

The Intellectual Structure of the *Journal of Baltic Studies*: A Longitudinal Evaluation as a Foundation for Future Research Possibilities

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INTRODUCTION

As defined by the *Journal of Baltic Studies*, the notion of Baltic studies itself is “the study of the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania), Kaliningrad, or the Baltic Sea region from a macro perspective.”¹ The journal states that “articles dealing solely with Poland fall outside [its] scope”² to indicate specific parameters related to researchers examining the Baltic phenomenon. Therefore, this makes the *Journal of Baltic Studies* the ideal peer reviewed research outlet to utilize in an evaluation of the Baltic studies literature’s domain.

In the past, previous attempts have been made to evaluate Baltic studies research in a more holistic sense.³ However, a scientific evaluation of the literature has yet to be performed in a comprehensive way. Therefore, this study follows previously established bibliometric research emphasizing the study of peer reviewed topics. The importance of utilizing multidimensional scaling (MDS) to depict the intellectual structure of a research domain such as the Baltic studies topic is two-fold. First, such an examination allows for a foundational understanding of the sequential and longitudinal dynamics at work in the area. Second, and more importantly, this previously stated evaluation follows the Kuhnian approach to theory development⁴ and provides the basis from which to suggest future research opportunities to be considered by the field.

The next steps in this study are as follows. First, the method used for this examination of the literature will be described in detail. Then, the results will be presented and summarized in a structured format. After that, a discussion will be provided to introduce research opportunities to consider by the future Baltic studies literature. Finally, a conclusion is given to summarize the overall message of this study.

METHOD

Bibliometric research is based on a long tradition of evaluating research domains in a variety of topics. Early work on the topic focused at a very general level and compared internationally oriented intellectual contributions longitudinally, geographically, and by sub-disciplines in the biological and physical sciences.⁵ This led to more detailed presentations concerning comparative

¹ *Journal of Baltic Studies* 2025.

² *Journal of Baltic Studies* 2025.

³ Musiał and Šime 2021: 488–494.

⁴ Kuhn 1962.

⁵ Billings 1881: 263.

work by research institutions,⁶ the relative influence of refereed outlets,⁷ and the demographic composition of impactful researchers.⁸ Alongside the emergence of bibliometric-related research, the emphasis on the citations and references made in academic journals over time emerged as a critical examination approach.⁹ Taken together, this laid the groundwork for modern theory and methodology emphasizing the bibliometric literature.

Perhaps the most compelling basis for bibliometric theory relates to the notion that intellectual fields evolve as a network of related ideas operationalized as influential publications in a research field¹⁰ and that co-citations made in a literary corpus not only reflect the state of the topical area but also provide opportunities to suggest future areas of research.¹¹ The Kuhnian perspective of scientific development¹² aligns well with social network theory, which defines social structures as networks comprised of actors as nodes linked with other actors.¹³ An intellectual structure represents a network of influential publications connected to each other by co-citations made by a set of refereed articles¹⁴ and the process used to achieve a domain's intellectual structure creates a representation of the critical underlying research of a discipline.

An essential aspect of this approach is the alignment in the depicted network of research groups, cliques, and chains. While a research group notes the relative closeness of at least two publications in an intellectual structure, a clique is an alternative research group type containing at least three publications typically densely configured in the network due to their topical similarity.¹⁵ In comparison, a research chain contains a series of similarly themed research groups connected to each other to focus on a more expansive topic.¹⁶ This type of configuration in an intellectual structure indicates the shared subjects have a common core but also benefit from different yet related branches emphasizing similar issues.¹⁷ Taken together, a long-term analysis of a domain provides an understanding of the changes which can take place over time by examining the composition of the topical area's groups, cliques, and chains.¹⁸

This study follows previous research which examined thematic elements of a specific academic journal via co-citation analysis.¹⁹ The Web of Science (WoS)²⁰ was used to gather relevant citation data for the 1981–2024 time period so this study could be as current as

⁶ Buchner 1903: 198, 199–200, 201.

⁷ Cason and Lubotsky 1936: 98–99.

⁸ Cattell 1906: 733-734, 738, 739-740, 741.

⁹ Fussler 1949: 24, 25, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33; Gross and Gross 1927:386, 387; Gross and Woodford 1931: 661, 662, 663, 664.

¹⁰ Kuhn 1962; Price 1965: 513–514.

¹¹ Kuhn 1962; Pritchard 1969: 348; Small 2003: 398.

¹² Kuhn 1962.

¹³ Hedström and Swedberg 1994:327.

¹⁴ Ramos-Rodríguez and Ruíz-Navarro 2004: 983, 1001.

¹⁵ Burt 1980: 905; Burt 1987: 1292; Mizruchi 1994: 330-331; Marsden and Friedkin 1993; Wasserman and Faust 1994.

¹⁶ Borgatti, Mehra, Brass, and Labianca 2009: 893; Samiee and Chabowski 2021: 952.

¹⁷ Small 1986: 98–99.

¹⁸ Carley 1991: 331, 343.

¹⁹ Chabowski, Hult, Kiyak, and Mena 2010 evaluated the *Journal of International Business Studies* over more than three decades (1976-2008).

²⁰ The WoS is widely known in the bibliometric literature as a preferred data source due to its rigorous journal evaluative process and relative absence of predatory journals. See Ball and Tunger 2006: 300; Moed, Markusova, and Akoev 2018: 1153, 1160.

possible.²¹ After dividing the sample's 978 articles with 38,387 citations into four eleven-year periods, the 1981–1991 time period had 251 articles with 6,201 citations, the 1992–2002 period had 188 articles with 4,778 citations, the 2003–2013 period had 225 articles with 9,959 citations, and the 2014–2024 period had 314 articles with 17,449 citations.²²

Once the citation data were analyzed in the respective time periods, the most highly cited publications were determined for the four periods. The number of most influential publications for each period was driven by established protocol in bibliometrics stating that about 25–30 publications provide suitable basis for statistical rigor and thematic analysis of a domain.²³ However, due to inexact citation counts, 1981–1991 included 23 publications, 1992–2002 had 33 works, 2003–2013 included 19 publications, and 2014–2024 possessed 34 works.

Next, a co-citation matrix for each was developed so analysis could be conducted using MDS. Traditional bibliometric methods were used to evaluate the four co-citation matrices. The original matrices consisting of count data were normalized with the Ochiai coefficient method since the data were binary and alternative applications²⁴ are suboptimal in bibliometric research.²⁵ Two dimensions were used to plot the co-citation matrix data in MDS as this leads typically to satisfactory solutions and is easily interpretable by researchers.²⁶ In an evaluation of the statistical rigor of each model, stress values²⁷ were calculated for each period's MDS configuration.²⁸ The 1981–1991 period had a stress value of 0.06682, 1992–2002 had 0.11627, 2003–2013 had 0.05513, and 2014–2024 had 0.10909, indicating that the first and third periods had good data fit statistics and the second and fourth periods fair data fits. Then, to determine the precise relational network configuration and intellectual structure of the journal, visualizations from the MDS results were analyzed further. A standardized Euclidean distance of 0.25 was used to identify the domain's research groups, cliques, and chains and as a basis for determining appropriate names for each research group and clique.²⁹ This provided the ability to evaluate the journal's intellectual structure in each period and also made it possible to examine its longitudinal development over the 44 years of this analysis.

²¹ While the *Journal of Baltic Studies* began publication in 1970, WoS data were only available starting in 1981. This allowed for the division of the citation data into four equal time periods to facilitate longitudinal evaluation: 1981–1991, 1992–2002, 2003–2013, and 2014–2024.

²² Common bibliometric practice was followed for a precise understanding of the intellectual structure of the *Journal of Baltic Studies*. As such, editorials, biographical items, book reviews, and other indirect publications were excluded from further analysis to permit an examination of the foundational contributions to the journal (Chabowski, Kekec, Morgan, Hult, Walkowiak, and Runnalls 2018: 125; Foroudi, Kitchen, Marvi, Akarsu, and Uddin 2020: 2580; Zha, Melewar, Foroudi, and Jin 2020: 5).

²³ Ramos-Rodríguez and Ruíz-Navarro 2004: 986.

²⁴ Two popular normalization approaches utilize cosine or Pearson similarities. However, because these techniques are not specific to this study's conditions, they were not utilized.

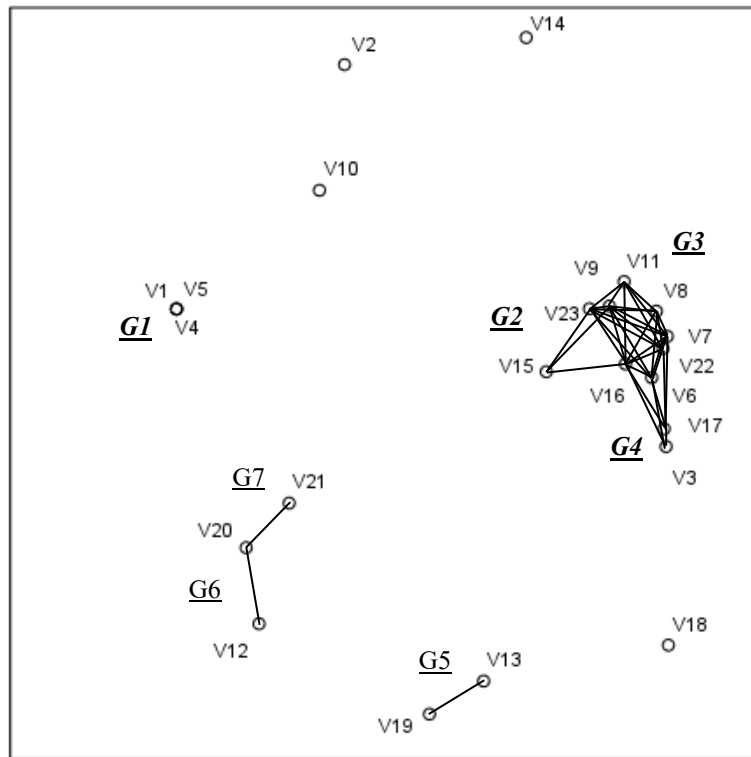
²⁵ van Eck and Waltman 2009:1638; Zhou and Leydesdorff 2016: 2805.

²⁶ Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black 1998.

²⁷ Stress values in bibliometric research also are considered a measure of a model's goodness of fit.

²⁸ Applications utilized this approach find that a stress value of 0.00 to 0.025 shows a perfect fit, 0.025 to 0.05 displays an excellent fit, 0.05 to 0.10 provides a good fit, 0.10 to 0.20 shows a fair fit, and 0.20 and higher renders a poor fit. See Kruskal 1964: 3 and Ramos-Rodríguez and Ruíz-Navarro 2004: 986, 987.

²⁹ Chabowski, Kekec, Morgan, Hult, Walkowiak, and Runnalls 2018: 125; Foroudi, Kitchen, Marvi, Akarsu, and Uddin 2020: 2581, 2583, 2586, 2602; Torgerson 1952: 401, 402–410, 417–419; Zha, Melewar, Foroudi, and Jin 2020: 5, 6, 7.

Journal of Baltic Studies Intellectual Structure, 1981–1991

Notes: stress value = 0.06682; Ochiai coefficients used; standardized Euclidean distance ≤ 0.25 ; bolded and italicized research group abbreviations indicate research cliques.

V1 = Adolphi (1685); V2 = Apkalns (1977); V3 = Christiansen (1980); V4 = Dreszell (1685); V5 = Endzelins (1951); V6 = Gimbutas (1963); V7 = Hiden (1987); V8 = Hinkkanen-Lievonen (1984); V9 = Hovi (1984); V10 = Kirby (1979); V11 = Misiunas and Taagepera (1983); V12 = Neuschäffer (1975); V13 = Remeikis (1980); V14 = Taagepera (1981); V15 = Thaden (1981); V16 = Thaden (1984); V17 = Urban (1975); V18 = Urban (1980); V19 = Vardys (1978); V20 = von Engelhardt (1983); V21 = von Pistohlkors (1978); V22 = von Rauch and Onn (1974); V23 = Zetterberg (1977).

Group 1 (V1, V4, & V5): Latvian Language and Grammar; Group 2 (V9, V15, V16, & V23): Russian Western Borderland, Baltic Province, Finland, and Poland Political Relations; Group 3 (V6, V7, V8, V9, V11, V16, V22, & V23): Russian Western Borderland, Baltic State, Finland, Poland, and British Political and Trade Relations; Group 4 (V3, V6, V7, V16, V17, & V22): Baltic Crusades, Russian Western Borderlands, and Baltic State Independence; Group 5 (V13 & V19): Catholicism, Opposition, Nationality, and Soviet Lithuania; Group 6 (V12 & V20): Livonian Socioeconomic History, the Baltic Provinces, and Catherine the Great; Group 7 (V20 & V21): Livonian Socioeconomic History.

Figure 15.1: *Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure, 1981–1991.

RESULTS

To establish the foundational influences of the *Journal of Baltic Studies*, an overview of the journal's intellectual structure is provided for the four periods of this analysis: 1981–1991, 1992–2002, 2003–2013, and 2014–2024. Once the configurational themes of the most influential publications of this topical area are understood, the longitudinal development of the journal's influential topics can be determined. In all, this analysis provides a solid basis from which to suggest possible future research opportunities examining the generalized subject of Baltic studies in the subsequent section of this study.

***Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure, 1981–1991**

As noted in Figure 15.1, seven research groups were identified in the first period of this analysis. In fact, these included two research chains and two standalone groups. The first chain was comprised of three dense cliques while the second chain was modest, consisting of two groups. The first solitary group was a clique emphasizing Latvian language and grammar (Group 1). Meanwhile, the second isolated group focused on Catholicism, opposition, nationality, and Soviet Lithuania (Group 5).

The first, concentrated chain (Groups 2, 3, and 4) dealt with the regional complexities and history manifested as the Russian western borderland, the Baltic states, Finland, Poland, and international political and economic relations. Centering on the topic of Russia's involvement in the region,³⁰ this was supported by research focused on other major local influences represented by Finland and Poland³¹ during the interwar period³² specifically in Estonia³³ as well as the general independence of all three Baltic states.³⁴ The second, smaller chain was anchored by the issue of Livonian economic history³⁵ and analyzed subjects related to the overall topic of Livonian socioeconomic history (Group 7) as well as the more cross-disciplinary themes of Livonian socioeconomic history, the Baltic provinces, and Catherine the Great (Group 6).

³⁰ Thaden 1981.

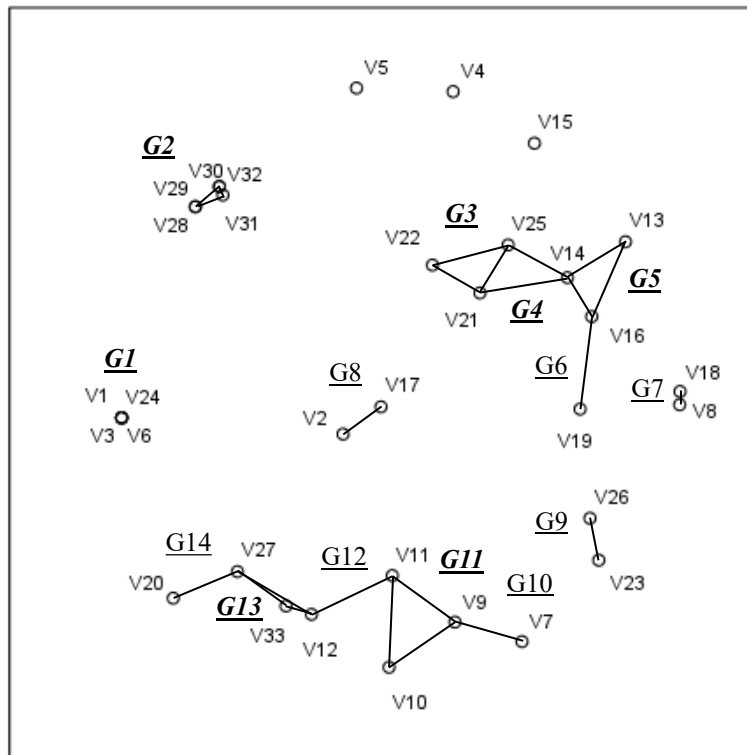
³¹ Hovi 1984.

³² The interwar period is generally considered the time frame between the end of World War I (1914–1918) to the beginning of World War II (1939–1945).

³³ Zetterberg 1977.

³⁴ von Rauch and Onn 1974.

³⁵ von Engelhardt 1983.

Journal of Baltic Studies Intellectual Structure, 1992–2002

Notes: stress value = 0.11627; Ochiai coefficients used; standardized Euclidean distance ≤ 0.25 ; bolded and italicized research group abbreviations indicate research cliques.

V1 = Blese (1936); V2 = Clemens (1991); V3 = Endzelīns (1951); V4 = England (1975); V5 = Eniņš (1984); V6 = Fennell and Langius (1987); V7 = Gimbutas (1963); V8 = Grennes (1997); V9 = Hiden (1987); V10 = Hovi (1980); V11 = Kirby (1990); V12 = Kirby (1995); V13 = Kirch, Kirch, and Tuisk (1993); V14 = Laitin (1998); V15 = Lieven (1993); V16 = Linz and Stepan (1996); V17 = Misiunas and Taagepera (1983); V18 = Nørgaard (1996); V19 = Park (1994); V20 = Raun (1987); V21 = Raun (2001); V22 = Rosengren, Lauristin, and Vihalemm (1997); V23 = Shugart and Carey (1992); V24 = Stenders (1783); V25 = Taagepera (1993); V26 = Taagepera (1994); V27 = Thaden (1981); V28 = Volkmann (1997); V29 = von Rauch (1986); V30 = Wittram (1939); V31 = Wittram (1945); V32 = Wittram (1954); V33 = Zernack (1977).

Group 1 (V1, V3, V6, & V24): Latvian Vocabulary, Language, and Grammar; Group 2 (V28, V29, V30, V31, & V32): Baltic German Historical Perspectives, National Socialism, and Livonian, Estonian, and Courland History; Group 3 (V21, V22, & V25): Independent Estonia and Post-Communist Cultural and Political Transition; Group 4 (V14, V21, & V25): Independent Estonia and Russian-Speaking Population Identity; Group 5 (V13, V14, & V16): Baltic State Post-Communist Transition Problems and Russian-Speaking Population Identities; Group 6 (V16 & V19): Post-Communist Transition Problems and Estonian Ethnicity and Independence; Group 7 (V8 & V18): Post-Soviet Baltic Independence and Economic Transition; Group 8 (V2 & V17): Russian Empire, Soviet Dependence, and Baltic Independence; Group 9 (V23 & V26): Democracy, Institutional Design, and Estonian Constitutional Assembly; Group 10 (V7 & V9): Weimar Republic Eastern Policies and the Baltic People; Group 11 (V9, V10, & V11): Weimar Republic Eastern Politics, Baltic History, and British Policy; Group 12 (V11 & V12): Baltic History and Northern Europe Periphery; Group 13 (V12, V27, & V33): Northern Europe Periphery, Baltic Province, and Finland Russification; Group 14 (V20 & V27): Baltic and Finland Russification and the Estonian Nation.

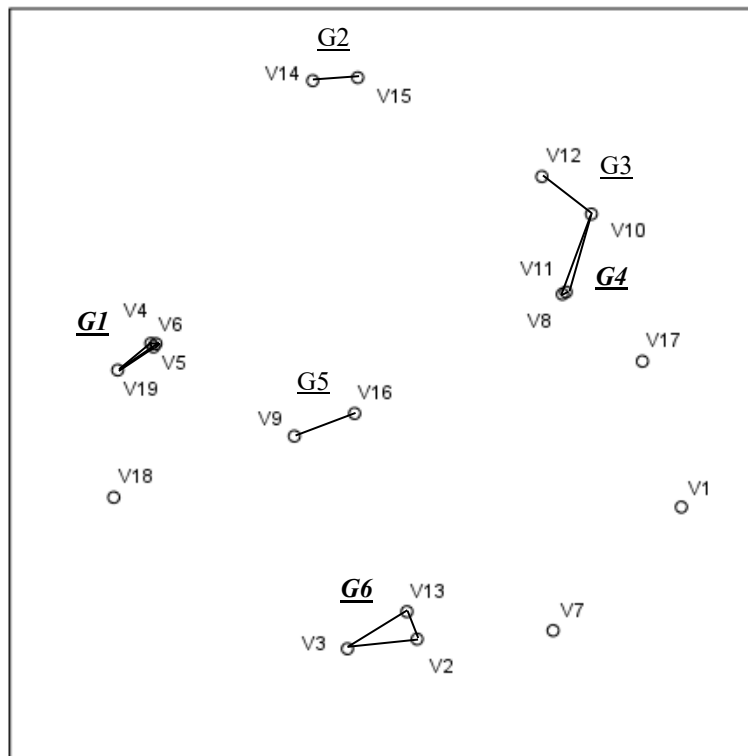
Figure 15.2: *Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure, 1992–2002.

Journal of Baltic Studies Intellectual Structure, 1992–2002

Shown in Figure 15.2, fourteen research groups were found in the second period of this study. More specifically, this time period possessed two chains and four solo groups. Both research chains were expansive, with one including three cliques and the other having two cliques. Similar to the previous period, one standalone clique focused on Latvian vocabulary, language, and grammar (Group 1). Then, the second individual group addressed the themes of the Russian empire, Soviet dependence, and Baltic independence (Group 8). Also, the third isolated group dealt with democracy, institutional design, and Estonian constitutional assembly (Group 9). Finally, the last independent group was compact and focused on post-Soviet Baltic independence and economic transition (Group 7).

The first broad chain centered on the community identity of Russian speakers in the Baltics,³⁶ but branched out into topics on independent Estonia and Russian-speaking population identity (Group 4) and independent Estonia and post-communist cultural and political transition as well as Baltic state post-communist transition problems and Russian-speaking population identities (Group 5) as well as post-communist transition problems and Estonian ethnicity and independence (Group 6). The second extensive chain's central topic took the perspective of Baltic history and northern Europe periphery (Group 12) while reaching topics on northern Europe periphery, Baltic province, and Finland Russification (Group 13) and Baltic and Finland Russification and the Estonian nation (Group 14) as well as Weimar Republic eastern politics, Baltic history, and British policy (Group 11) and Weimar Republic eastern policies and the Baltic people (Group 10).

³⁶ Laitin 1998.

Journal of Baltic Studies Intellectual Structure, 2003–2013

Notes: stress value = 0.05513; Ochiai coefficients used; standardized Euclidean distance ≤ 0.25 ; bolded and italicized research group abbreviations indicate research cliques.

V1 = Anderson (1991); V2 = Budryte (2005); V3 = Burch and Smith (2007); V4 = Inglehart (1997); V5 = Kalmus, Lauristin, and Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt (2004); V6 = Kennedy (2002); V7 = Kirss, Kõresaar, and Lauristin (2004); V8 = Laitin (1998); V9 = Lauristin and Kheïdmets (2002); V10 = Lieven (1993); V11 = Melvin (1995); V12 = Misiunas and Taagepera (1993); V13 = Onken (2007); V14 = Plakans (1995); V15 = Raun (2001); V16 = Rosengren, Lauristin, and Vihalemm (1997); V17 = Skultans (1998); V18 = Taagepera (2002); V19 = Vogt (2005).

Group 1 (V4, V5, V6, & V19): National Cultural Values, Post-Communist Transition, and Twenty-First Century Estonia; Group 2 (V14 & V15): Latvian and Estonian Historical Identities; Group 3 (V10 & V12): Prolonged Soviet Dependence and Baltic Independence Revolution; Group 4 (V8, V10, & V11): Baltic Independence Revolution and Russian-Speaking Population Political Identities; Group 5 (V9 & V16): Post-Communist Multicultural Estonia, Democratic Transition, and Estonia's Russian Minority; Group 6 (V2, V3, & V13): Post-Soviet Political Community, National Symbols, and (Inter)national Cultural Memory.

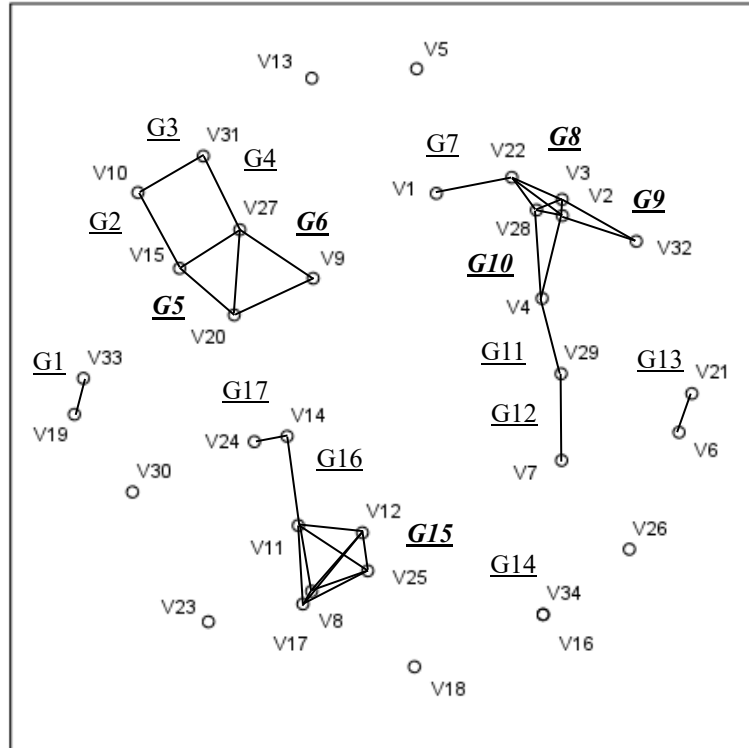
Figure 15.3: *Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure, 2003–2013.

***Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure, 2003–2013**

Identified in Figure 15.3, six research groups were shown in the third period's findings. To be exact, the time of 2003–2013 had one chain and four isolated groups. Emphasizing the importance of the Baltic States' independence movement at the end of the Soviet era,³⁷ the research chain was small, consisting of one clique and one regular group. The chain dealt with Baltic independence revolution and Russian-speaking population political identities (Group 4) while the adjacent group addressed prolonged Soviet dependence and Baltic independence revolution (Group 3).

The first individual group was a tightly knit clique emphasizing national cultural values, post-communist transition, and twenty-first century Estonia (Group 1). Meanwhile, the next standalone group examined Latvian and Estonian historical identities (Group 2). In addition, the subsequent isolated group focused on post-communist multicultural Estonia, democratic transition, and Estonia's Russian minority (Group 5). Then, the last detached group was a clique and studied post-Soviet political community, national symbols, and (inter)national cultural memory (Group 6).

³⁷ Lieven 1993.

Journal of Baltic Studies Intellectual Structure, 2014-2024

Notes: stress value = 0.10909; Ochiai coefficients used; standardized Euclidean distance ≤ 0.25 ; bolded and italicized research group abbreviations indicate research cliques.

V1 = Annus (2012); V2 = Annus (2016); V3 = Annus (2018); V4 = Bhabha (1995); V5 = Bohle and Greskovits (2007); V6 = Bohle and Greskovits (2012); V7 = Brubaker (1996); V8 = Cheskin (2013); V9 = Cheskin (2015); V10 = Duvold, Berglund, and Ekman (2020); V11 = Eglitis (2002); V12 = Ehala (2009); V13 = Gellner (1993); V14 = Golubeva (2010); V15 = Hiden (2004); V16 = Hobsbawm (1992); V17 = Jõesalu and Kõresaar (2013); V18 = Johansen and von Zur Mühlen (1973); V19 = Kasekamp (2018); V20 = Kattel and Raudla (2013); V21 = Kelertas (2006); V22 = Klumbytė (2010); V23 = Laitin (1998); V24 = Lauristin and Vihailemm (2009); V25 = Mincyte (2011); V26 = Misiunas and Taagepera (1993); V27 = Peiker (2016); V28 = Rothberg (2009); V29 = Simonsen (2006); V30 = Šmidchens (2014); V31 = Snyder (2010); V32 = Sommers and Woolfson (2014); V33 = Tamm (2008); V34 = Zahra (2010).

Group 1 (V19 & V33): Baltic History and National Cultural Memory; **Group 2** (V10 & V15): Post-First World War Baltic State Independence, Weimar Republic Eastern Political Friendship, and Post-Cold War (Inter)national Baltic State Integration; **Group 3** (V10 & V31): Central European Conflict and Post-Cold War (Inter)national Baltic State Integration; **Group 4** (V27 & V31): Central European Conflict and Postcolonial Estonian Nationalism; **Group 5** (V15, V20, & V27): Post-First World War Baltic State Independence, Weimar Republic Eastern Political Friendship, Postcolonial Nationalism, and Pragmatic Neo-Liberalism; **Group 6** (V9, V20, & V27): Baltic State Russian Speaker Identity and Integration, Postcolonial Nationalism, and Pragmatic Neo-Liberalism; **Group 7** (V1 & V22): Soviet Colonialism and Baltic Memory, Identity, and Citizenship; **Group 8** (V2, V3, V22, & V28): Soviet (Post)colonialism, Holocaust Remembrance, and Baltic Cultural Memory, Identity, and Citizenship; **Group 9** (V2, V3, & V32): Soviet (Post)colonialism, Baltic Culture, and Neo-Liberal Socioeconomic Structure; **Group 10** (V2, V4, & V28): Cultural Hybridity, Soviet (Post)colonial Baltic Culture, and Holocaust Remembrance; **Group 11** (V4 & V29): Cultural Hybridity, Outcast Youth, and Racial Hygiene; **Group 12** (V7 & V29): Post-Cold War Nationalism, Outcast Youth, and Racial Hygiene; **Group 13** (V6 & V21): Baltic Postcolonialism and European Periphery Capitalist Diversity; **Group 14** (V16 & V34): National Cultural Rituals, Symbolism Creation, and National Indifference; **Group 15** (V8, V11, V12, V17, & V25): Modern Baltic Nation and Russian-Speaking Identities, Socialism Remembrance, and Small Farming Subsistence and Sustainability; **Group 16** (V11 & V14): Modern Baltic Nation Identities and Majority/Minority Estonian and Latvian Acculturation; **Group 17** (V14 & V24): External and Internal Majority/Minority Estonian and Latvian Acculturation Factors.

Figure 15.4: *Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure, 2014–2024.

Journal of Baltic Studies Intellectual Structure, 2014–2024

Seen in Figure 15.4, seventeen research groups emerged for the last period of the results. More precisely, this period saw three chains and three individual groups. The first single group emphasized Baltic history and national cultural memory (Group 1). Also, another isolated group focused on Baltic postcolonialism and European periphery capitalist diversity (Group 2). Then, the final lone group dealt with national cultural rituals, symbolism creation, and national indifference (Group 14).

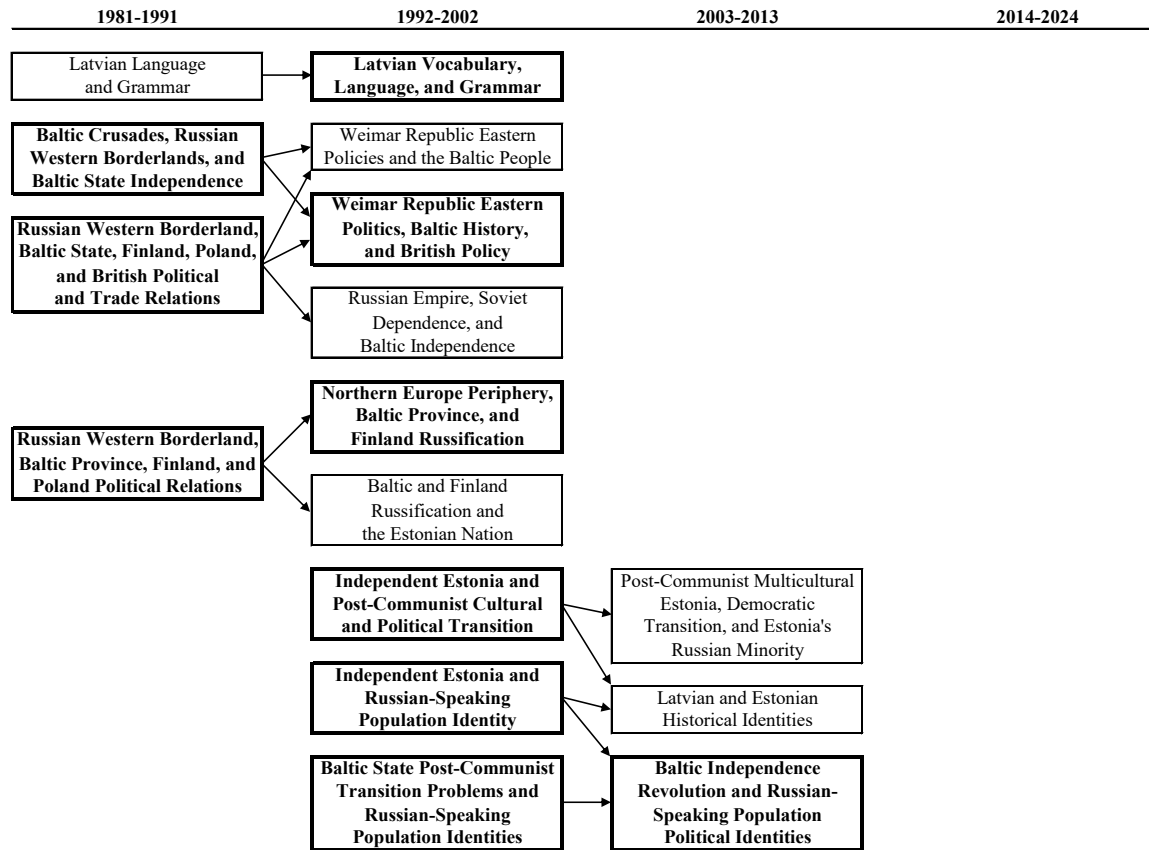
The first chain was anchored by the topic of post-First World War Baltic state independence, Weimar Republic eastern political friendship, and post-Cold War (inter)national Baltic State integration (Group 5) with related groups reaching topics such as the identity of Russian speakers in the Baltic States³⁸ and the opposing nation-based and European-centric political cultures at play in the three Baltic countries.³⁹ The second chain had a central focus on the Holocaust's role in the development of the Baltic countries' cultures in an era of post-Soviet colonialism.⁴⁰ Then, with a focal emphasis on modern Baltic nation identities and majority/minority Estonian and Latvian acculturation (Group 16), the third chain branched out to examine topics related to modern Baltic nation and Russian-speaking identities, socialism remembrance, and small farming subsistence and sustainability (Group 15) as well as external and internal majority/minority Estonian and Latvian acculturation factors (Group 17).

³⁸ Cheskin 2015: 72.

³⁹ Duvold, Berglund, and Ekman 2020.

⁴⁰ Annus 2016: 2–5; Rothberg 2009.

Journal of Baltic Studies Intellectual Structure Longitudinal Development



Notes: **Bolded** research groups indicate research cliques; arrows indicate formal longitudinal relationships.

Figure 15.5: *Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure Longitudinal Development

***Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure Longitudinal Development**

This longitudinal development analysis of the *Journal of Baltic Studies* followed established protocol to provide the chronological development and dynamism of a research area.⁴¹ The four periods (1981–1991, 1992–2002, 2003–2013, and 2014–2024) in this bibliometric study identify three general trends as indicated in Figure 15.5. These trends are determined by identifying the research groups or cliques across each successive time period with identical publications. Stated differently, if, for example, a particular article appeared in a research group or clique in both the 1981–1991 and 1992–2002 periods, then a longitudinal development is identified between those two groups across time periods. As a result, an arrow is used in Figure 5 to indicate this research development. However, should an article only appear in a research group or clique in only one (and not a subsequent) time period, then one cannot use this as a basis for longitudinal development in the research area. Taken as a whole, this precise application determines specific intellectual movements in the intellectual structure of the *Journal of Baltic Studies*.

The first and third advancements identified were straightforward in the results. As shown with the transition of Latvian language and grammar (Group 1) in 1981–1991 to Latvian vocabulary, language, and grammar (Group 1) in 1992–2002, the topic of linguistics related to the Baltic language became more complex. Then, themes related to the Baltic States' independence from the communist area were very prevalent in *Journal of Baltic Studies* research from 1992–2002 to 2003–2013. For instance, topics connected to independent Estonia and post-communist cultural and political transition (Group 3), independent Estonia and Russian-speaking population identity (Group 4), and Baltic State post-communist transition problems and Russian-speaking population identities (Group 5) from the earlier period led to post-communist multicultural Estonia, democratic transition, and Estonia's Russian minority (Group 5), Latvian and Estonian history identities (Group 2), and Baltic independence revolution and Russian-speaking population political identities (Group 4) in the later period.

The second research advancement discovered is more nuanced. One aspect is more benign and focuses on the Baltic, Germanic, and Russian historical, cultural, political, and commercial influences in the region. This advancement saw research on the Baltic crusades, Russian western borderlands, and Baltic State independence (Group 4)⁴² and the Russian western borderland, Baltic State, Finland, Poland, and British political and trade relations (Group 3) from 1981–1991 transition into Weimar Republic eastern policies and the Baltic people (Group 10), Weimar Republic eastern politics, Baltic history, and British policy (Group 11), and Russian empire, Soviet dependence, and Baltic independence (Group 8) in 1992–2002. In contrast, this advancement's other aspect is much more aggressive and emphasizes the political and cultural Russification attempts made in the Baltic States on the local populations. This was found in the expansion of Russian western borderland, Baltic province, Finland, and Poland political relations (Group 2) in the earlier period to northern Europe periphery, Baltic province, and Finland

⁴¹ Braam, Moed, and van Raan 1991: 255; Chabowski, Kecec, Morgan, Hult, Walkowiak, and Runnalls 2018: 130; Chabowski and Samiee 2023: 7; Hult and Chabowski 2008: 331; Samiee, Chabowski, and Hult 2015: 11; Small 1977: 144, 155.

⁴² This is the research group in which Urban's (1975) seminal book, *The Baltic Crusades*, appears.

Russification (Group 13) and Baltic and Finland Russification and the Estonian nation (Group 14) in the subsequent period.

Research continuity between 2003–2013, this study's third period, and 2014–2024, this study's fourth period, was not found. That stated, sufficient diversity in the last period of the analysis was identified. As a result, there is substantial information to consider future research suggestions for academics looking to study the topic of Baltic studies.

DISCUSSION

Future research emphasizing Baltic studies is, by definition, based on the extant literature to a large degree.⁴³ While new concepts may be introduced to the field, they are typically imported from other domains and integrated with established ideas. This standard approach to scientific transitions in a research domain can be identified in the previous section as well as Figure 5. Based on the findings of the longitudinal development of the *Journal of Baltic Studies*, it can be surmised that the advancement of the domain was an integration of well-known and emergent research areas.

With the findings from the intellectual structure and longitudinal development analyses in mind, the focus of this section is on suggesting possible future research opportunities in the Baltic studies domain. One approach used in the bibliometric literature to accomplish this⁴⁴ utilizes social network theory's weak ties⁴⁵ argument.⁴⁶ Supported by the Kuhnian notion that combining ideas from opposing sides of a conceptual domain makes for potentially invigorating new research areas, this approach relates research concepts appearing very distant from each other in the final period of the domain's intellectual structure.⁴⁷ Therefore, we turn to the *Journal of Baltic Studies* intellectual structure of 2014–2024 and use distant research groups and publications as a basis to propose five general topics for future research. These themes relate to areas emphasizing comparative Baltic history, culture, capitalist diversity, socioeconomic structure, socialism, nationalism, and Russian-speaking populations. Next, a presentation of these research possibilities is provided in greater detail.

First, the relationship between the national cultural memory⁴⁸ existing in postcolonial Baltic history⁴⁹ can be merged with the capitalist diversity of the region.⁵⁰ While research has been conducted to some degree on specific Baltic States, a relative comparison across Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania is necessary to sufficiently contribute to theory and contrast the differing embedded historical psyches across the three countries and their impact on the economic systems they chose in the post-Soviet period. For instance, aside from the relative closeness to

⁴³ Kuhn 1962.

⁴⁴ Chabowski, Kecec, Morgan, Hult, Walkowiak, and Runnalls 2018: 132–134; Samiee, Chabowski, and Hult 2015: 12–13.

⁴⁵ This can be alternatively referred to as, in the context of network theory, institutional voids.

⁴⁶ Borgatti and Halgin 2011: 1168, 1170–1175; Burt 1992; Granovetter 1973: 1373–1376.

⁴⁷ By focusing on the final period of the domain's intellectual structure, the suggestions which are proposed are the most relevant to the current readership.

⁴⁸ Tamm 2008: 499–502, 503–505.

⁴⁹ Kasekamp 2018; Kelertas 2006.

⁵⁰ Bohle and Greskovits 2012.

Finland, what anthropological and sociocultural reasons drove Estonia to choose a more *laissez-faire* application than Lithuania?⁵¹ Going further, how does Latvia's position as a crossroads in the Baltic States influence the historical and cultural reasons for its choice of economic system after the Soviet Union?

The second research opportunity exists by integrating Soviet (post)colonial cultural and socioeconomic structure⁵² with the modern Baltic nations⁵³ and their Russian-speaking populations.⁵⁴ There is little doubt that the Baltic States' experience as a part of the Soviet Union left a lasting impression on the three countries. In fact, the period is widely viewed by ethnic Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians as a vast experiment in colonialism that decimated the cultural and socioeconomic structures in place before World War II.⁵⁵ Still, as a part of the Soviet era, a large proportion of Russian speakers from elsewhere in the Soviet Union migrated to the Baltic States as a part of this colonialist policy. So effective was this strategy, about 27% of the population in Estonia, 29% in Latvia, and 6% in Lithuania are Russian speakers today.⁵⁶ This created distinct intra-country cultural dynamics in each Baltic State between the local and Russian-speaking migrant populations. As a result, this requires a two-fold approach that can be pursued. One application could evaluate the relative socioeconomic dynamics from the Soviet era's decline and end to the present day in each Baltic country. The other application could assess the comparative cultural hegemony shifts that took place during and after the Soviet period across the three Baltic States.

A third possible research direction relates to aligning post-Cold War (inter)national Baltic State integration⁵⁷ with a comparison of cultural traditions development⁵⁸ and a lack of cultural participation.⁵⁹ The ambition of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to integrate with the international community as quickly as possible after the Soviet period is understandable. After five decades of occupation and colonization, joining the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) were natural extensions of policy meant to advance each country economically as well as to protect them politically and militarily protect. With this safety comes the opportunity for the Baltic States to recapture and enrich their heritage. However, in the face of this apparent progress, how should each country build on its legacy if the population is indifferent to those traditions? How can the contemporary cultural icons in each Baltic State combat a population's cultural nihilism induced by economic and political progress?

The fourth research topic to consider emphasizes the contrast of neoliberal economic policy⁶⁰ and the identities of Russian-speaking populations in the Baltic States.⁶¹ Overall, there is little doubt that each Baltic country deployed some degree of neoliberal economic applications. Still, the intensity of neoliberalism utilized varied from Estonia to Latvia and Lithuania. As a result,

⁵¹ Kattel and Raudla 2013: 442–444.

⁵² Annus 2016: 5–11; Annus 2018; Jõesalu and Kõresaar 2013: 183–185, 188–190; Sommers and Woolson 2014.

⁵³ Eglitis 2002; Ehala 2009: 146–155.

⁵⁴ Cheskin 2013: 292–295.

⁵⁵ Estonian Ministry of Justice 2005: 21, 143–144, 147, 164.

⁵⁶ Encyclopaedia Britannica 2025.

⁵⁷ Duvold, Berglund, and Ekman 2020.

⁵⁸ Hobsbawm 1992.

⁵⁹ Zahra 2010: 94–98.

⁶⁰ Bohle and Greskovits 2007: 446, 448, 449, 458, 459.

⁶¹ Laitin 1998.

how did the economic transition from the Soviet era comparatively impact the Russian speakers in the Baltic States? In general, it could be said that Lithuania provided more economic opportunities to Russian speakers than Estonia and Latvia. This is based on the Lithuanian government extending citizenship to Russian-speaking inhabitants after independence was restored in 1991,⁶² while Estonia and Latvia required language proficiency examinations for citizenship. This leads to a considerable number of possible issues. For example, how do the relative economic (dis)advantages impact the cultural identities of the different Russian-speaking populations in the Baltic States? Also, how does this relate to the potential economic and cultural integration of Russian speakers into the political landscape of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania?

Then, the final research synthesis focuses on the comparison of nationalism⁶³ with the development of the city of Tallinn.⁶⁴ Taken more broadly, this issue could be presented as the comparative depiction of a Baltic country's nationalism through its capital city. In Estonia's case, the city has a very long commercial tradition as the northernmost member of the Hanseatic League.⁶⁵ Then, during the Soviet era, Tallinn benefitted from daily television broadcasts of Western programming⁶⁶ and also morning and nightly transmissions of the country's national anthem melody⁶⁷ from Finland.⁶⁸ In addition, throughout the Soviet era, there were many relationships, investments, and partnerships made between Finnish and Estonian companies.⁶⁹

Continuing with this focus on the West, Riga, Latvia's capital, was also a member of the Hanseatic League. However, due to its more central location and larger size, its import/export ratio was more balanced than Tallinn's. Based on the Hanseatic League's ledgers in the fourteenth century,⁷⁰ Riga had a net export balance of 4,000 marks while Tallinn had a net import balance of 19,700 marks. To assist the Estonian Hanseatic representation's balances, Pärnu⁷¹ had a net export balance of 22,700 marks, thus placing present-day Estonia's cumulative trade export balance at 3,000 marks.⁷²

To contrast, Lithuania's capital city, Vilnius, has a much more eastern focus. Located about 25 miles from the border with Belarus, its location reflects the time when the nation was at its height in the fifteenth century, spanning from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. Though a commonwealth was established with Poland in 1569, this cultural similarity led to Vilnius becoming a part of Poland between World Wars I and II. As a result, during this period of the country's original modern independence starting in 1918, Kaunas became Lithuania's capital city.

Based on the roles each of these four cities played as capital cities in the development and formation of their respective countries, it would be most valuable to examine the historical,

⁶² Aptekar 2009: 520.

⁶³ Gellner 1993.

⁶⁴ Johansen and von Zur Mühlen 1973.

⁶⁵ The Hanseatic League was a city-state trade and military alliance from the 13th through 17th centuries centering on the Lübeck area in present-day Germany.

⁶⁶ Lepp and Pantti 2012: 77.

⁶⁷ Miljan 2015: 314.

⁶⁸ Tallinn is a mere 50 miles across the Gulf of Finland from Helsinki, the capital of Finland.

⁶⁹ Stöcker 2016: 459–462, 465–468, 470–473

⁷⁰ Wikipedia (n.d.) published data for the period of March 18, 1368, through March 10, 1369.

⁷¹ Pärnu was one of a few other Estonian-based Hanseatic League members.

⁷² In all, this made Livonia's imports almost 13% and exports almost 25% of the entire Hanseatic League for the year specified.

ethnographic, and cultural drivers of the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian nations based on the roles of their capital cities. As the focal points of commerce, governance, and art for each Baltic State, there is little doubt a comparative assessment could provide fruitful insights into the historical character of each country.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the Baltic studies literature by evaluating the *Journal of Baltic Studies* over 44 years. Drawing its data from the WoS database, bibliometric techniques were used to depict the journal's intellectual structure for 1981–2024. The data were split into four equal time periods (1981–1991, 1992–2002, 2003–2013, and 2014–2024) to display four distinct intellectual structure configurations over time. Then, an analysis was provided to indicate the longitudinal development of Baltic studies research. In addition, based on the last period in the study, five suggested areas for future research were provided with detailed thoughts and ideas to consider by academics aiming to pursue this topic. Taken together, this study provides a unique contribution to the literature and can be used as a basis from which to develop further Baltic studies research.

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