-1284) Tabulae astronomicae. 2. ed. Venezia : Johann Hamman, 31.10.1492
- Johannes Regiomontanus Tabulae directionum prefectionumque. Augsburg : Erhardt Ratdolt, 2.1.1490
Raptulare Upsaliense

Furthermore Cop. 4 contains a sewn up hand-written note book – the so called Raptulare Upsaliense with astronomical tables written by Copernicus’ own hand during his time in Krakow as a student.

Alphonsus, rex Hispaniae (1221-1284)
Tabulae astronomicae. 2. ed.
Venezia: Johann Hamman (de Landoia), 31.10.1492
UUB: Cop. 4:1

Johannes Regiomontanus
Tabulae directionum profectionumque.
Augsburg: Erhard Ratdolt, 2.1.1490
UUB: Cop. 4:2

PictureSearch

Uppsala University Library has extensive collections of maps and pictures. Some of them are searchable online in PictureSearch which is a database under construction. PictureSearch is also a part of a uniform technical platform, Alvin, for searching, indexing and storing cultural heritage objects. Alvin is an abbreviation for Archives & Libraries Virtual Image Network. Alvin is currently under construction.

Manuscript maps over Finland

In the collections at UUL there are about 240 manuscript maps over parts of Finland. All these maps can be found in PictureSearch. In the record the map is described with names of originators, date of origin/establishment, physical description (i.e. size and material), notes, subject headings and bibliographical sources.

 Principally the maps have been acquired via donations such as those from C.D. Gyllenborg (1812?) and Claes Fleming in 1831.
Map of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania 1613

The development of the first original map of Lithuania based on detailed knowledge of the country started on the initiative of Prince Mikołaj Krzysztof Radziwiłł the Orphan (1549-1616) in the 1590s. The map is thought to have been published 1603, but the issue published 1613 is the only one that still exists. The mapmaker was Tomasz Makowski (c. 1575-1616). Printed in Amsterdam by Willem Janszoon Blaeu (1571-1638). The issue of 1613 was a cartographical masterpiece and was copied in several editions during the following century. A unique copy of the map of 1613 is preserved and kept in Uppsala University Library. The copy in Uppsala has a map of the River Dnieper and a descriptive text on Lithuania by Makowski. It is a wall map with an ornamental border and battens of wood. The size is 90 (height) and 115 (width) centimetres. The map is well known and has been published on several occasions, but still attracts attention. It will soon celebrate its 400th anniversary. However, preservation is needed in order to keep this unique map for future generations. It’s also one of the selected objects for the so called Adopt a Book Programme that includes unique items other than books. It’s a good opportunity for the public to support a library and contribute to preserving unique cultural heritage items for the future.

Malmberg documents/”Malmbergska papperen”

Another deserving object for digitization is the so called Malmberg documents (Malmbergska papperen). It is a manuscript collection containing parts of the Swedish governor-general archive which was kept in Riga during the 17th century. This archive is useful for research within areas such as demography, onomastics and economic history.
All the works mentioned above constitute examples of works belonging to the European Cultural Heritage, in some cases even to The World Cultural Heritage. These are works that due to the course of history happen to be kept at the Uppsala University Library. The library staff is well aware of this fact and feels an urge and a responsibility to preserve and make these unique works accessible to research and to a wider public all over the world.

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Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region – political and cultural aspects

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure and an honour to be asked to speak at this Forum to a group of people who in the framework of Bibliotheca Baltica have the ambition to “advocate closer collaboration within the Baltic Sea Region” – an ambition that the Council of the Baltic Sea States, and I personally, share.

The most obvious historical reference to cooperation in our region is of course the Hanseatic tradition. The historical aspects of our region was dealt with by Mr Kreslins already yesterday, so I hesitate to delve in to them here today. Still, it is to me striking how the Hanseatic League initially developed as a collaboration focussing on what the CBSS today would refer to as Civil Security; an example is the Agreement 1259 between the towns Wismar, Lübeck and Rostock, whose main purpose was defending trade routes between the cities against Baltic Sea Pirates. The Pirates are – partly thanks to this kind cooperation – long gone from the Baltic Sea. The concept of Civil Security is, however, more topical than ever. The CBSS pursues cooperation against trafficking in human beings, a modern form of slavery. In addition, we have cooperation networks between senior officials of the 11 Governments belonging to the Council in areas such as civil rescue/disaster management, nuclear radiation and safety, and the fight against organized crime. For both the Hansa at the time and our political leaders today it is clear that to solve the big problems, you need to cooperate beyond borders.

the Council of the Baltic Sea States was established as a reaction to a more recent history, i.e. the geopolitical changes of the early 90s. The Council comprises 11 Member States, the nine around the Baltic Sea and Iceland and Norway which actually holds the Presidency 2010-2011, and the European Commission.

Every year there is a Ministerial – or a Summit of heads of Governments of the region – which gives guidance to CBSS Cooperation, and thus to the Secretariat. Education and Culture was established at the Riga Summit in 2008 as one of five long-term priorities of the Council. Consequently, I could thus respond positively to your invitation, not fearing the wrath of my superiors for not acting in line with priorities set. Furthermore, the “Vilnius Declaration – a Vision for the Region 2020” endorsed by the heads of Government at the most recent Vilnius Summit in June this year says
that “A strong regional identity is emerging, fostered by research, education, culture, and the common heritage of the region.” What you are discussing at this Conference to me represents an excellent example of efforts to nurture our common heritage.

The CBSS Secretariat is based in Stockholm and employs 19 persons from nearly all countries of the region. We try to improve regional cooperation in all the five long-term priorities. Two – Civil Security and Education/Culture – has already been mentioned. The other three are Environment, Energy and Economic Development.

In the field of the Environment, the CBSS of course avoids duplication with the main cooperation effort in the region – the Helsinki Commission. We try to supplement Helcom in fields such as Sustainable Development and Spatial Planning through Expert Groups such as Baltic 21 and the associated inter-governmental cooperation VASAB – Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea.

In the field of energy, the main player in the CBSS family is BASREC – the Baltic Sea Region Energy Cooperation, which gathers government representatives of all 11 CBSS members for discussions on regional energy policy. In the field of Economic Development, finally, I would like to mention the newly established Expert Group on Maritime Policy, a priority of the current Norwegian Chairmanship. With the Baltic Region representing som 15% of the world’s cargo traffic it is clear that initiatives to promote cleaner fuels and less waste in the maritime sector could make a big difference.

Let me delve into the matter of cultural cooperation a bit more closely. Conferences of Ministers of Cultures have been held on a regular basis since 1993. As a supplement to these conferences, yearly meetings with Senior Officials are held once a year in the country holding the CBSS presidency.

As a priority in the field of culture the Ministers for Culture in the Baltic Sea States have decided to focus on cultural heritage, contemporary culture and the promotion of diversity and intercultural dialogue as means of advancing a regional identity.

The Council has two specialised bodies that address matters of cultural cooperation: Ars Baltica as a network for contemporary culture and the Monitoring Group on Cultural Heritage.

You will of course not be a stranger to the Ars Baltica as the very idea of Bibliotheca Baltica originated at a symposium with the same name organised within the Ars Baltica framework. I would like to say however that the Ars Baltica as a network:

- aims to extend and further develop infrastructure for enhanced cultural cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region.
- As a mark of quality, Ars Baltica awards its logo to projects that are good practice examples of cross-cultural cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region. These multinational partnership projects are actively supported and promoted by the network.
- In fact at its meeting a mere month ago, the network awarded its logo to four new projects that met this criteria, one of them actually will be presented by the next speaker, Mr Klaus-Jürgen Liedtke, namely the Virtual Baltic Sea
The other body, the Baltic Sea Monitoring Group on Heritage Cooperation, is responsible for promoting and developing cooperation in the field of cultural heritage.

- Work of the group is carried out through the national bodies responsible for heritage protection but other actors are involved in this issue. The Bibliotheca Baltica certainly is considered as carrying out very important work in protecting our literary heritage which to this day is preserved around our region, not always as national heritage but indeed regional heritage (as an example there is important Polish heritage preserved in Sweden, German in Estonia etc.)

- The Monitoring Group has launched several novel initiatives, one of the most widely recognised being the Cultural Heritage Forums, which offer a unique meeting place for professionals working with, or interested in, cultural heritage in the Baltic Sea Region. The most recent such Forum, entitled Cultural Heritage – Contemporary Challenge, gathered some 250 participants in Riga just six weeks ago, on 8–11 September 2010. The forum is based on the premise that the cultural heritage of the Baltic Sea Region is of outstanding value and diversity; this is also our strong belief.

- I would like to add here that new technology allows for new types of preservation. Not only can we preserve “born-digital” heritage such as films, but we can digitise practically any type of original heritage such as our literature, accordingly the Monitoring Group has included digitisation as part of its work and I see from your programme that this is also high on your agenda.

The Baltic Sea region today compares favourably to most regions in the world in terms of achievements in regional cooperation. Historically, however, it still in some ways compares less favourably to – itself. In the early 20th century, no visa was required to travel in the Baltic Sea region. In May 1914, a large “Baltic Exhibition” was organized in Malmö with participation by all littoral states at the time. S:t Petersburg was a city competing with Berlin, London Paris and New York – perhaps even with Hamburg! - as a magnet for capital and talent.

Then came revolutions and world wars, and regional cooperation has met challenges ever since. The last twenty years significant progress has been made, however, and I see no major reason why it should not continue. All countries except one are members of the European Union, and the yearly CBSS high-level meetings ensure that a regional cooperation format exists which incorporates all States in the region on an equal footing. This goes also for cooperation within Helkom and many other organisations. Full freedom of travel in the region still eludes us, however, and I can only hope that it will be possible again soon. I repeat the message from the Vilnius Summit last June:

by 2020 “A strong regional identity is emerging, fostered by research, education, culture, and the common heritage of the region.”

I believe we can get there by continued work on regional cooperation, like Bibliotheca Baltica and this Symposium. The CBSS Secretariat will certainly try to help.
The notion of a common cultural space is a rather recent one. The expression “world literature” was first used by Goethe in 1827 in the context of discussing translation. He uses the term to convey the idea of literature crossing borders, making exchange possible, of the transfer of art and criticism as transfers of quality and personal taste. He sees this “world literature” as also having a social function in that it provides a means of communication between the Serbian peasant and the reading public of the upper classes at the court of Weimar. In this context he also speaks of a kind of “world traffic”—a term that seems very relevant to our own age of globalisation—and access to foreign literary treasures as a form of appropriation, using the example of Serbian folk songs, translated pseudonymously by the female Slavic scholar Therese Albertine Louise von Jacob in 1825-26.

How does space become part of our common collective memory? And what role does literature play in dealing with the traumas of the past?
I think of the Baltic also as a sea of victims—the refugees crossing the sea in 1944 and 45, on their way to Western Germany or Sweden, the Jewish women who were driven into the sea by Nazi soldiers in January 1945 or the Jews whose boat was bombed by friendly fire from the British air force in the Bay of Lübeck at the end of the war. And I think of Anna Akhmatova—who has been called a “Mnemosyne of history”—when she comments on state terror in the Soviet Union: “We are so occupied by numbers—eighteen million, twenty million—that we have started to forget the human beings behind them. But each human being succumbed in his way.” (1964). Our memory is deeply bound to language, it has its specific language—which is also why we cannot really speak of a European “culture of memory”.

The Baltic Sea region does not share a common literature, a common language, a common general public. Each culture has its own Baltic Sea and its mythical image of it. But can landscapes, including cultural ones, also be seen as independent of their national affiliation? Are they in a deeper sense not at all German, Polish, Russian, Lithuanian, Finnish, etc? As Johann Gottfried Herder put it in his Diary of My Journey in 1769: “It makes no difference whether it is now Couronian, Prussian, Pomeranian, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Dutch, English or French sea; for our shipping it is sea everywhere.”

Today’s world has become closely connected by trade and communications, not least in the form of the internet, but what about our common mutual understanding? What do we really know about our neighbours, about their literatures, both past and present?
Responding to the challenge represented by Google, the European Union has thrown its weight behind efforts to digitise the European cultural heritage, but these efforts are primarily focused on national activities. There are very few projects taking place in a common supranational space, in different languages at the same time.
This deficit seems particularly relevant to the literature of the Baltic Sea region, where reciprocal knowledge of the contributions from countries other than one’s own is minimal, particularly after fifty years of being shut off from one another. In short, there is only German, Polish, Russian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Finnish, Swedish and Danish Baltic Sea literature, and there are only a very few celebrities, such as Immanuel Kant, Herder, Catherine the Great, Dostoevsky, Sören Kierkegaard and Strindberg, whose names have a cross-border currency.

Moreover, following the re-unification of Europe in the 1990s, we are now seeing a new nationalization, new frontiers, new demarcations. We each have our own history, or should I say histories, something very much in evidence when one considers the stark differences between what has been written in Russia and in the Baltic states pertaining to the same aspects of 20th century history. Even our interest in each other seems to have diminished during the last decade. With no shared language, what do we have in common, other than perhaps our mutual diversity?

The growing need for global co-operation means we need to consider how common understanding can be promoted across a whole range of spheres, including that of our literary heritage. What I am talking about here involves the idea of promoting the development of supranational identities. In my opinion Europe is too big a union to develop a common, non-national identity, and sub-regions as the Mediterranean or the Baltic seem to be much more suitable as objects of shared identification. How then might it be possible to present literary texts in order to make a certain region visible in a new way, in an age where digital presentation is taking over from print media? How can we re-shape a common understanding of ourselves in such a regional context? And in an age dominated by the image, how can we make literature and translation as such more visible and available?

My vision is based on the possibility of re-reading, re-writing and re-arranging the common literary heritage and contemporary literature as a kind of rag carpet. My point is that national literature cannot be the only focus of literature anymore. The notion that a particular landscape somehow belongs to one nation seems a questionable one. As Immanuel Kant wrote in his essay on Perpetual Peace, “Originally, no one had more right than another to a particular part of the earth.”

It is worth considering here the contribution that exile and its echoes have made to shaping literary experience, as in the case of Brecht, who moved from Denmark to Sweden to Finland and via Russia to California, then to Switzerland and back to (divided) Berlin.

As Brecht-expert Hans Peter Neureuter writes, “When Brecht shifts his settings to America, Asia, the Caucuses or Denmark, Sweden or Finland, he is not interested in the ‘individual value’ of these settings and circumstances, and therefore not in the particular or in exotic folklore, but rather in their ‘exemplary value’. We should be able to better recognize the familiar in the unfamiliar. How he transforms, for example, Hella Wuolijoki’s Tavastian comedy *The Sawdust Princess* into *Master Puntila and His Man Matti* is especially revealing. Hella Wuolijoki was appalled and bitterly disappointed when she received Brecht’s finished play. It was not only that her funny punch lines and lewdness were missing and that everything was ‘too epic to be
dramatic; her chief objection was that she no longer found the characters authentic: ‘Kalle is not a Finnish chauffeur!’ ¹ Her assessment changed mysteriously when she began to translate Brecht’s work into Finnish; she now found that ‘the piece is very rich and Puntila has become a national character’. ² The leading Finnish critic, Olavi Paavolainen, told her that Puntila was ‘a classic Finnish comedy’ and that he knew of ‘no other work, where so much is said about Finland so concisely’.

It seems that the view from outside can sometimes be crucial to finding the truth about one’s national and social identity!

But as identity is still a national one, the development of supranational traits can only be thought of as a common process over a longer time period. A network is necessary that backs up this process.

The network I have been involved in during the last thirteen years is the Baltic Writers’ Council. It was founded as a network of the literary organisations of the Baltic, both writers and translators’ associations, defining itself as a “forum for visions and ideas”, and has held its annual meetings at the Baltic Centre in Visby on Gotland ever since.

With the Baltic Meetings held in 2005, 2007 and 2009 in Kaliningrad, Visby and Narva, i.e. Russia, Sweden and Estonia, to be continued in Turku, Finland in 2011, the BWC has found new ways of bringing together writers and the public. A symposium on literature and art in the Baltic region with contributions by scholars from all the countries involved was held in 2002 in Visby and is providing the basis for an essayistic contribution to our newly launched virtual Baltic Sea Library.

The idea for such a library goes back to the year 1999. Over the course of a decade of cooperation, a network of editors has been built up, from St. Petersburg to Reykjavik. Now this network is taking on a new life on the web.

On a non-commercial basis the library shall explore and register the literary heritage of the whole Baltic Sea region (from Icelandic sagas situated in the Baltic to contemporary travel writing exposing the region to ‘the foreign eye’) and – via the internet – make it available and easily accessible to a wide public in all countries of the region and beyond.

Once installed, the library will, over time, develop into a Babel project, forming new clusters of interconnections and cooperation in the literary field of the Baltic Sea region. The national editors will have to ask themselves: “Which literature of my nation - connected to the common sea - do I want the others to see?” Translators will be encouraged and inspired to produce translations of the selected works of literature into the various languages of the Baltic region. This will considerably and effectively visualize the cultural diversity of the literary canon of the Baltic for a broad public. As a result, important literary works originating from directly neighbouring countries of the region (say Sweden and Estonia or Lithuania and Poland) can be deciphered and explored with the inhabitants’ mother tongue – without taking the roundabout way of English or Russian.

After two world wars and 50 years of Cold War and the Iron Curtain, the region of the Baltic Sea, especially in comparison with the Mediterranean, is in many ways still one of the blank areas of common European cultural consciousness awaiting reinforcement. Although there are manifold current contacts among authors,

¹ Bertolt Brecht, Journale 24.9. 1940, GBA vol. 26
² Ibid. 3. 10. 1940
societies, critics and readers, there is still widespread ignorance about the common historical and cultural heritage.

The idea of the network is innovative in that it aims to reinforce cultural contacts by means of information technology in an area that has been split up and divided for decades. As the perception of each others’ cultures is still restricted, the Baltic Sea library will lay the foundations for a common perspective on the Baltic as a whole, ensuring access to the widest possible audience, by forming a mosaic out of the contributions and through their translations create and promote the development of new work possibilities for authors, translators, researchers, scholars, copyright managers, literary societies and librarians from the entire area. It will also bring professional and democratic expertise into the fast-growing and sometimes rampant field of online-publishing.

How can the implementation work?
In each country an editor is to choose and comment on the texts to be scanned (novels only in extracts, no full text library). Editorial comments should provide a brief context for the text in question, an argument for why it has been chosen, the history of origin, influence, translations and a short biography of the author. These notes are to be linked to indices.
Together with these comments the proof-read scans are to be delivered to our webmaster, who will set up a new site for the Baltic Sea Library, containing a database in each of the 11 languages. The coordination of tasks is steered from an office in Berlin.
The core of first proposals – confirmed by an editorial board - will subsequently be supplemented by processes of accretion and snowballing. The library as a whole will function as a rhizome in a dynamic process. The democratic resources of the medium should be duly exploited to enable library users to look at and appreciate texts in ways and combinations different from those set down by history, language and forms of political and national dominance.

Recently there have been debates in all of the Scandinavian countries about a national literature, but the debates are always considered from the perspective of national self-assurance and its paedagogic foundations: As stated in Sweden’s Dagens Nyheter of August 9th, 2006: A literary canon should awaken reader interest as well as further an integration in which it establishes a common educational basis.

Instead of individual countries, I find it much more interesting to envision a supranational region, establishing a virtual sea, full of different literary voices that can enter into a dialogue with each other which can be communicated in the other languages of the region, first and foremost through translation.
What then should be included in the common canon? The most important criterion is that the work of literature should have both global and local importance, and that it should have not only a national significance but be relevant to the Baltic region as a whole, and thus to its synthesis. Apart from including the original text in the virtual library, the aim is also to make it possible for users to get some idea of its significance for later literature and to track its reception.

When arranged by language, the work of Edith Södergran, for example, who was born in St. Petersburg in 1892, would be subsumed not only under Swedish literature
but also become part of the Finnish and Russian tradition. The library thus inherently promotes a comparative point of view.

During a preparatory meeting in Ventspils in Autumn 2008 the editors decided upon the following criteria:

“The Baltic Sea of Words’ is to be seen as a whole, as a topic, thus carrying the interculturally connected literatures including echoes of other texts. Starting from today’s separation we see the need of crossing borders in our quest for the Baltic in our minds, the lost neighbours.”

An appreciable degree of consensus seemed to prevail around the notions that

- for inclusion in the library texts on life by this sea (or in its cultural, economic, political &c catchment area) certainly qualify, but so do texts based on (participant) observation and outright foreignization.
- some articulated relationship to the common sea – be it conflictive, embracing, or noncommittal – should inform the texts: they should relate to the fact of the Baltic’s existence, i.e. be recognizably ostseeisch.
- there should be no chronological limits on inclusion: for the Baltic to emerge fully as a scene of interaction and conflict, of cooperation and enmity, the library needs to accommodate the entire time span covered by written documents. The editorial approach will focus on the longue durée, the threads of commerce and cultural exchange from medieval times until today, from Latin as lingua franca to English, from folk poetry and documents of the Viking era to contemporary texts.
- texts mapping historical change are to be included in the selection: eg. The Tin Drum by Günter Grass and Hanemann by Stefan Chwin. An initial question to be addressed is that of which texts are paradigmatic for the region.
- literary quality takes precedence over instructiveness but texts that illustrate “dead ends,” i.e. that might serve as deterrents in relation to the vagaries of the Baltic, might also qualify.

It was further agreed that

- once the principles of text inclusion have been further refined, editors’ personal tastes need to be taken into account: the library must not be allowed to develop into a sum total of the leading works of pre-defined literary canons from around the Baltic.
- the library should offer opportunities for interactivity and the use of other media (visual, audio) to enrich its offerings.
- an initial core drawn from the entire area is preferable to cumbersome compendia from all contributors; this core will subsequently be supplemented, the library thus develop over time into a Babel project, forming clusters of interconnections.
- there was a shared interest in one specific stratum, or genre, i.e.. that of travel writing exposing the region to ‘the foreign eye’.

In the Danzig-world of Günter Grass, the Travemünde-world of Thomas Mann’s Buddenbrooks or the Archipelago-world of Strindberg, the lost space of the past has been preserved as in a black and white photograph. In the works of these authors we can still smell the sea and grip their specific sight of it. Literary memories can be
collected and put together like morsels, into a kaleidoscope of different literary treatments.

As Hans Peter Neureuter said in his keynote speech in Ventspils: “In the Baltic context we are confronted from the outset with a heterogeneity whose diversity stretches across space and time”, and “it would thus seem to make little sense to filter out a representative canon from each body of national literature and merely juxtapose these bodies of literature with one another.”

A new model is needed, developed from the perspective of a “shared particularity”—a process of ongoing choice forming a patchwork of texts.

This postcard produced for the virtual Baltic Sea library provides a visual representation of the multilingual character of the project. The quoted line, originally written in Swedish by Tomas Tranströmer, has been turned into all the languages of the Baltic Sea. In a book such a diversity of languages tends to make the book unreadable, but on a website it is enriching.

On the Baltic Sea website users can search for authors via the languages they write in or via translations of their works into other languages. Users can also conduct searches for the texts themselves and the locations they feature, thus establishing a multitude of combinations and links and even bring about information for planned travels in the area.

The choice of languages was not a given one: languages do not occur at the same time on the literary world scene and they have had a different impact on the literary development. For medieval times Latin and Old Icelandic are indispensable. For modern times it seems important not to include all Russian or German literature. There is even a difference in how big the role was the Baltic has played in their literature: as for modern Icelandic, Norwegian and Danish it is much less than for Swedish, for Finnish bigger than for Polish or Lithuanian who more looked to the woods than to the sea.

The starting point was the representation in our network, the Baltic Writers’ Council, where we have included 11 languages (meanwhile the Danish representatives have left us).

Other languages have – after a thorough discussion – not been considered at all: languages like Low German, Kashubian, Karelain, Livian (nearly extinct) and Sami. This has of course mostly practical reasons. Our strive to translate the chosen texts to as many languages as possible would definitely be deemed to become impossible when we have to find translators from say Icelandic to Karelain or to Kashubian. Even these languages’ own literary tradition does not seem to be so strong that it absolutely would have to be included or justify a representation in its own right.

We have chosen a poem in Low German, though: Anke van Tharau, written by Baroque poet Simon Dach from Memel (today’s Klaipeda), which has a thriving reception history, as it was translated to High German by Herder and to English by Longfellow and made its way to the world, nowadays being sung rather often in Russia’s Kaliningrad area.

The first choice of texts – three from each language – reveals a picture that is not really surprising: authors like Hamsun and Thomas Mann, Pushkin and Anna Akhmatova, Andersen and Karen Blixen are represented, but not yet Strindberg. Instead Selma Lagerlöf and Tove Jansson were chosen for Swedish literature, and the famous poem cycle by Tomas Tranströmer, Baltics (1974), from which we quote
on the opening page of our website. Written in Swedish it speaks for the experience of the entire Baltic from a subjective angle, quoting memories of the poet’s grandfather who was a pilot guiding ships through the Stockholm archipelago. Bill Coyle writes of Tomas Tranströmer, “The Baltic is Tranströmer’s archetypal environment, with its mixture of sea and islands, of sweet and salt water and, at least during the Cold War, of democracies and dictatorships”. It is a characterization that could be applied to many writers. And their literature has something to say to the world as a whole; in its synthetic dimension it becomes a landmark for literary communication across borders, a zone where, as Tranströmer puts it, “a conversation between friends really becomes a test of what friendship means”.

Coming to an end I would like to quote Neureuter again from his Ventspils lecture: “in a larger sense we are required to constitute ourselves as researchers and inventors of the Baltic Sea, of a large European province with several metropolises, and seek its particularities without losing sight of its general, its European aspect. It is in this sense that Fernand Braudel ‘invented’ his Mediterranean, by narrating it; and it is only through the process of reading that his ‘image’ emerges. And when reading we should not forget that our sea is much younger and that we are still only beginning.”

For me this project also provides a means of reembursing authors for the online use of their texts—both original authors and translators—and to give employment to translators between the languages of our specific region. One of our aims is to provide scholarships for translators working between Baltic Sea languages. The envisaged program to be financed by the International Writers and Translators’ House in Ventspils and the Nordic Council of Ministers will provide monthly scholarships from January 2011 onwards for a stay at the writer’s and translators’ centre in western Latvia.

There is one wish I would like to express here: in cooperation with the Bibliotheca Baltica, we would like to start a distribution list for contact persons within the national libraries, volunteering for research work esp. concerning translations and for discussions with our editors. Also we would like to discuss the possible linkage to The European Library and Europeana (including the question of global licensing for such a digital library).

For the spring of 2011, 5-7 April, we are preparing quite an ambitious meeting of editors and editorial board in Berlin with up to 30 participants, supported by Ars Baltica, the Nordic Council and the Goethe-Institute, on the question of digitising the Baltic literatures. This conference is planned to bring about an exchange of experience and a more standardized competence to all protagonists working for the digitisation of literature in the Nordic/Baltic region, dealing with among others “New ways of literacy, impact and challenges of a new reading culture in the digital world”. In combination with this conference we are also preparing a relaunch of our website which should make it more popular, colourful and audiovisual.

In autumn the same year in connection with the celebrations of the culture capitals of Europe, Turku and Tallinn, we would like to present the library and – hopefully – even at the Frankfurt Book Fair in connection with the focus on Icelandic literature. In the long run the choice of texts should also lead to anthologies in book form, at least in languages like German, Swedish and Russian.
The Swiss literary scholar Peter Utz wrote that “we have to translate if we want to uphold difference as a decisive cultural force of productivity”. Utz speaks about cultural difference as cultural quality, a quality which, within an indistinguishable European culture, re-establishes difference. The act of translation is therefore ambivalent: it engenders appropriation through its selection from a foreign culture, as well as distinctly shaping the image of the other through translation. The canon then takes the selection in hand, and with it, reassesses literary quality.

Canonisation is an ongoing, ever-changing endeavour. As a process, it means conceptualising traditions and contexts anew, freely, and the virtual library is a platform that can foster this process. By establishing a diverse platform of texts, it enables a new narration of the entire region – not as a conventional archive, but one whose digital character invites new interpretations. Canonisation in this sense harmonises with the recent phenomenon of fragmented reading – in which readers only perceive certain parts of literature assembled from quotations and chunks of text to create new interconnections. The polyphony that emerges through selection is not a given one; it is not set in stone, but is rather continually growing, inconclusive, and opens up the potential for canons based on a wealth of categories, including a canon of locations. An example of one such canon is my selection of “literary sites” inside the Baltic region for the Council of Europe in 2003 where the task was to choose up to 25 of the most important places around the Baltic.

If there is no truly common Baltic literature, then we have to forge one. Let us envision/create the Baltic Sea as a literary phenomenon! What is needed today is a common effort, a kaleidoscopic view, one that is not divided by the barrier of language but is synthesized in terms of motifs, topography, contextual references and translation within a framework administered by authors and translators, librarians and scholars for a broad public.
Minutes of the General Assembly of Bibliotheca Baltica, 22nd October, 2010, Helsinki will be published on the website.

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This edition of the Bibliotheca Baltica Newsletter was prepared and edited by Catharina Melldahl, National Library of Sweden, on behalf of the President and Board of Bibliotheca Baltica.

The Bibliotheca Baltica Newsletter is published at least once every year. A paper version is sent to all members of Bibliotheca Baltica, an electronic version is available on the internet at http://baltica.lnb.lv

Membership:

Bibliotheca Baltica invites all interested libraries to join the association in order to exchange information, to promote and to preserve the cultural heritage of the Baltic Sea Area, to initiate medium and large scale projects and to meet colleagues from the same field of interest.

The annual membership fee is 60 Euro (2010).

Please contact the secretary, Jürgen Warmbrunn, at the address above if you have any further questions about membership or if you have already decided to become a member of Biblioteca Baltica.