



"Ancient Cities Today" 7th meeting in Spain: 20.-24.03.2012

www.act-project.eu

Ancient languages in today's world

BALTIC LANGUAGES



Languages in Europe today

Indo-European languages

Romance (Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Catalan, etc.)

Germanic (German, Dutch, English, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, etc.)

Slavic (Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Polish, Czech, Slovak, Bulgarian, Serbo-croatian, etc.)

Celtic (Welsh, Irish, Breton, Scottish, etc.)

Greek

Albanian

Baltic languages (Lithuanian, Latvian)

Languages not from Indo-European family

Basque

Turkic (Turkish, etc.)

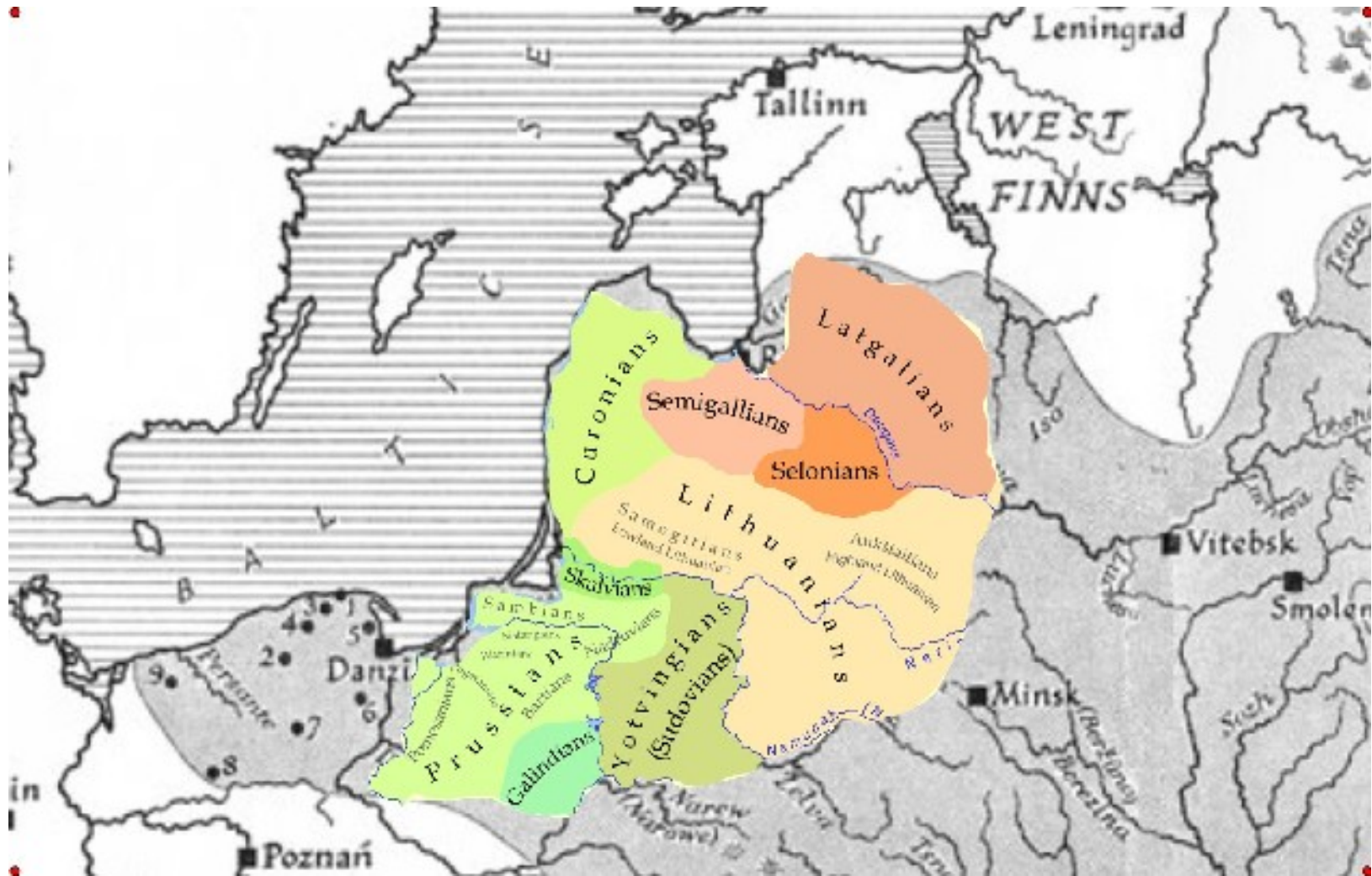
Uralic (Hungarian, Estonian, Finnish, Sami, Karel'ian, **Livonian (~100 speakers in Latvia)**), etc.



To this day river names are the best guides to establishing ancient geographical distributions of peoples.

Etymology of many rivers of Russia, Byelo-Russia, Ukraine, Poland and East Prusia (Kaliningrag district) can be explained through the meaning of the Baltic words.

Baltic tribes in prehistoric times (first centuries of A.D.)



Baltic lands from prehistoric time to 13th century

The lands occupied by Baltic-speaking people in modern times are only 20% of what they were in prehistoric times before the Slavic expansion (4th-12th century A.D.) and Germanic expansion (13th century A.D.).



Baltic tribes about year 1200 A.D.

Baltic linguistic group of the Indo-European family is Lithuanians, Latvians, and Old Prussians. Livonians (lived around Gulf of Riga) are from Uralic linguistic group, but some Latvian words have Livonian origin. Today only 100 people speaks Livonian.



Bloody war between Baltic tribes and German crusaders was for almost 100 years. Christian slogans were used in this war against the last “pagans” in Europe.

German expansion from 1200 A.D.

In the 13th (thirteenth) century, the Knights attacked the Prussians by land from the west and the Curonians, Semigallians, Lettigallians, Livonians and Estonians from the Bay Riga, because Lithuania was so strong to reject attacks.



German colonization
 Crusaders (the German Teutonic Order) created a state, called Livonia.
 But strong Lithuania protected us from many german speaking migrants, like in Prussia.
 Germans comes mostly with ships.

End of Prussian languages

Conquest was fatal for Prussian language, which disappeared after 400 years of German colonization. From 18th century name “Prussian” has passed over to the Germanic people.



Livonia

Borders of Latvia and Estonia today are same as border of Livonia.

Latvian language

As count of german speakers not so big, but local “latvian” tribes now lives in one country and it was precondition to form unified Latvian language.



“Good” swedish times

From 1629 to 1721 north of Latvia and Estonia was a part of Sweden. Some words in language come from this time.

Curland duchy

On 17th century Curland duchy was part of Poland, but in life independent and rich country with German owners and Latvian workers.

Many German words and terminology come to Latvian language.
First printed books in Latvian language.



Russian expansion

From 17th to 18th century Russia made big expansion – Finnish, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Polish lands incorporated in Russian empire.

Latvian lands again in one country - Russification

Good thing – latvian lands again in one country.

Bad – russification, prohibition of use latvian language and colonization of latvian territories with russians.



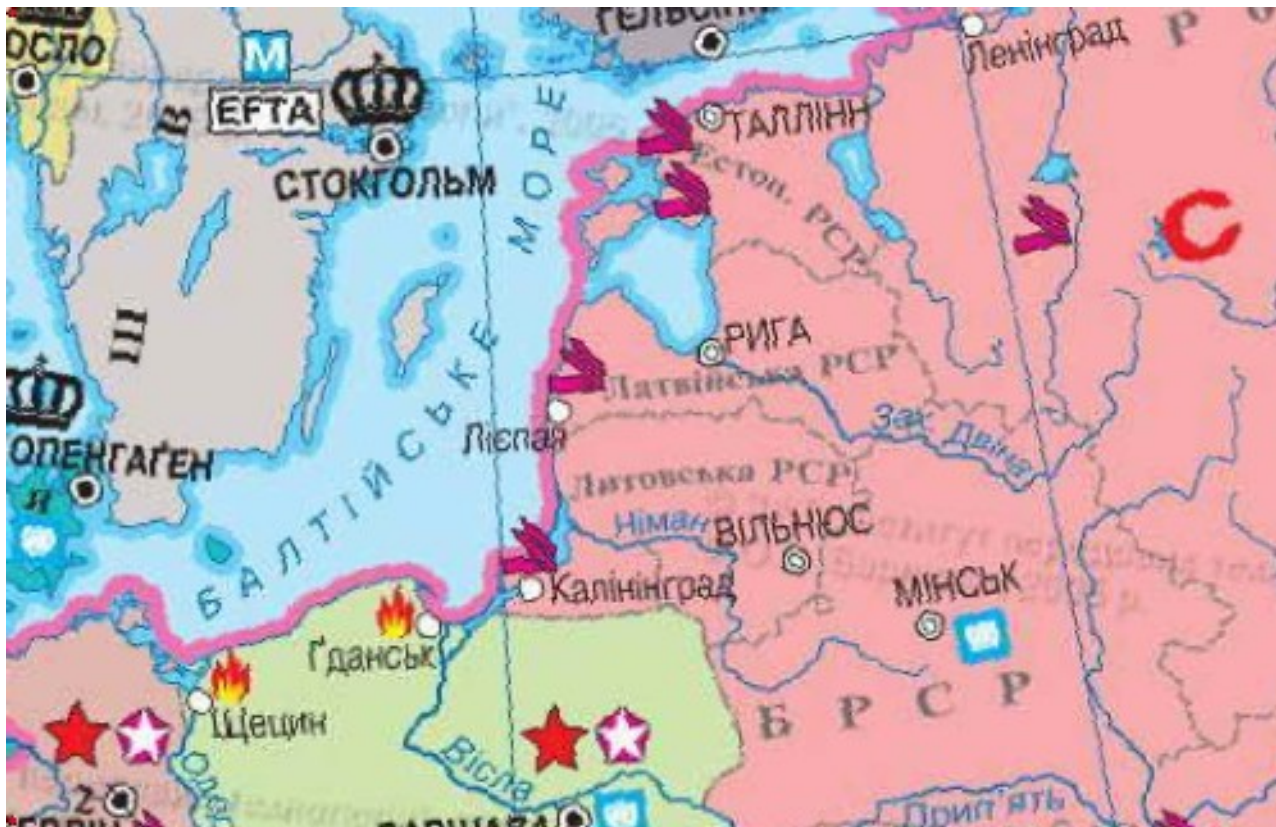
1918-1920

Independence of many European nations.

New countries in our region – Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland.

First time own country to Baltic nations

Final of creation of Latvian literary language – Baltic origin “improved” with German, Livonian, Swedish, Russian.

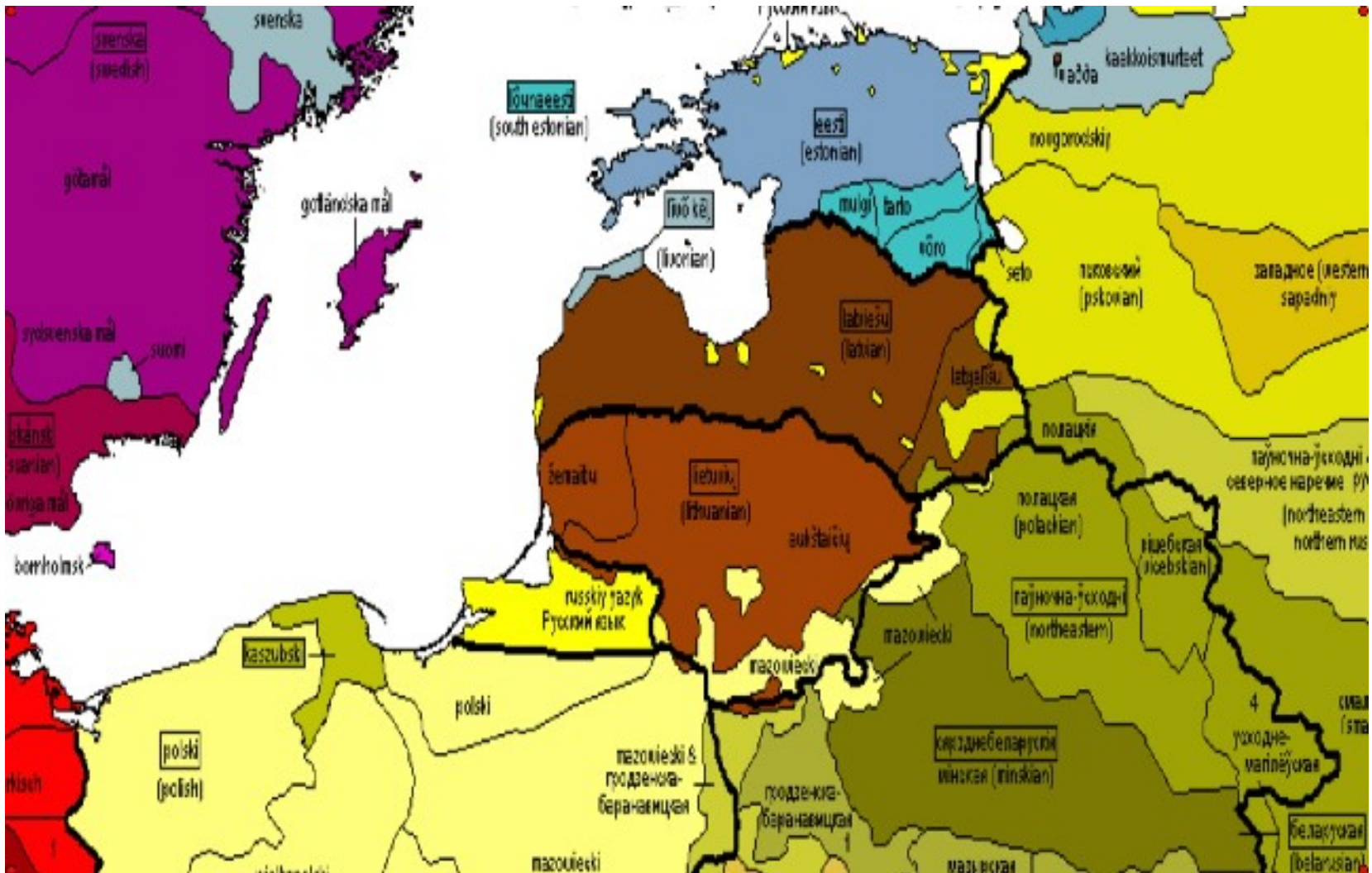


Soviet Socialistic Republic of Latvia

1940-1989 - Slavic
expansion
continues

Kunneugarbs -> Königsberg -> Калининград

Kaliningrad district of Russia made after full ethnic cleaning of many million germans from East Prussia



Lingvistic map today

Two Baltic languages – Latvian (2 million speakers) and Lithuanian (3 million speakers). But too different to understand each other.



"Ancient Cities Today" 7th meeting in Spain: 20.-24.03.2012

www.act-project.eu

Ancient languages in today's world

BALTIC LANGUAGES

Made by Māris Kalējs,
Women Rights Institute - LATVIA

