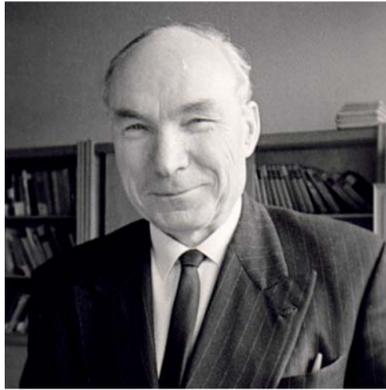


Edgars DUNSDORFS

1904—2002
Historian, economist



The most versatile of Latvian historians whose works embrace a wide range of history topics and epochs, from the 12th to the 20th century.

He organised and was in charge of the Latvian refugee diaspora; in 1946 he established the Baltic University in Germany for the education of refugees. Later he was an active organiser of exile Latvians in Australia, headed the Melbourne Latvian Society and the Kārlis Zariņš Foundation.

Edgars Dunsdorfs is the author of three out of six parts of the fundamental Latvian history, published by *Daugava*, a publishing house in exile: "*Latvijas vēsture. 1500—1600*" (1964, co-author Arnolds Spekke), "*Latvijas vēsture. 1600—1710*" (1962) and "*Latvijas vēsture. 1710—1800*" (1973).

A professor of the University of Melbourne, Australia, and a visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley, USA, and Swedish universities, he contributed much to the explanation of Latvian history to the world and to reminding the world of Latvia's unlawful incorporation into the Soviet Union.

To Latvians, the economist and historian Edgars Dunsdorfs means a connecting link between the pre-war and the modern science of history in Latvia. In the post-war years he immigrated to Australia where he, with a fresh view of the events of different times, served as a link between the two periods of independent Latvia at a time when history had to be interpreted through the prism of socialism in Latvia. If not for his publications, it would be difficult to have an overall understanding of Latvia's history. Edgars Dunsdorfs' role in preserving the Latvian spirit in exile during the Soviet occupation of Latvia in 1944—1999 cannot be overestimated.

Edgars Dunsdorfs was born on 20 November 1904 in Saldus. He studied at the Faculty of Economy and Legal Sciences of the University of Latvia. After graduation he taught methodology of history and in 1938 became a professor at the University of Latvia. From 1933 he studied the previously unexplored Swedish archival material on Latvia's history. This investigation was the basis for his doctoral thesis in economic history "*Vidzemes lielais zviedru kadastrs kā saimniecības vēstures avots*" [The Large Swedish Cadastre of Livonia as a Source in Economic History]. From 1924 he published articles on Latvia's history, which won four Krišjānis Barons' Prizes and the Latvian Culture Foundation Award (1936). Edgars Dunsdorfs was Vice-Director of the Latvian Economic Research Institute, he edited "*Tautsaimniecības vārdnīca*" [Dictionary of Economy] and was Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Latvju Tautsaimnieks* [Latvian Economist] and Head of the Department of Economics at the University of Latvia. In the autumn of 1944 he and his wife Lilija fled from the invading Soviet army to Germany where he worked at the Greifswald Institute of Economic Research. In 1946 he was one of the initiators of the Baltic University for the education of refugees and the rector of its Latvian sector.

In 1948 Edgars Dunsdorfs went to Australia where he started teaching at the University of Melbourne and was

granted a degree in commerce in 1956. At the University E. Dunsdorfs was Head of the Department of Economic History, but received professorship only after he was granted Australian citizenship in 1968. E. Dunsdorfs was also a visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley (1957) and at the universities of Uppsala and Stockholm (1962). He was Chairman of the Melbourne Latvian Society (1949—1950) and Chairman of the Kārlis Zariņš Foundation (from 1959).

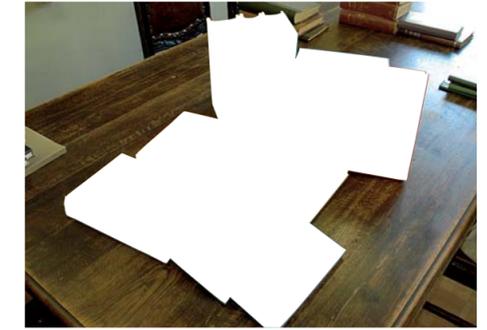
At the library of the Melbourne Latvian Society, which was headed by Edgars Dunsdorfs' wife Lilija from 1950 to 2000, the professor collected almost all of the Latvian literature published in exile. Lilija Dunsdorfa was an agronomist. She helped her husband in preparing for publication his work "The Australian Wheat-Growing Industry 1788—1948" (1956). Besides she helped Edgars Dunsdorfs in preparing his publications of the 1980s and 1990s when he was temporarily incapacitated as a result of a car accident in 1985.

Edgars Dunsdorfs was the author of fifty-nine books and numerous articles. His summary of Latvian maps of the 17th—19th centuries should be mentioned as very important among his other works. The thirty-one volumes of "*Arhīvs*" [Archive] (1960—1993) on the problems of Latvians in exile are of special importance; the volumes, which were compiled and edited by Edgars Dunsdorfs, contain about a hundred of his articles on various issues of Latvian history.

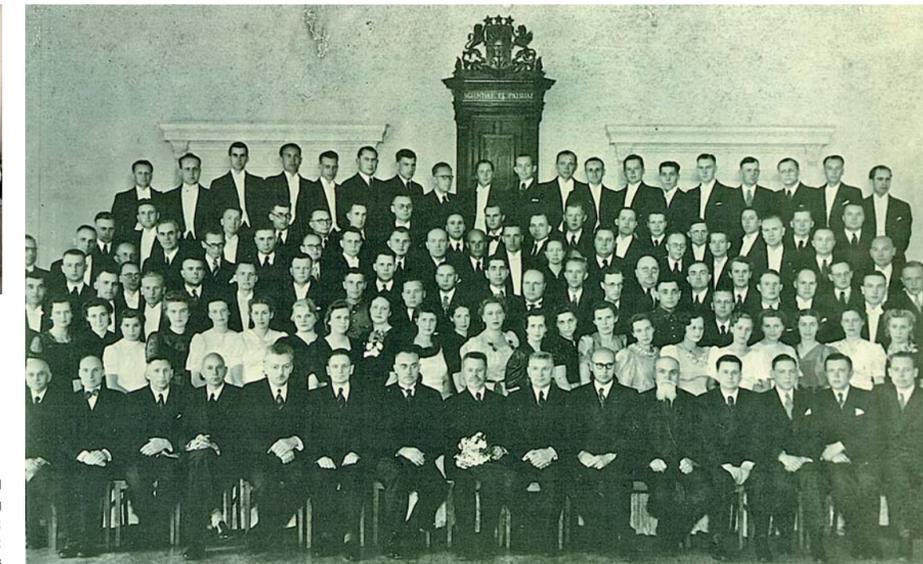
Edgars Dunsdorfs was awarded the Grand Medal of the Latvian Academy of Sciences (1994) and the Order of the Three Stars (1995). He was Professor Emeritus of the University of Melbourne (1970), Honorary Member of the Latvian Academy of Sciences (1990) and Honorary Doctor of the University of Latvia (1996).

Edgars Dunsdorfs died on 24 March 2002 in Melbourne, Australia; on 23 August 2002 the urn with his ashes was interred in Rainis Cemetery in Riga.

Professor Edgars Dunsdorfs in 1988, Australia



Dispersed in foreign countries, Latvians tried to preserve their national identity and culture by choir singing. The mixed choir of the Melbourne Latvian Society (November 1956)



Graduation ceremony in 1933 for the Faculty of Economy and Juridical Sciences of the University of Latvia. First row, the University teaching staff: second from left Edgars Dunsdorfs; fifth, Arnolds Aizsilnieks; seventh, Eduards Sironis; eighth, University Dean Eduards Balodis; tenth, Professor Konstantīns Čakste; fourteenth, Kārlis Ziverts



E. Dunsdorfs, raising the flag of Latvia at a scout camp. Away from Latvia, Edgars Dunsdorfs devoted considerable effort towards the upbringing of the young generation in the Latvian spirit; he organised scout camps for the young people



Lilija Dunsdorfa with her husband Professor Edgars Dunsdorfs, in Sydney, Australia (January 1957)



Professor Dunsdorfs talking to the only Minister of the First independent Latvia period who managed to escape the Soviet repressions: the Minister of Public Affairs, Alfrēds Bērziņš (17 November 1973)

Representatives of the Kārlis Zariņš Foundation Board in Australia, 1985. Left to right: V. Eglīte, Dean A. Grosbachs, E. Dunsdorfs, Kiploks, E. Silakalns



Edgars Dunsdorfs, on being decorated with the Order of the Three Stars (fourth Class), 25 June 1995. The Order of the Three Stars is being presented by Emīls Dēliņš, Latvia's consul in Australia; Professor Dunsdorfs' wife Lilija Dunsdorfa is in the centre of the photo

