Identity and Foreign Policy

Baltic-Russian Relations and European Integration

EDITED BY
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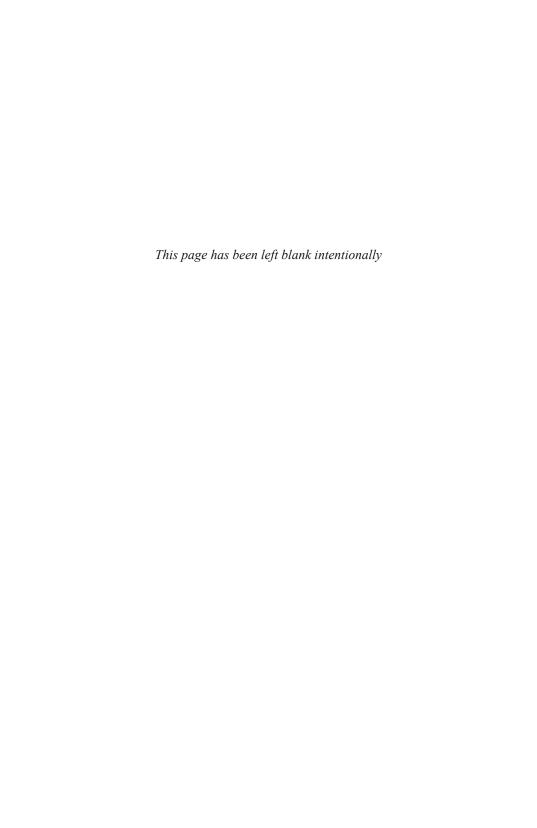
Incompatible Identities? Baltic-r ussian r elations and the e U as an a rena for Identity Conflict

Piret e hin and e iki Berg

r elations between r ussia and the three Baltic states – e stonia, l atvia and l ithuania – have been remarkably poor for most of the post-Soviet period. a lthough there have been brighter moments and occasional "breakthroughs", the repertoire of Baltic-r ussian relations has been dominated by manifestations of distrust and animosity, ranging from undeveloped cooperation, limited interaction and icy silence to scathing rhetoric, sanctions and heated crises.

Before the 2004 enlargement of the e U and na t o , many observers believed that the accession of the Baltic states to these organizations would help restructure the historically burdened relationship. However, five years after the double enlargement, the permafrost in Baltic-r ussian relations shows no signs of melting, but instead seems to thrive in the increasingly chilly climate of the r usso-Western relationship. o ld issues, such as the status of the r ussian-speaking minorities, have not disappeared from the agenda and, contrary to what was expected, e U membership appears to have added new conflict dimensions and expanded the arenas of contestation. e uropeanization has not helped the parties to "put the past behind them," as optimistic end-of-history scenarios foresaw. Instead, some of the most dramatic clashes over history and memory have taken place *after* the historic enlargement of Western institutions.

t hus, inquiry into the reasons for the poor state of Baltic-r ussian relations is as topical as ever. What explains the persistence of distrust and animosity? Why have efforts to normalize relations failed? h ow, and to what extent, has Baltic accession to the e U and na t o transformed their relations with r ussia? In this volume, a diverse group of scholars develop, discuss and criticize an identity-based explanation of Baltic-r ussian relations. a t the core of this explanation are three propositions. First, frosty relations between r ussia and its Baltic neighbours reflect underlying conflict at the level of identities: Baltic and r ussian post-Soviet national identity constructions, together with the historical narratives they are based on, are incompatible and, indeed, antagonistic. Second, this antagonism has increased, rather than eroded over time, reflecting certain content shifts in national identity constructions, as well as the consolidation and institutionalization of these constructions as the ideational basis of state- and nationhood. t hird, e uropean

institutions have become an important arena on which the Baltic-r ussian identity conflict is played out, as both Russia and the Baltic states strive for the international recognition of their constitutive historical narratives and concepts of self, while denying the e uropeanness of each other.

t he recognition that many of the problems in Baltic-r ussian relations are rooted in history and identity is obviously not new. Scholars, politicians and journalists have routinely referred to historical discord, identity struggles and "psychological factors" as causes of the troubled relationship. h owever, few studies have tried to link this diagnosis to broader explanatory frameworks and theoretical debates in international relations (Ir). a lthough the growing use of the concept of identity since the late 1990s seems to signal a "constructivist turn" in Baltic security studies (n oreen and Sjöstedt 2004), most of the existing literature focuses on Baltic and r ussian identity constructions separately taken. Identity-based accounts of Baltic-r ussian relations have, with some notable exceptions, remained sketchy and often conflicting.

o ur approach to Baltic-r ussian relations is derived from the constructivist scholarship in international relations that recognizes the existence, and independent causal power, of ideational structures. n ational identity constructions of states are an important part of these ideational structures in international politics. t he authors contributing to this volume understand national identity as a relatively stable set of conceptualizations and expectations about self (Wendt 1992: 397). More specifically, our conceptualization of identity rests on three premises: identities are constructed, not natural or essential; they are relational and involve references to various "significant others"; and third, identities have a discursive, narrative structure.

In addition to social constructivism, our approach to Baltic-r ussian relations builds on another burgeoning body of research – the growing literature on collective memory and memory politics. a lthough originally pursued by historians, the study of collective memory is rapidly crossing disciplinary boundaries and making inroads to sociology, political science and international relations. It focuses on memory both as a dependent (what determines what is remembered?) as well as an independent variable (what are the consequences of remembering?). In our view, the research on collective memory adds an important temporal dimension to the study of identity constructions. c oncepts of "who we are" inevitably involve accounts of "where we come from" and "what has happened to us" in the past.

t he ten chapters that make up this volume offer a multifaceted picture of the role of identity, history and memory in Baltic-r ussian relations after the eastern enlargement of the e U and na t o . t he contributors form a diverse group. c oming from r ussia, the three Baltic states and other countries in the Baltic Sea region, they represent different academic disciplines (including political science, international relations and history), intellectual traditions and epistemological convictions. Many of them have written extensively on Baltic-r ussian or e U-r ussian relations. While all share an interest in the role of ideational factors in

international politics, they do not agree on everything. c onformity to a single line of thought has not been the objective of this collaborative project; instead, our aim has been to lay out the constructivist identity-based explanation of Baltic-r ussian relations for elaboration, discussion and critical scrutiny.

t his introductory chapter offers a brief overview of the state of Baltic-r ussian relations after e U enlargement and presents a framework for conceptualizing and analysing the impact of identities on interstate relations. It also outlines alternative explanations of the troubled Baltic-r ussian relationship, derived from rationalist theoretical perspectives in international relations, and argues that these explanations remain incomplete because they fail to explain interest and preference formation. Finally, the chapter sketches ways to conceptualize the impact of e uropean integration on the r ussian-Baltic relationship. We conclude with a brief chapter-by-chapter explanation of the structure of the book.

Russian-Baltic Relations After EU Enlargement

For almost two decades, relations between the Baltic states and r ussia have continued to disappoint observers. In 1991, the prospects for creating good-neighbourly relations looked promising: the newly independent Baltic states and r ussia embarked on the course of democratization and transition to market economy, and the Baltic strive for independence was consistent with y eltsin's objective of dismantling the USSr . h owever, the period of mutual understanding remained short-lived. By the end of 1992, r ussia's honeymoon in relations with the West was over, as communist and nationalist forces gained greater control over policy-making. a t the same time, the underlying principles of Baltic state- and nation-building – above all, the restitutionist logic of the doctrine of legal continuity – had become evident, raising deep concerns in Moscow about the treatment of the r ussian-speaking minorities. a range of contentious issues dominated the agenda of r ussian-Baltic relations throughout the 1990s, including the status of the r ussophone population, the question of r ussian troop withdrawal, Baltic aspiration to EU and NATO membership, trade and transit issues, definition of borders, the status of the r ussian o rthodox c hurch, and regulation of travel and transit to and from the k aliningrad exclave. a ll of these problems have been extensively described and discussed in the existing literature and will not be elaborated here (a alto 2003; Browning 2003; k hudoley and l anko 2004; Morris 2003; Moshes 1999; Mouritzen 1998; Muižnieks 2006; D. Smith 2005; Trenin 1997).

Baltic accession to the e U was construed as having the potential to restructure the three countries' troubled relationship with their big neighbour. In the Baltics, it was hoped that subsuming Baltic-r ussian bilateral relations in the wider e U-r ussia relationship would force r ussia to abandon its post-imperial manners and treat the Baltics as "normal" countries and not as part of its "near abroad" sphere of influence (Ehin and Kasekamp 2005; Mihkelson 2003). According to

the e stonian Ministry of Foreign a ffairs (2007a), membership in na t o and the EU would "definitely contribute to strengthening co-operation with Russia while creating more stability in e stonian-r ussian relations." In Moscow, there were hopes that "with the guarantee of independence and security which membership in the e U and na t o brought, the Baltic states would be able to react to their e astern neighbour with more composure" (l ukyanov 2005).

t here were objective reasons for these hopes of improvement. t he improved international position of the Baltic states was expected to alleviate their existential insecurities, correct the power imbalance in the region, and offer new (multilateral) frameworks and instruments for developing r ussian-Baltic relations. t he e U accession process had compelled e stonia and l atvia to liberalize their citizenship policies and to enhance minority rights (Morris 2003), and tens of thousands of Soviet-era migrants had acquired citizenship through naturalization. Baltic e U membership was regarded as an additional guarantee that Baltic minority policies would remain in line with international standards. t rade volumes were expected to grow, as the extension of the e U-r ussia Partnership and c ooperation a greement (Pca) would eliminate politically motivated barriers to trade. Progress in concluding border treaties was expected, since the eastern borders of the Baltic states now constituted the e U external border, subject to increasingly stringent Schengen regulations.

Five years after the historic enlargement, it is clear that these optimistic expectations have not materialized. Baltic-r ussian relations have not become more amicable. Instead, post-enlargement interaction has been dotted with conflict episodes and high-visibility crises. a lthough limited space does not allow us to provide a detailed account of the problems and developments, even a cursory chronology reveals a long list of grievances. In early 2004, r ussia tried to link the extension of the e U-r ussia Partnership and c ooperation a greement (Pca) to the new member states to a number of conditions, including e U scrutiny of the status of r ussian-speakers in e stonia and l atvia. In the same year, the domestically contentious reform of r ussian-language schools in l atvia elicited strong criticism from Moscow.

In May 2005, e stonian and l ithuanian presidents refused to attend the Victory d ay celebrations in Moscow, equating Soviet "liberation" with a half-century of Soviet occupation and communist domination. t he l atvian president attended the event but skillfully used the occasion to draw international attention to the Molotov-r ibbentrop pact, Soviet annexation of the Baltic states and r ussia's refusal to denounce its Soviet past. In September 2005, r ussia revoked the e stonian-r ussian border treaty which the two governments had signed four months earlier because in its ratification bill, the Estonian Parliament had made references to legal continuity of the e stonian state. In a parallel process, l atvia eventually refrained from historical references, thus securing r ussian cooperation. t he l atvian-r ussian border treaty took effect in late 2007.

In o ctober 2005, repeated r ussian violations of the na t o -guarded Baltic airspace culminated in the crash of a Russian fighter near the Lithuanian city of

k aunas. t he same year, the r usso-g erman plan to construct a gas pipeline under the Baltic Sea met with strong suspicion and criticism from the Baltic states. t wo years later, the Estonian Government rejected an official application by the Nord Steam project to survey seabed off its coast to determine its suitability for the construction of the gas pipeline.

In July 2006, Russia closed an oil pipeline to the Mazeikiai refinery in Lithuania, after its privatization to a Polish company had prevented a r ussian takeover. Previously, it had stopped oil flow to Ventspils in Latvia in what appeared to be a deliberate attempt to force the shut-down of the biggest oil port in the Baltic region.

In a pril 2007, the decision by the e stonian g overnment to relocate a Soviet-era monument from downtown t allinn to a military cemetery led to massive riots, mostly by r ussian-speaking youth, in the e stonian capital. d enouncing the act as blasphemous, r ussia accused e stonia of glorifying fascism and demanded change of government. t ensions escalated into a major crisis in r ussian-e stonian relations, involving a siege of the e stonian embassy in Moscow, cyber attacks on e stonia's It infrastructure, as well as redirection of r ussian transit shipments.

In the same year, the dispute about the c onventional Forces in e urope t reaty had strong implications for the Baltic region. r ussia's decision to suspend its obligations under the treaty stemmed, in part, from the fact, that the Baltic states were not party to the treaty. t he suspension of r ussian obligations, in turn, escalated fears that r ussia could start to build up forces in regions adjacent to Baltic borders.

In the spring of 2008, l ithuania blocked the launch of e U-r ussian negotiations on the new Pca , tying the start of negotiations to a number of conditions, including the resolution of frozen conflicts in Georgia and Moldova. These demands reflect the active role that Baltic states are playing – to r ussia's irritation – in the e U-r ussia "shared neighbourhood", supporting democratic reforms in the post-Soviet space, and backing the e U and na t o aspirations of countries such as g eorgia, Ukraine and Moldova.

l ooking beyond the high-visibility crises, bilateral relations among neighbours remain conspicuously undeveloped and poorly institutionalized, although there are important differences between the three Baltic states in this regard. In all three cases, the treaty base for relations with Russia is insufficiently developed. Estonia and r ussia still lack a border treaty, although all substantive and technical issues were solved already in 1996. a lthough both l atvian-r ussian and l ithuanian-r ussian border treaties are now in effect, their conclusion was similarly wrought with problems. Intergovernmental commissions, created in the 1990s and entrusted with the task of working out agreements between r ussia and each of the Baltic countries, have made limited progress, and the e stonian-r ussian commission discontinued work in 2002.

Political and diplomatic contacts between the two sides remain limited. t he key foreign policy documents of both r ussia and the Baltic states pay little attention to each other. Both sides appear to lack vision of how their relations should develop

in the future (o zolina and r ikveilis 2006). t he limited engagement is sometimes misinterpreted as a sign of normalcy, a token that post-imperial preoccupation with one another has been replaced by broader foreign policy horizons. o ur reading of the situation differs: the non-happening reflects the frozen atmosphere of relations, a deadlock that the parties seem unable to solve. In the Baltics, the imperative of positively engaging r ussia seems – after several futile attempts – to be cast aside as "mission impossible".

Explaining the Failure to Normalize Relations

The persistence of conflict in Baltic-Russian relations – despite prospective gains from closer interaction and cooperation – constitutes an interesting puzzle, which can be addressed with the help of diverse theoretical frameworks.

a neorealist reading of the relationship directs our attention to the distribution of power in an anarchic international environment. t hus, the foreign and security policies of r ussia and the Baltic states have to be understood in the structural context of the post-c old War system (h eurlin 1998; k nudsen 1999; Mouritzen 1998). o f the two available strategies – balancing or bandwagoning the hegemonic power – the Baltic states have clearly chosen the latter, sparing no effort to cast themselves as loyal friends and allies of the US. In the Baltics, na t o membership was perceived as a solution to their security deficit arising from the immense regional power discrepancies. r ussia's post-Soviet foreign policy, in contrast, has been characterized by opposition to US hegemony and criticism of the unipolar world order (although elements of bandwagoning are also discernible – see a mbrosio 2005). d ue to its massive power contraction (and the limited choice of suitable allies), r ussia has not had the means to effectively challenge US hegemony. It has had to acquiesce to the geopolitical advances of the West, including the enlargement of na t o and the e U. t he realist/neorealist reading would portray the Baltic-r ussian relationship in terms of a classical security dilemma and explain the deterioration of Baltic-r ussian relations as a result of escalation of threat perceptions in the region, brought about by the enlargement of na t o in the face of an increasingly powerful r ussia.

t he central tenet of neoliberal institutionalism is that international organizations have the potential to reduce the effects of anarchy and enable cooperation. Institutions allow rational actors to choose the strategy of cooperation: by providing information, communication, rules and sanctions, they reduce the risk that other players will defect. t he likelihood of cooperation depends on the effectiveness of institutions, understood in terms of their ability to make and enforce rules. Several studies have argued that e uropean institutions have played a considerable role in conflict prevention in the region in the 1990s, championing, in particular, their involvement in Baltic minority policies (h urlburt 1997; k elley 2004; Zaagman 1999). h owever, the fact that relations have not normalized could be explained (a) by the toothlessness of those international organizations of which both the Baltic

states and r ussia are members (for example the c ouncil of e urope, o Sce); (b) the fact that r ussia has not chosen to pursue membership in those organizations that are characterized by effective (supranational) rule-making and enforcement (such as the e U). t hus, improvement of relations is hindered by the lack of shared, effective international institutions that would build trust and enable cooperation.

a number of second-image explanations have the potential to contribute to our understanding of the Russian-Baltic relationship. The first of these focuses on regime characteristics and points at the growing normative gap between an increasingly authoritarian r ussia and the Western community of liberal-democratic states, of which the Baltic states are members. a ccording to this explanation, r ussia's distancing from any standard concept of democracy and setting itself up as an alternative normative power ("sovereign democracy", in the k remlin's parlance) under President Putin is the main reason for deteriorating relations with the West. Baltic-r ussian relations form simply a subset in this broader dynamic between r ussia and the West.

Second, a pluralist interpretation directs our attention to different domestic political actors competing for power and influence over foreign policy-making and implementation. Intense rivalry between different political forces subscribing to very different visions of the country's future and its foreign policy course is highly relevant to understanding r ussian foreign policy in the 1990s (a rbatov 1993; t sygankov 1998). Similarly, the domestic and foreign policy in the Putin era can be explained by reference to the world view, values and formative experiences of the ruling elite, including the *siloviki*. a lthough differences among mainstream political forces in the Baltic states have been less pronounced than in y eltsin's r ussia, the party politics of all three countries reveals a distinction between nationalist forces pursuing a hard line on r ussia and the more "pragmatic" groups intent to reap the benefits from trade and transit, even if this implies compromises with regard to "principles" and "values". In addition, the rotation of Baltic presidencies between ex-communists (r üütel, Brazauskas) and émigré Balts with a n orth a merican background and loyalties (a damkus, Vike-Freiberga, Ilves) is also potentially relevant in explaining the ups and downs of Baltic-r ussian relations.

a related explanation links foreign policy behaviour to domestic electoral cycles and vote-seeking. It regards assertive foreign policy posturing as designed, above all, for domestic consumption. t hus, r ussia's overreactions to developments in the post-Soviet space have been described as attempts to whip up nationalist sentiments and build popular support for the regime. t ough talk sells well also in the Baltics. t he promise to remove the monument to Soviet liberators from downtown t allinn became an important issue in the e stonian parliamentary election campaigns in 2007; in the wake of the crisis that ensued the removal, Prime Minister a nsip's popularity soared to unprecedented levels.

a ll of these explanations can make a contribution to understanding the troubled Baltic-r ussian relationship. h owever, they have one major limitation. By treating preference formation as exogeneous, they tell us very little about where

the diverging interests and outlooks of the actors come from. a s pointed out by Fofanova and Morozov in c hapter 2, rationalist approaches cannot tell us why r ussia has chosen to balance, rather than bandwagon the hegemon; why the Baltic states have pursued membership in the e U and na t o while r ussia has not; and why, in domestic political discourses, the limits of acceptable speech lie where they do.

a constructivist account which focuses on national identity constructions as a source of interests and behaviour has the potential to fill this gap. a lthough the contestation between rationalism and constructivism is central to current theoretical debates in Ir (k atzenstein et al. 1999), the two theoretical frameworks are not incompatible and could, in principle, engage in effective two-stage division of labour. While rationalist explanations focus on the rational pursuit of exogenously defined preferences, constructivism has the potential to explain interest and preference formation. t hus, by offering an identity-based account of Baltic-r ussian relations, we do not seek to refute the rationalist explanations outlined above but, instead, cast light on issues that remain unanswered by the various realist, institutionalist and pluralist perspectives.

Con.icting National Identities

Interest in ideational and cultural determinants of foreign policy has been on the rise since the end of the c old War. t he 1990s witnessed the meteoric rise of social constructivism into the mainstream of Ir research. While constructivism shares key assumptions with the neorealist and liberal approaches to Ir , such as the centrality of states in the international system, it differs from rationalist approaches in that it conceptualizes structures and actors as constituting each other, attributes independent causal force to ideational factors, and focuses on discursive practices by which identities and ideas are conveyed, reinforced and transformed (c heckel 1998; Finnemore 1996; g oldstein and k eohane 1993; h ansen and Wæver 2002; k atzenstein 1996; Wendt 1992, 1999).

a central claim of the constructivist paradigm is that intersubjectively shared ideas, norms and values constitute an independent causal force in international relations, distinct from material structures (Wendt 1999). n ational identity constructions of states are among the most important elements of these ideational structures. Indeed, much of discourse by actors can be understood as identity discourse: "actors use particular adjectives that describe the self and others to achieve goals, and these articulated self descriptions also serve as motivations for behavior" (a bdelal et al. 2001: 1). d espite the proliferation of identity-based explanations in IR research, there is not much consensus on how to define identity and how to recognize and measure its impact. While clarifying the multiple controversies surrounding the term "identity" is clearly beyond the scope of this edited volume, we need to make clear how the contributions in this book understand identity. In broad terms, the authors in this volume subscribe to a

conceptualization of identity as "relatively stable, role specific understandings and expectations about self" (Wendt 1992: 397). More specifically, our understanding of identity rests on three premises. First, identity is not essential but socially constructed in the process of describing and conceptualizing it. Second, identity is relational in the sense that the self is defined through relationships to various "significant others" (Neumann 1996a). Finally, identity has a narrative, discursive structure (r icoeur 1991) of which memory and history are essential ingredients (a .d . Smith 1995; Wertsch 1997, 2002).

n umerous studies have examined Baltic and r ussian national identity constructions separately taken (Berg 2002; k assianova 2001; k uus 2002a; Mälksoo 2004; Miniotaite 2003; Pavlovaite 2003; t olz 2004). h owever, few studies have explicitly used social constructivism and identity-centred frameworks to explain Baltic-r ussian relations. y et, it seems to us that an identity-based account has the potential to offer a deeper and more complete understanding of the complex web of problems in this relationship. While many conventional explanations of Baltic-Russian relations regard specific issues (borders, transit, minorities/compatriots, security) as *causes* of the poor state of relations, an identity-centred approach casts these as *symptoms* of an underlying identity conflict.

t he core proposition of this identity-based explanation is that the continuously poor state of Baltic-r ussian relations can be explained by the fact that the national identity constructions of the Baltic states and r ussia, together with the historical narratives they are based on, are incompatible and, indeed, antagonistic. t he constituting "narratives of self" of the Baltic states and r ussia include truth claims that are mutually exclusive. t he differences are not in details but pertain to the central elements of the respective narratives – the events of the Second World War, the role of the r ed a rmy, assessment of the Soviet regime and its collapse, the termination and restoration of Baltic independence. t he r ussian Federation has construed itself as the legal successor of the Soviet Union and, increasingly, a willing heir to Soviet greatness and accomplishments (see for example Morozov 2008), while the bedrock of Baltic statehood is the doctrine of legal continuity, which construes the three states are restored states, re-emerging from 50 years of Soviet occupation. t he restitutionist logic of legal continuity which treats the restoration of *status quo ante* as the reference point for justice collides head on with elements of Soviet restorationism in the Russian construct of self. Conflict at the level of these grand narratives creates a situation where almost any reinforcement of the definition of self (through specific policies, discursive practices or social rituals) automatically implies a negation of the other's constitutive narrative of self, and thus, is perceived as a hostile act. Both sides accuse each other of denying, or attempting to rewrite, history. a s identity is translated into policy, the underlying antagonism is manifested in a range of policy areas and issues. Baltic-Russian conflict can thus be seen as structural in the sense that it stems from an in-built antagonism at the level of identity constructions underlying state- and nationhood.

t his argument presumes that both in case of r ussia and the Baltic states, reasonably clear officially endorsed national identity constructions are in place. We do indeed subscribe to the view while not denying that identities can, and do, change, and not supposing that these constructions are universally accepted by all groups in the society (on multiple identity discourses, see a alto 2003). Some additional disclaimers are in order. o ur focus on national identity constructions does not imply that we deny the reality of the historical events and their material consequences. National narratives of self are not mere reflections of historical events; they also construct the past for the purposes of the present, if only by selective emphasis. t hus, explanation of relations should focus on the particular ways history is presented, packaged and woven into core concepts of state and nation. h ere the Baltic states and r ussia are not exceptional. a ll states strive for the recognition of their founding narratives; a situation where the underlying principles and myths of state- and nationhood are challenged and contested is, in any context, likely to produce a "preoccupation with the past". In sum, antagonism at the level of basic concepts of self explains why r ussia and the Baltic states seem to be unable to follow the well-intended, if naïve, (Western) advice that they should leave the past behind by acquiring the "political will to deactivate negative myths and stereotypes" (k empe 2005: 3–4).

The Role of Europe in Baltic-Russian Relations

t he e U is a prominent regional and global player that matters greatly both to the Baltic states and r ussia. t o what extent has the eastern enlargement of the e U transformed Baltic-r ussian relations? Below, we sketch three alternative ways to conceptualize the role of e urope in the Baltic-r ussian relationship.

The first is the increasingly popular framework of Europeanization. Studies embracing this framework depict the e U as a "constitutive institution" that has potentially far-reaching effects on the institutions, policies, identities, values and interests of member states, as well as third countries closely interacting with it (c owles et al. 2001). a ccording to this logic, e uropean integration has the potential to transform Baltic-r ussian relations by transforming the actors involved, as well as the frameworks of their interaction. t hus, it is argued that accession conditionality has encouraged the constitution of a liberal post-modern state identity in the Baltic states (Miniotaite 2003: 210). o thers note that the effects of e uropean integration on domestic political systems need not be all positive: e uropeanization is also associated with increased executive dominance, democratic deficit and the rise of technocratic decision-making (a strov, in this volume; r aik 2004). a t the same time, the e U's attempts to use its transformative conditionality in relations with the increasingly sovereignty-conscious r ussia have not been particularly successful. r ussia refused inclusion in the e uropean n eighbourhood Policy (en P), a carrot-and-stick scheme for countries not included in the accession process, and insists on a strategic partnership on an equal basis.

t he Baltic states remain ardent critics of the tendency to circumvent conditionality in relations with r ussia, insisting (effectively appropriating the language of the en P) on the contingency of cooperation on "demonstrated commitment to shared values". In sum, we conclude that the e uropeanization in Baltic-r ussian relations is asymmetrical (which may intensify conflict instead of alleviate it) and that the effects of e uropean integration vary by issue-area, depending on the stringency and nature of e U rules, as well as the intensity and alignments of interests (which tend to interfere with the implementation of these rules).

t he second approach that can be used to make sense of the effects of e urope on the Baltic-r ussian relationship builds on the liberal intergovernmentalism of a ndrew Moravcsik (1998). Put simply, the basic argument in this elaborate theory is that member state governments (as opposed to supranational institutions) control the process of e uropean integration. Major decisions are taken at international negotiations and the outcomes of intergovernmental bargaining reflect power relationships and asymmetrical interdependence. In other words, big and powerful countries prevail. t his framework is relevant for explaining Baltic-r ussian relations for several reasons. First, it reminds us of the weakness of the e U as a foreign policy actor, clearly evident in its inability to speak to r ussia in "one voice" (see also l eonard and Popescu 2007). It suggests that e U policy on r ussia will ultimately reflect the interests of its core powers. Second, it raises questions about the impact that a big and powerful neighbour can yield over e uropean decision-making, relative to the impact of three tiny member states. c ould it be the case that a formal seat at the table matters less than energy leverage and growing might? t hird, intergovernmental reasoning is consistent with the r ussian strategy of bilateralizing its relations with e urope – that is, dealing directly with Berlin, Paris and r ome as opposed to the supranational rule-bound bureaucracy in Brussels. t he n ord Stream pipeline project can be regarded a vivid illustration of a great-power e urope in operation.

t he third approach, which is most consistent with the identity-based approach examined in this volume, focuses on the discursive construction of the meaning of e U/e urope in different national contexts (d iez 2001; h ansen and Wæver 2002). d epicting e urope as a "discursive battleground", these studies posit a layered structure of identity discourses. a t the bottom of this structure lies the state-nation core concept; the second layer specifies its relational position *vis-à-vis* e urope, while at the third layer we find the content of Europe and the particular visions of e urope that are promoted. t he basic argument is that states seek cross-level compatibility of identity constructions and advance visions of e urope consistent and advantageous to their definition of the national self. A number of specific propositions about Baltic-r ussian relations can be derived from this framework.

First, we argue that both the Baltic states and r ussia strive for the recognition and acceptance of a particular notion of self on the e uropean arena with corresponding implications for policy and interaction. Second, both the Baltic states and r ussia assert the e uropeanness of self while denying the e uropeanness of the other. a s ardent critics of the k remlin's record on democracy and human rights, the Baltic

states point to r ussian failures in conforming to "e uropean values". t hey also undermine r ussia's historical role as the "liberator of e urope" by sermonizing about the Molotov-r ibbentrop Pact, the illegal annexation and occupation of the Baltic states by the USSr , and the criminality of the communist regime. Utilizing h untingtonian imagery, the Baltics have been keen to portray themselves as outposts of e urope/e U (Pavlovaite 2000: 8), representing e urope in relations with r ussia and disseminating its values and norms (Miniotaite 2003). o ccasionally, the Baltic states present themselves as more Western than the West, reproaching the West for its failure to understand the "true" nature of r ussia. r ussian politicians, on the other hand, have been keen to portray the Baltic states as "false e urope" (Morozov 2003a), where the rights of minorities are not respected, history is being rewritten and "fascism" is embraced both by the authorities as well as the general public. Third, to the extent they can have an influence on the ongoing process of constructing the e U, both r ussia and the Baltic states seek to construct a e uropean Union compatible with and advantageous to their conceptions of self. t hus, the Baltic states strive for an e U sensitive to the rights and interests of its smallest and least powerful member states, while also emphasizing that in e U external relations, values should take precedence over interests. r ussia, in contrast, prefers an intergovernmental g reat Power e urope, similar to the nineteenth century c oncert of e urope, where r ussia is recognized as one of the powers with an undisputed right to defend its interests.

Structure of the Book

t his volume consists of ten chapters. In c hapter 2, e lena Fofanova and Viatcheslav Morozov argue that constructivism provides the most comprehensive framework for understanding the current state of relations between r ussia and the Baltic states. h ighlighting differences in the nation-building processes, they argue that r ussia and the Baltic states are unable to adopt the language of pragmatism because compromises could undermine "solidly sedimented identity structures". While they do not deny the relevance of explanations focusing on power relations, electoral politics and economic interests, they argue that rationalist accounts should take into account identity politics and contested regimes of historical truth.

c ontested interpretations of history give rise to semantic battles in which commemoration days and war monuments serve as important focal points. In c hapter 3, e va-c larita o nken uses a multi-level framework of memory politics to analyse Baltic domestic debates and international reactions surrounding Victory d ay celebrations in Moscow on 9 May 2005. She argues that the Baltic struggle with the invitation to Moscow had broader implications for e uropean memory politics because the controversy raised awareness about diverse historical legacies and their impact on politics. In c hapter 4, k arsten Brüggemann and a ndres k asekamp compare and contrast two cases in the e stonian "war of monuments": the removal of the g erman-uniformed monument at l ihula in 2004 and the relocation of the

r ed a rmy monument in t allinn in 2007. d epicting war monuments as important, ritualized sites of memory, the authors demonstrate the difficulties of coming to terms with the past in divided societies with contested identities.

In c hapter 5, Maria Mälksoo argues that struggles over the contents of a common e uropean remembrance of the Second World War are central to the recently intensified "memory wars" between the Baltic states and Russia. She argues that both sides try to wrench apart their traditionally liminal position in e urope by seeking all-e uropean recognition of the "e uropeanness" of their narrative of the Second World War. While the politics of becoming e uropean has taken diverging forms in the Baltic and r ussian cases, both have struggled for gaining Western recognition of their "e uropean subjectivity".

In c hapter 6, a lexander a strov questions the ability of both "end of history" and "return of history" perspectives to capture the underlying dynamics of the Baltic-r ussian relationship. h e proposes a third mode of collective engagement with the past where the state can no longer claim unproblematic identity with the nation and for this very reason, resorts to highly bureaucratic techniques of "commemoration". In his view, technocratic commemorative state practices tend to clash not because of the "return of history" but due to the exit of the state from "world history". Using the empirics of the Bronze Soldier crises, he demonstrates how technocratic administration aiming at peace without politics produced a peculiar conflict instead.

In c hapter 7, a ndris Spruds explains l atvia's strategic zigzags in its relations with r ussia by reference to the dynamic interaction between a newly promoted "opportunity discourse" and an older, more embedded "discourse of danger" that emphasizes victimization and historical grievances. t he desecuritization of economic cooperation with r ussia is indicative of selective "othering" – a practice that suggests a strong, two-way link between interests and identities.

The chapters by Dovilė Jakniūnaitė and Sergei Prozorov add a wider European dimension to the analysis of Baltic-Russian relations. In Chapter 8, Jakniūnaitė examines the neighbourhood concept and policy of the Baltic states against the backdrop of e U and r ussian policies in the shared neighbourhood. She argues that by actively supporting and promoting the e uropean n eighbourhood Policy (en P), the Baltic states are bolstering the e uropean layer of their national identities and working towards their "ultimate goal of moving away from e urope's edge". In c hapter 9, Sergei Prozorov discusses the narratives of exclusion and self-exclusion in the r ussian political discourse concerning e U-r ussian relations. h e argues that r ussia is subjected to both "temporal and territorial othering" and that the problematisation of this othering within r ussia leads to a reassertion of sovereignty and hence a turn towards self-exclusion. t he author concludes that these identity dynamics will give rise to continued conflict in EU-Russian relations, unless both sides choose to self-exclude from each other's domains.

The final chapter, by Hiski Haukkala, is a concluding chapter, which engages the rest of the chapters in discussion. h e argues that "identities are not the be all and end all in the study of social interaction" and concludes that although identities do

matter, it is important to keep in mind also the material and institutional structures of the international society. t hus, in his view, multi-causal analysis enables us to achieve more reliable accounts of international relations.

Imperial l egacy and the r ussian-Baltic Relations: From Conflicting h istorical n arratives to a Foreign Policy c onfrontation?

e lena Fofanova and Viatcheslav Morozov

t his chapter explores the process of national identity construction in the post-Soviet Russia and the significance of conflicting historical narratives for the current deplorable state of relations between r ussia and the Baltic states. It addresses the issue of national identity building in r ussia in recent years and highlights the differences between r ussia and other post-Soviet states, including, in particular, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It is our view that firstly, these differences are structural in nature, and secondly, they constitute a serious (perhaps the most serious) impediment on the way towards an improvement of bilateral relations between r ussia and the Baltic states. o ur argument about the structural nature of the foreign policy confrontation between r ussia and the Baltic states is based on a constructivist understanding of structure and agency. We attempt to go beyond the "conventional" interpretations of this problematic relationship in terms of either "subjective" or "objective" factors. We reject explanations in terms of "political will" or personal attitudes of particular politicians, most prominently the r ussian President Vladimir Putin. l ikewise, we do not accept accounts grounded in geographical determinism (such as promoted by geopolitics) or in some metaphysical (or racialist) preconceptions of the "r ussian soul", which do nothing but postulate r ussia's imperialist essence and the ensuing expansionism.

In the first section, we engage with existing rationalist accounts of the Russian-Baltic relationship. In spite of its relatively limited popularity in the scholarly community (it seems that rationalist researchers are simply much less interested in the topic than their constructivist opponents), rationalist outlook clearly dominates in the media and political discourses, and thus has to be taken seriously. We demonstrate, first, that rationalist explanations of the current state of Russian-Baltic relations are based on assumptions which, for the most part, are impossible to falsify because of their metaphysical nature, and which therefore cannot be accepted as valid starting points for an academic argument. Secondly, we provide empirical evidence against these rationalist accounts. In particular, we maintain that r ussian

society has largely reconciled itself with the fact of Baltic independence (even though this fact is still often described as accidental) and that no major political force promotes the expansionist agenda in the sense of depriving e stonia, l atvia and l ithuania of their sovereignty and somehow incorporating them back into Russia. Thus, in order to explain the persistence of conflict, we have to either slip back to untenable essentialist assumptions, or develop an alternative framework which duly takes into account identity politics as a key factor which puts r ussia and the Baltic states against each other.

Such an alternative framework is developed in the second section. We argue that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the r ussian Federation was structurally driven towards establishing itself as a successor of both the r ussian empire and the USSr . t his in turn meant that its foundational historical narrative clashed with those of the Baltic states at many crucial points. a s demonstrated in the third section, the overall feeling of insecurity about identities on both sides made the conflict almost inevitable. This controversy is deeply political in nature, since it directly concerns the foundational principles of each nation involved, the very idea of common good which necessarily underlies any political community. It is hardly surprising therefore that this political confrontation overrides and impedes cooperation on economic and societal issues.

It should be noted that we do not seek to completely dismiss rationalist explanations of the phenomena in question, but rather aspire to take them one step further and thus bring them out of the vicious circle which forces rationalists to base their work on untenable assumptions. For example, our approach can accommodate such accounts of the contemporary deterioration in the r ussian-Baltic relationship as power capabilities (for example r ussia's growing economic and military might and consolidating domestic power base in Putin's second term have led to a new foreign policy assertiveness, especially in post-Soviet space), alliance structures (for example Baltic n a t o membership as a key factor complicating relations) and domestic politics and vote-seeking (for example foreign policy statements and decisions designed to score points at home in the context of upcoming elections). t here is no doubt that all these factors play their part in aggravating the relationship – however, what is missing in rationalist explanations are answers to the very important *whys*: why a more powerful r ussia becomes more assertive in the post-Soviet space; why alliance structures exist as they are, and why r ussia, in its turn, does not seek membership in n a t o and the e U; and why vote-seeking takes the shape of more aggressive foreign policy *vis-à-vis* the West, and the Baltic states in particular? In our view, identity politics is what lies beneath *all* these developments, and therefore, rather than being an excessive supplement to the existing rationalist explanations, constructivist accounts actually result in greater parsimony and therefore are superior to rationalist ones.

The Vicious Circle of Rationalist Argument: From Assumptions back to Assumptions

Following Eiki Berg and Piret Ehin (see Chapter 1 in this volume), we find it useful to classify possible rationalist explanations of the current state of the Baltic-r ussian relationship into realist/neorealist, neo-liberal and domestic policy-oriented. Most of them, to be fair, try to incorporate historical memory and identity as variables, but usually treat those as additional, relatively unimportant factors. Moreover, we do not completely dismiss the validity of rationalist analysis, in order to replace them with "purely constructivist" reasoning. r ationalist explanations work as long as we can be sure all actors rationalize the social world in roughly the same way – that is, as long as we remain within one system of meaning that enables us to make sense of the world and to define our position in it. However, when it comes to crossing discursive boundaries and accounting for conflict between actors whose identities are built into radically different systems of signification, rationalist accounts tend to uncritically reproduce sets of assumptions which, for the most part, are impossible to falsify because of their metaphysical nature, and which therefore cannot be accepted as valid starting points for an academic argument.

Thus, the neorealist approach to the conflict between Russia and the Baltic states would reduce the plurality of relevant factors to power capabilities and threat perceptions: e stonia, l atvia and l ithuania, according to this view, are on the border between the two actors engaged in mutual securitization – the enlarging na t o and r ussia, weak or strong, but still perceived as dangerous (for a spectrum of opinions, see for example Bugajski 2003, 2007; g oble 2005a; l ynch 2001; Männik 2005: 76–78; Mozel 2001; Perry et al. 2000: 39–46, 60–70; Voronov 1998: 19–20). t he most consistent neorealist explanation would of course refer to the systemic level: under the conditions of international anarchy, any two centres of power that compete for resources and spheres of influence would see each other as potential enemies (Waltz 1979: 104–107) – however, in its pure form this vision is not present in the current debate for a very simple reason that it does not provide any ground for differentiating between r ussia and the West as potential threats for Baltic security. Much more widespread therefore is a qualified version of this argument that highlights the history of r ussian and/or Western expansionism and their struggle over the Baltic coast (for example h aab 1998: 119; Pikaev 1998) and underscores the overwhelming inequality between the two sides in terms of relative power (see k nudsen 2004). t his explains the Baltic states' bandwagoning (h ansen 1998: 109–10) and their obsession with the r ussian threat, but leaves open a number of issue-specific questions: why, for instance, is Russia, in its turn, so focused on the Baltic states, given their marginal position in the e uropean security architecture? Why are Moscow's relations with the core, and much more powerful, na t o countries, such as France and g ermany, and even the United States, so visibly better? a nd, at a deeper level, is there any explanation at all for r ussia's hostility towards the West, given that both face the threat of international

terrorism and the economic and demographic challenge of the rising a sia?[1] In the current e stonian debate, in particular, all these complications are explained away with a statement that r ussia still cannot reconcile itself with Baltic independence (a nsip 2007; Bugajski 2003: 85; Paet 2007c; Perry et al. 2000: 73). y et r ussian obstinacy in itself needs to be explained, unless we want to assume that it is *essentially* anti-Western and expansionist.[2]

n eo-liberal accounts, in effect, draw heavily on second-image arguments concerning the nature of the r ussian-Baltic relationship. h ere, it is often viewed in the broader context of post-communist transition and, in one way or another, related to the liberal teleology of the "end of history" (Fukuyama 1992).[3] Some authors (for example a mbrosio 2006; a smus 2008; k ramer 2002) would emphasize the role of international institutions – both those that include r ussia (such as the c ouncil of e urope and the o rganization for Security and c ooperation in e urope, or the na t o -r ussia c ouncil) and, in particular, the e uropean Union with its policy instruments aimed at making the e uropean neighbourhood more secure (Made 2005: 104–106; Mouritzen 2001). With a self-critical hindsight, one could also add a number of studies which at the turn of the centuries promoted the concept of regionalism (see Wæver 1997b) trying to apply it to the post-c old War Baltic Sea area. t his group of scholars, in which one of us also took part, was constructivist in its approach to national identity and region-building, but quite idealist in its "postmodernist" expectation that the state and bloc boundaries would blur, international relations would be desecuritized and a new e urope would emerge from the n orth based on shared values and bottom-up cooperation between various "post-national" units.[4] d avid Smith (2003: 51) rightly notes that this image of "the end of history", with its origins in the n ordic tradition of peace research, tended to too easily assume the non-confrontational nature of the post-c old War regional identities. When, towards the middle of the current decade, the inaccuracy of this assumption became clear, most of these authors felt it was time to turn to a deeper constructivist understanding of the nature of identity politics.

a number of important constructivist and post-structuralist studies have recently tackled the issue of e U security policy transformation and its apparent ineffectiveness at least in some crucial cases such as r ussia (Browning 2003;

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1   In his broadly realist power-based analysis of r ussian foreign policy, allen l ynch concedes that r ussia's opposition to na t o enlargement is driven mostly by identity concerns (2001: 17–19).

2   For a most characteristic example of such an essentialist outlook, see Mihkelson (2003: 270–1).

3   For a powerful critique of the teleology of modernization, specifically focused on the r ussian experience, see k apustin (2003).

4   among the most representative of this trend, one could name studies as diverse as c hristiansen et al. (1997); Joenniemi and l ehti (2003); Morozov (2003a); Wæver (1997b). d mitry t renin (1997) would be considered a more conventional liberal author, but this work of his stands alongside the above group due to its emphasis on the Baltic Sea region-building project.

Joenniemi 2007; Malmvig 2006; Prozorov 2006). t he e U's neo-liberal discourse of achieving security through democratic transformation, as well as the US project of democracy promotion, is premised on neo-k antian democratic peace theory (r awls 1999), which originates in the e nlightenment with its core idea of universal human rationality. a s a result, it tends to equate democracy with the formal presence of institutions shaped after their Western analogues, and to show deep mistrust towards local politics (c handler 2006; Morozov 2008). In the countries that do identify with the West and therefore find it relatively easy to conform to the disciplining practices of the e U, this often leads to a replacement of popular legitimacy with vicarious power – a rule in the name of external authority, which substitutes politics with management, and disproportionately expands executive prerogatives (a strov 2008; see also c hapter 7 of this volume). o n the other hand, the countries which, like r ussia, seem to be "lost in transition" (Shevtsova 2007), are often written off as *essentially* incapable of building a working democracy. a s Fabrizio t assinari rightly observes, the e uropean n eighbourhood Policy is premised on treating neighbours as "a source of instability that needs to be contained" (t assinari 2005: 396), since they are viewed as fundamentally different from the democratic e urope. Since the Ukrainian "orange revolution" r ussia, moreover, is often assigned the position of *the* authoritarian power in e urope: the choice that the eastern e uropeans had to make, according to the neo-liberal pro-democracy discourse, is between the inherently democratic West and the inherently authoritarian r ussia (Morozov 2005). In such accounts, r ussia figures as a threat regardless of whether it is considered strong or weak. t hus, according to r onald a smus, "Moscow sees itself as an independent e urasian power, offering its own authoritarian capitalist model of development as an alternative to democratic liberalism. […] [I]t is seeking to halt or roll back democratic breakthroughs in places such as g eorgia and Ukraine" (a smus 2008). Paul g oble, on the contrary, classifies Russia as a "newly weak country" which is dangerous because it has not come to terms with its reduced international status (2005a: 18–19), or, quite simply, as a "failed state which is neither willing nor able to control much that goes on in its territory" (2005a: 14).

a nother version of the neo-liberal argument would gravitate towards the pragmatic logic of economic cooperation. a ccording to this interpretation, the relations between the Baltic states and r ussia are characterized by a huge unrealized potential in the economic sphere. In particular, such authors would criticize projects like the Baltic o il Pipeline System or the n orth e uropean g as Pipeline (n ord Stream) as results of the "intrusion" of irrational political considerations into the economic ground, since both projects represent much more expensive alternatives to using the existing transit routes through r ussia's neighbouring states (for an overview, see Berg 2008). In general, this argument boils down to the statement that both sides are "objectively" interested in developing a good neighbourly relationship (Sergounin 1998: 50–1), that "*the interests* of all parties involved clearly contrast with their mutual perceptions" (t renin 1997: 20). t his leaves us with the "subjective" factor as the only explanation of the souring relationship: one

ends up discussing "stereotypes", "misperceptions" or the lack of "political will" on the part of the foreign policy elites, parts of which lean towards "concentrating attention on the problem side of the r ussian-Baltic relations" (t renin 1997: 25). Another option is to invoke the figure of corruption, that is, to describe the repeated crises in the Baltic-r ussian relations as resulting from the activities of various private lobbies (for example Jansons 1998: 5; Moshes 1999: 63; Perry et al. 2000: 71) or from the leaders' desire to "distract public opinion from the nation's serious problems" (Perry et al. 2000: 59). With time, it is argued, the genuine interests will prevail and "the need for a more constructive and coherent foreign policy in the area could emerge" (Sergounin 1998: 71; see also t renin 1997: 27, 2000: 38; SVo P 1999: pts. 4.20, 7.1; SVo P 2000: 36–37).[5] h owever, the persistence of these "misperceptions", which have remained virtually unchanged for the last 15 years, suggests that there is something more to that than just some kind of temporary failure of rationality on either or both sides. t hus, one has to either slip back to the untenable essentialist assumptions, or develop an alternative framework which duly takes into account identity politics as a key factor that puts r ussia and the Baltic states against each other.

n early all rationalist accounts, to a greater or lesser extent, seem to rely upon, or at least to reproduce, the assertion that r ussia still has not reconciled itself with the Baltic independence. It is hardly surprising because, as we have already pointed out, the abstract logic of anarchy and power, or of economic interdependence, does not accommodate the uniqueness of the Baltic-r ussian case with its persistent confrontational pattern. We have no problem accepting this argument if it is meant to refer to the endurance of imperial legacy in r ussian foreign policy – however, in this case, as we show in the next section, it eventually turns the rationalist logic upside down and assigns the central role in our understanding of the situation to history and identity. Before moving on to develop this argument, though, we must stress that to claim that imperial legacy refuses to go away is not the same as to contend that even at the end of the second decade since the collapse of the Soviet Union, getting back the territories of e stonia, l atvia and l ithuania constitutes for Moscow a valid foreign policy goal. t his assertion, in our view, would have no empirical support. For over a decade, Moscow has been pressing hard for a territorial settlement with all three Baltic states on the basis of the 1991 boundaries between the republics of the former Soviet Union. What has slowed down the negotiations on and the ratification of the border treaties was the suspicion on the part of Moscow that by insisting on the inclusion of the references to the t artu and r iga peace treaties of 1920, which established their sovereign statehood, e stonia and l atvia actually wanted to leave a loophole for future territorial claims on r ussia (g rotzky and k empe 2007: 34–35; k ononenko 2006: 78–80; Viktorova 2007: 26–51). t he treaty with l ithuania was signed in 1997, but, due to the disputes about the moral and legal significance of the Soviet occupation, as well

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5   arkady Moshes (1999: 57ff) disputes this conventional wisdom by maintaining that the impact of economic interdependence on political relations is not necessarily positive.

as on the future of the k aliningrad transit, was ratified and entered into force as late as 2003 (MId 2003).

It is also quite telling that in various imperial projects of the early twenty-first century, as well as in the major official statements and documents, the Baltic states have explicitly or implicitly figured as falling outside of the Russian domain. t hus, a natoly c hubais, in his famous "liberal empire" speech of 2003, insisted on r ussia's natural leadership in the c IS space, but did not mention the Baltics even once: for him, it seems, they unquestionably belong to the Western civilization, where the e U and US play the leading role (c hubais 2003). a ccording to the mapping offered in *Russia's Foreign Policy Review*, published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2007, the Baltic states are firmly located in Europe – it is not clear whether they are included into the region of central and eastern e urope or singled out as a separate group, but in any case their place is between Britain and the n ordic countries, very far away from the c IS space (MId 2007b).

t o sum up, the rationalist interpretations are unable to account for the uniqueness of the confrontational pattern in the Baltic-r ussian relations and, for the most part, have to resort to the essentialist argument that r ussia is inherently authoritarian and anti-Western. a nother contention that does the trick of providing an illusion of logical consistency is the rhetorical figure of "the lack of political will", which actually plays down the significance of politics and reduces it to the irrational superstructure which intervenes in the "normal" functioning of economic logic. a ll these accounts start from an assumed ontological priority of a certain layer of social reality – power over "ideas" and values, economics over politics, and so on. But they have to end up with equally questionable assumptions which are absolutely necessary to "seal" the argument. a constructivist perspective, which describes the conflictual relationship in question as an outcome of an identity-based antagonism, does not need any of such assumptions to be internally coherent.

Imperial Legacy and Russian Identity Construction

o ur interpretation of the current poor state of relations between r ussia and the Baltic states, in particular e stonia, is based on one key factor: identity dynamics. t his does not mean that we want to build ontological hierarchies and to reduce the variety of issues and processes that make up the patchy fabric of relations between the four nations to one and only one "real" substance, be it identity, economy or anything else. o n the contrary, identity politics, as we see it, is what *differentiates* the case in point from a number of others, and accounts for the specific interplay of interest-based politics in such fields as security, economy, domestic politics (including elections), and so on. Without denying the significance of interest, we argue that the Baltic-r ussian relations after the collapse of the Soviet Union are a perfect example of an historical conjuncture where interest should not be taken for granted, but on the contrary, the link between identity and interest formation should be the focus of any academically solid research. In order to demonstrate

that, we firstly need to explore the uniqueness of the Russian situation after the Soviet demise. Secondly, we will proceed to examine the negative identity dynamics between r ussia and the three Baltic states, which, in our view, is what makes this relationship so special.

r ussia, as many other contemporary nation states, is struggling to develop a consistent and consensual understanding of national identity – indeed, as a lexander a strov argues in c hapter 6, the faulty link between the nation and the state is behind many crises in the contemporary world. o n the one hand, r ussia's official nationalism under President Putin has been consciously developed in the civic direction, with the r ussian nation (*rossiyane*) being imagined as a political community including all citizens of r ussia (t olz 2004). n o doubt, there is a lot of ambiguity in the way some key figures in Putin's administration, such as the main k remlin ideologue, d eputy h ead of the Presidential a dministration Vladislav Surkov, formulate their understanding of the r ussian nation.[6] t he legacy of the Soviet Union as an "affirmative action empire" (Martin 2001) leads to a situation where, instead of prioritizing equality of all before the law, the state engages in supporting local cultures and languages as a way of paying respect to the "multinational" character of the r ussian Federation (Malakhov 2006; Markedonov 2006). h owever, the recognition that the r ussian Federation can survive in its present shape only if it manages to curb ethnic and religious extremism of all kinds and to develop some form of political unity is certainly one of the essential elements of the mainstream political consensus (Markedonov 2006; Miller 2007; Sultygov 2007).

a t the same time, however, civic nationalism presupposes a clear-cut differentiation between those who belong and who do not (t homas 2002), and thus some exclusionary measures unambiguously defining the body politic. The key measure of this sort was the replacement of the 1992 law on citizenship, which effectively was based on the premise that all former citizens of the USSr were eligible for r ussian citizenship, with a much stricter law in 2001 (Federalnyi zakon 2002). Putin's efforts to create a more efficient state by building the (in)famous "vertical of power" can also be interpreted in the same vein. a ll those trends arguably point in one direction and can be interpreted as attempts to consolidate the modern political subject in the situation of indeterminacy created by the collapse of the Soviet Union. Many scholars have pointed out that r ussia as a state has never existed in its present shape, that it had to be "invented"[7] as a nation, being initially just an accidental remainder left behind after the ethnic republics walked away from the communist empire (see r ichter 1996: 69–73; Suny 1999: 147–152; cf. Kagansky 2005). Nothing was given in advance: the Russians had to define for themselves the identity of the new state, to make sense of the outside world, and even to create the language for both: the r ussian politicians of the early 1990s,

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6   See, in particular, Surkov's most important ideological manifesto, *Nationalisation of the Future* (Surkov 2006), and its critique in k arpenko (2007).

7   t erm used by gleb Pavlovsky in his recent interview, see Semionov (2006).

as Johan Matz writes, "had to 'give names to things'… t hey even had to invent words in order to make sense of 'things'" (Matz 2001: 80). t he post-Soviet r ussia, therefore, inevitably was and remains a project, a political community whose identity is yet to be (re)defined and a subject whose sovereignty is to be (re)gained. Given the constitutive significance of sovereignty for the modern political world, the Westphalian notion of the r ussian nation as a sovereign political community, *pluribus in unum*, was bound to become the key element of nearly any vision of the country's future.

a t the same time there was, as indicated above, a certain ambiguity in the whole discursive setting, which arguably contributed to the political volatility of the 1990s. In the beginning of that decade, the r ussians had to decide for themselves whether, after the Soviet collapse, they were still living in the same country which now had to adjust to a huge loss of territory and to a new global environment, or in a new state that had just been born in the preceding revolutionary years, whose identity had to be created from scratch and whose political subjectivity was grounded in a new constitutive decision. In legal terms, the r ussian Federation immediately, starting from the Belovezha agreements of September 1991, defined itself as the heir of the USSr , thus creating a prerequisite for building its political identity on the same notion of the "continuer-state". t his grounding was further reinforced by the fact that the personal and family histories of nearly all Soviet people (with the only exception of the majority of the Baltic nations) were interwoven into the dominant Soviet historical narrative.[8] r ussia's position in relation to the pan-e uropean discourse, and to its key nodal points such as democracy and liberation, structurally differed from those of all former republics and satellites of the Soviet Union. e ven if the Soviet past still remains a golden age for many common people from l viv to d ushanbe and Ust-k amenogorsk (Mironowicz 2001; n adkarni and Shevchenko 2004; Petukhov 2006: 94–100), and even if some of the former Soviet republics, such as k azakhstan or Belarus, had no historical record of independent modern statehood, all of them nevertheless had their national existence officially recognized within the USSr . t hey had such attributes of sovereign statehood as the national territory, the flag and the anthem and, most importantly, their national history and culture were taught at school at all levels. a gainst this background, the acquisition of independent statehood was easy to present as the final act of national liberation, crowning the centuries-long history of a sovereign political community in the making. r onald g rigor Suny (1999: 153–154) is absolutely right to observe that most of the post-Soviet states had to deal with "serious issues of the inclusivity or exclusivity of what constitutes the nation", and some of them were for that reason drawn into "the devastating and violent crises that fractured the new republics". h owever, the story of "coherent and conscious nations emerg[ing] from decades if not centuries of oppression to take the opportunity offered by g orbachev to assert their natural, long-denied aspirations for independence and

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8 For a more detailed discussion on the significance of historical memory, see k hapaeva (2002).

sovereignty" was still available in all those cases, helping to overcome the crises and to consolidate the new states.

t he only case where the national alternative was available but did not really work was Belarus, whose identity was substantially reshaped during the post-Second World War years through the heroic narratives of guerrilla warfare, resistance and sacrifice, and thus firmly embedded in the Soviet history.[9] In r ussia, however, there was no national alternative at all: its official history was a history of an empire, of a diverse and expanding political space with a strong centre in Moscow. t he image of the USSr as an organic phase in the development of the thousand-year-old r ussian state and as a natural predecessor of the r ussian Federation was shaken by the attempts to rewrite the national history in the late 1980s-early 1990s (a dler 2005), but remained largely in place. c onsequently, the concept of the continuer-state was left as the only possible basis for national identity, and the imperial historical narrative, cleansed of the most conspicuous Soviet ideological clichés, remained at the core of various community-building practices.[10]

t he principle of continuity between the r ussian Federation and the USSr deepened another structural difference between r ussia and its neighbours. For the Baltic states and other new members of the e uropean Union and na t o , joining the Western institutions was a symbolic move confirming their belonging to Europe, to the Western civilization, and the final act of liberation from the oppressive r ussian rule. r ussia for them was the opposite of e urope, democracy and civilization, the Schmittean enemy (Schmitt 1996) whose presence helped to sustain and consolidate both the national community and the feeling of belonging to the democratic world. t his discursive setting was a prerequisite for the structure of incentives which ensured the success of the disciplining practices applied by the e U and na t o to their prospective new members (g heciu 2005; k elley 2004; Vachudová 2005). a s it turns out, the same discursive mechanisms can work even in the case of countries where neither the Soviet Union nor today's r ussia were, from the very beginning, unambiguously perceived as the "other" – g eorgia, Ukraine and Moldova, and even, albeit to a limited extent, in Belarus (Ioffe 2007). In r ussia's case, the negative side of this equation was missing: to go along the same path, r ussia, in a way, would have had to secede from itself, to work out a new identity based on the negation of the Soviet past. Whereas other post-Soviet states that had a "fresh start" preserved their foundational narratives, even if they

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9   t he purely heroic reading of this narrative was carefully constructed and protected by the Soviet authorities to overcome the immense trauma caused by the destruction and extermination perpetrated by all parties, including the guerrillas (Silitski 2005; see also Ioffe 2003; Marples 2005: 901–903; t ereshkovich 2001).

10   In particular, this is illustrated by the recent heated discussion about a new high school textbook (Filippov 2007) reproducing the main points of the official Soviet historical narrative and linking them to the ideological framework of "sovereign democracy" (see for example t aratuta 2007).

had to be adjusted to the new frame of reference, r ussia would have been left with emptiness, with a blank sheet which it would have had to fill in from the very top. Strong incentives for that could have been provided in the sense of the United States and the e uropean Union embracing r ussia as a member of the Western democratic community. t his, however, did not happen either, or at least the r ussians felt that the Western welcome was no more than lukewarm (h aukkala 2003: 288–290; n eumann, 1998; Simes 2007).

The strong identification of democratic norms and values with the West in itself was a factor impeding the development of a civic, non-imperial nationalism in r ussia. t he r ussian leaders, including President Boris y eltsin, did their best to present the new political regime as a democracy (Bruner 2002a: 53–55, 2002b) and insisted (initially with determination, later more and more timidly) that r ussia was moving closer to the Western civilization. In a situation where the majority of the population was utterly frustrated with the economic results of the reforms and feeling even more disempowered in the new "democratic" political system than under communism, it is hardly surprising that in the end the r ussians decided democracy was no good for them. a s demonstrated by Joachim Zweynert, even to many economists who professed liberal ideas in the early 1990s, "[s]hock therapy came as a shock" (Zweynert 2007: 53), which induced them to turn to nationalist and statist ideas. It should be emphasized that the argument here is not that "r ussia's new authoritarianism" has made the majority of the r ussians better off – we tend to agree with Michael McFaul and k athryn Stoner-Weiss's assertion that the creation of the "vertical of power" "has coincided with economic growth but not caused it" (McFaul and Stoner-Weiss 2008). h owever, it is all the more evident that very few r ussians would like to go back to the chaotic 1990s, and that, even while they mostly would like to see their country democratic, their understanding of democracy is conditioned by history – in particular, there is a strong tendency to prefer a unique r ussian version of democracy over the Western models (l evada-t sentr 2007; Sil and c hen 2004: 353–58).

The final deadly blow to the belief in the universal significance of democracy was wrought by na t o 's k osovo campaign in 1999, just before the parliamentary and presidential elections in r ussia. t he war against y ugoslavia was widely interpreted in r ussia as a cynical enterprise aimed at geopolitical expansion, and as a proof that the West was using democratic liberal values to undermine the principle of sovereignty, to destroy other civilizations and, in the end, to eliminate any diversity and dissent at the global level (Morozov 2002). t he strong presence of the nationalist platform in the public debate throughout the 1990s provided the most credible alternative and, in the end, the image of the West as the proper name for the "civilization-in-the-singular", rooted in the e nlightenment, gave way to the romanticist view of the world as populated by "civilizations-in-the-plural" (see Jackson 2006: 135ff).

Vladimir Putin came to power in a situation where the need to safely transfer presidential authority to a reliable successor and to consolidate the regime after the elections motivated the elites to make the safest bet possible. t he choice was

made in favour of restorationism. Putin's r ussia defines itself as not only the legal successor, but also the geopolitical heir of the USSr , while the concept of the continuer-state lies at the core of national identity. Inability to break away from the Soviet Union is arguably the key factor behind r ussia's never-ending attempts to (re)establish itself as a great power (g omar 2006: 64–65), with the idea of great-powerness based on the Soviet image of the nuclear superpower with a global network of allies, dependents and clients. In contrast to what a smus seems to suggest, "[t]he gap in historical narratives" does not simply "mirror the increasingly tense relationship between the West and r ussia", but, rather on the contrary, is one of the primary sources of r ussia's "drift in [the] anti-Western direction" (a smus 2008). Imperial ambitions necessitated the hopeless investments in the preservation of the c ommonwealth of Independent States, whose existence, especially up until the reversal of Moscow's policies in the early years of Putin's presidency, critically depended on r ussian subsidies of all sorts (t sygankov 2006: 1082). t he continuer-state identity was also one of the key reasons for the political involvement in the post-Soviet space (Matz 2001), which, *inter alia*, led to a gradual deterioration of Moscow's relations with the West. In particular, one could mention the union with "the last e uropean dictator" a liaksandr l ukashenka (Marples 2005) and, of course, the attempts to influence the outcome of the Ukrainian presidential elections of 2004.[11] e ven the understanding of the corporal boundaries of the Russian nation was influenced by the imperial syndrome: the special status of "compatriots" in the r ussian diplomatic and legal practices resulted in the never-ending row with the Baltic States, in particular l atvia and e stonia, about the rights of their r ussian-speaking population (Budryte 2005b; Morozov 2003a; Morozov 2004),[12] and in the provision of r ussian citizenship to the inhabitants of the g eorgian breakaway republics of a bkhazia and South o ssetia (t renin 2006: 10, 14).

t he heroic narrative of the g reat Patriotic War (that is, the Soviet Union's war against n azi g ermany in 1941–1945) is particularly important for the new r ussia's identity construction (g udkov 2005; see also o nken's contribution to this volume), since it links r ussia with e urope and/or civilization. Whereas according to nearly all other criteria r ussia comes out as at best a peripheral e uropean country, the history of the Second World War can be told in such a manner that the Soviet Union will appear at the centre of the struggle for the genuine e uropean values against a barbarian force (stemming, by the way, from the very heart of e urope). In his article published in *Le Figaro* on 7 May 2005, President Putin emphasized the link between all these nodal points by saying that "the r ussian nation's democratic

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11   the logic of the russian position is, in our view, most comprehensively presented in Zatulin (2005) and Pastukhov (2006).

12   It should be noted, of course, that the newly declared policy of inducing "the compatriots" to "return" to r ussia, aimed at offsetting the demographic decline (n ozhenko 2006), has eased the tension – but only to a limited extent, as demonstrated in particular by the Bronze Soldier crisis.

and e uropean choice is entirely logical. t his is a sovereign choice of a e uropean nation that defeated n azism and knows the price of freedom" (Putin 2005b). t he crucial importance of the g reat Patriotic War narrative is best illustrated by the scale of the celebrations commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of victory over n azi g ermany in 2005,[13] but the fact that the festivities carefully reproduced the style of the Soviet V-day is perhaps even more indicative (Barnsten 2005). a lso quite telling is the fact that the celebrations in the following years were no less pompous, with heavy weapons on show during the military parade in 2008, for the first time since the Soviet collapse.

Sacralization of the war narratives leads to a situation where the memory of the war becomes "implacable" (Ferretti 2005): the public discursive space is consistently purged of any stories which allow for drawing parallels between Stalin and h itler, the USSr and n azi g ermany. t he Molotov-r ibbentrop pact, the Soviet attack against Poland in September 1939 (effectively in alliance with the n azis), the Winter War against Finland, the occupation of the Baltic states, and the mass repressions which, *inter alia*, weakened the r ed a rmy on the eve of the g erman offensive – all these facts are not completely ignored, but squeezed out of the public space and left for the professional historians to discuss (a dler 2005; Khapaeva 2006; for the official position, see Chubaryan 2005). Obviously, there is a significant degree of conscious manipulation here (Mendelson and Gerber 2006), but all these myths, denials and suppressions should be understood as elements of discourse as a unified system, where one element cannot be changed without a corresponding adjustment of many others. h ere our interpretation differs from the one offered by Maria Mälksoo in her contribution to this volume. Where she sees "the cunning pick-and-choose approach to r ussia's communist inheritance", we tend to observe a strong structural determination, with discursive factors overpowering any evil or goodwill on the part of the political actors. g iven the foundational significance of the Great Patriotic War narrative, any recognition of the negative role played by the Soviet Union in the history of the Second World War would involve reconfiguring the whole groundwork of Russian national identity construction.

The Russian-Baltic Relations: Background Identity Dynamics and Pragmatic Departures

If one views r ussian foreign policy in this light, it is easy to understand why the Baltic states continue to occupy such a central position on the r ussian agenda, and why both sides find it extremely difficult to compromise in their disputes. The Baltic national identities, in all three cases, are based on the idea of restoration of their sovereign statehood after the Soviet occupation of 1940–1991 (Smith 1999).

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13   om the position of the Baltic states in relation to the celebration, see onken 2007a.

t hey do accept the idea of continuity between the r ussian empire, the Soviet Union and the r ussian Federation, but evaluate its historical role in a diametrically opposite manner – as that of an authoritarian, non-e uropean state which has repeatedly colonized its weaker European neighbours (Račevskis 2002). Most significantly, they completely refuse to consider the expulsion of the Nazi German troops from their territories by the r ed a rmy in 1944 as "liberation", arguing that for them, one occupation simply replaced another (Fredén 2005). It is therefore no coincidence that e stonia, l atvia and l ithuania, often together with Poland, most often occupy in the r ussian discourse the position of the "false e urope" (Neumann 1996a) – a structurally determined site in the discursive field that allows Russia to reaffirm its European identity in spite of the ever growing criticism of its democratic credentials, human rights record and on many other points which are normally accepted as criteria of belonging to the e uropean civilization. r ussian discourse always constructs a "true", friendly e urope, which represents an outside projection of r ussian identity, and dismisses the allegedly hostile, anti-r ussian e urope as having lost genuine e uropeanness, violating the rules established by and for itself. t o put it in terms of e rnesto l aclau and c hantal Mouffe's (1985) theory of discourse, all r ussian hegemonic articulations tried to establish relations of equivalence between r ussia and e urope (that is, position r ussia as an essential, defining part of the European civilization) by the exclusion of "false" (often pro-a merican) e urope.

By singling out the Baltic states as the black sheep of the e uropean family, r ussia could establish itself as a "normal" e uropean nation, which might have *some* internal problems (such as c hechnya or the parliament completely controlled by one party), but they were forgivable if compared with the even greater, it was argued, sins of others. t he list of transgressions allegedly committed by the Balts is especially long in the case of e stonia and l atvia: it includes such items as violating the rights of their r ussian-speaking residents, harbouring pro-Nazi sympathies manifest in the attempts to decry the significance of the Soviet victory in the Second World War and in the acquiescence to the marches of the Waffen-SS veterans, the refusal to fully give up territorial claims on r ussia (that is, the insistence on mentioning, respectively, the t artu and r iga peace treaties in the new border agreements), and so on (for details, see k ramer 2002: 734–6; Morozov 2003a, 2004). In all three cases, however, the opposite reading of some key historical events, such as victory over n azism or the reforms of Peter the g reat, has been at the core of the disagreement. r ussia angrily rejected any possibility of recognizing the fact of the occupation and, hence, any option of discussing the Baltic claims for compensation (c hernichenko 2004; d emurin 2005), while the Baltic states interpreted this as evidence of Moscow's continued imperial ambitions, which only confirmed their longstanding conviction that r ussia remained the key potential threat to their security (Mälksoo 2006: 283–6).

In sum, the Baltic states (similarly to many other central and eastern e uropean countries, but perhaps with greater intensity) based their e uropean identity on a negation of r ussia's belonging to e urope, while r ussia had no other choice but

to try and position them outside of the e uropean political space. t he negation of each other's e uropeanness constitutes a constant background in the Baltic-r ussian relationship ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, and explains the fact that any deterioration of r ussia's relations with the West tends to open a new round of conflict with all three Baltic countries. Identity dynamics, understood in this way, also explains why Baltic membership in the e uropean Union and n a t o resulted, contrary to what was expected by many (see c hapter 1), in worse relations with Moscow. o n the one hand, even while the e stonians, l atvians and Lithuanians obtained a positive institutional confirmation of their belonging to the West and e urope, the structure of their identity discourse had by that time solidified and thus the othering of Russia was bound to continue. What is more, they obviously expected their reading of e uropean history to be recognized by the fellow e uropeans, and the disappointment with what they saw as "o ld" e urope's connivance at r ussia's wrongdoings could only strengthen the binary identity structures in their case (Mälksoo 2006: 282–6), and even lead to the e U being conceptualized as "an agent of r ussia's interests" (Viktorova 2007: 53; see also a alto 2003: 582–83; k uus 2002a). o n the other hand, to the r ussians, the Baltic membership in the Western institutions was yet another confirmation of their perception that their country was discriminated against, which led to an even more intensive use of the discursive figure of "false" Europe. It is important to note here that the description of r ussia as a *threat* in the Baltic discourses could have become less common (for a discussion on the issue, see a alto 2003; k uus 2002a, 2002b; n oreen and Sjöstedt 2004; Viktorova 2007: 58–59). h owever, since no alternative identity structure has emerged, r ussia still remains a radical "other" for all three Baltic states, and to what extent this translates into security politics is only a question of circumstances (cf. Mälksoo 2006; Viktorova 2007). The situation in Russia differs only in the sense that its growing self-confidence makes explicit securitization of threats emanating from the Baltic states less likely – but they nevertheless occupy a core position in the consolidated "other" which threatens r ussia, *inter alia*, by trying to revise the results of the Second World War.[14]

As argued above, other factors, such as Russia's growing self-confidence or electoral politics, can explain the changes in the intensity of conflict, but neither its existence, nor the specific focus of Russia's security and identity discourses on the Baltic states. Thus, the first crisis in the Baltic-Russian relations, in which l atvia played the role of the "bad guy", unfolded in 1998–1999 against the background of the preparation for the critical electoral cycle of 1999–2000, which involved a transfer of power from ailing Boris y eltsin to a new president (Morozov 2003a: 227–232). c onsolidation of power in the hands of Vladimir Putin and cooperation with the US in the framework of the anti-terrorist coalition, which amounted to a

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14   dmitrii nersessov (2007) goes as far as to propose criminal punishment for any "public denial or disparagement of r ussia's and its people's role in defeating n azi g ermany".

recognition by the West of Russia's global significance, coincided with a significant improvement of the relations with all Baltic countries, in particular e stonia (k hudoley and l anko 2004; Morozov 2004: 321–324; n oreen and Sjöstedt 2004). t he onset of a "new c old War", which preceded another transfer of presidency in 2007–2008, corresponds to yet another crisis, this time centred on e stonia. It is also quite clear why, among many possible conflict matters, it was the removal of the World War II monument by the e stonian authorities that caused real anger and protest both among the citizens of r ussia and the e stonian r ussians – as pointed out above, it is the memory of the g reat Patriotic War that most explicitly links r ussian and e uropean identities, and therefore any encroachment on this memory is interpreted as a sign of outright hostility, as a violent negation of r ussia's self.

t he position of l atvia in the current r ussian debate presents another interesting empirical example that proves our point. t hese relations are still far from perfect – in spite of what is described by the r ussian diplomats as "positive shifts in bilateral relations" (l avrov 2007c; MId 2007a), the background identity dynamics described above is still in operation. n evertheless, the development that started with Vaira Vike-Freiberga being the only head of a Baltic state attending the 2005 Victory d ay celebrations, has since then materialized in the first ever bilateral visit of the l atvian Prime Minister to Moscow in March 2007, the signing and the quick entry into force in d ecember 2007 of the r ussian-l atvian border treaty, as well as l atvia's agreement to take part in the n ord Stream project. a ll that presents a sharp contrast to the practically frozen relations between Moscow and t allinn (cf. g rotzky and k empe 2007). a ndris Spruds (see c hapter 7) argues that domestically, the Latvian Government has justified its approach to Russia as "pragmatic". Interestingly, this seems to be exactly what r ussia might be expecting from its Baltic partners, since it resonates with its own realist disposition. Minister Sergei l avrov (2007d), for instance, taking stock of the international developments in 2006, contrasts the Western "black and white image of the world, tendency towards a re-ideologization and re-militarization of international relations", caused by "the syndrome of the western 'victory' in the c old War", with r ussia's ability to "comprehend the outcome of the c old War", to "reject ideology in favour of common sense" (see also l avrov 2007a, 2007b). a gainst this background, it is important to note that, according to e va-c larita o nken (2007a: 34), l atvian society has during the recent years succeeded in developing a critical attitude to the romantic national narrative, having overcome a number of stereotypes.

t he self-description of r ussia's foreign policy as "great power pragmatism" is accepted by many academic writers (notably, t sygankov 2006: 127–166). t his pragmatism, however, is based on the staunch defence of state sovereignty as the key organizing principle of the international system, and therefore looks desperately ideological from the liberal universalist point of view (see Morozov 2008). It is, however, useless to argue whether r ussian, e stonian or l atvian foreign policy is "pragmatic" or "ideological" and "nationalist". t he reality is that e stonia, which at the moment appears to base its approach to r ussia on a version of idealist nationalism, finds a partner in an equally idealist imperialist Russia. On

the other hand, l atvia, playing a pragmatic card, fits into another dimension of the r ussian identity discourse, which emphasizes pragmatic national interest based on the principle of state sovereignty.

Conclusion

t his chapter has argued that the constructivist approach provides the most comprehensive framework for understanding the current state of relations between r ussia and the three Baltic states. It is focused on the mutual othering that stems from opposing historical narratives and the struggle for belonging to e urope. t he ensuing identity dynamics constitutes the background to the relationship, which is then influenced by secondary factors, such as (perceived) balance of power, electoral politics, economic interests, and so on. t he case of r ussia and the Baltics proves, in our view, that identity politics must, at least in some cases, be considered as a fundamental layer of international reality, which often makes up the conditions for the workings of power and economic interest. t his does not mean that the approaches which focus on power, institutions and/or economics cannot be productively applied even to such complicated cases – our only claim in this respect is that the rationalist accounts must take into consideration what the constructivists have to say on identity dynamics and the contested regimes of historical truth.

The background conflict of identities and historical narratives does not preclude compatibility of more superficial identity discourses – this is what seems to have happened between "pragmatic l atvia" and "pragmatic r ussia" in 2005–2007. It would be naïve, however, to argue that the only thing the Baltic states have to do to normalize their relations with r ussia is to adopt the language of pragmatism. e ven if it were always possible in terms of domestic politics, the background identity dynamics would still be there, and the structurally given position of "false" e urope in the Russian discourse would still need to be filled in – at least at certain moments. a n empirical illustration of this point is that while the r ussian and l atvian diplomats in December 2007 exchanged instruments of ratification of the border agreement and spoke about "positive shifts in bilateral relations", the r ussian oil was still reaching Western e urope via all possible routes but one, perhaps most efficient in terms of direct costs – the Latvian port of Ventspils. The improvement of the l atvian-r ussian relations in the course of 2007 has been achieved in spite of the continuing existence of a vast array of potentially confrontational issues, ranging from the status of the r ussian-speaking minority to the Baltic support of g eorgia against r ussia. a s pragmatic as they could have become, neither Moscow nor r iga can so far afford a far-reaching compromise on any of these questions, because such a compromise would undermine their most solidly sedimented identity structures. For the normalization to become permanent, both sides have to find a new language for speaking about all these issues – a process that is likely to take many more months and perhaps years.

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c hapter 3

c ommemorating 9 May: t he Baltic States and e uropean Memory Politics[1]

e va-c larita o nken

d ays of commemoration are primarily meant for individuals to remember a past event that is considered important for the community or the state. t his can be a reason for celebration as much as for mourning and coming to terms with a traumatic event of the past. For a society "commemorative activity" usually serves to strengthen the feeling of community and of solidarity among those who commemorate – a solidarity that is not necessarily based on consensus over the past event, but rather stretches several generations, social classes and political camps (g illis 1994: 5). o ver time, the actual event and the individual experiences connected with it become less important and are replaced by a collective image of the past that is ritually re-evoked through the memorial event. Moreover, the salience of a particular event acquired through ritualized commemoration may over time screen out not only past events, but also diverging memories. c ommemoration days are thus also facilitating social mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. For political actors in democracies, commemoration days provide the opportunity to demonstrate positions in the struggle for interpretative power *vis á vis* political opponents. Moreover, the official appearance of politicians and heads of state on such days are often used to strengthen a country's profile *vis á vis* its neighbours and the outside world in general. t hus, commemoration days are of keen interest for those who study the relationship between memory and politics in domestic affairs as well as in international relations.

o ne recent example worth studying in this context is the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War on 9 May 2005, which was commemorated as "victory day" in Moscow and to which r ussian President Putin invited heads-of-state and -government from around the world, including the presidents of the three Baltic states. This invitation put the latter group of leaders into a difficult situation, as this day for the Baltic peoples marks the continuation of foreign occupation of their countries. Moreover, Putin's invitation of world leaders meant that "the history of the 20th century suddenly became a very real foreign policy issue in

the 21st century, and [the Baltic states] … found [themselves] in the centre of this controversy" (Kalnins 2005: 2). Confronted with a difficult decision, the then Latvian President Vaira Vike-Freiberga decided in January 2005 to accept the invitation, whereas her e stonian and l ithuanian colleagues decided two months later to stay away. a closer look at the decision-making process of the Baltic presidents reveals many levels on which e uropean politics today are closely linked to questions of collective memory and history culture. t hus the international gathering on 9 May 2005 in Moscow provides a perfect case to identify and illustrate the various levels of memory politics in e urope, as is the main aim of this chapter.

t he author argues that there are at least three distinct levels[2] of analysis worthy of study when trying to understand the link between memory and politics in e urope today: domestic memory politics, memory politics in bilateral relations, and memory politics in the e uropean Union. e ach of the three levels can be analysed separately, and especially for the domestic level of history culture and politics this has been done quite extensively in recent years. y et in reality the three analytical levels are closely related in so far as no thorough analysis of domestic debates and policies that involve questions of historical interpretation can ignore the impact of outside actors. Moreover, bilateral tensions between states over issues of the past not only derive from domestic considerations and perceptions, they can also be affected and affect the way history and memory are politically dealt with on a supranational level such as the e uropean Union or the c ouncil of e urope. Indeed, since the e U's eastern enlargement, this last level of analysis is gaining particular significance as different and sometimes contradicting perceptions of the past are increasingly influencing decision-making processes within European institutions.

a ll three levels of analysis constitute somewhat self-contained, rather dynamic spheres of activity and sites of power, in which an increasing number of political actors struggle and compete with each other over the interpretation of the past, the shaping of memory and its translation into policy decisions. a s the only new e U member states that were formerly part of the Soviet Union, the Baltic states provide an ideal case on which to demonstrate the distinct character and yet inter-relatedness of these different analytical levels. Moreover, taking the occasion of Moscow's celebrations on 9 May 2005 and analysing the public and political debates surrounding the Baltic presidents' reactions to Putin's invitation, will give an opportunity to further prove the utility of the proposed model.

The chapter is structured accordingly in two main parts: the first part will be dedicated to conceptually outlining the three levels of analysis, discussing some

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2   the term "level" is deliberately chosen for this analysis in order to point out the manner in which each field concerns an ever-growing number of actors involved in the shaping of memory politics. If the first is purely within a single country, then the second is between two state entities and the third is across a whole continent. t his does not mean, however, that the levels follow sequentially or are causally related. t hey are simply varying aggregate levels of activity, of which especially the last one – the e uropean level – is still rather little studied.

of the existing concepts and theories that link memory and politics on each level.[3] Moving on from there I will discuss the Baltic domestic debates and international reactions surrounding the 9 May event in Moscow. t he aim is to critically evaluate the presidents' decisions, public debates and subsequent action by systematically applying the concepts discussed for each of the three levels of memory politics.

Three Levels of Memory Politics in Europe: A Conceptual Outline

Domestic Memory Politics

r ecent years have witnessed an increasing number of studies that analyse different transitional countries' domestic politics and debates in relation to the past. t his concerned not only the post-communist countries of the former Soviet Union and Central East Europe, but also many other post-authoritarian and post-conflict countries around the world. t he primary interest of these studies has been in questions of transitional justice, of how the democratizing states deal with the legacy of the previous regime by legal and political means. Moreover, discussions of recent transition cases sought to establish a causal link between the ways in which a new regime deals with the institutional and criminal legacy of its predecessors and the success or failure of democratization (k ritz 1995). o ne argument here is that legal persecution of perpetrators, but also transparent institutional regulations of the use of data and documents of the previous regime, can serve as a moral foundation for the new polity by fostering trust in the accountability of the state (l angenbacher 2003: 8–9).

t he insight into the legal and political coming to terms with the past is often seen as one crucial factor for any later examination of the politics of memory "in a wider cultural arena, both during the transitions and after official transitional policies have been implemented" (Barahona de Brito et al. 2001: 2). a nalyses of this "political-cultural dimension" of domestic memory politics have so far been rather elite-based, relying mostly on qualitative data of different kinds and using methods of content and discourse analysis.[4] a rather innovative concept recently put forward by e ric l angenbacher, however, tries to combine both qualitative and

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3   In order to keep the conceptual focus in this paper, I will not go into any deeper analysis of the various distinctions between history and memory. Instead, I adopt the useful definition provided by Eric Langenbacher (2003: 4): according to him memory is an "intensification of history, consisting of some facts about the past coupled with 'thick' interpretive elements: selection, deeper narrativistic framing, value dimensions and lessons". Memory can thus be seen as "a way of packaging and operationalizing shared history".

4   att the centre of such analyses are public-political constructions of historical images and identities, thereby examining in particular political interests, structures and actors behind public and academic debates, representations and interpretations of past events and memories (Wolfrum 1999).

quantitative methods in the study of memory politics in the case of g ermany. With the aim of measuring "the evolution and political impact of memory", he develops a conceptual framework "that identifies the analytically distinctive elements of memory regimes and incorporates dynamics of competition and power". h e thereby departs from the argument "that memory is both a constitutive component of a political culture and an important attitudinal influence" (Langenbacher 2003: 3). In order to operationalize this thesis, Langenbacher first identifies the analytically distinctive elements of "memory regimes", the various types of memories and their individual or collective representatives in public and academic debates. h e then moves on to conduct a large-n survey that tests the relevance and salience of particular memories on people's political preferences, affiliations and expectations. l angenbacher's concept of memory regime competition within democracies over discourse dominance and influence on policy decisions will be of keen interest for later discussions in this chapter.

Memory Politics in Bilateral Relations

Identity formation and the impact of collective identity on foreign policy has recently become a growing interest in the field of international relations – not least in r ussian-Baltic relations (Morozov 2004; n eumann 1999). c ollective memory construction constitutes a crucial part of this as this volume demonstrates. Similar to the analysis of domestic memory politics, research into the political influence of memory and identity on foreign policy and on power relations between states need to concentrate on the "relevant political *carriers* of collective memory" (Müller 2004: 3). a gain, the researcher has to look at the public use of historical analogies and public-symbolic action of state representatives and policy-makers, who involve memory to shape collective images and influence decisions and policy outcomes. In order to better grasp this influence, however, the notion of memory needs to be more rigorously defined. Jan-Werner Müller suggests in this context to analytically distinguish between two types of collective memory: the "mass individual (personal) memory" on the one hand and "national, collective memory" on the other. While he defines the former as the personal "recollections of events which individuals actually lived through", yet at a large scale, the latter is mainly serving as a frame for nationally minded individuals to place and organize their histories in a wider context of meaning, thus being constitutive for national identity (ibid.).

In the process of overcoming historically rooted impediments to establishing future-oriented and politically defined foreign relations, both types of collective memory need to be addressed differently. Whereas the problem posed by collective national memory is primarily a qualitative one, that represented by mass personal (or individual) memory is of a quantitative character and needs to be addressed through official moral and, at times, material acknowledgement. In the former case, national elites have to provide alternative foci of identification. Thus it needs no more than a thorough process of redefining the elements of national self-

assertion and interest. t he ability of the democratic state's elite to slowly "divert personal memories from the issues of the day" and thus exert what Snyder terms "sovereignty over memory" is of crucial meaning here (ibid.: 35; Snyder 2004).

t his concept of two types of collective memory can be applied to both foreign policy as well as domestic politics and may even help to show the overlapping of both fields. Usually both types of collective memory exist within a society and state, given that almost all societies in e urope have a recent history of internal and external conflict, be it civil war, foreign occupation or colonialism. Their impact, however, might be different on different political fields and policy levels. Mass individual memories of traumatic events in the past can sometimes stand in conflict with the dominant collective, national memory of a given polity. t he claim for state recognition of a particular "minority memory" and the state's response can thereby become an indicator for measuring the degree of pluralism in a given polity. y et "minority memory" can also involve outside actors, such as the minority's states of origin, thus becoming a key factor in bilateral relations. t he crucial question to be asked here is how such "minority memory" – or rather its political mobilization – can influence foreign policy decisions on both sides of the shared borders.

t o a certain extent memory politics in bilateral relations also include the relations between a member state or a third country and the e U as a unitary actor, or "multi-perspectival polity", as it has been defined in international relations literature (r uggie 1993: 172). t his has become quite obvious during the accession negotiations between e U and post-communist candidate states, but also, for example, in the e U's decision to sanction a ustria after the success of the right-wing Freedom Party (FPÖ) in national elections and the subsequent involvement in a black-blue government coalition in 2000 (Seidendorf 2005).

European Memory Politics

e ver since the breakdown of the Soviet Union and the start of e U membership negotiations of 10 former communist states, much has been written about what constitutes a common e uropean identity. o vercoming the existing tensions between different national memories and even developing something like a shared European historical consciousness has thereby been identified as crucial for e uropean integration. y et little has been done so far to systematically analyse the mechanisms of memory construction and their translation into politics on the e uropean level. t he point of departure for such analysis would, again, be that the e uropean Union is defined as a unitary (state) actor with its own institutions, structures and procedures through which policies are determined and carried out. Thus, one has not to look very far to find a conceptual approach to the analysis of "e uropean memory politics", but rather use existing analytical frameworks such as that of competing "memory regimes" and types of collective memory that were discussed above. A first step would then be to identify existing memory regimes and their representation in e uropean structures, focusing on individual and collective actors that "hammer out and validate" these regimes (l angenbacher 2003: 10). o n

the e uropean level, both existing memory regimes and their representatives can be, but not necessarily have to be, closely bound to particular national backgrounds. Rather, specific memory regimes can be represented by generational cohorts, or by ideological and regional groups of actors.

l ooking at existing, mostly qualitative studies on (West-)e uropean discourse development and "identity construction" and their influence on decisions and policies, a number of memory regimes may be identified.[5] o ne such regime, or "common e uropean currency" as t ony Judt calls it, emerged after the immediate post-War period and was built on the consensus of g ermany's sole guilt for the atrocities of the War and the h olocaust (Judt 2004: 161). d erived from this was the second dominant memory discourse: the historical myth of national resistance and victim status of all formerly occupied countries. Western e uropeans up to the 1970s pretty much settled on these two memory regimes or constitutive myths that entailed a rather large-scale "collective amnesia" of all those historical facts of collaboration and war profiteering that did not fit into the dominating (master) narrative. Since the 1970s, another "common unifying memory" was found in the h olocaust as the singular act of barbarism, against which e uropean unity was to be strengthened and made irreversible. o ver the course of the past 30 years, this h olocaust-centred memory more and more "transformed into a veritable foundational, a seminal event […], to which historical memory, as it thickens into a catalogue of narrations and values, seems to lead back" (d iner 2003: 36).

The task of analysing European memory politics today would, first of all, demand a thorough examination of how these different memory regimes were maintained or contested by alternative collective memories over the past decades. It would, secondly, require the identification of new memory regimes that are forcefully entering the "discourse competition" on the e uropean stage, especially since the lifting of the Iron c urtain and the e U's eastern enlargement. o ne of them, namely the understanding that the crimes of the communist regimes in eastern e urope were equally barbaric to those committed by n azis, clearly challenges the paradigm of the singularity of the h olocaust against which e urope has been defined so far. Finally, the analysis would have to examine how and to what extent these competing memory regimes are translated into "real" politics, into e uropean legislation and policies.

h ere it becomes most interesting to examine how competing (domestic) memory regimes are being represented in e uropean institutions. a gain, it is crucial to look at the actors who represent particular collective memories and their respective political, ideological, but also generational and other affiliations. As indicated before, this will inevitably lead to the next step of identifying cross-national alliances and interest representation in the competition for dominance in e uropean

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5   If strictly following the analytical framework presented by langenbacher, these memory regimes would have yet to be rigorously quantitatively verified through European-wide surveys and comparative analysis. A first such effort, focusing on young people in e urope, was undertaken by a ngvik and von Borries (1997).

institutions and debates. a n instructive example of such alliance-building is a debate that took place in the c ouncil of e urope Parliamentary a ssembly (Pace) about a report "o n the need for international condemnation of the crimes of totalitarian communist regimes" in January 2006 (Pace 2006a). t his report caused a debate in the Assembly that reflects not just ideological differences in the house, but competing e uropean memory regimes. t he defenders of the report came from a wide spectrum of ideological backgrounds (uniting members of the "Socialist group" as much as of the conservative "group of the e uropean People's Party") and argued the need to morally assess and unambiguously condemn the crimes committed by the totalitarian communist regimes in central and eastern e urope. t heir declared aim was to raise public awareness about this part of the e uropean past, provide moral restitution to the victims, and give clear orientation to future generations. Members of communist parties such as the member of the r ussian State Duma (and of the "group of Unified European Left") Gennady Zyuganov on the other side accused the supporters of the report of a biased approach and a blind anti-communism that condemns all former members of any communist party in e urope (Pace 2006b). In a somewhat similar way a Swedish member of the same "Unified European Left" blamed the report for using "the atrocities of the past as a tool to attack, marginalise and even pave the way for the criminalisation of an ideology and political current, the ideals of which are the opposite of these crimes" (ibid.). o ne thing to discuss in this context certainly is which precise political interests stand behind such controversies. Is the disagreement on the interpretation of the past solely based on ideological differences (as it seems the case in the Swedish MP's argument) or does it in fact derive from domestic political power struggles (as the cases of r ussian but also other eastern e uropean MPs indicate). a nother issue is to put such parliamentary debates into a wider context of competing memory regimes in e urope that have or will have a direct impact on policy decisions and legislation. In this given case, the resolution was adopted by a majority of the a ssembly, thus one particular memory that stresses the criminal character of past communist regimes won the struggle for dominance.

t he c ouncil of e urope, one might argue, is, despite its important role as an international human rights institution that brings together representatives of almost all European states, an insignificant player in "real" European politics. And yet, these debates are undertaken by actors representing real political parties and programmes in their respective countries, and have sent out a clear message to other e uropean deliberative bodies – for example the e uropean Parliament, where similar debates have taken place – as will be discussed later.

The 9 May Memorial Day in Moscow and the Baltic Reactions

h ow are these three analytical levels of memory politics – the domestic, the bilateral and the European levels – reflected in the Baltic reactions to President Putin's invitation to attend the commemoration event on 9 May 2005 in Moscow?

First of all, for Putin the invitation of world leaders to join the celebrations of the "victory over fascism" represented a unique opportunity to demonstrate strength and the importance of r ussia in world politics. y et the way he chose to observe this day of commemoration – especially the Soviet style military parade on r ed Square – caused some irritation among Western politicians and controversy in the international media about Soviet nostalgia in contemporary r ussia (Bransten 2005).

President Putin clearly used the occasion to demonstrate his position as regards the official interpretation of Russia's role during and after the Second World War. But the three Baltic presidents, for whom this particular historical day marks all but a reason for celebration, also seized the opportunity to define their stance and demonstrate their view on the past, acting on all three levels of memory politics at the same time.

Domestic Debates and Considerations Around the Invitation to Moscow

Being invited as a head of state to take part in a memorial event celebrated by another state, even if it concerns shared history, is first and foremost an issue of foreign policy. In the case of the invitation given to the heads of the Baltic states, however, far more than just foreign policy considerations were involved. a s former l atvian ambassador to the US o jars k alnins pointed out, it was hard not to interpret the invitation as "offensive" to the Baltic people and their political leadership. It *de facto* meant "being asked to celebrate the invasion, occupation and demographic decimation of their lands by Stalin's r ed a rmy and Sovietization policies" (k alnins 2005: 2). t he Baltic presidents chose different ways to address the issue. t heir decisions can be clearly interpreted in the light of their respective domestic memory discourses and policies.

n o doubt, collective memory had a strong impact on Baltic state policies in the early years of independence. o ne of the most obvious examples are the laws on citizenship passed by both e stonia and l atvia in the early 1990s. t hey excluded all those "Soviet immigrants" that had moved to the Baltic r epublics after June 1940 (a quite sizeable group of some 40 per cent in l atvia and 30 per cent in e stonia) from automatically getting citizenship in the re-established independent states. o ther policy areas such as education, language and social integration policies, however, were equally strongly shaped by the historical notion of state continuity and illegal occupation by the Soviet Union. c orrespondingly, on the level of discourse, the long "hidden and forbidden" mass individual memory of the Stalinist terror, of lost relatives and statehood, served as "a major vehicle for destabilizing communist rule" and for mobilizing people in the fight for independence (Dreifelds 1996: 20). Through historical research, public commemoration events, new textbook writing and frequent references in political speeches and symbolic acts, this memory was also turned into the dominant and somewhat constitutive "memory regime" of both independent states.

Quite in accordance with t ony Judt's statement that "h olocaust recognition is our contemporary e uropean entry ticket" (Judt 2005: 803), especially for l atvia and l ithuania the "return to e urope" meant to be faced with much domestic and international criticism of local memory culture. a t the core of this criticism stood the way in which historians and public figures addressed or failed to address the h olocaust on Baltic territory and in particular the involvement of locals in the killing of Jews during the occupation 1941–1944. Such criticisms were mostly met by defensive, and often irrational, reactions from l atvian and l ithuanian politicians and historians. In part this was due to a lack of historical knowledge, given that the h olocaust had been a taboo in Soviet historiography. t he main reason, however, was that a critical confrontation with past wrongdoing seriously challenged the above-mentioned establishment of the victim narrative (Budryte 2005b: 1982–3).

t he controversies surrounding the involvement of l atvians (and e stonians) in g erman military units, the local "Waffen-SS-l egions", constitute another such confrontation of contrary perceptions. In both l atvia and e stonia the veterans of these military units are seen as "freedom fighters" against the Bolsheviks and as national heroes. h ereby public perception tends to overlook the fact that parts of n azi police battalions and *Selbstschutz* involved in mass murder were later included into the legions (e zergailis 1998; Jacobson 2001). For Western commentators and politicians on the other side, the abbreviation SS is often enough to associate these units with war crimes and crimes against humanity – with equal ignorance to historical differentiation.

o ne sign for the sobering of public controversies since the end of the 1990s has been the establishment of h istory c ommissions in all three Baltic states by the state presidents in 1998/99. t hese commissions have been working in rather different ways and with different objectives as to their self-perceived role within public discourse, with the l atvian one clearly taking the most determined position as an active player in the shaping of memory (o nken 2007b; n ollendorfs and o berländer 2005). t he success of the l atvian commission in inspiring critical research and exchange as well as supporting the teaching of history in l atvian schools was partly due to the strong support for the commission by President Vike-Freiberga, who after her inauguration in 1999 frequently expressed herself on historical matters in national and international media as well as supporting critical teaching and learning of history in schools. h er approach to supporting a critical historical discourse within and explaining the difficult Baltic past to the outside world earned her the title of "first lady of the Baltic memory offensive" (Mälksoo 2007).

t hus, coming back to my initial question of how domestic memory politics are reflected in the decision-building process of whether to attend the Moscow memorial event, I would like to argue that the l atvian president's reaction was somewhat logical. Vike-Freiberga's early and positive reaction to the invitation can clearly be interpreted as a consistent step occasioned by, on the one hand, the president's personal conviction that it is necessary to deal proactively with the

past and, on the other, the increasingly pluralistic and diverse memory discourses developed within l atvia over the past decade. t he widespread support Vike-Freiberga received for her decision by the local intellectual and political elite as well as in the population further supports this argument (Sloga et al. 2005; ka S 2005).

In contrast to this, e stonian president a rnold r üütel's decision to not attend the event in Moscow was quite differently perceived by the e stonian elite. Seen as unwise from a foreign relations point of view and a sign of weakness, r üütel had most of the parliament (*Riigikogu*) and media commentators against him. t he elite's main concern was quite starkly summarized by the social scientist and politician Marju l auristin. Whereas the l atvian president had made a clear future-oriented decision, l auristin pointed out, her own country was stuck in the past due to a lack of self-critical evaluation of history and its different sides (l auristin 2005).

Estonia has indeed kept a rather low profile in terms of actively confronting (self-) critical questions about its past. t he h istorical c ommission set up by then president l ennart Meri in January 1999 fulfilled its primarily investigative task set out by Meri of identifying individuals and groups responsible for crimes against humanity on e stonian territory. With the help of local historians yet consisting of only non-e stonian members, this commission mainly served the function of explaining e stonian history and clarifying still open questions to the outside world, thereby avoiding the conflict and irritation apparent in Latvia during the 1990s.[6] y et, in terms of triggering critical debate among local historians, who support the development of a diverse and pluralist public history culture, this commission has been rather passive. In this respect e stonia seems to be rather lagging behind its southern neighbour (o nken 2007b).

o ne incident that shows how little has been done over the past decade to raise historical awareness and a critical attitude towards the own past took place in a ugust 2004 in the small western town of l ihula. l ocal activists and politicians had erected a memorial statue of a soldier wearing a n azi uniform in order to commemorate those "e stonians who fought against Bolshevism and for e stonian independence from 1940 to 1945", as it was written in the inscription. International reactions were fierce, accusing Estonia of honouring Nazis (*BBC News* 2004). In a badly carried out operation, the monument was torn down, which sparked wide protests and a heated public debate. t his debate, however, addressed not so much the historical implications of the monument, but rather the methods the g overnment had used to take it down. Protesters that had gathered at the monument were forcibly disbanded by the police, which sparked some commentators to draw an historical parallel with states that use force against their own people (k olb 2005).

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6   The final report of the Commission on the time period 1940–1945 was published only in e nglish (h iio et al. 2006).

t hroughout the 1990s e stonia featured far less in the international media on issues regarding its history culture than l atvia has. t his, however, does not mean that unsolved questions of the past are not frequently resurfacing on the public and political agenda. y et they rarely result in a sophisticated public discussion of the own interpretation of the past. a s h annah Järä found out in her study on e stonia's dealing with the past, the "desire to 'forget' about the past", or at least a certain part of it, prevails in current e stonia feeding into a history culture "characterised by a politically ambiguous debate which has failed to develop a consistent policy" (Järä 1999: 2–3). Instead of seriously responding to (un)justified criticism from outside, the local media and public still react by referring to the nation's own suffering and with complaints about the lack of understanding by outsiders. a s l auristin remarked: "We expect others to understand without honestly understanding ourselves and without being able to imagine the other's reactions, viewpoints or values" (l auristin 2005).[7] Indeed, the predominant attitude of political leaders in both e stonia and l atvia is to widely ignore or avoid, rather than deal with, the diverse memories and resulting political identities that exist among the countries' citizenry (l iik 2008).

Considerations on Baltic-Russian Relations

In the bilateral relations of the Baltic states with the r ussian Federation since 1991, history and memory have always had a primarily *political* meaning. With the Baltic states on the one side defining the past 50 years of Soviet rule as illegal occupation and insisting on the principle of legal continuity and state restoration, and r ussia on the other side claiming the "voluntary association" of the Baltic states to the Soviet Union in 1940, history can indeed be seen as the major stumbling bloc in bilateral relations. Moreover, bilateral relations are yet aggravated by the fact that we are dealing here with a relationship that is determined by what Müller and others defined as "collective, national memory" – the "organisational principle, or set of myths, by which nationally conscious individuals understand the past and its demands on the present" (Snyder 2004: 50). The following will briefly outline the character and the impact of this collective memory on foreign policy decisions on both sides of the border. t his may best be illustrated by the decisions of l ithuanian president Valdas a damkus and e stonian president a rnold r üütel to stay away from the commemoration event in Moscow.

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7   the recent "Bronze soldier" controversy is yet another example of how the issue of memory keeps resurfacing and interfering in (domestic and bilateral) politics. a s Maria Mälksoo shows in c hapter 5, this time a public debate about collective memory, identity politics and integration did take place, mainly the year prior to the events of a pril 2007. y et the removal of the monument, the riots and subsequent diplomatic crisis with Moscow quickly diverted public and political attention again away from the burning domestic questions of young Russians' frustration and political alienation, amplified by one-sided and exclusive memory politics.

Baltic collective memory in relation to r ussia is fundamentally determined by the notion of lost statehood and Soviet-r ussian occupation since the pact between h itler and Stalin in 1939 and the subsequent invasion of the r ed a rmy in 1939/40. t he idea of legal continuity of statehood (due to the illegal occupation) has over the past decades, but in particular in the last 15 years, been the central historical notion for e stonians, l atvians and also l ithuanians. t hough the "mass personal memory" about large parts of the nations' suffering and losses under this occupation are still infrequently evoked by public commemoration days, newspaper articles or speeches, it is the lost national independence and continued occupation that has become a constitutive element of national identity.

r ussian collective memory as concerns the three Baltic countries is equally connected with the time of the Second World War. a nd similarly to the Baltic side, the memory of the "g reat Patriotic War", as it is called in r ussian sources, plays a crucial, if not mythical role in today's national self-perception of r ussians. y et the "collective, national memory" of the own role as liberators of e urope, and consequently also of the Baltic states, stands in stark contrast to the above noted Baltic view. t he comment by President Putin at a press conference given after the events in Moscow in May 2005 in response to an e stonian journalist's question why it is so difficult for Russia "to apologize for the occupation", illustrates the clash of national memories (and history):

> n ow on the issue of occupation. I believe that in 1918, as a result of the Brest Peace t reaty, there was a collusion, a conspiracy between g ermany and r ussia, and r ussia transferred a part of its territory under g ermany's *de facto* control. t hat was how e stonia's statehood began. In 1939, there was another collusion between r ussia and g ermany, and g ermany returned these territories to r ussia. In 1939, they joined the Soviet Union. Was that good or bad? We will not go into this now – this is history. [..] So what, are we going to let the dead grab us by the sleeves every day, preventing us from moving forward now? So if in 1939 the Baltic countries joined the Soviet Union, in 1945 the Soviet Union could not have occupied them since they were part of the Soviet Union (doc. in k hitrov 2005: 49).

In the light of this statement it seems almost impossible to overcome the deep split between the countries and to find ways of defining bilateral relations in political rather than historical terms. a s discussed before, it requires the national elites on both sides to redefine what the determinants of national interests are and to give alternatives to old historically founded identities (Snyder 2004: 57–8).

t he international commemoration of the end of the Second World War in 2005 might have been a unique moment for Baltic and r ussian leaders to start this process of debate and redefinition, yet they largely failed to do so. The only exception might have been Vike-Freiberga by accepting the invitation and stressing the need for Latvia to take part in this summit of world leaders, defining this as a fundamental national interest and a demonstration of national pride:

a s a full member of the e uropean Union and the na t o a lliance, l atvia is
proud to be able to take part in the construction of a new and better e urope, a
privilege that had been denied to my country for decades. For this reason, I, as
President of my country, have decided to attend the summit of e urope's leaders
in Moscow on May the 9th of this year. In doing so, I will be demonstrating
Latvia's resolute desire to take part in all significant meetings that concern our
continent's past history, as well as its future (Vike-Freiberga 2005).

t he l ithuanian and e stonian presidents on the other hand decided to stay in their
respective countries on this memorial day. a s a rnold r üütel formulated it: "a s
head of state, I have the duty and responsibility to uphold the confidence of the
nation. t his I can do best by being together with the people of e stonia on this
particular day." He thereby defined national interest in a backward-looking manner,
stressing the memory of "the Stalinist atrocities" as having left an "everlasting
mark on the memory of the people" (r üütel 2005). Interestingly, this view did
not coincide with the predominant evaluation of the situation by the political and
intellectual elite of his country. a s pointed out by a commentator in the daily
Postimees, Rüütel might have reflected the overwhelming popular opinion with
his decision, yet he did not properly consult with the political representatives of
the state and by deciding without them, the journalist concluded, r üütel, "as the
president of a e U border state … failed to take up his responsibility" to carefully
consider not only historical sensitivities, but also burning political questions and
policy concerns of the e stonian state (*Postimees* 2005a).

o ne such important policy concern was the signing of a border treaty with
Russia that would finally settle issues connected with the territorial losses by
e stonia (and similarly by l atvia) after its annexation into the Soviet Union. Both
e stonia and l atvia have for several years been ready to sign the treaty, yet r ussia
had kept the issue aloof. a fter Putin suggested signing the treaties with both l atvia
and Estonia during the European summit on 10 May 2005, hopes to finally settle
the issue were raised again. e stonian political leaders were keen to bring the
border treaty to a conclusion and even ignore the highly symbolic occasion of
the memorial day to do so. t herefore, r üütel's decision to not go to Moscow was
widely seen as a dangerous mistake that would further aggravate tensions with
r ussia and postpone the signing of the treaty.[8] Moreover, stressing the need to
normalize bilateral relations and to sign the treaty for the sake of national security
– as was done by the political representatives – would have been a clear option
for the e stonian president to justify his attendance of the Moscow event – and to

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8   e stonia and r ussia managed to sign the border treaty on 18 May, yet the e stonian
parliament subsequently added a declaration that once again declared the illegal occupation
of e stonia by the Soviet Union and the loss of territory that belonged to e stonia according
to the peace treaty of t artu from 1920. In response to this r ussia declared in June 2005 the
border treaty as invalid (*Postimees* 2005b). t he border treaty remains an unresolved issue
between e stonia and r ussia until this day.

redefine national interest. He decided against this option, which might have been closer to public opinion, yet also proved a certain inability to exert "sovereignty over power". a s l auristin put it, r üütel's decision was dictated "by insecurity, fear and dependence on history" (l auristin 2005).

a lthough seemingly similar, Valdas a damkus's decision to stay in l ithuania on this memorial day appears in a quite different light when considering the character of l ithuanian-r ussian relations. t o be sure, the bilateral relations between both countries are frequently put under severe tension by harsh, mostly rhetorical battles over the past. y et, l ithuanian political leaders can remain calm in view of such battles since they rarely involve or endanger distinct policy matters that are of national importance. For once, l ithuania has only a relatively small r ussian minority (about 10 per cent). Moreover, in 1991 l ithuania opted for the zero-version of citizenship law, granting full citizenship to all those r ussians, Poles and other ethnic minorities permanently living in l ithuania, thereby widely avoided domestic conflicts as they exist in the other two republics. Lithuanian leaders sought to "normalize" relations with r ussia once the last Soviet troops where withdrawn from l ithuanian territory in 1993, and border as well as military transit issues with the k aliningrad region were solved in 1995 by pursuing a pragmatic policy emphasizing the political and economic relevance of good relations rather than reiterating historical fissions (Vitkus 2006).

t herefore, concrete foreign policy considerations were of less importance to a damkus's decision. Far more relevant for him was to weigh all the pros and cons of a visit to Moscow, taking public opinion and political advice carefully into account (Sloga et al. 2005). e ven though a damkus, too, was later criticized for dithering too long with his decision and thereby causing unnecessary public controversies, his final refusal of the invitation was greeted by overwhelming support from the population as well as the political and intellectual (including émigré l ithuanian) elite (Seputyte 2005).

In other words, one could argue that the l ithuanian president could "afford" to reject the invitation from Moscow from the standpoint of foreign policy considerations. In terms of the above-mentioned political interest to divert bilateral relations from collective memory and to gain "sovereignty over memory" this decision, however, meant a setback. By particularly stressing the "painful historic experience of our nation" and the "deep wounds" left by the changing foreign occupations, Adamkus rather reified the notion of "eternal victimhood" as a core element of l ithuanian self-perception (a damkus 2005c). t his, however, has little to offer in terms of a future orientation and policy decisions for the l ithuanian democratic state.

International Reactions and the Impact of the Baltic Decision on EU Memory Politics

In relation to the e U and other "Western" countries, all three Baltic states' presidents' decisions concerning the 9 May event yielded a strong effect. In a

way one could say that precisely the combination of the decisions kept the Baltic states and, more importantly, their particular history, in the international media for several months. Moreover, it resulted in gestures and statements by political actors that would otherwise not have been. t hus, the aim of all three presidents to remind the world of the historical fact that 9 May 1945 meant for the Baltic people a continuation of foreign occupation, with all its consequences for the local populations, and to receive international recognition for this fact, was achieved.

In the weeks following the l atvian president's early acceptance, and responding to a letter of explanation she had sent to all heads of state at the same time, Vike-Freiberga's office received letters of acknowledgement from altogether 24 heads of state and government. a part from congratulating her on her decision, they all acknowledged the difficulty for Latvia in celebrating the end of the Second World War and they all expressed their empathy and support.[9] o n the one hand these letters can and should be interpreted as first of all an expression of relief. For once the l atvian president's proactive stance raised the hopes – inside and outside the country – that the other two Baltic heads of state would eventually follow suit. t his in turn would have helped to not only avoid an additional international discord at this particular memorial event, which was already controversial enough (Sloga et al. 2005), but it could have also been seen as a sign of memory finally loosening its grip on Baltic-r ussian foreign policy decisions and thereby make e U-r ussian relations easier. a s British Prime Minister t ony Blair wrote in his letter: "o ne year after l atvia took up its legitimate place in e urope, and 14 years after regaining independence, you are able to get together for reconciliation and for constructive relations with r ussia. I hope that r ussia will answer positively" (Blair 2005).

a t the same time, all these letters included an acknowledgement of the particularly difficult position the Baltic president was in in relation to this historical day, many of them stressing their regret about l atvia's loss of independence because of "Soviet occupation" – a term that is still put into question by r ussian state representatives.

o n the actual day of the "victory day" parade the international media focused on those two heads of state who had refused to join the event. In numerous interviews, features and reports, suddenly e stonia and l ithuania were at the centre of public attention (Baker 2005: a 04; *BBC News* 2005a). t hus, from the perspective of marking their political and historical standpoints and reaching a e uropean public, the non-attendance of the international commemoration day in Moscow proved a successful strategy. This success was further amplified by the US president's visit to r iga to meet with all three Baltic presidents, on the eve of 9 May, which was understood by many as a "a strong symbolic endorsement of the Baltic side in the Baltic-r ussian debate over the legacy of WWII" (k alnins 2005: 2). Visiting l atvia prior to, and g eorgia right after, the commemoration day in Moscow, can also be seen as an effort by the White h ouse to mitigate the impact of a large-scale

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9   alll letters are documented on the former President of latvia's website, under 'Press releases', Url   : http://www.president.lv/pk/content/?cat_id=2188, accessed March 2008.

controversy over r ussia's interpretation of the War's legacy that was looming also thanks to Baltic and Polish objections to the event (a pplebaum 2005). Moreover, apart from strengthening one particular memory and taking sides in a bilateral struggle over international influence, George W. Bush gave another twist to the debate, adding thoughts about the future role of the Baltic states in e U foreign policy. a t a press conference in r iga he suggested that "the three Baltic countries are capable of helping r ussia and other countries in this part of the world see the benefits of what it means to live in a free society" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the r epublic of l atvia 2005).

In order to put the political outcomes of the commemoration day in Moscow and its significance for European memory politics into our wider conceptual framework, a brief look back into previous debates and initiatives by Baltic and other eastern European representatives to gain influence in the politics of European memory seems necessary. t he number of private initiatives such as heritage societies and other ngo s as well as of governmental declarations calling for an international condemnation of the c ommunist crimes as crimes against humanity is rather big (Budryte 2005b: 182–3). t hese initiatives were mostly met by silence on the side of international policy-makers. y et, full membership in all e uropean institutions also means new forms of memory representation in legislative deliberation and policy-making. o ne example of this was the debate that took place in early 2005 about whether to issue a e uropean-wide ban on the use of n azi symbols. t his had been proposed by g erman politicians and supported by the Justice c ommissioner Franco Frattini to be put on the c ommission's agenda after the appearance of British Prince h arry in a n azi uniform displaying a swastika at a private costume party. t wo eastern e uropean members of the e uropean Parliament, among them the former l ithuanian president Vytautas l andsbergis, took this occasion and wrote an open letter to Frattini, urging him to also consider a ban on "symbols of equally cruel communist dictatorships" (Szájer 2005). l andsbergis explained this initiative, claiming support among many representatives of post-c ommunist countries, that "since there were two bloody regimes in e urope in the course of the last century, both with countless crimes committed, they deserve the same valuation" (Landsbergis 2005). In the end, the European parliament could not find an agreement on the matter and decided not to issue any ban. t hus most attempts to break through existing memory regimes and re-evaluate the moral standards set until now for the interpretation of the recent past have had little success.[10] h owever, these attempts "to bring the issue of our common responsibility for the victims of communism to e uropean political consciousness" (Szájer 2005) nevertheless mark the beginning of a new phase in e uropean memory politics.

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10   In december 2004 some Baltic and Polish MEPs from different factions had tried to gather signatures for a draft declaration on condemning the Molotov-r ibbentrop pact. Yet they failed to get the sufficient number of signatures among MEPs (*The Baltic Times* 2005).

Conclusion

I would like to argue that 9 May 2005 and the public controversies surrounding Putin's "victory day" celebration and his personal inability to recognize the illegal annexation of parts of Poland and the Baltic states after the h itler-Stalin Pact and to condemn the crimes committed against these peoples by the Soviet Union, constitute a turning point for e uropean memory politics. For once, the Baltic struggle with the invitation to Moscow reached an unprecedented wide international attention, which in turn raised the general awareness about diverse historical legacies and their direct impact on politics. It is difficult to prove the exact impact of this growing awareness on e uropean decision-makers, yet a number of smaller and bigger political victories for Baltic and eastern e uropean initiatives in e uropean institutions indicate a slow shift in attitude: a new willingness of e uropean representatives to politically acknowledge and condemn the crimes committed by the Soviet regime against the Baltic and other former c ommunist countries. t he resolution passed by Pace in January 2006 discussed above, which called for an "international condemnation of the crimes of totalitarian, communist regimes" is only another step in a whole series of resolutions, declarations and decisions following the 9 May anniversary in 2005.

o n 12 May 2005, the e uropean Parliament adopted a resolution "on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the end of WWII", in which it acknowledged "the magnitude of the suffering, injustice and long-term social, political and economic degradation endured by the captive nations located on the eastern side of what was to become the Iron c urtain" (e uropean Parliament 2005). In June the Pace acknowledged the occupation of the Baltic states and urged r ussia "to take the following measures: as regards the compensation for those persons deported from the occupied Baltic states and the descendants of deportees" (Pace 2005). In the same month a decision was made in the e uropean c ommission to allocate money from the e U programme *Culture 2007* not only to erect and keep memorial sites to the victims of n azism, but also to those of communism and mass deportations (Jemberga 2005).

In any future analysis of e uropean memory politics, the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War will certainly have to be considered as a watershed that pushed the critical public and political debates on existing perceptions of the past forward and might have marked the beginning of a new, more integrated e uropean historical consciousness. It remains to be seen whether such a shift in the e uropean level of memory politics will in turn impact on the other two levels by changing the parameters in which bilateral or domestic debates take place. More precisely, one can ask whether it will further deepen the memory-political divide between the countries of the enlarged e U and r ussia, given the latter's reluctant attitude towards any critical evaluation of the Soviet past. o r whether a pluralistic and differentiating approach to the past can in the long run manage to include r ussia in a critical discourse and trigger debate within the country.

t he fact that the e uropean level of memory-political analysis is a rather recently emerging phenomenon, as I have tried to show, makes the study of such reverse linkages between the various levels very much an undertaking of the future.

Identity Politics and c ontested h istories in d ivided Societies: t he c ase of e stonian War Monuments

k arsten Brüggemann and a ndres k asekamp

Introduction

t his chapter examines how historical narratives are constructed and used for political purposes. For the Baltic states and r ussia the most contested has been the interpretation of the events of the Second World War, or g reat Patriotic War. t he dominant discourse in r ussia has been of the r ed a rmy as "liberator" while in the Baltic states it is viewed as an "occupier". t here is a clash of identities at both the domestic and international level because both constructs deny the legitimacy of the other. t his has also physically manifested itself in monuments, the erection and removal of which are highly symbolic political acts. t his chapter focuses on the g erman-uniformed monument erected at l ihula in 2004 and the relocation of the r ed a rmy monument in t allinn in 2007. It compares and contrasts the monuments and the discourse surrounding the events associated with them, and accounts for the different responses to them. t he battle of narratives regarding these monuments occasioned not only controversy and heated debate in e stonia and Russia, but unprecedented violence, which also influenced bilateral relations and even e U-r ussia relations. t hus, this chapter addresses the relevance of the past and those semantic battlefields fueled by interpretation of history that still matter in e astern e urope.

War Monuments and the Politics of History

In his classic study of "collective memory", French sociologist Maurice h albwachs spoke of an ocean as a metaphor for the historic world where all part stories merge (h albwachs 1985: 72). In modern times, according to r einhart k oselleck, this sea of abstract "history" in the grammatical singular develops a specific historic space as *plurale tantum*, in the sense of giving room for the "interdependency of events and intersubjectivity of the course of events" (k oselleck 1995: 142). y et, this multivocality of the past voices merged into an ocean has to be eradicated in order to distillate a totality of past events. In

h albwachs' words, they must be detached from the memory of those groups who carried them. a society thus forms a "grammar of national memory" in transforming social memory into transgenerational cultural memory via a selection process, much like a writer who chooses to explicitly describe only some parts of the story he creates (a ssmann 2006; J. a ssmann 1999). h istory is narrative work in process and thus much less opposed to memory than French historian Pierre n ora desired (n ora 1990: 12–13); it may be seen more as a subcategory of memory (Burke 1997; t amm 2008). Memory (and subsequently history) in many ways can be influenced by the authorities' legitimating narratives, starting with innocent school textbooks and ending with open pressure on those that create the information available in a society, among them professional historians.

In formulating the "grammar of national memory" monuments may be seen as signposts. t hose signposts, however, even in authoritative political circumstances, do not necessarily represent only the intended reading. For instance, if we examine the monument to Peter the g reat that was erected in r eval (t allinn) in 1910 during the festivities of the 200th anniversary of the capitulation of the city to the r ussian a rmy, we see that every national group had its own story connected with the r ussian t sar (Woodworth 2001). If the organizers of the monument, the Baltic g erman burghers, primarily wanted to demonstrate their loyalty to the r omanov dynasty and perceived Peter as the "e uropeanizer" of r ussia, the r ussians praised the conqueror who brought the Baltic region "back to r ussia". While e stonians also sought to profess their loyalty, they could nevertheless not fail to recognize that the tsar enabled the g erman landlords to apply an even harsher serfdom onto the e stonian peasants. t hus the jubilee that was planned to show the unity of the province with r ussia fostered local perceptions of the past even more. When the monument was destroyed a decade later, neither g ermans nor r ussians anymore had the power to prevent it. c hanging political circumstances alter the "frame of remembrance" (Halbwachs 1985: 21), even if a monument falls into official oblivion as, for instance, the statues of g erman emperors on horseback that still stand prominently in many g erman towns. While even in former West Berlin the Soviet monument near the Wall was taken as an exotic curiosity, in the former Soviet bloc the perception changes significantly with an even more dramatic switch in importance on the territory of former Soviet republics. h ere the identity politics of the post-Soviet governments still clashes not only with senses of nostalgia on the internal level, but also with Moscow's watchful eye on her former satellites in questions of memory politics on the broader international relations level.

t he symbolism of war monuments, according to r einhart k oselleck, has changed over the course of time. a fter the First World War it became common to honour the fallen in the form of central national monuments to the "unknown" soldier. t his practice was reproduced by the Soviet Union after 1945, because the Stalinist leadership in the spirit of so-called "Soviet patriotism" had begun to elevate "national" heroes during the war in order to mobilize the people. t he message of these Soviet victory monuments that were erected in every capital of Soviet-dominated e astern e urope and in the capitals of Soviet republics was

univocally selective: heroicization of the "warrior-liberator" (*voin-osvoboditel*). a s k oselleck notes, only the memory about the "r ussian victory was allowed and compulsorily executed", while the commemoration of the deaths of the defeated was excluded from the public space (k oselleck 2001/2002: 73). It was a collective victory to be remembered, not the suffering of any individual. In Putin's r ussia this victory is recreated as a foundation myth in a quality that aims at substituting the myth of the o ctober revolution. t he Putinist element in this cult of victory may be seen in the notion of Stalinism as a basically integral and positive part of r ussia's great power history. t hus, this power narrative feels doubly offended when in former Soviet republics the symbolism of the old hierarchy is challenged: it contradicts the k remlin's interpretation of history and proves Moscow's impotence to control how former satellites rearrange the "common" history.

In Soviet times this legitimating memory discourse concerning the "g reat Patriotic War" corresponded with the restrictions in commemoration of suffering. o nly those who were fortunate enough to have survived g erman concentration camps were openly encouraged to share their memories. t hose who suffered in the Soviet g ulag were required to be silent. t hus, while the "good" Soviet citizen fought in the r ed a rmy and starved in a g erman camp, a "bad" one fought in n azi uniform and suffered in a Soviet camp. n ot surprisingly, the prevailing discourse in e stonia nowadays is quite the opposite. In g illis's words, one may call this a process of "concerted forgetting" (g illis 1994: 7–18) of those co-nationals that are marked "traitors" for the sake of the stability of the new narratives and rituals.

Public monuments offer an especially visible object for studying changing modes of *Geschichtspolitik*, since they provide us "with a tangible manifestation of some 'memory work' in process" (Burch and Smith 2007: 917). Wreaths might be laid on official recognized anniversaries or people might gather spontaneously, sometimes in order to protest official commemorative usage. However, the context of such sites of memory more often than not depends on political changes. In eastern e urope the break-up of the USSr has led to a visualization of contested narratives of the past with the ubiquitous war monuments dedicated to the victory in the "g reat Patriotic War" suddenly being "silenced" by the change of systems. d ays of commemoration performed spontaneously in contrast to official perceptions of the past are especially effective in strengthening the feeling of community and solidarity that is "not necessarily based on consensus over the past event" (see o nken in this volume; g illis 1994).

It has been exactly this "invention of tradition" that proved to be very effective for the anti-Soviet mobilization of the Baltic peoples in the late 1980s. t oday, however, in e stonia and l atvia, with their large minority groups that immigrated only under the Soviet regime, now dead symbols of the old nevertheless became hot spots even for the younger generation of r ussian-speakers in order to make themselves visible in the eyes of the new masters. o n the other hand, one might say that the l ihula soldier generally still fights for the revisualization of the memory of those who were virtually eradicated during Soviet times. t heir memory moreover today is contested because of e stonia's integration into the

West, whose concepts of the past simply do not honour those who fought on the g erman side. In contrast, the Bronze Soldier already lost its original discursive context and became on the one hand revitalized for the purpose of minority issues. o n the other hand, it was used in what o nken in c hapter 3 has called "memory politics in bilateral relations" by the r ussian Federation. y et when r ussian president Vladimir Putin accused the e stonian g overnment of "revising the past" (r omancheva 2007) he, of course, had the only true interpretation of his neighbour country's history in mind. We shall return to this way of judging history later in this chapter.

The Lihula Monument

t o understand why at least in some e stonians' eyes everybody who fought against the Soviets, even if he had SS-runes on his uniform, is to be praised as a "freedom fighter", one has to look briefly into the history (Feest 2007). Though the r epublic of e stonia was not a belligerent in the Second World War, e stonians were conscripted by the two totalitarian powers which occupied the country: the retreating r ed a rmy forcibly mobilized over 30,000 e stonian men in 1941; the g ermans recruited an equal number in 1944. Most of the latter drew a parallel with the seemingly hopeless circumstances of 1918 at the start of the e stonian War of Independence and believed that by halting the r ed a rmy's advance they could re-establish e stonian independence (Isberg 1992; h iio et al. 2006). a fter the war, guerrilla resistance continued in the forests until Stalin's death in 1953. Most e stonians who served the g ermans were deported to Siberia by the Soviets.

d uring the Soviet occupation, e stonians were regularly collectively branded as "fascists" and "n azi collaborators" (e zergailis 2005). Furthermore, the mild authoritarian regime of k onstantin Päts in the second half of the 1930s was labelled "fascist", thus creating a natural continuity in Soviet eyes between independent e stonia and later collaboration with the t hird r eich. r einforced by the standard Soviet branding of post-War Baltic émigrés as "fascists", this frames the currently popular r ussian perception of the Baltic countries as "fascist".

d uring Soviet times, public remembrance of those e stonians who fought under the g ermans was unthinkable, because the Soviet dichotomist discourse of good and evil left no space for them. a fter independence, surviving veterans began to refer to themselves as "freedom fighters" and sought public recognition of their "rightful place" in the nation's history. By 2002 the a ssociation of Freedom Fighters (veterans) managed to gather donations for a memorial stone to be erected in the city of Pärnu. t he monument featured a relief of an e stonian soldier in g erman uniform with a Mauer sub-machine-gun and bore an uncanny resemblance to a wartime g erman recruitment poster. t he text read: "t o all e stonian soldiers who fell in the second war of liberation and for a free e urope 1940–1945." t he monument immediately attracted international criticism and the

city authorities had it removed before the official unveiling ceremony (Bransten 2002; *BBC News* 2002).

t he veterans found a new site in the provincial town of l ihula in western e stonia. t he new text beneath the relief was less contentious as originally in Pärnu, reading: "t o the e stonian men who fought against Bolshevism in 1940–1945 and for the restoration of e stonian independence." t he unveiling ceremony took place on 20 a ugust 2004 and was attended by a couple of thousand old veterans and local people. e stonian g overnment and armed forces representatives declined to attend. Prime Minister Juhan Parts had said one week earlier that while he honours those veterans who fought to restore e stonian independence, the erection of the monument is a "provocation" and that it is at odds with the "real history" (*Postimees* 2004).

a fter headlines in the international media such as "e stonia unveils n azi war monument" (*BBC News* 2004), the g overnment removed the monument on 2 September. Unexpectedly, the action met stiff local resistance: riot police protecting the crane and its driver were pelted by stones. t he immediate reaction to the removal of the l ihula monument was the desecration of several r ed a rmy monuments, including the Bronze Soldier in t allinn. t he e stonian media pointed out that there were still over 100 monuments to one of the totalitarian powers that had occupied e stonia, and drew the comparison with the removal of e stonian interwar monuments by the Soviet regime in the 1940s, also often carried out under the cover of darkness. t he r ussian media trumpeted the "rehabilitation of fascism" in e stonia.[1]

t he clumsy removal of the l ihula monument initiated a steep decline in Parts's popularity, which contributed to the collapse of his government seven months later. Parts's heavy-handed and poorly communicated decision to remove the monument gave the impression of an incompetent and arrogant leader, who did not consider public sentiment. Furthermore, his action was not understood as being sincere, but rather as motivated by external factors, that is, appeasing a merican concerns. e stonian diplomats privately made reference to the imminent convening of the new session of the US c ongress and the desire to avoid having the l ihula monument brought up in Washington. Indeed, it was Foreign Minister k ristiina o juland who pressed the g overnment to take action, not the Minister of the Interior under whose jurisdiction the matter fell. When Prime Minister Parts spoke laconically of "national security", he meant that the expected international criticism would harm e stonia's image among its Western allies, particularly the United States.[2]

Thus, from an orthodox Estonian point of view, Parts "sacrificed" national history for the sake of the g overnment's version of "national security". t he l ihula soldier as a non-official war monument, however, manifests historical memory at

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1   even the "novaia gazeta" that published anna Politkovskaia's articles wrote about "flirting with fascism". See Moiseenko 2004. Cf. Zvegincev 2004.

2   Interviews with estonian diplomats in t allinn, September 2004.

the grass-roots level: while the Päts g overnment in 1940 was not able to organize armed resistance, in 1944 the people did it themselves (by joining the g erman army). t he internal controversy that the stone evoked in e stonia thus hints at an obvious gap between popular memory and the g overnment's politics of history. In introducing, for instance, the international holocaust memorial day, the g overnment tried to shift the "frame of remembrance" onto the e U-level and further away from the socially accepted normative set of collective memory (a ssmann 2006: 157–163). o nce the g overnment thus opened up Pandora's box, the next scene of conflict on memory politics already was prepared. In commentaries regarding the l ihula monument, parallels were often drawn with the most prominent remaining Soviet memorial at t õnismägi (St. a nthony's hill) in central t allinn. c ommentators asked why the g overnment removed a monument to those e stonians that fought against communism, but tolerated another monument in the heart of the capital celebrating a totalitarian regime (ke 2003; ke 2005; k ressa 2004).

The Bronze Soldier

t he reburial of some 12 or 13 r ed a rmy soldiers at t õnismägi on 22 September 1947, the third anniversary of the liberation of t allinn, was constructed as a highly political act from the start (Kaasik 2006). No fighting had taken place anywhere near the site. It was simply a prominent central location suitable for following the standard approach in other major cities of the Soviet Union of constructing a memorial with common graves that could be used for ceremonial purposes. t he importance of the "Monument to the l iberators of t allinn" increased over the years as the cult of the g reat Patriotic War rose in Brezhnev's times. a n eternal flame was added and the official public ceremonies conducted at the monument every 9 May and 22 September became ever more pompous. a fter the restoration of independence, the text accompanying the monument was changed from the contentious "liberation" to a simple remembrance of those who fell. o ne may argue that the site was not demolished immediately in 1991 because it was seen as a symbolically dead space compared, for instance, to l enin statues. o n the other hand, e stonians had to tread carefully while r ussian troops remained based in the country. o nly after their withdrawal in 1994 did the g overnment have free hands to refashion the site. But instead of getting rid of "Bronze Soldier" (often referred to as "a lyosha"), it decided to use the "multivocality of dead bodies" (Verdery 1999), whose symbolic meaning was shifted from (Soviet) heroes to (human) victims of war.

t his depoliticization of the monument, however, did not result in a democratization of the society's historical memory. a ccording to o nken, if criticised from the outside in terms of memory politics, local media and the public in e stonia "still react by referring to the nation's own suffering, and by complaining about the lack of understanding by outsiders" (o nken 2007a: 36). t his may have changed, however, after the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of Victory d ay in Moscow on 9 May 2005, when the international media concentrated on e stonian

President a rnold r üütel and l ithuanian President Valdas a damkus, who stayed at home, and l atvian President Vaira Vike-Freiberga, who participated but took with her a message of an alternative "historical truth" to the high-level international gathering in Moscow (o nken 2007a). International reactions to the events around the relocation of the Bronze Soldier in spring 2007 may have been more critical without this little "victory" in the information war with r ussia. y et domestic tensions escalated further.

a fter the heated debate surrounding Victory d ay in 2005, the traditional celebration of 9 May by the r ussian community at the Bronze Soldier monument the following year attracted unprecedented attention from the e stonian press, which had previously simply treated the annual event with dismissive irony. When a nationalist holding an Estonian flag ventured into the hostile crowd on 9 May 2006, the flag was torn from his arms and he had to be rescued by the police. The e stonian media was outraged, demanding an end to the situation where one could not freely show the state flag in the capital of the country while the USSR flag was tolerated. In subsequent weeks, e stonian nationalists organized protests at the site demanding the removal of the Bronze Soldier. a fter a small clash between ethnic e stonians and ethnic r ussians near the site, the police sealed off the area. a n informal r ussian youth group called the *Nochnoi Dozor* (n ight Watch) formed and staged small gatherings at the monument in the evenings to protect the Bronze Soldier (l adõnskaja 2006).

Prime Minister a ndrus a nsip promised to resolve the problem before the next anniversary. t he governing coalition, however, was split. t he largest party in the coalition, the c entre Party led by e dgar Savisaar, had the lion's share of ethnic r ussian votes behind it and understandably was against action. t he c entre Party also controlled the t allinn city government under whose jurisdiction the monument fell. Since the city government opposed the prime minister's initiative, a nsip's party secured parliamentary approval, with the support of opposition parties, for a Protection of War g raves a ct designed to place decision-making over the matter in the hands of the national government. In a general election in March 2007, a nsip's tough stance on the Bronze Soldier helped his r eform Party win a surprise victory over his rival Savisaar. a nsip formed a new government, which excluded the c entre Party and brought in the conservative-nationalist Pro Patria and r es Publica Union, who previously in opposition had called loudest for the removal of the Bronze Solider. t hus the scene was set for confrontation.

Unannounced, in the early morning hours of 26 a pril, the area around the monument was fenced off and covered by a large tarp as archaeologists moved in to exhume the corpses that lay beneath the site. By the evening, over 1,000 mainly ethnic r ussians gathered at the site. r iot police dispersed the crowd, but the protesters, joined by many e stonians, headed into central t allinn, where cars were set ablaze, windows smashed and shops looted. Shocked by the unprecedented scenes of violence, the g overnment made the decision early in the morning to immediately remove the monument. a second night of rioting ensued, but by the third night the police had managed to restore order.

t he monument was re-erected in the t allinn military cemetery within a few days. o n 8 May, the e stonian g overnment commemorated the end of the Second World War. Ironically, as a result of the crisis, the Estonian Government for the first time paid its respects and laid flowers at the feet of the Bronze Soldier. Seeking to construct a new meaning for the Bronze Soldier, d efence Minister Jaak a aviksoo said after the ceremony, that at its new site "it is now truly a symbol of our mutual grief and loss, and not opposition, as it was formerly at t õnismägi" (e stonian Government Communication Office). The next day, the Russian community came *en masse*, bringing white carnations to the Bronze Soldier in its new location (l objakas 2007a).

t he e stonian g overnment had initially sought to frame the issue of the Bronze Soldier as a purely internal matter. a fter the riots it reluctantly acquiesced when g erman c hancellor a ngela Merkel, representing the e U Presidency, brokered a deal for a r ussian d uma delegation to visit t allinn. h er goal of opening a dialogue between e stonia and r ussia, however, was undermined right at the outset when the d uma delegation stated that the e stonian g overnment should resign. t he dispute had now become internationalized and the scene of action had meanwhile changed to a new location: Moscow. c ity authorities and local police there did not interfere when the k remlin-sponsored patriotic youth organization *Nashi* blockaded the e stonian embassy and even attempted to assault the e stonian ambassador. h owever, the k remlin overplayed its hand, since this harassment caused the e uropean Union to demand that r ussia uphold the Vienna c onvention. t he k remlin evidently had not expected the e U and n a t o to produce a common front with e stonia. Physical pressure was replaced with indirect means. Massive cyber attacks targeting mainly e stonian g overnment Internet sites overloaded them and made them temporarily inaccessible (Meyers 2007). Russian authorities imposed unofficial economic sanctions, such as the sudden reduction of the rail transit of r ussian oil through e stonian ports and difficulties for Estonian exporters. The crisis escalated in the following weeks and contributed to the tense atmosphere at the e U-r ussia summit at Samara on 17–18 May. a fter the e U's show of unity at the summit – apparently not expected by Moscow – things calmed down (Press Statement 2007). Bilateral relations remained frozen.

In the aftermath of events, *Nashi* attempted to keep the wounds open. *Nashi* sent its members from Moscow to stand at the former site of the Bronze Soldier as a "living monument", standing in the same pose and draped in a r ed a rmy style cape. d uring the rest of 2007, more than a dozen such *Nashi* activists were expelled by the e stonian authorities.[3] While *Nashi* sought to keep the former site of the Bronze Soldier "alive", the e stonian g overnment quickly constructed a landscaped park, devoid of any symbols or historical markers. It obviously desired to eradicate any memory of what previous stood there, fearing that the former site

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3   For violating the conditions of their tourist visas.

could potentially become a *lieu de mémoire*, signifying remembrance of the lost "battle" to defend the monument.

A Monumental Conflict: Estonian and Russian Political Discourses

t he controversy should also be viewed in the wider context of the debate since the end of the c old War about the crimes of communism. t he Balts have been frustrated by the fact that they have wanted to turn the world's attention to the crimes of the communist regime, but the outside world instead pressured them "to come to terms" with the h olocaust first. The conditionality of the European Union and na t o accession process ensured that during the 1990s that latter received official priority. This was at variance with internal discourse, which concerned itself primarily with the Soviet occupation – which lasted 10 times longer than the n azi one, left a much greater impact on society and was fresher in people's minds. a fter the former Warsaw Pact and Baltic countries became members of the e U in 2004, the debate has intensified since they have been able to make their voices heard in a new forum.

a t the same time, r ussia appeared to move in the opposite direction. r ussian President Vladimir Putin called the collapse of the USSr the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe" of the twentieth century (Putin 2005a; *BBC News* 2005b). h is regime seemed intent on bolstering r ussian nationalism, making particular use of the g reat Patriotic War to strengthen r ussian pride. For Putin, history serves only as a tool in reclaiming superpower status for his country. t hus he is able, on the one hand, to complain about the mass terror in the late 1930s that deprived r ussia of her best men when he speaks at a site of executions in 1937/38. o n the other hand, addressing a conference of history teachers, he declares the Stalinist terror years to be negligible compared with n azi g ermany or the US that dropped atom bombs upon civilians. t he popularity of r ussian rulers like Ivan the t errible, Peter the g reat and Stalin in Putin's r ussia is exemplary for the goal to construct a narrative which, regardless of political systems, only values r ussian power (Bischof 2007). "r eform" as a catchword for current developments that might be researched in history has been replaced by the axiom of "power". In regard to the former Baltic periphery of r ussia, "power" as embodied by Ivan, Peter and Stalin bears an inherent threat because all of them sent their troops to t allinn and r iga. t hus Baltic independence for Putin seems to be simply a question of power relations. a fter US President g eorge W. Bush's visit to r iga[4] prior to Putin's own Victory

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4   Bush "leveled his harshest criticism against russia for acts after World War II, and seemed to lean as much toward a denunciation of postwar Soviet acts as celebratory words for the n azi defeat. […] Mr. Bush on Saturday seemed likely to anger the r ussians even more, because he repeatedly used the word 'occupation' to describe the r ussian acts in the Baltics l atvia, l ithuania and e stonia – after World War II. t he r ussians have furiously responded that they were invited in" (Bumiller 2005).

d ay parade in Moscow, the r ussian president used the opportunity to put an end to the discussion, by giving a rather original lecture on r ussian-Baltic relations during a press conference on 10 May 2005. a ccording to him, the c ongress of People's d eputies of the USSr had condemned the h itler-Stalin Pact in 1989, and as a result, he could not see any sense in repetition. t his should be the "end of talk", he said. Moreover, the independence of the Baltic states in 1918, in the president's view, was a consequence of g ermany losing the war, having taken the Baltic Provinces from Russia. In 1939, these territories were finally given back to r ussia by the g ermans and, in 1939 (!), they "*voshli v sostav SSSR*", that is, entered the USSr , this obviously according to the h itler-Stalin pact. t hus, the Soviet Union could not have occupied them in 1941 (!), "because they were already a part of it".[5]

Putin mistakenly assumed that everyone, especially in the West, would follow exclusively the r ussian interpretation of history. When the president tried to exploit history for his own political purposes, he became a victim of history himself, because history has slipped out from his control (g oble 2005b). While democratic societies sooner or later have to come to terms with the polyphony of history in their attempts to gain political profit out of the past, the Kremlin does its best in avoiding a "democratisation of memory". n o doubt, the recent experience of a collapsing empire, not the least because of "separatist" narratives of the past, was formative in the current leadership's tendency to build a historical identity on the country's greatness and power.

k eeping history under political surveillance seems to be the main content of the country's *Geschichtspolitik*.[6] t he g reat Patriotic War remains central for new r ussia's historical master narrative. It is this part of history where the r ussian g overnment most eagerly claims complete control over r ussia's Soviet history. a ccording to Foreign Minister Sergei l avrov, the "memory of the victors does not fade, this memory is sacred to us, and attempts to relate to this memory blasphemously, to commit outrages against it, to rewrite history, cannot fail to anger us".[7] a ttempts to sacralize history, however, just mean that an extremely selective approach to the past is perceived as the only truth. In the words of t zvetan t odorov: "If we treat the past as holy, we exclude it from the world of meaning and prevent it teaching lessons that might apply to other times and places, to other agents of history" (t odorov 2003, as quoted in Bell 2006). c oncerning the Baltic

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5   despite this curious chronology, Putin assured listeners that he had had good history teachers, although he admitted that he might have drank a little too much beer during his university studies (r ozhkov 2005).

6   although prominent journalists like ewgenii kiselev make use of the Internet to challenge this pretension for ideological purity (k iselev 2007).

7   Source for this statement made 7 May 2007: http://johnib.wordpress.com/2007/05/07/russia-warns-against-rewriting-history (accessed 13 a ugust 2007). See the critique of the heroization of the Soviet past in k iselev 2007.

part of Soviet history, the holy r ussian "truth" is threatened by of the conception of "Soviet occupation" instead of "liberation from n azi occupation".

g erman historian Stefan t roebst undoubtedly is right in stating that the strict g erman role model of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* ("coming to terms with the past") does not fit for every society in the eastern European context. In his recently presented scheme, e stonia together with her Baltic neighbours belongs to an "anti-communist" category of societies that almost unanimously remember history in terms of condemning their Soviet past. In other words, anti-communism became a kind of foundation myth for the young state. r ussia, in contrast, belongs to a category of societies that are characterized by "consensus and general identity of 'old' and 'new' elites" and thus by a basically positive understanding of the Soviet era (t roebst 2005: 12–17, quot. 16; o nken 2007b). h ence the main difference between e stonia and r ussia on the level of societal or even state actors resembles the divided historical memory of ethnic e stonians and r ussian-speakers in e stonia. t hus the divided historical memory among e stonia's inhabitants is somehow backed by the denial of dialogue on the part of the r ussian Federation (Brüggemann 2007). For a new rising r ussia, nationalizing the positive aspects of Soviet history obviously seems to be a matter of importance. a lthough d avid g albreath recently argued that r ussia "will no longer be able to maintain the role of external national homeland for e stonia's r ussian-speaking minority" (g albreath 2005: 231), it seems that in enforcing a rehabilitation of triumphant Soviet history, Moscow is still able to drive a wedge along ethnic lines.

Prime Minister a nsip later framed the issue not as contested history, but as a test of wills between two states:

> I don't agree with the opinion that it was simply a question of one monument. t he question was much wider and that question can be expressed as follows: whose word counts in e stonia? d oes the word from the k remlin count or is e stonia an independent state with its own parliament and own government? t he government could have left that question unanswered. But that would have meant retreat. t ake one step backwards, retreat another, retreat and retreat and the consequence is that you eventually discover that you have retreated out of your state. t his was not an alternative for the government (XI r iigikogu stenogramm 2007).
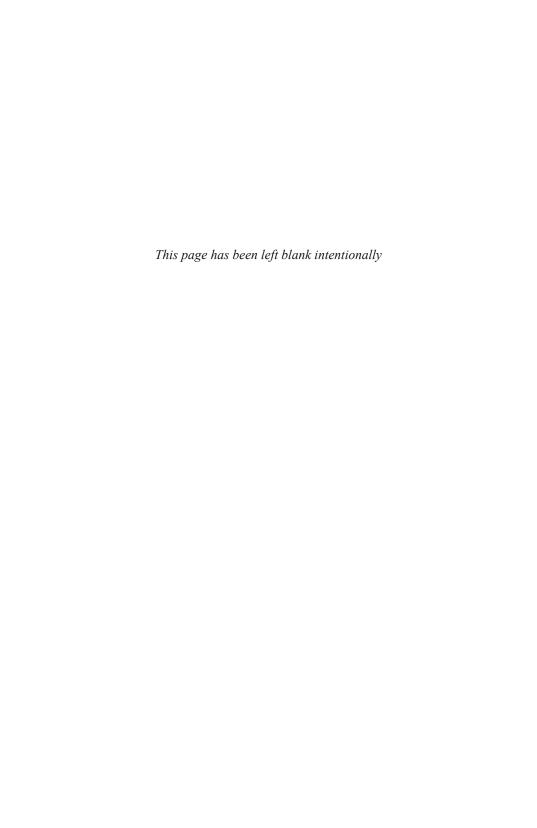
In terms of power politics a nsip chose to play the k remlin's game. y et he missed the opportunity to use creative history politics to integrate the e stonian narrative into the country's contested memory landscape. In other words, the prime minister again refrained from a "democratisation of history".

Conclusion

t he controversies surrounding the e stonian monumental landscape demonstrate the difficulties of coming to terms with the past in divided societies with contested identities. o n an internal level, however, the "war of memory" in e stonia basically mirrors the juxtaposition of "history taught at school versus history discovered at home", described by Peeter t ulviste and James V. Wertsch for the Soviet period (t ulviste 1994: 125; t ulviste and Wertsch 1994). t oday it's the r ussian-speaking minority that in an open society discovers an alternative history that does not correspond to the official Estonian version of the country's history. In the words of sociologist t riin Vihalemm, "t he r ussian media undoubtedly creates communication barriers and reproduces the protest identity of the repressed minority. t he problem is that the construction of the e stonian identity in the past was based on the same approach: a minority who had to defend itself against the majority" (Vihalemm 2007). In this contested situation, a "democratization of memory" according to g illis becomes a "profanation, or, what is worse, cultural suicide" for groups developing new identities with the help of an imagined national past (g illis 1994: 19). t his perfectly describes the frontline in e stonia for both communities. a ccepting plural identities in the framework of multinational states seems to be extremely necessary in order to ensure democratic processes, because in negotiating the past a society defines the future (Gillis 1994: 20).

h owever, there might be a more optimistic reading of events in spring 2007. a s k atherine Verdery reminds us, political transition ultimately has a non-rational cultural component as well that she sought to find in the "political lives of dead bodies". a ccording to her, re-establishing the "historical truth" with the help of destroying or erecting monuments or reburying (prominent) corpses shapes the realm of new moral systems as well (Verdery 1999: 26, 38). In fact, in removing the Soviet monument along with the corpses, the Estonian Government finally "liberated" it from the manipulative space of legitimating politics to the realm of private grief (eventually proven by the reburial of the dead alongside their kin in Russia). Their sacrifice for the sake of a sacralization of the (Soviet) state thus was ended. t he initial idea in 1995, when the monumental representation of moral order was changed from "Soviet" to "human" (by devoting the site to all the fallen of the war), proved to be only a short-lived compromise since e stonians saw the gatherings of r ussians on 9 May as a reanimation of the old Soviet moral order in the centre of their capital. In 2007 the e stonian g overnment, arguably in an effort to accumulate symbolic capital, demonstrated its understanding of a morally proper form of reburial in principally separating the dead bodies from the monument. t hey found their proper place at a soldier's cemetery among other r ed a rmy graves or with their kin, by which the g overnment basically re-established an almost universal order and not only a form of "historical truth" about the r ed a rmy's place in e stonian history. While in Soviet times the site at t õnismägi had signified a social space in a significant way, now the Government tries to "silence" it by creating a landscaped park. h owever, time will show what this

politics of space and memory will result in. In "cleansing" this formerly Soviet space it was reclaimed as "ours" from the e stonian point of view. In shifting, but not destroying, the *lieu de mémoire* for the r ussian minority, t allinn sought to come to terms with the needed "democratization of memory".

In the aftermath of the Bronze Soldier crisis, the e stonian g overnment has redoubled its efforts to create an official site of memory. Unlike the impressive Freedom Monument in neighbouring l atvia, e stonia does not yet have a central *lieu de mémoire*. t he Soviet occupation in 1940 stopped the plan to erect a national monument to the victory in the e stonian War of Independence (1918–1920) in central t allinn (at the site of where the monument to Peter the g reat had earlier stood). t hough the idea has constantly been discussed since the restoration of independence in 1991, diverging viewpoints among town planners and politicians, coupled with the lack of funds, has impeded progress. e vidently spurred by the row over the Bronze Soldier, the g overnment has pledged to have a monument erected on 28 n ovember 2008, the ninetieth anniversary of the start of the War of Independence. y et the victorious project for this monument, with its massive "freedom cross" resembling the symbolism of interwar Estonia, barely reflects the complex situation the country faces almost a century later. t hus, in building a past-oriented monument e stonia basically demonstrates not only a lack of self-confidence, but also its desire to import an "imagined" pure national identity from a past century that seems to be out of place in the wider context of the e U. Moreover, in referring back to the only military victory in modern e stonian history, the g overnment implements an anachronistic politics of history. It could be argued that the planned "freedom cross" follows the r ussian commemorative practice of monologizing the past and may even be contextualized as quite late evidence for the Soviet heritage the country still has to bear.

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l iminality and c ontested e uropeanness: Conflicting Memory Politics in the Baltic Space

Maria Mälksoo

Introduction

Recent years have witnessed intensified action on the "memory front" in the r ussian-Baltic relations, be they debates over "occupation" or "liberation" of the Baltics in World War II (WWII) in the context of the e stonian-r ussian and l atvian-r ussian border treaties, the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Victory d ay in Moscow in May 2005, controversies over WWII monuments in e stonia, or the writing of history. t his chapter sets these "memory wars" between the Baltic states and r ussia against the backdrop of their struggles over the contents of a common e uropean remembrance of WWII. I argue that both the Baltic and r ussian attempts to seek pan-e uropean recognition of the "e uropeanness" of their narrative of WWII and their "self" thereof, whilst denying the e uropeanness of the other, are indicative of their concurrent attempts to wrench apart their traditionally liminal position in e urope.

For after all, both r ussia and the "Baltic t hree" have historically occupied an ambiguous liminal space in the e uropean setting. Since its introduction in the era of e nlightenment, "eastern e urope" as such has been the embodiment of liminality, of the state "betwixt and between" in e urope's self-image (cf. t urner 1969). n otions like "*Zwischeneuropa*", or "lands between" describing the countries between g ermany and r ussia, speak volumes in this context (cf. Palmer 1970; Malia 1999). By all its different designations, eastern e urope has traditionally been positioned within geographical e urope but simultaneously put in the loop of being "less e uropean" than its western counterpart and therefore destined to unceasingly attempt to close the gap of "full e uropeanness" (n eumann 1999; Wolff 1994). *Mitteleuropa* as an area between r ussia and the West proper has further had a dually liminal character: neither Western nor e astern enough to be considered as wholly part of one or the other. Whilst r ussia has occupied a more traditional position of a clearly carved-out e astern "other" in the e uropean predicament (cf. n eumann 1999), its own ambivalent relation to the West, combining recognition-seeking from the latter with advances for autonomy, nonetheless places it in the comparative scale of "borderline e uropeans" (cf. l otman 1999: 359; k uus 2007).

Both r ussia and the Baltics' relative peripherality in relation to western e urope has created a curious case of "nested liminalities" in the region, where both sides use the other as a negative point of reference in order to veil their own sense of inferiority *vis-à-vis* the West (cf. Prizel 1998). t he Baltics' depiction of r ussia as a country of lower civilization and as an economic, political and military threat to them that inhabits an even lower stratum down in the depths of "e urope but not quite e urope" serves as a compensation mechanism for their own relative weakness in relation to the broadly defined West (cf. Zarycki 2004: 597). Building on their experience and historical ties to western e urope and r ussia, and their respective position on the semiotic border of the two semiospheres, the Baltic states also aim to function as bilingual "interpretative filters" for "translating" Russia to western e urope (cf. l otman 1999: 12). r ussia's frequent "counter-depictions" of the Baltic t hree as "troublemakers in the e uropean Union" similarly try to rescale their own sense of liminality towards the West (cf. Joenniemi 2005).

t his chapter unfolds these competitive claims for e uropeanness in the context of the acrimonious diplomatic confrontation between r ussia and e stonia over the relocation of a Soviet war memorial (the so-called "Bronze Soldier") in t allinn in the spring of 2007. I argue the "Bronze Soldier"-controversy to be, on the one hand, emblematic of the post-communist Baltic states' re-appropriation of their suppressed pasts, and their consequent attempts to seek Western support for influencing Russia to acknowledge the troubled legacy of communism in the region. r ussia's painful reaction to e stonia's decision to relocate the war memorial commemorating the country's "liberation" by the Soviet Union is, on the other hand, indicative of its difficulties in coming to terms with the mnemo-political emancipation of its former dependents as well as of its agonizing identity-building struggles in the post-Soviet era more generally.

t he argument is developed in three parts. First, the concept of liminality as an ambiguous borderline condition between different formations and subject positions is introduced. I claim "liminality" to be an especially appropriate notion for examining the historically peripheral Baltic states' self-positioning in e urope. Furthermore, the notion of liminality is instrumental for a more nuanced understanding of the self/other relationship, enabling differentiation to be made between shades of otherness in the scale between difference and outright threat to self's identity, as well as locating the space for negotiations between the self and other. Following the layout of the theoretical scaffolding of the argument, the chapter turns to the case in focus – the "Bronze Soldier" controversy of 2007, which is critically examined as an exemplary clash of competitive r ussian and Baltic claims for "proper e uropean remembrance" of the meaning and legacy of WWII, and their respective identities' "e uropeanness" thereof. t he chapter concludes with a critical discussion of the perspectives for a dialogue of different mnemonical visions of the legacy of WWII under the complex post-colonial predicament of the Baltic states.

The Dreadful and Vulnerable Liminal Character

While the notion of liminality originates from the field of ritual anthropology, it has recently become a staple of critically informed social and political studies as well. Outlining his theory of liminality in the first context, Arnold van Gennep (1960: 10–14) regarded all social and cultural transitions as marked by three phases: separation, margin (or *limen*, standing for "threshold" in l atin), and aggregation. The first, pre-liminal phase of separation signifies the detachment of the subject from its former attributes and identities, disconnecting it from an "earlier fixed point in the social structure, from a set of cultural conditions (a "state"), or from both" (see t urner 1969: 80). t he intermediate, yet central, "liminal" period marks the passage of the ritual subject through "a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state" (ibid.). t he liminal phase is thus a situation of great ambiguity, since the "liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial" (ibid.: 81). t he ambiguous state in between different classifications is only consummated in the third phase of the ritual passage (that is, reaggregation or reincorporation) where the relative stability of the subject in transition is regained, along with the restoration of the fairly stable order. t he end of the liminal state is marked by the ritual subject's acquisition of new rights and obligations *vis-à-vis* others in this clearly defined new structure where the former outsider, then half-insider-half-outsider, is now expected to follow the customary norms and ethical standards of the position in the system it has ultimately become part of. l iminality as an in-between stage between two stable orders is curious as its ambivalence determines the non-objectification of the liminal subjects, their lack of definite identity (cf. Szakolczai 2000: 193). As a state outside of order, in and out of time, and in and out of social structure, indeed, as a state of statuslessness and defiance of categories, liminality always borders on the transgressive (ibid.: 194; cf. t urner 1969: 83; n orton 1988: 67).

In the context of international communities, liminal entities likewise include subjects whose belonging to the community is contested and ambiguous. While the Baltic states have been formally incorporated to the e uro-a tlantic security community, their borderline self-identification as "Europe but not quite Europe" lingers on. t his is so in spite of their completion of passage through the formal liminal phase of becoming part of institutionalized e urope, that is, crossing the threshold from candidate countries to full-fledged members of the European Union (EU). Positioned in the fluctuating borderlines between Russia and the West, and embodying the consequently shifting conceptualizations of "e uropean", the Baltics constitute an exemplary liminal space where e urope's "high and low", or "sacred and profane" have historically met.

Importantly, liminal characters are essential for the successful constitution of the content and limits of a given political community, as it is precisely the liminal cases, not quite "this" nor "that", *vis-à-vis* which the political identity of a community is presumed to emerge with the greatest clarity (see n orton 1988: 4).

Since liminal figures are simultaneously alike and yet different from the self, they serve as mirrors for political communities, providing "an object with which the subject can identify even as it differentiates itself" (ibid.: 53–54, 7; cf. r umelili 2003: 220–23, 241). Western e uropeans have indeed been historically disposed to depict eastern e urope as a rudimentary and rustic version of the rational "self" of the West (cf. Wolff 1994: 13; Böröcz 2000: 869). In d errida's terms, "eastern e urope" has historically been a supplement to "western e urope": secondary to the privileged "West" but simultaneously necessary for the latter's self-completion and appraisal (d errida 1976: 141–64; cf. Said 2003). h ence, at once other and like, eastern e urope has traditionally been indispensable to western e urope's self-image, serving, *inter alia*, as a mirror for the e U's self-conceptualization as a political actor of a new and innovative kind.

l iminal character's borderline condition thus inevitably engenders its sense of fragility and vulnerability. o n the other hand, liminal entities can also be threatening to the self's identity boundaries since liminal subjects, by definition, subvert any clear distinction between self and other (see r umelili 2003: 219–21; cf. h opf 2002: 130–31; d ouglas 2002: 119). Indeed, as Bahar r umelili has shown, the categories of "self" and "other" emerge with greatest clarity in relation to the liminal subject as it is at positions of "partly self and partly other" that the self feels the greatest need to differentiate itself (cf. r umelili: ibid.). t he likeness of the liminal subject to the self thus increases the latter's fears of dissolving in the other, and therefore could give rise to the identification of the liminal entity as wholly unlike and threatening by those who cannot recognize the liminal character as simultaneously other and like (see n orton 1988: 55). t he "other" closest to the "self" could therefore be the most threatening "other", as an "alike alter" could potentially replace the "self" more easily than any other alternative (see Hopf 2002: 8). As a zone of heightened semiotic activity, the liminal figure (or the boundary of a semiosphere, if one were to adopt y uri l otman's terminology here) thus inherently threatens the self it identifies with (or, in Lotman's words, the cultural structures of its core). Its more intense and faster semiotic processes tend not to remain contained in the periphery but also burst out into the cultural centre, thus eventually pushing the latter's thought structures aside and replacing them with the originally marginal ones (cf. l otman 1999: 16).

The liminal figure is itself well aware of its critical boundary function *vis-à-vis* the semiotic space it identifies with. According to Lotman, the boundary of a semiosphere indeed represents its most important functional and structural position, essentially determining the character of its semiotic mechanism (see l otman 1999: 14). a s a bilingual setting that transmits information for the internal semiotic space from its surroundings, the boundary of a semiosphere is not as much a clear demarcation line as a contact zone between a semiosphere and the "other" spaces remaining outside of it. n onetheless, it is also a marker for distinguishing one's own specificity in relation to other semiotic spheres (cf. ibid.: 14–16).

t he upshot of this is that collective identities should be altogether regarded as triadic, rather than dyadic structures, where between self and other, lies the liminal

character; between inside and outside, the boundary; between left and right, the centre; and between past and future, the present (see e isenstadt and g iesen 1995: 75; cf. Wydra 2007: 256). t he curious e uropean predicament of the Baltic states and r ussia therefore questions the validity of the traditional binary understanding of the self/other relationship, suggesting instead to conceive identity as a triadic structure where in between a self and an other there is space for different liminal figures that cannot be affirmatively characterized as either one or the other. Accordingly, collective identifications, such as "European", are understood here as continuums along which several shades of "selfhood" and "otherness" are possible with varying degrees of difference, rather than clear dichotomies. Instead of assuming a static state of *being* e uropean, then, we should rather seek to capture the nuances of different politics of *becoming* e uropean at the eastern rim of the continent – which is arguably just an arbitrary geopolitical construction itself (see l ewis and Wigen 1997). While the politics of becoming e uropean[1] has taken diverging forms in the Baltic and r ussian cases, both have nevertheless struggled for gaining Western recognition of their "e uropean subjectivity" over the past decade – whether in the broader civilizational or stricter institutional meaning of the term (such as the membership in the e U and na t o in the Baltics' case).

Against that backdrop, the Baltics' and Russia's increasingly vocal and fiercely competitive claims of their respective narratives of WWII to be accepted as part of the mainstream e uropean remembrance of the war also signify their respective quests to be recognized as "clean" parts of "e urope proper" (see, for example, c hapter 1 in this volume). c asting the other concurrently into the category of "unclean", or "false" e urope, is aimed at expelling it from the "true e uropean" semiotic space and consequently bound to enhance the relative position of one's own "self" in the e uropean setting (cf. k risteva 2006: 105). In the context of the so-called "Bronze Soldier" crisis in particular, both r ussia and e stonia attempted to claim themselves the structural assets of a key boundary figure of the European mnemonical community. By seeking to restrain the intervention of the other and thus to filter out the "alien", or "wrong", material to what was conceived to be the "common e uropean understanding" of WWII, the respective mnemo-political offensives of e stonia and r ussia touched a tender spot in the broader e uropean self-conceptualization. a s a clash between nested liminalities in e urope, the "Bronze Soldier"-affair was emblematic of liminal figures' simultaneous sense of vulnerability and ability to emanate danger *vis-à-vis* the centre of their constitutive community. e stonia's pointing to the dubious outcome of WWII for the Baltic states essentially endangered the defence mechanisms of western e uropeans' self-congratulating narrative of WWII as the "good war" (cf. d avies 2007). e xposing with its "counter-history" western e uropeans' compliance with Stalin's regime and the kidnapping of eastern e uropean states' sovereignty for their own post-war security predicament, e stonia appeared in the "Bronze Soldier" controversy as the "bruised skin" of e urope – not quite an entirely internalized part of the "e uropean

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1 om the politics of becoming, see c onnolly (1999).

self" with its problematic east European understanding of the ramifications of the war, and yet potentially destabilizing, if not destructive, for the conventional patterns of relating to the implications of WWII in western e urope (cf. k risteva 2006: 193; d ouglas 2002: 117).

The "Bronze Soldier" and the Conflicting Memory Politics of WWII

t he debates surrounding the removal of this Soviet war memorial from central t allinn, which had originally commemorated the r ed a rmy soldiers who had fallen while "liberating" the city from the n azi occupation in September 1944, and that now simply states in its inscription "t o the fallen of the Second World War", have demonstrated the existential dimension of commemorative practices in the post-Soviet space.[2] t he freedom to choose forms through which to express one's memory has a heightened acuteness for the small nations in particular. a s l atvian historian a ivars Stranga argues, "the collective memory of collective history … is an inviolable component in national identity," the loss of which "can be a true tragedy for a small nation" (see Stranga 2006). Furthermore, since both l atvia and e stonia have large r ussian-speaking minorities (in e stonia's case, the r ussian-speakers make up approximately one-third of the country's 1.3 million population), they also face a serious challenge in accommodating the conflicting mnemonic visions of the respective nations' immediate past to their *national* collective memory in order to foster social integration (cf. Stranga 2006). t he debates over the semiotic connotations of the "Bronze Soldier" have therefore also revealed the inner fragmentation of "e stonian subjecthood", exposing the persistent insecurity of the e stonian "national self" towards the local r ussians' "minority histories", or, indeed, the "other in oneself". h aving exposed the subnationally divided memories about WWII within e stonia, the "Bronze Soldier" episode has confronted the governing elites with the unenviable task of getting "the e stonian narrative" across at the national and international levels concurrently, navigating between the different pressures from both the side of r ussia and the western e uropean members of the e U.

For the r ussians living in e stonia, the "Bronze Soldier" represents a key *lieu de mémoire*, a focal point of their national identity as well as their sub-group identity in e stonia, which provides cultural support for their memory of a heroic role in WWII as well as a venue for commemorating their war dead (cf. n ora 1995; c arrier 2000: 39; k arusoo 2007). t he "cult of the war dead" is indeed intimately linked to the self-representation of the nation (Mosse 1990: 105). t his monument, depicting a mourning soldier in Soviet uniform, was initially erected in 1947 as a *voin-osvoboditel* (that is, a monument for honouring the Soviet "liberators" of t allinn from the n azi occupation) after the destruction of its predecessor by the

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2 For the historical background of the "Bronze Soldier" monument, see kaasik (2006).

Estonian resistance fighters in 1946. In the mid-1990s, an attempt was made to enlarge the semiotic field of the monument by exchanging its old inscription for a new one dedicated to all the casualties of WWII. t he majority of e stonians have not, however, come to see it from this perspective, just as they never quite accepted the first inscription (see Soosaar 2007). The Russians of Estonia, in their turn, tend to still view the legacy of WWII through the narrow lens of their victorious g reat Patriotic War, disregarding its more problematic and complex outcomes for a country like e stonia. a ltogether, r ussia and the Baltic t hree have clashingly contradictory narratives of WWII. What was glory for r ussia, was humiliation for the Baltic states; what r ussia as the legal successor of the Soviet Union celebrates as its victory in the g reat Patriotic War, the Baltic t hree execrate as a loss of independence, identity, and thus their meaningful existence. t he collective memories of WWII in r ussia and the Baltic t hree have thus proved to be incommensurable to date, and the end of the war is an event still seen in completely different lights.

a gainst that backdrop, the "Bronze Soldier" has been a seemingly poly-referential realm of memory that has symbolized for the e stonians and r ussians their different experiences of WWII, leading to the monument's appropriation for different ideological and political purposes respectively (cf. k ritzmann 1995: x). What for r ussia, as well as for the considerable r ussian-speaking community in e stonia, had signified Estonia's liberation from Nazism in 1944, symbolized for the e stonians the return of the Soviet oppression for more than four decades. t he trope of "liberation", however, also suggests the respective monument's imperially significant symbolism, implying the "liberators" inherent right to the land that had to be "liberated" from an enemy that had been essentially contesting that right. c onsequently, the fact of e stonia's and other Baltic states' illegal occupation and annexation by the Soviet Union in the course of WWII is generally denied among the Russian community in Estonia, reflecting thus the respective political position of Russia proper. Russia's critical self-reflection against the backdrop of WWII has been hamstrung by the fact that for r ussians – perhaps more than for any other nation in e urope – the crimes and acts of heroism in WWII were embedded in the very same historical moment (see Wolfe 2006: 279; cf. Zarakhovich 2007). Russia's difficulties with critically engaging with its communist legacy are all the more amplified because the Soviet era marked the period of unprecedented international power for the country and a critical assessment of this period is therefore seen as potentially undermining of its position in the international arena at the time. a gainst this backdrop, Stalin's role tends to be viewed in Russia first and foremost as a "saviour from the n azi plague" rather than repudiated for his regime's mass repressions (cf. Satter 2005; Berezovsky 2007). t his has, however, led to the cunning pick-and-choose approach to r ussia's communist inheritance: when useful to today's r ussia, the country's direct legal succession from the Soviet Union is emphasized; when harmful, however, such as in case of admitting to the criminal acts of the forbearing regime (for example the occupation and annexation of the Baltic states), r ussia's direct succession from the Soviet Union is refuted.

t he selective r ussian remembrance of WWII exemplifies vividly how present concerns determine which past is remembered and how. h istory is always viewed from a particular vantage point of the present, as present problems tend to determine what is considered worth remembering and what destined to oblivion (cf. k ratochwil 2006: 14–21). For today's r ussia, which is resolutely seeking to re-establish its international position amongst the "great powers", the role of the Molotov-r ibbentrop Pact in sowing the seeds of WWII as well as leading to the ultimate subjugation of eastern e urope to the Soviet yoke is largely irrelevant, for it conflicts with Russia's "usable remembrance" of the war. Focusing on its hugely costly victory over Nazism instead enables Russia to position itself firmly amongst the "normal" e uropean countries, as the very victory is, after all, the only victory of the r ussian people that is celebrated throughout the world today, containing thus something universal in its Russian specificity (cf. Minaudier 2007). The attempts to institutionally monopolize and fix certain meanings of the past further demonstrate that the "interpretation wars" over the past events are substantially struggles over power – as the control over the narratives of the past enables to gain control over the construction of further narratives for an imagined future. h ence, the r ussian political elites' maintenance of the narrative of the Baltic states' voluntary joining with the Soviet Union consequently allows it to shed its responsibility for the communist crimes in the region as well as to demand full citizenship and political rights for the r ussians living there since the Soviet period. t he culpability of the official Russian stance *vis-à-vis* the record of WWII does not then really lie in selecting those parts of the past that it wishes to preserve (which is, after all, human, all too human), but in granting itself a "natural" right to decide what would be available to others (that is, the victims of the Soviet regime) (cf. t odorov 2003: 127). In a manner characteristic of a great power, the Soviet Union used a method of organized forgetting in the Baltic states and Poland over the communist period in order to try to deprive them of their national consciousnesses (cf. c onnerton 1989: 14). In a similar fashion, as we will see below, when r ussia encounters interpretations of history that diverge from its own, it tends to react with a hurt outrage that the Baltic states, in their turn, generally interpret as a propaganda campaign of disinformation, if not outright lies (see cf. Stranga 2006).

While the "Bronze Soldier" controversy became a full-blown "memory war" between r ussia and e stonia over their diverging interpretations of the meaning and legacy of WWII in the Baltic region in the spring of 2007, the two mnemonical visions of a conquering great nation and a colonized small one had clashed already a year before. Indeed, on 9 May 2006, about 1,000 r ussian-speaking people gathered at the "Bronze Soldier" to commemorate the end of WWII. But not merely that occurred – as the "counter-meeting" of the e stonians at the same spot witnessed: instead of a quiet mourning ceremony, arguably a "bellicose school of the Great Russian chauvinism" was on display with Russians waving Soviet flags clashing with e stonian nationalists (see a rujärv 2006, 2007a). For the latter, the police's reaction to the Russian demonstrators' attack on the Estonian flag simply added more fuel to the fire: the police shooed away the bearers of the Estonian

flag instead of restraining those waving the red Soviet flags. The commemoration ceremony took the dimensions of a protest rally against e stonia's current political course, with arguably "considerable support, assistance and encouragement" from the r ussian e mbassy in e stonia (cf. Ilves in Myers 2007). In the eyes of most e stonians, extremist pro-Soviet demonstrators essentially hijacked the "Bronze Soldier" from its regular visitors, the majority of which had probably just been honouring their war dead. t he 9th of May at the "Bronze Soldier" therefore came to be seen as a celebration of e stonia's occupation and a denial of the suffering of the e stonian nation as a result of that (see Ilves 2007a). Whilst ritual is generally meant to "enliven" the memory and thereby "aid perception", it can also change perception of a past event by its choice of the selective principles of remembering and modification of original experience. Hence, ritual can actually come first in formulating experience and knowledge about an historic event (see d ouglas 2002: 79). The meeting of 9 May 2006 thus also demonstrated the significance of the collective identity-bearing and educational role of this kind of commemorative practice: not only had war veterans and their relatives gathered at the monument, but classes of young r ussian students had been brought along to attend the ceremony as well, as if part of a mnemonic socialization ritual into the r ussian-speaking mnemonic community in e stonia (cf. Zerubavel 1996; t ulviste 2007).

a gainst the backdrop of the events of 9 May 2006, e stonian intellectuals and politicians began to ponder with a renewed intensity what the strategy and tactics of "Estonianhood" should be in that context. Suggestions ranged from calls to finally end the typically Estonian "sneaking along the walls", the "endless objectification, denial and self-negation", the quieting of one's own historical consciousness, to the enlarging of the semiotic field of the monument in order to encapsulate the liberation of e urope from all wars (see, for example, a rujärv 2006 and t aagepera 2006, respectively). In general, however, one's right to collective memories, to losses and sufferings, one's own stories, heroes and myths was emphasized along with the right to "call those who doubt our stories to their senses" (see a rujärv 2007a; cf. t oode 2007). Indeed, everyone should have the right to celebrate their victories and commemorate their losses, as president Ilves has powerfully argued (2007a).

y et, successful community-building would probably require not only a quest for a more consistent understanding of the legacy of WWII between the e stonian majority and largely r ussian-speaking minority of the country, or, as a theoretical alternative, mutual recognition of different viewpoints alongside a mutually shared awareness that setting out for a new start under the existing national predicament might, at some point, require drawing a deliberate line under the legacy of the past. Besides respecting each others' losses, building up an identity that is more coherently shared between the national majority and minorities of e stonia presupposes the capacity for forgetting, or overcoming, certain parts of the respective pasts. For, indeed, we are not only the past that we (can) remember, but also the past that we can forget (Wydra 2007: 226; cf. a nkersmit 2001: 308). n evertheless, it remains to be seen whether any singular, fully reconciled

version of the immediate past could actually emerge amongst the e stonians and e stonian r ussians, for institutionalized collective memory is inevitably political, subordinating some narratives rather than others. d ue to the tendency to interpret historical data in a strongly affect-oriented manner, the memories of victors and losers alike tend to be immune to alternative versions of history (see Wydra 2007: 231).

e stonian radicals' threats to blow up the Bronze Soldier, which by the 9th of May outburst of emotions had come to represent the remains of the Soviet occupation for most e stonians, led to constant police surveillance of the monument area in the spring of 2006. a fter heated debates, the e stonian parliament passed the Protection of War g raves a ct on 10 January 2007, which lay the legal foundation for the relocation of the monument from in the centre of the capital city to a military cemetery (see r iigikogu 2007a).[3] y et again, the r ussian propaganda machine went into rapid action, accusing e stonia of revisionism, rewriting of history, blasphemy against the soldiers who defeated n azi g ermany; even in representing n azism in a heroic light, and taking steps towards legalizing fascism and neo-n azism in the twenty-first century, displaying thus the Manichean logic of distinguishing an enemy using the rationale that "who is anti-Sovietist, is by definition a Fascist, or n azi" (see k osachev 2007a; cf. Soosaar 2007; Myers 2007). e ven threats about applying economic sanctions and calling off diplomatic relations with e stonia in relation to the removing of the "Bronze Soldier" from t õnismägi were made by r ussia.[4] Since WWII has almost a sacred role in the historical consciousness of the r ussian people, any attempts to undermine this understanding or to touch the "untouchables" related to it, is bound to meet an angry, and often violent, response (such as r ussian youngsters rallying at the e stonian embassy in Moscow; several occasions of staining the embassy building with paint etc.). t his seems to be the case because WWII, having become a sort of moral solution and salvation for the r ussians, enabled them to purge the rest of the Soviet history in their minds, as well as to provide some sense of stability and coherence throughout the tumultuous years from 1945 to today (see g oble 2006; cf. Wolfe 2006: 280; Masso 2007). y et r ussia's accusations of sacrilege, aimed at those who question the integrity of its core historical narratives, also bring to mind t zvetan t odorov's sharp observation

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3   Before the parliamentary elections of March 2007, another law was passed by the e stonian r iigikogu in order to accelerate the dislocation of the "Bronze Soldier" monument. d ue to the law's contradictions with the c onstitution, and arguably opportunistic timing, however, the President of e stonia refused to promulgate the "l aw on the r emoval of an Unlawful Structure" (see Ilves 2007b; r iigikogu 2007b).

4   during the diplomatic nadir of the e stonian–r ussian relations in connection with the "Bronze Soldier" crisis in May 2007, r ussia indeed took steps disrupting oil product and coal shipments through e stonia, albeit denying their politically inspired nature (see Wagstyl and Parker 2007).

that the sacralization of the past tends to serve the particular interests of its defenders rather than their moral edification (see Todorov 2001: 21).[5]

For the majority of e stonians, however, the painful r ussian reaction to the relocation of the "Bronze Soldier" monument from the centre of t allinn to a military cemetery spoke of the questioning of e stonia's current constitutional order and glorification of the Soviet Union than of the genuinely wounded memory. It further illustrated the agony of a previous "empire master" in coming to terms with the irreversibility of its former colony's emancipation (cf. Mutt 2007b; l aar 2007b).[6] t he public response of the majority of e stonians to the calls for enlarging the connotative field of the "Bronze Soldier" have, therefore, been rather mild from the beginning as the new interpretations of key historical symbols are seemingly difficult to "domesticate" (see Mutt 2007a; but cf. Tamm 2007b). Against the Russian propaganda campaign, it has been argued that Estonia does not fight a war against monuments, at least not against the war dead, but that it is simply defending its own conceptualization of what e stonian state and society is really about, and refuting the institutionalization of a collective memory that is quintessentially at odds with its own. t he contestations over the "Bronze Soldier" have therefore simultaneously been the debates about e stonian identity, about its relationship to its immediate past, and its self-establishment against the contradictory narratives of r ussia as well as the generally lukewarm Western willingness to take trouble with the "actual" course of historical events in the Baltic states.[7] Indeed,

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5   t odorov moreover aptly reminds us that it is human values, rather than monuments, that should be the objects of sacralization in today's world (ibid.). o n the hazards of the sacralization of memories, see Misztal (2004). For a call for the desacralization of the r ussian messianistic remembrance practices, see a rujärv (2007b).

6   om the deep-seated links between russian identity and empire, and its consequently marred post-imperial self-definition, see Prizel (1998: 151–79).

7   While the Baltics' constitutive historical narrative enjoys general tacit recognition from the West, explicit support in situations directly contesting e stonia's "story" tends to be usually confined to the immediate neighbours of the country (that is, Finland, Latvia, l ithuania, Poland hurrying to express their solidarity with e stonia during the most recent "Bronze Soldier" crisis of late a pril-May 2007). See also the statement by the k atyn c ommittee in Poland that urged the removal of Soviet monuments from Poland as well (see *Kommersant* 2007). n otoriously, however, the most recent "Bronze Soldier"-triggered confrontation between r ussia and e stonia also brought the e U's foreign policy coordinator Javier Solana, as well as the US Secretary of State c ondoleezza r ice to express their understanding and support to e stonia under this agitated predicament. See also the US Senate r esolution condemning violence in e stonia and attacks on e stonia's embassies in 2007, and expressing solidarity with the government and the people of e stonia (2007). Moreover, the timing of g eorge W. Bush's announcement of the e stonian president's visit to the US in June 2007 was also interpreted as an act of implicit US support to e stonia in e stonian diplomatic circles.

For a typical adoption of the r ussian rhetoric *vis-à-vis* the "Bronze Soldier" case, however, see former g erman c hancellor's g erhard Schröder's comments in relation to which the e stonian prime minister and president cancelled their previously scheduled

> e stonia's historical gaze is trained to see suffering rather than achievements,
> losses rather than victories. Fear and preconceptions rather than pride and
> openness dominate in our views. It is as if in our minds we are still fighting
> the Second World War, we continue fighting the occupation. Just like another
> country, not very far from here, finds it necessary to justify its actions during
> the 20th century. Unfortunately, r ussia does not want to recognise the words of
> its first president Boris Yeltsin, in h ungary in n ovember 1992, when he said
> that after the destruction of fascism, another ideology of violence descended on
> e astern e urope. President y eltsin, who apologised for the violence caused by
> the Soviet Union, said that one must know one's own history, because without
> the complete truth, justice cannot be restored, and without the complete truth,
> there can be neither remorse nor forgiveness (Ilves 2007a).

Just as the questioning of the absolute purity of the role of r ussians in WWII
invokes painful reactions from the r ussian side, the active expression of nostalgia
for the Soviet Union – the arch enemy in the collective historical consciousness
of e stonians – on e stonian soil is bound to do the same. t he "changing of the
meaning" of the "Bronze Soldier" has thus been viewed rather sceptically by the
e stonians, for "re-naming dirt as 'cake' does not make it any more edible", as an
e stonian activist who made a promise to blow the monument apart succinctly put
the point (see l iim 2006).

Pondering on the line of Julia k risteva's thought, we could thus conceive the
"Bronze Soldier" as a symbolic *abject* in the main post-Soviet self-conceptualization
of e stonians (cf. k risteva 2006). a s a symbol of Soviet victory in WWII, with all
its regrettable implications for the independence of the Baltic states, it is inevitably
embedded in the history of the collective Estonian subject, reflecting its complex
post-colonial predicament (*vae victis!*). As a prominent signifier of this part of
the past that today's e stonia would prefer to forget about, the abjective nature
of the monument was bound to engender (with a little help of the political elites'
respective engineering) an intense desire among e stonians to have it cast out of the
"e stonian symbolic system".

In the mnemo-political context, then, an abject refers to that part of a subject's
past that is, willingly or not, deeply interwoven with one's own selfhood, and
somewhat alluring for that, but nevertheless repulsive and despicable for the
subject as it hamstrings its normal and successful functioning in the present. a s

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meeting with Schröder, which was planned for discussing the g erman-r ussian gas pipeline
implications for e stonia (see *EUX.TV* 2007).

For media accounts sympathetic to the e stonian "narrative", see, for instance, *The
Wall Street Journal* (2007) and Macomber (2007), invoking rhetorical analogies of the
unimaginability of a memorial to n azi occupation in France and a monument in Washington,
D.C., to a government that murdered eight of ten US first presidents, respectively. Cf. *The
Independent* (2007), *The Economist* (2007a, 2007b, 2007c), h iatt (2007), *The Financial
Times* (2007), t heyssen (2007), and Berezovsky (2007).

an abject is situated outside of the subject's accepted symbolic order, being forced to face it is an inherently traumatic experience for the subject, as k risteva (2006) argues. For e stonians and r ussians living in e stonia alike (and perhaps also to r ussia proper) confronting the "Bronze Soldier" was essentially an act of facing one's abject (that is, the oppressive Soviet past for the e stonians, symbolized by the monument) and one's own abjecthood (that is, the self-acknowledgement of the r ussian-speaking community of its relatively marginalized position in the e stonian society). What the majority of Estonians regarded as vital self-purification from the remnants of the generally despised Soviet past, the local r ussian community conceived of as an act of defilement *vis-à-vis* themselves; indeed, an attempt to cast out an essential part of their self. a s we know from k risteva (2006: 85), castration is inherently perceived to be more dangerous for the liminal characters as they are not only in danger of thus losing a part of themselves, but their life as they know it altogether. t he Bronze Soldier crisis hence emerged as a ritual clarification of boundaries between the "inside" and "outside" of the Estonian and r ussian-e stonian "selfhood" – an event that both parties interpreted as essentially an offence by the other.

Facing one's mnemonical abject is similar to becoming aware of, or acknowledging the gaps in, one's own collective memory, or the politically endorsed and publicly shared remembrance of the past. The "holes" in the official r ussian version of WWII (that is also largely shared by the r ussian community in e stonia) bespeak of a rather noticeable ineptitude to reconcile the narratives of a liberator, conqueror and sufferer-nation within a comprehensive r ussian self-image. a ccordingly, the inconsistency between these antagonistic versions of the past does not leave sufficient space for empathizing with other nations' sufferings that might have resulted from contacts with these conflicting segments of the past. a s a nne a pplebaum writes in *Gulag* (2003), the foreigners' pointing to the criminality of the Soviet regime usually evokes in a common r ussian a reaction in the vein of, "But we ourselves suffered the most!" – just as if suffering oneself and causing it to others were necessarily mutually exclusive phenomena. t he politically endorsed r ussian WWII narrative of today has destined the darker side of r ussia's war experience to official oblivion as the country's central understanding of its role in WWII as e urope's liberator from n azism would hardly profit from being relativized with, say, the "liberators" behaviour in the occupied areas. a ltogether, if the central lens for viewing the past is self-congratulating on one's own national greatness and bravery, it is difficult to mould it in order to become more comprehensive *vis-à-vis* the experiences of those this very greatness has historically touched "from the other side". a ny remembering is therefore inevitably also forgetting. Furthermore, symbolic commemoration rituals might create a mere illusion of remembering and thus actually conceal forgetting (see a . a ssmann 1999: 335; cf. Zehfuss 2007: 39).

t he most recent act of the "Bronze Soldier" saga was opened with a diplomatic protest note presented to e stonia by the r ussian Ministry of Foreign a ffairs in a pril 2007, expressing r ussia's profound discontent with the e stonian

g overnment's plans to exhume the Soviet soldiers buried under the monument, thereby issuing a warning about the "most serious consequences" for r ussian-e stonian relations should e stonia persist in transferring the "Bronze Soldier" from central t allinn to a military cemetery (see *Eesti Päevaleht* 2007a, 2007b). r ussian Foreign Minister Sergei l avrov further cautioned that such a "sacrilegious" move would have "negative implications" not only for r ussian-e stonian relations, but for "all of postwar e urope" (see *Interfax* 2007). a pro-k remlin r ussian youth association n ashi (that is, "o urs") promised to send its representatives to guard the monument once its relocation operations began (see g orondi et al. 2007). t he "ticking semiotic bomb" of the "Bronze Soldier" finally exploded into an actual confrontation between young r ussian street protesters and the police on the night of 26 a pril 2007 when the preparations for the dislocation of the monument began, creating for several nights and days massive public unrest in central t allinn, with 1,000 rioters breaking windows, lighting fires and fighting with the police, whilst chanting "r ossija, r ossija" ("r ussia, r ussia") and unfurling banners reading "USSr forever" (sic!).[8]

What had started off as an ideological confrontation between the society's majority and main minority mnemonical visions turned into a marauding of downtown t allinn, bluntly exposing the dubious success of e stonia's social integration strategy towards its r ussian-speaking community, and consequently, the country's noticeable inner division (cf. *The Economist* 2007a, 2007b, 2007c). t he "semiotic bomb" of the "Bronze Soldier" therefore detonated another set of social tensions looming in e stonian society, exposing an apparent mismatch between the "authoritative" e stonian national mnemonic vision and the one the local r ussian community had found to be "internally persuasive" (cf. Bakhtin 1981: 342–46; h elme 2007). a s a result of the mediation of the g erman e U c ouncil presidency of the time, the r ussian State d uma delegation visited e stonia during the crisis, animating with its demand of the resignation of the e stonian g overnment the bitter memory of the Soviet "r ed e missaries" visit of 1940 (cf. l aar 2007a; *The Economist* 2007c). a pparently, then, in r ussian eyes e stonia's culpability in the "Bronze Soldier" affair lay not so much in its arguably disrespectful handling of r ussia's WWII memories as in its nerve to become independent from r ussia in the first place (Helme 2007; Penttila 2007).

a lready tense diplomatic relations between e stonia and r ussia were further exacerbated by the r ussian youth unions n ashi and Molodoja g vardija ("y oung g uard") encircling the e stonian embassy in Moscow for several days following the relocation of the monument in t allinn. h undreds of young r ussians held the embassy under constant siege, essentially keeping the embassy staff hostage; throwing stones at the embassy building, painting on its walls slogans such as "We made it to Berlin once, we will make it to t allinn as well," tearing down the Estonian flag, attacking the Estonian ambassador Marina Kaljurand, as well as the car of the Swedish ambassador on his way to meet the e stonian ambassador.

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8   om the explosive semiotic nature of the "Bronze Soldier", see Mikita (2007).

In relation to the r ussian authorities' lack of effort in restoring order around the embassy and their subsequent failure to fulfil their obligations to ensure the security and freedom of movement of e stonian diplomats accredited to the r ussian Federation in accordance to the Vienna c onvention on d iplomatic r elations, the e stonian Foreign Ministry presented r ussia with a note, protesting at the situation (see e stonian Ministry of Foreign a ffairs 2007b). t he e stonian Foreign Minister Urmas Paet issued a strong statement the following day, arguing that the "virtual, psychological and real attacks" of r ussia against e stonia constitute a problem for the whole of the e U, thus calling for the Union's reaction "in full strength" (see Paet 2007a; cf. Paet 2007b). t he e U c ouncil Presidency statement on the situation of the e stonian embassy in Moscow strongly urged the r ussian Federation to comply with its international obligations under the Vienna c onvention on d iplomatic r elations, calling for a "dispassionate dialogue" on the matter of the Soviet war graves in e stonia and addressing the problem "in a spirit of understanding and mutual respect" (see the e U c ouncil Presidency statement of 2 May 2007).[9]

From the "Memory Carnival" to a Dialogue of Memories

Instead of a *dialogue*, however, the whole "Bronze Soldier" saga was more reminiscent of a *carnival* in the Bakhtinian understanding of the term. For Bakhtin, carnival marks temporary suspension and reversal of the existing hierarchic distinctions, barriers, norms and prohibitions (see Bakhtin 1968: 109). a s such, "carnival" serves as a succinct metaphorical depiction for broader social processes that would come into play in the overthrow of established authority, entertaining thus considerable potential as an epistemological category for the study of the liminal condition in international relations.

　t he spectacle, the pillage and looting by young r ussian rioters of downtown t allinn could indeed be seen as a direct challenge to those in authority in the country, suspending temporarily the perceived hierarchic distinctions among and barriers between the two communities in e stonia. t he episode could also be understood in the light of the alleged marginalization of the r ussian-speaking minority's voice in e stonian society (cf. Bakhtin 1968, 1984; h olquist 1990: 89; M. l otman 2007). Borrowing from the thought of k risteva again, it was a vivid exemplification of how the telling of one's story is also essentially an articulation of one's pain: the shrieking out of fear, disgust and abjection in an attempt to solidify one's constitutive self-narration (cf. k risteva 2006: 208). a s we know from the anthropological works of a rnold van g ennep (1960) and Mary d ouglas (2002), anti-social behaviour is the common expression of those in marginal condition. For indeed,

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9　the european commission delivered a similar statement (see lobjakas 2007b). See also na t o statement on e stonia (2007), and the respective resolution by the e uropean Parliament (2007).

> t o have been in the margins is to have been in contact with danger, to have been
> at a source of power. It is consistent with the ideas about form and formlessness
> to treat initiands coming out of seclusion as if they were themselves charged
> with power, hot, dangerous, requiring insulation and a time for cooling down
> (d ouglas 2002: 120).

Furthermore, the "Bronze Soldier" crisis revealed not only a deep scar carefully hidden under the surface of the past 15 years' integration rhetoric in e stonian society, but a renewed fault-line in e uropean politics, over the essence of "e uropean values" and who has the power to define them (cf. Beeston 2007). According to the r ussian Foreign Minister l avrov, the monument dispute was really about e stonia challenging (that is, "spitting on") the "e uropean values" (see l avrov cited in h alpin 2007; cf. h arding 2007). In a similar vein, g erman ex-c hancellor g erhard Schröder described e stonia's handling of the monument as contradicting "every form of civilised behaviour" (see d eutsche Presse-a gentur 2007). e stonian President Ilves, in his turn, called r ussia in an otherwise conciliatory statement to "try to remain civilised" as "it is not customary in e urope to demand resignation of a democratically elected government of another sovereign country", or "organise cyber attacks from the governmental offices' computers against other country's governmental offices", or "think that the Vienna Convention can be breached when a small enough country's embassy is in question" (Ilves 2007c). Symptomatically, a key trope of the e stonian "afterthought" has also been the calling upon Marcus a urelius's famous dictum of "the best kind of revenge is, not to become like them" (see, for instance, Maiste 2007).

n evertheless, the Bakhtinian understanding of carnival carries the promise of new space for dialogue, for mutual enrichment and renewal through different voices coming together in free and frank communication (see Bakhtin 1984: 176–77; cf. Bakhtin 1968; Wall and t homson 1993: 58–59). It is of critical importance to clarify the precise connotation of "dialogue" in this particular predicament, since calls for dialogue in public politics generally tend to disguise a quest for specific procedures and premeditated solutions behind the veil of this seemingly open abstract principle (cf. h irschkop 1999: 9). l iberal democracies indeed overburden dialogue with expectations of resolution to conflicts through debate; emphasizing the significance of interlocutors' mutual readiness to take on board others' ideas and positions and the consequent acknowledgement of the inevitability of compromise solutions (see h irschkop 1998: 184–85).

t he ethos of a Bakhtinian dialogue generally only pertains to the question of what to do in the presence of another's responsive consciousness, or how to act creatively in a world of differentiated value orientations, without necessarily seeking or even foreseeing an agreement or reconciliation between different subjects/consciousnesses (cf. e merson 2002: xiv; n ielsen 2002: 2).[10] a t the interpersonal level, however, both Bakhtinian and h abermasian understandings of dialogue emerge as the only ethical form of conflict resolution (see Nielsen 2002: 145). h ence, Bakhtin does not just advocate "putting up with" different forms of alterity, but his dialogism also aims at "mutual recognition and co-understanding in a manner that opens up each such form of life to a diversity of reciprocal influences and points of view" (Gardiner and Bell 1998: 6). At the interpersonal level, then, Bakhtinian dialogue's distinction from a h abermasian one could ultimately be a very fine one. Indeed, Bakhtin maintains that the act of understanding potentially entails changing one's previously held positions, which should ideally result in mutual enrichment (see Bakhtin 1986: 42). l ike h abermas, Bakhtin, especially with his notion of carnivalesque, also envisages the widening and deepening of the public sphere, based on his understanding of "truth" as being constituted dialogically and intersubjectively (see g ardiner and Bell 1998: 6). t he maintenance of difference, or one's alterity to the other, does not preclude the possibility of solidarity or consensus for Bakhtin, as both a dogmatic monologism and the ultimate postmodernist relativism in their different ways would. Essentially for Bakhtin, then, a "unified truth" can be expressed through a plurality of overlapping perspectives and viewpoints, without falling into the trap of the monocular perspective or taking the position of a disembodied observer, presuming the *a priori* incommensurability of different viewpoints (see g ardiner 1998: 139; cf. e merson 1996: 118). It is indeed worth keeping in mind that the process of furthering mutual acquaintance and moving towards a more common cultural world does not only engender the closing of distance between different mnemonic communities, but inevitably also encourages their self-specification (cf. l otman 1999: 32–33).

a gainst this background, the president of e stonia suggested that the "history debate" in e stonia should be taken beyond the case of the "Bronze Soldier", where in an a ugustinian vein "all are equally right because all are equally wrong". h e has therefore called for an honest and thorough examination of e stonia's history, so that it could be regarded as a teacher, as a potentially transformative, forward-looking power, not as a tool for understanding the present (see Ilves 2007a; cf. Ilves 2006a, 2007d; t odorov 2003: 160–61; cf. Wydra 2007: 238–239). Ilves has

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10   cff. andrew linklater's more dialectical understanding of dialogue according to which a "true dialogue exists when moral agents accept that there is no *a priori* certainty about who will learn from whom and when they are willing to engage in a process of reciprocal critique. d ialogue, whereby the participants adapt their own understandings and grow as a result of interaction, is thus a more open and fluid process of communication than, for example, negotiation" (cited in Fierke 1999: 27; cf. l inklater 1996).

moreover strongly condemned the attempts to trivialize WWII by the e stonian politicians trying to increase their chances of getting elected as acts of "distributing ammunition" to Estonia's critics to fire at it, and has called for a focus on the future instead, for, ultimately, "we are the victors, in defiance of all our losses and tribulations" (Ilves 2007a). Similar calls for a pragmatic shift of focus to the "realities of the present" instead of being permanently bogged down in the past are becoming more commonplace among the political scientists and public intellectuals of the other two Baltic states as well (see, for example, Mölder 2005, o sica 2002; t amm 2007a; k odres 2007).[11] We are thus currently witnessing a curious balancing act between sanctifying and trivializing the past in perpetual motion along with the Baltics' politics of becoming e uropean.
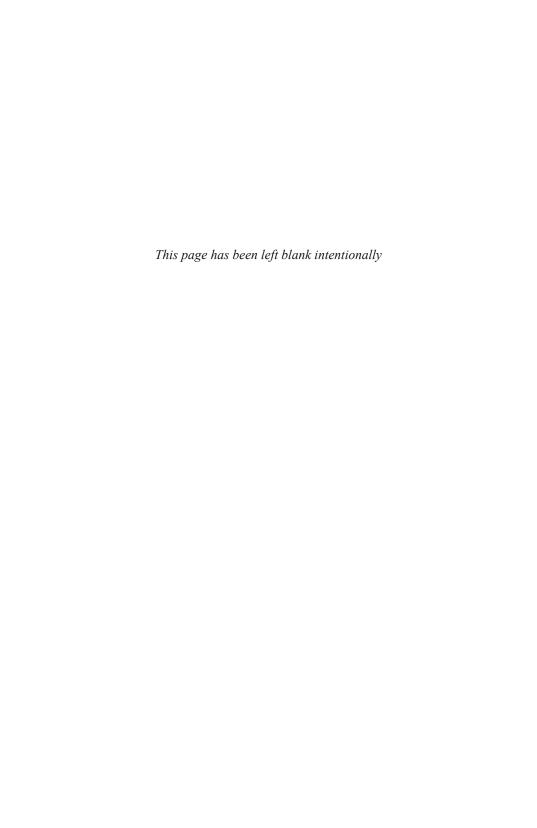
t he potential of e stonians and r ussians, whether in e stonia or r ussia proper, to actually begin to talk with one another has yet to be enacted upon the carnival freedom involuntarily created by the relocation of the "Bronze Soldier" monument. n evertheless, it remains an open question as to whether dialogue in circumstances where one party has difficulties in coming to terms with the historical facts that undermine the mnemonical narrative constitutive of its glorifying self-image (that is, the illegal occupation and annexation of the Baltic states) is really a contradiction in terms, especially if one were to follow its commonsensical, compromise-seeking, dialectic definition prevalent in the liberal democratic political space. Such a dialogue would, after all, presume its parties' readiness to encounter each other on the same plane (cf. Morson and e merson 1990: 241). Both parties' preoccupation with their respective sufferings is not a particularly conducive backdrop for the creation of a more amicable communicative space either (cf. r aag 2007). Without that space, however, and the emergence of mutual creative understanding it presumes, any message of the other, no matter how peacefully communicated, would continue to constitute a semiotic offence to the other party (cf. M. l otman 2007). What seems to be needed, then, is for each party to come to see itself as one among others, or an "other among others", always keeping in mind that not only are we all different, but we are "*differently* different" from each other. t he reactions towards others committing evil acts should thus be distinguished from our behaviour towards those who are simply different from ourselves (e merson 2002: xvii).

t he Baltic states' increasingly vocal claims to fix their memory of WWII as part of the "common e uropean remembrance" of the war indicate their quest for an equal subjectivity in the European mnemo-political field as well as signify their growing sense of confidence about the density of their ties to the Euro-Atlantic security community. t his, in turn, enables them to remind their western e uropean counterparts openly about the need to remember the e uropean history in all its

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11   See also a public letter to the estonian defence minister by 12 estonian university professors opposing the displacement of the monument on the grounds of damaging e stonia's "long-term interests of internal stability and international credibility" a few days before the Bronze Soldier's relocation (see *Eesti Päevaleht* 2007c; cf. Berg 2007).

complexity as well as to discover the "other in oneself" (see, for example, Ilves 2006b). a s they are situated in the interstices between western e urope and r ussia, the Baltic t hree have historically constituted a focal point of overlapping dialogues between various e uropean "selves" and "others" (cf. g ardiner and Bell 1998: 5). a ccordingly, in their most recent mnemo-political moves, such as e stonia's clarification of its position regarding WWII in the context of the "Bronze Soldier", and former Latvian president Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga's similar mission against the backdrop of the WWII sixtieth anniversary celebrations in Moscow, the Baltic states have tried to act as sensual receptors or interpretative blocks of and for e urope – in order to translate "external interruptions" (that is, r ussia) into the language of e urope's own nervous system (cf. l otman 1999: 12–13).

y et, it remains an open question to what extent western e uropeans are actually receptive to the agonizing past politics of their eastern counterparts. In any way, similarly to the e uropean debates about r ussia, the Western construction of eastern e urope has essentially been a e uropean heterologue *about* eastern e urope, rather than a dialogue *with* it – if only for the latter's traditional function as a counterpoint to, or a surrogate version of, the largely West e uropean-dominated "e uropean self" (cf. n eumann 1996a: 206; n andy 1987: 12–15; Said 2003). a ltogether, it seems futile to try to "fix" the painful "memory problem" of Europe once and for all by tying the conflicting narratives nicely into some coherent common vision shared by all the counterparts of WWII. What to remember and how to do it will always be a contentious issue. a ll WWII memories are inescapably partial, as also a British historian n orman d avies so eloquently demonstrates in his recent *Europe at War 1939–1945: No simple victory* (2007). Furthermore, as memory changes already at the moment of its articulation, "there will never be *a* memory for us to know" (Zehfuss 2007: 227). t he quest for a common e uropean remembrance of WWII thus remains as gargantuan a task as building a commonly shared emotive, and not only political, identity for e urope.

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c hapter 6

t he "r eturn of h istory" or t echnocratic a dministration? t he e ffects of d epoliticization in e stonian-r ussian r elations

a lexander a strov

o ne of the dominant themes in the Baltic states' rhetorical drive for the e U and na t o accession throughout the 1990s had been the promise of improved relations with their eastern neighbour. t he promise looked plausible from more than one angle. Membership in powerful Western organizations was likely not just to buttress the small states' security but also to allay potentially disruptive anxieties and temptations stemming from competing interpretations of their "civilizational" identity. l ast but not least, it looked likely to reduce tensions fuelled by the continuous presence of significant Russian-speaking minorities in e stonia and l atvia; again, in more than one way. o n the merely pragmatic level, membership in the e U was to provide Baltic r ussians with free access to the prosperous consumer and labour markets; and as long as r iga and t allinn served as institutional gateways to these markets, this should have reconciled local r ussians to the idea of e stonian and l atvian statehood. a lternatively, those whose animosity towards the two nation-states would prove to be insurmountable could take advantage of open borders and increased mobility and leave or benefit from legal and political institutions of the e U which, at least in theory, offered them new opportunities for voicing their grievances against their respective governments. Put differently, even if the choice between the three stances labelled theoretically as "loyalty", "voice" and "exit" (h irschman 1970) was still to be made by Baltic r ussians themselves and no national or international institution could possibly make it for them, e U accession made each of the three options more readily available and provided a stable framework within which choices could be made without disputing the overall legitimacy of either e stonian and l atvian or pan-e uropean order (h ughes 2005). t his legitimacy, in turn, was supposed to result from the practical application of e U conditionality as long as conditions to be met by accession states included their treatment of national minorities. Whatever ideas e stonian and l atvian legislators might have held about the legal and political status of "their" r ussians, they had to bring their laws and practices in conformity with the e uropean ones. Once this conformity was "certified" through the actual

accession, Moscow's ability to use the "local r ussians" card in its relations with Riga and Tallinn would be significantly reduced.

At first, these theoretical predictions seemed to be proven right in practice. Both e stonia and l atvia made significant steps towards signing their respective border treaties with r ussia and thus taking off the foreign policy agenda one of the longstanding conflictual issues (although both efforts were eventually disrupted). In 2006, in his inauguration speech as the new president of e stonia, t oomas h endrik Ilves (2006c) suggested that Estonia should no longer define itself politically in terms of the Soviet occupation but rather look forward, to a future which would be common to all of its citizens regardless of their past and ethnicity. Shortly after that, his first official trip took him to the state's north-east, populated mostly by the r ussian-speakers.

y et, in 2007, arguably the worst crisis in the relations between r ussia and e stonia since 1991 broke out. t he c hairman of the r ussian d uma International r elations c ommittee, k onstantin k osachev (2007b), referred to its consequences as "catastrophic", claiming that r ussia would "neither understand, nor accept, nor forgive" the decision of the e stonian g overnment to relocate the statue of the "Bronze Soldier" from the centre of t allinn. a lready after the removal of the monument and the outbreak of violence on the streets of t allinn, Ilves (2007e) wrote that for "several reasons, the success of liberal democratic changes in e stonia, l atvia, l ithuania and Poland is especially painful for r ussia, which is why, in a peculiar way, r ussia has resorted to the rhetoric of the 1950s when dealing with these countries". h e placed this change into a broader context of "the collapse of the Fukuyaman or – perhaps more properly – the neo-h egelian dream of an inexorable march toward liberal democracy"; that is, the collapse of that very paradigm which many in e urope (Ilves himself included) had previously publicly appealed to while justifying the enlargement of both n a t o and the e U. n ow, "great power politics is back, in every way. t he k antian eternal peace that we all dreamt of after the fall of the wall is as much of an illusion as it was in the c old War".

For some, most notably on the US neo-conservative side, this "return of history" in the form of great-power politics was hardly surprising (k agan 2008). In fact, many Estonian politicians eagerly embraced already the first major theoretical rebuttal of the "Fukuyaman dream" – Samuel h untington's *Clash of Civilisations* – when it promised an argument in support of their bid for the e U and na t o membership (k uus 2007). n ow, once such "non-Western", on h untington's terms, states as Ukraine and g eorgia started their drive towards major Western institutions, receiving wholehearted support from e stonia, it seemed that the neo-conservative version of the clash between democracies and autocracies looked like a more plausible engine of history. Be it as it may, in this part of the world history still matters and, despite its eagerness to join the future, e stonia, in the words of a nn a pplebaum (2007), "can also seem, to outsiders, paradoxically hung up on the past. Indeed, this is a problem e stonia shares with some other c entral e uropean nations. e verywhere you turn, historical arguments are dominating the region's politics".

So, it is hardly surprising that at least two contributions to this volume interpret the foreign policy stances of the Baltic states by reference to history. Maria Mälksoo follows their efforts to inscribe their visions of the past into the "collective memory" of europe, arguing that these mnemonic struggles are specific modes of national (and European) identity construction. accepting this general claim, karsten Brüggemann and andres kasekamp further emphasize the political character of mnemonic engagements, since history, as a "subcategory of memory", is always, to paraphrase robert cox (1986), told for/by someone and for some purpose.

here I defer. disagreements revolve not so much around the empirical analyses but those theoretical frameworks which support them. these frameworks inform not only the aforementioned accounts of specific events but also some of the influential theoretical renditions of state action in international relations (IR) generally. Perhaps the best summary of them is provided in the programmatic statement quoted by Mälksoo: "no memory, no identity; no identity, no nation." yet, this statement raises more questions than it gives answers. Memory may well be constitutive of a "personality", but is "personality" the same as "identity"? the state may well possess an "identity", but is state "identity" the same as "nation"? and, most importantly for my current purposes, is "memory" indeed identical with "history"?

all this may sound as an invitation for a debate which may be decided, if at all, only on the most abstract plane, at several removes from the developments "on the ground". luckily, some important work in this direction has already been done (cf. ricouer 2004). Its conclusion, concerning the distinction between history and memory to which Brüggemann and kasekamp are referring, is explicitly political. Whatever the epistemological or ontological status of memory, history and connection between them, there seems to exist the third mode of our collective engagement with the past: neither remembering nor historical understanding, but "commemoration". The significance of this mode of attending to the past, as outlined by the French historian Pierre nora (1998), consists in the fact that its fortunes are closely intertwined with those of the modern state; the state which can no longer claim unproblematic identity with the nation and for this very reason resorts to highly bureaucratized techniques of "commemoration". In a way, nora restates on the plane of historiography what cox argued on the plane of Ir : it is no longer possible, either in practice or in theory, to rehearse in good faith the "the state is the state is the state" mantra, especially so once "identities" are at stake. We inhabit the world of "state-society complexes" rather than personified states, and most of our genuinely political questions and crises arise from the uneasy interaction of states and societies.

the "Bronze Soldier" crisis, in my view, is of this kind of crises. the kind I tentatively define here as "the clash of commemorations". Allusion to the "clash of civilizations" is meant to signal an opposition to the Fukuyaman thesis. yet, at the same time, this opposition is anything but straightforward. one of the reasons why technocratic commemorative state practices, rather than "civilizational"

allegiances, tend to clash – including clashes within e urope outlined by Mälksoo and within individual states detailed by Brüggemann and k asekamp – is that the "collapse of the Fukuyaman dream" is accompanied not by the "return of history" but by the exit of the state from "world history", as a teleological process inaugurated in close connection with the state, so that "to think the extinction of the state without the fulfilment of the historical telos is as impossible as to think a fulfilment of history in which the empty form of state sovereignty would continue to exist" (a gamben 2000: 111).

So, in what follows, I first outline several theoretical accounts of state action in relation to the ideas politics, history and democracy and then introduce n ora's conception of "commemoration" so as to illustrate it in the end by some of the key moments in the "Bronze Soldier" crisis.

Neo-Wilsonianism or the New *Raison d'État*?

US neo-conservatives or the advocates of the clash-of-civilizations thesis are by no means the only critics of the end-of-history, progressivist accounts of international relations. t hus, for instance, it has been argued recently, from a constructivist perspective, that a neo-h egelian teleological account of the inevitability of the global state amounts to the denial of human agency (Shannon 2005). y et, this kind of critique can be found already in e .h . c arr's "introduction to the study of international relations", where h egelian teleology is also presented as a major qualification to "realism" which, once deprived of the certainty provided by the end-of-history teleology, loses its attractiveness as guidance for policy-making, at best retaining a backward-looking capacity for critique (c arr 1939).

t he true peculiarity of the contemporary neo-conservative position, as represented by the authors like k agan, consists in its attempt to combine the realist adherence to the circular, repetitive view of history as a great-power battleground, where the most important decisions are political rather than, say, economic, with a kind of progressivist "democratic fundamentalism" thus stated in g eorge W. Bush's second term inaugural speech: "t he best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world" (c handler 2006: 476). a s d avid Chandler has recently demonstrated, these two elements are difficult to uphold within a single coherent argument (or a single coherent foreign policy for that matter), mainly because of the incompatibility between the ideas of "politics" and "democracy" held by its proponents.

Somewhat ironically, in putting forward his own argument, c handler enlists the support of h untington, at least the h untington of *Political Order in Changing Societies*.[1] t he main target of c handler's critique of contemporary international

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1   a s c handler remarks in a footnote: "h untington's work was a response to the prevailing orthodoxy of 1950s modernisation theorists who focused on the importance of economic reform at the expense of political concerns. In many ways, his concerns have

promoters of democracy, as was the target of h untington's critique of the ideologues of modernization in the 1960s, is the idea of "peace without politics", according to which stable political institutions should precede fully fledged political activity of citizens and their representatives. t he problem with this idea is that it involves a number of prior assumptions about the nature of the political process: "that states and citizens can be socially-engineered by correct practices of external regulation", while "the problems of politics can be resolved outside the realm of the political, in the realms of law, social policy and administration" (ibid.: 482). a ccordingly, the activity of governing gives way, at least in the case of failing states or states in transition, to that of public administration. r esort to administration, in turn, is legitimized by its efficiency, allegedly superior to that of the political parties: broadened political participation is seen as introducing "irrational and corrupt considerations into the efficient pursuit of goals upon which everyone should be agreed" (Huntington 1968: 404). The flip-side of the bureaucratic coin, however, is the "desire of those in power to avoid popular accountability and to legitimize their authority on the basis of being above politics and instead being a direct representative of the 'public interest'" (c handler 2006: 479). e ven if/when this ambition results in a benign and indeed efficient governance, the problem with this kind of rule is that precisely in the case of "state-building" to which it purports to be appropriate, no truly "public" interest is or can be known prior to the often torturous and conflictual "political process" which administration puts on hold for the sake of consensus and efficiency.[2]

a lthough c handler's argument is advanced as a critique of international administration of failing states or states in transition, it may well be applied to the situation in today's r ussia. t he real problem of r ussia would then consist not merely in the failings of the Western-like democratic institutions lamented by Ilves, but rather in the paradoxical success of the Western-like nation-building – "peace without politics" – strategies applied by Putin to his own society under

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been revived in the 'state-building' literature, which has developed, in part, as a response to the destabilising consequences of market-led economic reform programmes under the 'Washington consensus' of the 1980s and early 1990s, which similarly neglected the importance of state institutions and the political sphere." See, for example, c handler 2006: 479, n. 13; Fukuyama 2004: 6–7. Interestingly, prior to his conversion to the end-of-Fukuyaman-dream thesis, Ilves, then Member of the e uropean Parliament, enthusiastically endorsed the latter book in the same *Diplomaatia* journal (Ilves 2005).

2   "Political process" is defined by Chandler as "the process of social engagement in the making of policy and in the legitimation of government; the existence of a public sphere, through which the state's relationship with society is cohered. t his takes place at a variety of levels and through a number of different mechanisms from media discussion, public debate and civil society engagement to more formal political campaigning and the party competition for representation. It is through these mechanisms that individual interests and concerns coalesce and a broader social and political consensus is developed and variously expressed" (c handler 2006: 477, n. 10).

the guise of anti-Western rhetoric.[3] y et, such an application reveals what seems to be a set of prior assumptions behind c handler's own argument. Whatever the intentions of Putin were, the success of his policies certainly depended on the widely shared belief that r ussia's integrity as a state was threatened by internal and external factors. The political process, as Chandler defines it, was put on hold in r ussia, as well as in Bosnia, which c handler gives as his own example, because such a process requires a robust enough we-identity capable of sustaining the overall coherence of the public sphere amidst all the contestations that such a political process might entail (k ielmansegg 1996). t he lack of such coherence and robustness, in turn, may be seen as a problem which is in no way peculiar to failing states or states in transition. In fact, understood as an outcome of global systemic pressures, it throws into question the neo-conservative division into democracies and autocracies as such by posing what k laus d ieter Wolf (1999) analysed as a "problem *for* democracy in world society".

If c handler believes that the substitution of bureaucratic administration for the genuinely political process is a sign of utopian "neo-Wilsonianism", Wolf understands it as a kind of *raison d'état* exercised under the new conditions. a ctually, for Wolf, the problem, as it is stated by c handler, that is, in relation to the situation of failing states analogous to what used to be called, at the time of h untington's writing, the t hird World, is hardly the real problem at all. In their international capacity as the constituent entities of the Westphalian state-system, great powers have always acted not as the promoters of "good life", but rather as instrumentalist problem-solvers. Faced with the incommensurability of such systemic goals as efficiency and citizens' participation (Dahl 1994), they invariably opted for efficiency. What forces Chandler to associate this problem-solving strategy with "Wilsonianism" is that the "problem" to be solved this time around is "democracy". t his, however, puts into question the goals (global promotion of democracy under the conditions of Westphalian system) rather than the means (executive administration). t he truly new, and pressing, challenge consists in the fact that so-called democratic deficit, previously experienced mostly by the t hird World states, is now becoming a problem for states considered to be not only "developed" but also perfectly democratic.

t he challenge, according to Wolf, is rooted in the fact that states, still organized as territorial units, seem to be losing their capacity to cope with the consequences of the spatial reorganization of different functional systems that are territorially debordered: "n ational governments are confronted with the increased *de facto* decision-making power acquired by transnational actors in the wake of economic globalisation. t he economic activities of the latter are not linked to any commitment to the common good but basically to the good of their shareholders"

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3   In his interview with *Expert* magazine, one of the architects of Putin's reforms, g leb Pavlovskii, suggests that nation-building was indeed the paradigm of Putin's rule, while acknowledging that the efficiency of this undertaking depended on the curtailing of the political process as defined by Chandler (Pavlovskii 2006).

(Wolf 1999: 338). t hese and similar pressures usually clustered under the heading of "globalization" hamper states' capacity to interact with each other on the basis of the fundamental Westphalian premise that in such interactions each state represents its own, domestically agreed upon (or enforced) conception of "good life". n ow state action "involves not only self-assertion *vis-à-vis* other states, but also, at the same time and in complex interconnection with this, a search for external support in securing internal room for manœuvre" threatened by the growing de-territorialization of societal actors and their interests (ibid.: 347).

a ssuming further that states, as actors conceptually distinct not only from the various transnational entities but also from their "own" societies, are interested in survival and self-assertion, Wolf argues that the practices of such self-assertion under the conditions of globalization may be defined as the "new *raison d'état*" without compromising the initial meaning of this concept, that of asserting the specific interest of the state, and thus the state as such, against various private affairs. Finally, states have discovered that binding intergovernmental agreements, rather than diminishing their autonomy, may serve as one instrument for their self-assertion against various societal pressure groups:

> a s instruments of this new *raison d'état*, intergovernmental governance arrangements controlled by national governments have become a potential threat to democratic governance. t his threat is increasing in line with the importance of governance *beyond* the state. Intergovernmental governance offers states the opportunity of making mutual self-commitments of a kind that can remove certain issues from societal debate and also from any possible revision. What at first looks like a loss of autonomy *vis-à-vis* the other members of the society of states acquires new plausibility as a form of protection against societal interference. State action, previously accorded superior status as a means of preserving the common good, is thus demystified and takes its place as the exercise of only one of several competing self-interests emanating from different societal subsystems (ibid.: 347–8).

Put differently, what e uropean states often (proudly) present as their ability to overcome narrow national interests and US neo-conservatives satirize as these e uropean states' inability to cope with the realities of power-politics, on Wolf's view appears as a sophisticated multi-level game in which the very notion of "national interest" is being restored to a more original idea of *raison d'état* reflecting the state's ability to assert itself not only internationally, but also domestically. t his, however, exposes the limits of the state's problem-solving capacity when the problem to be solved is democracy; and not only in relation to the failing states, as in Chandler, but, first and foremost, in terms of the fundamental discrepancy between the increasingly multi-level governance game played by states and other actors, on the one hand, and the majority-rule principle conceptually tying democracy to the territorial principle of political organization, on the other. a s long as this tie, fundamental for the Westphalian system, assumes a territorially delimited

and at the same time "sufficiently robust we-identity among the addressees of [executive] decisions" characteristic of "a community whose solidarity is based on shared communication, memory and experience, and which will not disintegrate over issues involving redistributive decisions" (ibid.: 354, 356), there is little or no contradiction between the assertion of *raison d'état* as an expression of this we-identity domestically and its exercise internationally. t he problem is, if such memory-based solidarities still exist, they no longer unproblematically map onto existing state borders in the form of "nations".

t o restate, the state as an upholder of "good life" domestically and a problem-solver internationally is conceivable as long as the only problem to be solved internationally is that of managing the territorial divisions. But then, the "return of history", as an antithesis to "the neo-h egelian dream" of progress, makes sense only if "history" here is understood, as k issinger (1973: 331) understood it and Mälksoo seems to do, as "the (collective) memory of states", devoid of any telos or civilizational mission. h ence Ilves's (2007e) suggestion that, in its relations with r ussia, the West should pursue the strategy of "benign neglect" rather than active promotion of democracy. y et, the fact that the term was borrowed from the US experience usually interpreted as a failure of the genuine "political process" advocated by c handler is hardly coincidental. Under the new global conditions described by Wolf, nourishing democracy in territorially delimited states is hardly to be more successful than Senator Moynihan's proposal to address the tensions between a merican communities by way of disengagement.

The Embarrassment of Changes: Between Memory and History?

o ne possible objection to Wolf's own attempt at reconciling the problem-solving pursuits of the new *raison d'état* by the state with a more "critical" understanding of global order is that, on Wolf's own, functionalist, logic, one cannot expect the same robustness of a given we-identity within any given context, since contexts themselves are never really "given" and not only transform, albeit with varying degree of resilience, depending on the issues at hand, but can be identified as such only on the basis of some we-identity already shaped, among other things, by memory and experience. t his kind of argument is made by Friedrich k ratochwil (2006) in his reformulation of the "second debate" in international relations. Using h edley Bull's "case for the classical approach" as a foil, k ratochwil argues for the "practical" character of all knowledge, scientific knowledge included. Since knowledge is practical and practices are emplotted, historical understanding is called upon not only in the "critical" approaches but also in "problem-solving" theorizing. h istory, in turn, is never a storage of brute facts but part of larger structures of meaning inextricably linked to the very ideas of agency and identity through its origin in memory (individual and collective). o n this view, the "return of history" would mean not only the collapse of the h egelian "historical process" but also the rejection of the neorealist alternative to it as "the science of *Realpolitik*

without politics" (k ratochwil 1993). h ere politics is seen as being eliminated not, on the level of practice, through technocratic administration, but on the level of theory through equally technocratic attempt to render scientific an account of the recurrent operation of some "objective" structures of international relations reproducing the practices of great-power politics. y et

> ... if history is produced by memory, ... then it is always viewed from a particular *vantage point of the present.* It is this present problem that informs the selection of what is considered worth remembering. To that extent historical reflection is not some collection of interesting facts one could do without, but is intrinsic to our notions of agency and identity. By approaching history not in terms of the fixity of the past, but through the modality of remembering, individuals and collectivities can transcend the confinements imposed by seemingly autonomously operating systems, and find new ways of mastering their destiny (k ratochwil 2006: 21).

a nd this, essentially practical, activity of "mastering one's destiny" alone is worthy of the name "politics".

Whereas this line of argument seems to be effective as a critique of certain conceptions of science and theory, I am not sure that such a complete identification of history and memory does justice to the complexity of the problem. a lthough it is clear that both history and memory attend to the past, it is far from being obvious that they attend to it in the same manner. In fact, it is precisely the difference between "historical" and "memorial" pasts that may hold the key to a better understanding of the effects of "the end of the neo-h egelian dream" on the relations between states.

t his difference has been emphasized by many historians following the work of Pierre n ora (1989). t hus, g abrielle M. Spiegel (2000), for example, insists that history and memory are opposed to each other as long as each operates with its own conception of time. Whereas genuine historical understanding, as a modern phenomenon, becomes possible only once, within the linear conception of time, events are seen as "disappearing" into the past and thus losing their immediate practical relevance, the task of memory, made possible by the circular conception of time, consists in the continuous return, enlivening of the past for the practical purpose of fostering present identities through their relatedness to the past ones. In this sense, the function of memory in its community-building capacity is similar to that of the liturgy. Whereas the defining characteristic of "historical" communities is their abandonment of the calendar of c hristian commemoration in favour of "the great dates of their own past" corresponding to their self-grounding in human freedom rather than divine will (n ora 1998: 610).

Still, this stark opposition between history and memory is not universally accepted. t hus, one of n ora's principle collaborators in the exploration of *les lieux de mémoire* (the realms of memory), Jacques l e g off, maintains, in line with k ratochwil's argument, that, rather than being opposed to or even driven

out by "collective memories" often produced on the spot by the media, the so-called "new" history is being reinvented and rewritten under the influence of these memories: "Memory, on which history draws, and which it nourishes in return, seeks to save the past in order to save the present and the future" (l e g off 1992: 99). h owever, in the closing essay of the *Realms of Memory* project, n ora himself makes it clear that the opposition is not only salient but has acquired an explicitly political character.

In the initial formulation of the idea of *les lieux de mémoire*, the sites of memory are located *between* history and memory, while there is a sense that it is affective memory that is threatened by history: "t here are *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory, because there are no longer *milieux de mémoire*, real environments of memory" (n ora 1989: 7). It is also clear that what breaks up the *milieux de mémoire* into the *lieux de mémoire* is an explicitly technocratic, irreverent towards the past and selective kind of history, or rather historiography, made possible (and necessary) once "the coupling of state and nation was gradually replaced by the coupling of state and society" so that with "the advent of society in place of the nation, legitimation by the past and therefore by history yields to legitimation by the future" and therefore by planning (ibid.: 11). It is memory that is besieged by history at this stage, so that the "defence, by certain minorities, of a privileged memory that has retreated to jealously protected enclaves in this sense intensely illuminates the truth of *lieux de mémoire* – that without commemorative vigilance, history would soon sweep them away" (ibid.: 12). a nd yet the problem is located precisely *between* memory and history insofar as the ongoing exhaustion of traditional frameworks cannot leave us indifferent, resulting in the increasing demand for historical knowledge, but also for the new sources of these frameworks' vitality, now sought "in their most spectacular symbols":

> c ombined, these two movements send us at once to history's most elementary tools and to the most symbolic objects of our memory: to the archives as well as to the tricolour; to the libraries, dictionaries, and museums as well as to commemorations, celebrations, the Pantheon, and the a rc de t riomphe; to the *Dictionnaire Larousse* as well as to the Wall of the Fédérés, where the last defenders of the Paris commune were massacred in 1870 (ibid.: 12).

h ence, the main intention of the *lieux de mémoire* project: to provide a counter-commemorative kind of critical history, so that indeed, as l e g off suggested, collective memory, reflected upon historically, may serve, again, as in Kratochwil, "the liberation and not the enslavement of human beings" (l e g off 1992: 99).

h owever, in the end, by n ora's (1998: 609) own admission, "commemoration has overtaken" this project – because the state has overtaken commemoration. Briefly restated, the argument goes as follows. As long as the Western idea of history remained inextricably linked with that of the nation-state, the practices of memory were confined to various localities considered "private" in relation to

the public domain organized "historically": "there was *one* national history and there were *many* particular memories" (ibid.: 635). It is in this sense that what counted for a single national "history" domestically may be said to reappear as a particular "memory" internationally for realists like k issinger, since for them no global idea of "good life", no global nation and hence no global "history" exist. y et, for n ora, as for r enan before him, the very existence of a "nation" depends upon the "inextricable association" of two shared experiences: "to have done great things together" and "to want to do more" pointing towards the past and the future respectively (ibid.: 634). a nd in this sense the history of France, for example, did not belong only to France: "t hat is why the destruction of the French national myth did not come solely from internal divisions born of World War I, aggravated by World War II, and continued by the c old War and colonial wars. It had just as much to do with the end of e uropean hegemony over the world and of e urope's implicit monopoly of the very idea of civilisation" (ibid.: 633). o nce France, a nation-state *par excellence*, was forced to withdraw from the process of world history, authority of history as an organizing force behind the public domain started to crumble.

t he consequent upsurge of localized memories, initially perceived by the state as being of little political significance, was offering a promise of fostering a new common identity around the state-sponsored frenzy of commemorating mutual inheritance. n ow it is (unifying) history that is besieged by (necessarily diverse) memory. Insofar as the various localized "collective memories" are nothing but the often conflicting claims of the various groups to "histories" of their own, previously stifled or neglected for the sake of "national history", they are necessarily political in character (e dkins 2003). a s such they challenge not only each other but also the dense system of representations in the form of "specific sites, designated institutions, fixed dates, classified monuments, and ritualised ceremonies" through which the state used "to tell its story, maintain its image, enact its spectacle and commemorate its past" (n ora 1998: 636). Previously seen as merely coexisting side by side with each other, different groups begin to claim their respective pasts, so that all "space is suffused with traces of its virtual identity, and everything in the present is given an added dimension extending into the past. What was once perceived as innocently displayed in space is now apprehended along the axis of time. Stones and walls come to life, sites begin to stir, landscapes are revitalised" (ibid.: 636).

a ll this ongoing dislocation can no longer be merely managed by the territorial state because the problem to be "solved" now is indeed "democracy", as a critical interrogation of existing localities and their claims to a place within an overall state-identity. y et, at the same time, and by the same token, competing claims to specialized historical representation are also evidence of the claimants' estrangement from their traditional ways of life. In a parallel development, and as a consequence of the "collapse of the neo-h egelian dream of an inexorable march toward" history's end half-lamented, half-celebrated by Ilves, the state loses the political means for countering the necessarily conflictual assertions

of hitherto "private" memories. a ccordingly, it asserts itself and its own *raison d'être* administratively, archiving local *lieux de mémoire* into a new phenomenon – "national" (rather than merely collective) memory. h owever, "the national", based on commemoration rather than history, becomes "the patrimonial" where the "meaning of *patrimoine* has shifted from inherited property to the possessions that make us what we are" (ibid.: 635).

t his is where (and how) "identity" comes into play; but its understanding in Nora is based not on the identification of memory and history, as in Kratochwil, but on the stark opposition between the two. a t the heart of this difference is not so much the understanding of the "self", individual or collective, as an ongoing activity of "connecting the past through the present to the future via our individual and common projects" (Kratochwil 2006: 16). Nora would have little difficulty with the following statement of Kratochwil (ibid.): "Who we are is significantly shaped by where we think we come from. t his process has therefore to do with identities and collective memories that allow us to function as a person and a group and that make 'society' an ongoing and trans-generational concern of all members." t he difference is rooted in the distinction, crucial for n ora and absent in k ratochwil, between state- and non-state kinds of "selves". a nd this happens to be the difference between problem-solving and critical approaches ever since the distinction was introduced into IR (Cox 1986). By significantly refining the "classical" problem-solving approach in opposition to its more scientific successors, k ratochwil (and mainstream constructivism generally) gives new credence to the opposition of social engineering and practical decision-making, but fails to see that it is quite possible for the "scientific man" to embrace "power-politics" (a shley 1981); just as, in n ora's account, technocratic state, rather than abandoning the past, comes to preside over its commemoration. t he difference this state intervention makes is that thus commemorated past no longer guarantees the future but merely fills the empty, dissected into the realms of memory, present.

> a new concern with "identity" resulted from the emergence of this historicized present. In the old regime of national consciousness, the word was used only by bureaucracy and the police. It acquired its interrogative centrality only in the climate of uncertainty from which it sprang. Michelet called France a "person", but France as person needed history. France as identity is merely preparing for the future by deciphering its memory (n ora 1998: 635).

Such preparations for the future from the vantage point of the present, impossible without the deciphering of one's memory, is what k ratochwil believes political activity to be. t he empirics of the "Bronze Soldier" crisis, however, seem to confirm Nora's assessment, in which this mode of action characterizes technocratic administration aiming at peace without politics but producing a peculiar conflict instead.

The Clash of Commemorations

By tentatively proposing to define this peculiar kind of conflict as "the clash of commemorations" I would like to emphasize the distinctiveness of "commemoration" in relation to both remembering and historical understanding. In this context, "commemoration" stands for a *modus operandi* of the technocratic state purporting to construct a national identity under the conditions of the "collapse of the neo-h egelian dream" of the end of history. "Identity" in this case comes to the fore indeed, but not as a "critical" alternative to the crude pursuit of "national interest". r ather, "identity", conceptually opposed to "personality" or "individuality", highlights the technocratic character of the commemorative strategies of the state, and executive power in particular, driven by the pursuit of its own self-interest, "new *raison d'état*', interest in survival and self-assertion *vis-à-vis* societal actors.[4] h ere the "Bronze Soldier" crisis offers interesting illustrations.

Already at an early stage in the development of the crisis, influential Estonian weekly, *Sirp*, came up with an editorial in which public discussions of the monument's fate were presented as unnecessarily exhaustive and fruitless. It was suggested that the issue could be resolved once and for all by means of an orderly public referendum (t arand 2006). Putting to one side the obvious point that genuinely democratic referenda are preceded by public discussions and not opposed to them, it is important to stress that in this particular case referendum could not possibly serve as a political solution precisely because any meaningful we-identity was not only lacking but was questioned by the issue at hand. Moreover, even a cursory perusal of opinion polls published at the time and the public discourse demonstrated that the numerous lines of contention ran not only along the ethnic lines but also through the (ethnically) e stonian part of the society. In fact, from the very beginning of the crisis up to its violent resolution, the prime minister persistently attempted to legitimize his decision by the divisive, contentious character of the monument, while presenting his own position as situated above these divisions and above politics. o nce the "Bronze Soldier" was removed from one of the central squares to a quiet cemetery, he became the first ever Estonian official to lay down a wreath to the monument at a carefully orchestrated commemorative ceremony. Justifying this move to the e stonian part of the society he insisted that at the cemetery the meaning of the monument was no longer ambiguous and therefore no longer divisive.

o ne can add that it was no longer political, for now the monument was explicitly removed from the public sphere. t his, in turn, may be seen as a fulfilment of a deliberate strategy. Again, already in the very beginning of the

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4   For an interesting philosophical investigation of the relationship between "personality" and "identity" see an essay by g iorgio a gamben (2007: 55–60) "Special Being". a gamben's conclusions, although drawn mainly from the analysis of medieval philosophy, are strikingly similar to those of n ora.

crisis, when the prime minister for the first time made public his intention to relocate the monument, one of the two leading e stonian dailies published two editorials in which three possible solutions to the emerging crisis – political, security-based and technocratic – were discussed (h õbemägi 2006a, 2006b). t he articles suggested that the g overnment will go for the technocratic one, trying to downplay both the foreign policy dimension of the crisis and the heated public debates that surrounded it. It is this prediction that proved to be correct, even if, at some point, the overall technocratic stance was upset by the violent reaction of local r ussians and threatening rhetoric of r ussia.

Brüggemann and k asekamp are certainly accurate when, in their account of the crisis, they suggest that a nsip decided to respond to this rhetoric and to stress the "international", security side of the crisis, and thus to "play the k remlin's game" only at its closing stages. h owever, the power game as such was started by him much earlier. o nly then it was aimed both at the members of the e stonian n ationalist Movement and Russian activists, whom he defined at one of his press conferences as "self-proclaimed communities", stressing that the state will not allow them to control a bit of its territory (*DELFI* 2007). In fact, Brüggemann and k asekamp's account of the preceding l ihula crisis suggests to me what they themselves tend to deny on the theoretical level: a clash between the "memorial", liturgical conception of the past embraced by the e stonian n ationalist Movement and the increasingly technocratic approach adopted by successive e stonian g overnments. Viewed from n ora's perspective, the term "divided societies" employed by Brüggemann and k asekamp is in no way reserved to multicultural societies. The very existence of the "realms of memory" signifies the division of a homogeneous "nation" through its transformation into a "society". In the case of e stonia, which for long stretches of history existed as nation without the state, not least by way of nourishing "private" collective memory, this process included the transformation of this memory into a "public" professional history. t he fact that this transformation was anything but straightforward is attested to by the "freedom cross" controversy, which does not involve local r ussians in any way and yet evidently defeats a nsip's contention that the public monument proper should not be divisive. Unlike Brüggemann and k asekamp, I read this neither as a sign of the g overnment's confusion with regard to its "own" history, nor as a burden of Soviet mentality. r ather, it is an attempt by the executive power to establish the only kind of relationship with the past it can tolerate and understand: commemoration.

o ne can also argue that the e stonian n ationalist Movement emerged as a reaction to such technocratic transformation of the state. Importantly, the initial rhetoric of the movement clearly identified this tendency as part of a "European project". o ne does not have to acquiesce to the nationalists' view of the e U. y et, it is necessary to asses the extent to which e U conditionality, while surely contributing to the emergence of genuinely political institutions in e stonia, at the same time contributed to the relative strengthening of executive power. t he relation between these two processes is not an easy one and may well turn out to be similar indeed to the one described by h untington: modernization (or Westernization)

as an administratively driven process may well offset the benefits of (Western) modernity as a desired condition. t his supports Wolf's theoretical objection to the specific variety of the "democratic peace" argument. According to this argument, democratic deficit can be significantly mitigated when the governments pursuing the new *raison d'état* are, first, democratically controlled, and second, operate within the framework where their sovereignty and the sovereignty of the peoples they represent are safeguarded by a rule of unanimity. t o this, Wolf objects that,

> even where these mitigating circumstances obtain, the capacity of the sovereign people to shape events is de facto reduced to saying a retrospective yea or nay to package-solutions that have already been negotiated intergovernmentally and which, as a rule, cannot be quashed without blocking any kind of decision at all. r ejection entails manifestly higher costs (abandonment of policy, loss of reputation) than retrospective approval ... a s is clear from the example of the e uropean Union, this applies in particular where an agreement entered into at a particular stage gives rise to secondary decisions that are neither foreseeable nor controllable and which then have immediate binding force (Wolf 1999: 335).

If the e stonian g overnment attempted to achieve "peace without politics", it may seem that on the r ussian side of the border the issue was politicized to the extreme. y et, in this case, appearances may be misleading. a t the centre stage of r ussia's reaction to the crisis stood the youth organization, "n ashi" ("ours"). t he word was introduced into the public discourse of post-Soviet r ussia by a lexander n evzorov, t V journalist and later MP, brought to media stardom in the heady days of g orbachev's and y eltsin's reforms. Initially, the word referred to Soviet troops, first ordered by the Kremlin to suppress public uprisings in Latvia and then abandoned. a s such, it served as a reminder of Moscow's withdrawal from world history precisely at the time when the West seemed to celebrate the end of history. As it happened with other Nevzorov interventions, this one stirred fierce public debates. When the word was later revived under Putin it acquired an altogether different connotation. a s a youth organization sponsored by the k remlin, "n ashi", it seemed, were meant to serve as a counterforce against any potential attempts, modelled on Ukrainian and g eorgian "coloured revolutions", to bring politics back to the streets, and thus to provide an agitated facade to otherwise explicitly technocratic, managerial counter-revolutionary stance of Putin (Prozorov 2008b) pursuing the same "peace without politics" course. a s n evzorov (2008) himself remarked wryly, these new "n ashi" also served as an overblown model for the whole of state-controlled and depoliticized r ussian media.

This raises the final question: If the crisis was indeed produced by two technocratically minded actors, each aiming at "peace without politics", why conflict then, or why do "commemorations" clash?

"c ommemoration" here has to be understood as not only an activity of the state, but also a specific mode of activity, belonging, to use the categories offered by h annah a rendt (1958), to the realm of "production" and "fabrication" (a xtmann

2006). Politics proper belongs to the in-between space of human relationships maintained through continuous exchange of words and deeds. t his ongoing exchange *inter homini* (Jackson 2000; n ardin 1983; o akeshott 1975) fosters not "identities" but "personalities" or "characters". t he imposition of the technocratic fabrication onto this world of politics is no less destructive to it than ideology-driven (cold) wars of annihilation. In a rendt's (2005: 200) formulation, it puts to its head the k antian statement that "nothing should happen in a war to make a later peace possible". When peace is achieved at the expense of politics it becomes "a peace in which nothing may be left undone to make a future war still possible". "Simply" because it extends the "desert" (a rendt's word for international anarchy) into the "world" that can only be established and maintained through human relations. a ppearances notwithstanding, technocratic "desert" is as destructive to the "world" as international – or "globalized" (n ancy 2007) – anarchy.

e ntrapment in the d iscourse of d anger? l atvian-r ussian Interaction in the c ontext of e uropean Integration

a ndris Spruds

r elations between the Baltic countries and r ussia throughout the last two decades have been complicated and frequently contradictory. t he Baltic integration into the e uropean Union and na t o contributed to expectations among experts of prospective "normalization" and "stabilization" of relations. h owever, the character and patterns of the Baltic-r ussian relationship in the aftermath of the transatlantic enlargement have become even more perplexing. Instead of the expected alleviation of security concerns and the establishment of more "normal" relations, interaction between the Baltic countries and r ussia have demonstrated further signs of deterioration, most visibly manifested by the "Bronze Soldier" crisis in e stonia in a pril 2007. h owever, there are important differences among the three Baltic countries with respect to their strategies towards r ussia. a lthough l atvia initially seemed to follow the common regional pattern of uneasy character of Baltic-r ussian post-enlargement interaction, it made a conspicuous turnaround in 2007 with an officially declared aim to promote "pragmatic" cooperation with r ussia. t his, according to e dward l ucas, made the country – alongside Bulgaria and Moldova – a e uropean "swing state" where r ussia was consolidating its "power grab" (l ucas 2008b).

h ow to explain the deterioration of Baltic-r ussian relations in the transformed and, effectively, more transparent, institutionalized and secure post-enlargement regional setting? e ven more importantly, how to explain the l atvian strategic "zigzags" and eventually, a diverging position *vis-à-vis* r ussia compared with its Baltic neighbours? h ow are l atvian-r ussian relations likely to develop and which trends would be dominant in the context of the newly promoted "opportunity discourse", on the one hand, and deeply embedded historical grievances and perceptions of victimization and threat on the l atvian side, on the other? o bviously, the customary focus in the analysis of foreign policy on the importance of systemic factors and the rationality of states as unitary actors, pursuing consistently and vigorously their national interests, has apparent limitations in elucidating those issues. h ence, this chapter follows the book's general approach in critically assessing the sufficiency of traditional explanations and examining the importance of ideational factors in interstate relations. a t the same time, it is based

on a somewhat expanded premise, arguing that the interaction of ideational factors and domestic politics is the principal source for understanding the formation and making of l atvian foreign policy, especially in its relationship with r ussia.

t he following steps are taken to achieve the chapter's research objectives. First, a theoretical framework, which synthesizes constructivist and pluralist premises, is elaborated. t he importance of ideational factors notwithstanding, the complementarity of political exigencies and particular and rather parochial political and business interests is considered to be imperative to comprehend the process of constructing and reconstructing ideational frames. t hus, foreign policy is seen both as the result as well as an integral part of the domestic political process, through which both state and non-state actors promote their political, economic and social interests. l eadership matters. t he identities and role of leaders count even more in post-communist states, which as transitory societies are effectively states in the making and, consequently, domestically different from consolidated states. Second, following the theoretical framework, the chapter devotes a primary attention to the perceptual maps and policy discourses that are employed in the making of l atvia's foreign policy towards r ussia. t he chapter follows the evolution of r ussia's "otherness" discourse in l atvia, pinpoints its political and economic rationale and examines how this discourse interacts with signals emanating from the r ussian side. It is argued that in the process of e uropean and transatlantic integration, the initial "danger discourse" was complemented and partly replaced by an "opportunity discourse". t his discursive change has contributed to the recent "de-securitization" of the l atvian-r ussian interaction in the strategically important energy domain. h owever, it is obvious that this discursive shift, driven by particular political and economic interests, has shaken the previously established consensus in the l atvian society about the ideational and political frames of the country's interaction with r ussia. t his ideational "entrapment in the past" remains influential and has apparent political implications. This leads to contradictions and vacillations in l atvia's r ussian policy, which will not be easy to synchronize. t he final section of the chapter summarizes the findings, shows what these suggest about the evolution of l atvia's foreign policy stances in the future and offers some broader generalizations about the role of ideational factors in the post-communist foreign policy process.

Identity and Interests in a Transitional Society

a s Piret e hin and e iki Berg indicate in the introductory chapter, ideational structures constitute a causal force in the Baltic-r ussian relations, and identity constructions of the Baltic states and r ussia are important elements of these ideational structures. t his approach follows the growing emphasis on integrating ideational aspects into the analysis of international politics, which has contributed considerably to the expansion of constructivism within the discipline of international relations. It is also obvious that the ideational sources and structures affect the

formation and modification of state preferences and particular foreign policy choices. t he national identity especially becomes one of the central elements of domestic legitimacy of foreign policy. n ational identity, which above all refers to fundamental societal preferences concerning the boundary of "nation", legitimacy of national borders, citizenship definition and relationship with the other nations, is shaped by the interaction of the so-called "path dependence" or historical heritage and the contemporary situation. t hus, among others, historical experience and memory, linguistic, cultural or religious identifications, perceptions of the former international status and contemporary patterns of interstate interactions may play a role in setting the conceptual limits for societal identity and, eventually, foreign policy orientation. t he foreign policy decision-makers are constrained by widely shared views and ideas among the majority of society.

t he shared recognition of the importance of ideational factors notwithstanding, the constructivist theoretical school, however, provides several and considerably diverging approaches to the analysis of interstate relations and foreign policy. a lexander Wendt in his seminal *Social Theory of International Politics* adopted a systemic approach to international relations. h e indicates that "states are real actors to which we can legitimately attribute anthropomorphic qualities like desires, beliefs and intentionality … [the state] is an actor which cannot be reduced to its parts" (Wendt 1999: 196–197). t he formation of states' identities and interests is the result of international interaction between states rather than the consequence of domestic political process and interaction of domestic actors (Wendt 1999: 245). For Wendt anarchy is "what states make of it" (Wendt 1992: 395). In the context of foreign policy analysis this has led Steve Smith to conclude critically that for Wendt "foreign policy [also] is what states make of it" (S. Smith 2001: 38).

While Wendtian social constructivism offers little room for integrating domestic dynamics into foreign policy analysis, others focus on the preference formation and policy implementation process at the state level. John g errard r uggie has succinctly stated that the state strategies are

> a matter not merely of defending the national interest but of defining it, nor merely enacting stable preferences but constructing them. t hese processes are constrained by forces in the object world, and instrumental rationality is ever present. But they also deeply implicate such ideational factors as identities and aspirations as well as leaders seeking to persuade their public and one another through reasoned discourse while learning, or not, by trial and error (r uggie 1999: 238).

h e underlines the importance of "collective intentionality", while also emphasizing the importance of leadership. Political elites are instrumental in the process of constructing and reconstructing identities. Although influenced by shared societal images, symbols and historical experiences, they simultaneously are in a position to manage these perceptions in the context of interstate relations, as well as inadvertently or calculatingly to shape, manipulate and even create them.

Politicians, intellectuals and influential business voices frame, mould and reinforce particular national narratives. t hus, relations between states are not only as they are perceived, but even more, how they are made to be perceived by a country's leadership.

n ick o nuf and Vendulka k ubalkova look into the "black box" of the state and focus on interaction among domestic actors, which is shaped by language, rules and choices (k ubalkova 2001; o nuf 2001). o nuf focuses on three constituents of the social world including individuals, society and the rules that link them, and underlines the importance of the "speech act" in the process:

> Policies exist only when we put our intentions into words and frame courses of action, or plans, to achieve them … Speaking is an activity with normative consequences. When we speak our words lead others to expect that we will act in a certain way – in accordance with our stated intentions – and that we set out to do so. o ur words matter to us. Simply by being spoken, our stated intentions and plans have some degree of normative force in their own right (o nuf 2001: 77–78).

t his largely corresponds to o le Wæver's treatment of security as a speech act: "a problem is a security problem when it is defined so by the power holders." The idea of "securitization" implies that by labelling some international, interstate or national developments as security issues, the power-holders claim special rights and attempt to legitimize their efforts to move those issues out of the realm of "normal politics" into the realm of "emergency politics". Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde argue that "'security' is the move that takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue either as a special kind of politics or as above politics. Securitization can be seen as a more extreme version of politicization" (Buzan 1998: 21–23; Wæver 1995: 54).

t his effectively leads to the recognition of the importance of the domestic environment in the foreign policy analysis and here the ideas of a ndrew Moravcsik are complementary for this analysis. Moravcsik, who is above all known for his intergovernmentalist approach focusing on the bargaining among governments in the context of e U integration, places a strong emphasis on the role of domestic factors in foreign policy choices. States have preferences, defined as "the fundamental social purpose underlying the strategic calculations of governments" or "an ordered and weighted set of values placed on future substantive outcomes" (Moravcsik 1997: 513; 1998: 24). State preferences, which could be described as concepts or fundamentals to which nations and their governments tend to adhere in their foreign policy orientations, are dynamic and transforming rather than static and could be purposefully altered over time. More organized, powerful societal groups may influence the formation of state preferences. As Moravcsik has expressed it, frequently "preferences reflect the objectives of those domestic groups which influence the state apparatus" (Moravcsik 1998: 24).

t hus, commitments of individuals and groups to particular political values and institutions may determine the general formal and informal political framework of the state and eventually policy orientations, also within the foreign policy domain. t he ruling political elites, however, may become the dominant element in the process of setting those political formal and informal institutes. o n the one hand, the political elite, which is in the position to make decisions, follows the direction of state preferences. t hus, it is possible to arrive at the conclusion that state preferences exist, to a certain extent, objectively and independently notwithstanding which political force exercises the political power. o n the other hand, however, state preferences may be continuously influenced and modified, to a lesser or larger extent, by the interests and relative power of the ruling political elite. Moreover, complexity of the interaction of domestic and international factors as well as elites and society may intensify, "when individual domestic actors – most often national executives – exploit the legitimacy of particular international policies as a 'two-level' instrument to increase their influence over the domestic polity" (Moravcsik 1997: 527). t he link, which exists between domestic and external environments, is also important for the reason that interaction with international environments contributes to the continuous redefinition of the national preferences. It may be noted in this context, however, that it is not the actions of outside actors *per se* that influence national preference construction but instead, how they are perceived by and what impact they bear on domestic actors and interests. In other words, the activities of outside actors are interpreted through domestic lenses (e vans et al. 1993; Putnam 1988).

t he interaction of ideas, leadership visions and interests, and political exigencies are even more important in transition societies, where nation-building takes place. t he countries in the post-Soviet space clearly fall into this category. e specially at the outset, the political processes in post-communist states were characterized by a high degree of conflict, institutional uncertainty and politicization of social forces. a lthough initial instability and the lack of appropriate and effective political institutions can be overcome in the longer run, certain repercussions in those post-transition societies remain. t he unclear rules of the political interaction, attempts to mobilize and manipulate with society, influential role of informal actors, and political culture of winners-take-all attitudes rather than compromise-seeking dominate the domestic political environment. Mette Skak indicates that these features have substantially contributed to conflict and controversy over foreign policy decisions in post-communist societies. She has described foreign policy-making as a complicated, ambiguous and frequently erratic process. Moreover, in the context of post-communist transition when foreign policy decision-making institutions are underdeveloped, the elite is tempted to use foreign policy for domestic goals, such as shaping the national identity and mobilizing the nation for reforms and state-building tasks (Skak 1996: 1–15).

In the context of a permanent presence of political conflict among political elites, rather radicalized society and simultaneous need to mobilize the potentially supportive segments of the population, the political exigency for

both the ruling elite and opposing political forces is an additional factor to be taken into consideration in foreign policy analysis. In the process of nation-building, various competing ideologies might appear and the consolidation of values is underdeveloped. a s society tends to favour radical views, the ruling political elite through governmental instruments may need to adopt some elements of the radical ideas of their opponents, thereby weakening their appeal and position. In the post-communist states an inclination existed within the political environment to revert to "dramatic actor" behaviour in the external policy domain. Forceful appeals to historical grievances can become politically resonant for a considerable part of the population and eventually lead to their inclusion in the political rhetoric and policy decisions by the political elite (Skak 1996: 16–26).

Policy preferences adopted immediately after re-establishing statehood, when a certain structural vacuum existed, have had a formative impact. a s o le n oergaard observed, "t he decision of a few individuals at the apex of the formal power structure can reflect their personal prejudices and idiosyncrasies, but at the same time lead to the formation of institutions having a profound influence on the future power configurations and policies" (Noergaard 1996: 3). This leads effectively to a certain political and perceptual entrapment in previously formed policies and identity discourses. d omestic public preferences can "be seen not as dictating particular choices but as placing outer limits on the foreign policies their governments have been able to pursue" (White et al. 2002: 198). With respect to ideational structures, it is apparently easier to find a mobilizing message for the "building" and construction rather than for "maintenance" and reconstruction. o nly in this "maintenance phase" one may observe all the contradictions and tensions of the fact that the nation is both a backward-looking and forward-looking community. a s k atrina Schwartz puts it, "national identity is not simply a reaction against otherness, much less against a particular o ther. It is also about the broader and more complex problem of maintaining of a distinctive sense of collective self in relation to the outside world" (Schwartz 2006: 14–15).

From the "Dramatic Actor" and "Danger Discourse" to "Dialogue Manifestation"

a fter the restoration of l atvia's independence, r ussia, and to an extent, the r ussian-speaking population in l atvia, became the "constituting other" in l atvia's identity formation process. h istorical experiences, geopolitical proximity and the assertiveness of r ussia's stances contributed to the formation of perceptions largely dominated by grievances, insecurity and enmity with respect to the neighbouring state. h owever, the l atvian case was not exceptional with regard to the elite's temptation to use foreign policy for domestic goals, such as shaping the nation's identity and mobilizing for reforms and nation-building tasks. t he l atvian national elite formed its own legitimacy through addressing those perceptions and

simultaneously promoted and cultivated such perceptions through the "discourse of danger" (Jaeger 1997: 11).

r ussians in l atvia, not rarely identified as Russia's "fifth column", became a significant element in the official discourse formation. This representation justified initially exclusive definition of citizenship. The apparent apprehensiveness of l atvians about r ussian intentions on both sides of the Baltic-r ussian border was expressed by l atvian minister of foreign affairs g eorgs a ndrejevs when he stated that, "Russia, by using [its diaspora] as a fifth column … is seeking to create a situation enabling forces which are not l atvian to come to power and to annex l atvia to r ussia" (a ndrejevs 1993). l atvia's policies in the 1990s were those of a "nationalizing state" – a concept introduced by r ogers Brubaker to denote states that are ethnically heterogeneous, "yet conceived as nation states, whose dominant elites promote (to varying degrees) the language, culture, demographic position, economic flourishing, or political hegemony of the nominally state-bearing nation" (Brubaker 1996: 57).

h owever, it must be acknowledged that in the beginning of the 1990s r ussia's international and bilateral behaviour contributed to l atvian perceptions on both elite and societal levels that r ussia had retained imperialistic ambitions regarding the so-called "near abroad". t he r ussian Foreign Policy c oncept, published in January 1993, clearly located the post-Soviet space within r ussia's zone of interests and invited for more active promotion of integration and inadmissibility of foreign powers in the region. t he Military d octrine, adopted later in 1993, asserted r ussia's right to use military force if the rights of r ussian citizens in other countries were violated, military facilities located abroad attacked or military blocs harmful to r ussian security interests expanded. t he "danger discourse" in l atvia was further strengthened by apprehensiveness related to r ussian troop withdrawal negotiations.

In this context, both l atvia and r ussia were rather reluctant to engage in direct bilateral relations in search for mutual understanding, instead appealing to international organizations, international society and major states to promulgate and advance their respective foreign policy goals. By expressing explicit security concerns on the international level, the implicit strategic goal of the policy of "conflict manifestation" was to attract international attention and support (k nudsen and n eumann 1995: 13). t he Baltic countries were actually keen to exploit the assertiveness of r ussian policy to demonstrate the otherness and imperialistic ambitions of r ussia and thereby justify the imperative for the Baltic states to be integrated into Western institutions. Hence, "conflict manifestation" in relations with r ussia effectively provided the l atvian leadership with means to strengthen the notion of r ussia's "otherness", to distance the country from the former empire and to justify its domestic and international policies, including the necessity for "return to e urope", or in other words, integration into Western institutions such as n a t o and the e uropean Union. Paradoxically, but in insecurity one may search for and find security. In other words, throughout a major part of the 1990s, the l atvian leadership actually sought to strengthen

both domestic stability and international security, exploiting the perceptions of insecurity.

t he success of the dominant identity-building paradigm, a consensus on domestic and foreign policy issues, and more importantly, coming closer to a full-fledged integration into the transatlantic and European structures contributed considerably to a transforming international milieu as well as influenced the character of l atvian foreign policy and, by extension, l atvian-r ussian bilateral relations. In the context of the transatlantic and e uropean integration, l atvian politicians were increasingly recognizing the importance of a dialogue rather than "conflict manifestation" in relations with Russia (Spruds 2002: 348). Since 1997, the l atvian leadership, after accomplishing the consolidation of state structures, creating institutional and cognitive stabilizers and effectively monopolizing political process, have begun actively to promote the integration of society by enacting amendments to the citizenship legislation and elaborating the national integration programme. t he adoption of a more inclusive citizenship policy was facilitated by a growing understanding of the need to integrate society, increasing attention to economic and social welfare, aspirations to e U and na t o membership and the increasing imperative to normalize political relations and take advantage of economic interaction with r ussia. t he initial concerns of national and cultural extinction had waned on societal level and political as well as some economic ambitions of the national elites were largely satisfied. For instance, in a very profitable oil transit sector, it was decided to permit "national businesses" to privatize the port facilities and infrastructure, excluding the outside investors, above all from Russia. Strategic security reasoning formed a part of the justification process. Moreover, economic stabilization and growth as well as securing specific dates for na t o and e U membership contributed to a more positive and more future-oriented tone in the national discourse in all three Baltic countries (d . Smith 2004: 171).

t he limitations and fragility of the "dialogue manifestation" and the presence of r ussia's otherness in domestic politics and in relations with r ussia, however, were clearly evident during this period, especially shortly before the fixed dates for na t o and e U membership were set. In the context of the Baltic strive for na t o membership, r ussia offered security guarantees in 1997 and reacted harshly after they were rejected. r ussian response to dispersion of r ussian-speaking protesters and gathering of l atvian Second World War veterans, who fought on the g erman side, in March 1998 caused a serious interstate crisis (Bleiere and Stranga 2000: 216–259; o zolina 2000: 188–215). t his was accompanied by an alleged frustration of r ussian energy companies excluded from participation in the privatization process of l atvia's transit sector. a lthough r ussia never carried out its threat to impose economic sanctions, a gradual reduction of oil transfers to Ventspils Port began as early as 1999. t he activities from r ussia's side did not alleviate the feelings of insecurity and contributed to the continuous prominence of "danger discourse" in the l atvian society. t his also once more underlined the importance for l atvia to join the e U and, especially, na t o . t he "nationalizing state" from

the nation-building process had gradually entered the "nation-maintenance" phase, yet the ideational structures created in the initial "building" phase seemed to be enduring.

Post-integration Dilemmas of Foreign Policy and Identity (Re-)Construction

a fter e U and na t o enlargement, l atvia, alongside the other new member countries, faced a complicated dilemma of defining new foreign policy priorities, its place in the "common e uropean home" and the character of relations with Russia. Previously, a rather clearly defined and mutually reinforcing policy objective existed on both external and domestic levels. t his has clear repercussions for l atvian "identity politics". r ussia's "otherness", strengthened by signals emanating from the r ussian side, contributed to the imperative of "returning to the European civilization", justified exclusive citizenship legislation and economic distancing from the former imperial centre. n ow, after "re-integration into Europe", the process of redefinition and reconstruction of national and foreign policy identities began.

t he e U is a "constitutive institution". Paradoxically, however, integration into the e uropean and transatlantic structures contributed to a certain "de-e uropeanization" of Latvian foreign policy and identity orientation. After achieving a full-fledged membership status within the e U and na t o , the consensus among political elites on the country's foreign policy priorities disappeared. Moreover, membership within the EU and NATO coincided with difficult and frequently unpopular policy choices either over an adjustment or termination of local production capacities, or participation in the US-led military missions in a fghanistan and Iraq. Brussels and Washington were gradually taking over the role of the "second Moscow" in public discourse.

Indirectly, EU and NATO membership also influenced regional cooperation. "d e-e uropeanization" was effectively complemented by a certain "de-regionalization". r egions, to a large extent, are the constructs of minds and constructs of perceived mutual interests. a lthough the realization of diverging interests among the Baltic countries was always present in l atvia, the perception of cooperation as one of the necessary ingredients for joining transatlantic organizations and counterbalancing r ussia existed. a fter the enlargement, the perceived imperative of regional cooperation waned and, arguably, the perception of importance of promoting own interests, especially in the economic domain, became the dominating trend within a wide segment of l atvia's leadership. t he certain shift away from the previously widely accepted l atvian "Balticness" was also facilitated by perceptions of e stonia's increasing disassociation from its Baltic neighbours and a certain invention of its n ordic belonging.

In this context of l atvia's transformed foreign policy identity niche, the character of r ussia's "otherness" has also been altering. t his was pinpointed in mid-2006 by a former high-ranking l atvian diplomat and presidential adviser,

a rmands g utmanis, who expressed the belief that pro-r ussian attitudes were becoming fashionable in l atvia and hoped that r ussophobia would be replaced by more constructive images of r ussia as a "neighbouring country". a ccording to the former diplomat, this would go along with the ever-present l atvian inclination to "improve relations with r ussia" (g utmanis 2006). t he turn of mood has been clearly facilitated and strengthened by an increased interest in economic cooperation with r ussia.

t hus, differences among e stonia's, l atvia's and l ithuania's bilateral interaction with r ussia are increasingly evident. In contrast to the decisions of other Baltic presidents, the l atvian president decided to attend the Victory d ay celebrations in Moscow in May 2005 (see for example c hapter 3 in this volume). t he l atvian g overnment succeeded in signing and ratifying the border agreement with r ussia in 2007. t he l atvian-r ussian intergovernmental commission relaunched its activities and a number of various intergovernmental agreements were reached, some of which were cemented during the visit of the r ussian Foreign Minister Sergei l avrov to l atvia in d ecember 2007. t he l atvian g overnment also took a rather reserved stance towards the e stonian "Bronze Soldier" crisis as well as when l ithuania made public the financial assessment of the country's losses during the Soviet period. a s a matter of fact, parts of the business and political elite may have perceived the neighbour's troubles with r ussia as an opportunity for l atvia to intensify its economic interaction with r ussia.

The external background and developments are not insignificant in contributing to the ideational, perceptual and normative thinking and making frame. t he evolving perceptions of r ussia's otherness and respective policy choices take place in the context of interstate asymmetry of perceptions and interests. a s foreign policy identity is relational, r ussia's activities have not been irrelevant. r ussia has become much more sophisticated and increasingly attempts to use soft power instead of hard power. In the meantime, after the expansion of the e uropean Union, the tone of e U-r ussia relations points to the uncertainty of mutual expectations and prospective policies. a n amalgamation of the frequently contradicting interests and perceptions within the e uropean Union (and, as a matter of fact, in r ussia) hinder the formation of an unequivocal image of its counterpart.

a transforming of l atvia's place in a changing international and regional environment, altering perceptions of r ussia and particular economic interests have contributed to perceptual tensions on several levels. t here are diverging trends in perceptions of r ussia among the elite and society, various political parties and economic interests. t his has effectively led to a coexistence of several foreign policy paradigms in l atvia and even the parallel implementation of several somewhat contradictory foreign policies. h owever, a certain shift to a "selective othering" of r ussia and partial de-securitization of economic relations has clearly taken place. t he "danger discourse" has been effectively complemented by the "opportunity discourse", at least among the l atvian elite. t his has been most apparent in the l atvian-r ussian economic interaction and particularly l atvia's position with regard to energy cooperation.

"Selective Othering": De-securitization of Economic and Energy Relations?

t he geographical location of the Baltic countries and the proximity of r ussia have often been only interpreted through the prism of victimization and menace, evoking notions of the *cordon sanitaire* or clash of civilizations. h owever, more positive geographical labels also abound: the Baltic have been celebrated as "true crossroads", "amber gateway", "bridge" or "multicultural transit hub" open in all directions (Schwartz 2006: 11). t his actually pinpoints the long-lasting existence of the regional "opportunity discourse". t his has also led to the somewhat veiled evolution, normative presence and, effectively, practice of "selective othering" with regards to r ussia in all of the Baltic countries. t he predominantly converging "othering" perceptions and approach to r ussia notwithstanding, all three Baltic countries had simultaneously competed for the role of the "natural and genuine bridge linking e ast and West". a nd here the general perceptions of "true crossroads" are unequivocally intertwined with and reinforced by particular economic interests.

Joining na t o and the e uropean Union contributed to a certain increased "otherness" of na t o and the e U, decreased the urgency of securitizing r ussia's threat and increased support to the idea that l atvia must unilaterally exploit the advantages arising from self-attributed expertise on and connections to r ussia. t he "double track" approach increasingly began to dominate the discourse related to relations with r ussia. r ussia is simultaneously a part of the danger discourse in political interaction and regarded as an "opportunity" in economic relations. t he l atvian elite's attempts to de-securitize economic relations have been particularly conspicuous in the energy sector. t his has been demonstrated by l atvia's position pertaining to the g erman-r ussian n ord Stream project, the prospects of developing underground storage facilities in l atvia and increasing l atvia's reliance on r ussian gas supplies.

t he transformation of the l atvian position on energy matters is somewhat paradoxical in the context of the evolving e uropean approach to the energy security notion. Until 2006, a free market economic rationale dominated for a long time the energy narratives of the e uropean Union, whereas the new members, such as the Baltic states and Poland, underlined the importance of a political and security approach to the energy issues. t he 2006 r ussian-Ukrainian gas crisis contributed to the alteration of the perceptions and policies regarding energy issues in the whole e uropean Union. e U leaders increasingly point to the political dimension of energy security. t he securitization of energy issues has also been observable among the Baltic Sea states.

t he most explicitly "statist" paradigm can be found in the Polish approach to energy security. Poland, under the leadership of conservative brothers k aczynskis, actively strengthened domestic energy companies, precluded from foreign, first of all r ussian, expansion into the Polish energy sector, and supported the purchase of energy industry assets abroad, such as *Mazheiku Nafta* in l ithuania, and actively embarked on the course of energy supply diversification (Oil and Gas Institute in Krakow

2007: 4–11). t he Polish g overnment under Jaroslaw k aczynski had obviously operated under the assumption that the "liberalization of the gas market prior to true diversification of supply sources would result in a threat of monopolization of the market by dominant external suppliers, thus affecting energy security and distorting competition" (Wyciszkiewicz 2007: 40). h ence, Poland has been the leading nation in securitizing energy issues and attempting to minimize its dependence on energy supplies from r ussia in the Baltic Sea region. Poland's energy security approach and concerns have been, though with some variations, shared in l ithuania and e stonia.

l atvia's approach has been much more controversial. r ussia's energy policies, and particularly the r ussian-Ukrainian gas dispute, served as a catalyst for a particular focus on energy security deliberations and relevant policy formulation and implementation. t he bilateral, regional and international developments contributed considerably to increased concerns that l atvia's energy dependence on r ussia would be even further reinforced. With r ussian transit through l atvia drying up, l atvia had been deprived of leverage and possible neutralizing countermeasures. t hus, its asymmetrical dependence made the country a potential hostage of r ussia's political and economic manipulation. a s a result, the notion of a kind of "intolerable dependence" on r ussian energy resources and the need for diversification of energy supplies increasingly entered public discourse and found its place on the g overnment's political agenda. In 2006, the l atvian Ministry of e conomics had elaborated the basic guidelines for a long-term energy policy with the aim of strengthening l atvia's energy security. In March 2006 the Baltic prime ministers conceptually agreed to cooperate on a joint project with the aim of replacing the old nuclear power reactor with a new one in Ignalina, l ithuania.

n otwithstanding those concerns, l atvia has been increasingly tilting towards an "economic" energy narrative. While securitization of the energy sector is the dominant trend in the e uropean Union, a partial de-securitization of the energy relationship has occurred in l atvia despite its generally securitized political interaction with r ussia. t his is partly understandable taking into account the asymmetry of interests and perceptions within the e U regarding the issue of supply diversification and limited success of the European Commission in consolidating the common "energy foreign policy". t he certain disappointment in e U energy policy notwithstanding, however, the diverging approach of l atvia on energy strategy has been apparently caused by unilateral economic considerations. Latvian energy strategy, arguably, has been more influenced by interests of specific economic groupings as well as governmental "economic approach" oriented towards ensuring lower price levels and taking advantage of economic cooperation and business opportunities with r ussia.

t he tendency towards a gradual "economization" of l atvia's energy security in 2006 and 2007 has been most obviously manifested in the gas sector and particularly demonstrated through l atvia's evolving approach to gas infrastructure projects in the region, above all the n ord Stream pipeline project. a fter the launch of the n orth e uropean g as Pipeline project in 2005, l atvian representatives alongside their Baltic counterparts strongly criticized the plan and pointed to the political agenda behind

the r ussian-g erman agreement. t he Baltic governments joined the ranks of critics pointing to the immense costs, increased length, technological complexity as well as environmental risks of gas pipeline construction on the Baltic Seabed. t he Baltic countries declared that a selection and design of alternative energy infrastructure, passing through the Baltic countries and Poland (referring particularly to the a mber pipeline project) would not only create a shorter, technologically less complicated, less expensive and ecologically safer route, but would also allow r ussia to intensify regional cooperation in the energy sector. t he Baltic countries considered r ussian activities related to the n ord Stream as an application of the energy card in regional and bilateral politics, which effectively allows r ussia to increase its political and economic manoeuvering capacity in central and east e uropean countries while simultaneously strengthening interdependence patterns with west e uropean countries and companies (Spruds 2006: 110–118).

Soon afterwards, however, l atvia's position on energy security as well as the Nord Stream underwent a gradual transformation. This was caused and influenced by regional, bilateral and domestic developments and actors. t he e uropean Union had found it difficult to promptly define a comprehensive policy in the energy domain and constrain the energy unilateralism of the member states. In the meantime, the acuteness of the Baltic energy supply problem had only intensified due to increasing domestic demand, rising prices on energy resources and the prospective closure of the Ignalina power plant mandated by the e U. h ence, paradoxically, integration into na t o and the e U may have even decreased the Baltic security of supply, at least in the short-term perspective. e U membership also contributed to the increase in energy prices. For instance, although the integration and liberalization of the e uropean energy markets (especially in the field of electricity) would lead to lower average prices within the European Union, actually the Baltic countries could be constrained to buy cheaper energy resources (Janeliunas and Molis 2006: 25–26). t he limitation of available energy alternatives has contributed to the perception of r ussia as an opportunity rather than a threat in l atvia (g lukhih 2007; n ovickaya 2007).

Selective othering has left its mark on l atvia's political "action programmes". This was demonstrated by Latvia's official reserved position on Estonia's "Bronze Soldier" case in a pril 2007 and by delaying the demonstration of the documentary "Putin's System" on l atvian television during r ussia's parliamentary elections in December. However, the political elite is divided and it is difficult to find a convincing "ideational bridge" to balance various economic and political priorities. t he ruling coalition appears to support a discourse of multi-vector economic pragmatism. h owever, the new "opportunity and pragmatism" discourse increasingly encounters reservations among the l atvian public. In all the Baltic countries it is possible to speak about a primary constituent of national identity: a rather homogenous official view of identity that is formed by official discourses, "top-down" constructions, "officially scripted" and "invented traditions" by government and formal institutions. Much more fragmented is the secondary constituent of national identity, which is "heterogeneous-individual, bottom-up" construction with significant gaps between

various social and ethnic groups and generations (Munck 2005: 209–13). t here is a certain political and perceptual entrapment in the previously formed policies and identity discourse in relations with Russia. Once established, it is difficult to change perceptions of r ussia's "otherness" as a major source of l atvia's insecurity. a rguably, the l atvian society, rather than the national elite, has become a major stabilizer of these perceptions. In the domain of economic and energy relations with r ussia, many groups outside of the ruling coalition (obviously opposition parties, but also non-governmental organizations (n g o s) and expert community) have directly criticized the country's increasing dependence on r ussian gas, described as "gazpromization", while others have been critical of the somewhat conciliatory approach in l atvia's political relations with r ussia. r ussia's otherness and the limits of reshaping l atvian identity and respective political and economic action programmes have been not only demonstrated by the "danger discourse" but also effectively by the "opportunity discourse".

Hence, there are several ideational factors that have influenced the discursive shift in l atvia's r ussian policy. First, the opportunity discourse with r ussia has been always present – the notion of a "gateway" or "bridge" has been arguably stronger in l atvia than in the other two Baltic countries. Second, n a t o and e U membership alleviated and altered the traditional r usso-centric danger perception. a somewhat opposite process has taken place – now Brussels and Washington have been perceived as "second and third Moscow". t hird, e U integration has also contributed to a growing perception of "everybody thinks about himself" – with regard to Baltic neighbours, especially within the e U and n a t o . Moreover, the ruling coalition and particular interest groups after winning the 2006 parliamentary elections have been in the position to promote interests aimed at a closer cooperation with r ussia.

h owever, one must realize also the caveats and potentially limited scope of the discursive shift. First, the institutionalization of the danger discourse in the first part of the 1990s contributed to a certain political, institutional and ideational entrapment in the discourse of representing r ussia as l atvia's constituting "other". Second, r ussia's "otherness" remains especially strong on the "secondary constituent" level of l atvian identity. t here are also political and business interests which are not so strongly oriented to r ussia. h ence, there remains a mixture of ideational and structural trends, which largely contribute to a rather uneven foreign policy course. t he enlargement did not change immediately the Baltic-r ussian relations, and the consequences varied from country to country. h owever, exactly in the l atvian case a certain shift in l atvian-r ussian relations after the enlargement has been the most obvious.

Conclusions

t his chapter has elaborated on the assumption that an adequate analysis of the post-communist foreign policy process and role of ideational factors requires a

theoretical framework that permits a multi-causal explanation. If a neo-realism treatment of identity and foreign policy is overdetermining, a pure constructivist approach somewhat lacks a causal explanatory power. Ideational structures are important but they are evolving and might be reinterpreted by interests. h ence, a certain synthesis of constructivist and pluralist approaches to foreign policy analysis allows to embrace a wider spectrum of important factors and to incorporate the intricacies of post-communist societies. It puts a greater emphasis on the factor of various non-state and state actors and more complicated patterns of their interaction. t his becomes even more complicated in post-communist states, which generally have been states in the making and remaking. t his somewhat mixed theoretical framework clearly may invite a considerable measure of criticism, not least for the mixture of rationalist and semi-reflictivist elements. a t the same time, the author follows o le Wæver's invitation "to break with the tendency to present it [Ir discipline] as consisting of a number of disembodied 'schools' or 'paradigms'" (Wæver 1997a: 2). a s Wæver puts it, "more commonly, writers engage in problematization, in alterations, in cross-overs between schools or fields. Thus, most of the interesting work is done in ways that do not fit into boxes" (Wæver 1997a: 27). h ence, the deconstruction of the "boxed" approaches and adopting multi-causal theoretical frame is seen here as one of the ways of dealing with analysis of foreign policy thinking, framing and making in post-Soviet societies.

t his refers also to examination of the role of ideational sources and structures in l atvian foreign policy with regard to r ussia in the context of e uropean integration. Identities and interests have been interactive from the outset of interstate relations. Whereas interests were frequently the driving force behind particular discursive practices, once adopted, those practices led to established ideational frames which left limited space of manoeuvre for the political leadership in expressing and implementing their interests. t he initial phase of state- and nation-building was formative in that it gave rise to an enduring mental framework of images, national roles, policy approached, moral and ethical beliefs in l atvia. It largely contributed to considerable westward openness and the erection of cultural and political boundaries in the e ast. t he deliberate and unintended actions of the political elite were instrumental in creating such a setting. a fter achieving e U and na t o membership, however, new challenges and opportunities have appeared and certain reconstruction attempts have taken place. Particular business and related political interests have contributed to the changing patterns of securitization. a s a result, the seemingly monolithic national identity of the past increasingly appears to be fractured, divided and contested. a bove all, there appears to be an increasing gap and major tensions between the elite and societal "r ussia projects". a lthough the elite has largely opted for the opportunity discourse and de-securitization of economic cooperation, the shared political culture and societal identity has largely remained "entrapped" in the post-Soviet nation-building phase, emphasizing the elements of a "danger discourse" with regard to r ussia. h ence, the dialectics of the interaction of primary and secondary identity constituents apparently will be a

complex process. t his may contribute to the continuation of strategic zigzags and parallel existence of several l atvian foreign policies. l atvia has effectively become a discursive battlefield for diverging ideas and interests among national political elites and societal groups and the search for a reconstructed consensus will remain part of l atvian politics in the foreseeable future. t he outcome of this debate and eventually adopted policies will have clear implications for l atvia's place in the e uropean Union in general and l atvian-r ussian relations in particular.

c hapter 8

n eighbourhood Politics of Baltic States: Between the e U and r ussia

Dovilė Jakniūnaitė

Introduction

t he biggest enlargement in the history of the e U not only brought 10 new members into the Union, but also multiplied the length of its external borders and created new neighbours and neighbourhoods. t he e U decided to manage these extensive changes by creating a new institutionalized policy – the e uropean n eighbourhood Policy (en P).[1] t he eastern part of the e U's neighbourhood coincides with the traditional sphere of interest of another major player – r ussia. Increasingly, the shared neighbourhood is treated as a sphere of competition by both the e U and r ussia. t he "orange revolution" in Ukraine, the "rose revolution" in g eorgia, the problem of "frozen conflicts", competing energy projects involving eastern ENP states – all these instances reveal the growing presence of the e uropean Union in territories where Russia has sought to retain its influence and hegemonic action autonomy. t hus, the eastern neighbourhood seems to have become a new front line in the already complicated e U-r ussian relations.

a lmost immediately after their entry into the e U, the three Baltic States – e stonia, l atvia and l ithuania – took a keen interest in the possibilities provided by the ENP to develop and redefine relations with the "new" neighbours. Estonia stated that the "shaping and effective implementing of the e U n eighbourhood Policy is one of the most essential goals of our foreign policy" (Mihkelson 2004); l atvia promised "to devote particular attention to the countries of e astern e urope" (Ministry of Foreign a ffairs of the r epublic of l atvia 2006); and l ithuania proclaimed to have regional ambitions in the eastern neighbourhood (Paulauskas 2004). t hus, the e U n eighbourhood Policy became the important focus of the foreign policies of all three Baltic states (for example Berg 2005; g albreath 2006; g romadzki et al. 2005).

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1 t he e uropean n eighbourhood Policy (en P), adopted in 2004, applies to a lgeria, a rmenia, a zerbaijan, Belarus, e gypt, g eorgia, Israel, Jordan, l ebanon, l ibya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian a uthority, Syria, t unisia and Ukraine. Usually, the en P is divided into two dimensions – the eastern and the southern. t his chapter deals only with the eastern dimension of the en P, which covers six states: a rmenia, a zerbaijan, Belarus, g eorgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

Why have the countries of the eastern neighbourhood become so central to the foreign policy of the Baltic states? t his chapter argues that the eastern neighbourhood policy is used by the Baltic states to consolidate their identity as true European and Western states and to redefine and change their relations both with r ussia and the e U. t o support this thesis, the chapter examines the neighbourhood concept and policy of the Baltic states against the broader background of e U and r ussian policies in the shared neighbourhood. t he chapter proceeds, first, by explaining the nexus of identity and foreign (neighbourhood) policy. t he second section presents the neighbourhood conceptualizations of r ussia and the e U as structural constrains for the behaviour of the Baltic states. t he third section analyses the neighbourhood policy of the Baltic states as an instrument for consolidating their e uropean identity and strengthening their status and position in the e U and e urope as a whole.

Identity Representations and Foreign Policy

c onstructivist analysis in the discipline of international relations emphasizes socially constructed identity politics (for example n eumann 1996b; Wendt 1992). a ccording to this theoretical position, the way actors behave mostly depends on how they imagine themselves. Identity is defined as a set of relatively stable understandings about the self and its role in social relations. It gives order and stability to any social system because identity is knowledge about the self which is shared with the others. a ccording to h opf, "an individual needs her own identity in order to make sense of herself and others and needs the identities of others to make sense of them and herself" (h opf 2002: 4). t hus, identity is the answer given to the question "who am I?" using the other(s) as definitional representations.

Identities are not reified, stand-alone entities. Identities are always relational. "t he identity/difference nexus is performatively constituted by both self and other" (Rumelili 2004: 37) and this means that identities are not defined and supported one-way, just by the self alone, they are supported through interactions with the other. c onceptualization of identities is performed in the context of the others performing their identity representations and constructing them through their own foreign policy practices. t hus, self-construction is inseparable from the constructions by the other about the self. How the other thinks about us influences our own identity constructions.

t he notion of the other is always connected with the idea of difference. Identity always draws the border which delineates the homogeneity inside and the difference outside (see k owert 2001: 282 (f. 7)). t he other must be different from the self to have some meaning. t hat is, who (what) we are can be known only through what we are not (see r umelili 2004). Marking difference from the others determines who does and does not belong to the imagined community. In international politics, the self of the state and also its relation to the other manifests itself through its foreign policy.

In the constructivist interpretation, foreign policy is not about physical survival or defending the national interests. Foreign policy, first of all, is about the mutual construction of the other and the self through drawing and maintaining the lines of difference, usually, through drawing borders. o f course, the state identification processes are also happening inside the state using the internal others, historical myths, national narratives, collective memories, symbols and so on (cf. k .e . Smith 2002). h owever, social constructivism generally assumes that the state's identity cannot be constructed just internally: "it is only in interaction with a particular o ther that the meaning of a state is established" (h opf 2002: 288). t hus, foreign policy is a manifestation of state identity, and its analysis can be used to understand how the state is transforming, what message about itself is transmitting to the world, how it understands the world, and how it sees the others. For the state, the most important other most frequently is the closest other – the neighbour. t he existence of the neighbour as the most proximate other creates also the unavoidable need to clearly draw the border from it and to define the differences.

a ll three Baltic states share common others, both positive and negative. Put simply, r ussia is regarded as the main negative other, while e urope constitutes the primary positive other (cf. Pavlovaite 2003; l ehti 2005; Miniotaite 2003). These two others defined for a long time the surrounding space of the Baltic states, making them seek identification with Europe and resist the influence of r ussia. h owever, identities, as noted by k uus (2004) do not always allow clear distinctions between the self and the other but involve gray areas. t he Baltic states' relationship to e urope is the exemplary situation: Baltic states are e uropeans yet not fully. t here are various othering, "orientalising" (cf. k uus 2004) processes that make them appear or feel as inferior, lesser parts of e urope. a nd exactly this perception forces the Baltic states to constantly confirm their Europeaness and to constantly seek confirmation of their aspirations from (western) Europe (for example Budryte 2005a, k uus 2002a).

Mälksoo (in this volume) explicates this situation using the concept of liminality. l iminality is an ambiguous borderline condition; a situation where some entity finds itself between two stable orders and seeks to transgress its status into the stable one. t his semi-insiderness of Baltic states (see also a alto 2006) forces them to constantly confirm and reconfirm their European identity and to constantly search for new ways, different policies of becoming e uropean. Besides constituting borderline cases for e urope, the Baltic states are also well aware of their smallness and irrelevance (more about that in the third section). t he liminal condition combined with small size makes the existential insecurity of the Baltic states another inseparable characteristic of their identity.

Identities are not stable constructs. They are floating, fluid in the sense that meanings defining it constantly interact and change what they are signifying. Similarly, states are constantly looking for more precise, accurate ways to define themselves and their place in the world. c hanges in identity perceptions are manifested in transformed foreign policy, although sometimes it is namely the

desire to sustain and strengthen existing narratives of the self that forces foreign policy to change.

In order to understand better how the Baltic states project their identity towards the neighbours and how the conceptualization of other actors about them influences their interpretations and actions, we must first examine how the two most important others of the Baltic states – r ussia and the e U – transmit their identity through the neighbourhood policy and how they define their relationship with the Baltic states.

Differing Neighbourhood Policies of the EU and Russia

r ussia and the e U are often regarded as two very different international actors. t he e U constitutes an anomaly for traditional conceptual categories in international politics: it is neither a state, nor a normal international organization. a variety of conceptualizations have attempted to grasp the e U's peculiar combination of supranational and intergovernmental features; it has been variously described as a "post-modern", "post-Westphalian", "post-nationalist" (r umelili 2004: 27) and "multiperspectival polity" (r uggie 1993). Its "overlapping forms of authority" and "nonexclusive forms of territoriality" (r uggie 1993: 168–174) have been noticed. It acts using "soft power" (k agan 2003) in order to become a "normative power" (Manners 2002). Supposedly, power politics and sovereignty discourses lose their traditional meaning in the context of e U studies, and therefore, the e U's neighbourhood policy should not be equated with a neighbourhood policy of a state.

r ussia, in contrast, is frequently characterized as a very "modern", territorial state which cares about achieving hard power and strives for recognition as a great power (for example h edenskog et al. 2005). d irected by principles of *realpolitik*, it pursues its national interests and is not overly preoccupied with morality (Bugajski 2004). It uses material power (economic, military, political) to gain both global and regional leverage (l ucas 2008a).

For both actors – their differences notwithstanding – the neighbourhood is the place to fix or to convey their prevalent understanding about themselves. Through their neighbourhood policies we can also see how they are trying to construct the closest others – their neighbours. t heir neighbourhood conceptualizations reveal a lot about the actor's world view and self-view.

The European Neighbourhood Policy, officially established in 2004, is designed "to avoid drawing new dividing lines in e urope and to promote stability and prosperity within and beyond the new borders of the Union" (c ommission of e uropean c ommunities 2003: 4). t he e U takes a normative stance towards its neighbourhood, constantly stating that its policy is built on a "mutual commitment to common values" (ibid.). t he stress is clearly on "common", on what the e U and new neighbours share. h owever, when we examine the relationship more closely, the alleged normative equality disappears. t he e U becomes more of

a value exporter by giving conditions and presenting itself as the best example (see also k .e . Smith 2005: 763). t he e U clearly states who is in the dominant position, whose values are better, and consequently, who has the right to demand and direct.

t he n eighbourhood Policy appears to be based on a "student-teacher" relationship. t his assymmetrical discourse is further strengthened by the responsibility idea (Prodi's 2002 speech is an example of responsibility discourse). t he e U's neighbour becomes the one who needs teaching, who does not know what to want and, consequently, how to reach it. n eighbourhood becomes the space which is dependent without being invaded.

Second, the en P represents not only the e U as the value exporter; the e uropean neighbourhood also involves a statement about the e U's borders. r omano Prodi admitted that the EU cannot enlarge indefinitely: "We need a debate in Europe to decide where the limits of e urope lie and prevent these limits being determined by others" (Prodi 2002). t his desire to delineate e urope shows that the e uropean neighbourhood discourse is still part of the traditional, "modern" nation-state discourse and the e U still holds on to a Westphalian worldview.

t his tension between the two discourses – the discourse of closeness and the discourse of openness – describes the e n P. t he e U currently has chosen to use both definitions of its borders. On the one hand, the EU is depicted as open, expanding and inclusive; on the other hand, there is the need to find the limits of the e U. t hese discourses construct both the e U's neighbours and the e U itself. t he neighbour is unstable, uneducated, in need of illumination, and the neighbourhood is the space where the fight for stability takes place, as the EU is both opening itself up with its hegemonic normative position and closing itself by bordering processes.

t he eastern neighbourhood of the e U is part of r ussia's western neighbourhood. a powerful representation of the r ussian understanding of the neighbourhood is embodied in the term "near abroad" (*ближнее зарубежье*), which was used by r ussia to describe the former republics of the Soviet Union and implied a special relationship between these countries and r ussia. r epeated for almost 10 years, the "near abroad" term left its trace both in r ussia's more recent neighbourhood constructions, and also in the perceptions of r ussia in the neighbouring states. t he neighbourhood as the "near abroad" implied a status of dependence which was regarded as an inevitable consequence of common history. t he imperial connotations about expansion and influence were undoubtedly present, as well as the idea about former Soviet republics not constituting the "real abroad". t he term was widely used during y eltsin's era; however, after Putin became the president the term gradually lost its popularity in the r ussian political discourse (l omagin 2000). l ater, r ussia's neighbourhood discourse became more subtle although the meaning did not change much. t his stability is connected with how r ussia perceives itself in international politics and what it considers the most important aspects of its identity (for more on identity components of Russia, see Jakniūnaitė 2007).

It is hardly novel to note the aggressiveness and offensive behaviour of r ussia towards its neighbours in general, and towards the Baltic states in particular. r ussia's "new imperial" policy towards the post-Soviet countries involves diverse instruments, including diplomatic pressure, propaganda, disinformation campaigns, control of energy resources, usage of ethnic groups, creating social discontent, and so on (Bugajski 2004). In Paulauskas's view, "r ussian government has an active albeit little advertised agenda aimed at influencing the politics and the policies of the Baltic States" as well as "using the 'Baltic factor' in the domestic politics" (2006: 11).

So, r ussia's approach towards the neighbourhood appears to be more aggressive than that of the EU. Russia defines its relationship with its neighbourhood also asymmetrically but more from the position of the master, rather than the teacher – it controls, protects and distrusts. t he same idea about responsibility for the neighbour is also prevalent, but it arises from a different definition of the relationship. As in the case of the EU, there is also the same demand to define the boundaries through identity definition (cf. Dubin 2004). However, the tension with the neighbour arises because of the rude methods used in relations with the neighbours. From here the negative assessment of r ussian foreign (neighbourhood) politics arises.

e urope as cultural, civilizational and geographical category is the most important "other" for r ussia (for example see Billington 2004; n eumann 1996a). e urope for r ussians has a mythologized image, it is the good "which we do not have"; however, Europe is also identified with the loss of cultural individuality and social disorganization (d ubin 2004). r ussia both wants and does not want to be European (see Chapter 9 in this volume). This ambiguity is very well reflected in the identification of Russia as being special, unique, as laying in between (cf. Zvereva 2005). t his in-between is between a sia and e urope, that is, in e urasia. t his description moves towards the idea of not belonging to anybody, to being alone and unique. t hus, the spatial self-construction of r ussia is to be everywhere and nowhere.

t hat is why those living nearby formally are considered and accepted as neighbours, but their representation is very vague and indeterminate – they either just share their space/place with r ussia, or are part of the r ussian space. t he case of the so-called compatriots (*соотечественники*) is a very good example (the analysis of the compatriot case is based on Jakniūnaitė 2007). Although Russians live all around the world, the r ussians living in the post-Soviet space are singled out. t hey are the ones who need help, who need to be defended. t he compatriot discourse is based on the attitude that r ussia must compensate their loss of the homeland and that one does not have to live in r ussian territory to be its citizen mentally. Interpreted this way, the homeland for the compatriots becomes not a territorial formation, but the entity that feels the responsibility but in this case cannot propose anything tangible.

t he phenomenon of the compatriots demonstrates how the neighbouring space is understood as a strange place, "not ours" anymore; however, it does not belong only to the neighbours either. t hus, the closest others become the ones

with whom the neighbouring space is shared, and they are more of an object, not the independent subject. t hat is why attempts by outside actors to establish a relationship to the neighbourhood is treated as an infringement of r ussia's own territory, as for example the debates on the enlargement of na t o demonstrated. Fofanova and Morozov (in this book) analysing differing historical narratives of Russia and Baltic states come to the similar conclusion by noting conflicting strategies to construct political communities. t hus, the space around and nearby Russia is not just neighbouring space, but specifically Russia's neighbourhood. t hat which is neighbour to r ussia can only be neighbour to it alone and can have relations with it alone; anything more is a threat to r ussia's own identity, territory and borders.

t o sum up, the neighbourhood policies of the e U and r ussia can be explained as the clash of two discourses of power – "normative" and "imperial". t his is the fight where the competition is about the right to form the identities of the others and where the drive behind this is the demand for self-definition and own limits. t he tension between the different conceptualizations of the neighbouring space and their role in the identity projects of both makes the position of the three Baltic states ambivalent and ambiguous. From r ussia's side they are not treated as independent subjects. t hey are like the objects through which r ussia is solving its territorial identification issues. For the EU, the Baltic states are formally in, they "officially" belong to Europe. However, the Baltic states do not feel that way; instead they feel the constant urge to confirm and remind how they are part of them. So, the Baltic states have this constant need to show the outside world that they exist, who (what) they are, and how they have changed. t heir approach towards the e U's new neighbours expresses and constructs these identity representations and also demonstrates how they creatively use and react to the identity constructions of the e U and r ussia.

The Baltic States Between Two Dominating Neighbourhood Discourses

h aving reached two most important and most desired goals – membership in the e U and na t o , Baltic states for a short while found themselves in a condition of zero gravity. It was not clear what was expected from them now that they were safe and secure and on the path towards prosperity. h owever, the Baltic states have found a new foreign policy rationale – to help the eastern (and, more recently, south-eastern) neighbours. t he new e U external policy instrument, en P (which not incidentally was also promoted by the Baltic states themselves), proved to be exceptionally well suited for defining the new foreign policy mission of the Baltic states.

Before the membership, the priorities of the Baltic states have been the integration into the e uro-a tlantic alliance. It was seen as the only way to ensure the survival of the three small states in the western neighbourhood of r ussia. It was also the only way to confirm and validate their status as the true European

(Western) states. So, from one side, the shift of foreign policy goals towards the eastern neighbourhood can be understood in quite simple terms – Baltic states were in need of new foreign policy goals. From the other side, it is not difficult to notice that the e U membership did not dissolute the feeling about r ussia as important security consideration. "t here is more than enough evidence to believe that Russia seeks to retain political, economic and even cultural influence in the Baltic States" (Paulauskas 2006: 19) – it is the prevalent opinion about r ussia's goals in the Baltic states. Furthermore, it became clear that it will not be easy to influence the Russian policy of the EU as it was initially considered, nor the status of the Baltic states as true Western, European states has been confirmed unconditionally.

t his section analyses how the Baltic states create and secure their identity through the en P framework and how their understanding of themselves forms and constructs policy towards the neighbours. t hat means that the Baltic states have chosen (not necessarily voluntarily) to participate in the clash analysed above as additional architects of meaning, belonging and territoriality. t his section also examines the peculiarities of the neighbourhood concepts of the Baltic states and discusses how their neighbourhood conceptualizations demonstrate the urge to become fully e uropean.

What kind of identity is being constructed by the Baltic states through their versions of the en P? Immediately after the e U's new policy towards the neighbours was declared, all three Baltic states proclaimed an active and successful en P to be their foreign policy priority and emphasized the particular relevance of their own transition experience and reform know-how:

> l atvia will devote particular attention to the countries of e astern e urope, with which it will continue to develop intensive political dialogue and co-operation so as to transfer the reform experience which it has accumulated in recent years (l atvia's Foreign Policy guidelines 2006–2010 2006). (For similar statements by e stonian and l ithuania representatives see, for example, a damkus 2007; o juland 2004b; Paet 2005; Seimas r esolution 2004.)

t he Baltic states also regarded the en P as an opportunity to overcome the perennial problem of being small and insignificant. Statements like "size does not matter" (a damkus 2005a, 2007); "the impact of a small country is based on the strength of its arguments" (Pabriks 2006: 5); or "e stonia's experience shows that despite the limitations posed by the smallness of a country, it also opens up opportunities for success if we have the skills and courage to use them" (r üütel 2006; see also Paet 2005) demonstrate the preoccupation of the Baltic states with the size issue. t he acceptance of the identity of the small state stimulates the foreign policy of the Baltic states. It urges them to use the symbiotic relationship with the e U to their advantage and to use it as the balancing tool between these two big players. a n active adaptation of the neighbourhood policy of the e U appears to be the

possibility to disregard the size issue and solves the balancing problem giving the leverage against r ussia.

t he Baltic states became strong and active proponents regarding the "new neighbours" and first of all sought to represent themselves as influential and independent actors and experts of post-communist transition. t his allowed them, the recent "graduates" in making democracy work, to become "professors". Just a couple of years ago, the Baltic states were the ones to be taught and tested in doing things the "e uropean way". With the help of the en P, they very quickly took over the role of the teacher and began to emphasize their experience, expertise and credibility, as well as the student status of the neighbouring states:

> How we can prepare, contribute to and by doing so – help finish the homework – the countries that have chosen to embark on the road of democracy and transatlantic integration ... how to apply the knowledge of successful transitions in e astern e urope to countries and regions that are far far away from the cradles of the Velvet and the Singing r evolutions (a damkus 2005a). Previously l atvia was a recipient of assistance during its democratization process. t he moment has now come when l atvia can pass on its experience and knowledge to other countries and international organizations. l atvia has carried out a number of reforms which the "old" e uropean Union member states are yet to face … g ood project can fail only because it is not adapted to concrete country and l atvia can offer its help (Pabriks 2005). We, e stonians, have not forgotten the days when we were supported in our aspirations. t oday, we are a nation that wants to help its neighbours – to help those neighbours who want to help themselves (o juland 2004a).

t he Baltic states perceive themselves as having changed a lot through the help of western e urope and the e U. t hey are transmitting the message that they have managed very quickly to jump from being underdeveloped and post-Soviet to becoming modern e uropean states. t his "brand new" e urope is prepared to help the remaining liminal cases to make the leap from one category to another. t he willingness to help is also motivated by the desire to move the borders of the e uropean civilization further from the borders of the Baltic states in order to move closer to the "centre". t he Baltic states do not like to be perceived as liminal states, a condition that not only perpetuates the feeling of insecurity, but also destabilizes identity construction processes. t heir new role *vis-à-vis* the eastern en P states allows the Baltic states to indulge in a sense of superiority and instills greater self-confidence, something that they so often have lacked.

t hus, the partnership between the Baltic states and the new eastern neighbours is also asymmetric despite the commonalities that are often emphasized. In various declarations by Baltic leaders, one can detect the attitude that the situation of eastern partners is worse than anything the Baltic states experienced during their own transition. e astern en P countries have had very little democratic experience

before (for example a damkus's references to the lacking Singing or Velvet revolutions above), they are much poorer and much more underdeveloped:

> a nd certainly not the least important factor – responsibility. t he responsibility that the wealthier bear for the less privileged. t he responsibility that the more advanced bear for those yet developing. t he responsibility that club members bear for membership candidates (Paet 2006).

The asymmetric relationship that the Baltic states are constructing is also reflected in the responsibility discourse they are spreading. t his is a continuation of the e U's responsibility discourse, pointing at the important role of those who have successfully completed the transition and thus possess know-how that o ld e urope does not have. a nd precisely this allows them to be the better teachers, most suitable for the job.

t he e U as a teacher is nothing new. t he novelty is how the former students immediately became teachers after completing their own lessons. t he asymmetric relationship formulated by the e U regarding the adjacent outside world was very easily overtaken by the Baltic states in order to show how they are better, more successful, hence, more lucky, but all together prepared to share and to teach. t his superiority also transcends further and is manifested in the relationship to the "older" e U states as well. t he Baltic states have not only transformed. t hey still remember "how it was" and know how "it feels" to undergo the transformation. t hey can be better teachers than their teachers.

n ot surprisingly, Baltic leaders talking about the en P or e uropean-r ussian relations easily adapted also the e U value discourse:

> [l ithuania should become] a dynamic and attractive centre of interregional co-operation, which spreads the e uro-a tlantic values and the spirit of tolerance and co-operation across the borders and unites cultures and civilisations (a greement between Political Parties of the r epublic of l ithuania 2004). Since we share the same values, we believe, that these values are good and right, and that observing and spreading them in the world is a just case (Paet 2005).

t he Baltic states quickly learned the discourse of democracy and human rights and have now become not the receivers, but the spreaders of these ideas and norms. t he Baltic states use the en P for the formulation of their neighbourhood policies, constantly repeating and reinforcing, reconstructing and recreating their identity of perfect teachers, good, advanced members of the e U that understand what the e U is about and are able to spread the ideas beyond the e U's borders. t he reinforcement of this identity demonstrates again how important it is to be recognized and accepted.

k uus noted the strategy of current new e U members to "locate their countries in e urope while othering their e astern neighbours, particularly r ussia" (k uus 2004: 474). t he neighbourhood discourse of the Baltic states, however, does not engage

in "othering" in a strict sense, that is, the Baltic states do not try to draw clear borders in the east (except, perhaps, with r ussia). a lthough one of the functions of the ENP is to draw definite borders around the European community, the Baltic states' discourse on the eastern neighbours lacks this dimension. Instead, the Baltic governments are sending a different message – a message about the impossibility of the e U closing itself off. If the e U wants security, it must be open and ready to expand:

> t he founding fathers of the e uropean project wisely kept wide ideological and physical boundaries for the rapidly evolving economic and political model of e urope. … there is no point for us to reinvent the wheel (a damkus 2005b). … no geographic barriers should be set for the e uropean Union's enlargement. Since, if the e U sends, in the future, to those that wish to accede, the message that the door is closed, then those left out in the cold might make a choice that could be dangerous and damaging for e urope (Paet 2006).

a lthough being asymmetrical and dominating, the neighbourhood discourse of the Baltic states is also inclusive and open. It seems that e stonia, l atvia and l ithuania are ignoring the EU's identification needs, which are manifested through bordering. The implementation of the EU strive for fixing its borders would place the Baltic states on the frontier and perpetuate their status as border states. t his also would mean that they would feel the clash between the e U and r ussian neighbourhood policies most severely. Kuus (2004: 473) asserted that "enlargement reconfigures the specific borders of Europe but not the underlying dichotomy of Europe and e astern e urope". h aving realized that, the Baltic states want to move closer to e urope's centre, not by othering through bordering but through including and blurring, or even erasing, the lines with the neighbours in order to be "further" from r ussia. So, the neighbourhood policy is used to create the identity of the Baltic states as truly e uropean, advanced, modern states as well as to help solve their security concerns.

a fter the e U's largest-ever enlargement there was a lot of hope that "at least for once in their troubled history the stakes for these countries [Baltic states] are their credibility and prestige, rather than national survival" (Paulauskas 2006: 6). It appears not to be that simple, however. n ational survival is still in question and the neighbourhood policies of the Baltic states still reflect the thinking about the borders and, hence, security. t he fact that they are trying to push these borders further than the official border of the EU does not mean that they do not care about the borders.

a ll three Baltic states feel very strongly the fragility of their territorial security. t he discourse of being "small, but important" that is directed more towards the outside still has not replaced the dominant internal discourse of being "small, therefore vulnerable". The independence these states got in 1990 or 1991 is first of all about national territorial sovereignty (see among others k uus 2002a; Miniotaite 2003; Schwartz 2007). n ot surprisingly, the most important other of the Baltic

states, r ussia, emerges here again. It is the border of this country where the virtual fence has to be built.

t he en P does not cover r ussia, and the Baltic states also rarely talk about r ussia in the context of the en P, except some occasional remarks noting that "we must not forget r ussia". t he en P value discourse is not applied to r ussia either. h owever, the Baltic states are well aware that their neighbourhood discourse competes with the r ussian one, which also includes them. t hus, the Baltic states' interpretation of the en P further and deeper perpetuates the dichotomy between e urope and r ussia.

In that sense, the ENP for the Baltic states is still about defining the borders and limits of e urope. t hese borders, however, are drawn further (east) than the current official EU discourse does. The goal is to resist a blurred, expansionist and therefore threatening neighbourhood conceptualization by Russia and to be finally accepted as equal subjects in the neighbouring as well as bilateral relations.

My final point about the neighbourhood policies of the Baltic states concerns the question of Baltic unity. t he tendency to treat the three states as a homogeneous unit has been criticized by several authors (see, for example, Paulauskas 2006: 21–26; k apustans 1998). a s Miniotaite explains, "e stonia, l atvia and l ithuania having been 'put in the same basket' by 50 years of the common past, are united not by a positive identification, but by a construction of a common danger from the East" (Miniotaite 2003: 213). This lack of positive identification, except the common difficult past, has troubled the proponents of Baltic unity. Indeed, almost 20 years of independence has not brought these states very close to one another. a lthough on the public level there is no discussion of any major differences, no coordinated or institutionalized Baltic version of the en P has emerged either.[2] t his is not the place to understand why this is the case. Instead, in the context of the current discussion, it is more interesting to go into some differences among the Baltic states regarding the en P. a lthough subtle, these differences seem to reflect important differences in the identity constructions of Estonia, Latvia and l ithuania.

o f the three, l atvia places the least emphasis on the en P. While l atvia also emphasizes the need to transfer knowledge and experience to "countries lying in the e astern e urope" (Penke 2005), it tends to categorize relations with eastern neighbours under the broader framework of development policy. l atvia positions itself as a "responsible member of international society" (Penke 2007: 11) and tries to avoid more particular geographical obligations. t he idea about state smallness in internal identity constructions is prevalent (cf. Schwartz 2007), but l atvia's foreign policy documents do not seem to emphasize this. t hus, in l atvia,

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2　Possibilities to strengthen the enPP cooperation are discussed. See, for example, the speeches at the 13th Baltic c ouncil and the conference "Baltic States and the e U n eighborhood Policy", which took place 23 n ovember 2007 in r iga (see http://www. baltasam.org/?d ocId =704, accessed 25 January 2008). h owever, any tangible results are still to be reached.

we find the least amount of euphoria about the ENP. The proclaimed foreign policy objectives regarding the eastern neighbours appear to be rather pragmatic, focusing on the need to "strengthen economic ties and cross-border cooperation" (Penke 2005: 9). t he pragmatic as well as dialectical nature of l atvian foreign policy is also noticed by a ndris Spruds in this book.

o n the other end of the scale of en P euphoria is l ithuania, which immediately after gaining e U membership declared the wish to become "the regional leader through its quality of membership in the e U and na t o and through proactively developed neighbouring relations" (Paulauskas 2004). t hrough this, l ithuania portrayed itself as "an active country, visible in the world and influential in the region" (Seimas r esolution 2004). For such a small country it was clearly a very ambitious task, quite difficult to support with existing resources. Subsequently, leadership rhetoric appears to have diminished and been replaced, to an extent, by an idea of partnership. h owever, these initial ambitions demonstrate how l ithuania sought to be distinguished from the other Baltic states and also from its bigger neighbour in the south-east, Poland. t his state is the additional important other in the country's identity constructions because of historical reasons. l ithuanian identity is strongly connected with Poland's and it tends to perceive itself as competing with Poland in the eastern neighbourhood (the Poles do not seem to share this sentiment, see, for example, Sirutavičius 2001; Korzeniewska-Wolek 2001). t he idea about l ithuania as a regional centre can also be treated as a national interpretation of the "normative power Europe" narrative (see Miniotaitė 2006: 5).

e stonia's en P rhetoric, although perhaps less leadership oriented, does not differ that much from the l ithuanian one. t he biggest difference lies in the greater emphasis on the c ommon Foreign and Security Policy (for example: "(…) reason why we want a stronger c ommon Foreign and Security Policy is e stonia's smallness. Just as the e U is as strong as its Member States, each Member State is exactly as strong as the e U as a whole" (Paet 2005)). o f the three, e stonia is most acutely aware of its smallness; this may help explain the fact why e stonia's approach seems to be less ambitious and more pragmatic, compared with l ithuania. e stonia also carefully cultivates an image of itself as a technologically advanced state.[3] Quite logically, this aspect was also noticeable in how the country defined the spheres of expertise and assistance: compared with the other two states, e stonia puts more emphasis on information and communication technologies and e-government development (for example o juland 2004a).

Wæver, among others, has noted that conceptions of e urope are constructed in a way that supports existing national identity discourses (Wæver 1998a). a s a result, we have a lot of localized understandings of e urope. t he meaning of e urope for every state must coincide with its own identity constructions. We could see here how the en P has provided opportunities for Baltic states to strengthen

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3   See, for example, "e-estonia", http://www.vm.ee/estonia/kat_175/pea_175/1163.html (accessed 10 February 2008).

their e uropean identity through emphasizing and celebrating their own narratives of self. Similarly, the differences in the Baltic states' neighbourhood policy conceptualizations demonstrate the continuity in how they construct their foreign policy in general and how they usually stress their differences from one another: Estonia as the smallest and the most advanced one, Latvia as constantly finding itself in between, l ithuania, owing to its different historical experience, as having more capabilities and, therefore, a right to be more ambitious and assertive.

h ence, the analysis of the neighbourhood policy of Baltic states shows that by taking a proactive role towards the neighbourhood, the Baltic states are trying to become more e uropean and transcend their own, still strongly felt, status as semi-insiders. t wo narratives have been created and reinforced since the restoration of independence: one is that of belonging to the West, while the second is the narrative of the dangerous and threatening other in the e ast (cf. Miniotaite 2003). Membership in the e U moved the focus of Baltic states' foreign policy elsewhere. t he neighbour, in an adapted Baltic version of the en P, became the object through which the small Baltic states can demonstrate their "realness" to the world, to show that they can matter. t he neighbourhood has become a space for self-expression, a land of opportunities that the Baltic states can venture into to bolster their own sense of importance and relevance.

Conclusions

t his chapter demonstrated how the e uropean n eighbourhood Policy allows the Baltic states to construct their narrative of the self for the outside world and for themselves. t he practices of identity creation through policy towards the eastern neighbours are performed under the conditions of manoeuvring between the bigger and more powerful neighbourhood discourses of the e U and r ussia. In formulating its neighbourhood policy, the EU finds itself caught between asserting its normative characteristics and acting as a traditional power, between being open and defining and guarding its borders in order to "put the inside in order". Russia also needs "to put in order" its identification processes, but its territorial conceptualizations at the moment make it impossible to share its neighbourhood, making the state very sensitive to any efforts (by the e U or others) to come closer to its loosely imagined territory. t he manoeuvring of the Baltic states under this tension between the two dominating discourses demonstrates how territorial identification processes and the need to make sense of the space around oneself are reflected in policies and actions towards the closest others.

t he en P adaptation by the Baltic states enthusiastically promotes and supports the normative e U discourse and, in doing so, is designed to solve the three countries' own problems. t hrough the en P the Baltic states present themselves as true e uropean states that, despite their small size and lack of muscle, manage to provide tangible input into "making the e U work". t he Baltic states have had for quite a while the desire to be accepted as important e uropean countries. t hus,

the en P for the Baltic states becomes the continuation of the enlargement process, which served two important goals: that of adding a e uropean layer to the national identities, thus strengthening and confirming their civilizational belonging, and that of drawing a definite line between themselves and the still dangerous other – r ussia – and eradicating as much as possible the feeling of insecurity living next to it.

Besides, these three states use the en P also to show to the new neighbours and also Russia how authoritative, influential and responsible, and, hence, more powerful they have become. By constructing an asymmetric relationship with their eastern partners they assert their superiority and importance despite their smallness. c onsequently, the en P has also come to signify the message that r ussia should look at the Baltic states as part of something bigger, more influential and stronger.

t hus the neighbourhood policies of the Baltic states not only reconstruct their identities, but also allow them to work towards their ultimate goal of moving away from e urope's edge and becoming something that does not belong or adhere to r ussian constructions and conceptualizations of the neighbourhood and of the world – thus finally and truly belonging to Europe.

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In and o ut of e urope: Identity Politics in r ussian-e uropean r elations[1]

Sergei Prozorov

Introduction

t his chapter seeks to reconstitute the narrative structure of the contemporary r ussian discourse on e U-r ussian relations and address the constitution of r ussia's "e uropean identity" in this discourse. In contrast to the enthusiasm about the e U-r ussian "strategic partnership" among r ussian politicians and analysts during the 1990s, the present state of e U-r ussian relations is widely perceived as a conflictual impasse, marked by an increasing mutual alienation of the two parties. While on the official level the mutual affirmation of strategic partnership, initiated in the 1995 Partnership and c ooperation a greement, continues to this day, currently specified in the project of four EU-Russian "common spaces" (see Prozorov 2006: c hapter 1), the meaning and substance of this partnership is increasingly put in question. a number of analysts have argued that rather than develop in a linear progressive manner, e U-r ussian relations have deteriorated since the late 1990s and that their condition during the second term of the Putin presidency may be considered "chronically critical" (t renin 2005; Voronov 2005). a ccording to Sergei Sokolov (2007), the twentieth e U-r ussia Summit in Portugal in o ctober 2007 demonstrated an extreme degree of alienation between the two parties, which precludes the formation of a meaningful agenda of cooperation and downgrades e U-r ussian interaction to the recycling of vacuous declarations, insofar as neither of the parties wishes to abandon the rhetoric of partnership and recognize the impasse in e U-r ussian relations. In Sokolov's argument, the key conclusion drawn from this summit by both the practitioners and the analysts of e U-r ussian relations is the need to decrease the frequency of such summits in the future so as to avoid a disgraceful biannual demonstration of the ineffectiveness of "strategic partnership". Similarly, Boris Mezhuev (2007) argues that we may presently observe the collapse of all "pan-e uropean" institutions, in which r ussia previously participated (o Sce , the c ouncil of e urope, the c Fe t reaty, and so on), while r ussia's relations with the e U are marked by the failure of the two parties

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to agree on almost anything whatsoever. While such pessimistic diagnoses of e U-r ussian relations have recently become ever more pronounced, the vacuity of the partnership and the prevalence of conflict issues in EU-Russian relations is not at all a new phenomenon. a s Sokolov notes, "for the last four years at least the r ussian Federation and the e U have been unable and even unwilling to formulate the long-term goal(s) of their interaction" (Sokolov 2007). While the goals of cooperation have remained undefined or abstract, recent years have seen the proliferation of conflict issues, which further exacerbate the possibility of meaningful EU-Russian cooperation. We need only recall a series of conflict occurrences between Russia and the e U since 1999 to demonstrate that the "strategic partnership" between the two parties is marred by a number of substantive political divergences: k osovo, c hechnya, Putin's federal reforms, the y ukos case, "colour revolutions" in post-Soviet states, energy security, the persecution of political opposition in r ussia, and so on. Yet, the focus of this chapter is not on individual conflict issues but rather on the more general narrative structure of the conflict discourse, in which these and other issues are articulated. In our analysis of this discourse, we shall attempt to account for its immanent contradictions that, contrary to first impressions, do not indicate defects or inconsistencies in policy design but rather point to the fundamentally problematic status of the figure of Europe in Russian identity politics.

According to a number of empirical studies, conflict in EU-Russian relations revolves around two opposite themes: the r ussian problematization of its exclusion from e urope in the e U's administrative practices and the reassertion by r ussia of its sovereign subjectivity through a policy of "self-exclusion" from the e uropean political and normative space (see for example a nders 2003; Bordachev 2003; k aveshnikov and Potemkina 2003; k hudoley 2003; Potemkina 2003; Prozorov 2005a, 2006; Trenin 2004). Moreover, both of these conflictual dispositions are articulated both on the level of concrete technical policy issues and on the more general level of "identity conflict", in which antagonism is no longer linked to particular actions of either of the parties but is rather recast as a matter of existential alterity (Stetter et al. 2006). In this chapter, we shall proceed from this point of departure in a systematic analysis of the narratives of exclusion and self-exclusion in the r ussian political discourse concerning e U-r ussian relations. We shall analyse the formation and functioning of these narratives across the r ussian political spectrum and interpret the current impasse in e U-r ussian relations in terms of the confinement of the policies of the two parties towards each other within the paradoxical discursive structure, constituted by these narratives.

t he narrative of r ussia's exclusion from e urope descends from the technical issue of the expansion of the strict visa regime for r ussians in the course of e U enlargement, which both complicates the existing e U-r ussian cooperative arrangements, particularly on the local and regional levels and contradicts both parties' declared ambitions of ever-greater and ever-deeper integration (Fairlie and Sergounin 2001; k hudoley 2003; Potemkina 2003; Prozorov 2006: c hapter 2). This issue was originally articulated in the context of the intensification of the

visa regime for r ussian travellers to central and eastern e uropean countries in the late 1990s, one of the conditions for their prospective e U membership. t he extension of the Schengen regime in the enlarged e U has entailed the imposition of a visa regime that far exceeds in its stringency the bilateral visa practices that existed between r ussia and, for example, Finland, Poland, c yprus or l ithuania (k hudoley 2003). In the unfavourable context, marked by r ussia's negative response to the na t o k osovo operation in spring 1999 and the e U's harsh criticism of r ussia's military campaign in c hechnya in autumn 1999, the visa issue acquired and presently retains an intensity that transcends its original locus of articulation. Instead, this problematic has developed in the r ussian political and academic discourse into an identity conflict on Russia's thoroughgoing exclusion from e urope in the political, if not cultural, sense, whereby r ussia becomes the only "non-e uropean" e uropean country (t renin 2004). We thereby observe the spillover of a conflict issue, originally articulated in a narrow discursive arena of visa policies, into a wider space of the discourses of identity and difference, that ultimately connects with the century-old debates on r ussia's relation to "e uropean civilization" (n eumann 1996a). a s our analysis will demonstrate, this problematization of exclusion from e urope characterizes the entire spectrum of political discourse in r ussia, from the liberal minority, which posits as axiomatic r ussia's belonging to "e uropean civilization" to the conservative, "left-patriotic" forces, who find in European practices the vindication of their principled opposition to r ussia's integrationist orientation. a lthough the reasoning behind this problematization and the proposed solutions vary considerably across the political spectrum, "exclusion from Europe" has become a privileged signifier in the r ussian discourse on relations with e urope.

The second conflictual disposition between Russia and the EU relates to the perception of r ussia's passive or subordinate status in cooperative arrangements with the e U. t he problematization of e U-r ussian interaction as an asymmetric and hierarchical "subject-object relationship" has resulted in demands to reconstitute the e U-r ussian "strategic partnership" on the basis of the principles of intersubjectivity and reciprocity (k aveshnikov and Potemkina 2003). t he lack of recognition of r ussia as a legitimate political subject with its own interests that need not necessarily coincide with those of the e U brings forth a narrative of self-exclusion from European integration, grounded in the renewed reaffirmation of sovereignty that forms the more general background of the reconstitution of r ussian politics during the Putin presidency (see Prozorov 2006: c hapters 3, 6). Similar to the narrative of exclusion, this conflictual disposition operates across the r ussian political spectrum, although, as addressed below, the modalities of self-exclusion, promoted by liberal and conservative discourses, remain significantly different.

t he following two sections address the narratives of exclusion and self-exclusion in the conflict discourse on EU-Russian relations, tracing their functioning in both liberal and conservative political orientations. While this analysis is certainly not exhaustive of either the issues raised in this discourse or the positions of its

practitioners, our intention is merely to elucidate the basic narrative structure of the conflict discourse and its operation across the political spectrum (see Prozorov 2006 for a detailed analysis of a wider range of EU-Russian conflicts). We shall therefore bracket off from the analysis the mainstream foreign policy rhetoric and focus on the extremes of the political spectrum, that is, the liberal and conservative discourses that at first glance appear to be diametrically opposed in their construction of the figure of Europe. In contrast to this conventional understanding, we shall demonstrate that it is impossible to equate the liberal/ conservative political divide with the borderline between pro- and anti-e uropean sentiments. Instead, we shall propose that the entire r ussian political discourse follows the same logic in its construction of the figure of Europe, whereby the problematizations of exclusion generate a reassertion of sovereignty and hence a turn towards self-exclusion, which in turn does nothing but vindicate the original exclusive gesture on the part of the EU. The detailed analysis of these conflict narratives will also provide the necessary background for the understanding of the manifest shift of the r ussian foreign policy mainstream from the rhetoric of integration to the reassertion of sovereignty during Putin's second term – a shift, which is conditioned by the discursive transformations in identity politics that lie outside the domain of foreign policy in the strict sense of the term. In the concluding section, we shall locate the two conflict narratives in the wider context of contemporary debates on the nature and the future of e uropean integration and probe the possibilities of going beyond the narrow range of foreign policy options that they prescribe.

A European Country Outside Europe: Problematizing the "Schengen Curtain"

Out of the United Europe: The Liberal Criticism of Russia's Exclusion

l et us begin with addressing the problematization of the e U's exclusive orientation toward r ussia in the discourse of the most avowedly "pro-e uropean" actor in today's r ussian political and expert community. t he "r ussia in the United e urope" c ommittee (r Ue) is headed by Vladimir r yzhkov, an independent liberal member of the r ussian d uma during 1999–2007, and unites politicians, businessmen and analysts of a broadly liberal persuasion, both supporters and opponents of the Putin presidency. Starting from 2001, the c ommittee has cast itself as the vanguard of the "e uropean movement" in r ussia, working towards ever-closer integration between r ussia and the e U. e xplicitly pro-e uropean and delimiting itself from the mainstream of r ussian politics, r Ue 's publications nonetheless critically address the key issues in EU-Russian relations that have been the object of conflict discourses, for example Wt o negotiations, k aliningrad, the n orthern d imension and the "e nergy d ialogue". In the 2002 conference report *Schengen: The New Barrier Between Europe and Russia* r yzhkov poses the problem of the Schengen visa regime as central for e U-r ussian relations in the light of e U enlargement

and questions the readiness of the e U to adequately respond to r ussia's repeated proposals to establish a visa-free regime between r ussia and the e U (r yzhkov 2003: 2). In a ugust 2002, President Putin launched a proposal for the reciprocal abolition of visa regimes between r ussia and the e U, partly as an attempt at a blanket resolution of the specific problem of Kaliningrad o blast, which has become a r ussian exclave within the enlarged e U. t he visa problem is of course particularly acute for k aliningrad, as the visa threshold both complicates the oblast's socioeconomic relations with the rest of r ussia and jeopardizes the cross-border cooperation arrangements between the region and its neighbours in Poland and l ithuania. h owever, Putin's 2002 proposal explicitly rejected the logic of treating k aliningrad as a "special case" and rather posited the goal of creating a common space of free movement of people between r ussia and the e U. t his proposal was supported across the entire r ussian political spectrum, including the opposition parties. a ccording to g rigory y avlinsky, the leader of the left-liberal opposition party y abloko, "r ussians are e uropeans too", hence any restriction of their right to travel freely in e urope is an unwarranted exclusionary gesture, which jeopardizes the entire policy of intensifying e U-r ussian cooperation (y avlinsky 2003).

t he r Ue report demonstrates clearly the incompatibility of the positions of the e U participants in the discussion and the most "pro-e uropean" representatives of the r ussian political elite. Similarly to r yzhkov, the a cademic d irector of r Ue, n adezhda a rbatova, claims that "neither economic nor political cooperation is capable of effecting such revolutionary change in popular consciousness that a visa free regime could" (a rbatova 2003: 3). o n the contrary, Swedish a mbassador h irdmann's presentation seeks to allay the fears of the r ussian counterparts concerning the exclusion of r ussia through visa practices, which he views as neither political nor even technical but "psychological": "Some people are nostalgic about the past, while others perhaps perceive that they are being unjustly suspected of something or being viewed as 'second-rate' people, which is of course not the case. Most people get their visas with few problems, quickly and at a reasonable expense" (h irdmann 2003: 12).

Insofar as any relaxation of the visa regime is deemed possible by the e U representatives, it is made conditional upon a number of technical solutions that Moscow must implement prior to beginning any negotiations on the matter: the conclusion of the readmission treaty with the e U, the thoroughgoing reform of the passport system, the wide-ranging changes in the management of r ussia's Southern borders (h irdmann 2003: 14–15). o n the contrary, Vladimir l ukin, a prominent member of the left-liberal y abloko party and presently the r ussian o mbudsman for h uman r ights, argues that the question is purely political and is therefore bound to have serious political repercussions for e U-r ussian relations. a ccording to l ukin, while in the Soviet period travel to e urope was restricted by the Soviet authorities, this function is presently transferred to the EU officials. In the following statement, l ukin is scathing about both the e uropean insensitivity to r ussian concerns about exclusion and the failure of r ussian decision-makers

to move beyond fancy talk on "strategic partnership" towards the resolution of concrete problems:

> I am baffled by the fact that for years we have had an escalation of fancy words and projects on full integration, strengthening unity and creating the common economic space. y et, when it is a question of solving a concrete problem, it is impossible to reach a compromise with the e uropean bureaucracy on any question whatsoever. It is a matter of principle. t he problem is that now we are invited to abolish the free movement of our citizens within our own country, from r ussia to r ussia. […] d emocratic parties in r ussia, one of which I am representing here, will take the toughest position on this question (l ukin 2003: 36).

t his tough position is reiterated in the concluding statement of Vladimir r yzhkov, which succinctly sums up the central status of the Schengen issue for e U-r ussian relations as perceived by the most liberal and pro-e uropean political forces in Russia: "I am convinced that this harshness is justified: we can go on making plans and talk of cooperation but there are visa problems that hit hard the millions of r ussians and e U citizens. *Nothing jeopardises our relations as much as the visa problem*. t herefore we shall be most decisive in exerting serious political influence on bureaucrats both in Brussels and Moscow" (Ryzhkov 2003: 45; emphasis added).

For its part, the r ussian foreign policy bureaucracy has repeatedly articulated a position that is fully in accordance with this conflict narrative. In the 2003 r Ue publication, then d eputy Minister of Foreign a ffairs and currently r ussia's representative to Brussels, Vladimir c hizhov has articulated the specific visa issue with the more general identity problematic at work in e U-r ussian discussions on the freedom of movement. c hizhov points out the correlation between the historical r ussian discourse on its belonging to the e uropean civilization with the e uropean discursive constructions of r ussia as either "instinctively aggressive" or possessing a "mysterious soul", yet always perceived as the "other", whether in the metaphysical or in the concrete, strategic and geopolitical sense. "I would say, with sincere regret, that the absolute majority of r ussians have got rid of such outdated stereotypes far quicker than their e uropean counterparts" (c hizhov 2003: 18). For c hizhov, the frequently reported problems in acquiring Schengen visas are by no means mere indicators of low efficiency but have a clear political grounding in the ongoing "othering" of r ussia in administrative practices:

> One knows all too well about the humiliating "interviews" at the consular offices of Schengen states, not to speak of the piles of documents that r ussians must present to prove their law-abiding status to be granted permission to make a visit to one of the Schengen states on a prepaid holiday package. c an someone give me an intelligent reason why someone with a prepaid package, i.e. a return ticket, paid accommodation, medical insurance, etc, must present proof of

> regular income? What is the motivation for income thresholds for the applicants,
> e.g. 10.000 roubles a month demanded by Belgium? (c hizhov 2003: 21)

t his brief discussion of the r Ue debates on the problematic of exclusion demonstrates the clear incompatibility of e U and r ussian subject positions, which is of particular significance insofar as it is the RUE Committee with its key figures, particularly Ryzhkov and Lukin, that self-consciously posits itself as the *vanguard* of the "e uropean movement" in r ussia. While the liberal position of r Ue articulates the technical issues of visa arrangements into an interpretive discourse on identity politics and exclusion, which conceives of the present visa threshold between r ussia and the e U in terms of unwarranted *humiliation*, the response of EU officials is confined to the narrow issue domain and is restricted to the discussion of plans to make the practices sustaining this threshold more efficient. In the narrative of exclusion, espoused by the Russian party, this of course amounts to nothing other than *more ef.cient humiliation*, adding insult to injury. It is this structural incompatibility that accounts for the increasingly critical stance of such figures as Lukin, who, being pessimistic about the very possibility of a common discursive platform between r ussia and the e U on the question of visas, issues a stinging accusation about the similarities between "the two Unions" that r ussia has had to deal with, the e uropean and the Soviet one (l ukin 2003: 35). t he consequence of this is the gradual alienation of r ussian liberals from the "e uropean project", which we shall discuss in greater detail in the next section.

 a s we shall see below, the problematization of the e U's exclusionary practices by r ussian liberals is by no means restricted to the concrete issue of visas but also relates to numerous instances of ideological divergence that primarily relate to the renewed appreciation by r ussian liberals of strong statehood and the principle of sovereignty, with which the e U's rhetoric of globalization and integration cannot but fail to resonate (see Prozorov 2005b, 2006: 107–111). n onetheless, the visa issue, having entered the sphere of "high politics" during the 2001–2003 debates on the problem of k aliningrad, assumes central importance in this general context of the perception of the exclusion of r ussia from the reconstruction of the international political order, functioning as the nodal point, around which disparate grievances with regard to the e U converge. From this perspective, the much-lauded e U-r ussian agreement on the facilitation of visa arrangements that entered into force in June 2007 can hardly be considered an adequate solution to the problem, precisely insofar as it merely provides a modest technical readjustment of what is increasingly a political issue with a strong symbolic connotation. t he agreement explicitly stipulates the eventual abolition of visas exclusively for holders of diplomatic passports, while the rest of the population is merely promised a reduction in visa fees and an ambiguous relaxation of requirements for multi-entry visas. r estricting the promise of visa-free travel to the narrow category of public servants, who never had notable visa problems in the first place, this "solution" sadly symbolizes the

vacuity of the e U-r ussian partnership, perpetuating the discourse of exclusion into the foreseeable future.

In the conflict discourse on the relations with the EU, the Schengen visa simultaneously figures as both a material object, a practical instrument of restricting the access of the other to one's political community, and a symbol of the manifold acts of "othering" r ussia. In this narrative, all concrete exclusionary practices of the e U serve to *materialize* the already perceived symbolic exclusion, while all ideological or value discord is in the final instance a *symbolic* equivalent of a visa threshold. Moreover, in the wider context of the identity conflict discourse, the statements of discord, related to this issue, are able to find multiple points of interface with a politically-opposed orientation, which also problematizes e uropean exclusion, albeit initially from a different angle. It is to this conservative narrative of exclusion that we now turn.

Liberation From the "European Myth": Left Conservatism and the Problem of "False Europe"

Since the early 1990s, the oppositional discourses of r ussian politics, both communist and national-patriotic, have been conventionally viewed as "anti-e uropean" both in the sense of endowing contemporary e urope with the attributes of the "hostile other" and in the sense of opposing the pro-e uropean policy course of the r ussian g overnment. a t the same time, e urope has remained a key object of discourse, albeit endowed with negative connotations and serving as the means of r ussia's *negative self-identification* (see for example Zyuganov 2004). While we shall discuss these patterns of negative self-identification in the following section that deals with the narrative of self-exclusion, this section will demonstrate that the identity conflict discourse on the European exclusion of Russia, practised by the liberal politicians and analysts, also characterizes the oppositional field. In the illustration of the operation of the narrative of exclusion in the oppositional discourse, we shall focus on the discursive grouping of "left conservatism", which may be considered the most ideologically coherent opposition to the Putin presidency (see Prozorov 2005b for a detailed introduction).

t he origins of left conservatism lie in the disillusionment of many critics of the y eltsin and subsequently the Putin presidency with the dominant style of oppositional politics, which since the mid-1990s has been exemplified by the c ommunist Party of the r ussian Federation (c Pr F), which was reconstituted in 1993 on the syncretic platform that combined nostalgic Soviet communism with nationalist and imperial sentiments. It is against the background of the weakening of the c Pr F during this decade and the correlate rise of the depoliticized "anti-ideological" stance of the Putin presidency that the left-conservative discourse was articulated in the 2003–2004 electoral cycle by the movement h omeland (*Rodina*), initially led by Sergei g laziev and d mitry r ogozin. In 2006, h omeland, Pensioner Party and l ife Party merged into the new political party Just r ussia (*Spravedlivaya Rossiya*) under the leadership of Sergei Mironov, the Speaker of

the c ouncil of the Federation. While this merger has resulted in a certain dilution of the specifically left-conservative themes in a wider "centre-left" agenda, this orientation remains one of the few ideological currents not to suffer a lasting eclipse in the "post-ideological" environment of the Putin presidency (see Prozorov 2007). The leading figures of the Homeland party have repeatedly proclaimed their orientation as a long-awaited alternative to the discredited binary opposition of "liberals vs. communists" (n arochnitskaya 2004a, 2004b; r ogozin 2004e). a s a consequence, the left-conservative oppositional discourse can no longer be contained within an *a priori* "anti-e uropean" (or anti-Western) label and requires a more balanced and nuanced investigation. Moreover, the key representatives of left conservatism, for example d mitry r ogozin (formerly special representative of the President in the 2002–2003 negotiations with the e U on k aliningrad and currently r ussia's envoy to na t o) or n atalia n arochnitskaya (a h omeland and Just r ussia MP and a prominent Ir scholar) have been among the most active participants of the debate on r ussian-e uropean relations since the early 1990s and have arguably contributed to its overall direction.

In his 2004 book *Reclaiming Russia*, r ogozin adopts an initially cooperative stance *vis-à-vis* e urope, despite also viewing e urope as a source of challenges and dangers for r ussia: "Besides the c IS, the e uropean dimension is our second priority in foreign policy, determined by deep historical traditions. a t the same time, in e urope we face a multitude of problems, from the attempts to undermine our territorial integrity in c hechnya and k aliningrad to the discrimination of r ussian exports and smear campaigns in the media" (r ogozin 2004e).

r ogozin's conception of e U-r ussian relations is characterized by the prioritization of statecraft and diplomacy over ideology and values. In contrast to Soviet-era diplomacy, of which r ogozin (2004a, 2004c) is highly critical, post-communist foreign policy is viewed in classical realist terms as the domain of intricate statecraft, divorced from ideological considerations and seeking to attain an advantageous balance of power. r ogozin labels this stance "national egoism": "In high politics everyone thinks of his own good" (r ogozin 2004b). o n the basis of this principle, r ogozin's position on k aliningrad is able to combine both a strong degree of flexibility and the assertion of Russia's sovereign integrity as an absolute principle: "The question must be resolved within the legal field of both r ussia and the e U politically, that is, by means of compromise. What we must never do is humiliate each other. […] We will work constructively [with the e U] but there are limits to compromise, which we shall not overstep. […] t here is room for flexibility, but flexibility is not the same as demonstrating spinelessness" (r ogozin 2004f).

Within the "left-conservative" discourse, the problematization of exclusion targets the increasingly common equation of the historico-cultural concept of e urope with the normative and administrative apparatus of the e U, an equation which excludes Russia by definition as the only "non-European" European country (cf. Prozorov 2006: 183). t he discourse of the left-conservative opposition is therefore directed towards "liberation from myths" (n arochnitskaya 2004b),

unravelling the hypocrisies at work in the e U's posture as a normative hegemon in today's e urope, having the "last word" on the concept and practices of democracy, pluralism, human rights, and so on. t his criticism focuses particularly on the e U's nonchalant position towards the problems of r ussian minorities in the Baltic states, whose discrimination towards ethnic r ussians did not pose an obstacle to their e U membership:

> In l atvia r ussians are deprived of the right to study their own culture and language and the President of l atvia says that r ussians must become "l atvians of r ussian origin". c an you imagine a r ussian president saying that, say, t atars must become "r ussians of t atar origin"? Is this democracy? t his is a disgrace to e urope and the e U! (n arochnitskaya 2004a).

t he e U is problematized as both contributing to the literal exclusion of r ussians from democratic politics within an e U member state and excluding r ussia from the very discourse on democracy by presenting itself as having the last word on the subject. In the particular case of the Baltic states, the e U enlargement is perceived as undermining the e U's own normative hegemony, revealing the failure of the enlarged e U to conform to the standards that it imposes on others. h owever, it is important to note that such revelations of hypocrisy do not lead to the call for r ussia to reject these standards altogether and adopt a bluntly "anti-Western" policy course. Instead, n arochnitskaya dismisses the very label "anti-Westernism", turning the tables on the e U, which she considers increasingly r ussophobic:

> We are not anti-Westernists. It is the West that denies r ussia, and this denial is followed by our libertarians so that they can gain recognition in the West. t he great Westernism [the 19th century philosophical trend] of the past was never an antithesis to r ussian consciousness but one of its components. t he dilemma of "r ussia and e urope" does not haunt r ussia and the r ussians; on the contrary, it haunts e urope, which, having built its "paradise on e arth", remains apprehensive of our magnitude and our capacity to withstand all challenges (n arochnitskaya 2004b).

For all its excessive pathos, this citation provides us with a crucial insight into the idiosyncratic operation of the figure of Europe in the left-conservative narrative of exclusion. a s opposed to the conventional and overused notion of r ussia plagued by the question of its "e uropean identity" (which, as we shall see in the next section, is presently being challenged precisely by left-conservatives), n arochnitskaya advances the opposite argument: it is rather e urope that is challenged with the "r ussian question", being aware of r ussia's cultural or "civilizational" *commonality* but unable to accommodate r ussia's political *difference*. r ussia is in many ways identical to e urope, but *not quite* identical, and it is this minor, yet noticeable gap that makes full r ussian-e uropean convergence impossible and is therefore far more irritating and dangerous to e urope than r ussia's complete and

categorical "non-e uropeanness" would be. In this understanding, the e uropean exclusion of r ussia is a resolute, if heavy-handed, move of univocally settling the problematic question of r ussia's relation to e urope.

t he strategy of left-conservatism is to resist this facile strategy of univocal exclusion by reasserting the *cultural identity* between r ussia and e urope and at the same time playing down the existing *political divergence* as something that e urope's own liberalism should teach it to respect or at least tolerate: "for us, the West is the historical e urope with its intellectual, cultural and spiritual heritage" (r ogozin 2004e). t his historico-cultural "e uropean identity" should in turn provide sufficient ground for the inclusion of Russia within European integrative processes without any discrimination towards its government or citizens in punishment for the country's abandonment of the "infantile thinking of g orbachev and Sakharov" (n arochnitskaya 2004a). t he criteria, allegedly postulated by the e U for r ussia's further inclusion, are deemed politically unacceptable as they confuse cultural identity and political difference in a set of demands that can only be achieved at the cost of the effacement of r ussia's political subjectivity: "t he West does not need a country that is strong, equal to it and, furthermore, grounded in its own values; such a country is an objective obstacle to the global administration of the world. t he West demands of us to refuse our own selves and only then promises to reward us with a passing grade on the 'civilisation test'" (n arochnitskaya 2004a).

This brief discussion of the left-conservative conflict discourse demonstrates that this approach does not merely problematize exclusion *per se*, but rather focuses on the illegitimacy of the threshold that r ussia is required to pass to be included, that is, on what r ussia is to become if it is to be included. In Mezhuev's (2007) argument, r ussia and the e U "cling to the old format of relations, whereby r ussia is thought of as an eternal failing student that permanently and unsuccessfully takes exams to advance to the 10th grade. y et, due to its presence in the e uropean integrative process in the manner of a member of some hypothetical 'Wider e urope', r ussia unwittingly provokes this type of attitude on behalf of e urope." It is the very desire of r ussia to maintain its e uropeanness despite its exclusion by the e U that ultimately enables and reinvigorates these very practices of exclusion, which are paradoxically legitimized by r ussia's own unwavering commitment to the rhetoric of integration. t hus, left-conservatism goes one step beyond the liberal problematization of unwarranted exclusion to warn against the uncritically positive reception of any inclusive gesture whatsoever, emphasizing that what is at stake is not *inclusion at any cost* but precisely the *cost of inclusion*. In the terms of h ardt and n egri (2004: 164–167), the left-conservative discourse is critical of the form of "hierarchical inclusion" that "includes" r ussia in the subordinated and disadvantageous modality.

t he concept of hierarchical inclusion should attune us to the problematic nature of the presently widespread uncritical approach to inclusion and integration as *a priori* better alternatives to "exclusion" and "isolation". t he facile valourization of inclusion has been addressed in a number of critical approaches in political philosophy, from g iorgio a gamben's (1998) reconstruction of the logic of

sovereignty in terms of "inclusive exclusion" that abandons the subject to sovereign violence to Foucauldian studies of governmentality, which emphasize that inclusion and integration increasingly function as mechanisms for the extension of power relations into the social domain (d ean 1999; Foucault 1991). In a previous study we have analysed the mechanisms of hierarchical inclusion in the e U technical assistance practices in r ussia, whereby the "included" local counterparts in e U t acis projects are indoctrinated into particular governmental rationalities and subsequently reconstituted as their "autonomous" practitioners (Prozorov 2004). In this manner, it is precisely the integrationist or inclusive stance that leads to the constitution of strict discursive hierarchies and ritualistic discursive practices, which in turn, as is the case with left-conservatism, tempts one to rethink the unconditional value of inclusion.

It is precisely the problematization of hierarchical inclusion that differentiates the left-conservative conflict discourse from the more liberal strands discussed above. a lthough the unfair or unjust nature of the "thresholds" required for example for a visa-free regime is frequently noted in the discourse of the liberal "e uropean movement", these occasions do not exceed the status of isolated episodes and have no consequence for the overall narrative, which constitutes the demand for greater, fairer or more efficient integrationist policy. In contrast, within the left-conservative discourse, the notion of hierarchical inclusion plays a crucial role in rupturing the integrationist narrative, which leads to the reassertion of sovereignty that we shall discuss in the next section in terms of r ussia's "self-exclusion" from e urope. t his rupture takes concrete shape in the replay of the dualism that is foundational for the very debate on r ussia's "e uropean identity" – the *distinction between "true" and "false" Europe*, which, according to Iver Neumann (1996a), has been a permanent fixture of Russia's historical discourse on its relation to e urope. h istorically, the question of being inside or outside of Europe (defining the positions of respectively "Westernizers" and "Slavophiles") is complicated by the fragmentation of the figure of Europe itself into a "true" e urope (variably conceived as conservative, liberal or socialist) and a "false" Europe, the object of negative identification of various Russian discourses (see Morozov 2003b). In the case of r ussian left-conservatism, contemporary e urope, viewed interchangeably as "liberal" or "socialist", is taken to have betrayed its own cultural tradition, which explains its denial of r ussia's more "authentic" belonging to e urope. t he following statement by r ogozin (2004d: 3) illustrates most starkly the operation of this logic: "r ussia is indeed the *true Europe*, without the predominance of gays, without marriages between pederasts, without punk pseudo-culture, without lackeying for a merica. We are the true e uropeans, as we have preserved ourselves, *proving our Europeanness* in wars with both the crusaders and the Mongols" (emphasis added).

t his statement is an extreme demonstration of the logic at work in the move from the problematization of exclusion to the valorization of self-exclusion: departing from an axiomatic assumption of r ussia's e uropeanness, one perceives concrete European exclusionary practices as unjustified humiliation, which in turn leads one into a cognitive dissonance, whereby the "we" of e urope is necessarily

fractured into the excluded us and the excluding them. t his dissonance is in turn resolved by the fracture of the image of e urope itself into the true and false components, the line of the fracture becoming a precise marker of difference and a border of self-exclusion.

In relation to the e U, this stance acquires concrete shape in the renunciation of the goal of e U membership even in the long-term perspective and the emphasis on the maintenance of that very *difference* which makes r ussia "true-e uropean". In n arochnitskaya's terms, this means to "calmly and confidently go on being Russian" (n arochnitskaya 2004a). In r ogozin's view (2004e), "We do not need to rush to the e U, as if only membership in this organisation delimits e uropeans from non-e uropeans." In the next section, we shall address the ways in which this assertive self-exclusion from Europe, defined in EU terms, is articulated into identity conflict discourse and operates across the entire r ussian political spectrum.

Against Interactional Asymmetry: Self-exclusion and the Fate of European Identity

"Liberal Empire": Self-Exclusion and the Strategy of Redoubling of Europe

At first glance, the adoption by liberal political forces of the narrative of self-exclusion from e urope may appear paradoxical and self-defeating, insofar as the assumption of r ussia's "e uropean identity" has been axiomatic for r ussian liberalism and the disappearance of this fetishized figure from the discourse creates an uncomfortable lacuna in place of the object of identification. At the same time, a number of analysts of liberal persuasion, as well as the politicians on the centre-right, have since the late 1990s voiced strong scepticism about the ultimate goals of r ussia's cooperation with the e U and urged to put the question of potential e U membership aside once and for all (see Baunov 2003a, 2003b; l eontiev et al. 2003; Privalov 2003). t he "inclusive" orientation, characteristic of the liberal discourse of the 1990s, is increasingly found wanting by commentators and politicians, who point to the invariably asymmetric and hierarchical nature of the inclusionary policies of the e U, which would turn any further integration of r ussia into the e uropean institutional structures an unsavoury project of apprenticeship.

a ccording to a lexander Baunov, the strategy of seeking e U accession is ultimately self-defeating for r ussia, as it would subject r ussian policy-making to the excessive bureaucratic regulations and the contestable norms of "good governance", which, paradoxically at first glance, would be counterproductive for the process of (neo)liberal economic reforms that are deemed to be the desirable policy course for r ussia. What is particularly interesting is the comparison that a liberal critic like Baunov draws between the e U and the Soviet Union:

> It would be a question of entering a closed corporation of the privileged, somewhat reminiscent of the c entral c ommittee in the Soviet period. a ccording to the

rules of this genre, prior to any hypothetical accession r ussia will have to face a long, difficult and indefinite period of apprenticeship. […] What is undoubtable is that during this period the e uropeans would try to get all possible concessions, while our temporary weakness and the unequal status of the candidate permit it (Baunov 2003a).

Moreover, Baunov notes that as a potentially "last candidate state" to enter the e U, r ussia would need to adopt the entire volume of *acquis communitaire*, devised entirely without its participation. In short, Baunov draws a direct linkage between the narratives of e uropean exclusion and r ussia's self-exclusion and concludes that "the unwillingness of the e uropean bureaucrats to make even a minimal step towards our possible accession must be viewed as a blessing that liberates us from a poignant and fruitless temptation" (Baunov 2003a).

Instead, Baunov suggests an ambitious upgrading of the present Partnership and c ooperation a greement with a view to the establishment of a relationship of association, which would create the sought "common spaces" between r ussia and the e U without compromising r ussia's sovereignty. a t the same time, the author recognizes that symmetry is problematic between such incomparable entities as the e U and the r ussian Federation and argues, in a manner formerly tabooed in the liberal discourse, that the only possibility for r ussia to establish an equal intersubjective relationship with e urope is by becoming the leading actor and the guarantor of order in the post-Soviet space, which remains outside the e U and is not liable to e U intervention and control:

In the great e urasian space, r ussia is the only state that can realistically guarantee the development of liberal-democratic order in the Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, the states of c entral a sia and the c aucasus that are unreachable for the great e uropean powers or the e U as a whole. […] Paradoxically, the real, rather than formal integration of r ussia into e urope will only be assisted, and not hampered, by strong statehood, a strong army, a rising population, a vast yet well-governed territory. a ll of this is true on the condition that we speak with our e uropean and non-e uropean neighbours (as well as with each other) in the language of Western liberalism. t his is the easiest and the most painless way to eliminate obstacles and prejudices on our way to e urope and arrive at the common market, common security and the freedom of movement – all that is presently desired in r ussia (Baunov 2003b).

This fragment illustrates a highly significant shift of the liberal discourse from the valourization of e uropean integration at any price towards the increasing realization that the price may well be too high and could exceed the benefits of integration. t he problematization of hierarchical inclusion entails the abandonment of the axiomatic status of integration and the search for an arrangement that would secure symmetric intersubjectivity in e U-r ussian relations. n otably, in Baunov's analysis self-exclusion is advocated as a response to the purely *formal* problem

of interactional asymmetry, rather than a *substantive* issue of normative or policy divergence: "the language of Western liberalism" remains the common ground for cooperation, but speaking this language no longer requires a subordinate subject-position. Unlike left-conservatives like r ogozin, whose vision of "true e urope" would appear obnoxious to the e uropean political mainstream, Baunov's rhetorical repertoire is uncannily close to the e U's own vision of r ussia's desirable future, which makes all the more interesting the dissociation that he performs on the basis of this proximity.

Baunov's strategy of entering e urope as a hegemonic power in the post-Soviet space has been influential, if ultimately unsuccessful, in the election campaign of the liberal coalition Union of r ight Forces (Ur F) in the 2003 parliamentary elections. t his theme is particularly associated with a natoly c hubais, a veteran liberal politician who returned to the forefront of liberal politics during the Ur F's election campaign. a gainst the avowedly pro-e uropean disposition of other Ur F leaders (Boris Nemtsov and Irina Khakamada), reflected in the campaign slogan "d o you want to live like they do in e urope?", c hubais advanced a vision for r ussian liberalism that is more ambitious and self-assured than a second-hand reiteration of e uropean doctrines. c hubais's programmatic article "r ussia's Mission in the 21st c entury" (2003) proceeds from the assumption that liberal economic and political doctrines are already sufficiently internalized in the r ussian political discourse and the new task of the liberal forces must consist in the abandonment of the economy-centric and technocratic tone, usually associated with r ussian liberalism, and greater participation in the debates on the r ussian "national idea" or "mission", from which the liberals used to recoil in distaste. "o ur country has always been disposed towards the tasks of cosmic – both literally and figuratively – significance. Russia is a country with its own destiny and undoubtedly with its own historical mission" (c hubais 2003). In contrast to the standard tropes of r ussian liberalism, this mission clearly does not consist in the integration "with the West" or "into e urope", particularly through joining the e U, which was presented as the telos of liberal reforms in the 1999 campaign of the Ur F: "t he long-suffering question of r ussia's entry into the leading political and military structures of e urope – the e U and na t o – is resolved unambiguously: we must not enter either the EU or NATO. We simply won't "fit" there, either politically or geographically" (c hubais 2003).

t he alternative, proposed by c hubais, is the controversial concept of a "liberal empire", which proceeds from the explicit assumption of r ussia's "natural leadership" in the post-Soviet space:

> It is time to clearly tell it like it is. r ussia is the only and unique leader in the space of the c IS, both in the volume of its economy and the quality of life of its citizens. From this fact follows our task: r ussia can and must enhance and strengthen its leading positions in this part of the world. […] t he ideology of r ussia for the long term perspective must be liberal imperialism. […] t his is the

task of the scale that would permit our people to finally overcome the spiritual crisis, will truly unite and mobilise them (c hubais 2003).

Since the "empire" in question is, in line with Baunov's theses, to be built on squarely liberal principles, we may refer to this strategy of self-exclusion in terms of *redoubling* of e uropean practices. r ussian liberals, initially eager to pursue further integration with the e U but disappointed in the modalities of hierarchical inclusion offered to Russia, conjure up a figure of Europe of their own. This figure is also a partially "e uropean" Union, in which r ussia plays the leading role rather than acts as an apprentice. a s a leader of the post-Soviet "liberal empire" it is able to act as an equal partner of the e U and at the same time no longer has any need to ask for its inclusion in the e uropean institutional and normative space. h owever problematic in practice in the aftermath of "colour revolutions" in post-Soviet states, in which invocations of liberal maxims were accompanied by strongly anti-r ussian sentiments and demonstrations of allegiance to a rather more established liberal empire, that is, the USa , this discursive move must be appreciated as an attempt at resolving the glaring contradiction in the liberal discourse between an axiomatic "pro-e uropeanness" and a critical stance towards the e U in concrete policy settings. a strategy of redoubling permits r ussian liberals to dissociate their continuing valourization of the principles of liberal political philosophy from the fetishization of the place of their origin. In terms of the problematic, introduced in the previous section, it permits r ussia to legitimately present itself as a *European country outside of the EU*. While the left-conservative narrative of exclusion demanded r ussia's inclusion into e uropean structures, irrespectively of continuing and intensifying political differences, the liberal narrative of self-exclusion performs the reverse gesture of advocating institutional difference, notwithstanding the underlying political identity. While in the former case the common "e uropean identity" was paradoxically advocated on the basis of political difference, in the latter case, a no less paradoxical gesture of asserting structural and institutional difference on the basis of an underlying identity of "liberal values" is observed.

d espite the electoral failure of the Ur F in 2003 and its particularly disgraceful defeat in 2007, the "liberal-imperialist" blueprint is highly significant as an indicator of the desire of the proponents of r ussian liberalism to go beyond the limits of a mimetic project that depends on external recognition. c hubais's vision, which seeks to articulate the relative success of liberal reforms with the elusive search for a "national idea", serves as a precursor to the contemporary r ussian "liberal conservatism", which seeks to articulate a synthesis of the universal "idea of freedom" and the patriotic "idea of r ussia" – a task that may be traced back to President Putin's (1999) first major policy statement "Russia at the Millennium" (see also, l eontiev et al. 2003; Privalov 2003; Ulykaev 1999). a widely discussed version of such a synthesis, which has entered the official discourse of the ruling United r ussia party, is the concept of "sovereign democracy", which was originally launched by Vladislav Surkov, the d eputy c hair of the Presidential a dministration,

and forms the centrepiece of a lexei c hadaev's book-length treatment of "Putin's ideology" (2006). a s has been noted by critics inside and outside r ussia (see a nderson 2007; Magun 2006), the notion of "sovereign democracy" ultimately comes down to the first term devouring the semantic content of the second, so that "democracy" begins to denote whatever the sovereign wants it to. Moreover, taking into consideration the conventional definition of democracy since Rousseau as "popular sovereignty", the term "sovereign democracy" either becomes a classic case of a pleonasm or implies the expropriation of the sovereignty of the people by another sovereign figure (see Prozorov 2007). Whatever its conceptual deficiencies, the discourse of sovereign democracy resonates perfectly with the self-exclusive orientation of r ussia with respect to e urope, insofar as it allows to dismiss all e uropean criticism of the anti-democratic tendencies of the present regime while retaining "democracy" as a mode of the regime's self-identification. Just as the figure of Europe is redoubled in the visions of Baunov and Chubais, the notion of democracy receives its r ussian double with the help of the "sovereign" qualifier.

t he wilful dissociation of Surkov, c hadaev and other adherents of Putinism from the liberalism of the 1990s and their self-conscious embrace of statist and patriotic rhetoric evidently raises the question of whether there is anything recognizably liberal about this orientation. n onetheless, we suggest that this "conservative turn", which was particularly manifest during Putin's second term, reflects not a pure and simple abandonment of liberal precepts *per se* but a desperate and ultimately ill-fated attempt to "liberate" liberalism from an *a priori* valourization of e uropean integration, which resigns r ussia to the position of an apprenticeship in a structure of hierarchical inclusion. t he concepts of "liberal empire", "sovereign democracy" and other such paradoxical, if not oxymoronic, formulae testify to the tension between the commitment, however formal or hypocritical, to the maxims of e uropean liberal democracy, and the rejection of the subordinate political status that this very commitment comes down to in concrete settings of e U-r ussian relations. In this manner, the exclusionary practices of the e U, addressed in the previous section, ultimately lead to the self-exclusion of r ussian liberals from the integrative project. a lthough this disconnection does not necessarily imply the abandonment of the substantive "e uropean ideal" as such, it remains to be seen whether the redoubling of e urope would amount to anything more than its obscene caricature, whereby the valourization of sovereignty obliterates any recognizable meaning of democracy.

Getting Over Europe: Left-Conservatism and the Demise of the Question of "European Identity"

Within the left-conservative discourse the problematic of self-exclusion is not as innovative as in liberalism, as it has been part of the political platform of the national-patriotic opposition since the early 1990s (see for example d ugin 2000, Zyuganov 2004). a t the same time, the left-conservative discourse in the Putin

presidency marks a number of serious departures from the oppositional discourse of early post-communism, particularly that of the c Pr F, which, however formally, remains tied to the tropes of Soviet socialism. In contrast, n atalia n arochnitskaya (2004a) focuses her criticism on *both* liberalism and Marxism as equally destructive for r ussia. She ridicules the dogmatism of contemporary r ussian liberals, whose slogan of "worldwide transition to democracy" she finds as vacuous and asinine as the precepts of Soviet "scientific communism", which of course also operated with the teleological category of transition. In line with conventional e uropean conservatism, from h eidegger to Schmitt, she argues that both of these political philosophies, having at the centre of their political ontology respectively the figures of the individual and social class, are united in the cosmopolitan valourization of the universalist, atheistic and anti-national community.

t he abandonment of the categories of religion and the nation in the aggressive promotion of liberal universalism deprives liberalism itself of its particular national and religious origins, without which, as an *actually universal* disposition, it turns into a monster of a nihilistic, hedonistic and narcissistic ideology. "t he central ideologem here is the abstract individual with his rights. t he valourization of physical existence as the supreme value undermines not only the two millennia of c hristian culture but also the elementary norms of collective life. t he nation stops being a continuous organism, held together by spiritual and historical experiences and becomes mere population or *okhlos*" (n arochnitskaya 2004c). t his is what allegedly took place in post-communist r ussia, where liberalism entailed little more than the triumph of base consumerist values and the decline of patriotism, morality and faith. t his partial and hurried adoption of select "Western values" is for n arochnitskaya nothing less than a "capitulation before e urope", which in her view is the only vision of r ussia's future that liberals can offer (n arochnitskaya 2004c). n onetheless, the conservative response must consist not in isolation but in purposeful self-exclusion of r ussia from e uropean and other Western structures so that it may reassert itself as a sovereign subject with its own distinct (necessarily particularistic) identity that has a greater potential to "restore the spiritual edifice, abandoned by e urope" (n arochnitskaya 2004a).

a t the same time, n arochnitskaya's discourse on e urope does not mark her vision of the optimal course of r ussian foreign policy as entirely heterogeneous to e uropean policies: "I suggest that just like them, we should pursue national interests and defend domestic business. Self-isolation is fatal for the country, as history has shown us. However, equally fatal is the artificial self-depersonalisation. r ecent years have shown that r ussia can not develop without goals and values that go beyond mere earthly existence. It is a difficult task: we need modernisation, but without that version of Westernisation that destroys the meaningful core of our historical life" (n arochnitskaya 2004b). t he relation between r ussia and e urope is thus ultimately ambivalent: on the one hand, cosmopolitan Westernization destroys r ussia's traditional identity, while on the other hand the preferable policy course suggested for r ussia consists in acting just like the contemporary e urope *does itself but does not allow others to*. t he extreme dissociation of r ussia from

e urope is combined, on the level of the positive programme, with an almost disappointingly trivial vision of the positivity of the "self-excluded" sovereign Russia: the reaffirmation of national interests, the insistence on the principles of sovereign equality and territorial integrity, the revival of the armed forces – in short, nothing that exceeds the minimal set of attributes for the *reconstitution of a modern nation-state*, a e uropean phenomenon if there ever was one.

a similar ambivalence may be observed in r ogozin's volume *Reclaiming Russia,* in which crass diatribes against the e U coexist with a positive programme that belongs squarely to the tradition of e uropean political realism. t he already-cited invectives about the false "e urope of pederasts and punks" are combined with the presentation of the desirable foreign policy in terms of "the pragmatic policy of national success, […] civic dignity and historical pride, in the absence of any humiliation of others, belligerence, self-importance or arrogance […] We must never sacrifice our priority interests, of which the central one is the existence of r ussia as an independent sovereign state" (r ogozin 2004e). t his fragment clearly demonstrates that the policy course, dictated by the left-conservative narrative of self-exclusion, is furthest away from the Soviet conflation of statecraft and ideology in the international communist project as well as the utopian geopolitical scenarios of the national-patriotic opposition of the 1990s. Instead, what is at stake is a simple, but nonetheless a fundamental gesture of *self-delimitation*, whereby r ussia clears a minimal space, from which it can act in the modality of a sovereign state: "h ow r ussia is thought of in the world is obviously important. But even more important is how we think of ourselves. […] r ussia is not a dollar bill to be liked by everyone" (r ogozin 2004e).

t he stinging critique of e urope and the West in the left-conservative approach is therefore not guided by "ideological" divergences but is rather a cathartic exercise that ought to liberate r ussia from an infantile desire to be "liked by everyone". For "left-conservatives" the figure of Europe has functioned as the *discursive limitation on Russia's enunciative modality*, deployed either from the outside (in the imposition of strict conditionality on r ussia in order to gain acceptance as a legitimate subject) or from the inside (by the cosmopolitan liberals, whose "hijacking" of the linkage to the valourized object of e urope previously served to endow them with discursive privileges). a s a resolution of this problem, r ogozin suggests an attitude of neither hostility nor fetishism, but rather that of *indifference* towards the West:

> It is strange that a country with a millennium-old culture, the most literate country in the world, suddenly became so stupid, opened its mouth and started waiting for what the West may have to say about us and what it shall recommend. It is time to look at the West with greater indifference: it is not a teacher and we are not pupils (r ogozin 2004e)

Although at first glance, this strategy of pure dissociation may be dismissed as facile, it connects with more serious philosophical discussion in conservative

circles on the very function of the figure of Europe in the Russian political discourse. In a programmatic article, Mikhail r emizov observes the tendency of r ussian liberals to speak of e urope in exclamatory and axiomatic terms and suggests instead that any enunciation of "e urope" must be accompanied by the reflection on the meaning of the concept (Remizov 2001a; see also, Elbe 2003). From a conservative perspective, the proverbial "e uropean identity" is obviously a problematic term, if one expects identity to be constituted on the basis of geographical, cultural, geopolitical or any other concrete and particularistic criteria. h owever, this is precisely the path avoided by the discourse of e uropean integrationism, which views historico-cultural factors as irrelevant and instead deploys global and universalist claims that cannot be *localized* and are therefore, in the conservative worldview, *out of place*. t hus, r emizov ventures that "the very term 'e uropean identity' may well be a contradiction in terms. […] e uro-optimism celebrates its own non-identity" (r emizov 2001b). t herefore, the task of "integration into Europe", perpetually reaffirmed by President Putin, is impossible even if it were desirable, since "e urope" merely designates a locus where it ought to be, a locus presently *vacant* (r emizov 2001a).

t herefore, r emizov makes a move that is far more radical than the century-old oscillation between fetishization and denunciation of e urope in the Westernizers-Slavophiles debate. Instead, he targets the very *discourse* on r ussia's e uropean identity, which has arguably been constitutive of r ussia's identity, as markedly *irrelevant* in all its modalities: the g orbachevian optimism of the "c ommon e uropean h ome", the desire of right-wing liberals to "abduct e urope" by its reduplication in the post-Soviet "liberal empire", or even the already discussed conservative move of pronouncing r ussia to be the "true" e urope. t his wild oscillation of positions that nonetheless all *refer* to e urope as a relevant other is for r emizov a symptom of hysterical self-questioning that must be ceased by a simple *dissociation* of r ussia from e urope as such:

> Up to this moment e uropean politics was an existential zone for us, an area of fateful deeds, in which we fought not so much for our interests, but for the formation of our identity. e urope has never been our friend but has always been our o ther, the glance of which we were trying to steal, deserve or provoke so that it could mediate our subjectivity. t he "abduction of e urope" resembles an erotic game with a succession of sadistic and masochistic phases. First we impose ourselves on it in order to define ourselves through its frightened stare and then reject our selves to be defined by it through a condescending glance. [t hus,] the very abduction of e urope is twisted inside out and is presented as a return to it (r emizov 2001a).

Since the present e U is viewed as lacking proper political subjectivity, the "question of Europe" is of no consequence for Russia's self-identification and should be discarded without regret. r ussia must neither join nor confront e urope; instead, in r emizov's fortunate formulation, it must *"get over" it* (r emizov 2002; see

also h olmogorov 2002). In strongly similar terms, Boris Mezhuev (2007) argues for the need for r ussia to "divorce e urope": "r ussia is not merely a complex and problematic part of e urope; r ussia is already quite simply not e uropean, as year by year it outgrows the framework of any pan-e uropean institution." In Mezhuev's argument, any attempt by r ussia to assert its e uropeanness is doomed to fail, insofar as it is the e U that sets the rules of the game and the criteria for recognition in the field of European politics. The only effect of Russia's trying to "force" its way into Europe would be the intensification of EU-Russian conflicts that have no other substance than the struggle for recognition that, to recall h egel, is purely symbolic yet no less lethal for this reason:

> In any domestic-political configuration, Russia will increasingly stick out from every pan-e uropean construction, losing its positions in the united e urope, while desperately trying to split the Union in order to deal with individual e uropean states. Instead, it would face systemic retaliation from the e uropean bureaucracy and pro-integration forces. t his will create a perfect background for the strengthening of the "new", c entral e urope, with all its anti-r ussian complexes, within the EU. We will enter an unnecessary conflict, just like two irritated spouses, who could have improved their relations simply by having a civilized divorce years ago (Mezhuev 2007).

t he discourse on e urope, practised by such younger "left-conservatives" as r emizov and Mezhuev, is thus distinct from the geopolitical constructions of, for example, a lexander d ugin (2000) or g ennady Zyuganov (2004), prevalent in the "national-patriotic" discourse of the 1990s. In comparison with these approaches, left-conservatism is considerably more attuned to the realities of contemporary European thought and practice and abandons all attempts at finding a "true" e urope, with which r ussia ought to identify and cooperate. Indeed, as Mezhuev's argument above demonstrates, this approach is clearly aware that after the 2004 enlargement e U-r ussian relations can and will only get worse, as the e U is less and less conceivable as a privileged club of g reat Powers, with which r ussia could envision a nineteenth-century-style partnership. While the dwindling geopolitical discourse constructed a mirage of "continental" e urope that was cast as a "natural" partner of r ussia, contemporary left-conservatism is increasingly bereft of such idle fantasies and renounces the very logic of "true" and "false" e urope as resigning r ussia to a perpetually frustrated search for its own traces in the other. Instead, the "question of e urope" is simply removed from the r ussian political agenda in the strictly sovereignty-based vision of foreign policy. t his apparently negative gesture is nonetheless of profound significance for the future development of EU-Russian relations, since it targets not merely the practical implementation of the policy of "strategic partnership", whose problematic status is self-evident, but also the overall telos of "integration into e urope", which has been virtually uncontestable for most of the post-communist period. a s President Putin remarked in his annual a ddress to the Federal a ssembly in May 2004, shortly after the e U enlargement,

e uropean integration is not only a matter of economic policy, but also a "spiritual" question (Putin 2004). l eft-conservatism confronts precisely this "spiritual" or existential dimension, considering it a symptom of political immaturity that leads to a discursive self-entrapment in the infinite struggle for recognition of Russia's "e uropeanness". r ecalling n arochnitskaya's insistence on the importance of Russia's being "not quite European" for the justification of European exclusionary practices, it is evident that this struggle for recognition is doomed from the outset, since in this logic the most minimal difference would suffice to perpetuate the asymmetric structure of e U-r ussian relations.

t he difference between the liberal and left-conservative discourses is now clear. For the liberal narratives of exclusion and self-exclusion, r ussia's entry into the "e uropean community" remains a valuable objective, though its achievement ought not to be tied with the subjection to external normative pressure. t his stance leads to the complex choreography of frequently irreconcilable positions: from the repeated oaths of r ussia's unequivocally "e uropean choice" to the ceremonies of taking offence and feigning retreat. o n the other hand, for "left-conservatives", the very paradigm of integration appears discredited by the processes of hierarchical inclusion, and the maximal content of cooperation is exhausted by the "mutual delimitation" of r ussia and e urope, whereby the interface between the two parties is grounded in the recognition of each other's legitimate difference. While the liberal narrative of self-exclusion asserted institutional difference on the basis of the underlying political identity, the left-conservative narrative dismantles this deep structure altogether in a purely autopoietic constitution of r ussia's identity in terms of its pure difference from its exterior. t hus, the r ussian discourse on relations with e urope endlessly oscillates between the problematization of the lack of due recognition of r ussia as a member of the "e uropean" political community and, as it were, the *de-problematization* of the question of recognition as such, whereby Russia's identity no longer requires the confirmatory nod of the other. For both liberals and left-conservatives, r ussia is simultaneously in and out of e urope, and it is this very dynamic of perpetual oscillation that makes the discourse on e U-r ussian relations plethoric and impoverished at the same time, since its practice is strictly confined between these two poles of a binary opposition.

Conclusion: Beyond the "In and Out" Dynamic?

What is the relation between the two conflict narratives, reconstituted in the analysis in the preceding sections? Is the combination between the problematization of exclusion and the valourization of self-exclusion a mere contradiction, an indicator of the fragmented nature of the r ussian political discourse, which fails to achieve a consolidated position on the "question of e urope" and is doomed to forever oscillate between incompatible positions and mutually exclusive claims? In our view, the conflict narratives which we have reconstituted must be understood in their dynamic interplay in the context of concrete political encounters with the

e U. t he dynamic understanding of these narratives is crucial for grasping the tendency within the liberal discourse to gradually move away from the enunciative modality of the complainant in the narrative of exclusion toward the more active modality of the double of e urope or the embodiment of its long-lost "truth". t he development of the conservative discourse is similarly dynamic, yet in this case the shift is from the more militant position in the struggle over "true" and "false" notions of e urope that demands due recognition of r ussia as a "true e uropean" country towards the more resigned stance of "getting over e urope". Both liberal and conservative strands of discourse therefore move from the initial endorsement of integration through the problematization of e U's exclusionary policies or the hierarchical nature of the offered inclusion to the disillusioned abandonment of the integrationist ideal in the reaffirmation of sovereignty.

t he concept of hierarchical inclusion permits us to go beyond the facile opposition between exclusion and inclusion and thus eliminate the apparent contradiction between the two conflict narratives. Indeed, both the narratives of exclusion and self-exclusion have the same object of problematization – the manifest interactional asymmetries in e U-r ussian relations. Whether one advocates a greater inclusion of r ussia in the e uropean space or seeks to delimit r ussia from it, the fundamental grievance that incites the conflict discourse is the perception of the absence of genuine intersubjectivity in e U-r ussian encounters. We may therefore consider hierarchical inclusion to be the key "point of diffraction" of the entire political discourse on r ussia's relations with e urope, while the narratives of exclusion and self-exclusion may be viewed in the Foucauldian sense as the effects of the dispersion of discursive practices, according to the rules of formation of the "strategies" of discourse (Foucault 1989: 71–78).

a s we have shown, these strategies of discourse do not coincide with the division of discursive practices along the liberal-conservative divide in the r ussian political spectrum. We have demonstrated that *both* liberals and conservatives participate in *both* conflict narratives: even though the content of discursive practices varies according to the "ideological" orientations of the respective parties, the limits of variance are nonetheless restricted to the two strategies. It is therefore as if the two discursive distinctions, between "exclusion" and "self-exclusion" and between liberalism and left-conservatism, became superimposed on one another, the former ordering the formal structure of discourse and the latter providing substantive content to its practice.

t he developments that we analysed demonstrate that the "inclusive" strand of discourse on r ussia's relations with e urope has been ultimately unsuccessful, leading many of its practitioners to opt for a more "self-exclusive" orientation. Indeed, at the end of the second term of the Putin presidency the tendency towards self-exclusion from e uropean integration appeared to have achieved a hegemonic status, while the "inclusive" discourse became the province of marginal or outright obscure political forces, such as for example the d emocratic Party of r ussia, which advocated r ussia's e U membership and symbolically held its September 2007 c ongress in Brussels before setting a dubious record of becoming the lowest polling

party (0.13 per cent) in the d ecember 2007 elections. In another demonstration of the marginalization of "the idea of e urope" in today's r ussian political discourse, EU flags have been frequently observed at the so-called "Marches of Dissenters", organized during 2007 by the radically oppositional "a nother r ussia" coalition that unites anti-systemic forces of both the left and the right, which self-consciously posit themselves outside the existing political order. a n avowedly pro-e uropean orientation thus seems to have become the marker of one's (self-) exclusion from the mainstream of r ussian politics as such (see Prozorov 2008a for a detailed analysis). o n the other hand, the domestic political developments in r ussia from 2007 onwards fully confirm Mezhuev's (2007) wariness of self-exclusion from e urope leading to the "erroneous interpretation of national uniqueness, which many of its acolytes hurriedly view in terms of despotism or the purity of patriarchal mores". While integrative rhetoric in the r ussian discourse loses its force and legitimacy due to the e U's exclusive or hierarchically inclusive policies, the consolidation of "self-exclusive" rhetoric is accompanied by a manifest retreat from the e uropean norms of political praxis. "g etting over e urope" appears to entail nothing other than acting in full accordance with the very scarecrow image of r ussia that in the e uropean discourse originally validated r ussia's exclusion.

t he dominant interpretation of r ussia's move from complaints over exclusion to an assertive self-exclusion regularly refers to the wider context of the "reconstitution of the state" in the Putin presidency, which is marked by the general trend of the reaffirmation of sovereignty (Chadaev 2006; also see Prozorov 2004, 2006). t he divergence of the two parties in relation to sovereignty has been offered as a key explanation for the occurrence of conflictual dispositions in EU-r ussian relations. h iski h aukkala has posited a binary opposition between r ussian and e uropean foreign policy discourses, whereby the e U is viewed as a post-modern, post-sovereign polity that embraces regionalization and globalization, while r ussia remains quintessentially "modern", state-centric and obsessed by the "geopolitical imagination" that makes it *a priori* hostile to international integration (h aukkala 2001: 8–9; see also Bordachev 2003). In this reading, sovereignty is cast as entirely exterior to the e U's own "political imagination", which permits to cast the two parties' policy orientations as diametrically opposite.

a similar interpretation has been ventured on a more general level by o le Wæver (1998b), to whom the contemporary other of e urope is nothing other than its own past, that is, the e urope of "modern" sovereign nation-states. Similarly, t homas d iez (2004) has argued that a *temporal*, rather than *territorial*, "othering" has been the prime modality of identification of the post-war Europe. However, as our analysis has shown, this "temporal othering" is presently acquiring a clearly identifiable "territorial other", namely, Russia, insofar as it constitutes its present identity on the basis of precisely the same discursive grounds that e urope is allegedly leaving behind. r ussia is thus the perfect image of "e urope's past" surviving in the present. t his argument permits understanding and appreciation of the persistent recourse of conservatives such as n arochnitskaya or r ogozin to claims about r ussia as "truly e uropean'. t hese claims are entirely correct, insofar

as modern sovereign statehood is an inherent feature of the e uropean tradition; yet, it is precisely this tradition that is apparently discredited today, which lends some credence, though perhaps not veracity, to the claim that contemporary e uropean practices have betrayed this tradition and are therefore "false-e uropean". In this reading, Russia's reconstituted sovereign subjectivity by definition makes it the "other of e urope", since it serves to *territorialize* the dominant mode of temporal othering, which after all cannot do without such a territorialization to avoid becoming a pure abstraction. t he narrative of self-exclusion is then self-explanatory, insofar as any discursive affirmation of sovereignty excludes Russia from the e U discourse, whether it wants it or not. t o assert one's own self-exclusion is merely to make a virtue of necessity, presenting, in a parody of n ietzsche's "eternal return", the *fait accompli* as one's own willed decision.

y et, how past *is* "e urope's past"? t o what extent has the e U actually abandoned the constitutive principle of modern sovereign statehood so that the latter is able to function as a "temporal other"? d iez's own argument on temporal othering is characterized by the admission that this modality of othering is presently "losing in importance" due to the resurgence of territorial or geopolitical othering of, for example, Islam, the United States, t urkey, r ussia, and so on (d iez 2004: 328). From this perspective, r ogozin's and n arochnitskaya's repeated declarations that a more assertive, "self-exclusive" r ussia would be "just like" contemporary e uropean states is not entirely unfounded. Indeed, the sheer fact that r ussian left-conservatives are able to recognize their own political project in the image of contemporary e urope throws doubt on the thesis about "e urope's past", be it nationalism, geopolitics or sovereignty, as the "other" of e urope. a lthough guarding against an excessive enthusiasm about the relegation of "e urope's past" properly into the past, d iez's argument still presupposes that such a project is possible in principle, ignoring the intricate interdependence of the two modes of othering, evident in the very examples he discusses. In all of the above cases, the construction of the other is *simultaneously territorial and temporal*, permitting to cast the actual adversary as little more than a phantom from one's own past, whether this past is concretized in terms of political instrumentalization of religion, aggressive nationalism or the commitment to the ideal of sovereignty. r ather than unfold in a chronological succession, whereby temporal othering "temporally others" territorial othering, the two modes of exclusion are at work simultaneously and derive their efficiency from their mutual conditioning: what is othered temporally must be assigned a spatial locus in the present, while the territorial other must be denied legitimacy in the present by its relegation into the past.

A more nuanced interpretation of EU-Russian conflicts is ventured by Chris Browning (2003) in his discussion of the "external/internal security paradox" that characterizes e uropean foreign policy. a ccording to Browning, there is a tension between the e U's goal of "internal security", essentially a "modernist" (supra-) statist project that rests on the strict and exclusive delimitation of borders, and the more open and outward-oriented project of "external security", in which strictly delimited sovereign borders are transformed into integrated borderlands. t he

paradox of e uropean foreign policy consists in the fact that, since both internal and external security remain indispensable imperatives, any concrete policy towards r ussia will inevitably be infused with its apparent opposite, which undermines its overall logic from within. t he "hierarchically inclusive" orientation of e U policies towards r ussia may thus be interpreted in terms of a paradoxical combination of diametrically opposed policy imperatives of the very same kind that this chapter has shown to be operative in the r ussian discourse on relations with e urope. Just as r ussia cannot be proclaimed an unequivocal opponent of integration but rather, as we have seen, specifically protests its asymmetric character, so the EU can barely be treated as a "post-sovereign" polity, which has dispensed with territorial othering and other exclusionary practices of sovereignty.

In Prozorov (2006), we have discussed this ambivalent character of e U-r ussian relations in terms of the paradoxical coexistence of the rationalities of sovereignty and integration in the policies of the two parties. Instead of a facile representation of two subjects, whose policies are guided by *a priori* incompatible logics, we observe the existence of a complex amalgam of both sovereign and integrationist logics in the policies of both r ussia and the e U. It is precisely this internal contamination of policy logics by their own opposites that accounts for the conflictual character of EU-Russian relations, which can only be overcome by a radical transformation in the approaches of both parties to each other. o n the one hand, the conflict-generating character of the EU's approach to Russia is not merely a policy failure or a result of an *a priori* divergence of e uropean and r ussian policy logics, but the effect of a more fundamental contradiction at the heart of the "e uropean project", which draws the lines of exclusion at the heart of its own integrationist programmes and practises sovereignty in the very acts of its disavowal. EU-Russian conflicts are unlikely to disappear unless this contradiction is resolved, yet the question remains of whether it *can* be resolved at all without fundamentally reshaping the e uropean project as we know it. While the shift of the e U towards a greater delimitation from r ussia would jeopardize the e U's own integrationist self-description, a truly "post-sovereign", non-exclusive e uropean Union is a prospect, whose actualization lies almost entirely in the future. o n the other hand, r ussia's ambivalent stance towards the e U, in which the half-hearted "struggle for recognition" alternates with a self-exclusive posture that denies the very need for such recognition, is similarly both inherently conflictual and virtually inescapable, insofar as the figure of Europe remains a privileged element of r ussia's identity.

Evidently, the simplest way out of the conflictual impasse would be a reciprocal self-exclusion of the two parties from each other's domains. In this scenario that we have termed "mutual delimitation" (Prozorov 2006: 137–156), r ussia would, to recall r emizov and Mezhuev, "get over" its attempts at "integration into e urope", while e urope would renounce its ambition of managing the course of events in r ussia and recognize in it the ultimate limit of its integrative potential. t aking into consideration the current tendency towards regime consolidation in r ussia and the increasingly vacuous agenda of e U-r ussian summits, this form of

mutual delimitation might indeed exemplify the dominant tendency in e U-r ussian relations in the foreseeable future. And yet, however efficient in practice, this course of development would only temporarily suspend the problem of r ussia's paradoxical status as a e uropean country outside e urope, the only e uropean country, whose e uropeanness remains at stake in its existence and which vainly attempts to resolve the undecidability of its own identity by distancing itself from the very community, the belonging to which it tirelessly asserts.

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c ontextualizing and Qualifying Identities: Baltic-r ussian r elations in the c ontext of e uropean Integration

h iski h aukkala

Introduction

t his is a book about the role of identity in the making of foreign policy. t he contributions in this book paint a variegated and vivid picture of the power of ideas and identities as well as the main vehicles for these factors, memory and history, on human collectives and their consequent interaction. t his short concluding chapter seeks to discuss these contributions by seeking to contextualize and qualify them, especially when it comes to the role of identity. t his is done by seeking potential linkages between the individual chapters as well as teasing out some more general conclusions for the entire book.

It should be noted at the outset that the explicit aim on this occasion is to act as a sympathetic critic, suggesting ways to take the analysis beyond the issue of identities and their interaction. Indeed, this chapter argues that identities are not the be all and end all in the study of social interaction. a lthough identities – or worldviews, or belief systems – do matter, at the same time we must also acknowledge that the independent explanatory power of identity-based accounts has its limits as well (see l egro 2005: 21). t his is of course something that has been acknowledged by some authors in this book as well (see especially the contributions of Fofanova and Morozov, Spruds, as well as the Introduction by e hin and Berg), so even in this respect this chapter should not be construed as a scathing attack against any of the contributions in this book: there is much to be agreed with all of them, and this chapter finds itself in agreement with the basic thrust of this book. It is with the modest aim of pushing its arguments further that this concluding chapter has been written.

In their introductory chapter e hin and Berg outline the main theoretical tenets of the work at hand. Following Alexander Wendt, they define identities "as a relatively stable set of conceptualizations and expectations about self". t his is indeed a reasonable move to make, as to have serious independent explanatory power of its own, identities would in my view indeed need to remain fairly stable over time. o therwise, identity and especially identity change could too easily be used as an explanatory ace from the sleeve that could be invoked when our other

explanations simply fail to be illuminating. h aving established this, e hin and Berg then go on to spell out the three other conceptual premises of the present work: identities are constructed, not natural or essential; they are relational and involve references to various "significant others"; and identities have a discursive, narrative structure. t hese three facets of identity can be likened to a crucial baseline that binds the otherwise rather multifaceted contributions in this book together. It would, however, be wrong to say that e hin and Berg's theorizing would be put into any systematic test in the chapters that follow, but they all do broadly share these commitments and consequently shed light on the book's theme from a wide variety of different angles.

The argument in this chapter is developed in three parts, reflecting three broader themes that can be identified from the individual contributions in the book. First, the questions of memory, history and the more active process of commemoration are discussed. t his is then followed by looking into the issue of liminality, or residing in-between, in Baltic-r ussian relations in more detail. Finally, these questions as well as that of identity are put into the wider context of other causal factors, both material and institutional, that can be seen as affecting the issues discussed in the book. In this respect, the events surrounding the relocation of the Bronze Soldier in a pril 2007 are revisited with the aim of emphasizing a more multi-causal understanding of the actual events that took place in order to arrive at fuller accounts of the issues at stake.

Memory, History and Commemoration

o ne of the most interesting and pertinent facets to the discussions in this book relates to the role of history in the construction of identity. In this respect, the contributions of a strov, Brüggemann and k asekamp, Fofanova and Morozov, Mälksoo and o nken all probe the different facets of this same problematic. a s a strov usefully argues, memory – both individual and collective – is the spring from which actual histories eventually sprung. By contrast, and in my view, memory is more of a passive kind, whereas history is always something produced, constructed (dare one say fabricated?) to meet the requirements and the needs of the present (see also a strov's discussion in his chapter). t o a degree, then, history can be seen as institutionalized memory, and it is often on the basis of contrasting historical interpretations that some of the most bitter contemporary political clashes and crises become understandable. Finally, and by contrast, commemoration seems to be the active act of remembering – but not only that, as it, very much like history itself, seems to include aspects of public manifestation of remembering and practices that can become institutionalized over time. In this respect, different ways of commemoration can become flashpoints of contention, if they evoke different memories and historical representations of past actions and events.

t he actual discussion of the empirical cases reveals two important conclusions to be drawn from the book. First, there exists a strong – and perhaps even growing – discrepancy between the r ussian and Baltic readings of history. a strov speaks of "clash of commemorations", Fofanova and Morozov about "conflicting historical narratives", and Mälksoo refers to "conflicting memory politics" in this context. a lso the main gist of the argument for Brüggemann and k asekamp, e hin and Berg as well as o nken seem to be the inherent incommensurability of different narratives relating to the question of the Second World War and its aftermath in the context of Baltic-r ussian relations. t he existence of such deep divisions and discrepancies related to history can itself be seen as a root cause for present misperceptions and ensuing political conflicts (see the interesting discussion in the context of r ussia and the 1999 k osovo War in Mendeloff 2008). In the context of Baltic-r ussian relations the most glaring and recent event that has portrayed these same negative dynamics was of course the intense political crisis over the relocation of the Bronze Soldier monument in a pril 2007. For obvious reasons, the case has elicited a good deal of analysis also in the present volume (see the contributions of a strov, Brüggemann and k asekamp, and Mälksoo).

t he second conclusion to be drawn is that despite their strong bilateral – or perhaps quadrilateral – character, the Baltic-r ussian relations and the identity politics related to them should not be viewed in isolation from the wider e uropean currents. For example, Jakniūnaitė argues that Baltic neighbourhood politics only become understandable against the wider backdrop of e uropean n eighbourhood Policy (en P). Perhaps even more pertinently, in his contribution a strov shows how the e stonian, but also l atvian, discourses on the past as well as the present have in fact been embedded in wider Western registers and debates (Fukuyama, h untington, k agan) as well as the policy-speak of certain key institutions, the e uropean Union and na t o in particular. Interesting in this respect is to note that it is largely the a merican intellectuals that have been able to frame the debate within the Baltic countries. a lso the dog that does not the bark, that is, the voice that seems to be missing from the debates is worth pointing out, as it seems that the "e uropean k agan" r obert c ooper is missing from a strov's discussion. o n the one hand, this could only be an omission. But on the other hand, one is tempted to read much more into this fact, as it could be that c ooper's more post-modern reading of the e U as an essentially open project also to the outside world does not gel very well with the current needs to demarcate and delineate, perhaps essentially seal off the Baltic countries from the eastern neighbourhood, especially r ussia (for c ooper's ideas, see c ooper 2003).

But regardless of the Baltic and r ussian wrangling over these issues, the main point to me seems to be this: the e uropean, and indeed wider Western, debates and discourses in effect largely frame the Baltic-r ussian relations. t he Baltic-r ussian encounters take place within the wider Western matrix of meanings, and even if and when they themselves fail to take this fact into account in their actions, these tussles are nevertheless interpreted within the wider and at times rather hegemonic Western understandings concerning the issues at stake. In this respect, it seems

that both the Baltic and r ussian readings are conspicuously out of sync with wider e uropean ways of seeing things. a s a strov notes, "in this [Baltic-r ussian] part of the world history still matters" to the extent that the countries in the region can be seen as essentially being "hung on the[ir] past". t his is very much evident also in the current r ussian debate concerning the Second World War – or the g reat Patriotic War as it is known in the r ussian parlance – the public and repeated annual commemoration of which on 9 May – coincidentally also the current e urope d ay that commemorates the Schuman d eclaration of 9 May 1950, as it happens – is seen as being out of step with Western e uropean ways of remembering the war (see o nken; e hin and Berg; and Fofanova and Morozov).

a lso Brüggemann and k asekamp seem to concur with this assessment when they note how in its rush to embrace its military past through the erection of a new past-oriented monument, the e stonian g overnment is in effect engaged in practising "anachronistic politics of history". In this respect, one could in fact take issue with o nken's characterization of the e uropean present as a process where "an increasing number of political actors struggle and compete with each other over the interpretation of the past, the shaping of memory and its translation into policy decisions". Instead, one could also argue that in the recent years the role of the past and e urope's bloody history has been devalued as a source of political capital and fuel for further e uropean integration. e ven if e urope's escape from its own past has been the main storyline for e uropean integration (as Wæver 2000 has suggested), its usefulness in justifying further integrative moves has in effect been drastically reduced. Indeed, the biggest problem concerning e uropean integration at present seems to be that while the legitimating power of the past has waned, this has happened with the future-oriented aspects of the project as well, especially when one keeps in mind the fact that the thrust towards a more federal e urope has for all means and purposes become a dead letter in the union of 27 member states. y et this does not negate the fact entirely that in the future the e U's legitimacy – if it is going to have any at all – must increasingly come and stem from a set of future-oriented projects and objectives, and not from its chequered past. In any case, this would seem to imply that without a radical change in their own way of viewing the present and insisting on accentuating the past, the Baltic countries and r ussia, but also, for example, Poland, will continue to be increasingly at odds with the wider e uropean present.

Baltic Liminality vs. Russian Peripherality

a nother interesting theme rising from the book is that of Baltic liminality, or residing in-between. In this respect, the chapter by Mälksoo makes an interesting case for the essentially liminal existence of the Baltic countries in the context of wider e uropean structures, especially the e uropean Union. h er analysis is usefully complemented by Jakniūnaitė's chapter, which makes essentially the same case in

the context of one specific policy initiative of the European Union, the European n eighbourhood Policy.

It should be noted that it seems obvious that these two chapters have managed to uncover something rather essential about the Baltic countries in the context of e uropean integration. a lso, it seems evident that the feeling of insecurity stemming from their perceived liminal position is a factor affecting their relations with other external powers, especially r ussia. But having said this, after reading the chapters one is left with a lingering feeling that despite its power and obvious merits, the argument also has its limitations, especially if one pushes it towards its theoretical and conceptual extremes.

Mälksoo's chapter would seem to be a case in point in this respect. She discusses almost archetypical liminality, characterizing it as "a situation of great ambiguity", and of being "neither here nor there" that can only be overcome by "acquisition of new rights and obligations *vis-à-vis* others in this clearly defined new structure where the former outsider, then half-insider-half-outsider, is now expected to follow the customary norms and ethical standards of the position in the system it has ultimately become part of". a fter this, Mälksoo goes on to tell the story of the continued, almost semi-permanent, Baltic liminality in rather strong terms.

But having read Mälksoo's account, one is left with a feeling that perhaps the case has been overstated somewhat. t his would seem to be so in two important respects. First, it could be that she exaggerates the extent of Baltic liminality in contemporary e urope. In fact, the reverse case could also be made, as there are some grounds for expecting that the Baltic countries' liminality should have actually dramatically decreased during the post-"Big Bang" e U enlargement era since May 2004. In fact, the "acquisition of new rights and obligations *vis-à-vis* others in this clearly defined new structure" is exactly what took place when these countries joined the e uropean Union in full.

Second, it is less than evident whether the Baltic countries' belonging to the e uropean Union is "contested and ambiguous". h ere, too, the reverse case could be made. For example, one of the most important conclusions to be drawn from the Bronze Soldier crisis would seem to imply that on that occasion e stonia was indeed perceived as being "fully" in e urope: a full member of the e uropean Union as well as na t o and therefore entitled to full political solidarity that implies, regardless of whether t allinn's decision and timing concerning the relocation of the monument was seen as being advisable or not (see more below).

n one of this should be construed as a crushing critique of Mälksoo's chapter, however. t he reverse is in fact the case, as Mälksoo is undoubtedly touching upon something very essential when she urges us to grasp the essentially triadic nature of identities and identity politics. In this respect, also the Bronze Soldier would seem to imply that e stonia was indeed the land-in-between, the battleground for wider narratives and identity projects. It also seems evident that r ussia was in fact aware of this fact and was trying to use this to her own advantage to dilute the essential e uropean/wider Western solidarity and to isolate e stonia from its partners. o n this

occasion, it seems safe to conclude that the solidarity prevailed but the question that rises, and it is one that cannot be settled on this occasion, is what will happen to that essential solidarity in the future (see h aukkala forthcoming 2009 for a longer discussion of the issues at stake).

It is in this context that Jakniūnaitė's chapter enters the scene in full. She traces the place of the Baltics at the cross-hairs of two wider discourses of power: the e U's "normative" and r ussia's "imperial". t his is not the place to discuss this dichotomy in full – especially when there is a lot to be agreed with it – but suffice it to say that there is perhaps more symmetry between the e U and r ussian positions than at first sight might seem to be the case. Therefore, it could be argued that both the e U and r ussian approaches to their neighbourhoods are equally normative *and* imperial – it is only the content of the normative factor (be it the r ussian modernity, or the more fluid EU post-modernity) that would be the main, although crucial, difference between the two projects.

In a very useful way Jakniūnaitė locates two motivations for the Baltic activism in the e astern neighbourhood. o n the one hand, the en P would seem to offer them with opportunities to reflect their raised rank in the post-enlargement situation: the students have now become the teachers, which in itself is an important distinction compared with the earlier situation. In addition, they can at the same time send the message of being constructive and useful members of the e uropean Union: the newcomers are not only consumers of EU-related benefits but aspire and also manage to bring new constructive elements to the table as well (here we actually have an interesting historical precedent in the case of Finland and the n orthern d imension initiative, see o janen 1999). Finally, the activism in the eastern neighbourhood sends a signal also towards the e ast, namely r ussia. h ere Jakniūnaitė's words are worth quoting: "these three states use the ENP also to show to the new neighbours and also Russia how authoritative, influential, and responsible, and hence, more powerful they have become."

In the last instance, therefore, the Baltic activism *vis-à-vis* their eastern neighbourhood can be seen as an attempt to push out the Union's boundaries, as if to escape their liminality and the historical lot as an eternal battleground between the e ast and the West. But having said this, at the moment it seems likely that the Baltic travails will largely be to no avail, as there is very little appetite to embrace the eastern neighbourhood in full in the e uropean Union. t his situation is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future, at least without a radical re-alteration of r ussian and consequent western e uropean stances towards the countries currently residing in between the e U and r ussia.

It is indeed the role of r ussia that deserves to be the final theme in this context. c rucially, Prozorov's discussion of r ussian discourses related to the e U reveals that she, too, finds herself outside desperately looking in. The very last sentence of his chapter hammers the point home in full: despite all its sound and fury r ussia, too, seeks acknowledgement and recognition for its place in e urope (for the same argument in the context of the Soviet Union, see r ingmar 2002). t his only seems to reinforce the impression of the essentially hegemonic nature of the e uropean

project in the eyes of *all* of the cases discussed in this book. t herefore, and quite interestingly, it is not only the minuscule Baltics that have to look for their place and belonging in the eyes of the wider e uropean community, it is also r ussia that is forced, due to its own identity dynamics as well as very pressing economic and political needs to do the same (see also a alto 2006, which makes the same point very eloquently indeed). In this respect, there is certain symmetry in the lot of both the three Baltic countries and r ussia after all, as they all are forced to do their reckoning with e uropean integration. a t the same time, there seems to be a crucial difference between the two: as was already noted, it is the Baltics that have in fact been able to enter these very structures, giving them a voice in e urope that far exceeds their small size in economic and political terms. t his is a voice that is lacking in the case of r ussia, and it could be argued that it is a handicap that at times essentially "forces" r ussia to resort to extreme measures to be heard, as the case of the Bronze Soldier exemplifies. Therefore one could argue that the diminishing Baltic liminality together with the more permanent and fixed Russian peripherality in effect create a structural dynamic between the two that is actually working in favour of the former and to the detriment of the latter.

k eeping this in mind, the challenge for the e U would therefore seem to be how to accommodate – essentially embrace, and perhaps even integrate – these stories into wider e uropean narratives. In the short term, the answer would seem to be that this cannot perhaps be done easily, as some of the readings put forth by r ussia but also by the Baltic countries seem to be rather incompatible with the e uropean discourse. But over the longer term, perhaps certain convergence between the currently conflicting readings can be expected – or at least it is to be hoped – enabling the parties to arrive at more fully shared inter-subjective understandings concerning the past and its relevance for the present.

The Role of Multi-causality in Contextualizing and Qualifying Identities

In this final part of the chapter, the attention is turned towards other factors than identity in helping us to understand the dynamics of Baltic-r ussian relations. e ssentially, this entails broadening the scope of our analytical narratives to include also other structures of the international society by seeking more multi-causal accounts of the events out there. In fact, all actors are always caught in the middle of a multitude of social structures, with identities being only one of them. It is important to keep in mind that also the material and institutional structures of the international society should be taken into consideration, if we hope to arrive at richer and essentially more truth-like accounts of international relations.

It should be noted that the contributions in this volume are neither alien nor hostile to the idea of multi-causality. t he reverse is the case, as two chapters – by Fofanova and Morozov, and Spruds – make explicit references to the need to keep also other than purely ideational factors in mind. a lso, the introductory chapter by e hin and Berg devotes ample space to the consideration of other than

purely ideational factors in Baltic-r ussian relations. h aving granted this, not one of the contributions actually goes on to develop the argument in full but instead concentrate largely on the role of ideational factors after all. t here is, however, nothing wrong in this in a book that is mainly interested in probing the dynamics of identity conflicts. Also, it is worth pointing out that developing multi-causal theoretical models and applying them empirically is a very demanding and time-consuming task indeed, and it is rather unrealistic to expect that in article-length expositions to begin with. y et multi-causal frameworks are worth aspiring to, as the increased explanatory power and consequent understanding of the events out there far outweigh the tribulations associated with the process.

To show why this is the case, the rest of the chapter briefly revisits one of the central cases that has been studied in this book: the statue crisis between e stonia and Russia in April−May 2007 (the following draws heavily from Haukkala 2009 forthcoming). But before discussing the events in some detail, a few words about multi-causality are in order.

a useful way of arriving at multi-causal understandings of the issues at stake is to view the very actors at play as situated actors. a ccording to h ay (1995: 190), a situated actor is an intentional agent that is located in a structured social context that defines the range of the agent's potential actions. For the present purposes, we may note that the ideas informing any given actor's intentions stem from its identity. h aving said this, it is important to bear in mind that these ideas do not operate in a vacuum. Instead they are conditioned by a wider social structure that can be called the constitution of the international society. a ny constitution has two interlocking dimensions. First, it has a normative component that captures the rules and norms that are crystallizing in certain institutionalized practices. Since the Peace of Westphalia, the *Grundnorm* in this respect has been sovereignty, the precise content of which has, however, significantly varied over time (Barkin 1998). But there is also another, material structure of the international society that we must take an interest in. k eohane (1984: 132) has argued that although ideational phenomena are important, "a structural analysis of constraints … [is] necessary to put the phenomenon of actor cognition into its proper political context".

At first sight, and as has been suggested by several chapters in this book, the row over the relocation of the statue of a Bronze Soldier in a pril 2007 is a classic case of identity politics (see the chapters of a strov, Brüggemann and k asekamp, and Mälksoo respectively). But although the identity prism will definitely help us to fathom why the crisis erupted and why the Bronze Soldier proved to be such a potent object of contention in this respect, it does not help us understand why the events unfolded the way they did. More importantly, it does not answer the question concerning perhaps one of the most striking aspects of the events: despite all its sound and fury, Moscow in effect failed to achieve any of its objectives concerning the crisis. Prior to the event r ussia was not able to prevent the relocation of the statue; nor was she able to put political pressure directly on the e stonian g overnment post hoc by seeking to internationalize the events, clearly

seeking to isolate e stonia from its Western partners in the e uropean Union and na t o (Socor 2007).

d espite these well-articulated aims and considerable effort, r ussia failed in its endeavours. d espite Moscow's early protestations, the statue was relocated. d espite political and economic pressure, the e stonian g overnment refused to amend its domestic policies or resign, as demanded by certain Russian officials. a nd despite attempts at internationalizing the situation in the hope of isolating e stonia from its Western partners, the solidarity towards e stonia only became more intense.

But why did r ussia fail to reach its objectives, then? In order to understand r ussia's lack of success in the crisis, we must turn our attention to other causal dynamics at play: that of institutional factors in e urope and indeed the wider West that were instrumental in balancing the at-first-sight drastic power asymmetries between e stonia and r ussia to the extent that it is practically meaningless to discuss the events as a purely bilateral conflict between the two without a clear reference to the role played by the wider e uropean structures. h ere we may note that from the outset r ussia was severely constrained by the fact that during the post-c old War era e stonia has together with other Baltic states been brought under the umbrella of Western multilateral institutions. Of special significance in this respect are the memberships e stonia secured in na t o and the e uropean Union in 2004. t hey gave e stonia the kind of institutional solidarity that was clearly a factor affecting r ussia's room of manoeuvre in the crisis without which we cannot appreciate the turn of events in full.

Some of the r ussian actions during the crisis indicate that r ussians were indeed well aware of the existence of institutionalized solidarity in e urope. It can be argued that one of the major aims behind the attempted internationalizing of the crisis was indeed to test and potentially reduce the existence of solidarity enjoyed by t allinn in the West (see also Socor 2007). o n this occasion at least, the verdict seems to be, however, that the solidarity prevailed and r ussia's hopes of successfully putting pressure on e stonia were seriously dented in the process. y et one may go further than this and to argue that the attempts at diluting the institutionalized solidarity in e urope have become one of the leitmotifs of r ussian e uropean policy, especially under President Vladimir Putin. t he r ussian drive for cultivating bilateral relationships at the expense of, for example, wider e U-r ussia relations has been a case in point (h aukkala 2006). Usually these have been seen as mere tactical manoeuvres aimed at blunting the edge and the preponderant weight of the Union's institutions (see l eonard and Popescu 2007). y et it is possible to detect also other and more purposive strategic dimensions behind the r ussian antiques in the Bronze Soldier crisis: an attempt at diluting e uropean solidarity in the hopes of isolating a single member state so that it can be pressured into submission (cf. l ucas 2008a).

Conclusion: Baltic-Russian Relations in the Context of European Integration

It would be nonsensical at the end of a book of this kind to ask whether identities matter. It is obvious that they matter and they do so a great deal; they are the primary prism through which people fathom their place in the world and perceive the meaning of different events to their own existence (see also a bdelal et al. 2006). t o a large degree then, identities are a factor conditioning and shaping our (policy) responses. a lso, it seems safe to conclude that in the case of Baltic-r ussian relations identities are especially relevant. Memory and history – the stuff that identities are made of – are much more present and the differences in interpretations are much more acute and accentuated than seems to be the case elsewhere in contemporary e urope (with the western Balkans perhaps being the other notable exception here).

t he factor that seems increasingly to come to the fore is that of identity politics: issues are consciously moulded, debated and challenged: they are used as part and parcel of wider political engagements and disagreements; they are also used in wider attempts at affecting the wider historical and identity landscape in e urope. In this respect, it makes sense to speak of overlapping identity complexes (perhaps in all the senses of the word) or sub-regimes uneasily co-existing in contemporary e urope. But at the same time it seems advisable to take heed of the fact that memory and history are not just tactical ploys in the wider Baltic-r ussian relations; they are the original sin affecting the very roots of the relationship in ways that all the parties find hard to resist and impossible to escape.

l uckily identities are not all that there is to the story. c ontemporary Baltic-r ussian relations do not take place inside a vacuum, but are conditioned by wider structures of the (e uropean) international society. h ere, it is important to take note that the currently very negative bilateral identity dynamics are in fact embedded in wider e uropean registers and discourses. t his is a good thing in itself, as it can be seen as offering a potential way out of the currently locked-in bilateral perceptions: it could be that there are alternative ways of looking at the past, or that the relevance of past is not as high in the e uropean context anymore (the past is not what it used to be anymore, so to speak). a lso, the existence of wider European institutional structures can be seen as beneficial, as they seem to have a certain moderating effect on Baltic-r ussia relations, preventing them from spiralling down or escalating to more serious forms of open conflict. It is to be hoped at least that taken together the existence of this wider e uropean layer could create both the ideational and institutional breathing space within which the Baltics and Russia could find the wherewithal eventually to renegotiate their relations and arrive at mutually satisfactory forms of remembering the past and working together for the future.

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