

This is a self-archived version of an original article. This version may differ from the original in pagination and typographic details.

Author(s): Roiko-Jokela, Heikki; Roiko-Jokela, Tapio

Title: A Century with the Same Problem - Similar but still Different Solutions? : Four perspectives on the security policies of Finland and Estonia during the approximate period of 1917-2018

Year: 2020

Version: Published version

Copyright: © 2020 Faravid – Historian ja arkeologian tutkimuksen aikakauskirja

Rights: CC BY 4.0

Rights url: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Please cite the original version:

Roiko-Jokela, H., & Roiko-Jokela, T. (2020). A Century with the Same Problem - Similar but still Different Solutions? : Four perspectives on the security policies of Finland and Estonia during the approximate period of 1917-2018. *Faravid*, 49, 111-135.

<https://faravid.journal.fi/article/view/97502>

Heikki Roiko-Jokela & Tapio Roiko-Jokela

A Century with the Same Problem – Similar but still Different Solutions?

Four perspectives on the security policies of Finland and Estonia during the approximate period of 1917–2018

Preface

Background of the Article

Nowadays, the Baltic Sea Region is full of tensions because relations between the European Union / NATO¹ and Russia have worsened. But that is not the first time when there are tensions in the Baltic Sea Region. Nevertheless, the small countries of that region have managed to survive and preserve their independence. For instance, Finland and Estonia, the countries analyzed in this article, have celebrated the 100th anniversaries of their independence in 2017 and 2018, respectively, and their history has been topic for many studies in Finland.

Kalevi Holsti has studied Finnish foreign policy of the early 1920s. He wrote his dissertation² on his father's – Rudolf Holsti, a Finnish Foreign Minister – political activities concerning Finnish foreign policy. His research was also published in Finnish³. This dissertation is important when one wants to understand Finnish security policy decisions, especially, when they are related to Estonia, in the early 1920s because Rudolf Holsti had an important role while the Finns were shaping their foreign policy and when they orientated to Border State cooperation, of which architect was Rudolf Holsti.

¹ North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

² Kalevi Holsti, *The origins of the Finnish Foreign Policy, 1918–1922: Rudolf Holsti's Role in the Formulation of Policy*, published in 1961.

³ Kalevi Holsti, *Suomen ulkopoliittikka suuntaansa etsimässä vuosina 1918–1922: Rudolf Holstin osuus*, published in 1963.



Kalervo Hovi's studies⁴ are dealing with themes related to Baltic States and/or Finland. They give information about the activities, related on Baltic Sea Regions, of different countries. Kalervo Hovi has studied French policy but neither the British policy have been neglected. Olavi Hovi has studied British Baltic Area policy in the period of 1918–1920 in his dissertation⁵. He has also studied Finnish volunteers in the Estonian Independence War.

Seppo Zetterberg has written his dissertation⁶ on political relations between Finland and Estonia. Estonia has also been dealt with in his later publications⁷. These publications give important information about history of Estonia. Due to that, it is important to acknowledge these publications when it comes to research on history of Estonia.

These above mentioned studies have formed the first wave of Finnish research on the Baltic history. Later studies have been made, for instance, by Heikki Roiko-Jokela, who has studied Rudolf Holsti's role in Finnish foreign policy concerning the international de jure -recognition of the Baltic States' independence and Border State cooperation in his dissertation⁸. He has also made other studies related to Finnish-Estonian relations⁹.

During the second wave of Finnish research on Baltic history, Jari Leskinen wrote his dissertation¹⁰, of which theme was secret military cooperation between Finland

⁴ Kalervo Hovi, *Cordon sanitaire or barrière de l'est? The Emergence of the New French Western European Alliance Policy, 1917–1919*, published in 1975; Kalervo Hovi, *Alliance de revers. Stabilization of France's Alliance Policies in East Central Europe, 1919–1921*, published in 1984; Kalervo Hovi, *Estland in den Anfängen seiner Selbstständigkeit. Die Tagebuchaufzeichnungen des dänischen Generalkonsuls in Tallinn Jens Cristian Johansen 13.12.1918–29.5.1919*, published in 1976; Kalervo Hovi, *Interessensphären im Baltikum. Finnland im Rahmen der Ostpolitik Polens 1919–1922*, published in 1984.

⁵ Olavi Hovi, *The Baltic Area in British Policy 1918–1920 I. From the Compiègne Armistice to the Implementation of the Versailles Treaty, 11.11.1918–20.1.1920*, published in 1980.

⁶ Seppo Zetterberg, *Suomi ja Viro 1917–1919. Poliittiset suhteet syksystä 1917 reunavaltiopolitiikan alkuun*, published in 1977.

⁷ As examples, we can mention the following publications: Seppo Zetterberg, *Die Liga der Fremdvölker Russlands 1916–1918. Ein Beitrag zu Deutschland antirussischem Propagandakrieg unter der Fremdvölker Russlands im ersten Weltkrieg*, published in 1978; Seppo Zetterberg, *Historian jännevälit*, published in 1995; Seppo Zetterberg, *Samaa sukua, eri maata: Viro ja Suomi – historiasta huomiseen*, published in 2004; Seppo Zetterberg, *Viron historia*, published in 2007.

⁸ Heikki Roiko-Jokela, *Ihanteita ja reaali politiikkaa: Rudolf Holstin toiminta Baltian maiden kansainvälisen de jure -tunnustamisen ja reunavaltioyhteistyön puolesta 1918–1920*, published in 1995.

⁹ We may mention, for instance, the books Heikki Roiko-Jokela, *Virallista politiikkaa – epävirallista kanssakäymistä. Suomen ja Viron suhteiden käännekohtia 1860–1991*, published in 1997; and Heikki Roiko-Jokela, *Etelän tien kulkija. Vilho Helanen (1899–1952)*, published in 1997, edited by him (the latter one in cooperation with Heikki Seppänen).

¹⁰ Jari Leskinen, *Vaiettu Suomen silta. Suomen ja Viron salainen sotilaallinen yhteistoiminta Neuvostoliiton varalta 1930–1940*, published in 1997.

and Estonian between the World Wars. At the late 1990s, Marko Lehti continued the list of Finnish studies concerning the Baltic history by writing his dissertation¹¹.

Finnish researches are not the only ones, who have studied relations between Finland and Estonia. As for Estonian researches, we may mention Heino Arumäe, who has studied Estonian independence process and foreign policy¹². In addition we may mention Toomas Karjahärm, who has studied Finland and Estonia as neighbours of Russia¹³. The Third Estonian researcher to be mentioned is Magnus Ilmjärv, who dealt with the foreign policy of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in his dissertation; he has also, for instance, studied the Great power policies towards Northern Europe¹⁴. Mati Graf is also important to be mentioned. He has studied, for instance, Estonian policy during the first years of the Estonian independence¹⁵. In addition to above mentioned researches, Eero Medijainen should be mentioned. He has studied Estonian foreign policy and its Baltic State orientation¹⁶.

Research Questions and Materials and Methods of the Article

This article is continuation to tradition of Finnish research on Baltic history. The main theoretical background idea of this article is that societal crises have an influence on the international relations and security policy decisions of countries. This fact applies to both Finland and Estonia when modifications in the policies of

¹¹ Marko Lehti, *A Baltic League as a Construct of the New Europe. Expressing Sovereignty and the Territorial Imagination in Estonia, Latvia, and Finland after the First World War*, published in 1998.

¹² Heino Arumäe, *Vandenõu või revolutsioon. Vabadus- või kodusõda*, published in 1987; Heino Arumäe, *Der diplomatische Kampf um die Schaffung des Baltischen Bundes 1919–1925*, published in 1971; Heino Arumäe, *Eesti vabariigi välispoliitika üldised suundumused aastail 1920–1924 – kaks algust. Eesti Vabariik – 1920 ja 1990 aastad*, published in 1998; Heino Arumäe, *Noch einmal zum sowjetisch-deutschen Nichtangriffsakt*, published in 1989.

¹³ Toomas Karjahärm, “Venäjän varjossa: Suomi ja Viro Venäjän naapureina”. *Virallista politiikkaa – epävirallista kanssakäymistä: Suomen ja Viron suhteiden käännekohtia 1860–1991*, published in 1997; Toomas Karjahärm, *Ida ja Lääne vahel. Eesti-Vene suhted 1850–1917*, published in 1998.

¹⁴ Magnus Ilmjärv, *Silent Submission. Formation of Foreign Policy of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Period from mid-1920-s to Annexation in 1940*, published in 2004; Magnus Ilmjärv, *Eesti välispoliitika 1930. aastatel – sõja ja rahu vahel*, published in 2004; *Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Eastern Pact Project*, published in 2006; Magnus Ilmjärv, *Hääletu alistumine. Eesti, Läti ja Leedu välispoliitilises orientatsiooni kujunemine ja iseseisvuse kaotus 1920. aastate keskpaigast anneksioonini*, published in 2004; Magnus Ilmjärv, *Põhijooni Euroopa suurriikide välispoliitikast Kirde-Euroopas 1930. aastate teisel poolel*, published in 2004.

¹⁵ Mati Graf, *Eesti rahvusriik. Ideed ja lahendused: ärkamisajast Eesti Vabariigi sünnini*, published in 1993; Mati Graf, *Parteid Eesti Vabariigis 1918–1934. Koos eellooga (1905–1917) ja järellooga (1934–1940)*, published in 2000.

¹⁶ Eero Medijainen, *Eesti välispoliitika Balti suund 1926–1934*, published in 1991.

the great powers, alterations in societal systems, and changes in local hegemony have transformed the geopolitical map of the Baltic Sea Region. At the same time, these changes have directed the actions and decisions of states when they have tried to preserve and secure their interests. Now, in the aftermath of the 100th anniversaries of the independence of Finland and Estonia, we ask: How have Finland and Estonia reacted to changes in international politics, especially questions related to Russia, with regard to their security policies? And secondly, what is the historical perspective on modern Finnish and Estonian security policy decisions and how do previous events explain the decisions made in the last few years?

In order to give answers to the above mentioned questions, we have to form our methodological approach. This article is a study on history of diplomacy and it is empirical, material-driven research, which is mainly based on some of above mentioned research books and articles and author's own primary source based scientific monographs. Embassy reports of Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland from London, Tallinn, Washington, and Paris, for instance, have been in central role in these monographs. In addition, documents and newspaper collections, which shed light on Finland and Estonia's relations, have been used. When it comes to the documents of the National Archives of Finland, special mention must be given to Rudolf Holsti's, a Finnish Foreign Minister, private archive. Foreign archives should also be mentioned; Memories and embassy reports concerning Finland, which are collected from English Public Record Office, and collections of Eesti Riigiarhiiv concerning Finland have been used. The last section of this article ('Finnish and Estonian security policies in the 21st century') before the conclusions is mostly based on Finnish and Estonian governmental programmes and newspapers.

Although, our article is material-driven, we also use some methodological tools in order to explain and achieve further comprehension about Finnish and Estonian security policies. As for the methods of the studies on international relations, they have long traditions. Despite these traditions, the theories of studies on international relations are changing. New theoretical ways of approach¹⁷ are made and they enrich the research field of the international relations but, at the same time, they are a challenge for the old research traditions and cause fragmentation. Due to new theories of international relations, one may ask, are the old traditions lost their importance? One may also ask, what themes should be taken into account while studying international relations? Answers to both questions are available.

The old traditions are important and they have their own role while studying international relations. One just have to create cohesion between them and new theories. This can be achieved via conceptual specification.

¹⁷ For newer theories, see, for instance, Michael Nicholson, *International Relations. A Concise Introduction*. New York University Press, New York 2002, passim.

Because the research field of the international relations is fragmented, it is reasonable to be defined conceptually, which means that the different theoretical dimensions of the studies on international relations get their own role. One way to do that is using the micro and macro levels, borrowed from Economics.

The separation to the micro and macro levels can be made in three different parts: the first is defining the geographical area of the study; the second is defining the study thematically; and the third is defining, what themes are used to explain the results of the study. These separation lines are illustrated in the following table.

	Micro level	Macro level
Separation line I: Geographical area	One country or local level	A few countries or global level
Separation line II: Thematic of the study	How agents act?	How international relations work?
Separation line III: Explaining the results	Factors directly related to the subject of the study (E.g. geopolitics, demography, folk psychology, national history, political leaders...)	Global factors (E.g. climate change; world economy; global threats such as terrorism; international organizations...)

Table I: The micro and macro levels of the international relations.

The first separation line is used to delineate the study to the national or local level of the international relations (micro level) or to many countries, even to global level of the international relations (macro level). The second separation line is used to direct the thematical dimension of the study. It tells whether the study is orientated to analyse how agents act in international relations (micro level) or is it focused on how international relations work (macro level).

The third separation line is used to define, which themes are used to explain research results. As for the micro level, one focus on the themes directly related to the subject of the study. The macro level means that one is interested in factors, which affect not only to the subject of the study but also much wider (see table I). Why these separation lines are valuable?

The separation line I and II helps to define the main focus of the study and the separation line III helps to choose what theoretical ways of approach one may use. If the macro level is chosen, one should take a look to newer theories; if the micro level is chosen, the older theories might be useful.

Our article is based on the above mentioned micro and macro level separations. As for the first separation line, we use the micro level. We analyse local level

international relation (Finnish and Estonian security policies). The second separation line also follows the content of the micro level because we analyse how Finland and Estonia have acted. The third separation line also follows the ideas of the micro level.

In order to find explanations for Finnish and Estonian security policies from the micro level, we apply some parts of Pierre Renouvin and Jean-Baptiste Duroselle's, who were French Historians, theoretical way of approach to international relations. Renouvin and Duroselle's way of approach dates back to the 1960s and, thus, it does not represent the latest theories of studies on international relations. After all, their theory should be mentioned because it has formed the base for later theories and it fits well to the idea of the micro level of the international relations. The aspects of the Renouvin and Duroselle's way of approach, which we use, are related to geopolitics, demography and folk psychology. We also note that the personalities of national leaders and politics have an effect on the national policies and, thus, they have been included in our article's methodological base.¹⁸

In order to use the above mentioned aspects, they must be defined in our article's context:

Firstly, geopolitics means geographical factors, which have an effect on international relations. They are, for instance, borders, bodies of waters, and the geographical sizes of the countries. Secondly, demography means factors related to population such as number of inhabitants and whether the countries are homogeneous or heterogeneous.

Thirdly, folk psychological factors means schemas, which are adopted by Finns and Estonians, concerning question how did they understand and see their security political location? In practice this means that people adopt different kind of fears, believes and desires, which are based on, for instance, their national history and experiences. For instance, if a group of people share narratives about their history or future and they emphasize these narratives much enough, they can form mutual understanding concerning questions such as who are their allies, who is threat? Of course, these folk psychological schemas are not stable and everybody does not share them but in small countries they can be widely accepted, especially if they are based on mutually shared experiences.

These folk psychological factors have an effect on national policies. We give an example: The Estonian security policy decision before the years of Second World War did not guarantee security for Estonia. Instead of that, the country was drawn into a war and it lost its independence. During the Soviet Era Estonians adopted

¹⁸ Kalervo Hovi, "Kansainvälisten suhteiden historian ranskalainen koulukunta". *Katsauksia, tulkintoja, näkemyksiä historiasta historioitsijalle*. Edited by Marjatta Hietala and Päivi Setälä and Matti Viikari. Historiallinen arkisto 82. Suomen Historiallinen Seura, Helsinki 1984a, 89–99 (94–97). See more about Renouvin and Duroselle's way of approach from their original publication: Pierre Renouvin and Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *L'introduction à l'histoire des relations internationales*. 1964, passim.

mutually accepted schema that Estonia should never again lost its independence nor become a piece on a playing board of Great Powers. In this mutually accepted schema, national fears (losing the independence or becoming a piece on chess board), believes (independence and own policy are better options), and desires (to be independent and gain support if needed) drew their power from history and national experiences. This is, for instance, what forms the folk psychological aspect in the Estonian security policy: Estonians share mutual understanding that their future should not replay their experiences from past nor their country should follow previous policy that failed to guarantee their security and independence. Since this believe is strong in the country, policy makers take it into account in their policy decisions.¹⁹

Fourthly, personalities of the national leaders as analytical tool means that national leaders might be able to affect national policies. For instance, if they keep some countries in high value or dislike some alliances, they might be able to modify national policies in some extent. This is particularly important factor if national leaders have political right to really lead their country in foreign affairs. In that situation, their personal ideas, experiences and preferences might give explanations to question why a country act as it does?

The Collapse of the Russian Empire

The Baltic Sea Region was under of the hegemony of two countries until the First World War. Russia ruled the Baltic States and the eastern parts of the Baltic Sea while the southern coasts of the sea were controlled by the German Empire. The geopolitical map of the area altered when the German Empire collapsed and Russia fell into internal crises that meant two revolutions and a civil war. Because of these alterations, a few nations in the border areas of Russian declared their independence²⁰. Of these countries, Finland and Poland were quite stable, but Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania could not be sure about their futures because the paths of international politics were uncertain. As for security policy, no matter what the international

¹⁹ Cultural relations might be seen as a part of folk psychology. About the cultural relations between Finland and the Baltic States, see, for instance, Kari Alenius, "The Cultural Relations between the Baltic Countries and Finland 1917–1997". *Relations between the Nordic Countries and the Baltic Nations in the XX Century*. Edited by Kalervo Hovi. University of Turku, Turku 1998, 128–187 (passim).

²⁰ These countries are known as Border States.

statuses of these countries were, they had their own problems. Finland and Estonia were not exceptions.²¹

The security political situation of Finland was problematic after the country had gained its independence because both the future and future policy of Russia were unsure. In that problematic situation, it was widely accepted in Finland in the early 1920s that the country could not secure its independence by itself while it was a neighbour of a great power. Had there been a conflict, Finland with a small population and geographical size would have been outmatched by Russia. Consequently, Finland had to seek allies or support from other countries or international organizations.²²

As the previous paragraph is highlighting, folk psychology, geopolitics and demography had an influence on Finnish security policy in the early 1920s: Geopolitics was important because of the fact that Finland shared a long border with its eastern neighbour, which demography was far more advantageous in conflict situation than Finland's one. These factors are important but they do not tell the whole story.

Folk psychology is also an important factors as for Finnish security policy in the early 1920s. Finland had recently gained independence from Russia, of which current policy was hardly predictable. It is also important to remember that Finland had suffered from the policy of Russian many times during the history. Consequently, the Finns did not trust their eastern neighbour. In addition, it is folk psychological desire to preserve the independent status of nation and in the aftermath of the Finnish Civil War the values of the white Finns were highlighted in Finnish policy. Although, they were not mutually accepted in the country, many people in power position shared mutual political understanding that bolshevism and Russia were a threat to Finland. It is also important to notice that many Finnish national leaders were willing to cooperate with Germany in the late 1910s and in the early 1920s they emphasized western countries. Thus, Russia was 'natural threat' in their political views. Due

²¹ Eesti Riigiarhiiv, Eesti ja Soome suhted 1920–1925, Dokumentide Kogumik 1, edited by Heino Arumäe: document 1, Soome välisministri pro memoria, August 1919, pages 12–13; document 3, Herman Gummerus Soome peaministrile, 8th of August 1919, pages 14–16. Jukka-Pekka Pietiäinen, "Suomen ulkopolitiikan alku". *Itenäistymisen vuodet 1917–1920. 3. Katse tulevaisuuteen*. Edited by Ohto Manninen. Valtion painatuskeskus, Helsinki 1992, 252–472 (252–257, 405–414); Heikki Roiko-Jokela, *Ihanteita ja reaalipolitiikkaa: Rudolf Holstin toiminta Baltian maiden kansainvälisen de jure -tunnustamisen ja reunavaltioyhteistyön puolesta*. Studia Historica Jyväskylänseia 52. PhD diss. University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä 1995, 13; Heikki Roiko-Jokela, "Reaalipoliittiset edut vaativat rannikkomme eteläpuolelle ystävällisen maan". *Baltia Suomen lähialuepolitiikassa 1918–1996*". *Virallista politiikkaa – epävirallista kanssakäymistä. Suomen ja Viron suhteiden käännekohtia 1860–1991*. Edited by Heikki Roiko-Jokela. Atena, Jyväskylä 1997a, 65–94 (67).

²² Rudolf Holsti's PM: Suomen ulkopolitiittisista mahdollisuuksista 29.8.1919. Rudolf Holsti's Collection, File 36. Finnish National Archive; Pietiäinen 1992, 367–368, 405; Roiko-Jokela 1997a, 67.

to these factors, Russia was seen as a threat by the Finns, who tried to find foreign support to guarantee the independence of their country.

The Finns considered the League of Nations, the western great powers, the Scandinavian countries, and the Border States²³ as possible allies, but there were some problems. Firstly, Sweden did not want to cooperate with Finland because relations between these countries were cold²⁴. Sweden also hesitated to bind itself to a country located next to unstable Russia, which meant from a geopolitical point of view that the country was in a problematic situation. Consequently, Swedes continued their neutrality policy. Secondly, the Finns did not expect to receive any support from the western great powers because they were unsure about the future of Russia and based their policies in the Baltic Sea Region on their own interests. Thirdly, the Finns considered the League of Nations weak. Thus, the only alternative for Finland was to rely on the Border States, especially on the Baltic States, which were in a similar geopolitical and demographical situation with Finland. It should be noted that Rudolf Holsti, a Finnish Foreign Minister, and his political views also greatly influenced the decision of Finland to concentrate on cooperation with the Border States. Cooperation with the Border States was a natural path for Finland because the support of Estonia, given its geopolitical location, was considered crucial for the security of the southern coasts of Finland. In addition, Finnish policymakers thought that the activities of Russia towards the Baltic States could also have an influence on Finland. Therefore, Finland could not stay out of the events in the Baltics.²⁵

The comment of the members of the Finnish Agrarian Party tells a lot about the Finnish attitudes:

²³ The purpose of the Border State cooperation was to form an alliance against Russian aggression but it was also a way to keep Russia and Germany separated from each other and in that way prevent them from strengthening through mutual cooperation. For more information about Finland and Border State cooperation see Kalevi Holsti, *Suomen ulkopoliittikka suuntaansa etsimässä vuosina 1918–1922. Rudolf Holstin osuus*. Translated into Finnish by Raimo Heiskanen. Kustannusosakeyhtiö Tammi, Helsinki 1963, 161–184; Roiko-Jokela 1995, passim.

²⁴ Both Finland and Sweden were interested in controlling Åland Islands in the turn of the 1920s but the decision of the League of Nations give the area to Finland, which turned relations between the countries colder.

²⁵ Finnish National Archive, Rudolf Holsti's Collection, File 36, Holsti's PM: Suomen ulkopoliittisista mahdollisuuksista 29.8.1919. Pietiäinen 1992, 424–438; Roiko-Jokela 1995, 254–256, 265, 274; Roiko-Jokela 1997a, 67; Seppo Zetterberg, *Viron historia*. Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seuran toimituksia 1118. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, Helsinki, 2007, 532–533. It was not an easy task to make decisions on security policy in Finland; for more information see Roiko-Jokela 1995, passim; Seppo Zetterberg, *Suomi ja Viro 1917–191*. *Poliittiset suhteet syksystä 1917 reunavaltio politiikan alkuun*. Historiallisia tutkimuksia 102. PhD diss. Suomen Historiallinen Seura, Helsinki, 1977, 269–276. For more information about Rudolf Holsti and his activities on the Border State cooperation see Kalevi Holsti 1963, passim; Roiko-Jokela 1995, passim.

*“Small nations”, they reasoned, “are nothing but chessmen on the political chessboard of the great powers – the union of small countries is the possibility of the future – common enemy of the border countries is Russia.”*²⁶

Summarizing the contents of the previous paragraphs from our article’s methodological point of view, we can say: if folk psychology and geopolitics result in Finland’s attempts to seek support, they had also an influence on the question from where Finland tried to get support. As for geopolitics, it, on the one hand, partly caused that Sweden did not want to cooperate with Finland. On the other hand, Finland was interested in cooperation with the Baltic States because of their geopolitical location.

All in all, the importance of geopolitics should not be over emphasized. It cannot completely explain, why Finland sought cooperation with the Baltic States. In addition to geopolitics, one has to understand some other aspects too: The Finns had adopted an assumption that the League of Nations was weak and the western powers based their policies in the Baltic Sea Region on their own interest. At the same time, the Finns believed that the Baltic States had the same risk scenarios as Finland had and, in addition, they identified their country – at this time – to the Baltics rather than the Nordic countries²⁷. In that situation, these factors would have united the countries. One should note that it is not important whether or not these assumptions were correct but it is crucial that the Finns thought so and based their activities on these assumptions.

The development of Russia was considered as a threat in Estonia and in the other Baltic States. For instance, the Russian Civil War was a problem for Estonia: If the Bolsheviks won the war, their political ideology could pose a threat to Estonia. If the white Russians won the war, they would not acknowledge Estonia as an independent country. To guarantee their independence, the Baltic States relied on the League of Nations, mutual cooperation, and acquiring allies, which was an understandable decision. Because the United Kingdom, which had held a position of power in the Baltic Sea, was doubtful about the future of the Baltic States and was giving up its position in the Baltic Sea, the small Baltic States could not rely on its assistance.

²⁶ Heikki Roiko-Jokela, ‘In Light and Shadow. Turning-Points in Finnish-Estonian Relations between the years 1860–1991’. *Relations between the Nordic Countries and the Baltic Nations in the XX Century*. Edited by Kalervo Hovi. University of Turku, Turku, 1998, 81–127 (92–93).

²⁷ Note that already in the late 1910s and in the early 1920s Finns emphasized kin-relationship, which was in some aspect a folk psychological way of view: people, who shared mutual historical background, was seen as a part of same kin.

Thus, local cooperation, although not easy because of their disagreements, was the only alternative for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.²⁸

Geopolitics and demography formed the base of Estonian security political worries. Estonia was a small country with small population located next to much larger and populous Russia / Soviet Union, of which future and policy were unsure. In addition to geopolitics and demography, folk psychological desire to preserve recently gained independence was also a factor, which explains why the Estonians sought security political support.

Finland was an alternative in Estonian security policy. The Estonians made contact with Finland in January 1921 and said that they would be interested in a defensive alliance with Finland. The reason for this is simple. The Estonians considered that two mutual problems brought the countries together: it was important for both to arrange their relations with Russia and maintain peace on the coasts of the Baltic Sea. Consequently, cooperation was a decision of realpolitik based on the mutual interests created by the countries' geopolitical location and recent history, and, of course, by the policies of the great powers.²⁹

Cooperation between the Border States seemed to be realistic until the Border State Conference in Warsaw from March 13th to 17th 1922, but the decisions of the conference were not ratified in Finland because of domestic disagreements over Finnish policy. Subsequently, the military and political aspects of Border State cooperation were abandoned by Finland and Estonia. Therefore, Finland began to rely on the League of Nations and Nordic countries in its security policy while Estonia approached Latvia and Lithuania. Finland and Estonia were now two little countries, which were guarding their interest even against each other. The security policy solutions adopted by Finland and Estonia were tested when the Second World War began and relations with the Soviet Union and relations between the Soviet

²⁸ Wilton From Kaunas to Curzon 11.3.1921, Foreign Office (FO). 419/5, Confidential Print Baltic States and Finland, Public Record Office (PRO); Wilton's Telegram from Riia 17.7.1921, FO. 371/6730; Rennie From Helsinki 3.11.1921, FO. 371/6730, PRO; 'The Baltic States' mf. 118. Department of History of University of Turku; Magnus Ilmjärv, *Silent Submission. Formation of Foreign Policy of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Period from mid-1920-s to Annexation in 1940*. Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis. Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia 24. PhD diss. Stockholm University, Stockholm 2004a, 38–40; Roiko-Jokela 1995, 97, 250–251. For more information about Estonian policy, see Heino Arumäe, *Eesti Vabariigi välispoliitika üldised suundumused aastail 1920–1924 – Kaks algust: Eesti Vabariik – 1920 ja 1990 aastad*. Tallinn 1998, passim; Magnus Ilmjärv, *Hääletu alistumine. Eesti, Läti ja Leedu välispoliitilise orientatsiooni kujunemine ja iseseisvuse kaotus 1920. aastase keskpaigast anneksioonini*. Tallinn 2004b, passim; Ilmjärv 2004a, passim; Ero Medijainen, *Eesti välispoliitika Balti suund 1926–1934*. Tartu 1991, passim.

²⁹ Pietiäinen 1992, 415–424; Roiko-Jokela 1995, 256–257, 267.

Union and Germany formed the main problem for Finnish and Estonian security policies.³⁰

The Second World War

When Border State cooperation was no longer an available alternative to resolve security political problems, the Finns began to emphasize a non-alignment policy in their security policy decisions, which meant that the League of Nations became more important for Finland. But this was not a sustainable solution: the League of Nations proved to be inoperative and the Soviet Union robust. In addition, Germany was becoming more powerful in the Baltic Sea Region. Therefore, Finland had to reconsider its security policy decisions. In this changing situation, the Finns began to look to the Nordic Countries, especially to Sweden, which also meant that the Finnish folk psychological identification changed as their understanding about their ‘allies’ or at least the group to identify themselves changed: the Finns began to identify their country with Scandinavia and the neutral Nordic group instead of the Baltics.³¹

Nevertheless, Finnish policy did not mean that the Baltic countries were not important for Finland. The Finns were merely careful about their policy because they wanted to avoid a situation in which they would have to defend the Baltic countries. On the other hand, the politically stable Baltic States³² were essential to Finnish security policy. Thus, the careful policy towards the Baltic States was a way to prevent problems before they even appeared, which was an important aspect because the Finns thought that an active policy could emphasize tensions close to Finland when the Soviet Union could interpret the active policy of Finland in the Baltics as being aimed against it. Therefore, Finland’s careful policy was meant to stabilize the Baltics and avoid tensions close to its own borders. Nevertheless, some cooperation between Finland and Estonia was also planned after Rudolf Holsti became Foreign

³⁰ Kalervo Hovi, *Interessensphären im Baltikum: Finnland im Rahmen der Ostpolitik Polens 1919–1922*. *Studia Historica* 13. Suomen Historiallinen Seura, Helsinki 1984b, 151–163; Pietiäinen 1992, 415–424; Roiko-Jokela 1995, 258–259; Roiko-Jokela 1997a, 78–79; Toomas Karjahärm, “Venäjän varjossa: Suomi ja Viro Venäjän naapureina”. *Virallista politiikkaa – epävirallista kanssakäymistä: Suomen ja Viron suhteiden käännekohtia 1860–1991*. Edited by Heikki Roiko-Jokela. Atena, Jyväskylä 1997, 31–61 (61). For more information about Finnish domestic problems concerning the ratification of the Warsaw Pact see Roiko-Jokela 1995, 258–259.

³¹ Roiko-Jokela 1997a, 79–81.

³² The politically stable Baltic States were a preference in Finnish security policy: the Finns did not want any foreign interventions to occur in the Baltics. They hoped the Baltic States could preserve their current independent statuses. One should note the fact the Finnish security political preference did not mean that the Baltic States were internally stable, which they were not. Their governments were short-lived and thus there was no governmental continuation in the Baltic States. See more information Zetterberg 2007, 525–529; Mati Graf, *Parteid Eesti Vabriigi 1918–1934. Koos eellooga (1905–1917) ja järellooga (1934–1940)*. Tallinn 2000, passim.

Minister of Finland again in 1936. Finland, though, was still careful about Estonian cooperation and the cooperation did not proceed because of the resistance of the Soviet Union and Germany.³³

Now, there is a need to highlight a few key factors regarding Finnish security policy. The Finns had learnt folk psychological lesson. Russia was still considered as a threat, but the Finns had adopted more cautious policy after the first years after they had gained independence. Consequently, the Finns did not want to pull out any provocative policy and the Finnish folk psychology was now characterized by wariness. In addition, the importance of the national leaders should not be neglected when one is evaluating Finnish policy. Although Finnish Policy was based on cautiousness regarding the Baltic States and was more active towards the Nordic countries, Holsti's personal preferences could result in some contacts to Estonia.

The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (1939)³⁴ delineated the spheres of interest between the Soviet Union and Germany, which altered the geopolitical map of the Baltic Sea Region. Finland, the Baltic States and Poland were divided between the two countries. Consequently, Finland and Estonia were attached to the sphere of interest of the Soviet Union. When the Soviet Union began to put the pact into operation, the decisions of Finland and Estonia were different. Estonia accepted the demands of the Soviet Union and, thus, briefly avoided a crisis. But that decision meant, at first, that the Soviet Union established military bases in the country and later led to the creation of the Soviet Estonia. As for Finland, the country tried to negotiate with the Soviet Union and after unsuccessful negotiations the Winter War started. Finland was alone in the Winter War because its previous security policy decisions gave no guarantees of support from other countries. The war, the territorial losses and the internal societal problems related to the war were problematic but, despite everything Finland preserved its independence.³⁵

Although, Finnish and Estonian security policy decisions were different and events related to the Winter War were having a negative influence on relations between Finland and Estonia, Finland mattered in Estonian security policy in the early 1940s. The Estonians hoped to get support from Finland against the threat posed by the Soviet Union. Ultimately in the summer of 1940, Estonia appealed, as one last try to fulfil the folk psychological desire to preserve national sovereignty, to the so-called Pääts' political testament: Finland and Estonia would unite as a federation

³³ Roiko-Jokela 1995, 80–81.

³⁴ This pact had importance even decades later when Estonia reclaimed its independence. See Heino Arumäe, *Noch einmal zum sowjetisch-deutschen Nichtangriffspakt*. Frankfurt am Main 1989, passim.

³⁵ Heikki Roiko-Jokela, "Yli Suomenlahden – kohtalona Suomi". *Virallista politiikkaa – epävirallista kanssakäymistä: Suomen ja Viron suhteiden käännekohtia 1860–1991*. Edited by Heikki Roiko-Jokela. Atena, Jyväskylä 1997, 182–228 (182–183). More detailed about Estonian policy, see Ilmjärv 2004a, 342–428.

with a common national defence, foreign policy, and economic policy. The Finns' reaction was not something that the Estonians hoped for. Finland did not want to intervene in the Baltic policy of the Soviet Union for realpolitik reasons. The reaction of Finland was similar when the Estonians again took up the federation idea while Germany was ruling in Estonia. The reason for this is simple: the Germans did not recognise Estonia as an independent country and they outlawed contacts between Estonia and Finland. In that situation, Finland did not want to act independently regarding Estonia because relations to Estonia were not allowed to have any impact on the relations between Finland and Germany and, thus, affect the countries' shared front against the Soviet Union.³⁶

The importance of Germany in relations between Finland and Estonia indicates a change in Finnish security policy. Before the Second World War, Finland's security policy emphasized a non-alignment policy and the importance of the League of Nations, as well as neutrality and the Nordic countries. During the war, Finland became geopolitically isolated and, after the Winter War, the Finns were afraid that the Soviet Union could attack Finland. Consequently, the Finns began to seek support. Because of the isolated location of Finland and the prevailing war situation, there was only one alternative for getting support: Germany. That is why, Finland based its security political efforts on Germany when Germans attitudes towards Finland improved in 1940.

After the Second World War Finnish security policy was based on geopolitical realities. It was accepted that Finland was a neighbour of a super power and, thus the Finns tried to avoid a situation in which their political decisions could provoke the Soviet Union. Consequently, there were three principles in Finnish policy: maintaining good relations with the east, emphasising neutrality, and seeking freedom of movement in foreign policy. These principles are deep in Finnish policy and they may be considered as parts of Finnish folk psychology, which is an important factor even when one is analysing the present day Finnish security policy. At the same time, the special role of the Baltic States disappeared from Finnish security policy. The Baltic States were, de facto, parts of the Soviet Union and the relations with them were handled via Moscow. As for Estonia, the country lost its independent security

³⁶ Roiko-Jokela 1997a, 81; Roiko-Jokela 1997b, 183, 185, 192–193; Heikki Roiko-Jokela, *Unelma vapaudesta: Virolaisten pako Saksan sorron alta Suomeen, elämää Suomessa, salamatkustusta Ruotsiin, luovutuksia Neuvostoliittoon noin 1942–1955*. Kopijyvä, Jyväskylä 2001, 56; Seppo Zetterberg, "Historian jännevälit". *Viro, historia, kansa, kulttuuri*. Edited by Seppo Zetterberg. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, Helsinki 1995, 45–145 (121); Zetterberg 2007, 541. See more about Finnish and Estonian relations during the German era Heikki Roiko-Jokela 2001, 56–62.

policy after it was annexed by the Soviet Union and, therefore, its decisions were based on the policy of the Soviet Union.³⁷

The Collapse of the Soviet Union

While the Soviet Union was collapsing, significant alterations were happening on the geopolitical map of the Baltic Sea Region. This meant the security policy situation of Finland developed in such a way that it mirrored the situation after the collapse of the Russian Empire. The Finns could not be sure about the development of the Soviet Union and the process of a super power's collapse created tensions close to Finland's borders. The central security risks were related to the Soviet Union / Russia: what the country's internal development would be and how it would influence Finland, were questions which were unanswerable. The activities of the Baltic States during the years 1988–1991³⁸, when they tried to reclaim their independent statuses, were particularly a process which created tensions close to Finland. This was a problem for Finland because it meant that a power vacuum could appear in the Baltics.³⁹

The official Finland was cautious in that uncertain situation. It should be noted that the word 'cautious' did not apply to unofficial activities. In his dissertation Heikki Rausmaa wrote that many Finnish citizens, organizations including political parties, and the lower levels of public government started to establish contacts with Estonia. In addition, according to Rausmaa, the leaders of Finnish foreign policy made the

³⁷ Mati Graf and Heikki Roiko-Jokela, *Vaarallinen Suomi: Suomi Eestin kommunistisen puolueen ja Neuvosto-Viron KGB:n silmin*. Minerva, Helsinki 2004, 22, 28; Roiko-Jokela 1997a, 81–82; Roiko-Jokela 1998, 99–108. See more about the meaning of Finland in Soviet-Estonia Mati Graf and Heikki Roiko-Jokela 2004, passim.

³⁸ See information about Estonian activities: Zetterberg 2007, 720–728.

³⁹ Tasavallan presidentin uudenvuodenpuhe 1.1.1989, 33, Ulkopoliittisia lausuntoja ja asiakirjoja (ULA), Ulkoministeriön julkaisuja (UMJ) 1991; Baltian tilanne, Ulkoasiain ministerin Pertti Paasion antama lausunto 27.3.1990, ULA 1990, UMJ 1992; Suomen suhtautuminen Baltian maihin, tasavallan presidentin lausunto tiedotusvälineille 10.1.1991, 101, ULA 1991, UMJ 1992; Mauno Koivisto, *Historian tekijät: II kautta*. WSOY, Helsinki 1995, 321–327, 393–404, 431–441; Seppo Zetterberg, *Samaa sukua, eri maata: Viro ja Suomi – historiasta huomiseen*. Evaraportti. Yliopistopaino, Taloustieto oy 2004, 16; Heikki Rausmaa, "Kyllä kulttuurin nimissä voi harrastella aika paljon". *Suomen ja Viron poliittiset suhteet keväästä 1988 diplomaattisuhteiden solmimiseen elokuussa 1991*. Historiallisia tutkimuksia Helsingin yliopistosta XXX. PhD diss. University of Helsinki, Helsinki 2013, 223–224; Heikki Roiko-Jokela, "Baltian maiden itsenäistyminen ja Suomen ulkopoliittikka". *Ulkopoliittikka* 3/1994. Ulkopoliittinen instituutti, Helsinki, 4–17 (4); Roiko-Jokela 1997a, 84; Heikki Roiko-Jokela, "Pienet maat suurvallan naapurissa: Suomen virallinen linjaus Baltian maiden uudelleen itsenäistymiseen". *Historia ja herramies: Seppo Zetterbergille omistettu juhlaKirja*. Edited by Kalevi Ahonen and Anssi Halmesvirta and Ilkka Nummela and Juha Sihvola. University of Jyväskylä 2005, 67–77 (67, 72). See more about Finnish attitudes towards the Baltic States' independence question Rausmaa 2013, passim; Roiko-Jokela 2005, passim.

decision to support non-governmental cooperation between Finland and Estonia. As for the official Finland, the country observed the development and reactions of the Soviet Union and, if official discussion occurred, the importance of a peaceful solution was emphasized. The Finns did not want to make any security political statements regarding the question of the independence of the Baltic States nor the development of the Soviet Union. The Finnish policy was simple. The situation in the Baltic States was an internal affair of the Soviet Union. This policy was based on the geopolitical fact and folk psychological lesson accepted after the Second World War. Finland was a neighbour of a great power and military might, which had to be remembered while considering own decisions.⁴⁰ The following citations give light to official Finland's attitudes and Finnish folk psychology:

*President Koivisto continued the discussion [- -] "Although the world is changing, the point of departure should be the premise that some things do not change and that others change very slowly. Where we are concerned, the initial premise should be that we shall continue to live surrounded by the same neighbours, with whom we have the most important of our international relations."*⁴¹

*Representatives of the Baltic States have ever more repeatedly requested that we intervene in their affairs. To date, we have preferred to pursue a different policy. In the past few years, we have been accustomed to pursue a good neighbour policy as the primary aim of our international endeavours. We have not pushed our opinions, but neither have they been asked of us. [- -] Our experience has indicated that a country should learn to stand on its own feet, without relying too much on foreign help, and, especially in the case of small country, it is important to have friends close by, and that enemies, should necessarily be any, be far away. [- -] The recent developments in the Baltic region arouse anxiety in us. The Finnish people are keeping a close eye on developments, and are following the neighbouring peoples difficulties with sympathy.*⁴²

⁴⁰ Tasavallan presidentin uudenvuodenpuhe 1.1.1989, 33, ULA, UMJ 1991; Baltian tilanne, Ulkoasiain ministerin Pertti Paasion antama lausunto 27.3.1990, ULA 1990, UMJ 1992; Suomen suhtautuminen Baltian maihin, tasavallan presidentin lausunto tiedotusvälineille 10.1.1991, 101, ULA 1991, UMJ 1992; Koivisto 1995, 21–327, 393–404, 431–441; Zetterberg 2004, 16; Rausmaa 2013, 223–224; Roiko-Jokela 1994, 4; Roiko-Jokela 1997a, 84; Roiko-Jokela 2005, 67, 72. See more about Finnish attitudes towards the Baltic States' independence question Rausmaa 2013, passim; Roiko-Jokela 2005, passim.

⁴¹ Roiko-Jokela 1998, 111.

⁴² Koivisto 1995, 394–395; Roiko-Jokela 1998, 115–116.

At this point, there is an interesting aspect in Finnish policy. During the Cold War Era, Finns trusted their national leaders and the it was adopted in folk psychology that the Soviet Union should not be irritated. Afterall, apart from the official Finland, Finns started to support Estonia. Thus one can say that Finnish folk psychology changed. As for 'ordinary' Finns they were not anymore so bind to the idea that with Soviet Union should be careful. At the same time the Finnish national leader bind themselves more strictly to old manners. They personal preferences were based on folk psychological lesson learned after the Second World War and, thus, they preferred more careful policy in official levels. Due to that, two folk psychological aspects in Finland changed. Firstly, 'ordinary' Finns were not anymore so careful with the matters concerning the Soviet Union. Secondly, the attitudes of Finns towards the president institute change. If it was widely trusted during the Cold War Era, now Finns acted against its desires.

In Finland, it was considered a fact that the Baltic States had reclaimed their independence in the summer of 1991. Consequently, the Finns stated that the de jure recognitions of the independence of the Baltic States, granted in the 1920s, were still valid because Finland had never officially recognized that the Baltic States belonged to the Soviet Union. The independence of the Baltic States did not remove tensions from the borders of Finland but made the Baltic Sea more important for the security of Russia. There was no longer a buffer zone protecting the Russian mainland. Thus, the events on the Baltic Sea directly influenced its heartlands. Consequently, Finland, too, could not ignore the Baltic Sea in its security policy due to the fact it was possible that, with the small Baltic States not able to fill the power vacuum in that area, some other agents would try to do so, causing a crisis in the Baltic Sea Region. In that scenario, the risk for Finland was that the crisis could influence Finland because of its close location to the country. That risk had to be neutralized, and to do that the Finns began to emphasize two themes in their security policy. These themes were integrating the Baltic States into the European community and improving relations between the Baltics and Nordic countries. Therefore, Finnish security policy highlighted stabilizing, a policy which was meant to prevent crises beforehand, which is usually an easier task than protecting against already existing ones.⁴³

In addition to the integration of the Baltic States to the west, Russian soldiers in the Baltic States were a central security policy question in Finland. In order to remove the tensions from the Baltic Sea Region, it was considered necessary for Russian soldiers to leave the Baltic States. Therefore, Finland actively took up the

⁴³ Restoration of Diplomatic Relations between Finland and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania; Speech by Foreign Minister Paavo Väyrynen, 29th of August 1991, 118, ULA 1991, UMJ 1992. Timo Kivimäki, "Suomen turvallisuuspoliittinen integraatiopäätös rationaalisena valintana". *Ulkopoliittikka* 3/1994. Ulkopoliittinen instituutti, Helsinki, 37–52 (38–39); Roiko-Jokela 1994, 5; Roiko-Jokela 1997a, 85–86.

theme in the OSCE⁴⁴ summit in Helsinki on May 15th, 1992. The Estonians agreed with the Finnish point of view. They thought that Russian soldiers could be a threat to the democracy and security of the Baltic Sea Region and Europe. The common security policy hope of the Finns and Estonians was fulfilled on August 31st, 1994 when Russian soldiers left the Baltic States (excluding soldiers in Kaliningrad). But there was still a problem: Russia no longer filled the power vacuum of the area, meaning that the small Baltic States had to do so. In addition, the development also emphasized the geopolitical importance of Kaliningrad in Russian Baltic Sea policy.⁴⁵

After reclaiming their independence, the Baltic States wanted to arrange their security policies by integrating into the west, which was in accordance with the hopes of Finland. The policies of the Baltic States were good news for Finland because they made it certain that there would be friendly governments beyond the southern border of Finland. As for the Estonians' desire to integrate into the west, one example is that they were interested in the security policy decisions of Finland and Sweden. For instance, there has been military cooperation (training of Estonian soldiers) between Finland and Estonia since the summer of 1992. This cooperation was based on the Estonians' decision to learn from the Finnish national defence system. Finland was also active. The country volunteered to coordinate the international aid aimed at developing the Estonian national defence. Both measures accorded with Finnish security policy: on the one hand, they helped to integrate Estonia into the west and, on the other hand, they strengthened the national defence of Estonia and thus, prevented a situation in which there would be a military vacuum in the Baltic States. Although there was cooperation between Finland and Estonia, Finland stressed that the cooperation did not mean Finland would guarantee the security of Estonia. Consequently, there was cooperation between the countries, but Finland continued its efforts to avoid too strong obligations towards the Baltic States.⁴⁶

Finnish and Estonian security policies in the late 1990s and in the 21st century

The current security policy questions and decisions are related to the development that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union. In that situation Finnish and Estonian security policy decisions changed. During the Cold War, Finland emphasized neutrality in its security policy and when the country joined the European Union in 1995 it stressed that it did not mean transforming its basic security policy. Nevertheless, the European Union membership means that Finland is committed to the common

⁴⁴ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

⁴⁵ Roiko-Jokela 1997a, 88–89; Zetterberg 2007, 734–736.

⁴⁶ Roiko-Jokela 1997a, 86–89; Jukka Tarkka, *Venäjän vieressä. Suomen turvallisuusilmasto 1990–2012*. Otava, Helsinki 2015, 71–72.

policy of the European Union, which means Finland is no longer neutral, but it is still unallied. That is why Finns' attitudes towards NATO were moderate and constructive in the 1990s: the country joined NATO's Partnership for Peace Programme but did not join the organization as a full member. Then, in making security policy decisions related to NATO, Finland tried to take the interests of Russia into account because NATO membership questions are related to the general security of the Baltic Sea Region. For that reason, any ill-judged decisions related to NATO could upset the stability of the area. From a Finnish point of view, a problem in NATO membership was/is that the advantages of membership could be negated by its risks. Membership could cause a crisis or draw Finland into a crisis which could be avoided in other situations.⁴⁷

It was typical for Finnish policy to desire keep up good relations to east while still having freedom of movement in foreign policy. This is a continuation for the Finnish policy, adopted after the Second World War. It is crucial to understand the geopolitical location of Finland if one is trying to understand Finnish policy. Because Finland is between NATO and Russia it have to either balance its policy to serve realpolitik or join to NATO or turn towards Russia. Joining to NATO or turning towards Russia means Finland could not continue its current balancing policy.

Finnish policy⁴⁸ is based on the former alternative. Reasons for that can be found from folk psychology and national leaders. After the Second world War, Finnish presidents Juho Paasikivi, Urho Kekkonen, and Mauno Koivisto emphasized good relations to east. That policy served Finland well during the Cold War. Due to that, there is some kind of folk psychological policy model, caused by previous national leaders, according of which the Finns want to be cautious when it comes to security political questions related to Russia.⁴⁹

The old folk psychological idea 'we should not irritate Soviet Union or Russia' is still there but the folk psychological change from the early 1990s when Estonians were reclaiming their independence can also be seen. Finns are careful but, still, they are more willing to do decision even though they might irritate Russia. For instance, Finland has joined to European Union (without 'permission' from its eastern neighbour) and cooperated with NATO.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, NATO has expanded eastwards, which Russia has considered a security policy threat. Therefore, the country has objected to the NATO memberships of the Baltic States. Regardless of the attitudes of Russia,

⁴⁷ Roiko-Jokela 1997a, 89–91; Tarkka 2015, 85–87. For more information about alliance commitments effects on security, see Kivimäki 1994, 41–47.

⁴⁸ About Finnish foreign and security policy during the years 1990–2012, see, for instance, Tarkka 2015, *passim*.

⁴⁹ This policy has faced been opposed, for instance, see Tarkka 2015, 85.

Estonia joined NATO and the European Union in 2004⁵⁰. The reason for Estonia's decision was that the country was seeking its own security policy after reclaiming its independent status and, consequently, it was interested in integrating into the European Union and NATO. In fact, as Seppo Zetterberg has written, 'the main goal of the Estonian foreign policy is guarantee the independence'⁵¹. Due to that, the national history of Estonia had an influence on the decision to integrate: The country did not receive any support during the Second World War and became a part of the Soviet Union – Estonia was war era or occupied by enemy roughly 50 years, which left traces on their attitudes towards Russia. Because of that, there is folk psychological fear about having to face a threat alone. Due to that, Estonian security policy aims to turn down the folk psychological threat of being alone by seeking foreign support. Because of the Estonians' decisions to join NATO and the European Union, Estonia is not a neutral or unallied country, but it has committed itself to two supranational organizations – in fact, the question of being 'allied or unallied' is a significant difference between the Finnish and Estonian security policies. Russia has feared that NATO could expand towards its borders and when Estonia joined the organization the fear actualized, which also meant the balance of the Baltic Sea, which was/is important in Finnish security policy, was destabilised. Consequently, the Baltic Sea Region became a potential area of tension.⁵²

Finland and Estonia have made their own security policy decisions and, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the main questions have been related to the reactions of Russia: Would Russia be satisfied with its new status or would it try to restore its former empire? How would Russia react to development in its neighbouring areas? What would be the status of the Russians living in the countries that declared their independence when the Soviet Union collapsed, from the Russian point of view?

Russia has become stronger and more stable during the late 1990s and that development has continued during the 21st century. Compared to the early 1990s⁵³, the policy of the country has developed towards a more aggressive and great power status

⁵⁰ About Baltic States NATO orientation, see Tāvlavs Jundzis, "The Baltic States, NATO, and the European Security and Defence Identity". *The Baltic States at Historical Crossroads*. Edited by Tāvlavs Jundzis. Latvian Academy of Sciences, Riga 2001, 114–137 (115–118).

⁵¹ Zetterberg 2007, 734.

⁵² European Union, "EU Member Countries in Brief", https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries_en, accessed 11.8.2018; NATO, "Member Countries", https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52044.htm?selectedLocale=en, accessed 11.8.2018; Jundzis 2001, 114; Roiko-Jokela 1997a, 90–91; Tarkka 2015, 235. For more information about Estonian NATO and European Union orientation, see Zetterberg 2007, 734–736. For more information about Russian attitudes towards NATO, see Tarkka 2015, 235–241; Jundzis 2001, 119–124.

⁵³ About Russian policy during the 1990s, see Zetterberg 2007, 734–735.

with an emphasis on the parts of its former empire and the international community⁵⁴. At the same time, the country has objected more strictly to the eastern expansion of NATO. Russia has also tried to secure its citizens' interests abroad, which, according to Heikki Lehtonen, Major in the Department of Strategy of the National Defence University of Finland, can be a threat to Russia's small neighbouring countries with significant Russian minorities. As a consequence of that development, the security policy decisions of Finland and Estonia were tested at the turn of the 2010s when relations between Russia and NATO / the European Union worsened because of the Ukrainian crisis. The security policy situation of the Baltic Sea Region became tenser because of NATO's presence in the area, with Russia considering the activities of NATO a threat, to which it has responded by strengthening its own military presence in the area.⁵⁵

How did Finland and Estonia react to the changes in the relations between Russia and western countries? The decisions of Finland and Estonia are similar but still different. Both countries are committed to the European Union's common policy and, consequently, they have condemned the aggressive policy of Russia. Nowadays, the crucial difference between the countries is in their attitudes towards NATO. Estonia has joined NATO and, according to the action programme (2011–2015) of its government, Estonia relies on NATO's 5th article, the European Union, and international organizations in its security policy. As an example of this, we can mention how, according to Finnish news organization YLE, the Estonian Defence Minister has emphasized that relations with Russia should be managed via the European Union and/or NATO: 'It is important for Estonia that no negotiation between Russia and one country [any of the Baltic States] occurs. Instead they should be managed via NATO or the European Union. They are coherent forces which must be taken seriously by Russia.'⁵⁶ This is a natural continuation of Estonian policy decisions made in the 1990s after the country reclaimed its independence: Estonia does not want to face any threats alone as it had to do during the Second World War.

⁵⁴ As Michael Nicholson has written, the collapse of the Soviet Union cleared international relations from tensions but, already in the early 2000s, he wrote the change may be temporal. See Nicholson 2002, 62–64.

⁵⁵ MTV, "Venäjän armeijalle lupa suojella kansalaisiaan asein ulkomailla", October 25 2009, <https://www.mtv.fi/uutiset/ulkomaat/artikkeli/venajan-armeijalle-lupa-suojella-kansalaisiaan-asein-ulkomailla/2166484#gs.jXYIz4k>, accessed 11.8.2018. About Russian policy and NATO presence in the Baltics, see, for instance, Tarkka 2015, 43–50, 242–244; Dmitri Trenin, "Russia and the Baltic States: Security Aspects". *The Baltic States at Historical Crossroads*. Edited by Jundzis Tālavš. Latvian Academy of Sciences, Riga 2001, 480–490, (passim). About Russian minorities in Estonia see, for instance, Zetterberg 2007, 735; Aksel Kirch, "Russians in Contemporary Estonia – Strategies of Integration into the Nation-State". *The Baltic States at Historical Crossroads*. Edited by Jundzis Tālavš. Latvian Academy of Sciences, Riga 2001, 529–541 (passim).

⁵⁶ YLE (written by Marjo Näkki), "Latvian sooloilu Venäjän kanssa hiertää Baltiassa", December 14 2016, <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-9352831>, accessed 22.8.2018.

In addition to that the above mentioned policy is continuation for previous Estonian policy, it is reasonable. As Tāvlavs Jundzis has written, powerful military alliances or bilateral unions might be good security political solutions for small countries.⁵⁷

As for Finland, the country has not joined NATO and in its government programme (2015) the country has been defined as militarily non-allied. Nevertheless, Finland has cooperation with NATO based on the Partnership for Peace Programme. The country also seeks other forms of practical cooperation with NATO and, in addition, it maintains the possibility of applying for membership of NATO; but, still, membership is not a written objective in the government programme, which is political continuation for the Finnish policy during the 1990s. Instead of alliances, Finland has emphasized international cooperation; constructive policy; defence cooperation with Sweden; seeking space for national flexibility in its foreign and security policy; and preparing against new threats such as hybrid influencing, cyber-attacks, and terrorism. As for international cooperation, we may mention as examples discussions about defence cooperation between Finland and France and the European intervention forces.⁵⁸

In addition, in its security policy Finland stresses the maintaining of bilateral relations, stability within the Nordic area and Baltic Sea Region, and maintaining convincing independent national defence ability. With regard to policy emphasizing bilateral relations, we can mention the meeting between the Presidents of Finland and Russia in Sochi on August 22nd, 2018. In that meeting, the Presidents discussed, for instance, the security of the Baltic Sea Region. As one can see, the security political environment of Finland has changed and the country has reacted by maintaining its national defence ability, seeking peaceful solutions, preparing against potential

⁵⁷ Council of the European Union, “EU Restrictive Measures in Response to the Crisis in Ukraine”, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/sanctions/ukraine-crisis/>, accessed 11.8.2018; Eesti Vabariigi valitsus, “Välis- ja julgeolekupoliitika ning riigikaitse”, <https://www.valitsus.ee/et/valis-ja-julgeolekupoliitika-ning-riigikaitse>, accessed 11.8.2018; Eesti Vabariik, “Riigikaitse”, <https://www.eesti.ee/et/eesti-vabariik/riigikaitse/>, accessed 11.8.2018; Republic of Estonia, Government. “Action Programme 2011–2015”, <https://www.valitsus.ee/en/activities/programme>, accessed 11.8.2018; YLE (written by Marjo Näkki), “Latvian sooloilu Venäjän kanssa hiertää Baltiassa”, December 14 2016, <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-9352831>, accessed 22.8.2018; Jundzis 2001, 116. One should compare Jundzis point of view to the possible effects of the alliance commitments, see, for instance, Kivimäki 1994, 41–47. About Baltic States’ NATO policy during the 1990s see Jundzis 2001, 115–119.

⁵⁸ Valtioneuvoston kanslia, “Suomen hallitusohjelma 2015: Ratkaisujen Suomi, Ulko- ja turvallisuuspolitiikka pääministeri Juha Sipilän hallituksen strateginen ohjelma 29.5.2015”, https://valtioneuvosto.fi/documents/10184/1427398/Ratkaisujen+Suomi_FI_YHDISTETTY_netti.pdf, accessed 11.8.2018; YLE, “Ranska vikittelee Suomea puolustusasioissa – Macronin interventiojoukot houkuttelevat”, August 23 2018, <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-10367634>, accessed 24.8.2018; Tarkka 2015, 244–246.

threats, and emphasizing international cooperation, which continues the policy begun after the collapse of the Soviet Union.⁵⁹

Why has Russia had a central role in Finnish and Estonian security policies?

As one can see from the sections above, Russia has been a key factor in Finnish and Estonian security policies. Why is this so? The Baltic Sea is important for the security of Russia. Therefore, the countries in the region belong to the interest sphere of Russia, particularly if they have been a part of Russia during their history. Russia has tried to achieve the status of a great power throughout its history. Consequently, it has been considered a potential threat in its neighbouring countries, which has forced them to observe the development of Russia carefully.

The geopolitical and demographical situation of Finland and Estonia has a central role in their security policies. Because Finland and Estonia are small countries with small populations and share borders with Russia, it is important for them to pay attention to the policy and internal development of Russia. It is crucial to understand this because Russia has been politically, both domestically and internationally, unstable during its history, which means that more than once it has been uncertain what the future and policy of the country will be. Consequently, other countries have been unsure about the future activities of Russia.

Russia is also interesting from the point of view of other great powers because of its geopolitical location in the Baltic Sea, its natural resources, and its policy. Therefore, the development of the country has had an influence on world politics. While various great powers and alliances have observed Russia and have based their Russian policy on their own interests, Finland and Estonia have had to operate in a changing security environment, which has emphasized the importance of Russia.

Reasons for the Base Lines of the Security Policies of Finland and Estonia

In this article, we have analyzed Finnish and Estonian security policies from four perspectives during the approximate period of 1917–2018. The reason for the security policies the countries can be found from different themes, which are geopolitics,

⁵⁹ The President of the Republic of Finland, “President Niinistö and President Putin met in Sochi”, August 23 2018, <http://www.presidentti.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=377673&nodeid=44809&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>, accessed 24.8.2018; Valtioneuvoston kanslia, “Suomen hallitusohjelma 2015: Ratkaisujen Suomi, Ulko- ja turvallisuuspolitiikka pääministeri Juha Sipilän hallituksen strateginen ohjelma 29.5.2015”, https://valtioneuvosto.fi/documents/10184/1427398/Ratkaisujen+Suomi_FI_YHDISTETTY_netti.pdf, accessed 11.8.2018.

realpolitik, folk psychology, national history, and policy makers' preferences. They are all important when one is trying to understand and explain security political decisions of these countries.

Firstly, when the Russian Empire was collapsed and Finland and Estonia achieved their independences, they were unsure about the future of Russia. Due to that, Finland and Estonia shared mutual need to get allies or international support in order to preserve their independences. Because of that, they started mutual cooperation. On the one hand, the cooperation was based on countries similar political and geopolitical situation and, on the other hand, there were politics in both countries, who seek to put forward Finnish-Estonian cooperation because their preferences.

Secondly, in the years of Second World War and in the years just before the war, the security policies of Finland and Estonia were based on threatening geopolitical situation. In that time, both countries carry out policy based on reasons of realpolitik. On the one hand, Finland tried to seek support against the Soviet Union, and, on the other hand, it tried to avoid policy, which could be seen as an aggression by the Soviet Union. Similarly, Estonia tried to preserve its own interests and get support against the Soviet Union. Thus, the current political situation formed the base of countries' security policies.

When the Soviet Union was collapsing, the folk psychology and historical experiments of the Finns and Estonians were important factors for the security policy decisions of Finland and Estonia. In Finland, it was seen crucial to have good relations to other countries, especially to neighbouring countries, particularly if they possessed a status of great power. Because of that, Finnish people did not want to accomplish policy that could provoke the Soviet Union / Russia.

Instead of that, the official policy of the country was cautious and the idea that small countries should stand on their feet was emphasized. The idea meant the policy of small countries should be founded on their own interest and they should be able to achieve their goals without relaying too much on foreign help. That was a lesson, which Finland had learnt after the Second World War when the country was navigating through the Cold War era's tensions.

That is important factor, when one wants to understand Finland's decision not to join NATO as a full member. The Finns considered that the good political relations to other countries can serve their goals better than joining the organization. Contrary to that, the Estonians had learnt different lesson from the Second World War. Their policy did not guarantee any foreign support and led to loss of Estonia's independence. Due to that, Estonians have folk psychological idea not to be alone again. Consequently, the country has joined NATO and the European Union. When comparing Finland and Estonia, it is also important to notice that Finland had suffered from the Second World War but, after all, the country remained independent. On the contrary to that, Estonian war era was in much higher intensity than Finland during the Second World

War, which might explain why Estonians are eager to seek allies in present day than Finland: they suffered much more during and after the Second World War than Finns.

During the 21st century, Finland and Estonia have carried on their security political base lines adopted in the 1990s. One can say that the decisions are once again based on realpolitik, geopolitics and folk psychology. The countries have evaluated that there is no realpolitik need to change the adopted security policy lines, although, their geopolitical situation in the area of tension created by Ukrainian crisis has forced them to observe international situation in order to be able to react on time if it is necessary. At the same time, Finland has continued its endeavours to be able to react security political threats standing on its own feet if necessary but the Finns have also emphasized international cooperation and the importance of peaceful solutions. Estonia, on the other hand, has continued its NATO / the European Union orientated policy based on folk psychological lesson of the Second World War.

Abstract

The geopolitical map of the Baltic Sea Region has altered many times during the last century. These changes have influenced the actions and decisions of states, which has been problematic for small countries, such as Finland and Estonia, especially if they were neighbours for a great power. In our article, we took four perspectives on the security policies of Finland and Estonia and analysed how these countries have reacted to changes in international politics, especially to questions related to Russia. The key result of this study are that Finland and Estonia have had important role in each other's security policies and the main reason for that is politically unstable Russia.

Keywords: Baltic Sea Region, Estonia, Finland, Geopolitics, International Relations, Security Policy

