

# The Department of Baltic Philology (1921–1940) established by Jānis Endzelīns at the University of Latvia

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**Abstract:** The article is devoted to the history of the Department of Baltic Philology of the Faculty of Philology and Philosophy at the University of Latvia. The department was established in the academic year of 1920/1921 by professor Jānis Endzelīns, who also acted as head of the department throughout its existence. Using the documents available at the Latvian State Historical Archives and the Museum of the University of Latvia, as well as published memories, the article provides a characterization of the establishment process of this department as an unprecedented one among the universities around the globe. The article also describes study programmes and their development, students and graduates, academic personnel, international relations of the department and its reputation.

**Keywords:** *academic personnel, Department of Baltic Philology, graduates, international relations, Jānis Endzelīns, students, study programmes, University of Latvia*

## Introduction: Jānis Endzelīns and the University of Latvia

According to several European experts, the most prominent scholars of Latvia of all times are the chemist Vilhelms Ostvalds (1853–1932), the linguist Jānis Endzelīns (1873–1961) and the physicist Juris Upatnieks (born 1936) (Atlas EU, 2012, p. 114). The scientific achievements of the two representatives of natural sciences—Ostvalds and Upatnieks—are probably more widely known around



Prof. Jānis Endzelīns in the 1920s or 1930s.  
Photo from the family collection of M.  
Krieviņa, Jānis Endzelīns's granddaughter.

the world than the contribution of Endzelīns; therefore, it is appropriate to start to introduce his activities.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Endzelīns carried out fundamental research in Baltic languages. He employed the historical-comparative method, and the research resulted in high-quality treatises, such as *Lettische Grammatik* (1922; translation into Latvian in 1951), *Senprūšu valoda* ('Prussian language', 1943; translation into German in 1944), *Baltu valodu skaņas un formas* ('The sounds and forms of Baltic languages', 1948; translation into Lithuanian in 1957, into English in 1971). Endzelīns created a new branch within the domain of Indo-

European comparative linguistics—Baltistics (further on this see Hauzenberga-Šturma, 1962; Kļaviņa, 2008, pp. 187–195).

Professor Endzelīns's most important contribution to the history of higher education in the Baltic states, Europe, and globally, was the establishment of the Department of Baltic Philology at the University of Latvia in 1921. No university around the world had a department of Baltic philology at that time and for many subsequent years it also remained the only one. The year 2011 marked the passing of 90 years since the department commenced its work at the University of Latvia under the lead of professor Endzelīns. The department's activities have not yet been comprehensively researched and characterized. Only in 1991, after independence was restored in Latvia, the linguist Rasma Grīse (1991, pp. 9–11) brought to the focus of philologists the department's academic programme, study subjects, and named respective lecturers. In subsequent years, while compiling a collection of memories about professor Endzelīns (Barbare & Bušmane, 1999), information was gathered also about the department's pre-war activities. This information was supplemental to the data obtained in 2009 to

2011 from the documents held at the Latvian State Historical Archives (LSHA, 1919–1940, files 1, 6, 42, 82, 102, 167–169) and the Museum of the University of Latvia (MUL, 1919–1922).

The University of Latvia is a relatively new institution. It was established as late as on September 28, 1919, almost a year after the proclamation of independence in Latvia, as a result of the reorganization, in national spirit, of the Riga Polytechnical Institute, which had already been functioning in the Baltic states since 1862. The newly-established republic needed a single united national university with faculties of technical and natural sciences, medicine, the humanities and agriculture. In the first academic year (1919/1920), studies were commenced in nine faculties, the largest of which by the number of students was the Faculty of Linguistics and Philosophy (later the Faculty of Philology and Philosophy) with 245 students in four functioning departments: Linguistics, History, Philosophy and Pedagogy.

## Establishment of the Department of Baltic Philology

As the faculty's first book of records indicates, on 24 April 1920 its academic personnel (Kārlis Kundziņš, Jēkabs Lautenbahs, Pauls Dāle, Ernests Blese, Arnolds Spekke, Leonīds Arbuzovs, Ernests Šneiders, Aleksandrs Dauge), while discussing the academic courses for the following year and the “structure of the departments in the nearest future”, envisaged the establishing of three sections in the linguistics department: (1) Comparative Linguistics and the Baltic-Slavic section, (2) Classical section, and (3) the Romance-Germanic section (MUL, 1919–1922, p. 40).

On 12 June 1920, a few weeks after his return from Kharkov, professor Jānis Endzelīns was elected the dean of the faculty and specification of the faculty's study programmes and work on structural changes was actively started. At the end of September 1920, associate professor Ernests Blese, the faculty's secretary, announced in the newspaper *Latvijas Vēstnesis* ('Latvian Herald') that regarding the planned activities of the faculty for the academic year 1920/1921 the department of linguistics has been divided into three sections, the first of which was to be the Department of Baltic Philology (Blese, 1920). Blese also admitted that the creation of new divisions had become possible only because the faculty welcomed back from Russia its eldest and most prominent employees—professor

Jānis Endzelīns, Ernests Felsbergs, associate professor Juris Plāķis, and Jānis Kauliņš—but also associate professor Edgars Krieviņš and Aleksandrs Dauge of the younger generation of scholars. In June 1920, Professor Pēteris Šmits, the excellent world-known Sinologist, Manchurist and folklorist, also arrived in Riga from Vladivostok, together with soldiers of the Imanta regiment.

Full-fledged work of all the departments commenced as of the academic year of 1921/1922. Jānis Siliņš (2004, p. 203), student of philosophy at the time and later researcher at the University of Latvia and Latvian Academy of Arts, painter and arts scholar, writes about this period in his memoirs. The *Latvijas Universitātes lekciju un praktisko darbu saraksti* ('Lists of lectures and practical trainings at the University of Latvia'), published since the spring semester of 1921 (issued once a semester until the 1932/1933 academic year and from then on once an academic year), serve as another proof. This publication reveals that Endzelīns started to teach the main course on Baltic philology—Comparative Grammar of Baltic Languages—and chair seminars in Baltic languages only in 1921/1922 (Lists of lectures, 1921, p. 22; 1922, p. 29). During the previous academic year (1920/1921), the professor, newly-arrived from Kharkov, taught Introductory Course to Latvian, Comparative Grammar of Slavic Languages and Germanic Proto-Language for Germanists (LSHA, 1919–1940, files 1, 102). Within the next years Blese taught Introductory Course to Latvian, and since 1924 Anna Ābele lectured on Comparative Grammar of Slavic Languages.

## Study programmes and subjects

The activities of the Department of Baltic Philology were based on the study programme developed in 1921 and on the regulations of study progress and final examinations (Jurevičs, 1939, pp. 180–276). Similarly to other departments in the Faculty of Philology and Philosophy, there were two admission tests (in Latvian and Latin) and two final oral examinations. For graduation, the students of Baltic philology had to take final examinations in Scientific Grammar of Latvian and in History of Latvian Literature, as well as write a paper in the presence of the examination commission about a specific subject matter, announced by the commission at the spot.

The evaluation of the results of the examinations was as follows: 'very successful', 'successful', 'good' and 'unsuccessful'. The persons who had completed their

studies ‘very successfully’ and wished to obtain a candidate’s degree were required to develop also their candidate’s paper within a year’s time. From 1922 onward there were two types of graduate diplomas—1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> rank. Diplomas of the 1<sup>st</sup> rank were given to the students who had passed all final exams, completed the examination paper and the candidate’s paper, as well as two thirds of the curriculum with the evaluation ‘very successful’.

Students who graduated with a candidate’s degree and wished to obtain the rights of a secondary school teacher had to master four additional subjects: Logics and Theory of Cognition, General Pedagogy or History of Pedagogy, Pedagogical Psychology and methodology of the given subject.

The extensive list of study subjects consisted of (1) general, (2) specialized or main, and (3) recommended subjects. Mastering these subjects required very serious studying for many years. The minimum study time was four years, while eight years was acknowledged by the faculty in 1922 as the maximum study time.

The academic programme periodically went through changes and there was an increasing tendency towards specialization; for example, already in March 1922, the branches of linguistics and literature were separated in the study programme. The studies took place according to the corresponding study programmes of 1921, 1924, 1927, 1931 or 1938.

Compared to the previous years, the study programme of 1938 was different in that during the first propaedeutic academic year (*philosophicum*) all the students of the faculty shared *general* and *introductory* courses in the History of Latvia, History of Art, Philosophy, General History of Literature, History of Latvian Literature, and Greek.

Starting with the second academic year, students made a choice of their department and acquired *specialized* subjects. In the Department of Baltic Philology the specialized subjects were: Introduction to Linguistics, Introduction to Baltic Philology, Folklore, Scientific Grammar of Latvian, History of Latvian Literature, History of Lithuanian Literature, General History of Literature, Lithuanian, Comparative Grammar of Baltic Languages, Ethnography, Baltic Mythology, Greek or Latin. The branches of linguistics and literature each had their own specialized subjects; for example, linguists could take Introduction to Phonetics, Sanskrit, Old Slavic, Greek, Comparative Grammar of Indo-European Languages, Comparative Grammar of Slavic Languages, and Ancient History of Latvia.

Already in the development of the department in autumn 1920, examination programmes for a specialist of highest qualification—that is doctoral degree in Baltic Philology—were considered. On 23 October 1920, it was decided that applicants for doctoral degree in Baltic linguistics had to pass examinations in the following four subjects: (1) Baltic Languages (Prussian, Lithuanian and Latvian), (2) Comparative Grammar (general course), (3) Comparative Grammar of Slavic Languages, (4) Old Slavic, as well as to develop and present to the Council of the Faculty an independent research paper, or thesis.

### Students and graduates of the Department of Baltic Philology

The number of students in the department constantly increased throughout its existence—from 32 during the first year of activities up to 255 in the academic year of 1938/1939 (Jurevičs, 1939, Table on p. 230). As of the academic year of 1933/1934, the department had the largest number of students in the whole faculty, exceeding the popularity of the Department of History. However, the situation of graduates was different. In the course of 18 years, only 89 students graduated with the candidate's degree from the Department of Baltic Philology, while most of the graduates received a diploma for the completion of a full study programme. At the same time the Department of History had 140 graduates with a candidate's degree in History (the total number of the faculty's graduates was 475).

The reports of the deans of the faculties about granting candidate's degree to graduates (LSHA, 1919–1940, files 167–169) indicate that the first graduates of the Department of Baltic Philology to be given the candidate's degree in spring 1926 were Kārlis Kārklīš and Jānis Alberts Jansons, future specialists in literature and professors of the University of Latvia. Kārklīš's candidate thesis was devoted to the subdialect of Prauliena, whereas the thesis of Jansons focused on Latvian drama up to the national period at the beginning of 1868.

Some other theses, the authors of which later made a significant contribution to Latvian science, education and culture, are also worth mentioning. For example, in 1929 Zenta Mauriņa was awarded a candidate's degree in Baltic Philology for her thesis *Jānis Poruks kā romantiķis un reālists* ('Jānis Poruks as a romanticist and realist'), in 1931 Edīte Hauzenberga for her thesis *Vietvārdu studijas* ('Studies of place names') and Alvilis Augstkalns for his thesis *Leišu dainu pantmērs* ('The rhythm of Lithuanian folk songs'), in 1933 Valērija Bērziņa for the thesis *Raiņa*



Students and academic personnel of the Department of Baltic Philology around 1925 (Prof. J. Endzelīns holding roses). Photo from the archives of the Literature and Music Museum in Latvia.

*“Uguns un nakts” attiecības pret Pumpura “Lāčplēsi”* (‘The relations between *Uguns un nakts* by Rainis and *Lāčplēsis* by Pumpurs’). In 1934, Rūdolfs Grabis was awarded a candidate’s degree for his thesis *Piezīmes par Straupes draudzes izloksnēm* (‘On the subdialects of the Straupe parish’), in 1935 Krišjānis Ancītis for *Aknīstes izloksne* (‘The subdialect of Aknīste’), in 1938 Kārlis Draviņš for *Stendes vietu vārdi* (‘The place names in Stende’), and in 1939 the candidate’s degree was awarded to Daina Zemzare for *Lejasciema vietu vārdi un uzvārdi* (‘The place names and surnames in Lejasciems’).

On June 1, 1939 the Council of the University of Latvia approved the decision of the Dean’s Council to rename the candidate’s degree to master’s degree (LSHA, 1919–1940, files 6, 82). Thus, in 1939, the Department of Baltic Philology awarded the master’s degree for their candidate’s thesis to eight graduates, including Velta Rūķe for her *Kārļa Brugmaņa un Hermana Hirta uzskatu un metožu atšķirība indoeiropiešu valodu salīdzināmā materiāla apstrādājumā* (‘Differences between the opinions and methods of Karl Brugmann and Herman Hirt in the processing of comparative material of Indo-European languages’).

The best graduates stayed in the faculty to prepare for the academic career: Kārklīņš in 1925/26, Jansons in 1926/27, Augstkalns in 1931/32, Ancītis in 1934/35, Kalniņš in 1935/36, Draviņš in 1938/39, Hauzenberga-Šturma in 1938/39, and Meņģele, Zemzare and Rūķe in 1939/40. Not all of them received scholarships, which were quite small at the very beginning (50 Latvian lats per month), but as of 1 July 1939 the scholarship was already 175 Latvian lats.

Several of the new candidates were sent to further their studies in other European universities. The first Baltic philologist to study abroad, in Leipzig, Kaunas, Königsberg, Munich and Vienna, was Alvis Augstkalns, the graduate of 1931.

The highest qualification, doctoral degree in Baltic Philology, was awarded to only three scholars: in 1928 to Ernests Blese for his thesis *Latviešu uzvārdu studijas* ('Studies of Latvian surnames'), in 1938 to Zenta Mauriņa for her thesis *Friča Bārdas pasaules uzskats* ('The world outlook of Fricis Bārda'), and in February 1940 to Kārlis Kārklīņš for the thesis *Rūdolfa Blaumaņa darbu ārējā forma* ('The form of the works of Rūdolfs Blaumanis'). Mauriņa became the first woman to defend a doctoral thesis in Baltic Philology.

## Student participation in research

Many students of the Department of Baltic Philology took active part in the department's research activities of that time.

As soon as on 22 September 1920, upon the initiative of Endzelīns, the Society of Philologists was established under the auspices of the University of Latvia in order to unite the academic personnel and students of linguistics, literature and folklore studies, and other enthusiasts outside the university (LSHA, 1919–1940, file 1, p. 200). The department's students were actively involved in the work of the society. Many student research papers on dialects, folk songs, fairy tales, fiction and Latvian texts from the 16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> century can be found in the selected collection of articles *Filologu biedrības raksti* ('Proceedings of the Society of Philologists'; 1921–1940) alongside the publications of the academic personnel (J. Endzelīns, P. Šmits, L. Bērziņš, A. Ābele, L. Arbuzovs, L. Adamovičs, F. Adamovičs, E. Blese, J. Kauliņš, P. Ķiķauka, M. Nusbergers, J. Plāķis, A. Spekke, K. Straubergs, J. Velme, R. Vipers, and B. Vipers), and of foreign scholars (G. Devoto, E. Fraenkel, G. Gerullis, and M. Niedermann).



In autumn 1921, soon after the Department of Baltic Philology had started its activities at the university, the Ministry of Education of Latvia gave the society's founding professor Endzelīns a daunting task—to edit and complete the Latvian language dictionary which had been started by Kārlis Mīlenbahs. Endzelīns wrote an appeal, which appeared in several press publications under the title of “*Uzaicinājums latviešu vārdnīces lietā*” (‘Call in the matter of the Latvian language dictionary’; Endzelīns, 1921, pp. 1194–1195), to all friends of the Latvian language to join a common cause and send him “words not yet disclosed”, indicating their pronunciation, meaning and area of usage. On 13 October 1922, the linguistic division of the Riga Latvian Society restored its activities under the lead of Endzelīns. The linguistic division had one main objective—to prepare Mīlenbahs's dictionary for publication. This was the division's only task at all its 309 meetings, which took place every Thursday up until November 24, 1932. In the course of these ten years, 208 persons took part in the meetings, next to linguists also teachers, novelists and poets, publicists and theologians, medical doctors and civil servants, engineers and homeowners. Among the most active participants were also many current and former students of Baltic philology. Emma Medne, who studied Baltic philology from 1926 to 1932, reminisces:

We were a big crowd from all over Latvia [...] The meetings were chaired by professor Endzelīns himself together with F. Adamovičs, who was like his secretary. However, the real secretary was E. Hauzenberga-Šturma; she had already compiled in advance the list of the words to be discussed. Professor Endzelīns called out the words in front of everybody and those who recognized the respective word responded and explained its meaning. (Medne, 1999, p. 138)

Kārlis Rinkužs, teacher of the Riga State Gymnasium No,1, who also took part in these meetings of the linguistic division of the Riga Latvian Society, wrote:

Even if our life is completely meaningless, participation in this joint work on words is at least something. Every one of us can be characterized: “He has given words to the Latvian language dictionary”. (Rinkužs, 1932)

After the last booklets of the Latvian language dictionary were published towards the end of 1932, the meetings of the linguistic division continued at previous pace and intensity. The discussions now focused on supplements to the dictionary (Endzelīns & Hauzenberga, 1934) and topical issues in language practices. The minutes of the meetings, titled *Profesora J. Endzelīna atbildes* (‘Answers by Professor J. Endzelīns’) and published at the “Ramave” publishing house in the United

States, serve as further proof of this (Hofmanis, 2001). These meetings were very useful for many students and graduates of the Department of Baltic Philology who worked as teachers. Endzelīns thus has given rise to generations of Latvian teachers not only in the auditoriums of the University of Latvia, but also in the linguistic division of the Riga Latvian Society. Those teachers could, in turn, share their acquired knowledge and belief in a clear and pure language with their students.

In spring 1925, the Cabinet of Experimental Phonetics was established at the Faculty of Philology and Philosophy of the University of Latvia. Associate professor Anna Ābele was elected the head of the cabinet. In 1927, the cabinet started its active operation in the backyard building of 5 Baznīcas Street. Some students used the non-compulsory seminars in phonetics, organized by the cabinet, and learned methods of phonetic transcription, to identify the phonetic differences between speakers of different dialects, and to operate the sound analysis equipment of that time (e.g., the kymograph). The cabinet's library boasted the most recent literature on linguistics, for example, from Prague, where Ābele had worked in the academic years of 1922/23 and 1923/24. Many of the students carried out research on the sounds of Latvian language as well as on intonations in different dialects. Ābele herself carried out her scientific research here.

The Cabinet of Experimental Phonetics operated in 5 Baznīcas Street until spring 1938. The premises were then transferred to the Museum of Art of the Faculty of Philology and Philosophy, which was established by merging the Cabinet of the History of Arts (founded in 1921/22 by Professor Ernests Felsbergs) with the Cabinet of Eastern Philology (headed by Professor Francis Balodis). From then on, practical training in general and dialectal phonetics took place in the main building of the University of Latvia in 19 Raiņa *bulvāris*.

The year 1924 also saw the establishment of the Archives of Latvian Folklore, with Anna Bērzkalne as the first head of the archives. Several students of Baltic philology (Augstkalns, Hauzenberga, Medne, Ozols, and others) worked here in parallel to their studies. They were also involved in the collection of regional words and other materials of dialectology. Following the example of Finnish dialectologists, the development of dialect dictionaries of twenty Latvian municipalities was started. The already completed work was later taken over by the Archives of Latvian Language (established in 1935 under the auspices of the Ministry of Education), and managed by the graduates of the Department of Baltic Philology: Alvilis Augstkalns until 1 November 1940, Velta Rūķe from 25 November 1940 to 1 July 1941, and Edīte Hauzenberga-Šturma from 1 July 1941 to 1944. The archival work was done mostly by Baltic linguists,

graduates or students of the department. The research of dialects was supervised by Professor Endzelīns and Baltic philology students, Šmite and Rūķe were involved, while Hauzenberga-Šturma was preparing a comprehensive dictionary of Latvian synonyms. The collection of regional words and toponyms was in the competence of Augstkalns, the then head of the archives.

Baltic philologists were the founders of *Ramave*, the academic organization of students of philology and philosophy (the founding document was signed on March 1, 1929). *Ramave* aimed to unite people involved in the studies of Latvian philology and philosophy in promoting the development of research in these fields and spreading public awareness. The Baltic philologist Velta Rūķe-Draviņa (1917–2003), a former member of *Ramave*, admitted that the organization served as a second university, being practical, rich in ideas and initiatives (Rūķe-Draviņa, 1999, p. 217). In 1939, *Ramave* had 75 members—the academic personnel including Endzelīns, Bērziņš, Ābele, Kauliņš, Vipers, Kārklīš and others had become its honorary members. During its regular gatherings, the members of *Ramave* and their guests discussed issues in literature, linguistics and philosophy, recent publications and travels. Apart from that, *Ramave* implemented several projects: for example, in 1932 it launched the collection of material for the historical dictionary of Latvian language, in 1931 founded a publishing house, which published the collection of articles *Ceļi* ('Roads'), as well as works of other Baltic linguists, such as *Baltu valodu teksti* ('Texts of Baltic languages') by Endzelīns (1936), *Valodas prakses jautājumi* ('Issues in language practices'), edited by Endzelīns (1935), *Leišu valodas elementi latviešu ģimnazijai* ('Elements of Lithuanian language for Latvian gymnasiums') by Augstkalns (1935, 1936), *Tautasdziesmu literatūras bibliogrāfija* ('The literary bibliography of folk songs') by Ozols (1938), *Programma izlokšņu aprakstiem* ('Programme for descriptions of dialects') by Rūķe (1940), and *Valodas un rakstības jautājumi* ('Issues in language and orthography'), compiled by Rūķe and edited by Endzelīns (1940). *Ramave* was a place where the students' talents flourished and the intellectual humanities of Latvia matured.

## Academic personnels

Becoming an academic staff member at the University of Latvia before World War II was not an easy task. Being granted the right to teach was called habilitation (from Latin *habilitare* "to prove one's skills") and it took place in accordance with regulations approved by the Council of the University of Latvia on May 4, 1927

(Academic personnel, 1939, pp. 33–34): habilitation or *pro venia legendi* thesis had to be an independent research, the theme of the test lecture was defined by the faculty council and it had to be prepared within two weeks. After these tasks were completed successfully, the faculty council in a secret ballot decided about the endowment of lectureship to the habilitant. The Constitution of the University of Latvia also set the upper age limit for permanent academic staff to 70 years; after that professors and associate professors, upon their own wish, could be elected freelance lecturers and could continue their academic tenure.

As the word *cathedra* was then used to refer to an academic personnel of a discipline, the faculty had a sufficient number of *cathedras*: for example, the staff lists for the academic year of 1924/25 mentioned 13 *cathedras*. The *cathedra* of Baltic philology usually consisted of three professors (J. Endzelīns, P. Šmits, and L. Bērziņš) and one associate professor. Juris Plāķis was the only professor at the *cathedra* of Comparative Linguistics, Ernests Blese was one of the two professors of German Philology and Anna Ābele was the docent, later senior docent or associate professor, of Slavic Philology. Acquiring proficiency in the languages was supervised by lecturers, who were often native speakers (e.g., from 1928 to 1940 Ādolfs Raulinaitis from Lithuania taught Lithuanian to the Baltic philology students, whereas the academic course of Lithuanian language was lectured by Professor Juris Plāķis). It must be mentioned that professors and associate professors were teaching not only subjects of their own *cathedra*, but also other subjects in the academic curriculum, which content-wise were attributed to some other *cathedra* (e.g., Ernests Blese, professor of German philology, gave lectures also in the Introductory course in Latvian from the academic year of 1921/22 to 1940). In addition, some academic departments, including the *cathedra* of Baltic Philology, had one assistant or “sub-assistant”. The basic workload of the lecturers was six hours per week, which entailed lecturing three study subjects. The rest of the workload was calculated as overtime, for which special planning was done, and limitations and reimbursements applied.

The main courses of the Department of Baltic Philology—Comparative Grammar of Baltic Languages and Scientific Grammar of Latvian Language—were taught by Professor Endzelīns in alternate years (one year the former subject, the following year the latter). Apart from that, every year Endzelīns chaired seminars or practical training in Baltic languages and added either Sanskrit or Old Iranian texts, Old Icelandic or Proto-Germanic language as the third subject. The list of subjects taught by Endzelīns (Jurevičs, 1939, p. 284) included also some non-traditional courses: for example, on Tacitus’s *Germania* in the academic year of 1938/39,

which was most probably related to the translation the professor was doing at that time, and a course on Plautus's *Mostellaria* in the academic year of 1923/24.

Information on what specifically, when and where, was taught by each lecturer can be found in the brochures *Latvijas Universitātes lekciju un praktisko darbu saraksti* ('Lists of lectures and practical trainings at the University of Latvia'), which were published annually since the spring semester of 1921. The brochures even provide information on which day of the week, at what time, and in which auditorium did a lecture or a seminar take place. Endzelīns's lectures, for example, usually took place on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays in auditoriums No. 39, 40 or 60 of the main building of the University of Latvia.

In order to learn which courses were taught by each member of the academic personnel, it is not even necessary to dig up archive documents or trust in various online resources. The brochures, for example, provide necessary information on that Professor Pēteris Šmits taught Introduction to Linguistics, Introduction to Baltic Philology, Latvian Folklore and Mythology, as well as Chinese; Professor Juris Plāķis taught Comparative Grammar of Indo-European languages, Lithuanian, Sanskrit and Phonetics; associate professor Anna Ābele lectured on Comparative Grammar of Slavic languages, Old Slavic, and Phonetics, while literature courses were taught by J. Lautenbahs, L. Bērziņš, K. Kārklīņš, J. A. Jansons and others, and courses in philosophy by P. Zālītis, V. Frosts, T. Celms, P. Dāle, P. Jurevičs and others.

For many years the Department of Baltic Philology remained unique in the world with the most prominent scholar of Baltic studies Professor Jānis Endzelīns working there, and this drew several foreign linguists to Riga to attend his lectures. Among the foreign scholars were Václav Čiháň from the Czech Republic (1924–1926), Christian Stang from Norway (1936), Valentin Kiparsky from Finland (1935–1938), Petras Jonikas from Lithuania (1935–1937) and Jonas Kabelka (1939–1941).

The Department of Baltic Philology also welcomed several guest lecturers: Antoine Meillet from Paris (1922), Jooseppi Mikkola from Helsinki (1930), Giacomo Devoto from Rome (1933), and Mykolas Biržiška from Kaunas (1935 and 1939) (LSHA, file 42).

The faculty's academic personnel also excelled in publishing. Professor Kārlis Straubergs has compiled a list of these scientific, popular-scientific and journalistic works from 1919 to 1930. The list of books, articles and reviews covers 62 pages

in two brochures (Straubergs, 1926–1930). The most prominent among the publications are the following monumental works by Baltic philologists: *Lettische Grammatik* by Jānis Endzelīns (1922), the four volumes of Latvian language dictionary by Kārlis Milēnbahs, edited, revised and continued by Jānis Endzelīns (1923–1932), and the fifteen volumes of *Latviešu tautas teikas un pasakas* ('Latvian folk legends and fairy tales') compiled by Pēteris Šmits (1925–1937). Both professors were given the highly-deserved Fatherland Award, the highest state award in Latvia. Pēteris Šmits received the award in 1938, Jānis Endzelīns in 1939.

Other academic publications of the staff members of the Department of Baltic Philology also have a lasting value: Endzelīns published the two-volume *Latvijas vietu vārdi* ('Place names of Latvia', 1922–1925) and *Latviešu valodas skaņas un formas* ('The sounds and forms of Latvian language', 1938). Juris Plāķis published *Kursenieku valoda* ('Couronian language of Couronian isthmus', 1927) and the two-volume *Latvijas vietu vārdi un latviešu pavārdi* ('Place names and surnames of Latvia', 1936–1939). Endzelīns's book on the sounds and forms of Latvian (1938) was awarded the Prize of the Cultural Foundation, while the three others received the Krišjānis Barons Prize.

The example set by the outstanding academic personnel had a positive effect on the professional growth of students at the Department of Baltic Philology. The contribution of the graduates of this department during the next decades, in Latvia and abroad, became a cornerstone for the education, science and intellectual culture of future generations of Latvians. The students remembered with pride their studies in Baltic philology at the University of Latvia.

Unfortunately, at the onset of the Soviet occupation in summer 1940, the Department of Baltic Philology was closed down according to the Soviet university regulations. Alvilis Augstkalns, the talented graduate of the Department of Baltic Philology and first head of the Archives of Latvian Language, did not survive the first "year of horror" of the Soviet occupation and committed suicide on November 1, 1940. In the mass deportations on June 14, 1941, several members of the department's academic personnel, graduates and students, were deported to remote regions of the Soviet Union.

During the German occupation (1941–1944), the Department of Baltic Philology was established anew. With the advance of the Soviet army in autumn 1944, also many Baltic philologists—both academic personnel and graduates of the Department—fled into exile to Germany (E. Blese, E. Hauzenberga-Šturma, L. Bērziņš, K. Kārklīņš, Z. Mauriņa, and others) or Sweden (V. Rūķe-Draviņa,

K. Draviņš, and others), but Jānis Endzelīns stayed in Latvia. Nevertheless, after World War II the activities of the Department of Baltic Philology at the State University of Soviet Latvia were again discontinued.

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