

**STARPTAUTISKA KONFERENCE**

**MUTVĀRDU VĒSTURE:  
MIGRĀCIJA UN LOKĀLĀ IDENTITĀTE**

**Latvijas Universitāte  
2008. gada 27.-29. jūnijs, Rīga**



**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

**ORAL HISTORY:  
MIGRATION AND LOCAL IDENTITIES**

**University of Latvia  
Riga, June 27-29, 2008**

## **Rikotāji Organizers**

Latvijas Universitātes Filozofijas un socioloģijas institūts  
Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, University of Latvia

Latvijas Universitātes Vēstures un Filozofijas fakultāte  
Faculty of History and Philosophy, University of Latvia

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Latvijas mutvārdu vēstures pētnieku asociācija „Dzīvesstāsts”  
Latvian OH researchers association „Dzīvesstāsts” (Life Story)

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**norden**

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**Ieva Garda-Rozenberga**, Mg.philol., LU FSI Nacionālā Mutvārdu vēsture // University of Latvia, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, National Oral History, Latvia

## **Veltījums**

Konferenci veltām Nacionālās mutvārdu vēstures projekta zinātniskā vadītāja profesora Augusta Milta piemiņai. Augustam Miltam ir īpaša nozīme Latvijas mutvārdu vēstures pētījuma attīstībā.

Būdams filozofs, ētikas profesors, viņš padomju laika beigās tika aicināts vadīt cilvēku atmiņu krājuma apkopošanu Latvijas Kultūras fondā. Tūlīt pēc tam, kad Latvija atguva neatkarību, viņa vadībā rūpe par cilvēku atmiņu nosargāšanu tika pārnesta uz zinātniskās pētniecības jomu – Filozofijas un socioloģijas institūtu.

Tagad šī darba augļi ir vairāk kā 3000 dzīvesstāstu ierakstu, aizstāvētas doktora disertācijas un vairāk kā 70 publikācijas dažādos zinātniskos izdevumos, kuru autori ir gan Augusts Milts, gan Nacionālās mutvārdu vēstures pētnieku grupas dalībnieki.

Šogad aprit Augusta Milta 80. dzimšanas diena, kuru nesagaidījis, viņš šai pavasarī aizgāja mūžībā. Augusts Milts bija apveltīts ar labu humora izjūtu un smalkjūtību, prata atrast kopēju valodu ar katru cilvēku un izcēla viņu stāstos vērtības, kas sakņojas cilvēku savstarpējās attiecībās, attieksmēs pret dzīvi. Viņš izgaismoja cilvēku eksistences gaišo kodolu, kas ir būtisks motīvs atmiņu un pieredzes stāstu krājuma mērķos un izdevumos.

## **Dedication**

The conference is dedicated in memory of Prof. Augusts Milts, the scientific director of the National Oral History Project and an important figure in the development of Latvian oral history research.

During the Soviet era Milts worked as a philosopher and professor of ethics. He was later invited to organize the memoirs collection at the Latvian Culture Foundation (Latvijas Kultūras fonds). When Latvia regained its independence, Milts' work in the safeguarding of people's memories was transferred to the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology.

There are now more than 3000 life stories and PhD dissertations, as well as over 70 publications in various scientific journals, authored by Augusts Milts and other participants of the National Oral History research group.

Augusts Milts passed away this spring. He would have been 80 years old this year. He was a man with a wonderful sense of humor and great sensitivity. He was able to connect on a personal level with others and able to bring to view their values regarding relationships and life in general. Milts knew how to reveal the bright essence at the center of each individual's existence, which is an essential theme in the collection of memories and personal experiences.

# PROGRAMMA

Rīgā, 2008. gada 27. jūnijā

Latvijas Universitātes Vēstures un filozofijas fakultātē, 1. auditorijā

10.30 Dalībnieku reģistrācija

11.30 Konferences atklāšana

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## PLENĀRSĒDE

**Vada: Baiba Bela**

12.00 **Alesandro Porteli** (Romas Universitāte, Itālija). *Atmiņa un globalizācija: Thyssen Krupp pretrunīgums Terni, Itālijā, 2004-2005*

13.00 **Vieda Skultāne** (Bristoles Universitāte, Anglija). *Atmiņa, identitāte un migrācija*

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### 1. sesija. MIGRĀCIJA UN KOPIENA

**Vada: Tīu Jāgo**

15.00 **Edmunds Šūpulis** (LU FSI, Nacionālā Mutvārdu vēsture, Latvija). *Trīmdas kopiena kā sociāla kustība*

15.20 **Maruta Pranka** (LU FSI, Nacionālā Mutvārdu vēsture, Latvija). *Migrācija kā mājas pretstats: gadījuma izpēte*

15.40 **Maija Hinkle** (Latvijas Mutvārdu vēstures projekts, ASV). *Amerikas latviešu kolektīvā stāstījuma veidošanās grupas un individuālajās intervijās*

16.00 Kafijas pauze

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### 2. sesija. MIGRĀCIJA UN STĀSTĪŠANA ZIEMEĻVALSTĪS 1

**Vada: Knuts Djupedāls**

16.20 **Maija Runcis** (Sederternas Universitātes koledža, Zviedrija) **un** **Johans Ēlends** (Sederternas Universitātes koledža, Zviedrija). *“Mēs un viņi” – migrantu gaidas un pieredze par zviedru sabiedrību*

- 16.40 **Ruta Hinrikusa** (Igaunijas Literatūras muzejs, Igaunija). *Divas dzimtenes. Mājas un pielāgošanās igauņu dzīvesstāstos Zviedrijā*
- 17.00 **Baiba Bela** (LU FSI, Nacionālā Mutvārdu vēsture, Latvija). *Migrācija kā vērtību katalizators*
- 17.20 **Māra Zirnīte** (LU FSI, Nacionālā Mutvārdu vēsture, Latvija). *Kursenieki Zviedrijā: migrācijas rezultāts*
- 17.40 **Aigars Lielbārdis** (LU FSI, Nacionālā Mutvārdu vēsture, Latvija). *Dokumentārā filma "Brāļi Zakuti" (35 min.)*
- \*\*\*\*\*
- 20.00 Pieņemšana Latvijas Universitātē (reģistrētajiem konferences dalībniekiem)

Rīgā, 2008. gada 28. jūnijā

LU Vēstures un filozofijas fakultātē, 1. auditorijā

9.00 Reģistrācija un kafija

9.30 Ievadvārdi – **Baiba Bela**  
(LU FSI, Nacionālā mutvārdu vēsture, Latvija)

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### PLENĀRSĒDE

- 9.45 **Inta Gāle Kārpentere** (Indiānas Universitāte, ASV). *Tradīciju un atmiņu priekšnesumi Sibīrijas latviešu ciemā*

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### 3. sesija. MIGRĀCIJA UN STĀSTĪŠANA ZIEMEĻVALSTĪS 2

**Vada: Edmunds Šūpulis**

- 10.30 **Helēna Jermāna** (Helsinki Universitāte, Somija). *Pārceļšanās un piederēšana: aprautā turpināšanās laikā un telpā*
- 10.50 **Outi Fingerūsa** (Ivaskilas Universitāte, Somija) **un Rīna Hāņpo** (Turku Universitāte, Somija). *Svešinieki no austrumiem – Karēlijas trimdīnieku stāsti un repatrianti no Krievijas*
- 11.10 **Jirki Poisa** (Somu Literatūras biedrība, Somija). *Zaudētās vietas*
- 11.30 Kafijas pauze

#### 4. sesija. MIGRĀCIJA UN IDENTITĀTE

**Vada: Maija Runcis**

- 12.00 **Knuts Djupedāls** (Norvēģijas Emigrācijas muzejs, Norvēģija). *Amerikas drudzis un imigrantu identitātes veidošana*
- 12.20 **Solveiga Miezīte** (Latvijas Universitāte, Toronto Universitāte, Kanāda). *Kanādieši, meklējot īru saknes: pārdomas par ceļojumu uz svētajām vietām*
- 12.40 **Anu Korba** (Igaunijas Folkloras arhīvs, Igaunija). *Krievu izcelsmes igauņu repatriācijas un adaptācijas stāsti*
- 13.00 Kafijas pauze

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#### 5. sesija. MIGRĀCIJA UN STĀSTĪŠANA

**Vada: Inta Gāle Kārpentere**

- 13.30 **Ami Nianga** (Edinburgas Universitāte, Skotija). *Nevienprātība un saskaņas trūkums mutvārdu vēsturē: migrācijas stāstījumu robežsituācija Rietumāfrikā*
- 13.50 **Tiu Jāgo** (Tartu Universitāte, Igaunija). *Migrācija: stereotipi un pieredze*
- 14.10 **Ilze Matīss** (Toronto Skolu valde; privātprakse, Kanāda). *Naratīvās domāšanas piensums dzīves vēstures pētījumos*
- 14.30 **Ilze Akerberga** (Indiānas Universitāte, ASV). *Pagātnes interpretācija divās dzīvesstāstu dokumentārās filmās Latvijā un Brazīlijā*
- 15.00 Pusdienas

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#### 6. sekcija. MIGRĀCIJA UN TOTALITĀRISMS

**Vada: Maruta Pranka**

- 16.00 **Ieva Garda Rozenberga** (LU FSI, Nacionālā Mutvārdu vēsture, Latvija). *Migrācija un totalitārisms: padomju totalitārās sistēmas diskursi Zviedrijas latviešu dzīvesstāstos*
- 16.20 **Irēna Saleniece** (Daugavpils Universitāte, Latvija). *1949. gada 25. martā no dienvidaustrumu Latvijas izvesto identitāte mutvārdu vēstures avotos un arhīva dokumentos*
- 16.40 **Anu Printsmane** (Tallinas Universitāte, Igaunija). *Igaunijas "Sibīrija" Kotla-Jarvē*

## Diskusija. MIGRĀCIJAS FILOSOFISKIE ASPEKTI

**Vada: Baiba Bela**

- 17.00 **Jelena Celma** (Latvijas Universitāte, Latvija). *Kas es esmu? Divu identitāšu pārklāšanās*
- 17.20 **Solveiga Krūmiņa-Koņkova** (Latvijas Universitāte, Latvija). *Reliģiskās minoritātes Latvijā: attieksme pret kultūras identitāti*

Rīgā, 2008. gada 29. jūnijā

Latvijas Brīvības muzejā

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- 10.30 Došanās uz Latvijas Brīvības muzeju
- 11.00 Ekskursija
- 12.30 **Dace K. Bormane** (LU FSI, Nacionālā Mutvārdu vēsture). *Identitātes ekoloģija*
- 12.45 Diskusija un pusdienas
- 14.00 Noslēguma vārdi un atvadišanās



# PROGRAM

**Riga 27 June 2008**

**University of Latvia, Faculty of History and Philosophy, Room 1**

10.30 Registration

11.30 Opening words – **Indrikis Muiznieks** (University of Latvia)

11.45 Opening words – **Maija Kule** (University of Latvia)

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## KEYNOTE LECTURES

**Chair: Baiba Bela**

12.00 **Alessandro Portelli** (University of Rome, Italy). *Memory and Globalization: Thyssen Krupp controversy in Terni, Italy, 2004-2005*

13.00 **Vieda Skultans** (University of Bristol, England). *Memory, Identity and Migration*

14.00 Lunch break

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## Session 1 MIGRATION AND COMMUNITY

**Chair: Tiiu Jaago**

15.00 **Edmunds Supulis** (University of Latvia). *The Exile Community as a Social Movement*

15.20 **Maruta Pranka** (University of Latvia). *Migration: the Opposite of Home. A Case Study*

15.40 **Maija Hinkle** (Association of Latvian Oral History, USA). *Creating a Collective Latvian-American Narrative from Group and Individual Life Story Interviews*

16.00 Coffee break

## Session 2 NARRATING MIGRATION IN NORDIC COUNTRIES 1

**Chair: Knut Djupedal**

- 16.20 **Maija Runcis** (Södertörn University College, Sweden) and **Johan Eellend** (Södertörn University College, Sweden). *“We and them” – Migrant Expectations and Experiences of the Swedish Society*
- 16.40 **Rutt Hinrikus** (Estonian Literary Museum, Estonia). *Two Homelands. Home and Adaptation in the Life Histories of Estonians in Sweden*
- 17.00 **Baiba Bela** (University of Latvia). *Migration as Catalyst of Values*
- 17.20 **Mara Zirnite** (University of Latvia). *Curonians in Sweden: Saved by Migration*
- 17.40 **Aigars Lielbardis** (University of Latvia). *“The Zakuts Brothers” – A Documentary Film. 35 min.*

20.00 Reception at University of Latvia (only for registered participants)

**Riga 28 June 2008**

**University of Latvia, Faculty of History and Philosophy, Room 1**

9.00 Registration and coffee

9.30 Opening words – **Baiba Bela** (University of Latvia)

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### KEYNOTE LECTURE

- 9.45 **Inta Gale Carpenter** (Indiana University, USA). *Performing Tradition and Memory on Stage in a Latvian-Siberian Village*

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## Session 3 NARRATING MIGRATION IN NORDIC COUNTRIES 2

**Chair: Edmunds Supulis**

- 10.30 **Helena Jerman** (University of Helsinki, Finland). *Movement and Belonging: Disruptive Continuities in Time and Place*

- 10.50 **Outi Fingerroos** (University of Jyväskylä, Finland) and **Riina Haanpää** (University of Turku, Finland). *Strangers from the East – Narratives of Karelian Exiles and Re-immigrants from Russia Regarding their Integration in Finland*
- 11.10 **Jyrki Pöysä** (Finnish Literature Society, Finland). *Lost Places*
- 11.30 Coffee break

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#### Session 4 MIGRATION AND IDENTITY

##### Chair: Maija Runcis

- 12.00 **Knut Djupedal** (Norwegian Emigrant Museum, Norway). *America Fever and the Creation of an Immigrant Identity*
- 12.20 **Solveiga Miezite** (University of Latvia, University of Toronto, Canada). *Canadians in Search of Irish Roots: Reflections on a Trip to Sacred Sites*
- 12.40 **Anu Korb** (Estonian Folklore Archives, Estonia). *Repatriation and Adaptation Stories of Russian-Born Estonians*
- 13.00 Coffee break

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#### Session 5 MIGRATION AND NARRATION

##### Chair: Inta Gale Carpenter

- 13.30 **Amy Niang** (University of Edinburgh, Scotland). *Discordances and Dissonances in Oral History: Frontier Condition of Migration Accounts in West Africa*
- 13.50 **Tiiu Jaago** (University of Tartu, Estonia). *Migration: Stereotypes and Experience*
- 14.10 **Ilze Matiss** (Toronto District School Board; Private Practice, Canada). *Insights and contributions from Narrative thinking in Life History research*
- 14.30 **Ilze Akerberga** (Indiana University, USA). *Interpreting the Past in Two Life Story Documentaries in Latvia and Brazil*
- 15.00 Lunch break

## Session 6 MIGRATION AND TOTALITARIAN REGIME

### Chair: Maruta Pranka

- 16.00 **Ieva Garda Rozenberga** (University of Latvia). *Migration and the Totalitarian Regime: Discourse of the Soviet Totalitarian System in Life-stories of Latvians in Sweden*
- 16.20 **Irena Saleniece** (University of Daugavpils, Latvia). *The Identity of the Deported from South-Eastern Latvia on March 25, 1949, in Oral History Sources and Archival Documents*
- 16.40 **Anu Printsman** (Tallin University, Estonia). *Estonian "Siberia" in Kohla-Järve*

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## Discussion PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF MIGRATION

### Chair: Baiba Bela

- 17.00 **Jelena Celma** (University of Latvia). *Who I am? Overlapping of Two Identities*
- 17.20 **Solveiga Krumina-Konkova** (University of Latvia). *Religious Minorities in Latvia: their Attitude towards Their Cultural Identity*

**Riga 29 June 2008 10.30-15.00**

### Latvian Ethnographic Open Air Museum

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- 10.30 Departure to Latvian Ethnographic Open Air Museum
- 11.00 Tour of the Latvian Ethnographic Open Air Museum
- 12.30 **Dace K. Bormane** (University of Latvia). *Ecology of Identity*
- 12.45 Discussion and lunch
- 14.00 Closing words and departure

## ABSTRACTS

**VIEDA SKULTANS** (University of Bristol, England)

*Memory, Identity and Migration*

The last century has witnessed unprecedented population movements both forced and self-imposed. The subject of this conference provides an interdisciplinary meeting place for certain recurring thematic dualities around the idea of memory, identity and migration. I want to consider the dualities that beset the three terms of my title. The Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben writes that: “The novelty of our era, which threatens the very foundations of the nation state, is that growing portions of humanity can no longer be represented within it” (1994: 3). How these refugees and migrants are represented, how they perceive the homeland and the host country and where they locate hope for a normal life is the subject of my talk.

**EDMUNDS SUPULIS** (University of Latvia)

*The Exile Community as a Social Movement*

Latvian Oral History project researchers have made several study expeditions to Sweden and have collected about three dozen life stories interviews with Latvian people who emigrated from Latvia at the end of World War 2. The present study revisits these stories and brings to the forefront narratives depicting individual lives as being part of an emigrant community. In social sciences community is characterized in terms of geographical and social ties, as a localized interaction reproducing shared meanings and symbols. Keeping community ties is a way for people to deal with personal problems as well as public issues.

A feature of emigration or escape from Soviet expansion is that to a great extent there were people from specific social classes against whom the Soviet regime had special objections. These were largely soldiers who fought on the “wrong side”, well-off people, entrepreneurs, and intelligentsia. Apart from a few personal belongings, those people took with them intangible things (skills, social and symbolic capital), which usually in destination country could not be employed immediately in a professional field, but rather mostly in creative activities and the socio-political realm. To cope with problems, but also to express themselves and to pursue common good, the exiles rapidly established various structures of civic society (groups, organizations).

The so to say “*in* itself” condition of these structures promoted a process of adaptation and preservation of lifestyle. But many of them also operated “*for* itself” (carrying expressive goals such as the liberation of Latvia) and were outwardly oriented to the large-scale public arena. That included secret work with the homeland, work with public opinion in Sweden and with agents on an international scale. To describe that process it seems more fitting to use a more narrow term than civic society or community. In my opinion such emigrant social activism could be conceptualized as a social movement in the sociological sense, and in the paper I am asking to what extent that might be so. The social movement concept is narrower than civic society, yet it offers a more specific look at what happened in the community during the exile years and how key persons we interviewed had acted. It reveals the broader meaning of exile activism, which often went across borders and linked together different efforts in the fields of culture and politics.

Bringing together oral and printed sources we will explore this most active part of the exile community and their stories employing two perspectives: “resource mobilization theory” and “new social movement theory”.

**MARUTA PRANKA (University of Latvia)**  
***Migration: the Opposite of Home. A Case Study***

This paper examines the biographical approach to the research of the migration process and uses the “Māja” research project as an example. “Māja” is a long-term study within the National Oral History Project of the Department of Philosophy and Sociology of the University of Latvia that records the life stories of the inhabitants of a single apartment building in Riga. The project reflects the time period from 1936 to the present, and the resulting life stories reconstruct the inhabitants’ lives as they relate to that specific building and its history. The large amount of information allows the researchers to examine a number of social processes, including migration. Migration, or relocation, is associated with a change of place and a change of home. If home is a symbol of stability, then migration is a departure from that stability.

Quantitative statistics about the various types of migration in Latvia cannot reveal what a personal story reveals. Research of a building through the lens of personal experience tells of the emergence and subsequent destruction of the middle class: from the transfer of ethnic Germans to Germany, to Soviet deportations, to the migrations resulting from Soviet occupation.

Memories of forced migration are still topical in life stories today. Returning to the home (“māja”) that was lost due to forced migration becomes an object, or goal, and symbolizes the end of migration.

The political and economic changes beginning in 1990, when Latvia regained its independence, brought about new migration processes, namely, changes of residence due to denationalization and privatization, as well as repatriation.

A life story is created in the teller’s present social environment, but it also carries influences and experiences from his/her past and past relationships. The credibility of life stories in the research of social processes, including migration, is based on both content and social relationships.

**MAIJA HINKLE** (Association of Latvian Oral History, USA)  
*Creating a Collective Latvian-American Narrative from  
Group and Individual Life Story Interviews*

History, just like memory has often been viewed from the perspective of two primary functions: 1) to provide an accurate account of past events and 2) „to provide a ‘usable past,’ an account of events and actors that can be harnessed to some purpose in the present,” most commonly a narrative of the past that helps to formulate and develop an individual or a collective identity (Wertsch, 2005, p. 31).

Latvian-Americans want to do both. The generation who came to the United States as refugees after WWII have experienced first-hand the turbulent events of the second half of the 20th century – WWII, the exile experience, is making a life in a new country, and now, the miraculous rebirth of their home country, Latvia. Most of them cannot go „home again,” yet many retain their deep connection to Latvia, quite a few are citizens of both Latvia (& now the EU) and the United States.

In this paper I will describe, contrast and evaluate two different approaches that I and my colleagues have used to try to obtain information from Latvian-Americans that is both accurate and usable for present purposes: 1) individual life story and oral history narratives and 2) group interviews on specific topics and in the process I will touch upon the problem of accuracy in life story & oral history narratives.

**MAIJA RUNCIS** (Södertörn University College, Sweden)  
**JOHAN EELLEND** (Södertörn University College, Sweden)  
*“We and Them” – Migrant Expectations and Experiences  
of the Swedish Society*

Throughout history people have migrated over the Baltic Sea for different reasons. War, revolution and famine as well as expectations of a better future on another shore have caused people to leave their homes and look for new homes for longer or shorter periods. This project focuses on the refugee wave from Estonia and Latvia during the World War II.

Although war refugees from the Baltic States entered Sweden throughout the whole war, the bulks of refugees set off over the Baltic Sea after the collapse of the German front in 1944 or were brought to Sweden from Nazi German concentration camps. At the end of the war approximately 200 000 refugees had reached Sweden, confronting the Swedish society with a new experience. The initial Swedish effort to give the refugees temporary shelter was soon confronted with a situation where a large number of the refugees were to be integrated into Swedish society. For Sweden as well as for the migrant countries this has caused considerable demographic change. (Parming, Tönu, 1972:1)

By listening to the narratives of the refugees and immigrants to Sweden we increase our understanding of *the Other* living amongst us as well as *the Other* wanting to cross borders to come here, thus decreasing the gap between them and us. (Castles & Miller, 2003: 33). By taking part in the migrant’s expectations, understandings and experiences of Swedish society we are offered a better understanding of the causes of migration as well as problems and possibilities meeting the émigrés merging with Swedish society. This knowledge can provide a vital background for the understanding of past as well as present migration in the Baltic Sea area.

The aim of this project is to explore the ways in which the encounter with Swedes and Sweden is experienced mainly by refugees from Estonia and Latvia during and after the Second World War. How do these refugees, coming to Sweden from the same geo-political location, make sense of their own identities and what images do they create of Sweden and the Swedes? This is one of the main questions we try to answer in our research project.

As a natural consequence of our field of interest, this project also fits into a broader network, which aims at studying migration within the Baltic Sea area during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Its areas of research include Baltic refugees in other countries, the forced transfer of Balts mainly to Siberia, as well as the organized inflow of mainly Russian speaking immigrants into the Baltic countries after the Second World War.



**RUTT HINRIKUS** (Estonian Literary Museum, Estonia)

*Two Homelands. Home and Adaptation  
in the Life Histories of Estonians in Sweden*

During World War II about 9% of Estonia's population-- about (70 000) persons-- left their homeland for political reasons. Among the available destinations, Sweden was most preferable, but in the absence of other options, many Estonians fled with retreating German ships to Germany. Finland became an insecure destination due to the Soviet-Finnish agreement in the autumn of 1944.

The number of Estonian refugees in Sweden in 1945 was 28,369. In memoirs, critical and dramatic events are always described more vividly than stable periods. Jobs were provided for the refugees: young men worked in the forests and women in textile mills or other factories, educated older people worked in archives.

Life in postwar Sweden was considered better than in the other countries, but in the first years many families lived "out of suitcases", hoping to return home soon. Soviet agents actively encouraged refugees to return home. The people who repatriated continued on with their lives, but some of them met complications, sometimes severe ones.

The refugees organized themselves very quickly. In Sweden, Estonian cultural life was organized; Estonian language newspapers were published; an Estonian Publishing House was established; congregations, schools, and a variety of societies were formed. Local organizations became part of national Estonian organizations, which in turn sponsored international events. Estonians adjusted quickly to the economic life of their adopted country.

The refugees' stories are a mixture of testimony and nostalgic pictures of a lost homeland. The first generation of refugees carried their loss with them constantly. Their descendants were and continue to be faced with questions about who they are and what kind of identity to configure. The sense of home and homeland varies according to generation; there are fewer significant gender differences, although in women's life stories home has more of a central place than it does in the stories of men. In the life narratives of refugees, the feeling for home is rarely mentioned directly. The concept and sense of home emerges indirectly and implicitly from descriptions of the surroundings and through attitudes toward the landscape and dwelling-place. Nowadays there has been a great deal said about equal attitudes with respect to the old and the new homeland. In life stories ethnic identity often becomes aligned with homeland and home, and it is among the key questions of the life narratives of refugees and their descendants.

**BAIBA BELA (University of Latvia)**  
*Migration as a Catalyst of Values*

The Soviet occupation and World War II changed the course of thousands of people's lives, among them more than 100,000 Latvian refugees. Exile became a break or turning point in their lives, as well as a scenario for a new life. Many sure and self-evident things were lost: home, homeland, friends, relatives, social status, property, and belongings. The refugees had to rebuild their whole lives, both on an individual and collective level. To a large degree, a person's values define the course of his/her life (choices, relationships, actions, and so on). Our individual values are to a large extent connected to the society and culture in which we live. How does migration affect the values system on an individual and collective level? In a search for clarity and answers, the paper considers the following issues:

How do great losses and changes affect the values system?

What issues were brought to the forefront and why?

How are values revealed during life's dramatic moments?

How are values and exile ideology connected?

How are values and identity connected in exile?

How is the relationship between significant collective and individual values addressed in exile?

**MARA ZIRNITE (University of Latvia)**  
*Curonians in Sweden: Saved by Migration*

According to information from the Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project at the University of London, which supports research, training, and archiving of endangered languages throughout the world, half of the estimated 6,500 human languages are under threat of extinction within 50 to 100 years.

Each language -- even those spoken by only a few hundred people, or just tens of people -- contains some unique aspect of humanness, expresses a specific world view, and preserves certain survival skills. The paper introduces the audience to vanishing cultures through life stories held at the Latvian Oral History Archive.

During our fieldwork within the Baltic-Nordic Network Project we unexpectedly met three brothers living in Sweden who spoke an ancient dialect with each other: the Kursenieki language, which has close ties to Latvian. The Zakuts brothers

were born into a Kursenieki (Curonian<sup>1</sup>) family in Nida<sup>2</sup> and managed to escape by boat to Sweden at the end of World War II. In Sweden their parents lived long lives (their mother lived until age 93), and the whole family, including the brothers, who worked their traditional work as fishermen, spoke the Kursenieki language. In Sweden they kept alive until the 21<sup>st</sup> century a language whose number of speakers had steadily declined throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>3</sup>. The language is now no longer spoken in their previous homeland on the Curonian Spit, which was included on the UNESCO list of world cultural and natural heritage sites.<sup>4</sup>

Similar examples of a lost ethnic and linguistic identity can be found along Latvia's northwestern coast, which was the last homeland of the ethnically distinct Livonian people. The Livonian language belongs to the Finno-Ugric language family and is related to Estonian, Finnish, and Hungarian. The Livonians were driven from their homes during both world wars and only a fraction returned afterwards. Yet after World War II many of them were again forced to leave due to the lack of civilian employment opportunities on the very outer edge of the Soviet empire. The Livonian language has survived to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, thanks to a few older generation speakers and a handful of young academically trained specialists who were able to learn the language from them.

The strongest weapon in the extermination of such “cultural islands” is war. War is closely followed by the forced relocation of populations or the “voluntary” flight of refugees, in other words, the loss of home and native territory. A whole layer or stratum of culture containing work techniques, traditions, values, customs, and spirituality is thus ruined.

**AIGARS LIELBARDIS** (University of Latvia)  
*“The Zakuts Brothers” – A Documentary Film*

Herberts (born in 1925), Verners (born in 1928), and Martins (born in 1930) are brothers. They were born in Nida on the Curonian Spit in present-day Lithuania.

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<sup>1</sup> Western Baltic people who migrated during the Middle Ages from various Latvian counties to the Curonian Spit, which now belongs to Lithuania.

<sup>2</sup> A Curonian fishing village on the Curonian Spit.

<sup>3</sup> „Curonian is still spoken by 3000 persons living in Nida, Preiļi, Pervelka, Juodkrante, Melnrags, and elsewhere”, R. Malvess, 1932 manuscript „Ceļojuma iespaidi Kuršu kāpās”. Latviešu konversācijas vārdnīca, Vol. 10, Rīga 1933 – 1934, column 19062.

<sup>4</sup> J. Bučas. Kuršiu Nerijos Nacionalinis parkas. Vilnius, 2001, p. 255.

During World War II they emigrated to Germany and later arrived in Sweden, where they and their families still live today. Only after the fall of the Soviet Union were they able to return to their original homes to visit. In exile the Zakuts brothers have preserved a unique, old, and rich language, which only 5-8 people in the world still speak.

The inhabitants of the Curonian Spit are called 'Kursenieki' and are considered the descendants of the Curonians, a Western Baltic ethnic and language group. Driven by various political and economic factors, the Kursenieki left Kurzeme beginning in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and moved to the Curonian Spit, where they formed and preserved their unique culture and language. The Kursenieki were mainly fishermen until World War II, and the Zakuts brothers continue to fish to the present day in Sweden. They speak the Kursenieki language while fishing and when they wish to keep something secret from their wives or others nearby.

The documentary was filmed during field research in 2006 and 2007. In 2007 the Zakuts brothers read texts and language samples in their native language, which linguists had recorded in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**INTA GALE CARPENTER** (Indiana University, USA)

*Performing Tradition and Memory  
on Stage in a Latvian-Siberian Village*

A neglected topic in Western history and social sciences is the peasant colonization of Siberia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by thousands of families from the Baltic region of the Russian empire. Their migration was spurred by the completion of the Trans-Siberian Railway and the government-sponsored colonization policy that offered them otherwise unattainable free land and the hope of prosperity (Kilis 1999). This presentation explores how third-, fourth- and fifth-generation descendants of the Latvians (along with a smaller number of Estonians and Germans) who settled in what became the village of Augsbebri/Bobrovka have responded to post-soviet opportunities in a political order secured now by consent not coercion. In particular, how have new collective identities emerged with regard to ethnic and national belonging in the context of changing institutions, practices, and relations? How do these compare with sustained local identities?

Based on historical documents and field-observation and interviews in 2006, the paper focuses on two cultural organizations in Augsbebri (a folksong ensemble and a social club) as mediating structures (Berger and Neuhaus 1977, Habermas 1989, Mechling 1997) within which public narratives about co-existing ethnicities are forged, revived, strengthened, and invented through tradition, sociability,

and memory. Responding to proffered definitions of how they should identify (for example, by Latvians from the ancestral homeland and by cultural brokers of the Omsk region) as well as their own sense of who they are and have become, residents choose to foreground different identities in different international contexts: local socializing, regional performances of multiculturalism, and transnational relations with Latvia.

**HELENA JERMAN** (University of Helsinki, Finland)  
*Movement and Belonging: Disruptive Continuities in Time and Place*

My current research on perceptions on self and lived experience among Russians crossing national boundaries delves deep into an analysis of the ways in which cultural knowledge is related to memory. Memory, ‘an activity in the present’ and, primarily, not concerned with the ‘truth’ rather emphasizes the role of social consequences of lived experience. Social memory is central to the construction of subjectivity and identity. The creation of otherness on the one hand, and the creation of belonging, on the other, are two sides of the same coin and thus central themes in shaping perceptions and imaginations in border crossing, be it cognitive or physical.

Supporting the view on memory as a site for studying the dialectics of individual and social processes my presentation introduces some ethnographic examples of child migration as process in time and space in the Finnish Russian borderland. I argue that multi-sitedness and multi-temporality are significant notions in studies of childhood and migration.

I discuss the way elderly and middle aged informants recall displacements and emplacements during their childhood and in what sense they consider it a meaningful experience. I explore in what way their perceptions of powerful early childhood events affect their sense of belonging during their life span. My presentation suggests that elderly persons’ narratives and present perceptions of displaced childhoods disclose memories, i.e. traces. Arguably, these affect human lives as memories of the past become present tense, and a transition in space and time occurs.

I also examine the existential and practical consequences of the care of children in a present transnational context in the Finnish Russian borderland. My multi-temporal approach considers how informants interpret or transmit related experiences.

Methodologically my presentation emphasizes juxtaposition and mobility, moving between different time perspectives and with different social actors exploring

central notions of cultural forms within specific contexts. My presentation suggests that the nucleus of memory is emotion being enacted in cultural forms as resources for social memory. Furthermore, individual enactment of belonging originates in the consciousness of the self and its relationship to society.

**OUTI FINGERROOS** (University of Jyväskylä, Finland)

**RIINA HAANPÄÄ** (University of Turku, Finland)

*Strangers from the East – Narratives of Karelian Exiles  
and Re-immigrants from  
Russia Regarding their Integration in Finland*

Research in the humanities has often been criticized for having little societal and practical significance. The aim of this project is to examine immigration into Finland from the east and the measures taken by the Finnish authorities during the post-Second-World-War period. The examination will focus on evacuees from Karelia and on re-immigrants from Russia, and specifically on how their narratives open up a perspective of ‘other knowledge’ on the integration process. The project assumes that the measures taken by the authorities aimed at quickly integrating the immigrant groups, but that there were discrepancies in the treatment of the groups depending on their places of origin. Thus at their best, the official measures promoted the absorption of the immigrants into the main population, but at their most extreme they could lead to discrimination.

The project seeks to elucidate how the economic, communal, cultural and religious conditions that were important for the immigrants were taken into account at different times in integrating the immigrant groups: Which groups were treated better than others, and why did this happen? Above all, the project will explain how the immigrants themselves experienced factors affecting their own integration.

The most important general goal of the project is to produce information that will have societal influence and clear applicability. It aims to activate researchers into a mutual dialogue on subjects related to immigration (the Karelian evacuees and the re-immigrants from Russia) into a strange country (Finland) after the Second World War. The questions posed by the research can be divided into two entities:

1. ‘Other knowledge’ as a key to questions of adjustment

The project will investigate the narratives that constitute the ‘other knowledge’ that opens up concrete perspectives in questions related to the adjustment of immigrant groups. The object is to produce information about questions of

adjustment relating to immigration that can be used in work with immigrants. The questions asked by the researchers are: What is it like to live in a strange country? What is the ‘other knowledge’ on questions of adjustment like?

2. ‘Other knowledge’ as a tool for the producers of ‘official knowledge’ (the authorities)

The most important hypothesis of the project is that ‘other knowledge’ in the form of narratives offers a significant source of information about adjustment in a foreign country. The object of the project is to demonstrate that questions connected with immigration should be solved by using ‘other knowledge’ related to adjustment. ‘Other knowledge’ should also be valued in the same way as ‘official knowledge’, and its significance taken into account in the actions of the authorities. The researchers on the project ask: How do the nationality, ethnic background and relationship to the main Finnish population of an immigrant affect her or his treatment? Have questions regarding the settlement and integration of immigrants been given the same attention as the settlement of the Karelian evacuees in 1945 or the re-immigrants with Finnish roots in the 1990s? Have the same basic conditions – such as the right to land, work, housing and living – been applied as in the case of the Karelian evacuees and the re-immigrants? Have the authorities something to learn from the settlement measures that were applied in the 1940s?

## **JYRKI PÖYSÄ** (Finnish Literature Society, Finland)

### *Lost Places*

In my paper I discuss *the rhetorics of loss* in written reminiscences. As an empirical basis I’m using texts produced by writing competitions arranged by the Finnish Literature Society between the 1950’s and 2000.

Four kinds of places and four kinds of collection competitions are compared:

- 1) Nature places (marsh, bog) lost to forestry (drainage) or housing development
- 2) Rural home districts lost because of WWII (Karelian refugees)
- 3) Urban places lost to demolition and rebuilding of urban areas
- 4) Lost workplaces (experiences of unemployment in the 1990’s)

For the beginning, some of the main processes behind the forms of loss are separated out. However, the main focus of the paper is on the structures of *heimweh* (homesickness) in written reminiscences: how is the loss treated, explained, and made personally meaningful? *Heimweh* is not to be confused

with nostalgia: the target for nostalgia can be something that has not existed in the personal (or any) past. With *heimweh* I'm referring to experiences of past places felt to be true and authentic, part of a personal history.

The relationship between space and time is especially important for me. When it comes to the categories of lost places (above), it is interesting to ask if there is any possibility to *return* to the important place and if not, why? Categorizing the different processes behind the loss of meaningful places makes sense in this context: is the place lost in time (you can go back, but don't experience it the same way), in space (you can't go there because of the distance or borders), or in both time and space (the place is no longer the same place, it has been destroyed or changed into something else). And what is the effect of returning or not being able to return? In what sense can *writing* be seen as a symbolic return?

**KNUT DJUPEDAL** (Norwegian Emigrant Museum, Norway)  
*America Fever and the Creation of an Immigrant Identity*

It is said that the Norwegian emigration to America began in 1825 when a small ship with 52 souls on board sailed from Norway to America. In time they were followed by approximately 1 million countrymen, of whom some 80% went to the United States.

Yet in the beginning, very few Norwegians followed these pioneers across the Atlantic. Indeed, during the entire generation between 1825 and 1865, only 79,000 people left Norway, of which over half emigrated after 1855. Mass emigration did not begin until the 1870's.

Why was there such a delay? This paper will provide an answer to that question through an examination of the phenomenon of "America Fever".

"America Fever" is a term and a phenomenon known in all European countries. I will suggest that its existence in Norway indicates the existence of a social learning process driven by what I call an "acquisition craze" during the years between 1825 and 1855. It was at this time that Norwegians learned about America and integrated an axiom into the Norwegian world view that America was a land of opportunity.

Once this notion of America had become a part of the Norwegian world view, it colored and defined the immigrants' views of themselves, of their country of origin, of the act of emigration, and of the country in which they now lived. In many ways, it colors the views of Norway and America held by the immigrants' descendants today.



**SOLVEIGA MIEZITE**

(University of Latvia, University of Toronto, Kanada)

***Canadians in Search of Irish Roots: Reflections  
on a Trip to Sacred Sites***

I will share with you my week long experiences in Ireland in May 2008 with a group of 26 educators from Canada, the EU, and Africa who came to visit the sacred sites in Beara Peninsula and at Tara Hill and Knowth. Among them were Canadians and Americans of Irish origin as well as Canadian native people of mixed ancestry who came to visit the sacred sites and perform ceremonies to help heal the pain suffered by the Irish from the British colonizers. We visited the sites and shared our stories. The trip ended with a meeting of Irish educators at the University of Maynooth to share our experiences and engage them in examining their roots.

**ANU KORB (Estonian Folklore Archives, Estonia)**

***Repatriation and Adaptation Stories of Russian-Born Estonians***

In this presentation, I analyze the repatriation stories of Russian-born Estonians, focusing on their adaptation to life in Estonia. In addition to recounting their personal experiences, the narrators also describe the experiences of their families and community members. The presentation is based on 50 stories received for the 2004 biography contest “Exodus and Life in the New Homeland”, and on 42 interviews I conducted with Russian-born Estonians between 2003 and 2007. I myself have been conducting fieldwork in different Estonian communities in Russia since 1991 and socialising with Russian-born repatriate Estonians in Estonia outside interview situations as well.

The ancestors of most of the narrators had migrated to the scarcely populated areas in Russia between 1855-1918, settling in rural, ethnic villages. Their return to Estonia came after the annexation of the republic in 1940. The narrators’ routes back to Estonia were many: some were evacuated as civilians from the areas behind Lake Peipsi, some relocated due to job offers from the Communist party, some landed in Estonia after demobilization from the Soviet Army, some returned of their own initiative after World War 2, some arrived through the reunification of families, and some travelled home on their relatives’ invitation.

On one hand, the stories of adaptation to a new environment have provided a productive discussion topic throughout time and hold a firm place in the migration lore of various countries. Such adaptation stories illustrate sharply the way

groups discriminate between “us” and “them”: focusing on different patterns of behavior, dressing and dining traditions, linguistic misunderstandings, etc.; these stories can have a somewhat therapeutic effect on both the narrator and the audience. On the other hand, the adaptation stories remain strictly intragroup lore for long periods of time. A more public sharing of such stories can only occur when both the group and the society at large are ready for that. For Russian-born Estonians, that time came when Estonia regained its independence and they rediscovered their Russian identities and strongly associated with their places of birth and residence (e.g. Siberia, Samara).

**AMY NIANG** (University of Edinburgh, Scotland)  
*Discordances and Dissonances in Oral History:  
Frontier Condition of Migration Accounts in West Africa*

In many African societies, oral traditions are an object of continuing controversial debate. If diversity in historical accounts denotes the combination of a rich origin for certain groups, it also reflects the existence of discordances within histories and the impoverishment of oral modes of transmission at times too engagingly put in the service of attempts to distort and reconstruct.

On the one hand, and as opposed to stateless societies where local histories reflect wide diversity, centralized states garner a state view of history which tends to carry a uniform rendering of national history. The latter feeds the repertoire of social and political re-enactments of the past in performances that motivate the need for grounded legitimacy, a tale of unifying essence and a sense of collective purpose. Histories also reconstruct the past as much as they suppress it. Gaping silences are the victims of the unknown and the suppressed. As a part of a society’s historiography, silence defines the useful past that tells ‘a unifying tale of ethnic achievement, and of a progressive, enabling civilization’;<sup>5</sup> and the usable knowledge, that which is likely to contribute to current needs of historical re-enactment.

I will examine the origins of a uniformity of accounts in Mossi historiography as well as the historical diversity amongst migrant groups in West Africa and the role of griots in the preservation of oral history. Orators of court history, the griots have a stake in the modes of detention of knowledge, in the negotiation of the historical past as instrument of power reference and prestige. They also had a stake in their professional status as vehicle and guardians; if not always

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<sup>5</sup> John Lonsdale, 2002: 202

in a position to make history, griots could make and unmake kings by invoking history as *the* source of legitimacy: ‘to tell the past was to persuade the present’.<sup>6</sup> Placing history as ‘a competition in civilization’, historical accounts contextualize culture with a view of comparing legacies and achievements on a wider scale, thus expanding both the audience and the thrust of historicity beyond purely historical borders and projecting useable ideas into the future. I will also look at the origins of social formation through a historical evaluation of migration, the formation of ethnic group, household formation and break-up, (patriarchal) power access to spiritual forces or what Lonsdale calls images of social action as constructed through common, at times conflicting oral histories.

At the heart of the analysis is the issue of methodological challenges for historians and anthropologists of Africa. Where stories tend to validate ‘mythical charters’ and symbolic meaning of social practice, the task of oral historians has been to elaborate a coherent reading grid so as to dissect the past and give a more accurate account of it.

**TIJU JAAGO** (University of Tartu, Estonia)  
*Migration: Stereotypes and Experience*

In folklore one can differentiate between genres that support stereotypical opinions and assumptions (e.g. anecdotes, jokes) and those that verify and adjust these established opinions (e.g. experience narratives). In oral history both genres are used. In my paper I raise the question: what are the stereotypical opinions about migration in Estonia (in the Estonian community) at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and what are the assumptions supporting or contesting these opinions.

In folklore and life history research in Estonia, migration has been dealt with mainly by analyzing the experience of émigrés. Most of the folklore studies represent the experiences of people who migrated from Estonia eastwards (north-west Russia, Siberia and the Caucasus) at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. To a lesser extent, folklore researchers have dealt with the topic of refugees (i.e. escaping to the west during the course of World War II). The question of placement is first of all related with identity (the ethnic, local, and language identity of the expatriates); and secondly with everyday habits and behavior, and the preservation and changing of lore traditions.

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<sup>6</sup> Lonsdale, 2002: 205; also see Carola Lentz, 2000: 195

The above-mentioned two emigration periods (turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; World War II) are also connected with the two most important waves of migration, which have shaped the experiences/assumptions on migration of those who stayed behind. But the idea of migration also includes an experience of immigration (mainly work-related immigration from the eastern parts of the Soviet Union into Estonia during the Soviet period). The new political situation since 1991 has diversified the migration experience even more – the subject continues to be topical.

The analysis is based on web-based discussions conducted in the years 2002, 2006 and 2007. The discussions took place in the distance education course “Dialogue between the Private and the Public Life”, created by the Folklore Department of the University of Tartu and the Folkloristics Department of the Estonian Literary Museum. One of the five topics was related to migration. The participants first discussed two research articles dealing with emigration and thereafter presented a paper based on their own experience and opinions.

**ILZE MATISS** (Toronto District School Board;  
Private Practice, Canada)

***Insights and contributions from Narrative thinking  
in Life History research***

This paper will introduce participants to “narrative thinking” and ideas, and explore the impact of this way of thinking on issues relevant to Life History, Oral History, and other related research approaches. Themes will include: a social-constructivist view of story and how people live storied lives, the effects of dominant and alternate stories, the power of language and questions, the meaning of memories, and the complexity of researcher-participant relationships. Time allowing, participants will have the opportunity to become engaged with these ideas through interactive exercises facilitated by the presenter.

**ILZE AKERBERGS** (Indiana University, USA)  
***Interpreting the Past in Two Life Story Documentaries  
in Latvia and Brazil***

This paper will explore the themes that occur in two documentaries created from life stories, one in Brazil by Museu da Pessoa (Museum of the Person) and one in Latvia by Dzivesstasts (Life Story), both produced in 2001-2002. I

will examine the points of emphasis in documentaries, for example, the role of humor, attempts at reconciliation, and the ways of survival under difficult circumstances. The documentaries show the points of view of the producers of the films, telling their stories about two different nations through the stories of everyday people. Through narration and visual clips, they create stories of their past, which, at the same time, reveal the differences in the character and culture of these two countries.

**IEVA GARDA ROZENBERGA** (University of Latvia)  
*Migration and the Totalitarian Regime: Discourse of the Soviet  
Totalitarian System in Life-stories of Latvians in Sweden*

One of the main goals of the National Oral History Research Project carried out at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, University of Latvia, is to listen to a separate individual speak of his/her individual and the nation's collective experiences in the 20<sup>th</sup> century when two totalitarian regimes were governing in Latvia. The main attention is being paid to the older generation, as they have experienced two World Wars, the change of occupation forces and times of Latvia as a free state. These people are thus providers of unique evidence. At this point more than 3000 life-stories in various regions of Latvia as well as abroad (Norway, Sweden, USA, Canada, Australia, Germany and Brazil) where there are Latvian communities have been listened to. Oral history forms a bridge between individual experience and society, changes the viewpoints of history and opens fields for new research. The researcher here records not only what has happened to an individual but also how a person is aware of what has happened, how he/she understands, tells and takes the consequences of an event. The Latvians in Sweden are one of the Latvian communities that has its own view of the experience of a totalitarian regime and everyday life.

**IRENA SALENIECE** (University of Daugavpils, Latvia)  
*The Identity of the Deported from South-Eastern Latvia on March 25, 1949,  
in Oral History Sources and Archival Documents*

In the south-eastern part of Latvia – on the border with Lithuania (Poland), Belarus, and Russia – a polyethnic and multiconfessional environment has been formed that has influenced the formation of a specific local identity. The local population along with ethnic and religious identity features often had a distinct

awareness of belonging to this place. During the years of Latvian independence, due to the national policy, foremost the compulsory general free basic education policy, the people of Latvia started to form a national identity that marks the relation between the human and state. People of different ethnic origins living in south-eastern Latvia who grew up in the 1920-30s have characteristic features of this national identity.

In March and April of 1949 thousands of people from south-eastern Latvia were deported from their homeland to alien surroundings and social environments in Siberia. Forced migration and life imprisoned in an alien land (special settlement) has certainly made an impact on the identity of the deported. To what extent? Answers to this question are supplied by the fate and life-story of each deported individual; some common tendencies may be brought out by investigating a number of life-stories and other evidence. The presentation makes an attempt at clarifying the identity transformations of the south-eastern Latvian inhabitants by using the history sources published in the book compiled by the Oral History Centre of Daugavpils University “The Voices of the Deported, March 25, 1949. The Fate of Some Deported Families from Daugavpils and Ilūkste Districts in Oral History Sources and Archival Documents”.

**ANU PRINTSMANN** (Tallin University, Estonia)  
*Estonian “Siberia” in Kohtla-Järve*

Migration creates a watershed between lives as hitherto lived and the new life – still the palimpsest aspects of previous existence drag along. Strategies for how to cope: whether and what to forget differs individually and according to socio-demographic groups. “Typical lines of genesis” are at interplay when childhood backgrounds cause different perceptions of the surrounding landscape. Knowledge of historical context helps to read the previous layers of landscape much more easily.

The identity of the new location shapes the new immigrants even as they shape the new area – an interaction where space-place conversion may be turned upside down depending on the perspective of insiders or outsiders. Not only do migrants inscribe a new layer of meaning onto the landscape but the space around them changes as well, driven by ideological conditions (that occasionally move people as well).

These aspects come forth and are analyzed in depth in Kohtla-Järve, Estonia – a town founded in 1946 in north-east Estonia. A prosperous Soviet mining town replaced the agricultural life that was considered outdated then in the

villages of Kohtla and Järve. Industrialization and urbanization was completed by immigrant workers from the rest of Estonia and the Soviet Union (today 80% of the population is Russian-speaking). Additionally, returning deportees from Siberia who were not allowed to return to their former homesteads were settled in Kohtla-Järve causing the non-public nickname of 'Estonian Siberia' for Kohtla-Järve. Still, Kohtla-Järve features a more complex bundle of emotions: it was also desirable to live there because work and lodging opportunities were up to date. Thus, three "lines of genesis" can be brought out: (1) local villagers whose place was turned into an abstract, uniform and impersonal space by ideological conditions, (2) immigrants from the rest of Estonia (directly or via Siberia) who could read the previous layers of landscape but whose appreciations of the place contradicted, and (3) immigrants from the rest of the USSR who "brought the culture" and saw an inhabited space that was their task to convert into something livable.

The focus in this presentation is on Estonian life-stories (analysis of narratives not narrative analysis): how they constructed their value systems and what moral beliefs were upheld in the situation where meanings of "homeland" and "fatherland" were changed, where different identities share the same town space simultaneously.

**DACE K. BORMANE** (University of Latvia)  
*Ecology of Identity*

Identity and life-story are audio referential concepts; they comprise many other notions. Both are open to continuation/communication and historical understanding.

If we take into account that there is information for knowing and information for thinking, that, in turn concerns understanding, i. e. „knowledge how to continue”, then in this context of the ways to perceive identity in socium is its ecologization (*gr.* oikos). Besides other things it implies the reading of space (in the wide sense) and time-space (*chronotopos*) as a kind of „text” within framework of habitus (*lat.* habitus). (The space can be read and related; „rights of place” means preservation of environments in the changing world).

The qualities of life story as temporal, processual depiction of human existence could be found outside the doctrine of time, namely, in space, especially when talking of migration. The unit of social time has the dominant of space.

Place (*lat.* locus) is a stimulus for human identification – both positive and negative. The question of identity: „Who am I?” in different conditions is being

replaced by the question: „Where am I?” It is about the awareness of life-space constitution on the level of identity. The question is „What does it mean to function, to be effective within the the practice of identity.

Life-story has a habitual nature, life-story is a communicative event and it makes up the capital of communication, namely, the situation expressed in words and fixated in space. The function of *Habitus* in human existence is the sense of space. Migration, in turn, can be viewed as a movement in the territory and change of quality of „living” time or „insecure history”.

When we ask about the mode of communication about identity as moral autonomy, about teleological nature of identity and sense of continuity the community, nation, society, then in life-story in a way plays the role of human identity test. This identity test on the personal level presupposes certain interrelation – harmonization of experiences. The understanding of identity modification and identity test in this topic are being reduced to the concepts *linguistic habitus*, harmonization of experience, *the art of life to be and to belong*. These concepts function in the academic research, as well as in the formation of social communicative processes and ideologies when the „contract of narration and listening” is being drawn. It is related to security of identification.

The „locality” of identity (if it is relatively presumed) has its own autonomy of being. In a special way it appears in the museum; for instance, in the National Open-Air museum (founded in Riga in 1924) – as movement of human life in space within framework of fixation of nation modules, when the spatial organization is the index of the *whole life*.



## ABSTRACTS OF AUTHORS WHO HAD TO CANCEL THEIR PARTICIPATION

AIVAR JÜRGENSON (Tallinn University, Estonia)

*Everlasting Desire for the Center of the World:  
the Creation of Homeland.*

*An Example from Siberian Estonians*

Local identity requires the existence of creative connections between a place and a person. The adaptation process means abandoning connections with the former location and achieving new ones. Adopting a foreign culture takes place according to the cultural patterns taken along with oneself from the former homeland.

This paper analyses the oral history of Estonians who migrated to Siberia at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and focuses on the process of creating a new homeland: 1) what kind of cultural preferences were involved in the process of choosing a new homeland, 2) cultural patterns of “creating” a homeland in a foreign environment, 3) adapting by reconstructing the foreign environment mentally and physically, and 4) changing the foreign place into their own place.

Old cultural patterns taken along from the old homeland are taken into account in creating a new homeland: the new homeland must be an idealized and selected reflection of the old one. Familiar objects of nature, landscapes, and climate were quite often decisive in choosing a new homeland: the old homeland functioned as a model of the new one. At the same time the new homeland became a model for its new settlers in determining their local identity: the image of the whole of Siberia was formed after the natural environment of the new home place. The nearest surroundings become the center of the world – this phenomenon is observed in the paper through many examples.

The process of creating a new homeland involves renaming new and foreign places. Quite often the settlers gave such names to places that emphasized the connections with the old homeland: foreign is turned into familiar through familiar names. In this manner the old homeland is transported into the new milieu.

The formation of local identity in Siberia is observed through the pseudo-scientific constructions that belong in the Siberian Estonians’ oral history and are contrary to each other: 1) myths of archetypal connections between motherland (or nationality) and the new colony, as if the ancestry of the settlers were located

in this certain area for already thousands of years, and 2) the so-called “empty land” image, as if the land was uninhabited until the arrival of the Estonians in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Both myths emphasize the fact that Estonian settlers were living in those places before the others. In this way the status of the settlers is legitimized.

These and many other stories belonging to the oral history of Siberian Estonians are analyzed in the report as the tools to fix Siberian Estonians’ local identity.

**KRISTIN MIKALSEN** (Norwegian Emigrant Museum, Norway)  
*Foreign Football Players in Hamar: Immigrants and Local Identity*

In Norway, as in several countries all over the world, football (soccer) is important in the shaping and expressing of local identity. Supporters usually support the team from their home town, often being one of the most expressed indicators of their local identity if they move away. Two decades ago, the players in the Norwegian football league were mostly local, playing for the team from their home town, or maybe for another Norwegian team. Nowadays, a significant proportion of the players in the first league are foreign-born. They are temporary immigrants whose job is tightly connected to local identity. How does this affect the players’ integration and identification with their new home town? Does being paid to represent a city or an area exaggerate the feeling of connection, or do the players consider themselves professionals doing a job they could have been doing anywhere? Also, do football-immigrants relate themselves differently to Norway than other immigrants, their connection being so clearly local?

The local football team in Hamar, *Ham-Kam*, has players from altogether ten countries (for instance, Albania, Denmark, Belgium, Nigeria, and Rwanda). I arranged to interview a number of these, preferably those who had stayed in Hamar for at least one season. Football players and athletes in general are a proportionally small number of the immigrants in Norway. They are, however, very visible in the media, and research on their perception of local identity would give a more popular approach to oral history and migration research, hopefully reaching a new audience. At the same time, the special conditions of footballers as immigrants make their experiences an interesting, though little explored, field of research. The findings in this study could give new and different perspectives to research on “regular” immigrants and their perception of local and national identity.

**MARTA KURKOWSKA-BUDZAN** (Jagiellonian University, Poland)  
*'From Forest to Poland' – About the Identity of the Kurpie Migrants.*  
*Case Study: Przytuły-Las*

Przytuły-Las is a settlement in north-eastern Poland established in 1932 by the hands of over a dozen families who came from a few villages from the nearby Green Forest (Puszcza Zielona) region. This was an internal migration with an economic basis (exchanging the arable land for better land, under the condition of clearing the forest which was growing there) and was seemingly easy for the migrants. They were not moving to a different country, they were not changing their social status, and as ethnic Poles they were moving in a fairly close group for a distance of merely 100 kilometers to land inhabited by other ethnic Poles.

The distance, however, turned out to be much bigger: here they found themselves in a region with a strong feudal tradition. In the 1930s the division between the descendants of the parochial gentry and the peasants was still very vivid here. The Kurpie migrants were double strangers: as newcomers and as representatives of the expressive folk group. Their pride and the foundation of their identity were based on the legend saying that the Kurpie people had never been serfs. On the other hand, they were perceived as a poor and “uncivilized” population, of which they were aware.

In my paper I present the results of the oral history research in Przytuły-Las village conducted among the first two generations of the settlers, who shared their experiences of ‘being a Kurp’ during the period from the 1930s until the 1970s, as well as the research on the perception of the Kurpie people in the ‘host community’.

**BEN ROGALY** (University of Sussex, England)

**BECKY TAYLOR** (University of Sussex, England)

*An Historical Geography of Transnationalism and Return Migration  
in a ‘White’ Social Housing Area: Old Moves and the New Imperialism*

The proposed paper emerges out of ethnographic and archival work in three contiguous, mainly ‘white’, social housing estates in the city of Norwich, England. In this paper, we shift the standard ways of writing about white working-class areas in Britain, bringing an historical and migration studies lens to consider how people’s migration histories shape their responses to the real and imagined presence of migrants in their home area.

Drawing on interviews with seventy residents and local workers of all ages, including extended, multiple-sitting life histories with older people, we bring

into focus migration dynamics often neglected in contemporary public debates on immigration and ‘race’ in Britain. These interviews included ten with white British people in their sixties and seventies, who had lived as military expatriates/ temporary emigrants in the last years of colonial rule in one or more of the following countries: Aden (Yemen), Burma (Myanmar), Cyprus, India, Malaya (Malaysia), Malta and Singapore. We reveal connections between the contemporary narratives of past expatriate lives and the same people’s views on current immigration to the United Kingdom. The analysis we present throws up apparent disjuncture, paradoxes and contradictions.

In the context of national media reports of the ‘War on Terror’ and, in certain newspapers, of an alleged crisis of immigration and settlement by visible minorities, particularly asylum seekers and refugees, we explore the connection between residents’ own ‘whiteness’, past histories of migration, including with the military, and residents’ racialised and sometimes Islamophobic portrayals of changes in local and national society. In their descriptions of contemporary British society, we find a ‘loud silence’ about British foreign policy, and in particular about the historical forms of colonialism associated with the British empire, which are all the louder when it is remembered that the same people served in or were married to members of the colonial military. In the paper we consequently draw attention to the contradiction between memories of being part of the colonizer’s armed forces that emphasize fear of the unknown, living in closed compounds, and the difficulties of integration, with the insistence that immigrants and ‘Muslims’ in contemporary Britain give up seeking what some research participants saw as their desire for separate lives.

**CHARLES REEVE** (Ontario College of Art & Design, Canada)  
*Ideology & Instability in Paul Kane’s “Wanderings of an Artist”*

The journeys that Paul Kane describes in his *Wanderings of An Artist among the Indians of North America* (1859) contain much of what we expect from migrant narratives: extended periods away from his home country; unbelievable hardship; musings on his relation to the foreign communities he encounters. But Kane undertook his *Wanderings* by choice, so his book reverses the usual reading of migrant narratives. The “eye of power” (as Heather Dawkins called Kane’s perspective) travels while the subjugated populations stay relatively still.

This reversal centres on the “eye of power’s” relation to the people Kane met, since his goal was to record their lives. “The face of the red man is no longer seen. All traces of his footsteps are fast being obliterated...,” Kane writes, explaining

his determination “to sketch pictures of the principal chiefs, and their original costumes, to illustrate their manners and customs, and to represent the scenery of an almost unknown country.” His book, he says, provides “explanations and notes” of the things depicted in his images.

Consequently, as Kane apparently saw, accuracy in his drawing, painting, and writing was paramount. “The following pages are the notes of my daily journey, with little alteration from the original wording,” he states in his preface. “Although without any claim to public approbation as a literary production,” he continues, “still I trust they will possess not only an interest for the curious, but also an intrinsic value to the historian...”

Generations of readers took Kane at his word. J.G. MacGregor, in his introduction to an edition issued in 1968, says, “[Kane’s] observations which are valuable as history and ethnology are doubly perceptive because of the fresh, alert mind and the keen artist’s eye he brought to bear on them.”

However, in the last 20 years, thanks largely to I.S. MacLaren, we have learned that important conceptual gaps separate the four elements of the oeuvre produced from Kane’s journey: his field sketches; his travel dairies; the 100 oil paintings that he started on immediately after returning to Toronto; and *Wanderings*, published more than a decade after his travels ended.

Most germane for our purposes, the “Indians” of Kane’s title were profoundly transformed. As MacLaren shows, Kane had considerable “help” working his journals up into the book that became *Wanderings*, and this assistance shifted his description of indigenous communities from the even-handed treatment of his diaries to depictions that conformed to the stereotype of the Noble (and gullible) Savage that his audience expected and his publisher demanded. Paradoxically, as J. Russell Harper notes, this dismissive view overlaps with an attitude of concern: “The aborigines, driven farther and farther into the north and west, would be extinct in two generations.”

Given that the Hudson’s Bay Company (a massive trading concern) underwrote Kane’s travels, these perspectives form an ideological feedback loop in which the need to record the “Indians of North America” derives from a concern that they are disappearing – which disappearance resulted from the activities that both facilitated and necessitated their recording. But the gaps between diaries, sketches, paintings and book show that these records are more complicated than they seem, that the editing informed and was informed by a contemporary discussion about the First Nations’ unsophisticated culture and consequent putative decline (a discussion perhaps underpinned by the discourses that prepared the way for Charles Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species* to be published the same year as Kane’s *Wanderings of an Artist*).

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## CONFERENCE VENUE

### **Registration, sessions**

Faculty of History and Philosophy

University of Latvia

Room 1 (second floor)

Riga, Brivibas bulvaris 32

### **Reception**

Café “Science”

Main Building of the University of Latvia

Riga, Raina bulvaris 19

### **Departure to Latvian Ethnographic Open-air Museum**

Rīgas Latviešu biedrības nams (Riga Latvians Society)

Merkela street 13

## CONFERENCE MEALS

There are many restaurants, pubs and cafes in the town centre. Conference participants are encouraged to discover them on their own.

We recommend:

**Café Vermanitis (Latvian traditional food)**

Elizabetes street 65

**Student's café**

Main Building of University of Latvia

Raina bulvaris 19

**Café Cili pica**

Raina bulvaris 15

**Café Alus Ordenis (Latvian traditional food)**

Raina bulvaris 15 (basement)



