

ABSTRACTS

Migration since the EU enlargement: migrant groups and patterns – the case of Latvia

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Contemporary emigration from Latvia increased, firstly, due to the access to free labour movement just after accession and, secondly, due to conditional changes in Latvia under economic downturn which stroke Latvia and induced changes in out-migration patterns.

Analyses of this study are based on the results of a web based questionnaire. Comprehensive online survey with Latvians residing in other EU countries is used in order analyze shifts in contemporary emigration from Latvia from the emigrants' point of view and unfold the importance of modern technologies in researching migrant groups as well as exchange of information between migrants in the host country and non-migrant in country of origin.

The findings indicate that migrant groups' composition change according to the emigration period and shift in emigration reasons are prerequisites for different migrant group elimination. In the case Latvian migrants in the UK the findings indicate that large proportion of Latvians currently living in the UK is more likely to stay in the UK. Analysis distinguishes only certain groups of people who would be in favor of return. However context of economic conditions, uncertainty and unemployment in Latvia leaves space for the greatest challenge facing crises-migrants, moves remaining only temporarily or permanent.

Mad at the State: Affect and the Politics of Latvian Diaspora

Dace Dzenovska, University of Oxford

Following accession to the European Union, Latvia experienced mass labor migration to Western Europe, which was even more exacerbated during and after the recent financial crisis. Many Latvia's residents live and work abroad, however, the relations between the Latvian labor diaspora and the Latvian state and nation are fraught. Many people who left Latvia harbor resentment and even anger, while many of those who stayed behind consider that labor migrants have betrayed the state and the nation. The affect that animates discourses and practices of migration suggests the existence of an imagined moral contract and an affective relationship with the state.

This fraught relationship through which Latvians are constituted as a deterritorialized nation is at the center of my ongoing research. In this paper, I will begin to think about what it means to be mad at the state and, more broadly, about the role of affect in the politics of Latvian diaspora.

The Case Study of Latvian Writer Guntis Zariņš: Reconfiguring Liminality in Exile

Eva Eglāja-Kristsone

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To describe the exilic condition, many scholars have made use of V. Turner's concept of liminality. The experience of a life that involves at least two cultures is an inseparable part of exile. Being neither here (Great Britain) nor there (Latvian society) characterizes the life of one of the best Latvian existentialist prose writers - Guntis Zariņš (1926-1965). He tried to become incorporated into the host country and culture starting to write his prose in English and reporting on actual political currents and news of the GB in one of the main Latvian exile newspapers. His prose depicts England (especially London) and has a nuanced and interesting view to its people. He worked at one of the biggest psychiatric clinics in England as a nurse, though it seems sadly ironic that he became a patient himself and committed suicide at the end.

This is a story about one individual in the 1950s and 1960s, who similar to thousands of Latvians had fled from his country before its occupation by the Soviet Union. He lived in Germany as a Displaced Person and was recruited by the British as a European Volunteer Worker, finally arriving in the Great Britain in 1952. He was closely connected to the Rowfant House, which Latvian Lutheran Church in London started to lease from the Locker-Lampson family in 1953. Thanks to the voluntary work of its members, the house was made habitable again and was used for residential purposes and a variety of community events. This is a story about an individual who gradually lost his identity because of becoming alienated from the exile society and separated from the home country, thus being between borders, between societies and between cultures.

The Portrayal of Baltic People in British Media

Inga Freimane, University of Glasgow

The field of migration and media is relatively new in social sciences and it has largely been understudied in relation to British immigration from the Baltic States following the EU enlargement. However, where such studies occur, their main emphasis is placed upon the immediate pre- or post - enlargement context, or in relation to the shifting perception of migrants during the economic crisis of 2008. This gap is filled by the present research on British newspapers' coverage of Baltic countries' profiles as well as comments in the articles published in 2012. These are contrasted to the wider discourse on immigration from Central and Eastern Europe in the exploration of the themes of ethnicity and nationalism, Baltic integration in EU and media-related discussions.

Migration between Latvia and the UK between the 2004 EU accession and the current recession

David McCollum, University of St. Andrews

With the onset of recession in the UK in 2008 it was assumed that immigration from other EU countries would decline. However this has been shown to not be the case, with the volume of new arrivals from most of the East-Central European 'Accession 8' (A8) countries actually increasing. The focus of this paper is Latvia, a country that had a relatively buoyant economy following its accession to the EU in 2004 but that now has one of the highest unemployment and emigration rates in Europe. Interviews carried out with labour providers, policymakers and employers are used to examine the labour migration channels that reflect and structure labour migration flows from Latvia, and how these have evolved in the period between accession and recession. The findings indicate that intermediaries such as labour providers, the state and informal social networks exert considerable influence on the nature of labour migration flows and that the relative importance of these channels display significant temporal and spatial variations. This research represents an original contribution to the literature on labour migration channels by focusing on movements from a low to higher wage economy in the context of the introduction of free movement of labour between Eastern and Western Europe and the later onset of severe global recession. These findings are of relevance to how labour market channels are theorised and suggest that analysts need to be sensitive to how the function served by intermediaries, and their influence on migration systems, evolve over time and across space.

Lithuanians in Scotland: history of the diaspora and challenges of the research

Vytautas Petronis, Herder Institute

Until now history of the Lithuanian migration has already received a fair amount of scholarly attention. Even though from the beginning of emigration (2nd half of the 19th c.) the main point of destination was the US, yet a number of Lithuanians settled in the UK too. It is common for the Lithuanian diaspora in Britain to be seen as one community. This, I argue, is somewhat misleading interpretation, especially regarding the Lithuanians in Scotland. Therefore, this paper intends to give a brief overview of history of the Scottish Lithuanian diaspora from their arrival in 1870's and until the WWII and thus aim at disclosing a few aspects of their adaptation to the new environment, challenges of interaction with the Scottish culture and society, as well as highlight general problems pertaining to the research of this emigrant group.

Lithuanian immigrants in late Victorian and Edwardian London

Kęstutis Raškauskas, London

The first significant groups of Lithuanians began to settle in the areas around the London docks in the 1880s. By 1904 there were over two thousand Lithuanians living in East End area. They made up only 0.03% of the population of London. Lithuanians were unnoticed by social researchers of London and their history narratives were available only in Lithuanian. The absolute majority of Lithuanians living in East End ended up working as sewers and furniture makers. The concentration of Lithuanians in the same workshop or workshops close by resulted in denser numbers living in the same street, becoming over time street colonies. Often families were created within these neighborhoods. Non-formal groups eventually went on to set up more formal structures in the form of mutual organizations (from 1896), Catholic parish (from 1899) and social club (from 1905). The purpose of this paper is taking a closer look into social world of Lithuanian community in 1880s – 1910s.

Post-war migration from Baltic states and Ukraine to Britain: the comparative analysis

Mariana Semenyshyn, University of Glasgow

WW2 is one of the most controversial periods for the refugee question in modern historiography. Looking at the people's movement in aftermath of the WW2, this paper focuses on immigration from Baltic States and Ukraine to the United Kingdom within chronological framework of 1945-1951. Based on the comparative approach between these two groups, the main scope is on the categorization of immigrants arrived to the UK after the WW2, genesis of the Allies politics towards Balts and Ukrainians and British politics concerning immigrants from Baltic States and Ukraine in early postwar years. Tangled within the wider objectives of post-war settlement as well as narrow interests of the state, ethno-political aspect of the refugee problem is extremely complicated and is, at least partially, revealed through the comparison of what status Baltic and Ukrainian refugees bore in post-war Britain.

The role of the Estonian embassy in London in looking after post-WWII refugees

Tina Tamman, Reading

Few people remember the old Estonian embassy at 167 Queen's Gate. Purchased for Estonia in 1919, it was sold in 1989 and now houses the Omani embassy. My paper focuses on the post-war period when for a few years the building was close to regaining its pre-war relevance as a hive of activity. About 7,000 Estonian refugees had come to Britain; they needed to be documented and organised. A society was formed, a newspaper was launched, a church was established and the pre-war choir gained a new lease of life. As a long-standing member of the Estonian student association EÜS, ambassador Torma set up a local branch in London. There are still a few people who remember attending EÜS meetings at Queen's Gate. The embassy also became a beacon of hope for all the Estonians abroad, deprived as they were of their homeland.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Crossing the Baltic – A blogging project to promote the idea of a Baltic Europe

Anna-Cara Keim, 'Crossing the Baltic'

Crossing the Baltic is a blogging project run by former University of Glasgow students. We believe that the Baltic Sea Region, a geopolitical area lying at the heart of modern Europe, should be brought closer to an international and British audience. Through our project we are trying to overcome the existing mental geographies dating back to the Cold War era's divisions, and highlight the efforts of transnational collaboration and policy-making that have become prevalent in the region. Crossing the Baltic showcases the arts and culture, history, and contemporary politics of the Baltic Sea Region, with a special focus on recurring topics such as energy policy or cross-national infrastructural projects. The University of Glasgow has a long-long standing tradition of teaching the history and politics of the three Baltic states without which a project like Crossing the Baltic would have never succeeded. The UK, with its diverse Baltic diaspora, provides a rich ground for a breadth of voices, opinions, and expertise on our region of interest.

René Beermann – Man of Many Cultures

Lea Kreinin, University of Glasgow

This presentation gives a brief overview of the life of René Beermann, a man who was born in Russia, brought up in Estonia, left for Germany as ethnic German shortly after the Soviet occupation, found himself in the UK in 1947 and lived the rest of his life in Scotland. From 1963, he worked at University of Glasgow, teaching Soviet Law, Russian Language and Literature and continued his teaching even after his retirement. During his work at the University, René Beermann influenced and inspired many of his students and close friends. He was an intellectual who spoke multiple languages and embraced different cultures. This presentation attempts to give a glimpse into the life of this extraordinary person, full of challenges and events.

Ad fontes far away – tracing the history of Estonians in England on the wrong side of the Atlantic

Maarja Merivoo-Parro, Tallinn University / University of Minnesota

The history of postwar Estonian refugee migration to the United Kingdom is a topic with scant historiography but great prospects for further research. One of the aspects that presents a challenge to anyone dealing with the subject of the Estonian diaspora is the scarcity and dispersal of archival resources. This presentation sheds light on a collection titled *Estonians in England* which is repositied at one of the worlds largest diaspora Estonian archives, located in the Immigration History Research Center at Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota.

Publishing Activities of Estonians in England

Anne Valmas, Academic Library of Tallinn University, Estonia

The small Estonian community in the United Kingdom experienced considerable growth after World War II, when about six thousand Estonians came to England from the displaced persons' camps in Germany. The Association of Estonians in Great Britain was founded in 1947. Its members shortly decided to start a newspaper for fellow Estonians, which came to be published under the editorship of Gert Helbemäe. The first issue of "Eesti Hääl" appeared in December 1947. It has been continuously published up to the present, serving as an essential information intermediary for Estonians and their friends in the UK.

Several well-known Estonian authors living in England, e.g. Gert Helbemäe, Arved Viirlaid, Elin Toona and Karl Einer, used to publish their works under the imprint of larger Estonian publishers outside Estonia, such as Eesti Kirjanike Kooperatiiv and Orto, which were not located in the UK. In fact, the only Estonian publishing house operating in England was Boreas. Registered way back in 1939, it continued to operate until 1999. The company has been run by three Estonian-born authors – Hans Männik, Evald Jakobson and Einar Sanden since 1973. The works of them all are well-represented in the output of the publishing house. The total number of more consequential publications produced by Boreas reached half a hundred titles. All in all, the publishing activities of Estonians in England may be characterised as rather modest on ground of their book production figures, which remained well below a hundred titles. Besides, a limited number of publications were issued by various organisations and individuals.