

Lithuanian president awards US scholar with state decoration

VILNIUS, Jan 27, **BNS** Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaite on Friday awarded US scholar Antony Barry Polonsky with the Cross of Officer of the Order for Merits to Lithuania in recognition of his merits to the Republic of Lithuania and the promotion of Lithuania's name in the world, the Presidential Office said on Friday.

Polonsky is a professor of history and Middle Eastern studies at Brandeis University and an active researcher into the history and problems of "Lithuanian-Polish-Jewish relations."

"Professor Polanski is a major figure in the discourse on the Holocaust in both the United States and on the global scene. He contributes in a significant way to the Lithuanian-Jewish dialogue at international level as well as to better understanding in academic and political circles. His personal authority as a researcher into the Holocaust and Jewish issues in Eastern Europe helps to introduce the works of Lithuania scholars and historians to a wider audience and demonstrates that Lithuania is open to a dialogue on the most painful issues of its past," the Presidential Office said.

Polanski was awarded last June on the occasion of the Lithuanian State Day (Coronation of King Mindaugas), and received the award on Friday when many countries, including the United States, remember the Holocaust and its victims. The day also marks the anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration and death camp Auschwitz.

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