



Summer 2020

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association for
the advancement
of baltic studies

AABS Board of Directors Annual Reports

*Features
Student Awardees
Share Project Insights*

*KGB Surveillance in
the Baltic Republics*

*Conducting Fieldwork
in a Pandemic*



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The AABS 2020–2021 membership year runs from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. To renew your membership online, visit www.aabs-balticstudies.org/membership.

2020-2022 Board of Directors



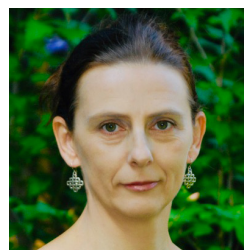
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Meet the Newest Board Members

Aušra Park: As **Vice President for Publications** I will be heading three selection committees for a book contest, a book subvention contest, and the Vitols award for the best Journal of Baltic Studies article. Although the duties of the office appear straightforward, one of my primary aspirations during my tenure will be broader outreach to raise awareness and advance knowledge of the existence of these awards. Additionally, I would like to start a tradition of publicly giving credit with official mentions of reviewers' names listed at the end of selections/awards announcements to not only express AABS Board's thanks for their voluntary service, but also have a public record of acknowledgment for the work they have done.

Laura A. Dean: AABS was the first national academic conference I attended as a master's student in Baltic studies back in 2006, so I am looking forward to jumping into my new role as **Vice President for Conferences** for nostalgic and sentimental reasons a mere 14 years later. My vision for the conference includes a diverse array of academic panels featuring cutting-edge research that challenges the status quo. I aim to pair these academic panels with a rich cultural program building on the strengths of the University of Washington Baltic Studies Program and the Seattle-Tacoma Baltic communities. I will work to try and make the conference more affordable for undergraduate and graduate students by providing scholarships, room share options, and home stays in the Baltic communities. We are also introducing a poster session to make the conference more open to those beginning a new line of research or anxious about giving a full paper presentation. Overall, I look to bring my experience as an outsider with no Baltic heritage, and will work to make the conference inclusive and welcoming for everyone.

AABS Administration



Australasian Committee
Dr. Delaney Skerrett



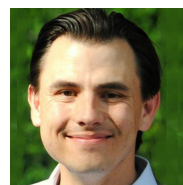
Administrative Exec. Director
Dr. Liisi Esse



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Academic Exec. Director
Dr. Olavi Arens



Advisor to the Board
Dr. Joseph M. Ellis



Journal of Baltic Studies Editor
Dr. Matthew Kott



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Dr. Indra Ekmanis

AABS Outgoing President's Annual Report

It was an honor and privilege to take over the duties of president during the 50th anniversary of AABS. As I stated in my address at our Stanford University conference in 2018, my vision for AABS is to expand its global presence, especially to play a bigger role in Baltic studies in Europe. We made significant progress in that direction during my term in office. A key step was bringing the North American AABS conferences and the Conferences on Baltic Studies in Europe (CBSE) closer together.

Unlike the AABS conferences, the CBSE has no permanent organizational structure or backing. After CBSE 2017 in Riga, I proposed that CBSE expand to Poland, specifically the magnificent Hanseatic city of Gdańsk, as the venue of its 2019 conference. Thereafter, I personally recruited Kazimierz Musiał to organize the conference and Jörg Hackmann to be the program director. At the Gdańsk conference, we established an advisory committee for CBSE, which includes AABS representatives. In that context, I proposed that CBSE 2021 be held at Uppsala University and secured support for it from Claes Levinsson, the director of the Institute of Russian and Eurasian Studies at Uppsala. Uppsala is particularly appropriate because the editor of the Journal of Baltic Studies, Matthew Kott, is located there and he will be the main organizer.

The greatest regret of my tenure is that we were not able to hold our conference in Charlotte due to COVID-19. However, the effort and time that Joseph Ellis and others on the Board put into organizing it has not been for nothing. Fortunately, the panels and papers accepted for Charlotte will be transferred to CBSE 2021 in Uppsala. This will further cement the close bond between AABS and CBSE.

On the practical side of running the organization, AABS has one part-time paid employee, the executive officer, who manages our day-to-day business. She ensures that AABS functions properly and successfully. During the past couple of years, Amanda Swain took big strides towards making our operations more efficient, but in Spring 2019 she stepped down from the post. We thank her for her dedicated service. Fortunately, I was able to convince Liisi Esse, the organizer of our phenomenal Stanford conference, to take on the position. After a smooth three-month transition period, Amanda handed over her duties to Liisi in July 2019. Liisi has brought new energy, ideas and enthusiasm to the role, and she has already updated our systems, made our procedures more efficient and increased AABS's visibility in social media.

AABS's finances are stronger than ever, however, we don't yet know the consequences of the pandemic. Other notable milestones include negotiating and signing a new five-year contract with Routledge for the continued publication of Journal of Baltic Studies. A key duty of the president is to ensure continuity of leadership, which means finding and convincing the best people to serve on the board. I am very gratified that we have an outstanding group of individuals on the incoming AABS Board. I am especially pleased that Dovilė Budrytė agreed to serve as our president-elect and future president as of 2022. Another crucial position is that of vice president for conferences. Finding someone willing to take on this demanding job wasn't easy. Laura Dean from Millikin University stepped up to the plate, and the University of Washington in Seattle, which just celebrated the 25th anniversary of its Baltic Studies Program, agreed to be the host in 2022.

Dr. Andres Kasekamp
AABS President, 2018-2020

Overview of AABS 2019 Activities

Compiled from AABS Board of Directors' reports by Dr. Liisi Esse, AABS Administrative Executive Director

Although the AABS biennial conference was unfortunately cancelled in 2020 due to the extraordinary circumstances related to COVID-19, our mission of enhancing Baltic studies and supporting Baltic students and researchers continues to be fulfilled through many of our annual programs and activities. This year, we issued eight grants and scholarships to aspiring Baltic graduate students and young researchers, and awarded best books, articles, and student papers on Baltic studies. AABS also continues its support to BALSSI and cooperation with the German Studies Association.

We were happy to see the number of AABS members increase from 224 to 306 this year and to witness a great voter turnout at the AABS 2020–2022 board election. We are thankful to all our donors who contributed more than \$5,000 to the Baltic Studies Fund and to AABS program expenses, including student travel grants. We stay in touch with our members through quarterly e-newsletters and social media, and look forward to seeing many of them at the 14th Conference on Baltic Studies in Europe (CBSE), taking place in Uppsala, Sweden, in June 2021.

Participants of the cancelled AABS 2020 conference were offered the opportunity to transfer their papers, panels, or round-tables from the AABS conference to CBSE, and almost 50% of them (95) requested to be transferred. AABS will continue to closely collaborate with the CBSE 2021 organizing committee and welcomes the close bond between AABS and CBSE.

Awards and Prizes

The AABS Book Prize, Undergraduate Student Paper Award, and Vilis Vitols Article Prize were advertised more heavily this year and began accepting submissions through an online, automated form, resulting in a increased number of submissions.

A record of 14 nominations were received for the AABS Book Prize, and a committee consisting of Dovilė Budrytė, Liisi Esse, and Amanda Swain selected a winner and three honorary mentions. The Undergraduate Student Paper Award received four nominations and a committee consisting of Kristo Nurmis, Dovilė Budrytė, and Daunis Auers selected two winners. Although we did not receive a large number of

nominations for this award, we believe that the quality of the submissions was higher this year than previously. The winning essays explore issues related to Lithuanian identity and memories about deportations.

Dovilė Budrytė, Olavi Arens, and Matthew Kott served on the committee selecting the best JBS articles from years 2018 and 2019. The committee started its work in October 2019 and selected three winners: two for 2018 and one for 2019. The AABS Book Publication Subvention, which accepts applications twice a year, is yet to be awarded. The AABS board will discuss the requirements for the grant in the near future.

AABS Finances (as of April 2020)

The value of the Association's investment portfolio decreased by 0.9% over the period from July 31, 2019 to April 19, 2020. In dollar terms, the net asset value changed from \$3,856,392.76 to \$3,822,272.60. This reflects portfolio income, unrealized gains and losses, as well as a withdrawal of \$100,000 to cover grant payments and operating expenses. The Association's funds are invested in equities (50%) and fixed income securities (50%) – inflation-protected US Treasury bonds and short- to intermediate-maturity US Treasuries. This is in keeping with the Association's long-term strategy of a balanced stock and bond investment portfolio.

The Association's asset portfolio produced a gross return (before withdrawals) of \$165,879.84, which, as of mid-April,

exceeds the fiscal year budgeted amount of \$154,256 by 8%. The gross return for the entire fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, is dependant on financial market performance over the remainder of the second quarter of 2020.

Membership dues and donations through March 2020 totaled \$18,410 — 24% short of the \$25,000 budgeted for the fiscal year.

JBS revenue of \$34,172 has exceeded the budget by 14%.

As of April, with three months left in the fiscal year, the total AABS grants and expenses were at \$175,634, compared to the budgeted amount of \$207,434.

Grants and Fellowships

AABS grants and fellowships are getting more attention, and the year 2020 is marked by a notable increase in project applications. In 2019, 11 proposals were submitted, while this year 26 solid applications were received for evaluation. We believe that this is a convincing sign from young people in the US, Canada and Europe that shows increasing interest in Baltic studies. The committee has always had to make difficult decisions during the selection procedure, as the majority of proposals present impressively interesting, credible and meaningful research topics. Those include, but are not limited to, issues of identity, citizenship, gender, migration, and trauma studies. Moreover, most of the proposals take an interdisciplinary approach and apply diverse methodologies.

The projects selected in 2019 are currently in the implementation stage, demonstrating good results. The reports show that the 2019 awardees are successfully using their grants.

A special mention should be made of the 2019 Grundmanis Grant awardee, Renāte Prancāne (Hunter College, CUNY, master's program in art history), who shows splendid results in her studies and takes advantage of other opportunities to excel. We hope that this year's awardee Krišjānis Mazurs, who has demonstrated great motivation and expertise, will be successful in implementing ambitious goals at Stanford University.

As in previous years, the greatest competition was for the Emerging Scholars grant. The decision was taken to select two candidates — Dainius Genys and Kādi Talvoja — instead of one because of the novelty and ambition of their research proposals, as well as the noteworthy experience that both candidates have demonstrated.

We were happy to receive three strong project proposals for the Saltups grant; however, only one awardee — Jānis Šiliņš — was chosen for his proposed project on "Immigrants from the historical Latvian territories to Pennsylvania."

In contrast to previous years, when interest in the Baumanis Grant for Creative Projects had dropped considerably, in 2019 we received 16 applications for the award. Three high-quality projects were considered for the grant, however, we had to select only one — Štěpán Černoušek's project on the "Baltic memory of the Gulag." In 2020, we received 12 applications and the committee is scheduled to make a decision by July.

The observed trends indicate a higher interest in Baltic studies, and the number of submitted project proposals is growing. Candidates for these awards are also often young people, who benefit from financial support in their early career. As such, the Board has decided to increase the financial support to our grants and fellowships.

Student Affairs

Since 2019, AABS has significantly increased the money allocated to student travel grants for the biennial AABS conferences, and continues to offer research and dissertation completion grants for students of the Baltic region all over the globe. We have recently also doubled the prize money for the AABS Undergraduate Paper Prize, which we awarded this year to two highly qualified Baltic studies undergraduates.

Responding to a request by several graduate students, AABS Student Representative Kristo Nurmis launched a Facebook

group "Baltic Studies Graduate Students" in 2019. The group seeks to serve as a platform for graduate students to share information about grants and conferences, as well as to help look for panelists, organize meet-ups while researching the Baltics, and offer other networking possibilities.

Kristo is available for any questions Baltic studies graduate students may have about AABS, and is particularly open to all ideas and suggestions on how to serve the student interests in the organization better.

BALSSI

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, Kathleen Evans at Indiana University reports that all instruction for the 2020 Baltic Studies Summer Institute will be conducted online. BALSSI 2020 will run from June 8 through July 31, with four hours per day of synchronous instruction, plus activities and homework. Student enrollment numbers are solid: Estonian 1 (6 students);

Latvian 1 (4); Lithuanian 1 (5) and Lithuanian 2 (4). Almost all BALSSI students are receiving funding. As in past years, Indiana University will send AABS a full report of the program later this fall. AABS funds to the program have played a critically important role, supporting both instructor salaries and student financial aid.

AABS and the German Studies Association

In continuation with its policy of cooperation with other learned societies, AABS is sponsoring a seminar on “Germany Faces East: WWI and the Post-War World” at the fall annual conference of the German Studies Association in Washington, DC (Oct. 1-4, 2020). Seminars at the annual German Studies conferences meet for two hours on each of the three conference days (a total of six hours) and allow for a small group of scholars to engage with each other on specific topics by presenting their research for discussion.

The purpose of the seminar is “to examine the divergent views that existed in Germany about what German policy toward the East should be, as well as discuss the interaction

of actual German policy and German military authority with the populations of the different areas of occupation. Short-term institution building, economic policies including food requisitions, and cultural policies will be considered. The focus of attention will be the interaction of both war-time and post-war Germany with what came to be called East Central Europe.”

The co-sponsors for the seminar are Jesse Kauffman of Eastern Michigan University and Olavi Arens of Georgia Southern University. Among the participants will be 15 scholars from Poland, Germany, the Baltic States, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

AABS 2020-2022 Board Elections

The election of the AABS 2020–2022 Board of Directors was held on April 1, 2020 with online voting beginning on March 18. For the first time in the organization’s history, the election was carried out both online and via mailed-in paper ballots.

AABS members were given the option to vote online or by mailing a paper ballot, depending on the preferences indicated when submitting or renewing membership. We sent out 69 paper ballots via mail and 227 members received

an email with an e-voting link (three bounced). The paper ballots also included instructions for voting online. Out of 293 eligible voters, 149 members (50.85%) voted, the vast majority of them (144) online. Out of the 69 paper ballot recipients, 21 voted online.

All seven candidates set by the AABS Nominating Committee received over 97% votes each and will thus assume office starting from July 1, 2020.



NEW DIRECTIONS IN BALTIC STUDIES CHARLOTTE, NC (USA)



2020 conference report

The AABS 2020 conference, New Directions in Baltic Studies, was to be held May 28th-30th in Charlotte, North Carolina. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic forced cancellation of the conference. This year's conference would have hosted over 200 guests, from more than 10 countries, in 15 different academic disciplines. The program was also to include visits from the three Baltic ambassadors to the United States, as well as keynote talks from Russian and Baltic literature professor Yasha Klots, and Latvian American writer Inara Verzemnieks. The program also included a Q&A with former US ambassador to Estonia, James Melville, and a screening of Mary Umans' film about Lithuanian displaced persons camps, "Displaced." Needless to say, from our many diverse and interesting panels to our many special guests and visitors, we were looking forward to hosting AABS members in Charlotte.

Our hope with choosing Charlotte as a conference location was to direct our conference and its energies to exploring new spaces and "directions" in the field of Baltic studies. And I hope we can explore new directions — especially in the American South — in the future.

I would like to wish a special thanks to the division chairs who helped with the selection of conference papers, to the AABS board for their wisdom, advice and financial support of the conference, and to our many donors — both large and small — that supported our conference proceedings. A special thanks to AABS administrative executive Liisi Esse, who provided both technical knowledge of planning a conference, and was an excellent sounding board when I needed one. One more note of thanks to my home institution, Wingate University, who supported bringing AABS to Charlotte from the beginning, and was the first to provide financial support for this venture.

It should also be said in closing, that the host site, Queens University, and host hotel, the Hilton hotel group, did not charge AABS cancellation penalties, and refunded 100% of any and all of our deposits. This was deeply appreciated.

One more thing: I enjoyed getting to know so many of you by email and by phone, and was delighted to work with each of you as you planned your visit to the conference. Please stop and say hi at a future conference.

Dr. Joseph Ellis
Vice President for Conferences, 2018-2020

Report on the Journal of Baltic Studies

By Dr. Matthew Kott, JBS Editor, Uppsala University | Statistics by Madeleine Markey, Taylor & Francis

Downloads by country in 2019

United Kingdom	4383
United States	3177
Netherlands	2284
Estonia	1714
Lithuania	1694
Sweden	1094
Germany	1077
China	771
Canada	763
Australia	564
Finland	489
Latvia	482
Russia	359
Italy	346
India	321
Ireland	270
Belgium	265
Norway	263
Poland	260
Denmark	249
Switzerland	231
Czech Republic	215
France	209
Austria	196
Turkey	194
Hungary	189
Japan	166
South Africa	116
Israel	104
Greece	100
Indonesia	95
South Korea	95
New Zealand	91
Portugal	86
Croatia	61
Singapore	58
Hong Kong	53
Spain	51
Ukraine	50

As of Volume 51 (2020), JBS has an increased page budget of 644 per annum, or 166 pp. per issue (up from 144 pp. per issue previously). This means that, on average, we have room for seven, rather than six, articles per issue, not including book reviews, etc. This not only makes planning for special issues less difficult (special issues tend to have more and slightly longer articles, necessitating the “borrowing” of page allocations from other issues in the same year), it also helps JBS publish more articles per year overall, increasing both the throughput of the journal (which pleases authors), and the providing more chances for this work to be cited (boosting journal visibility).

The average submission rate is about seven to eight manuscripts per month, or around 90 submissions annually. Given that the journal can only publish about 28 articles a year, there is currently no foreseeable difficulty in fulfilling the production quotas.

Thanks to the support an upgraded assistant editor provides the editor, peer review times are becoming shorter. The average length of peer review rounds is down to around three months’ turnaround time from submission by the author to editorial decision, which is positive, considering the often niched or, increasingly, cross-disciplinary nature of manuscripts submitted to JBS.

An interesting trend to note is that the number of manuscripts submitted that cite articles published in JBS is on the rise. This suggests that scholars are reading JBS more actively, and that articles published in JBS may be having an increased impact more generally, as well.

In February 2020, Mike Loader left Uppsala University to take up a post at University of Glasgow. Mike will continue in his role as assistant editor of JBS, aiding the editor in keeping a good workflow. Over the spring, Mike has been focusing his attention on the forthcoming Special Issue, JBS vol. 51, no. 3, on cultural entanglement in the Baltic region (guest editor: Eneken Laanes).

Emma Rönngren, a recently started PhD student at the Institute for Russian and Eurasian Studies working on media studies related to the Baltic states, has joined JBS as a part-time editorial assistant. Her primary duties will include the technical editing of manuscripts and working with the JBS presence on social media. Emma is expected to complete her PhD in 2024, which will offer a significant amount of stability in staffing the JBS Editorial Office at Uppsala over the next few years.

Liisi Esse continues her diligent service as the book reviews editor for JBS, alongside her other work for AABS and Stanford University Libraries. The overlapping interests of her various roles offer synergies that benefit all parties involved, including JBS.

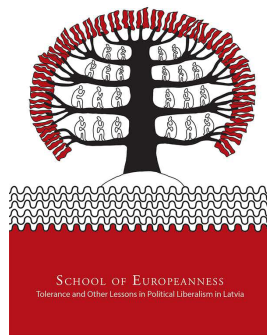
Most frequently used words in article titles 2019



AABS Recognizes Excellence in Publications

AABS Book Prize Awardee | Dr. Dace Dzenovska

School of Europeanness: Tolerance and Other Lessons in Political Liberalism in Latvia
Cornell University Press, 2018



Dace Dzenovska

Dace Dzenovska (PhD, University of California, Berkeley) is an associate professor of the anthropology of migration at the University of Oxford. Her research areas include: geopolitics of mobility and migration; forms of statehood, sovereignty and capitalism in post-Cold War Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union; and postsocialism as a critical lens for analysis of late liberalism. In addition to *School of Europeanness*, she is the author of the Latvian-language book *Aizbraukšana un tukšums Latvijas laukos* (*Departure and Emptiness in the Latvian Countryside*). She is also the recipient of the European Research Council Consolidator Grant (2019) for a project on the emptying cities, towns, and villages in Eastern Europe and Russia.



The biennial AABS Book Prize is awarded to an outstanding English-language scholarly book in Baltic studies.

Review by Dr. Ieva Zaķe

To start, Dr. Dzenovska's book *School of Europeanness* is outstanding and I am happy to be able to offer my praise for it. The book is an academic accomplishment and a major contribution to the field of the Baltic studies. While there was a notable growth in writing about the Baltic states immediately after the break-up of the USSR, the more recent processes such as integration into the European Union have not received as much scholarly attention in the West. Dzenovska's book, however, makes a strong argument that the post-post-Soviet context continues to be interesting and complex enough for scholars to learn many valuable lessons.

The book that Dzenovska presents is a theoretically rich manuscript that draws on a variety of contemporary and late 20th century anthropological and sociological theories. Yet, the heavy theoretical constructs do not obscure or unnecessarily confuse a clearly presented story about how uneasy has been the integration of post-socialist and newly independent countries such as Latvia into the supposedly inclusive, liberal and tolerant European community since the late 1990s and early 2000s. European liberalism, with quite a bit of non-tolerant fervor of its own, demanded inclusivity and tolerance from the Latvian state and society. Latvians often felt lectured to, even controlled by the European "experts" of everything that was "acceptable" in a "truly" democratic society, thus implying that Latvia had not graduated into that status yet and even had a long way to go. Dzenovska's book explains that no one should have been surprised about this situation because Euro-

pean liberalism itself is characterized by the paradox of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion. The book also points out that the demands of European liberalism were not just externally imposed. It had inside agents whose activities and ideas were met with a notably mixed reaction by the rest of Latvia's public. In other words, as Dzenovska wonderfully demonstrates, one cannot draw simple distinctions between the internal and external forces in the complex process of "civilizing" Latvia.

More specifically, Dzenovska tackles the controversial topic of how Latvia's society and state were pulled and pushed to adhere to the expectations of European liberalism during Latvia's integration into the EU. She demonstrates how this process played out in highly sensitive areas such as language policies, immigration issues, protection of the new state's borders, and attitudes and policies regarding ethnic and other minorities. Dr. Dzenovska masterfully shows that European liberalism was not — and still isn't — a necessarily perfect fit with Latvia's social and political realities. And this is not just Latvia's fault. She argues that actually the problematic path toward Latvia becoming "Westernized" was also due to European liberalism itself as it that loves to proclaim its tolerance and inclusivity, while working hard to exclude those who do not belong. And so as Latvia tried to find a way to integrate itself into this paradoxical European context, Latvia's own issues of inclusion and exclusion forcefully surfaced and clashed with those in Europe. For example, as Dzenovska excellently describes, Latvia as a new state was expected to integrate groups that European liberalism defined as ethnic minorities, while the Latvian society overall still harbored a strong sense about themselves

as a minority mistreated by Soviet dominance. To reconcile the two perspectives was hardly an easy feat. With this and many other pertinent examples, her book makes a tremendous contribution to helping us understand what it looks like when a society is expected to remake itself into something that appears quite external, but supposedly beneficial to it.

In this context, I particularly enjoyed Dzenovska's analysis of the activities and attitudes of a unique group, even a subculture, of what she calls "tolerance workers" of the early 2000s. This was a network of relatively young professionals, often Western educated locals or Western-grown children of émigrés, who worked for local offices of international organizations, human rights NGOs or state institutions such as the Secretariat of the Special Tasks Minister for the Integration of Society. I have to note that having been involved in this network myself in its early stages during the 1990s, I can attest that Dr. Dzenovska's observations are spot on. This subculture was deeply committed to introducing Western concepts of liberal politics into Latvia's society and facilitating Latvia's self-evaluation and self-criticism. They harbored a perception of Latvian society as ethnocentric, xenophobic and narrow minded due to its nationalism and backwardness of the Soviet period. Dzenovska's writing gives a voice to the tolerance workers as the agents of European liberalism at the same time as she also allows those critical of the imposed tolerance industry to articulate their perspective. She does not privilege one over the other. Instead, she allows us to understand that the conflict between the two was inevitable and she effectively uses the two perspectives as critiques of each other.

The book is impressively researched over a number of years. It includes in-depth interviews with informants, carefully documented and collected media references, an impressive number of secondary and historical sources as well as her own insider participant information about the processes she describes. It builds a story that is rich in detail and context. As an anthropologist, Dzenovska weaves together personal perspectives of a number of main characters with macrosocial analysis and historical context. The voices of these individuals don't just illustrate the larger social forces that Dzenovska addresses; they actually allow these abstract forces to come to life and provide the readers with a sense of reality and urgency. So in terms of its methodology, the book is a thoughtful and well executed ethnography.

In addition, the book greatly benefits from Dr. Dzenovska's own personal experience in working directly with the organizations and issues that she describes. As she explains in one of the endnotes, she herself was engaged in the UN-based development work in Latvia and commissioned some of the studies produced and subsequently used by the tolerance workers. She notes that eventually she grew disillusioned with the development work in Latvia. But the sources that she knew so well proved to be excellent material for this study. The authenticity of her research is also strengthened by her linguistic skills in Latvian, Russian and English. All of these languages intersect in building a powerful and engaging story about the efforts to "civilize" Latvia through the introduction of European liberalism.

AABS Book Prize Honorable Mentions

Dr. Tomas Balkelis | *War, Revolution, and Nation-Making in Lithuania, 1914–1923*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018

The book explores how the Great War and ensuing postwar conflict created and shaped the Lithuanian state from 1914 to the last waves of violence in 1923. As the very notion of independent Lithuania was constructed during the war, violence was an essential part of the formation of the Lithuanian state, nation, and identity. War was much more than simply the historical context in which the tectonic shift from empire to nation-state took place. It transformed people, policies, institutions, and modes of thought in ways that would continue to shape the nation for decades. The volume's two main themes are the impact of military, social, and cultural mobilizations on the local population, and different types of violence characteristic of the region throughout the period. The actors in this story are people displaced by war and mobilized for war: refugees, veterans, volunteers, peasant conscripts, POWs, paramilitary fighters, and others who took to guns, not diplomacy, to assert their power. This is the story of how their lives were changed by war and how they shaped the society that emerged after war.



Tomas Balkelis is a senior research fellow at the Lithuanian Institute of History in Vilnius. He received his PhD in history at the University of Toronto in 2004. After graduation he worked at the universities of Manchester and Nottingham. In 2009-2013, he was a European Research Council postdoctoral research fellow at University College Dublin. He also led a Lithuanian Research Council funded team of historians based at Vilnius University working on the population displacement in Lithuania in the 20th century. In 2015-2016 he was a visiting fellow at Stanford University. He is the author of *The Making of Modern Lithuania* (Routledge, 2009) and *War, Revolution and Nation-Making in Lithuania* (Oxford, 2018). His articles have been published by Past and Present and Contemporary European History.

Dr. Kevin O'Connor | *The House of Hemp and Butter: A History of Old Riga*, Northern Illinois University Press, Ithaca and London, 2019

The *House of Hemp and Butter* is the very first English-language history of early Riga. It begins in the 12th century with the arrival to the eastern Baltic of German priests, traders, and knights, who conquered and converted the indigenous tribes and assumed mastery over their lands. It ends in 1710 with an account of the greatest war Livonia had ever seen, one that was accompanied by mass starvation, a raging epidemic, and a flood of nearly Biblical proportions that devastated the city and left its survivors in misery. If *The House of Hemp and Butter* is an urbanography that is embedded in its broader regional and international context, the book's main focus is always the city itself, populated by merchants and clerics, craftsmen and builders, porters and day laborers. Readers will learn about the city's structures and spaces, its peoples and its rhythms, its internal conflicts and its unrelenting struggle to maintain its traditional independence against outside threats. Intended both for readers of history as well as for curious travelers, *The House of Hemp and Butter* is essential reading for anyone who plans to spend any amount of time in the city of Riga.



Kevin O'Connor is a professor of history at Gonzaga University, where he teaches courses in European and Russian history. His books include *The History of the Baltic States*; *Culture and Customs of the Baltic States*; and *Intellectuals and Apparatchiks: Russian Nationalism and the Gorbachev Revolution*. Out of his travels through the Baltic states was born a fascination with Latvia's stunning capital, where on some summer mornings one might come upon him enjoying a croissant in a noisy cafe while fidgeting on his multivolume history of Riga.

Vincent Hunt | *Up Against the Wall: The KGB and Latvia*, Helion and Company, 2019

Blending documentary journalism, oral history and travelogue, Latvia's twisted relationship with the Soviet security police over a century is laid bare in brutal detail in this book, as first the Latvian Rifle-men helped Lenin to power, then 50 years of totalitarianism followed Stalin's purges. Eye witnesses tell vivid stories of the partisan resistance, Cold War spying missions, deportations to Siberia and human rights protests, ending with the opening of the "Cheka Bags" in 2018, the KGB index of agents discovered when the Soviet Union collapsed. The *KGB and Latvia* integrates many personal testimonies from ordinary citizens of Latvia, and thus enriches the study of the Soviet period in Latvia, while making a persuasive argument that Latvians were key players in the establishment of the Soviet security forces.



Vincent Hunt is an award-winning former BBC documentary journalist. His work explores little-told chapters of recent history in his books, including the Nazis' scorched earth destruction of northern Norway, the end of WWII in western Latvia and the untold story of the KGB in Soviet times. He teaches journalism in Manchester and is researching a PhD analyzing storytelling, combining documentary methods with oral history and memory studies.

Vilis Vītols Article Prizes | 2018 & 2019

Dr. Saulius Sužiedėlis | "The International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania: Successes, challenges, perspectives," *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 49:1, 103-116 2018

The article summarizes the history of the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania and outlines the work it has accomplished to date. The author reviews the problems and controversies surrounding the Commission's research into the post-1940 period of Lithuania's history and describes the clashing perspectives inherent in the starkly different Lithuanian, Jewish, Western and Soviet wartime narratives.



Saulius Sužiedėlis is professor emeritus of history at the Millersville University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Sužiedėlis received his PhD in history and Slavic studies at the University of Kansas in 1977. In 2013, he received an honorary doctorate from Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas for his work in Holocaust studies and the humanities. He edited the *Journal of Baltic Studies* from 1994 to 1998 and was president of the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (2002-2004). In 2007-2010, he served as director of the annual Millersville University Conference on the Holocaust and Genocide. His books include *The Historical Dictionary of Lithuania* and *The Persecution and Mass Murder of Lithuanian Jews during Summer and Fall of 1941* (with Christoph Dieckmann). Dr. Sužiedėlis is the author of more than 60 research articles, reports and reviews.

Dr. Marharyta Fabrykant | "National identity in the contemporary Baltics: Comparative quantitative analysis," *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 49:3, 305-331, 2018

This paper is about contemporary national identity attitudes in the three Baltic states as ethnic democracies. It presents the results of a quantitative comparative study using data from the International Social Survey Program, collected in 2013. The parameters of comparison include the perceived importance of various national identity criteria and the pride in a nation's achievements in various spheres. The results show that Baltic national identity focuses not on ethnic homogeneity, but on commitment and loyalty, to reflect upon the current situation more than the historical past, and to have the potential for the integration of ethnic minority members. In particular, the research findings that demonstrate that language appears among institutional, not ethnocultural, criteria suggests that in the Baltics, learning to speak a country's language more likely reflects not the preservation of collective cultural heritage, but the individual commitment to the country. Investing time and effort into mastering a language of a small country, a skill that is highly unlikely to be of much use outside that country, might function as what economists call a "costly signal" of loyalty and willingness to belong and contribute to the country in the future.



Marharyta Fabrykant is a senior research fellow at the National Research University Higher School of Economics and an associate professor at the Belarusian State University. She holds a PhD in sociology (2017) and in social psychology (2018). She conducts comparative research on national identities and national history narratives with a focus on the bottom-up demand for and perceptions of national identity politics. Dr. Fabrykant has taught courses on Belarusian national identity in comparative perspective as an Erasmus+ visiting lecturer at the University of Tartu (2016) and Justus Liebig University Giessen (2019). She has recently published in *Europe-Asia Studies*, *Nationalities Papers*, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, *Slavic Review*, and *Nations and Nationalism*.

Dr. Liene Ozoliņa | "Embracing austerity? An ethnographic perspective on the Latvian public's acceptance of austerity politics," *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 50:4, 515-531, 2019

Latvian austerity policy following the 2008 economic crisis has been touted as a success story by some and critiqued as a socially costly experiment by others. It has remained a puzzle, however, how such harsh socio-economy policies were possible without causing sustained popular protests. Drawing on ethnographic research at an unemployment office in Riga in the aftermath of the crisis, this article considers austerity as a political and moral phenomenon. It argues that welfare policies played an important role in disciplining the parts of the population most adversely affected by the crisis by framing post-crisis precarity as a matter of individual responsibility. Furthermore, this disciplining worked because it was underpinned by a particular moral discourse that the author calls "a discourse of freedom." Thus, this historically and culturally-shaped moral economy helped not only secure the implementation of post-crisis austerity in a way that yielded little sustained public resistance, but also helped legitimate it.



Liene Ozoliņa is a political sociologist and her research interests span political ethnography, social theory, state-citizen relationship in post-socialist societies, political subjectivity formation, and links between politics and ethics. She works as a course tutor in sociology at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and holds a PhD from the LSE, a MSc from the University of Amsterdam and a BA from the Latvian Academy of Culture. Dr. Ozoliņa's first book, *Politics of Waiting: Workfare, Post-Soviet Austerity, and the Ethics of Freedom*, was published in 2019 by Manchester University Press. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Latvia following the 2009 global economic crisis, the book examines waiting as a form of power and subjectivity in post-Soviet neoliberalism. Her research has also been published in the *British Journal of Sociology*, *Slavic Review*, and *East European Politics and Societies*.

*The Vilis Vitols annual award is presented to the author of the best article in a given year of the *Journal of Baltic Studies*, selected by a committee appointed by the AABS Board. Priority is given to articles that encompass more than one Baltic country and thus expressly represent Baltic studies. The winners of the Vilis Vitols Article Prize are announced once in every two years.*

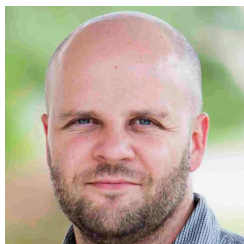
*The articles selected as Vitols award winners have been made freely accessible online by Taylor & Francis, the publisher of *Journal of Baltic Studies*. They can be found on the Association's website — www.aabs-balticstudies.org. The articles will remain freely accessible until December 31, 2020.*



2020 Grant & Fellowship Awardees

Dr. Dainius Genys, Vytautas Magnus U.
Emerging Scholars Research Grant

This project focuses on the study of emotion, adapting Genys' previous research on Lithuanian emigrants to a comparative analysis among the Baltic states. For several post-communist decades, progress was associated with reforming and modernizing political and social systems in the hope that a new type of person would emerge as a result of the redesigned order. The progress achieved over the short period is impressive, but the emotional climate of society has not changed significantly. What has impacted the shift from the great joy of independence to a contemporary sense of frustration?



Dr. Jānis Siliņš, Latvian National Archives
Mudite I. Zilīte Saltups Post-Doctoral Fellowship

This research is a reconnaissance of the historical record of the 18th to 20th centuries as related to immigration from the historical Latvian territories to Pennsylvania. It asks: Why were people willing to undertake a long, dangerous immigration journey? Why was Pennsylvania chosen as a primary destination? How did Pennsylvania and the American experience change emigrants' identities and worldviews? What ideals did arrivals bring with them and how did they implement them in the new environment? How did the Pennsylvania Latvian community influence political, social and cultural developments in their homeland?



Dr. Kādi Talvoja, Estonian Academy of Arts
Emerging Scholars Research Grant

Baltic triennials offered lively transnational communication platforms for Baltic artists in the 1970-80s, and inspired artistic innovation. As regional initiatives, they enjoyed certain freedoms and were even perceived as a form of Baltic separatism. But as Moscow receded as mediator of cultural communication, these exhibitions gradually replaced joint Baltic anniversary exhibitions held in Moscow, and lost their incentive function to a more representative one. The first phase of this research looks at triennials as a possible instrument of "stagnation" of Baltic art.



Mārtiņš Laizāns, University of Latvia
Aina Birnitis Dissertation-Completion Fellowship in the Humanities for Latvia

This project explores an obscure epoch of Latvian cultural and literary history. Neo-Latin culture and literature in most cases is not regarded as an inherent part of Latvian cultural and intellectual history. With the exploration of life and times of Basilius Plinius, a 16th century Neo-Latin poet from Riga, and a close study of his works, this project looks at the Neo-Latin heritage of Riga (and Livonia more broadly) and asserts it is an integral part of Latvian history, connected to wider Baltic and European contexts.



Clinton Glenn, McGill University
Dissertation Grants for Graduate Students

This project explores links between the material fabric of post-socialist cities and national memory, identity, and LGBT rights. It takes Baltic Pride, a pan-Baltic pride celebration, as a case study to examine how pride marches are situated in the materiality of the city, from infrastructure and architecture to cultural and political symbols. Pride marches can also be considered in terms of narratives. How do histories of occupation inflect public debates over what legal and social rights sexual minorities should be afforded?



Krišjānis Mazurs, Stanford University
Jānis Grundmanis Postgraduate Fellowship for Study in the US

Studying design impact at Stanford University, Mazurs is exploring how human-centered design can be used to address the global mental health epidemic in general, and help people avoid unhealthy behaviors in particular. He is focusing on how modern technology — be that through an app on your smartphone, a piece of wearable tech, or via artificial intelligence — could itself be designed to yield therapeutic effects.



Justina Smalkytė, Sciences Po Paris
Dissertation Grants for Graduate Students

This doctoral research concerns social history of anti-Nazi resistance in German-occupied Lithuania. The project examines lived experiences, roles, and (self) perceptions of the individuals who participated in multiple ethno-political organizations that resisted the Nazi regime in the Generalbezirk Litauen. In particular, it focuses on intra- and inter-group relations with the aim to understand what role ethnic belonging and gender played in the functioning of resistance networks and decisions to join resistance groups.



Noel Foster, Princeton University
Dissertation Grants for Graduate Students

This dissertation on Russian information operations in Estonia and Latvia considers how authoritarian powers shape political behavior in target states. AABS grant funding facilitated dozens of interviews and survey experiments on large, representative samples of Estonian voters. Findings provide evidence for the theory that online information operations polarize, rather than persuade, leading to political paralysis. They suggest "fake news" is not necessary to polarize voters, as factual content drawn from strategic narratives has powerful polarizing effects.



Q&A: 2019 Grant Awardees Share Insights

Compiled by Dr. Indra Ekmanis, AABS Newsletter Editor

Kristīne Bekere, Birnitis Dissertation-Completion Fellowship

How did you become interested in Baltic studies?

Interest in Baltic Studies comes somewhat naturally for someone who has born and is living in one of the Baltic states. Nonetheless I feel that I have chosen a slightly different approach than the mainstream here in Latvia, namely to research the history of Baltic people outside Baltic States. My research institution is the Institute of Latvian History at the University of Latvia and although my research does not deal with the history of Latvia as territory, it still is the history of Latvian people, and so it fits in well and is rather valued because of this difference.

It is natural that the most interest in about Baltic Studies should come from the Baltic States themselves. That is not to say that research on Baltic topics from abroad is less valuable. In many cases quite the contrary: A view from a different perspective gives one another angle from which to look at a particular problem or development. The more such research angles are present, the closer we can approach a full understanding of the certain process under investigation.

Describe your research project.

My project currently is a dissertation on the political activism (meaning activities to promote the restoration of Baltic states' independence) of Latvians in the "free world," that is, outside of the influence zone of the Soviet Union in the time period from World War II to the restoration of Baltic states' independence. My work is an attempt to create a periodization of Latvian exile political activism and to look at it as a connected process through decades, analyzing main tendencies rather than individual activities or organizations, which has been mainly done up until now. Of course, it is only a first overview and there is still much to research in this field.

My feeling is that this topic is something that connects the Baltic states to the wider world. For me, born and living in Latvia, researching this topic has been a completely new experience of getting to know the life of Latvians on the other side of the Iron Curtain. I do hope that afterwards it will be possible to publish my research in the form of a

book. The lives and aspirations of Latvians outside of Latvia during the Soviet period is still surprisingly unknown to the general public here in Latvia. I hope to add to the understanding.

What advice would you give to a student interested in Baltic studies?

My advice would be: Do not be afraid of the fact that the Baltic states are seemingly insignificant and small. When it comes, for example, to history, the Baltic states have always been right in the middle of all those important processes going on in Europe, be it Viking raids or World War II. When you look into it, the seemingly small becomes an integral part of a much wider experience and the knowledge about smaller parts helps to understand the whole a lot better.

Štěpán Černoušek, Baumanis Grant for Creative Projects

How did you become interested in Baltic studies?

I personally studied Russian studies in the Czech Republic at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in Prague in the 1990s. To this field I added at that time the newly emerging field of Latvian studies because I wanted to expand my knowledge of the other territories of the former Soviet Union with a completely different history and relationship to the Soviet regime. Although I did not finish my Latvian studies, I was really influenced by almost two years spent studying Latvian and Latvian culture. Even though Latvia was out of my professional scope for a long time, I was always interested in what was happening there and tried to follow Latvian culture. I had an opportunity to visit Latvia several times and establish professional relations with institutions that are also studying Soviet repression — the Sibīrijas Berni (Siberia's Children) association and the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia.

In our Gulag.cz association, we popularize the topic of Soviet repression and want to show the period of the Soviet regime and its victims in a broader context. Among the victims of the Soviet regime were not only Soviet citizens, but also people from many European countries. In our virtual museum, Gulag Online, we show the history of Soviet repression as a pan-European history, to which stories from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania also contribute.

Describe your research project.

My project “Baltic Memory of the Gulag” is dedicated to hundreds of thousands of innocent people who became the victims of two Soviet occupations of the Baltic states: Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The two occasions on which the Baltic states were forcibly joined to the Soviet Union had an especially tragic impact on their inhabitants. Many were executed, imprisoned or sent to Gulag camps, though the largest number of victims comprised those deported from their homelands to inhospitable corners of Soviet Russia.

Through work with our partners in all of the Baltic states — Misija Sibiras in Lithuania, the Museum of the Occupation in Latvia and the Institute of Historical Memory in Estonia — and thanks to the support of the AABS Baumanis Grant for Creative Projects in Baltic Studies, we have selected several stories from each country that illustrate different forms of deportation and Soviet repression against the Baltic nations. Thanks to a moving map, their geographical form is also depicted. The stories of concrete individuals also show the tragic consequences that the USSR’s imperial decisions to annex foreign territory had on the lives of ordinary people. Together these stories will make up a new, Baltic layer of memory in the Gulag Online virtual museum and all the texts are available in three languages — English, Russian and Czech. It is a way to remember this history in a broader context for audiences in other countries. These tragic historical moments must be constantly remembered.

Dr. Catherine Gibson, Emerging Scholars Grant

How did you become interested in Baltic studies?

I first became interested in the Baltic region during an undergraduate history course on the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, its breakup, and the histories of the different territories and peoples in the 19th and 20th centuries. We spent a lot of time discussing Poland, Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine, but I was surprised how little attention was paid in our readings to Latvia’s historical connections with the former Commonwealth, through the Inflanty Voivodeship or Polish Livonia (today’s Latgale) and vassal state of the Duchy of Courland and Semgallia (today’s Kurzeme and Zemgale). I was intrigued by why these historical connections had been overlooked in so much of the historical literature. Since then, my research has engaged in various ways with the historical geographies and memories that have shaped how we think about the Baltic region. I’m currently based as a postdoctoral research fellow in the School of Theology and Religious

Studies at the University of Tartu. While my training is primarily as a historian of modern Europe and Russia, my work uses the Baltic provinces of Estland, Livland, and Kurland as a case study to explore regional experiences of empire. I’m interested in thinking comparatively across Eurasia and about the similarities and differences between the imperial experience in the Baltic provinces and in the western borderlands, Caucasus, and Central Asia.

Describe your research project.

My project examines how different mapmakers in the Baltic provinces in the second half of the 19th century surveyed and classified religious communities, churches, and schools. I’m interested in looking at the kinds of visual stories that were being told through maps and the role of cartographic material culture in legitimizing imperial governance or, alternatively, how it was used to challenge the tsarist state.

One strand of my project involves analyzing how cartography emerged as a battleground for depicting the Baltic provinces as a Lutheran or Orthodox space, and the geopolitical and cultural orientation to the west or east that this implied. Another strand investigates the political viewpoints and policies shaping who was mapped and who was excluded from cartographic depictions of religious life in certain contexts, such as Jews and Old Believers. By drawing together archival materials from Estonia, Latvia, and Russia, the project advances the argument that religion persisted as a meaningful, although often underestimated, form of identification that cut across linguistic and national communities, both from the perspective of the imperial administration and in the eyes of the local population.

What would you tell a new student interested in Baltic studies?

Acquiring language skills can be daunting, especially as opportunities to learn Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian are not offered by most universities. My advice is not to be put off from getting involved in Baltic studies if you don’t (yet!) know Estonian, Latvian, or Lithuanian, or you feel that your level in these languages isn’t good enough to do research. The complex and multilingual past of the Baltic region means that there are in-roads into the region’s history through lots of different languages. For example, there is plenty of scope to work on certain topics if you have a basic reading knowledge of German, Russian, or Polish. Also, thanks to digitization initiatives in all three countries, there are rich collections of source materials available online that are a great resource if you are looking for a topic for a research paper.

AABS Recognizes Best Undergraduate Papers

The AABS Undergraduate Paper Award award recognizes academic papers on Baltic studies based on originality, scholarship, excellence in writing, and quality of engagement with the subject area. Faculty members at the college and university level are invited to nominate undergraduate papers once in every two years.



Juozas Lukošius, great grandfather of author Gintarė Daulys, was deported. He is seated second from left; his brother Kazys (standing third from left in the same photo) was also deported.

The contribution of Lithuanian deportees' memoirs to Lithuanian national identity

By Gintarė Daulys, Arizona State University

Between 1941 and 1953, thousands of Lithuanians were deported from their homeland, which had been occupied by the Soviet Union, to distant uninhabitable regions, including the northern reaches of Siberia. While many perished as they contended with hunger, thirst, illness, harsh weather, ill-suited clothing, and poor housing, some survived and returned. Among the returnees were those who recounted their experiences in written memoirs. The Soviet Union's occupation of

Lithuania was coming to an end in the late 1980s, the seeds of re-establishing independence had been planted, and the memoirs recounting the inhumanity experienced by Lithuanian deportees reminded the populace of why the fight for independence was so important.

In these recollections, returning adult deportees often report solidarity among Lithuanians, interactions with locals and authorities, and efforts to maintain agency and continue cultural traditions while in exile. Lithuanian deportees helped each

other to meet basic physical needs, and lent emotional and moral support to one another. Differences in social class or other demographic characteristics are infrequently described or noted as causes of conflict, save for a few indications of social class differences, which had an impact on survival. Occasionally, deportees supported or did not support each other out of fear for themselves or to further their own interests, often related to work assignments or other system-imposed circumstances. Keeping their faith and values, practicing traditions, and speaking and passing on their language to their children helped deportees to preserve their identity and to cope with the ordeal of deportation.

Deportees invariably interacted with Soviet authorities and the local inhabitants of their places of exile. Many of these interactions and relationships involved living circumstances, mandates, work assignments, and returning to the homeland from places of deportation. Relations with locals were initially challenging, partly because they were not always much better off than the deportees. Upon arrival at their final destinations, deportees were often met with wariness, if not outright hostility, as “criminals,” so named by Soviet authorities. Relations tended to improve over time, however, with locals helping deportees care for their children, bury their dead, and secure more desirable work positions, among other forms of assistance. Deportees’ attitudes toward authorities were mixed.

Some Soviet authorities helped the deportees prepare somewhat for their journey by advising them about what to pack during their arrest and some helped them return to Lithuania later. Defying authorities’ demands did not always bring any real consequences, suggesting a lack of concern or inability to do much in response to widespread defiance.

Child deportees remember going to school, relying on their parents, and then finally leaving their harsh environments and returning to Lithuania. Parents considered the need for child-care while they worked when deciding whether to have their children attend school. They also weighed the significance and importance of sending their children to Soviet Russian language schools, as they were environments in which child deportees learned about Soviet ideology. The schools are not portrayed as particularly safe spaces, as evidenced by descriptions of students unwittingly getting into trouble for “political” reasons. The absence of any mention of Lithuania in some schools, along with instruction only in Russian, points to Soviet authorities’ determination to squash Lithuanian identity. Child deportees recall often getting along well with their Russian classmates, who would help them create makeshift school supplies and understand difficult expressions or concepts. Positive interactions extended to chats during recess and play outside of school. Lithuanian children experienced some bullying, however, and their abilities to overcome this challenge varied.



Juozas Lukošius, the author’s great-grandfather, with the author’s grandmother, Karolina Kubilienė, seated on his lap.

Many deported children were without their fathers, and many also lost their mothers. Parents often helped their children in matters of food and protection; orphaned children struggled to fend for themselves upon losing their parents. Perhaps most importantly, parents helped themselves and their children manage hunger and ration food to save themselves from starvation.

Returning from exile in Siberia to Lithuania was a much-anticipated event, but posed significant challenges. Parents or other relatives would arrange for others to help children travel back to Lithuania. There was a danger that during the journey, the children would be turned back or deported again, or returned to their parents in Siberia if they were traveling alone. They and their families faced many difficulties in trying to live and work in Lithuania; many found their homes and property had been confiscated. It is interesting to note that, when circumstances finally allowed, many child returnees pursued higher education, some even earning doctoral degrees from prestigious schools. Much later, some became prominent cultural and political figures.

Deportees and others involved in recording their memoirs wrote them in Lithuanian or translated them into English for various purposes and with different intended audiences. Memoirs written and published in Lithuanian arguably best indicate the thoughts and attitudes of those individuals most closely touched by deportation, as nothing is lost in translation, and they were written for an audience largely familiar with the deportations. However, memoirs written or translated into English can reach a broader readership. The information included in Lithuanian and English memoirs indicates what authors, editors, and translators felt was important to convey to a Lithuanian versus a global audience. Deportees sometimes wrote down their stories for themselves; some later wanted to share them with others following the end of the Soviet Union and reestablishment of Lithuania's independence.

At other times, they shared their experiences at the urging of family members or ethnographers. Family members took an interest in this part of their own history and supported the inclusion of deported relatives' stories in published collections to enable wider audiences to learn about experiences of deportation. A younger generation was sometimes involved in preserving an older generation's memories and ensuring that they would be passed down. Background information provided by translators helps to frame deportations in a historical and cultural context; memoirs' purposes are sometimes identified prior to the beginning of narratives. Individual memoirs chosen for translation seem to be those of deportees who experienced more unusual or extraordinary circumstances that heighten the drama of the narratives. Earlier memoirs — published during the Cold War, while Lithuania was still occupied by the Soviet Union — had the aim of bringing the deportations to the world's attention and, hopefully, preventing such a chapter of history from repeating itself, whether in Lithuania or elsewhere.

The ways in which deportees described their experiences and what they included or omitted from their stories shaped Lithuania's national identity when it reemerged after the Soviet Union fell and Lithuania reestablished its independence in 1990, long after the death of Stalin, architect of the deportations, in 1953. The years in which memoirs were published also likely influenced their contents. Despite the horrors of deportation, returnees also describe positive aspects of the experience. Many deportees portray themselves as struggling for survival, but not as helpless victims. Relatively rare mentions of conflict among Lithuanian deportees and infrequent identification of non-Lithuanian deportees' ethnicities suggest the importance of Lithuanians striving together for a common goal: survival and return to Lithuania. The creation of museums focused on mass deportations, incorporation of memoirs in school curricula, and observation of a Day of Mourning and Hope in Lithuania, as well as the portrayal of deportations in works of literature and film, demonstrate the lasting impact and significance of these events.

Gintarė Daulys is a second generation Lithuanian American from the Chicago suburbs. She has long been interested in and loved learning about her Lithuanian heritage. In addition to the usual elementary and high school academic programs in the US, she attended and graduated from Lithuanian Saturday school. She has participated in many Lithuanian cultural song and dance festivals, heritage camps, and cultural organizations, such as Lithuanian youth groups (Catholic Youth Association "Ateitininkai" and Lithuanian Scouts), choirs (Vyturys, Polėkis, and Dainava), and a folk dance ensemble (Grandis). Her three trips to Lithuania have included a volunteer opportunity through Child's Gate to Learning and an internship in a Vilnius hospital through the LISS program. She graduated summa cum laude from Barrett, The Honors College at Arizona State University in May 2019 with a bachelor of science degree in biomedical sciences, minor in Spanish language studies, and certificate in cross-sector leadership. She completed her senior year honors thesis about the impact the memoirs of Lithuanian deportees in the 1940s-1950s had on Lithuanian national identity. She currently works as a medical scribe for a family medicine physician and is considering pursuing a future career in medicine.



What it means to be Lithuanian in America and what Russia's got to do with it

By Marija Aldona Čyvas, *The College of Wooster*

The second of three major waves of Lithuanian immigrants to America fled their homeland in the 1940s to avoid oppression under Soviet occupation and to escape the risk of deportation to Siberia — my four grandparents among them. These Lithuanians were dedicated to maintaining and passing on Lithuanian culture in America until Lithuania was free again and they could return home. Independence came much later than expected, about 50 years after the first Soviet occupation of Lithuania. By then the Lithuanian community in America was well established. It had grown to include multiple generations of Lithuanian Americans born outside Lithuania. Today, many first- and second-generation Lithuanian Americans strongly identify as Lithuanian, continue to practice traditions, and speak the language fluently.

I am a member of one of these later generations of the Lithuanian community in America. I call myself Lithuanian, but I was born and raised in America. I know the American way of life and am educated in the American system, yet I speak the language of a country I have only visited twice. I sing about wanting to return to the homeland, yet I remain in America. I do not feel like I belong in Lithuania, but America is not home either. Many of my peers are in the same situation.

To better understand Lithuanian ethnic identity in America, I conducted 10 in-depth interviews with Lithuanian Americans during which I asked participants about their upbringing, family history, involvement in the Lithuanian American community, perception of Russia, and how they identify ethnically. Specifically, I focused on first- and second-generation Lithuanian Americans, who are the children and grandchildren of the second major wave of Lithuanian immigrants to America. My central research question was: What are the experiences of second wave, first- and second-generation Lithuanian Americans that lead them to claim Lithuanian identity? Further questions include: How do they make sense of their Lithuanian identity? And, what role does the perception of Russia play in ethnic identification among these Lithuanian Americans?

In analyzing the results of my interviews I relied and drew on theories of ethnic identity, group boundary maintenance, diasporas, and Lithuanian national identity. The notable theorists whose literature and theoretical work I relied on most were Mary Waters, Eglė Rindzevičiūtė, and

William Safran. I did an additional analysis of literature by Tomas Venclova, who offers an interesting critical perspective of Lithuanians, especially how they understand themselves as an ethnic group and how they make sense of “their occupier and neighbor, Russia.”

Rindzevičiūtė's theory on Lithuanian national identity proved to be the most salient of the theories I reviewed, as I continued to find more and more support for it within the results of my interviews. Rindzevičiūtė suggests two types of discourse on Lithuanian national identity that stem from two ideologies of Lithuanian academic thought. The first, reproductive-nationalistic, was rooted in philology and philosophy — disciplines that were influenced by German romantic nationalistic ideas. The second, constructionist-critical, was more influenced by pan-cultural civilization theories, Russian Eurasianism, and Social Darwinism. While I do not argue that one of these approaches is “better” or “the correct” way to understand Lithuanian identity, it was very exciting to find examples of and support for both these approaches within the findings of my interviews.

I identified six major themes that emerged from my interviews:

Knowledge of Lithuanian background: All 10 individuals demonstrated great knowledge and awareness of their Lithuanian ancestral background. They knew the detailed stories of their parents' or grandparents' immigration to America, as well as the history of Lithuanians in America.

Diasporic community: My respondents' descriptions of the Lithuanian community were reflective of the characteristics of an ideal diaspora. My interviews revealed that the Lithuanian community, a diaspora, is the vehicle through which the ethnic identities of its members are fostered and developed.

Disjuncture: Descendants of the second wave of Lithuanian immigrants experienced considerable disjuncture when new Lithuanian immigrants began arriving in America after 1990. They began to question their Lithuanian identity because they lacked a common background with the new immigrants.

Meaning of ethnicity: The main goal of the Lithuanian community — to preserve the culture until independence was regained — was achieved in the 1990s with the col-

lapse of the Soviet Union. Its members were then met with the challenge of redefining what it meant to be Lithuanian in America. Today, Lithuanian identity is understood as a gift that must be passed on or something that makes Lithuanians stand out within American society.

Romanticization: From their arrival in America until independence in 1990, Lithuanians in the US could not return to Lithuania, and so they held a very romantic view of Lithuania and its history. They understood Lithuania as a beautiful little country that was suffering under Soviet occupation and deserved freedom.

Perception of Russia: Lithuanians in America were raised learning about “the terrible things Russia had done to Lithuania.” My respondents shared that they held very negative views of Russia when they were younger, but they now realize that this claimed victimization and implicit bias is what often fueled their Lithuanian pride. If it weren’t for what Lithuanians understand as the Soviet occupation, perhaps there would not exist in America a Lithuanian community as it is today.

What does being Lithuanian mean in America? Analysis of my interviews and other significant literature suggests that the Lithuanian identity in America is a product of unique historical circumstance and the nature of the Lithuanian community, a diaspora. Once the goal of the community was met (in March 1990 with the reestablishment of Lithuanian independence), strong identification with Lithuanian heritage did not decrease. The new answer to the question of “now what?” after independence was gained came in the form of the continuation of maintaining and performing the Lithuanian culture. On the other hand, 1990 brought with it disjuncture that is also unique to the second wave, as they found that they did not share a common background with any of the new Lithuanian immigrants who came to the US after 1990. While some may feel this within the community, outside of the community they began to view their Lithuanian identity as something

that separated them from others.

I found that the Lithuanian American community held a re-productive-nationalistic approach (as based on the theoretical work of Rindzevičiūtė) to many aspects of the community life, another reason for strong identifications with the Lithuanian identity. This approach is characterized by attitudes of isolation, romanticization, the mythical homeland, a glorified past, and emphasis on native culture and language. Many of the experiences shared in interviews were lined with these elements in terms of how the individuals made sense of them. Interestingly, I find that the community may be heading more in the direction of the constructionist-critical approach as they begin to become more aware of biases and tendencies that they embodied when they were younger, such as the romantic view of Lithuania and the negative perceptions of Russia. Despite being born and raised in America, Lithuanian Americans have found ways to make sense of and define their ethnic identity as it functions in America today.

While all of my respondents strongly identified as Lithuanian, their responses indicated that this identification is a choice that is strongly influenced by their awareness of their ethnic and ancestral background and their family structures. The Lithuanian community, a diaspora, serves as the vehicle through which their Lithuanian identity is fostered as they live in America but continue to be active in the Lithuanian community. Finally, their awareness of Lithuanian tendencies that were common among the second wave Lithuanian immigrants in the US indicates a slight shift towards a constructionist-critical approach to Lithuanian identity, as Lithuanian Americans today embrace a re-constructed Lithuanian identity that is unique to the United States. Overall, I found that this study offered me a fascinating, well-rounded look at the unique dynamics of the Lithuanian community in America, why its members tend to claim Lithuanian identity, and what role the perception of Russia plays in the Lithuanian American experience.

Marija Čyvas graduated with honors from the College of Wooster in May of 2019 with a degree in sociology and Russian studies. She spent much of her final year at Wooster excitedly writing her thesis on various aspects of ethnic identity among Lithuanian Americans. At Wooster, Marija was very involved on campus with the volleyball team, the Wooster Student Leadership Institute, both her academic departments and other student organizations. Marija has been an active member of the Lithuanian community of Chicago in which she grew up. From a young age she attended Lithuanian heritage school, participated in Lithuanian song and folk dance festivals, and is an active member of the Lithuanian Catholic Youth Association “Ateitis.” After graduation Marija was selected as a member of the Mission Siberia (Misija Sibiras) 2019 team. Most recently Marija was invited to join the National Executive Committee of the Lithuanian American Community as vice president of youth affairs.





KGB Surveillance in the Soviet Baltic Republics

By Dr. Bradley Woodworth, University of New Haven

The activities of Soviet security agencies in the lands of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia while under Soviet occupation were closely examined in a one-day symposium held by the Yale Baltic Studies Program on Feb. 20, 2020. Titled “KGB Surveillance in the Soviet Baltic Republics: Documentary Evidence and Coping with the Past,” the symposium brought to Yale’s Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies a distinguished group of archival experts and historians from Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine, and the United States. Support for the conference came from the Edward J. and Dorothy Clarke Kempf Memorial Fund, the Keggi-Bērziņš Fund, and the European Studies Council of the MacMillan Center. Bradley Woodworth, Baltic Studies coordinator at Yale and associate professor of history at the University of New Haven, was the conference organizer and host.

The focus of the symposium was on the documents that shed light on how the KGB carried out domestic surveillance among the populations of the three Soviet Baltic republics. KGB documents in the Baltic region gained significant attention in late 2018 when the National Archives of Latvia began releasing documents left by the KGB in the Latvian SSR — not taken with the majority of KGB documents transported to the Russian interior beginning in the late 1980s. The documents held in Latvia included dossiers

of recruited agents, card indexes containing the names of agents, and other materials. It caused a great furor when the names of some very well-known and respected individuals appeared in these documents, including Ivars Godmanis, prime minister of Latvia from 1990 to 1993 and then again from 2007 to 2009, and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Latvia Ivars Bickovics.

The basic outlines of the work of the KGB in these Baltic Soviet republics are known. Leading Estonian historian Tõnu Tannberg writes:

“The tasks of the security organs were varied. They were to be the eyes and ears of those in power, to continually monitor and control society, so that all possible anti-Soviet intentions and actions could be smothered before they took root. They were also to be — especially at the all-Union level — a kind of brain trust, where information from both domestic sources, as well as from abroad, was processed and then forwarded on to the upper echelons of power. The security organs were charged with foreign and counter espionage, guaranteeing the security of those in high positions of state power, securing secret communication, jamming foreign radio stations, controlling people’s contact with foreigners, and a number of other activities. ... Regular [KGB] staff alone were not enough to fill all assigned tasks. In addition, individuals from various sectors of society were recruited as agents.

Some people volunteered — others were forced to comply through the use of threats — to spy on others or to become informants.”

More work has been done by historians of Lithuania, where more KGB documents are extant, but much remains unknown concerning the details of the work of Soviet security organs, particularly for most of the 1950s through to the end of the Soviet period. In the cases of Latvia and Estonia, a major challenge has been a paucity of sources. In Estonia, for instance, entirely missing for the bulk of the Soviet period are “operational” documents — internal KGB records detailing their day-to-day aims and methods. In their recent article “The Political Surveillance Role Played by the Committee for State Security (KGB) of the Latvian SSR, 1940-1991,” Aldis Bergmanis and Indulis Zālīte write:

“Most of the archived and operational documents held by the Latvian SSR KGB were either destroyed or transferred to the RSFSR during the late 1980s. Scholars today are only able to access regular and other ports as well as criminal cases investigated by the KGB that were transmitted to the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR or to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia.”

There is so much more we want to know about how the KGB functioned in the Soviet Baltic. We want to understand the role of the KGB in administering and controlling these lands — what were the means used in the attempt to achieve those aims? How were people used? How were their hopes for the lives of their loved ones and themselves abused? We want to know about the practical and moral

decisions people were forced to face and what kinds of decisions they made — how they managed to cope — and how they refused to accommodate themselves or how they sometimes did. What did everyday life look like in a state and society with this kind of surveillance and control carried out by a secret police?

The symposium began with presentations by Dr. Ainārs Bambals and Dr. Gints Zelmenis, both of the National Archives of Latvia, on KGB documents held in that country and on the process of making these documents available to the public. Bambals moved the symposium audience with a story from when, as a child, he began to understand the nature of the surveillance the KGB had in Soviet Latvia. When letters arrived to his family from relatives abroad, small rows of markings along the edge of the envelopes were always present — signs that the letters had been opened and their contents vetted. Dr. Zelmenis explained that many documents involving the KGB work in the Latvian SSR to tamp down political discontent were destroyed in the late 1980s. While some files do remain concerned with political oppression at home, a lesser-known aspect of the KGB’s work emerges in connection with the “shadow economy,” including dealing with smuggling and other activities defined as economic crimes, such as illegal currency operations.

The work of the KGB in Soviet Lithuania was addressed by Dr. Kristina Burinskaitė and Dr. Ramona Staveckaitė-Notari, both of the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania. Dr. Burinskaitė discussed testimonies of individuals who collaborated with the KGB based on responses given on questionnaires completed by people who volun-



tarily confessed their collaboration before a lustration commission in 1999. "Every agent has a different story, and a different relationship with the KGB. Some agents had been collaborating for decades, others only for brief and short moments; some of them collaborated voluntarily, even deliberately," she told the symposium. While much is known about what collaborators were willing to disclose, she said, "We can only speculate regarding what motives drove the persons to come to confess and how honest they were." Dr. Staveckaitė-Notari spoke about the actions of the KGB in the struggle of the Soviet state to root out anti-Soviet Lithuanian partisans, focusing on the case of partisan commander Adolfas Ramanauskas-Vanagas (1918-1957). After his arrest, trial, torturing, and execution, the KGB "sought to associate this partisan with the killing of civilians and his obscure activities in the early days of the Nazi occupation, rather than with his post-war fight for [Lithuania's] freedom," Dr. Staveckaitė-Notari said. Several claims made in Lithuania in the last several years associating him with civilian deaths and asserting he had been recruited by Soviet security raise the likelihood that "KGB documents on partisans remain a tool for manipulation in information by Russia."

KGB documents in Estonia were addressed by Dr. Meelis Saueauk from the Estonian Institute of Historical Memory and Dr. Ivo Juurvee, from the International Centre for Defence and Security in Tallinn. Dr. Saueauk described the KGB documents in Estonia, the Baltic country with the fewest extant documents. He addressed broadly the role of Soviet se-

curity organs in post-World War II Estonia, including the work of the KGB in Sovietizing the country. Dr. Juurvee focused on the legacy of KGB documents in Estonia after the collapse of the USSR in 1991. He discussed the lustration in Estonia of former KGB employees and agents, published memoirs of a number of individuals in Estonia who have confessed to collaborating with the KGB, and several recent international espionage cases in Estonia with ties to past KGB activity.

The symposium also was addressed by Andriy Kohut, branch director at the State Archive of the Ukrainian Security Service and one of the authors of the so-called "decommunization laws" in Ukraine. He described the holdings of KGB documents in Ukraine, highlighting documents held in Kyiv involving KGB activities in the three Baltic republics.

The final speaker at the symposium was Prof. Edward Cohn of Grinnell College. Dr. Cohn addressed the efforts of the KGB to control and prevent political unrest among young people in Soviet Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. This was done through application of a sort of hierarchy of responses of increasing intensity: informal warnings, "prophylactic chats" held with KGB officers, threats of school expulsion or conscription into the Soviet Army, and outright arrest. Dr. Cohn is at present writing a monograph on the use of the prophylactic chats by the KGB in the Soviet Baltic republics.

The symposium participants hope to gather their present-ed papers in a collective volume for publication.

Page 23: Ainārs Bambals, National Archives of Latvia; Gints Zelmenis, National Archives of Latvia

Page 24: Andriy Kohut, State Archive of the Ukrainian Security Service; Edward Cohn, Grinnell College; Claire Roosien, Yale University



Notes from Quarantine: Conducting Fieldwork During the Pandemic in Latvia

By Dr. Laura A. Dean, Millikin University

Spring 2020 was a long-awaited sabbatical for me. After six years on the tenure track, it was finally time to get back into the field and start working on a new research project examining gender dynamics in the Latvian parliament.¹ I was really looking forward to taking a break from my heavy teaching load and to being immersed in my research. I was fortunate to be awarded both a sabbatical and Fulbright Scholar teaching and research fellowship for the semester, and I planned to integrate the course I was teaching on gender and politics at the Social Science Faculty at the University of Latvia (LU) into my research. When I left the United States in January 2020, just as things were starting to get bad in China, my flight was half empty. It was the beginning of my journey

into how the novel coronavirus pandemic would influence my research and work in the field — both negatively and positively.

Working at a teaching institution has taught me to integrate students into my research through the classes I teach. I designed my research project in Latvia around my Gender and Politics class at LU, where students from the class were research assistants, conducting interviews and preliminary analyses for my research project. The 2018 Latvian parliamentary election were a watershed year for women in politics, increasing women's representation in the Saeima from 18% to 31%. This catapulted Latvia to first in the Baltic states and fourth in the region for women's representation in politics.² Latvia is an interesting case study for women's representation because it



Laura Dean (@proflauradean) chronicles her sabbatical on Twitter: "The new campaign from @liveriga_lv 'Rīga bez tevis nav Rīga' (Riga without you is not Riga) at the Brīvības piemineklis (freedom monument) with the ī missing in the infamous Riga sign is a pretty clever way to invite everyone to become part of #Latvia's capital city!"

Saeimas 2020.gada 18.jūnija attālinātā ārkārtas sēde



Izskatāmais jautājums

Likumprojekts (544/Lp13) 1. lasījums

Grozījumi Izglītības likumā

Referents: Reinis Znotiņš Iesniedzējs: Izglītības, kultūras un zinātnes komisija

Debates Tēma: Par likumprojektu Debatētāju skaits: 1

#	Debatētājs	Frakcija	Ilgums	Info
1.	Jānis Vucāns	ZZS	—	

Balsošana Motīvs: Par likumprojektu

Speaker of the Saeima, Ināra Mūrniece, convenes the e-Saeima during the last day of the spring session June 18, 2020.

is the highest-ranking country in Eastern Europe without institutional mechanisms like gender quotas to increase women's participation. With this new surge of women in parliament, my research aimed to examine the changing dynamics with more female members in the 13th Saeima.

For the research project, every student in my class chose a female member of parliament (MP) to interview, and with recruitment emails approved by me, we began enlisting respondents in early February. Students and I worked to translate the interview questionnaire and IRB protocol. I trained them how to conduct ethical feminist research, positioning themselves in the research and observing the tone of speech, formality, collegiality, and verbal and non-verbal cues of the research subject in an interview setting. While most of the interview questions were related to women's recruitment to politics, their representation of women, and their policy agenda, the last question was focused on the women MPs' experience with harassment, intimidation, or violence. The answers to this question were probably the most shocking for my students, as many MPs recounted their experience or another female MP's experience in Latvian politics with some aspect of gender-based violence. Research from 39 different countries around the world shows that 44% of female MPs surveyed reported having received threats of death, rape, assault, or abduction,³ and preliminary findings from our research found similar experiences in Latvia.

Our research progressed normally in February. Students found most MPs were willing to be interviewed, and many discussed the importance of our research project. This gave an added value to students who, at first, didn't seem to care about the research project. Having political leaders discuss the importance of examining the role of women in Latvian politics made even the most apathetic student realize that the research we

were conducting mattered. By March 12 we had over a 30% response rate for the 13th Saeima and a 22% response rate for the 12th. And then the pandemic hit.

Latvia registered its first COVID-19 case on March 3 and began to quarantine people returning from abroad. On March 12, the Latvian government issued a state of emergency. This was the first and only time I saw panic buying in the stores since the pandemic began. On March 13, there were 17 registered cases in Latvia and I had my temperature taken before I was allowed into the Saeima building. I sat in parliament that day watching the debate on the state of emergency not knowing that it would be the last time I would be able to observe the Saeima in person.

After the United States' travel ban from Europe began on March 11, borders started to close in surrounding countries and in Latvia on March 17. Then on March 13, Fulbright recipients received an email from the United States Embassy urging us to leave Latvia. Once the borders were closed, the US Department of State could not guarantee they could evacuate us if the situation worsened. Looking at the lines of returning passengers at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport that weekend, I decided to stay in Latvia. Once the borders were closed, I planned to hunker down for a few months and envisioned continuing my work after the pandemic.

On March 19, the State Department raised its global travel advisory to a Level 4 "Do Not Travel," and on the evening of March 20, Fulbright grantees around the world — 3,000 total — received notice that the Fulbright Program was suspended worldwide, effective immediately. We were told that our grant activities were concluded, that we needed to return to the US, and if that was impossible, to be prepared to shelter in place. I was equipped to remain in Latvia, but I was unprepared for

the fact that the US Embassy cut off all of our immigration support. I was going to be stuck in Latvia without a way to get a visa. Although the Fulbright Program initially said grantees could keep our health insurance if we remained in-country, we found out in April that insurance was also cancelled in March — during a worldwide pandemic, no less. I was told that I was not able to continue my grant activities, which meant I needed to stop teaching my classes (which had gone online) and I could not continue my research project. After much consideration, I decided to forgo the guidelines.

The core goal of the Fulbright Program, the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the State Department, is to promote international goodwill through mutual exchange. In line with that goal, and considering the amount of work my students had put into the Gender and Politics course, I continued my class rather than offload it on to a Latvian colleague likely already overwhelmed with moving their own courses online. I felt that cancelling my courses was in direct opposition to the goals of the Fulbright Program and could make my faculty and host university reticent about hosting another Fulbright Scholar in the future. So, I worked to navigate the intricacies of Latvian bureaucracy with the help of my chair and administrators at LU rather than leave the university in the lurch.

Because of the emerging challenges caused by COVID-19, the research project — like my class — went online. But to-

gether with my students, we persevered with our interviews. We continued recruiting participants via written responses, phone, and online interviews using Zoom and Facebook chat. I was even able to continue my participation-observation of Saeima sittings online through the e-Saeima, where parliamentary debates occurred remotely with members sitting two meters apart in different rooms of the building, according to political party, or from their homes and offices.

Most researchers who conduct fieldwork are keenly aware that we have to be adaptable to changes in the field. Consequently, I have worked to adapt this research project with my students and continue collecting data. I am planning to return to Latvia next summer to continue the project — recognizing that is a luxury not afforded to many evacuated Fulbright grantees, especially doctoral students conducting research on a fixed funding or graduation timeline.

Despite these challenges, this time in quarantine has also given me a break while in the field to reflect on preliminary findings and analyze interview transcripts. The pandemic has granted me a research pause. Consequently, I am able to take stock of things and plan further data collection. Though this pandemic has caused a cancellation of everything I had planned for this sabbatical — and sorrow for everything that has been lost — the research persists, and I am working with my students to adapt this work to a new online social distancing world.

1 I acknowledge the immense privilege I have conducting sabbatical research with a Fulbright fellowship. I realize people have lost loved ones, graduate students have lost crucial research time and funding, and many people who were evacuated had no homes in which to return. I am writing this essay not to diminish the role of the pandemic in many people's lives, but to demonstrate how I have worked to acclimate my research to the social distancing conditions of the pandemic.

2 Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2018. "Women In National Parliaments."

3 Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2016. "Sexism, harassment and violence against women parliamentarians."



BALSSI Moves Online for Summer 2020

By Isak Nti Asare, Indiana University Language Workshop

The Baltic Studies Summer Institute 2020, hosted by the Indiana University Language Workshop, is offering eight weeks of intensive, online instruction in Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian this summer. Despite the need to move online on short notice in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, BALSSI is proving more popular than ever, with enrollments higher than they have been for many years. The 19 students attending BALSSI 2020 are exceptionally diverse, ranging from high-achieving high school students, to heritage learners, to a retired US ambassador. With support from the BALSSI Title VI Consortium, the AABS, the US Department of State's Title VIII program, and Indiana University's Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies, BALSSI 2020 is training students in First-Year Latvian, First-Year Estonian, and First- and Second-Year Lithuanian.

BALSSI courses are proving resilient through the ongoing novel coronavirus pandemic. Student interest and engagement has remained high and instructors have been proactive and creative in adapting their courses to provide intensive, online instruction. Several of the innovations of 2020

are increasing student engagement and will be included in the courses offered next summer in BALSSI 2021.

Dalia Cidzikaitė, Daiva Litvinskaitė, Agnė Strolaitė, Jura Avizienis, Solvita Pošeiko, Iveta Grīnberga and Piibi-Kai Kivik, deserve double honor for their hard work and their dedication to furthering Baltic languages and studies under unexpected and challenging circumstance. The success of BALSSI 2020 rests entirely with them.

BALSSI students join 500 students of other languages in the Indiana University Language Workshop. Embedding BALSSI in the larger Workshop provides students access to a wide range of career-planning, grant-writing, and area studies presentations. The international atmosphere of the Workshop facilitates cross-cultural exchanges between BALSSI students and students and faculty from countries historically connected with the Baltic region, enriching the language-learning experience for BALSSI and non-BALSSI students alike.

We look forward to being able to share student success stories at the end of the summer, as well as in the semesters that follow, as students continue to pursue their studies in Baltic languages and cultures.

Interlude: Photos submitted by 2020 grant awardees



Baltic Pride 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania / Clinton Glenn



Hermann linnus, Narva, Estonia / Noel Foster



Vanalinn, Tallinn, Estonia / Noel Foster

AABS Incoming President's Annual Report

It was with great sadness that the AABS board took the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 conference at Queen's University in Charlotte, North Carolina. The 2010 AABS Conference (held jointly with the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study, SASS) in Seattle, Washington, had been badly hit by the heavy disruption to air travel caused by the volcanic eruption of Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull. Those of us who were forced to miss the 2010 conference will have the opportunity to visit Seattle for the AABS conference in 2022. Nevertheless, Charlotte, which would have been our 27th (and most geographically southern) conference, was the first to be cancelled in AABS' 50-plus year history.

The AABS board took this painful decision quite early in order to minimize disruption for our conference attendees. More than half of all registered participants were flying in from Europe, with several others arriving from Australia and Asia. The cancellation was particularly agonizing for Dr. Joseph Ellis, the conference chair, and his team at Wingate University in Charlotte, North Carolina. They had been planning the conference for two years and had put together a splendid academic and cultural program, culminating in a traditional southern barbecue on the gracious Queens University campus on Saturday evening.

The next opportunity for the global Baltic studies scholarly community to gather will be at the 14th Conference on Baltic Studies in Europe (CBSE) being organized by the Institute for Russian and Eurasian Studies (IRES) at the beautiful and historic Uppsala University campus in Sweden from June 3–5, 2021. I'm delighted that a great number of 2020 AABS Conference papers and panels took the opportunity to transfer their submissions from Charlotte to the CBSE. My thanks go to Dr. Matthew Kott and his colleagues at IRES for agreeing to incorporate them into the CBSE 2021 program.

One of the few up-sides to the awful COVID-19 pandemic has been an acceleration in the fledgling cooperation between AABS and the CBSE. Both the outgoing AABS president, Dr. Andres Kasekamp, and I have organized past CBSE conferences and, most recently, sat on the advisory board of the 2019 CBSE Conference in Gdańsk, Poland. We are both also involved in plans to institutionalize the CBSE Advisory Board to provide greater cohesion and stability between CBSE conferences which have, hitherto, been organized by willing enthusiasts on an ad-hoc basis. The cancellation of the Charlotte conference has led to even deeper cooperation between AABS and CBSE, with AABS agreeing to fund student travel grants to Uppsala.

Deeper cooperation with CBSE makes sense from an organizational and scholarly perspective, as well as reflecting changing trends in the composition of the AABS membership and conference attendees. A few years ago, Dr. Olavi Arens, who attended the first conference on Baltic Studies held at the University of Maryland in 1968, recounted that every participant, bar one, had been born in the Baltic states. This reflected AABS' roots in the sizeable North American émigré Baltic community. émigré scholars were the driving force behind the institutionalization of the association as a learned society, as well as the AABS conference and the Journal of Baltic Studies. Just as importantly, this first and second wave of émigré scholars and activists made generous financial contributions to build-up the AABS endowment, which now allows us to support cutting-edge research and foster a new generation of scholars with an interest in the Baltic states. The conference, journal and grants, fellowship and prizes program will remain the core activities of the Association.

At the same time, we need to recognize that an ever-growing number of AABS conference attendees, as well as submissions to the Journal of Baltic Studies, come from European scholars, largely, but not exclusively, those based in the Baltic states. Indeed, I am the first, but unlikely to be the last, AABS president to be professionally based in the Baltic states. Most Baltic-oriented research is, unsurprisingly, undertaken in the Baltic region by Baltic scholars. As the Baltic economies continue to grow vigorously and spending on research and higher education multiplies, the Baltic-based scholarly community will increasingly internationalize and look to disseminate and communicate research internationally. Future AABS conferences and the Journal of Baltic Studies will be future beneficiaries of these trends. Over the next few years, we should aim to grow our international membership, particularly in the Baltic states. Internationalization has already impacted other scholarly organizations. The Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES — which tellingly changed its name from the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies in 2010) has repositioned itself as an international association, organizing conventions in Europe while still maintaining its base in the US at the University of Pittsburgh. Other associations — such as the Renaissance Society — have taken their annual conferences abroad. To keep our own membership and academic activities at a sustainable level going forward, AABS will gradually and inevitably morph into an international scholarly organization, albeit one with firm roots and an organization based in the US.

By the time you read these words I hope that we will be over the peak point of the COVID-19 pandemic and returning to some sort of normality. The enforced social distancing and self isolation we have all experienced may well mean there has been a significant up-tick in submissions to the Journal of Baltic Studies. We should also be able to look optimistically to the future and begin making travel plans to meet at the 2021 CBSE in Uppsala and, even further forward, in Seattle in 2022.

Dr. Daunis Auers
AABS President, 2020- 2022



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The 14th Conference on Baltic Studies in Europe (CBSE)

“Rights and Recognition in the Baltic Context”

June 3–5, 2021, Uppsala University, Sweden

In 2021, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania will mark 100 years of international recognition *de jure* as modern independent states, and 30 years of recognition of their reestablishment as independent democracies following a half century of Soviet domination. At the same time, it will be 300 years since the Treaty of Nystad ended Swedish rule in the Baltic territories, resulting in the creation of provinces of the Russian Empire with their own particular system of rights and regulations. Similar to today, however, these rights were not applied evenly across society. Then as now, some voices are suppressed, and some groups struggle for recognition. Thus, the main theme of the CBSE Uppsala in 2021 will be to look at aspects of rights and recognition in their broader meanings, as they pertain to the societies of the eastern Baltic littoral.

Scholars are invited to submit proposals for individual papers or panels in the following thematic streams:

- History
- Politics, International Relations, Security
- Language, Culture, Media
- Society (Sociology, Economics, Anthropology, Gender studies, etc.)
- Migration and Minorities
- Sustainability (e.g. cultural heritage, urban planning, “green” management, higher education policy)

In collaboration with *Journal of Baltic Studies*, there will also be writing workshops for early career scholars (graduate students and postdocs) to discuss draft manuscripts for publication in academic journals.

Proposals for papers, panels, and writing workshop participation are to be submitted electronically using the following online form: <https://forms.gle/XaUCZCweGjfrq8tN7>

The deadline for submissions is 30 September 2020.

Decisions on proposals will be announced in December 2020. Due to the fact that a significant number of presentations have been transferred from the AABS conference to be held in Charlotte, NC, in May 2020, which was cancelled due to Covid-19, there may be more slots available for papers/panels in some streams than in others.

The conference is organized by the Institute for Russian and Eurasian Studies (IRES) at Uppsala University.

For general queries, please contact: cbse2021-ires@uu.se.