



**Informationen zum Bibliothekswesen im
Ostseeraum**

**Information on Librarianship in the Baltic Sea
Region**

NEWSLETTER OF THE BIBLIOTHECA BALTICA WORKING GROUP

Newsletter - No. 22 - November 2011



National Library of Estonia

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This edition of the Bibliotheca Baltica Newsletter was prepared and edited by Catharina Melldahl and Jürgen Warmbrunn on behalf of the President and Board of Bibliotheca Baltica.

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

Membership:

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

The annual membership fee is 60 Euro (2011).

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

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Sphinx in the National Library of Estonia
Photograph: Catharina Melldahl

Words from the President ...

“In the end of November I shall be leaving my position as National Librarian of Sweden.” This was what had been decided, and I wrote these words when I started to write my text for this number of the Bibliotheca Baltica Newsletter. But the Ministry has not yet taken a decision about my successor, and therefore I have to stay until the beginning of next year.

In November 2011 the National Library of Sweden celebrates the 350th anniversary of the first legal deposit law in Sweden (1661) with several activities, like for example a seminar, a book and a web exhibition (which you can find on our website, in Swedish, <http://plikt.kb.se/>). Now we are waiting for a legal deposit law for digital material. The Parliament will decide about this new law in 2012.

What is on the agenda for Bibliotheca Baltica? The Board is preparing new activities together with old and new partners. We will send you information about these activities in the beginning of next year.

In October next year we will have our symposium in Tallinn. As you can read in this Newsletter we have a programme, and we are now busily planning for this symposium. As you also can see in this Newsletter we will hold a seminar called “Bibliotheca Baltica Think Tank”, in Vilnius in the beginning of January.

In a month we have Christmas and New Year Celebration. We are still waiting for snow here in Stockholm, but for sure it will come soon.

Regards

Gunnar Sahlin



On the right: The Bibliotheca Baltica President Gunnar Sahlin, Treasurer Liisa Savolainen and Secretary Jürgen Warmbrunn
Photograph: Catharina Melldahl

Bibliotheca Baltica Symposium 2012 – Welcome to the National Library of Estonia!

The National Library of Estonia is pleased to welcome the delegates of the next Bibliotheca Baltica symposium, focusing on library services for researchers and other clearly defined target groups. The Symposium will take place on 25-26 October 2012 in the Main Conference Hall of the the library's Conference Centre. More information on the National Library of Estonia can be found at www.nlib.ee/en

Dear Colleagues,

Recently the Bibliotheca Baltica Board decided to hold its 2012 Symposium in Tallinn. It will be hosted by the National Library of Estonia, October 25-26, 2012. The overall topic of the symposium will be library services to researchers and other clearly defined target groups (e.g. members of parliament or business corporations). Examples of 'good practices' will be presented from Estonia, Finland, Germany, Poland, Russia and Sweden. A special session will be devoted to a couple of research projects that studied how library services are used and assessed by researchers themselves.

The program of the symposium will be presented in early February 2012, but please do mark the date in your diaries already now.

The program committee of the 2012 Bibliotheca Baltica Symposium consists of:

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If you would like to actively contribute to the conference program please contact one of the members of the program committee.

Gunnar Sahlin
Bibliotheca Baltica President



National Library of Estonia – Entrance Hall

National Library of Estonia - Highlights in 2012

Development of the e-library

In its Strategic Development Plan for 2009-2013, the library has set an objective to develop its e-library to the same level as the traditional library. In Estonia, one of the most important tools in collecting, preserving and providing access to digital information of national importance is the digital archive DIGAR, developed by the National Library. Under the Legal Deposit Copy Act, DIGAR has been acting as the archive of Estonian publications since 2006. The further development of DIGAR focuses on receiving, archiving and preserving publications collected by the digital repositories of other Estonian memory institutions. The library plans to increase the archive's backup capacity and continues to automate the workflows. For this purpose the library builds a new server room meeting the corresponding security measures, purchases additional servers and upgrades the archive's information management software.

The archive DIGAR is public and provides free access at <http://digar.nlib.ee/>.

Extensive renovation project of the library's building

In September 2010 the Government of Estonia took a decision to invest the revenue from the sales of Estonia's unused pollution quota (the AAUs or Assigned Amount Units) into the energy efficiency improvement of public buildings. These extensive renovations will take place under the Green Investment Scheme, leading to reduced energy consumption and consequent CO2 emission reductions. One of the public buildings going to be renovated is the National Library of Estonia. The renovation will be carried out in two stages: during the first one the ventilation and air conditioning system of stack-rooms and reading rooms will be rebuilt. At the second stage the windows will be replaced and lighting in the reading rooms will be renewed.

According to the present schedule, the summer of 2012 requires great flexibility from the library and obviously readers' services will have to be profoundly reorganised for at least a couple of months. All renovation works should be completed by October 2012.

International events in 2012

In addition to the Bibliotheca Baltica Symposium, the National Library of Estonia will host another important international event in 2012. In cooperation with the IFLA Classification and Indexing Section, the library will organise the IFLA satellite post-conference Beyond libraries – subject metadata in the digital environment and semantic web on 17-18 August. The digital environment creates new possibilities and new challenges for subject access. How could we take advantage of the new opportunities and how can we handle the challenges? The post-conference will explore the role of different kinds of subject metadata in the digital environment and the semantic web – in libraries and beyond libraries. The working language of the conference is English and online registration opens in March 2012. More information will be available at the conference website at www.nlib.ee/tallinnsatellite

Invitation: Bibliotheca Baltica Think Tank Brainstorming Session: National Library of Lithuania, 10 January 2012

Bibliotheca Baltica Think Tank: Strategic Intention

BALTIC SEA LIBRARIES CONTRIBUTION TO DIGITAL EUROPE

BBTT

-Thoughts Leadership-

October, 2011

In This Issue

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- Object
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"The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers."

—Ralph Nader

Bibliotheca Baltica Think Tank (BBTT) is intended to be integral part of Bibliotheca Baltica (BB) foundation with strategic purpose to foster economic, social and cultural growth of the Baltic Sea region libraries.

BBTT could provide awareness on Digital Europe and boost the Information Society building process in the Baltic Sea region.

BBTT is planned to be a synergetic structure contributing to fully realization of BB network potential through its missions and goals.

The initiative of BBTT emerged as result of generating interdisciplinary thinking between library and information science experts, research scholars, practicing industry executives, content providers and decision makers who share a strong interest in the topics of Information Society and Knowledge Economy.

The BBTT goal is to find solutions to concrete problems through joint projects by setting on sound and workable international cooperation mechanism. The scope of projects initiated by BBTT is intended to be relevant to target areas of EU Information Society development policy. EU Digital Agenda indicated the action areas like:

- Simplifying pan-European licensing for online works
- Preserving orphan works and out of print works
- Oblige public bodies to give access to public sector information
- Wide stakeholder debate on further measures to stimulate a European online content market
- Simplifying the distribution of creative content

Upcoming event

International brainstorming session is organized with an intention to identify strategic activities of BB.

Date:
10 January, 2012

Venue:
National Library of Lithuania
(Gedimino str. 51)

Expected participants:

- Bibliotheca Baltica board and network members
- „Ernst & Young Baltic“
- Experts in Information Society Policy

Further information about the event and registration will be communicated later on.

Strategic activity trends of BBTT:

- Project based interdisciplinary interaction of BB network libraries.
- Interoperable cooperation and engagement of BB network libraries with local and international stakeholders.
- Stimulation of communication and joint research development.

BBTT should consist of international and national top level decision makers, library executives, academics, entrepreneurs and IT experts who provide strategic advice on the coverage and implementation strategy of the BBTT. Possible stakeholders:

- Bibliotheca Baltica
- Baltic Sea Library
- Council of the Baltic Sea States
- LIBER
- MOST
- UNESCO
- European Science Foundation

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News from The University Library in Toruń

Żaneta Dera

Journals Department
University Library in Toruń

Since the University Library in Toruń was founded in 1945 an important aspect of its acquisition policy has been the creation of valuable special collections. Because of the newly founded University's focus on the Humanities and also its geographical location, the Library management placed particular emphasis on titles contained in such collections as *Pomeranica*, *Baltica*, *Copernicana* and *Vilniana*, which undoubtedly contributed to raising the University Library in Toruń to the rank of one of the most important libraries functioning in Northern Poland. Over the years the library has assembled an interesting collection which is a rich source of information for academics and researchers of the region. Recent rapid advancement in information and communication technologies has become a driving force bringing about major improvements in the library services and the accessibility of its valuable collections.

To meet the growing demands of users of our modern university library, in September 2005, the Library enabled the general public to view valuable documents within the Kujawsko-Pomorska Digital Library (officially opened in December 2005; <http://kpbc.umk.pl/dlibra>). The KPDJ provides free access to full texts of documents which are not subject to restrictions under the Copyright and Related Rights Act (OJ 2006 No. 90 item 631) and documents to which the Library has acquired common access rights.

Following the Dublin Core metadata standard, the KPDL library assumed a very innovative approach to making its collection available on the Internet. Clicking on the RIGHTS label, users may find very accurate descriptions of the legal status of the digital resource they access. We now know which resources are public domain, which are protected under a Creative Commons license and the use of which is restricted by copyrights. It is a very important piece of information for digital library users because it guarantees the lawful use of the library resources for their own purposes.

The KPDJ collections fall into three categories: *Cultural Heritage*, *Educational Materials* and *Regional Resources*. The latter is particularly valuable since it contains digital versions of various documents relating to the region of Pomerania and the Baltic Sea area. Especially noteworthy here are *Baltica* and *Lituanica*, which are collections of special importance for historians and other researchers interested in this region. Resources in the Kujawsko-Pomorska Digital Library can be accessed via available worldwide Internet search engines, such as the Google Scholar academic search tool, or BASE, because the library is based on software that uses the OAI-PMH open protocol.

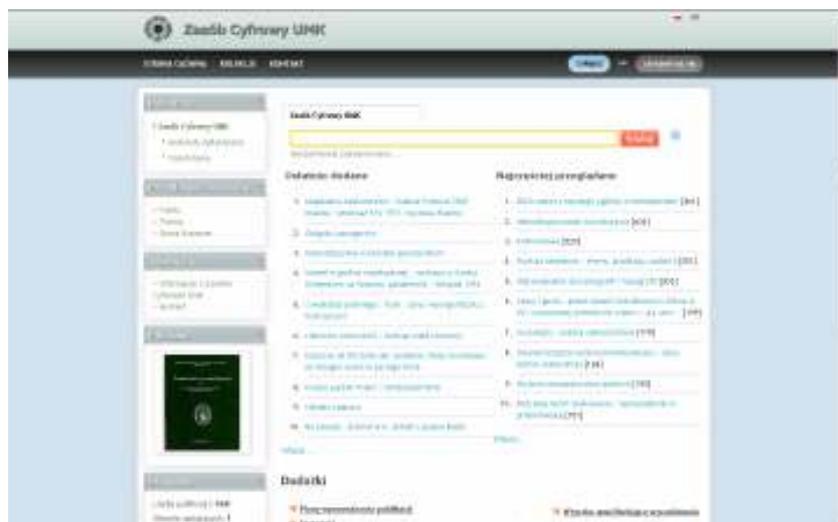
Significant emphasis was also placed on providing a digital version of one of the major regional newspapers *Gazeta Toruńska*, first published in the second half of the nineteenth century. Now (May 2011) users have free access to its full-text resources from the years 1867-1892 (<http://kpbc.umk.pl/dlibra/publication?id=8268>). Other

annual sets of the newspaper are going to be gradually added to the library resources and made available to the public.



Newspapers in Toruń. KPDJ webpage. Screenshot.

Following the ever-growing technical capabilities and importance of electronic materials accessible from anywhere in the world, and also doing its best to make its resources freely available for the NCU students and academic staff, the University Library in Toruń, has been also developing (since June 2009) the NCU Access-Restricted Digital Resource, which mainly consists of such copyrighted works which are not readily available in libraries as: academic textbooks, monographs, articles and other valuable materials, developed by members of the NCU academic staff and local publishers (<http://zc.umk.pl/dLibra>). The content stored in the Digital Resource is not available to the general public. Due to copyright restrictions, one can use them only on the University's premises. Despite these limitations, however, publications contained in the Digital Resource are very often used by readers and are a great help in research and teaching.



NCU Digital Resource. Homepage Screenshot.

In autumn 2011, in collaboration with the University Library in Lund (Sweden), the University Library launched the Directory of Open Access Journal project (DOAJ), which opened a new area of activity of the University Library aimed at electronic dissemination and popularization of academic resources.

This cooperation is based on promoting top-quality Polish scientific journals appearing in their electronic form in the open access model, together with options for improving the already existing models. A characteristic feature of such magazines is that they provide free access to the full texts of articles published on their pages, allowing researchers around the world instant access to the latest research results or analyses. The Library staff are involved in promoting the open access movement in Poland and participate in such European projects promoting better access to knowledge and development of the public domain on the Internet as Communia.



DOAJ. Screenshot.

In the years to come, taking full advantage of new possibilities and technical solutions, Toruń University Library will certainly seek to participate in the development of projects which will enable it to maintain its status of one of the best academic libraries in Poland. This is a difficult task and requires international cooperation. The dynamically changing reality is forcing librarians to be flexible in their approach and prepare well in order to function in our fluid reality. The financial crisis has reached Europe, although maybe not to such an extent as elsewhere. Poland has not remained unaffected, either. That is why, universities have been forced to restructure and adapt and our library must also join in the process of change. Therefore, all the new plans of the library must include better work efficiency and improvement of the quality of the services it offers.

Electronic Memory of the Arctic Project at the National Library of Russia

Liudmila Kildushevskaya

Head of the Department of Cartography
National Library of Russia

Irina Lynden

Deputy Director General for International Activities
National Library of Russia

This year the National Library of Russia moved forward on the *Electronic Memory of the Arctic Project*, which was started as a digital portal by several partner institutions in Russia in 2009.

About the Project

The objective of the *Electronic Memory of the Arctic (EMA)* project is preserving the most complete representation of information resources on the Internet, which are related to learning resources, development, and up-to-date functioning of the modern circumpolar world. The project provides broad online and easy-to-use access to the comprehensive digital cultural heritage that is kept in collections of various institutions. The project also assumes the establishment and development of national information segments for the Arctic Council countries. Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin internationally supported the project when he spoke at the Arctic: Territory of Dialogue International Forum.

Among other institutions participating in the project on the Russian side, there are the National Library of Russia, the Electronic Memory of the Arctic Non-commercial Partnership, the Russian Geographic Society, the Russian State Library, Paulsen Editions, and the Institute for Russian Literature (the Pushkin House) of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The Office for Information Service and Automated Technologies, which includes teams responsible for collections, services, prints, cartographic materials, newspapers, national literatures, printed music and sound recordings, data processing and catalogues, represents the NLR in these activities.

In the first phase of the project, professionals identified collections for the Russian segment of the EMA. They also chose the most interesting materials from various departments of the NLR.

At the first stage, over 2,000 books were selected. They represented the Russian language and the languages of the peoples of the High North. The selected books cover the period of time from the beginning of the 18th century up to 1940 inclusive. Professionals chose literature from all subject areas, related one way or another to the circumpolar habitat. For example, statistics and economic data and surveys, records of the polar expeditions, descriptions of nature and everyday life, studies in wildlife and natural resources, publications of indigenous peoples' folklore, studies in ethnography and philology, primers in North peoples' languages, and Christian and missionary literature.

The project also assumes to include periodicals, published in the Polar Region after 1917, including, perhaps, the world's most Northern newspaper called *The Polar Steamship*, which before the 1917 Revolution was published in Spitzbergen.

Printed music and sound recordings reflect traditional folklore classics created by peoples of the High North.

Postcards are widely represented in the EMA, many of them contain views of various places of the Northern Region, its people and ethnographic subjects. Some of the postcards relate to the rescue of the Nobile's expedition, contain photos of the members of Soviet expeditions to the Northern Pole, as well as famous pilots.

Cartographic materials, starting with the 16th century, show both the development of ideas on the Region as a whole, and numerous studies by Russian sailors and polar explorers.

Up to this point, about 100,000 pages of books, maps and images from the NLR's collections have been scanned, supplied with rich metadata and reference materials and added to the EMA digital library.

The EMA portal has a user friendly interface and search functionality. The display options include zooming in to sheet maps and images, and automated sizing of displayed pages depending on the users' screen resolution.

Systems Architecture and Software

In late 2010 -early 2011 the primary engineering and processing infrastructure of the project was established with development of software, as well as a system to store and access the project information resources. The Server of the EMA project is located in Moscow and maintained by the experts of the RusAr.

At the same time, processing infrastructure for receiving, editing and publishing of the content online was formed. The components of the infrastructure are provided to the two major partners at that time: the National Library of Russia in St. Petersburg and the State Library in Moscow.

The major international events, which the EMA Board organized in 2011 were:
Presentation at the SDWG Expert Council Meeting, Copenhagen, February, 2011,

Participation at the Meeting of the Arctic Council's SMT, Copenhagen, Denmark, March, 2011,

Meeting of representatives from the National Library of Russia, National Library of Norway and the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District, May, 2011, St. Petersburg, Russia

Presentation of the project and signing of the Memorandum with the National Library of Norway at the Arctic Forum, October, 2011, Salekhard, Russia

It should be noted that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry for Regional Development of the Russian Federation and the EMA Project Board have made intensive efforts to promote the project among various institutions in the members of the Arctic Council. Number of times the EMA experts attended the Arctic Council Working Groups' meetings to hold presentations, workshops, and discussions. As a result, official representatives of the Arctic Council member-countries supported the project, and now it has moved to the stage of engaging new partners from countries outside Russia to join the EMA Project.



Photograph below, on the right:
Irina Lynden, Deputy Director General for International Activities, Russian National Library
and Member of the Bibliotheca Baltica Board
Photograph: National Library of Russia, St Petersburg

Visiting Friends: the 9th Conference of Baltic Studies in Europe at Södertörn University (12 – 15 June 2011)

Dr. Jürgen Warmbrunn

Research library of the Herder-Institut, Marburg, Germany

For the Herder-Institut as a highly specialized research institute and academic infrastructure provider one of the main benefits of actively participating in an international working group like Bibliotheca Baltica is the possibility to find new academic and/or infrastructure partners among the working group's members as well as to maintain and cultivate the already existing contacts and partnerships.

Therefore the Herder-Institut was delighted to receive an invitation to participate in the 9th Conference of Baltic Studies in Europe entitled "Transitions, Visions and Beyond", which was held from 12 to 15 June 2011 at Södertörn University in Hudinge just outside the Swedish capital Stockholm. Södertörn is after all the home of the Centre for Baltic and East European Studies (CBEES), a fellow member of Bibliotheca Baltica and also an institution with research interests very similar to those of the Herder-Institut. Following a research stay of the present director of the CBEES, Prof Anu Mai Kõll, in Marburg a few years ago loose contacts between the two institutions were established, which were then gradually strengthened by further mutual visits, among others of members of the Herder-Institut's "Leibniz Graduate School for Cultures of Knowledge in Central European Transnational Contexts". After a few years of cooperating on a more or less informal basis the contacts between the CBEES and the Herder-Institut will soon be formalized through an official cooperation agreement, which will not only provide for an exchange of staff and researchers from both institutions but also for library cooperation through an exchange of publications and other library materials.

Three members of the Herder-Institut answered the conference's call for papers and fortunately all three proposals from the Herder-Institut were accepted by the program committee. So Dorothee M. Goeze, M.A., one of the two archivists in the Herder-Institut, Dr Vytautas Petronis, a native of Lithuania with a wide international academic experience and a post-doc member of the "Leibniz Graduate School for Cultures of Knowledge in Central European Transnational Contexts", and Dr Jürgen Warmbrunn, the institute's librarian and deputy-director, had the chance to travel to Stockholm just before Midsummer and to speak on topics related to their research or work interests.¹

Otto A. Webermann

Dorothee M. Goeze participated in the section „Sociology, Ethnology and Cultural Studies“ with a paper entitled „Estonian cultural history in Germany? Possibilities and limitations of cultural/scientific mediation during the Cold War. The example of Otto A. Webermann“.

¹ The author wishes to express his gratitude to Dorothee M. Goeze and Vytautas Petronis for providing him with summaries of their respective papers which were used in the preparation of this article.

This contribution – closely related to her dissertation project – looked into the different forms that cultural mediation and contacts between academics from the East and the West could take during the Cold War, a time – possibly hard to imagine for the younger academic generation – still without the technical blessings of the internet or communication networks like “Facebook”. Otto A. Webermann, a native of Estonia who lived in Germany from 1944 onwards, conducted these contacts mostly by letter with Estonian scholars in exile (for the major part residing in Sweden and the US), with Estonian researchers in Soviet-occupied Estonia and naturally also with both Germans and Baltic Germans in his new country of residence. In her paper Dorothee M. Goeze pointed out how Webermann maintained and cultivated these contacts not in the least because of their relevance to his own research interests (Estonian and Baltic German literature and the Age of Enlightenment in Estonia).

Both the possibilities and the limitations of cultural mediation during the Cold War period were the main topics of the discussion that followed the presentation of Dorothee M. Goeze’s paper. This discussion was to no small degree enlivened by the participation of the historian Toivo Ü. Raun, Bloomington, who – as a young Estonian historian – had in the 1960s corresponded directly with Webermann and thus actually participated in the forms of academic exchange described in the paper.

Violent communities: the “Iron Wolf” in Lithuania

Vytautas Petronis delivered a paper “Fascism in the Shadows: societal reconstruction and the Lithuanian pro-fascist paramilitary organisation ‘Iron Wolf’ (late 1920s)”, which discussed the development of this radical right movement in interwar Lithuania as well as the attempt to introduce a pro-fascist type of political system in the late 1920s. The paper was received with great interest and the discussion after the presentation was mostly concerned with the ‘Iron Wolf’ organisation and a comparison of the Lithuanian case with that of Latvia and Estonia.

Nearly twenty years of Bibliotheca Baltica

The last of the three papers from the Herder-Institut was entitled “Bibliotheca Baltica – Nearly twenty years of library cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region” and given by Jürgen Warmbrunn.

After a short general introduction to the Herder-Institut and its library the paper first of all described the historical background that alone had made the founding of a working group like Bibliotheca Baltica in the early 1990s possible: the peaceful revolution in Eastern Central Europe in 1989 and 1990, the break-up of the Soviet Union and the independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in 1991.

So in 1992 the International Symposium „Bibliotheca Baltica“ could be organized by the Lübeck City Library within the framework of the ARS BALTICA activities initiated by the state of Schleswig-Holstein. Following the unmitigated success of this conference the idea to create a permanent body that would facilitate cooperation between libraries in the Baltic Sea region (including book exchange) and support scholars in accessing libraries around the Baltic Sea was born. The working group was to attract libraries and librarians from all countries bordering the Baltic Sea – deliberately including the then Soviet Union and Norway. Lübeck City Library

remained for many years the administrative centre of the working group with the library's director, Dr Jörg Fligge, acting as Bibliotheca Baltica's treasurer and the deputy director, Dr Robert Schweitzer, as its secretary.

The paper then described how the Bibliotheca Baltica working group – originally created in the time before the internet and all major digitization projects – was soon forced to redefine its role with a new emphasis on the propagation of and mediation in digitization projects focussing on the cultural heritage of the Baltic Sea area and the cooperation with partners from outside the library sector – private as well as public organizations (universities, literary organizations, corporations). In order to achieve this Bibliotheca Baltica quickly developed into a truly international organization, in this way reflecting the international character of the Baltic Sea and its adjoining lands and at the same time emphasizing the importance of historical relations and ties within the Baltic Sea area and beyond (i.e. between Scandinavia and the Baltic countries, between Scandinavia and Pomerania or between the Baltic Sea area and the Netherlands). It is worthwhile noticing that the German language, which had been its “lingua franca” in the beginning of Bibliotheca Baltica's activities, soon lost its role as the “official language” of Bibliotheca Baltica and was replaced by English. As a matter of fact English has been the main conference language at Bibliotheca Baltica's symposia since 2000 and is now more or less the only language used in the Bibliotheca Baltica newsletters.

The paper then described how many logistical problems that made Bibliotheca Baltica's work in the early years difficult (problems with mail and telephone, bank transfers, visa regulations) were quickly overcome but that new problems like the high postage costs for printed materials increasingly hampered the physical exchange of library materials among its members. Following the “information revolution” of the last two decades the focus on the physical accessibility of library materials that dominated Bibliotheca Baltica's rationale in the early days was replaced by an emphasis on virtual accessibility accordingly. In consequence the idea to produce a printed guide to the holdings of the member libraries was abandoned.

In the 1990s Bibliotheca Baltica's role and activities were enhanced by – mainly Scandinavian – support programs for libraries in Eastern Central Europe and especially the Baltic countries (NORDINFO, Danish National Library Authority). Having further described the particular “*Balticness*” of Bibliotheca Baltica with its strong content focus on the Baltic countries, with the representation of librarians from all the Baltic countries in Bibliotheca Baltica as presidents and board members and with all Baltic countries having been hosts to Bibliotheca Baltica symposia² the paper then analysed the challenges and possibilities for library cooperation in the Baltic Sea area today and the consequences these have for Bibliotheca Baltica. They include the process of building more and more sophisticated digital libraries, the transformation of national, public, research and other libraries with the help of the web and the attempt to add joint projects (project-orientation) to the exchange of know-how and experience at its symposia (conference-orientation) as the main activities and “*raisons d' être*” of Bibliotheca Baltica.

² In 2012 Estonia will become the second country to have staged a Bibliotheca Baltica symposium twice.

In a world in which national boundaries seem to play an increasingly less important role transnational cooperation around the Baltic Sea is a high priority not only from the respective governments' point of view but also for all stakeholders in the new information society, including of course libraries and librarians. At the same time the value of libraries as a central and reliable provider of knowledge and information is being questioned more and more. This means that libraries will have to find new roles and tasks for themselves. In this context the concept of the library as a "space" for study, research, exchange and communication in a more and more spaceless virtual environment has attracted much attention lately. Not surprisingly good examples for the practical realization of this concept exist in the Nordic countries with their highly-developed libraries. These examples, which actually represent the current state of art, can be publicised and maybe even transferred from there to all libraries adjoining the Baltic Sea through Bibliotheca Baltica's activities. At the same time the necessary preservation of the cultural heritage of the Baltic Sea area, also at the heart of Bibliotheca Baltica's long-term priorities, has tended to be overshadowed by the importance of its digitization during the last year few years. Consequently Bibliotheca Baltica has undertaken efforts to propagate a mixed strategy of both preserving the national heritage in libraries and making it more available to the public through digitization.

In closing the paper stressed that Bibliotheca Baltica as a comparatively small organization must continue to build on its strengths as a small, but influential group thanks to the involvement of libraries and dedicated librarians from university and special libraries and to intensify cooperation with partners from outside the immediate library sector (e.g. the Virtual Baltic Sea Library³ and the Council of Baltic Sea States). It ended with an appeal not to leave out of sight Bibliotheca Baltica's original intentions: the advancement of Baltic studies through assistance to scholars and its contribution to international library cooperation around the Baltic Sea. This appeal will be answered by – among others – the program of the Bibliotheca Baltica Symposium to be held in the National Library of Estonia in Tallinn in October 2012.

The 9th Conference on Baltic Studies in Europe with more than 230 participants was a huge success – not in the least because of the tremendous work done by our colleagues from Södertörn University and the Centre for Baltic and East European Studies (CBEES) for which all participants were very grateful indeed.

³ Over the last few years the Virtual Baltic Sea Library has been one of the major cooperation partners of Bibliotheca Baltica. For further information: <http://balticsealibrary.com>.