



EMBASSY OF DENMARK



Ties Through Time: Denmark & Latvia

Celebration of the 100- and 30-year jubilees of diplomatic relations between Denmark and Latvia.

Going back *through time* to a few important moments in the Danish-Latvian history. As time pass some events deserve to be told again by the people who took part and experienced events first hand. Other moments are little known or even discovered for the first time. This can give new understanding of the shared history that *ties* us together today.

25 AUGUST 2021

LNB ZIEDONIS HALL (100) / LIVESTREAM

National Library of Latvia
Mūkusalas iela 3, Rīga

13.00

Doors open

- Moderator: Sarmīte Ēlerte, Advisor to President, former editor-in-chief of daily Diena

13.05

Welcome speeches

- Flemming Stender, Danish Ambassador to Latvia
- Andris Vilks, Director of the National Library of Latvia
- Simon Drewsen Holmberg, Director of the Danish Cultural Institute in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

13.20

Roundtable: The events of 1991 and the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Denmark and Latvia

Personal impressions from the historic moments - before, during and after independence

- Sandra Kalniete, MEP, one of the founding leaders of Popular Front of Latvia, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia
- Rikke Helms, former Director of the Danish Cultural Institute in Latvia
- Kirsten Biering, Danish Ambassador to Latvia (1991-1995)
- Michael Metz Mørch, Danish Ambassador to Latvia (1995-1999)

14.20

1921 and beyond

Danish volunteer soldiers in Latvia's war of independence. After establishing independence of Latvia in 1918 the political and security situation was unstable. The newly established Latvian army had to fight with different forces to maintain independence. Latvian researcher Ēriks Jēkabsons has studied the Latvian War of Independence and has found facts on Danish persons in Latvian army while Danish researcher Michael Kirkebæk has published a comprehensive book on the Danish volunteer soldiers in Latvia in 1919.

- *Ēriks Jēkabsons, Dr.Hist., Professor at the Faculty of History and Philosophy, University of Latvia (in Latvian)*
- *Mikkel Kirkebæk, PhD, Historian and author*

15.00

Livonian-Danish relations

Until now, relations with the Kingdom of Denmark have played a minor role in the study of Livonian history. Since the 13th century the rulers of the Danish lands have had a political and economic interest in the Livonian lands. The relationship with Denmark can be conditionally divided into three episodes. The first is related to the Christianization of the region, where there is both cooperation and competition, as well as the coming of the northern part of Estonia to the sphere of influence of the Kingdom of Denmark. The second relates to the period after the sale of the northern part of modern Estonia, which belongs to the Kingdom of Denmark, to the German Order. The third relates to the period of the Livonian War (1558-1583), when part of the Livonian territory belonged to the Kingdom of Denmark.

- *Edgars Plētiens, Mg.hist., Supervisor (in Latvian)*

15.20

Coffee break

15.40

Contacts between the Duchy of Courland and Denmark in the 17th century

Historical ties between Denmark and territories of Latvia have been winding through the centuries, at least since Viking times. At the beginning of the new era, more intense communication took place at the national level between the United Kingdom of Denmark and Norway and the Duchy of Kurzeme and Zemgale.

Apart from the mention of Denmark and especially the Øresund Strait, no study of the trade or colonial policy of the Duchy of Courland is possible. Duke Jacob and his sons in Copenhagen had permanent sales agents, and in Denmark sailors were often recruited for the duke's ships and soldiers and colonists for the ducal property in the Gambia and Tobago.

- *Māriete Jakovļeva, Researcher at the Institute of Latvian History, University of Latvia*

(in Latvian)

16.00

Imanta. Latvian exile book publishing in Denmark

Imanta, a publishing house founded by Imants Reitmanis in Copenhagen in the 1940s, has a definite place in the collection of Latvian books published outside Latvia after the Second World War. Reitmanis was not only a publisher of books, but also a socially active figure who headed the Danish branch of the Daugava Hawks (1951-1956) and was the chairman of the Danish Latvian National Committee (1957-1964).

- *Viesturs Zanders, Dr. Philol., Senior researcher at the National Library of Latvia, and Professor at the University of Latvia (in Latvian)*

16.20

Human rights. Minorities and international politics between the World Wars

One of the important issues emerging from the order in Europe after World War I and therefore also for Latvia was the relationship between the various nationalities and ethnic groups within and between the new state borders. The relationship between minority and majority groups had a prominent place in the state to state relations and the creation of a new order and was on the political agenda in many of the new states. This required a proper arrangement of post-war political and judicial regulation of the world.

- *Charlotte Flindt Pedersen, Director of The Danish Foreign Policy Society*
- *Iļja Ļenskis, Director of the museum 'Jews in Latvia'*

17.00

Short break (arrival to the concert)

17.15

Concert

A Danish-Baltic string quartet has been created uniquely for the celebration of 100 years of diplomatic relations between Denmark and Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania

- *Christina Åstrand, leader of the Danish National Symphony Orchestra with a Baltic string quartet*

The quartet will consist of the highly remarkable and versatile Danish violinist Christina Åstrand playing first violin who will be joined by Estonian violinist Mari-Katrina Suss, Lithuanian violist Simonas Laučka and Latvian cellist Elīza Sestule.

Programme:

M. K. Čiurlionis, String Quartet in C Minor (1903),
Carl Nielsen, String Quartet in G Minor (1888),
Peteris Vasks, String Quartet No. 2 (1984),
Arvo Pärt, Fratres (1977/1989).

18.00

Reception