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Newsletter Editor

Indra Ekmanis
University of Washington
indraekm@uw.edu

Email | Website | Twitter

aabs@uw.edu
<http://depts.washington.edu/aabs/>
@balticstudies



Attendees at the 2015 Conference on Baltic Studies in Europe (CBSE) in Marburg, Germany. | Photo: Wolfgang Schekanski.

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Panelists discuss "Rethinking Europe in the Crisis: The Baltics and Eastern Europe in Transition" at the closing event of the CBSE hosted in the Alte Universität of Marburg University. | Photo: Wolfgang Schekanski.

AABS Board Meets in Philadelphia

By Māra Lazda

AABS President

Bronx Community College, CUNY

The AABS board met November 22, 2015, at the University of Pennsylvania for its fall meeting. There were two reasons we chose Philadelphia and Penn. First, the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES), a society whose membership and interests overlap that of AABS, was holding its national convention the same weekend. Second, U Penn is the site of the AABS 2016 conference. The board meeting was hosted by Jānis Chakars of Gwynedd Mercy University and AABS VP for Conferences.

Individual reports on finances and budget, the *Journal of Baltic Studies*, conference planning, and the grants program are found elsewhere in this newsletter. In addition to these key matters, the board discussed the progress of several initiatives to strengthen Baltic Studies as a field of scholarship, as well as the organization itself.

President-Elect Giedrius Subačius reported the AABS support of Lithuanian language and culture instruction at the University of Illinois at Chicago has been important in insuring the revival and continuation of the program. When, in 2011, UIC decided to cut Lithuanian language instruction from its curriculum, a three-way agreement between UIC, Vilnius University, and AABS helped secure the salary of a Lithuanian instructor. Professor Subačius reported it looks like the program is secured for the next six years.

AABS also continues to support financially the Baltic Studies Summer Institute (BALSSI), which offers intensive language training in all three Baltic languages at the beginning and more advanced levels. Last year, BALSSI was held at the University of Pittsburgh; next year BALSSI will return to Indiana University, Bloomington. AABS contributes \$10,000 per year to be used at the discretion of the host institution. This support has become especially important with the loss of federal funding in area studies centers across the nation. This year, our contribution was used to help fund



AABS Board members at Penn. Front row from right: Jānis Chakars, Māra Lazda, Merike Henneman, Kara Brown, Irena Blekys. Back row: Olavi Arens, Ain Haas, Mark Moll, Ivars Ijabs, Guntis Šmidchens.

student scholarships. Nine students attended the institute, some of whom had personal connections to the region, but most sought language training to complete research in graduate studies. BALSSI support is critical to the development of future scholars.

AABS as an organization continues to grow, and, excitingly, has a global reach from North America to Europe to Asia and the Pacific. AABS is further strengthened by the diverse backgrounds of its members, who are scholars as well as members of the broader community interested in Baltic Studies. At its fall meeting, the board discussed how to best serve the varied interests of its members. Initiatives discussed include:

1. A new grant for scholars or individuals at any stage in their career whose project advances Baltic Studies: The specific announcement of this grant is forthcoming in January 2016 (check aabs-balticstudies.org). This grant recognizes that Baltic Studies projects can take many forms, including books, films, plays, art, conferences, and more. The hope is that this grant will foster collaboration among our members and among the three Baltic States.

2. Creation of collaborative forums: Our conferences result in lively and

productive discussions among the participants. Yet, especially considering the international nature of our membership, this cooperation is challenging to maintain between meetings. The board discussed creating on-line member forums, which have been used successfully by other associations, that would encourage the continued sharing of ideas and resources among all members.

3. Building relationships between academia and the community: The board also discussed how to insure the traditional openness of AABS to all interested in Baltic Studies. The board will continue to report regularly in the newsletter and will also develop regular updates on the website. In addition, the board supports the archiving of AABS documents and correspondence from its founding. Finally, AABS will insure that the conference has special one-day rates for community members/non-presenters to encourage their participation.

We look forward to seeing many of you in Philadelphia May 26-28, 2016! We also welcome your suggestions throughout the year. You may write to our office: AABS Executive Office University of Washington Box 353420 Seattle, WA 98195-3420 or email aabs@uw.edu or mara.lazda@bcc.cuny.edu.

Russian-Baltic Relations Today: Politics in Light of Ukraine

Panel at the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies National Convention Nov. 2015

By Māra Lazda & Jānis Chakars

AABS President & VP for Conferences

Russia's annexation of Crimea and war with Ukraine has brought new attention to the Baltic States. Recognizing this spotlight, Jānis Chakars, AABS Vice President for Conferences, organized a panel, "Russian-Baltic Relations Today: Politics in Light of Ukraine," that brought together the expertise of scholars and policy makers of the Baltic region. This panel was also, in part, a response to requests by members that AABS hold public conversations on events in Ukraine.

The panel featured three speakers: Piret Ehin of the Institute of Government and Politics at the University of Tartu; Ivars Ījabs, Associate Professor at the University of Latvia and AABS Vice President of Professional Development; and Chris Miller of the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia and Associate Director of the Program of Grand Strategy at Yale University. In addition, Paul A. Goble of the World Politics Institute and former special advisor to the Secretary of State, sent his detailed analysis. This was shared at the session and may be read in abbreviated form in this newsletter. Agnia Grigas who was scheduled to present the Lithuanian perspective, unfortunately had to cancel her participation.

Ehin's and Ījabs' presentations provided in-depth analysis of the particular ways in which the war in Ukraine has shaped recent politics in Estonia and Latvia. In her presentation, Ehin focused on a multi-year study that considered how "perceptions of the Russian Federation structure political competition in Estonia." Ehin's main point was that, in Estonia, a voter's view on Russia — whether it is a "threat or a partner" — is one of the most important factors in predicting which political party that voter will support.

The evidence for this study came from three post-election surveys in Estonia carried out in 2011 (national parliament elections), 2014 (European Parliament elections), and 2015 (national parliament elections); the total number of respondents was 3008. Interviews were conducted in both Estonian and Russian. Voters



Dr. Ivars Ījabs | University of Latvia

were first asked to place themselves and the major political parties on the "left-right scale." Then they were asked to identify their own perception of Russia as a "threat or a partner" as well as identify the four largest political parties' stances on Russia. The results of these surveys showed that voters had much clearer positions on the perceptions of Russia — both for themselves and for the parties they supported — than on their positions on the "left-right" scale. Further, when Ehin's study divided the voters according to self-ascribed ethnicity, she found that Estonians "clearly regard Russia as a threat" while "ethnic Russians ... remain certain that Russia is a trustworthy partner." The war with Ukraine, moreover, has confirmed most Estonians' positions on Russia, while for Russians their skepticism of Russia as partner fell one point between 2011 and 2015. In sum, Ehin, concluded, the perception of Russia is a much more important predictor than social class or the "conventional cleavage theory" of a "left-right" split that is usually used to explain politics elsewhere in Europe. She also suggested that similar dynamics may be present in other former Soviet or Soviet bloc countries.

Ivars Ījabs traced how the Ukraine crisis "has made some deeper problems of the Latvian nation-building project reappear." Ījabs built on the theoretical work of David Lake and Donald Rothchild, who



Dr. Piret Ehin | University of Tartu

argue concerns about security play a key role in inter-ethnic conflict. Ījabs argued, while the tension between Russians and Latvians has not been violent, the crisis in Ukraine indicates that a "security-oriented approach" to ethnic understanding and integration in Latvia is a salient one.

Ījabs then presented results of various surveys from 2011-2015 that measured, first, Latvian and Russian perceptions of each other, and, second, Latvian and Russian understandings of the Ukraine crisis and Russia's position regarding Latvia.

Regarding Latvian and Russian perceptions of each other as recorded in the surveys, Ījabs concluded the threat level between these two groups on an every day level is "rather low." The majority of both Latvians and Russians answered positively when asked if "the [opposite group] can be trusted," and a minority saw the opposite group as aggressive.

However, Ījabs noted, feelings of insecurity and threat do exist. These do not play out in daily interactions, but rather are tied to specific identity concerns; for example, both communities are worried about the survival of their languages, with Latvians expressing their fears at a higher rate. Most significantly, Ījabs argued, the question of insecurity is tied to perceptions of the Latvian and Russian states and their policies. The polls carried out show that while Russians may identify with Russia,

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Member News

New AABS member **Lukas Milevski** (University of Oxford, Changing Character of War Programme) has received a Smith Richardson Strategy and Policy Fellowship to research and write a book manuscript on contemporary Baltic defense from a strategic perspective. He received his PhD in December 2014 at the University of Reading under strategist Colin S. Gray for "The Modern Evolution of Grand Strategic Thought," scheduled for publication in summer 2016 (Oxford University Press).

Former AABS board president **Guntis Šmidchens** was interviewed about his book, *The Power of Song: Nonviolent National Cultures and the Baltic Singing Revolution*, for the "New Books in East European Studies" podcast series by AABS member **Amanda Swain**. <http://new-booksineasterneuropeanstudies.com/>

"The Great Courses," which produces recorded lecture courses on CD/DVD/download, has just released a new course by Dr. **Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius**, past president of AABS, entitled, "A History of Eastern Europe." This course covers the Baltics to the Balkans and over a thousand years of the past in 24 lectures. More information about the course can be found at: <http://www.thegreatcourses.com/courses/a-history-of-eastern-europe.html>

AABS members: We invite you to share your news (publications, job updates, current research, etc.) with the newsletter. Please send your short news update (50-100 words) to indraekm@uw.edu.

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GRADUATE STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Sveika, Riga: On Life, Fieldwork



Adam Brode outside the National Library of Latvia with Old Riga in the background. | Photo: Indra Ekmanis

By Adam Brode

AABS Student Member, U. Pittsburgh

There is no denying the architectural splendor of Riga. I've always been interested in urban history and urban spaces, and Riga is a magnificent case study for a historian engaged with these subjects. My dissertation investigates the role played by the built environment in shaping relations between Riga's ethnic groups during the interwar period, analyzing key public structures and spaces during the period of symbolic transformation following the consolidation of the Latvian state in 1919.

I've spent the fall semester living in Riga, spending long hours in the archive scanning inventories, ordering documents, perusing yellowed papers and deciphering cryptic handwriting and outdated orthographies — in short, doing what a historian does. The research has been difficult at times — reading cursive writing from nearly a century ago isn't easy even in English, and the German-style spellings only complicate matters further.

It's difficult not to be overwhelmed by the mass of material, and to know how to best distinguish bureaucratic details from crucial insights. Managing one's time effectively and not losing sight of the forest for the archival trees is a challenge for a fledgling historian. Juggling the need for detail with the ever-pressing need to remain on schedule is a continual concern. Despite these challenges, I've made progress and collected a wealth of information to be found only in Riga's archives, sometimes in portfolios which, according to the register, I am the first person to have

looked since their filing. Slowly but surely the outlines of my narrative are beginning to take shape, and even as the process demands considerable patience, it is also deeply rewarding.

Of course, I haven't spent every waking hour in the archive. I've also been experiencing life as a denizen of Riga, meeting new people, practicing my Latvian (and Russian, and, occasionally, German), and coming to a better understanding not just of the country's past, but of its present as well. Perhaps most rewarding has been the ability to engage with my subject matter on an intimate, physical level, by living in and among many of the spaces about which I write. The Saeima building, the National Opera and Theater, the Stock Exchange, the University of Latvia ... these spaces continue to exist in largely unaltered form, fulfilling similar functions to the ones that they first assumed during the interwar period. This visceral and immediate experience of my subject matter enhances the quality of the research and my enjoyment of the process enormously. The life of a graduate student is not without its travails, but there are certainly times when one's path seems well-chosen indeed.

I'm already keenly anticipating my return to my new home, to reconnect with the friends I've made here, deepen my acquaintance with contemporary Latvian culture, and to further pursue the (hi)story I've chosen to investigate in my dissertation. I'd like to offer my warmest thanks to AABS for their generous support of my study of Latvian at BALSSI 2013 and 2014, the value of which has become fully clear. All the best from Riga.

The Baltic States as Models for Ukraine: Three Lessons for Kyiv, Moscow and the West

By Paul Goble

Institute of World Politics

Washington, D.C

Edited for length by Jānis Chakars

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have been supportive of Ukraine in a variety of ways since the Maidan. But their most important role in that regard may be as a model of what works and what doesn't for countries that live in the shadow of Moscow's realm and of what the West should do, what Kyiv should assume, and what Moscow should expect. Those three things – the power of non-recognition policy, the critical importance of NATO membership, and the fact that Moscow will ultimately benefit from Ukraine's eventual integration in Europe just as it has benefitted from the integration of the Baltic countries already – are my subject here.

Non-Recognition Policy as Model for the West on the Crimean Anschluss

The US Department of State has declared Washington will never recognize Russia's annexation of Crimea, but such declarations, important as they are, need to be given real content to ensure that no part of the government, intentionally or otherwise, takes steps that undermine that policy.

In short, what is needed now is a new non-recognition policy. That is all the more important now, given continuing Russian meddling in Ukraine and elsewhere in the former Soviet space.

Given all that has happened since Moscow's seizure and annexation of Crimea, it may seem to some that any such call has been overtaken by events. But in fact, continuing Russian aggression in Ukraine and elsewhere in the former Soviet space make it even more important.

The immediate danger of not having such a clearly defined and articulated policy was highlighted when the Voice of America put up on its website – and then fortunately took down – a map showing Crimea not as an internation-

ally recognized part of Ukraine, but as part of the Russian Federation whose government under Vladimir Putin has engineered its annexation by force and the threat of force.

But the larger dangers are even greater.

Since at least 1932, the United States has maintained as a matter of principle that it will not recognize changes in international borders achieved by the use of force unless or until they are sanctioned international agreement. That doctrine was enunciated by Henry L. Stimson, the US secretary of state at the time, in response to Japan's seizure of China's Manchuria province and subsequent creation of the puppet state of Manchukuo.

While the US has not always adhered to this doctrine, it has never denounced or disowned it. And in one case, its articulation and maintenance helped right a terrible wrong and contributed to a most positive outcome.

The most forceful expression of the Stimson Doctrine was US non-recognition policy regarding the Soviet seizure of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in 1940 under the terms of the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between Hitler and Stalin.

On July 23, 1940, US Undersecretary of State Sumner Wells declared that the Baltic countries had been "deliberately annihilated by one of their more powerful neighbors" and that the US would continue to stand by its principle in their defense "because of the conviction of the American people that unless the doctrine in which these principles are inherent once again governs the relations between nations, the rule of reason, of justice and of law – in other words, the basis of modern civilization itself – cannot be preserved."

That declaration was given content by a policy the United States followed until 1991, when Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania escaped from Soviet occupation and recovered their de facto independence. This policy included, among other things, provisions that the US

would maintain ties with the diplomatic representatives of the pre-1940 Baltic governments and that the Baltic flags would continue to fly at the State Department, that no map produced by the US government would show the Baltic states as a legitimate part of the USSR, but would carry the disclaimer that the US did not recognize their forcible incorporation, and that no senior US official would visit the Baltic countries while they were under Soviet occupation.

It is important to remember what such policies did not mean. Neither the Stimson Doctrine nor Baltic Non-Recognition Policy called for American military action to liberate occupied territories, but both provided enormous encouragement to the peoples of these occupied areas that they would at some point once again be free and thus reflected the principles and values of the American people.

Why shouldn't such a policy be announced now? There are three main objections, none of which withstands examination. The first is that the US has not always lived up to its doctrines either in its own actions or in its willingness to denounce the use of force to change borders. Washington did not issue such a policy after the Soviet invasion of Georgia in 2008, for example; why should it do so now? But arguing that past mistakes should be repeated just because they were made once is hardly compelling.

Second, it is said Crimea is only part of a country and therefore a non-recognition policy regarding it couldn't look exactly like Baltic non-recognition policy. That is true. A new non-recognition policy would not include maintaining ties with any pre-occupation government but it could keep senior American officials from visiting the peninsula and include continuing US recognition of Ukrainian passports of the residents of that peninsula, much as the US did in the case of holders of pre-1940 Baltic passports. Arguing that you can't get everything and therefore should do nothing

FEATURE ARTICLE

ing, a suggestion made all too often of late, isn't very compelling either.

And third, it is maintained that Putin isn't Stalin and that the US shouldn't anger him because we have so many concerns in common. Tragically, some US officials have even insisted that Putin shouldn't take anything we say or do about Ukraine "personally." That is absurd. Putin is the aggressor in Crimea and Ukraine more generally. If we make him uncomfortable, we are only doing the minimum to live up to our principles.

Moreover, despite what Moscow suggests and some of its supporters in the West say, some future Russian leader or even Putin himself will cooperate with us when he or they see it is in their interest. US non-recognition policy regarding the Baltic countries did not prevent the US and Stalin's USSR from becoming allies against Hitler or the US and later Soviet leaders from cooperating. Again, the objections fall away.

It is thus time for a new non-recognition policy so that at a minimum no one will ever see a map of Ukraine put out by the US government that shows part of that country belonging to another.

The Paramount Importance of NATO Membership

In the 1990s, experts and politicians in Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius debated whether it was more important to gain membership in NATO or to join the European Union. But since Vladimir Putin's campaign of aggression against Ukraine began, it is clear that the former membership is more important than the latter. After all, one can't be a liberal free market country if one is not a country.

Since Moscow's annexation of Crimea and its continuing subversion of other parts of Ukraine, many have asked whether one or another of the Baltic countries might be Vladimir Putin's next target, given his strategic goal is clearly breaking apart Europe and the US, and discrediting or even destroying NATO.

That lies behind the question, "Are you prepared to die for Narva?" a reference to the predominantly ethnic Russian city on Estonia's eastern border, a

city some have suggested Putin might seek to occupy temporarily or permanently and, thus, a possible flashpoint in a post-Ukraine world.

Andres Kasekamp, a political scientist at the University of Tartu and past AABS board member, argues in an

“ Putin is the aggressor in Crimea and Ukraine more generally. If we make him uncomfortable, we are only doing the minimum to live up to our principles. ”

essay for the Estonian Foreign Policy Institute there are compelling reasons to think Narva will not be Putin's next target, reasons that reflect how different Estonia is from Ukraine (http://evi.ee/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/EVI-mot-tepaber21_mai15.pdf).

Although Russia has engaged in expanded military activity in the Baltic Sea region and although "at first glance there might be some superficial similarities" between Ukraine and NATO, Kasekamp points out, there are a large number of "clearly more significant" differences between the two.

Estonia, like her two Baltic neighbors, is a member of NATO and the EU, thus any action against them would have "immeasurably graver consequences." Moreover, "the success of the Crimean operation depended on surprise, the existence of Russian bases on Ukrainian territory and the defection of Ukrainian officers, and "a unique post-revolutionary situation" in Ukraine.

Moreover, Moscow was able to exploit a situation in which "the border with Russia in eastern Ukraine was lengthy, porous, and weakly guarded." None of those things is true in the Estonian case, Kasekamp says. Estonia not only has "a state capacity to respond immediately" to any Russian challenge, but a commitment based on experiences that it must "always offer military resistance."

Additionally and importantly, the Estonian political analyst argues, "Hybrid war is not something new for the Baltic states. They have already experienced elements of hybrid war — cyber attacks, economic pressure, disinforma-

tion campaigns."

No Russian move against Estonia would allow Russia "the deniability of direct military involvement" it has exploited in the case of Ukraine. And "there is no historical territorial bone of contention" like Crimea. "Narva has always indisputably belonged to Estonia," Kasekamp points out. And "even Putin understands that Estonia ... is a completely distinct nation," something he does not believe Ukraine to be.

But the crux of arguments that Putin might move against Estonia or her Baltic neighbors, especially Latvia, involves the ethnic factor. "Putin has justified aggression against Ukraine with the need to 'protect' Russian speakers" and pointed to the better economic conditions in Russia as compared to Ukraine.

Neither of these factors works for Moscow in the Estonian case, Kasekamp points out. Few Russian speakers in Estonia, even those who support Moscow's occupation of Crimea, have any interest in becoming part of Russia themselves. They know how much better off they are in an EU country than are the Russians in Ivangorod and Pskov, two extremely poor areas.

Instead of asking the Russian speakers of Estonia about how they feel about Crimea, it would be far more instructive, Kasekamp says, to ask "whether they would prefer rubles to euros ... the Russian health care system to the Estonian one ... [or giving up] the right to freely travel and work within the EU."

"There is a sharp contrast between Estonian and Russian-speakers on support for NATO and perception of a threat from Moscow," he acknowledges, but he points out that "there is little difference" between the two groups "regarding the will to defend their country."

After Estonia recovered its independence in 1991, many believed the ethnic Russian minority there would be integrated over time, that "Soviet nostalgia would fade with the passing of the older generation." That has not happened as quickly and thoroughly as such people had expected.

In part, that is because "Russia has instrumentalized its 'compatriots' in order

to undermine societal integration and to maintain a sense of grievance and marginalization," an effort that reflects Moscow's use of Russian television in order to ensure "most Estonians and Russophones live in separate information spaces."

But that is not the irresistible force that many assume, Kasekamp says, noting, "the Baltic states were among those who proposed that the EU take counter-measures." Estonia itself has "decided to fund a new Russian language TV channel – not to provide counter-propaganda, but to strengthen the identity of the local community."

European Integration of Its Western Neighbors Will Benefit Russia

Vladimir Putin has pursued the policies he has in Ukraine in order to block Kyiv from joining Europe and protect the Russian diaspora. However, his policy is short-sighted in the extreme because Europe has been the main force working for the just treatment of ethnic Russians in the Baltic countries and thus, the integration of Ukraine into Europe will benefit both ethnic Russians living there and Russia itself.

Konstantin Ranks, a Latvian who lives in Siberia, argues, Europe has exercised a powerfully restraining influence on anti-Russian nationalism. The EU has also made relations between the Baltic countries and Russia far better and far more beneficial than would otherwise be the case (http://slon.ru/world/baltiyskie_kamni_na_ukrainskom_puti-1051018.xhtml).

Consequently, his article, which begins as a warning to ethnic Russians in Ukraine not to believe the promises of Ukrainian opposition leaders that "in principle they are not against Russians, but only against the regime in Russia," concludes that the best possible outcome for them would be Ukraine's integration in Europe rather than its subordination to Moscow.

Ranks starts by noting Russian speakers in the Baltic countries — and he focuses on Latvia almost exclusively — fear that ethnic Russians in Ukraine suffer some of the same problems they have had because they were misled by the promises of Baltic leaders and believe they've done as well as they have

only because Europe has forced the Baltic leaders to restrain their nationalist impulses.

Latvia, Ranks suggests, "is a very good example for assessing the situation in Ukraine for several reasons." The two countries have "much in common historically." They were victims of Molotov-Ribbentrop, they fought against Soviet power in World War II and after, and although both "had played a big role in the success" of the Bolshevik revolution, they each had at the time of the recovery of independence enough people "who had preserved the habits of life in market conditions."

Obviously, there were important differences as well, he continues. The size and ethnic balance of the two were very different. And unlike Ukraine, Latvia had a far more recent experience of independence to look back to and revive,

// The Latvian drive for the recovery of independence at the end of Soviet times also is instructive for ethnic Russians in Ukraine. //

and it had the experience of the departure of an entire ethnic community, the Baltic Germans in 1938, who had played a disproportionate role in Latvian life prior to that time.

The Latvian drive for the recovery of independence at the end of Soviet times also is instructive for ethnic Russians in Ukraine, Ranks argues. Not only did the Latvians create "parallel" state institutions at that time, as the Ukrainians are doing now, but they told the ethnic Russians there that they would be treated equally after independence.

That reinforced the desire of many Russians to move to Latvia as their way to Europe, an attitude that continues, it should be said, and it led many ethnic Russians to discount statements of Latvian nationalists. The same thing appears to be happening in Ukraine now, Ranks says.

After Latvia became independent, he continues, the situation changed dramatically. Latvia's citizenship law, which was based on succession from the pre-war republic rather than ethnicity as such worked against ethnic Russians, a

large share of whom had moved there in Soviet times. As a result, many ethnic Russians — about a quarter of the population — became non-citizens and suffered as a result.

"The ethnic Russian believes not in law, but in justice," Ranks says, and ethnic Russians in Latvia responded by leaving — 150,000 have done so — many back to the Russian Federation and others, like many Latvians, to Europe. Others have organized to call attention to their plight and press Riga to change its approach.

Both the European Union and NATO required Riga to commit to the simplification of naturalization procedures, although Ranks says despite Latvia's admission to both, Russian speakers in Latvia continue to have problems. Nevertheless, he writes, "Europe was and remains the single hope for the Russian-language diaspora."

At present, there is "almost no exodus of Russian speakers" from Latvia to Russia, Ranks notes, "because life in Latvia is better," although he argues that many young Russian speakers in Latvia are upset that "instead of uniting for the achievement of common goals, the communities [of Latvians and ethnic Russians there] exist, as it were, in parallel worlds."

Ethnic Russians in Ukraine and Russians in Russia as well, Ranks suggests, need to see that the spread of European values in Ukrainian society is "the strongest medicine against nationalism, which, like everywhere else" (and he implies this includes Russia, as well), pushes people "toward conservative religious-ethnic values."

"The ideas of tolerance and respect for the rights of ethnic minorities," Ranks concludes, "will assist both the European integration of Ukraine itself and the gradual liberalization of Russian public life by destroying the siege psychology" that exists in both places. A more powerful argument for Ukrainian inclusion in Europe can hardly be imagined, be it in Ukraine itself, in the Russian Federation, or in EU capitals.

These are three lessons the Baltic experience offers to the West, Kyiv and Moscow: None of them should be ignored.

AABS 2016 conference coming together

By Jānis Chakars
Vice President for Conferences

So far, we have 200 scholars and a president committed to coming to Philadelphia for the 2016 AABS conference. That would be enough to make for a stellar event, but there is more.

In addition to the latest research in over 15 disciplines and a keynote speech by Toomas Hendrik Ilves, we will have a lively set of social, cultural, and professional activities for participants.

On the social side, a reception will follow President's Ilves' address, refreshments will be made available throughout the conference, and we will have our usual luncheon with an address by Giedrius Subačius. The big party, however, will be at the Philadelphia Society of Free Letts on Friday night. There conference attendees will find live music, dancing, food, and poetry on the side. A shuttle bus will be provided to bring people to and from the event from the conference hotel.

If music, dance and poetry were not enough, for our cultural fare, we are add-

ing two museum exhibits to the conference focusing on Latvian and Lithuanian émigré experiences. Then, on the last night of the conference, we will host a festival of short films from the Baltic states.

For professional development, we are excited to be bringing the Foreign Policy Research Institute to the conference. This prominent Philadelphia-based think tank will be sponsoring a research panel and a luncheon where they will explain a new project they have begun related to Baltic studies and invite scholars to participate.

Organization of a publishers' exhibit has begun. AABS members who have a book they want to make sure gets displayed should contact Mark Trocchi, the exhibits manager at Association Book Exhibit (Email: info@bookexhibit.com).

Mike Lyons, a professor of communications at Saint Joseph's University, who wrote a dissertation about Wikipedia, has agreed to staff our Wiki Café. The idea behind this is to provide a chance for the experts assembled at the conference to do a public service by



Estonian President Thomas Hendrik Ilves will give the keynote speech at the AABS 2016 Conference at U Penn in May. | Photo: Wikimedia Commons

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February 22

Deadline to reserve hotel rooms
& lower registration costs
upenn.irisregistration.com/Form/AABS

writing entries. Dr. Lyons will be there to help, but people interested in contributing should do some preparation ahead of time. Here is a guide to writing entries for the uninitiated: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Your_first_article.

In other good news, we aim to provide \$15,000 in support of graduate student and junior scholar travel to the conference. This is the highest ever goal for that purpose; fundraising to support it and other conference extras is under way. Please consider making a donation (see page 10). Registration fees do not cover all that we do at the conference. Grad student support is a key place you can make a difference, but we also need support for the film festival and other activities accompanying the research presentations. Supporters

will be acknowledged with gratitude in the conference program, on our website, and at the members meeting.

The conference website is now live at upenn.irisregistration.com/Form/AABS. There you can register as well as find information about accommodations, Philadelphia, and the program (and make a donation of support). There is a link for conference rate booking at the Sheraton Philadelphia University Hotel (\$199 per night, <https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/AABS2016>), but as you click through the registration form you will also be offered a room in the UPenn residence halls for \$65 per night as well as the chance to sign up for the dance/concert and luncheon.

We look forward to seeing you in Philadelphia!

(chakars.j@mercycu.edu)



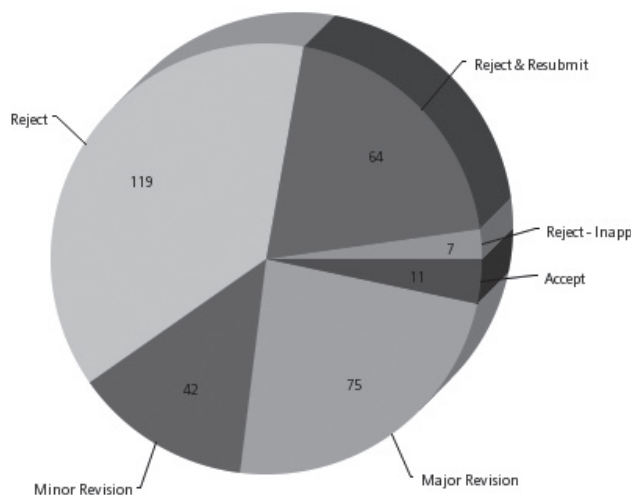
U Penn will host the 2016 AABS Conference. | Photo: Rebecca Poyourow

Journal of Baltic Studies report 2015

By Terry D. Clark

Journal of Baltic Studies Editor

No. of manuscripts by decision



No. of manuscripts by country

Country	Accept	Reject	Total	Accept Ratio
Australia	3	0	3	100.00%
Canada	0	2	2	0.00%
Czech Republic	0	2	2	0.00%
Denmark	0	4	4	0.00%
Estonia	30	56	86	34.88%
Finland	4	9	13	30.77%
Germany	3	8	11	27.27%
Hungary	0	5	5	0.00%
Iceland	1	2	3	33.33%
India	0	2	2	0.00%
Italy	0	1	1	0.00%
Japan	0	2	2	0.00%
Latvia	7	14	21	33.33%
Lithuania	10	25	35	28.57%
Netherlands	1	3	4	25.00%
Norway	1	1	2	50.00%
Poland	1	7	8	12.50%
Romania	0	1	1	0.00%
Russian Federation	0	5	5	0.00%
Serbia	0	2	2	0.00%
Slovakia	0	2	2	0.00%
Spain	0	1	1	0.00%
Sweden	6	9	15	40.00%
Taiwan	0	1	1	0.00%
Turkey	0	2	2	0.00%
UK	4	14	18	22.22%
United States	14	25	39	35.90%
Total	85	205	290	29.31%

List of AABS Donors

July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015

\$ 572,143

Estate of Velta Marija Baumanis

\$ 24,114

Estate of Aina Galejs Dravnieks

\$500 to \$1,000

Olavi Arens, Vija Celmins, Zaiga Phillips

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Andrejs & Dzintra Baidins, Edward Clark, Vincents Dindzans, Karen E. Greever, Bernard Maegi, Jon Mikhels, Toivo Raun, Tuuli-Ann Ristkok, Vytautas J. Sliupas, Rein & Mare Taagepera

\$60 to \$100

Mari Arulaid, Boris Auksmann, Gediminas Balanda, Vita Bite, Edwin Blumberg, Dean Bowles, Ilvi Cannon, Kornelijs Dale, Rita Drone, Atis Freimanis, Ene Inno, Petras G. Kaufmanas, Ramunas Kondratas, James Kraskouskas, Guna S. Mundheim, Gundars Plavkalns, Arturs R. Neparts, Barry L. Nobel, Janis M. Riekstins, William Schmalstieg, Thomas Palm, Edwin O. Tums, Dzintris Vallis, Olaf Virro, Betty Zeps

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\$25 and under

Voldemars Avens, Stanley H. Backaitis, Nicholas E. Berkholtz, Sophie Blumenfeld, Dzintra S. Bond, Biruta Cap, Inese Erdmanis, Andrievs Ezerigails, Janis V. Giga, Liga Gonzalez, Karlis Jirgens, Lembit Lilleleht, Jeremy Lin, Ilmar Kalnins, Rasma Karklins, Hans S. Keerig, Grazina Kenter, Sandra I. Kronitis-Sipols, Andres Kurrik, Harvey Mayer, Modris Medris, Valdar Oinas, Willis Parker, Marju Rink-Abel, Anna Romanovska, Viktoria Skrupskelis, John F. Sutton In memory of Ulo L. Sinberg, Saulius A. Suziedelis, Asta Teemant, Andris Vinakmens, Juris Zirnis

RUSSIAN-BALTIC RELATIONS CONTINUED FROM PG. 3

they do not see annexation as a possibility or desirability. Russia is not a threat. Latvians, by contrast, see Russia as a threat to Latvia's sovereignty and tend to perceive local Russians as desiring annexation.

Russia's aggression in Ukraine initially did little to change Latvian and Russian perceptions of Russia regarding Latvian independence. For Latvians, the attack confirmed their suspicion of Russia's aggression; Russians did not see events in Ukraine affecting Latvian statehood. Russians do not see Latvia as a major point of interest for Russia. However, Ījabs pointed out Russians have changed their position regarding the legitimacy of the invasion of Ukraine itself. Polls conducted in 2014 and 2015 saw a decline in Russian support for the invasion and an increase in the percentage of Russians who think Latvia should support Ukraine. Still, considerable numbers of both Latvians (approximately 40%) and Russians (approximately 60%) want Latvia to remain neutral.

Miller rounded out the panel with an assessment of geopolitical interests and policy maneuvers in the region. He focused his presentation on four key points. First, he asserted the Baltic states have been "punching above their weight" in European and transatlantic politics. Second, this muscle became evident in the response to the Ukraine crisis, particularly with regard to sanctions on Russia, which were tougher in part because of Baltic influence (in spite of, or, perhaps, because the Baltics had more to lose from retaliation). Third, NATO deployments in the Baltic states indicate their centrality to European and transatlantic concerns in the region in light of Ukraine. Fourth, policy toward Ukraine (e.g., the successful conclusion of the EU-Ukraine Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement, or DCFTA trade agreement) and significant European Union financial support also shows the influence of the Baltic states in EU politics.

Chakars read from Goble's prepared remarks, summarized the panel, and directed questions to the presenters that engendered a lively discussion with the audience. Some of the audience members questioned the premise of the panel: Is ethnic difference, in fact, the determining factor for an individual's political position? Might all the studies and research on "Russian-Baltic" ethnic difference, in some ways, perpetuate division? The panelists responded that while the Baltic identities are certainly complex and overlap, the primary language spoken at home has had a measurable impact on an individual's position.

The discussion continued beyond the allotted time and those at the session were still talking as they left. The presentations and response showed the ability of AABS to respond to the most pressing matters of our day and the eagerness of people to hear and engage these issues. We welcome ideas for future panels at ASEES &

The AABS Conference: Success Comes from Your Support!

AABS is able to make an impact well beyond its size because of the generosity of its members and supporters. With no overhead costs and an all-volunteer board of directors, virtually all AABS funds are put toward advancing Baltic studies whether it is through grants, scholarships, awards, publications or meetings. Toward that end, we also keep membership and conference fees as low as possible to encourage wide participation in Baltic studies research from a global network of scholars. The key place where all our efforts as Baltic studies scholars comes together is the biannual conference which will next be held May 26-28, 2016 at the University of Pennsylvania.

Supporters will be acknowledged with gratitude in the conference program. We also seek sponsors for individual events, museum exhibits, conference sessions, graduate student travel, and cultural programming. For more information on these sponsorship opportunities, please email Jānis Chakars, AABS Vice President for Conferences, at aabs2016@gmail.com. Paldies, ačiū, aitāh, thank you. With your help, Baltic studies thrives.

Yes, I want to support the 2016 AABS conference!

Name _____

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Treasurer's report: review & future planning

By Merike Henneman
Treasurer, MBA, CPA

Review of 2015

The value of our investment portfolio grew by 20.6% from \$2,633,773 to \$3,175,641 between 30 June 2014 and 30 June 2015. This increase was primarily due to Baumanis bequest of \$572,143 that was received in April 2015.

Our invested assets produced a net return (income and capital gains) of \$74,725 or 2.84%, which is about 70% of budgeted investment return of \$105,351.

Other sources of revenue were membership dues, donations, and the *Journal of Baltic Studies* (JBS). Total membership dues and donations of \$54,664 exceeded the budget targets of \$30,000 by \$24,664, or 82%. JBS revenue of \$26,242 exceeded budget by \$2,342, or 10%.

Total expenses and allocations of \$151,956 were below the budgeted total of \$158,920. The association's program, management, and fundraising expenses and allocations were all lower than forecast. Management expense reduction was related primarily to the lower cost of executive office administration.

2016 budget

Total non-investment

ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF BALTIC STUDIES		FYE June 2014		FYE June 2015		FYE June 2016	
		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Revenue and support							
Membership dues		20,000	15,245	20,000	13,055	15,000	
Donations - BSF					4,081		
Donations - Expendable		17,000	5,130	10,000	37,528	5,000	
JBS: Editorial revenue received from Routledge		12,500	13,909	13,900	16,000	16,000	
JBS: Royalties received from Routledge (12.5% of revenue)		8,000	8,291	10,000	10,242	10,000	
Conference income: registration fees/donations		7,000	9,623			5,000	
Investment returns		94,451	275,586	105,351	74,725	127,026	
Total recurring revenue and support		158,951	327,783	159,251	155,631	178,026	
--- Nonrecurring items ---							
Baumanis Bequest					572,143	15,000	
Total revenue and support		158,951	327,783	159,251	727,774	193,026	0
Expenses							
Program							
Baltic Studies Newsletter		4,200	3,509	4,200	4,915	5,500	
Conference		13,000	9,491	0	0	22,000	
Journal of Baltic Studies		19,200	13,000	19,500	19,115	22,800	
Grants, prizes, and donations		65,000	32,775	78,000	75,500	77,000	
Other program expenses		3,990	3,586	3,990	2,430	3,990	
Total program expenses		105,390	62,361	105,690	101,961	131,290	0
Management							
Total management expenses		49,367	44,166	50,230	47,242	58,430	0
Fundraising							
Total fundraising expenses		3,500	2,542	3,000	2,753	3,000	
Total expenses		158,257	109,070	158,920	151,956	192,720	0
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS		694	218,714	331	575,818	306	0

revenue and support for the fiscal year ending 30 June 2016 is budgeted to total \$51,000, of which \$5,000 is budgeted for conference income. The decrease relative to last year's actual total non-investment revenue and support is attributable to the weak economy, which has resulted in a decrease in our membership dues.

Investment returns (dividends and capital gains) are budgeted to be \$127,026. This figure represents an assumed 4.0% annual return on our beginning-of-year investment

assets. The association has adopted a target investment allocation mix of 50% bonds and 50% stocks. As of 30 June 2015, 50.7% of our portfolio was invested in bonds, and 49.3% was invested in stocks, which is within acceptable tolerance of the target allocation.

Total expenses and allocations are budgeted at \$193,720 representing an increase of 27.5% compared to last year's actual expenses and allocations of \$151,956. This increase is attributable primarily to conference related cost budgeted to be \$22,000.

Fiscal year 2016 is expected to be a break-even year, with a marginal budgeted net increase in assets of \$306.

Other matters

An independent auditor conducted a review of the association's financial statements for the 2015 fiscal year. The review is substantively less in scope than an audit, and does not include an expression of opinion regarding the financial statements. The review includes primarily analysis of financial data and inquiries of association management.

2016-2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS SLATE OF CANDIDATES

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Liisi Esse

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POSTMASTER: Address Correction Requested

The AABS is an international educational and scholarly non-profit organization. The purpose of the Association is the promotion of research and education in Baltic Studies. Its activities include sponsoring meetings and conferences for the exchange of scholarly views, the evaluation of research in Baltic Studies and supporting the publication of research and other information about Baltic Studies. Membership is open to anyone wishing to support these endeavors. All AABS memberships include complimentary subscriptions to the quarterly *Journal of Baltic Studies* and the *Baltic Studies Newsletter*. Membership dues are not tax deductible as charitable contributions but may be deductible, depending on individual circumstances, as miscellaneous professional expenses. All donations to the Baltic Studies Fund are deductible in the United States as provided by law.

To communicate with us, detach the entire sheet including your address and send it to the return address printed above.

- ☐ Please note my address correction above.
- ☐ Please send me additional information about the AABS, including a membership application.
- ☐ Please send me information about the Baltic Studies Fund.

(Membership forms may also be downloaded at the AABS website, <http://depts.washington.edu/aabs/>)

Check the type of membership desired (annual dues in parentheses):

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> student (\$25.00) | <input type="checkbox"/> Baltic resident (\$25.00) | <input type="checkbox"/> retired (\$35.00) | <input type="checkbox"/> regular (\$60.00) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sponsor (\$100.00) | <input type="checkbox"/> patron (\$500.00) | <input type="checkbox"/> life membership (\$2000.00) | |

Libraries and institutions may subscribe to the *Baltic Studies Newsletter* for \$ 25 a year.

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