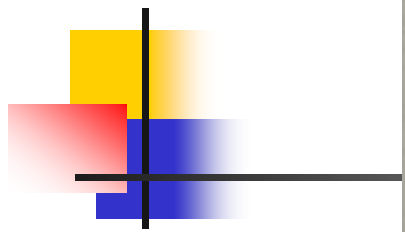


XIV Baltic Conference on Intellectual Cooperation
Riga, April 20, 2015

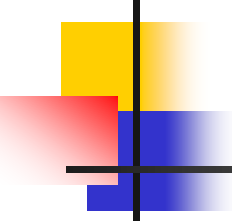
Rainis' Worldliness

Benedikts Kalnačs,
Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art,
University of Latvia, Riga



46/1.
Fr. W.S.i.R.

Rainis



Edward W. Said (1935–2003), *The World, the Text, and the Critic*, 1983

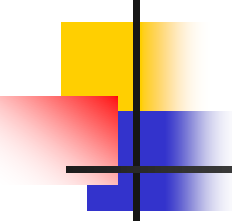
- **My position is that texts are wordly**, to some extent they are events, and, even when they appear to deny it, they are nevertheless a part of the social world, human life, and of course the historical moments in which they are located and interpreted.



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Rainis' Worldliness

- Biographical background
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Rainis (1865–1929): Biographical background

- University of St. Petersburg (1888)
- Editor-in-chief, *Dienas Lapa*, Riga (1891)
- *Dienas Lapa* closed down (1897)
- Prison and exile in Slobodsk (1897–1903)
- In Riga (1903–1906)
- Exile in Castagnola (1906–1920)
- In Riga (1920–1929)



Cultural setting

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Literary activities

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Literary activities

- *Distant Moods on a Blue Evening* (*Tālas noskaņas zilā vakarā*, poetry, 1903)
- *Fire and Night* (*Uguns un nakts*, drama, 1905, stage production 1911)
- *Joseph and his Brothers* (*Jāzeps un viņa brāļi*, drama, 1919, stage production 1920)



East-Central European parallels

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Cornis-Pope, Neubauer (eds.), *History of the Literary Cultures* (2004)

- 1800–1890, the national awakenings and the institutionalization of literature;
- 1890–1945, the literary institutions of modernism
- 1945–1989, the radical reform under the communist regimes



Intellectual horizon

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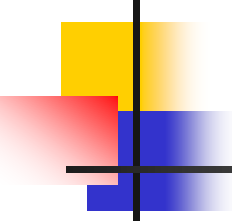
Intellectual horizon

- 1909, *The Golden Steed (Zelta zirgs)*, Rainis' drama based on Estonian folklore motifs
- 1924, Latvian National theatre under Rainis' leadership visits Kaunas
- 1928, Rainis' article published in *Vaba Maa* in Estonia
- 1929, draft of a play about Vytautas Didysis, medieval Lithuanian ruler



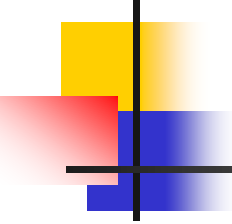
Worldliness

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Edward W. Said (1935–2003), *The World, the Text, and the Critic*, 1983

- **It is supposed that** literature and the humanities exist generally within the culture, that the culture is ennobled and validated by them, and yet that in the version of culture inculcated by professional humanists and literary critics, the approved practice of high **culture is marginal to the serious political concerns of society.**



Rainis (1865–1929),
Daugava (1919)

*Water of life, water of death
Flowed into the Daugava.
I touched the water's surface,
I feel both in my soul:
Water of death, water of life
We feel both in our soul.*