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**Imagining Europe, Imagining the Nation**  
**Estonian Discussion on European Unification, 1923–1957**

by

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“See, mida Euroopa tähendas kunagi meile,  
sel polegi tähtsust: see oli ju kunagi eile.”

“What Europe ever meant for us before,  
it doesn't matter: it was already yesterday.”

J.M.K.E. (Villu Tamme): Õhtumaa viimased tunnid (2000)



## TIIVISTELMÄ

**Pauli Heikkilä**

**Kuvitella Eurooppaa, kuvitella kansaa. Virolainen keskustelu Euroopan yhdistymisestä 1923–1957**

Politiikan tutkimuksen laitos, poliittisen historian oppiaine, Turun yliopisto

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Väitöstutkimus valottaa Euroopan yhdistymisen historiaa viime vuosisadan alkupuoliskolla. Tuona aikana virolaiset näkivät yhdistymisessä keinon tehostaa kansallisvaltionsa itsenäisyyttä ja – vuodesta 1940 lähtien – palauttamista. Englanninkielinen väitöstutkimus koostuu kuudesta artikkelista, jotka ovat ilmestyneet kansainvälisissä julkaisuissa vuosina 2007–2010.

Ensimmäinen maailmansota johti sekä uusiin kansallisvaltioihin että lisääntyneisiin yhdistymissuunnitelmiin. Kolme ensimmäistä artikkelia käsittelee sotienvälisen kauden keskustelua kansallisena kysymyksenä; Viron paikan etsimisestä Euroopassa. Käytännön toimenä Ranskan ulkoministeri Aristide Briand teki ehdotuksen Euroopan Yhdysvaltojen perustamisesta toukokuussa 1930. Viron hallitus kannatti lämpimästi aloitetta ja sen seurauksena Kansainliittoon perustettua tutkimuskomissiota. Ulkoministeri Jaan Tönnisson ja lähettiläs Kaarel Robert Pusta yrittivät vielä syyskuussa 1931 saada sille lisävaltuuksia.

Richard Coudenhove-Kalergin Paneurooppa-unioni herätti keskustelua virolaislehdistössä puolesta ja vastaan. Asiaa perusteltiin taloudellisin, poliittisin ja kulttuurisin seikoin, mikä on myös väitöskirjan määritelmä yhdistymisestä. Toisinaan maanosan yhdistämistä verrattiin naapurimaiden yhteistyöhön. Nämä kaksi aluetta voitiin nähdä täydentävinä vaihtoehtoina mutta kuitenkin taloudellisen laman kiristyessä kauniit sanat balttilaisesta veljeydestä sivuutettiin helposti ja sen sijaan rajoituttiin kansallisiin näkökulmiin. Keskustelu oli jo näivettynyt kevääseen 1934 mennessä, jolloin Konstantin Päts kaappasi vallan aloittaen ns. hiljaisen ajan Viron politiikassa.

Eurooppa ei kuitenkaan yhdistynyt, vaan Viro joutui voimakkaampien valtojen, ensin Neuvostoliiton ja sitten Saksan, miehittämäksi. Neljäs artikkeli esittelee tuntemattomaksi jääneen suunnitelman Euroopan yhdistämiseksi, jonka Helsinkiin jäänyt lähettiläs Aleksander Varma laati joulukuussa 1942. Sen mukaan Euroopan rauhaa vakautettaisiin alueellisten liittojen kautta, joita valvoisi kansainvälinen elin. Varma lähetti suunnitelmansa USA:n ulkoministeriöön, jossa oli jo alettu suosia vastaavanlaista politiikkaa rauhan varalle.

Kaksi viimeistä artikkelia tarkastelee virolaispakolaisten toimintaa European Movement -liikessä. Heidän lopullinen tavoitteensa oli palauttaa Viron itsenäisyys. Tämän edistämiseksi etsittiin yhteyksiä läntisiin johtajiin. European Movement oli yksi harvoista järjestöistä, jossa kansainväliset toimijat niin idästä kuin lännestä toimivat yhdessä. Arvo Horm osallistui Haagin Eurooppa-kongressiin toukokuussa 1948, mutta hänen nimeään ei ole osallistujaluettelossa. Kesti runsaat puolitoista vuotta, ennen kuin virolaiset hyväksyttiin jäseniksi. Kuitenkin sillä välin Kylmä sota oli viilentynyt Euroopan jakaantuessa pysyvästi kahtia, ja Länsi-Eurooppa alkanut yhdistyä Hiili- ja Teräsyhteisön merkeissä. Lisäksi Keski- ja Itä-Euroopan konferenssi Lontoossa tammikuussa 1952 paljasti sovittamattomia kiistoja pakolaispolitiikkojen keskuudessa. Vähitellen virolaisten pettymys Euroopan yhdistymiseen keinona palauttaa Viron itsenäisyys tuli ilmeiseksi ja Aleksander Varma toi tämän lopulta ilmi lokakuussa 1957.

**Avainsanat:** Viro, integraatio--Eurooppa, federalismi, Paneurooppa, toinen maailmansota, kylmä sota



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## LIST OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

1. “Northern Replies to the Briand Memorandum in 1930. The European Federal Union in Estonia, Finland and Sweden” in *Scandinavian Journal of History* 2007(32):3, 215–236. <ref.>  
[<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/ftinterface~content=a778146878~fulltext=713240930>]
2. “The Pros and Cons of Paneurope. Estonian Discussion on European Unification in the Interwar Period” in *Acta Historica Tallinnensia* 2008 (13), 68–91. <ref.>  
[[http://www.kirj.ee/public/Acta\\_hist/2008/issue\\_2/Acta-2008-13-68-91.pdf](http://www.kirj.ee/public/Acta_hist/2008/issue_2/Acta-2008-13-68-91.pdf)]
3. “Narrowing the alternatives: Regional aspects in the Estonian discussion of European unification during the interwar period” in *Media, Interaction and Integration. Cross-Cultural Dialogues in the Baltic Sea Area*. Eds. Heli Hyvönen, Tuomas Räsänen, Janne Tunturi. Population Research Institute and The Graduate School on Integration and Interaction in the Baltic Sea Region 2009, 93–113.  
[<https://oa.doria.fi/handle/10024/50584>]
4. “Aleksander Warma’s 1942 Plan for Consolidating European Peace” in *Revue d'Histoire Nordique*. 2009, 87–106. <ref.>
5. “The Finn Hjalmar Procopé and the Estonian Arvo Horm at the Congress of Europe” in *Publication des Actes du Colloque sur le Congrès de La Haye (1948-2008) - Proceedings of the symposium on The Hague Congress (1948-2008)*. Eds. Jean-Michel Guieu, Christophe Le Dréau. P.I.E. Peter Lang Bruxelles 2009, 253–262.
6. ”Unifying the Divided Continent. Estonian National Committee of the European Movement” in *NordEuropa Forum* 2010:1, 135–161. <ref.>  
[<http://edoc.hu-berlin.de/docviews/abstract.php?lang=&id=37683>]



## Introduction. Expanding the history of European integration

The history of European integration has developed into a sub-field of historical research. However, it has also been strongly associated with the evolution of the European Union, which Jost Dülffer calls “The Christmas story of European integration”. Here, the EU becomes complete, in terms of both territory and depth, just as one candle is lit each week in December before full illumination is achieved on Christmas Day.<sup>1</sup> It is clear that, before their own state becomes a member of the expanding Union, a citizen from outside the original Six finds it very difficult to relate to such an analogy.

The aim of the present research is to go beyond such teleology and institutional situations. This justifies the study of the discussions on European unification that took place before actual membership had even become possible. Examination of this discussion, as well as of failed attempts and proposals, may hopefully reveal reasons for the founding of the institutions and, furthermore, the meaning of Europe today - such a meaning, which is not bound to the European Union. Even past meanings have relevance for us, since, as Alan Milward, one of the leading historians of European integration, put it, “Systematic procedures and the way citizens choose within them are defined by history.”<sup>2</sup>

This research covers 35 years of the stormy 20<sup>th</sup> century and focuses on Estonian

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1 Jost Dülffer: "The History of European Integration: From Integration History to the History of Integrated Europe." In Wilfried Loth (ed.): *Experiencing Europe. 50 years of European Construction 1957-2007*. Nomos, Baden-Baden 2009, 22-23.

2 Alan Milward: "Conclusions: the value of history". In Alan Milward et al. (eds.): *The Frontier of National Sovereignty. History and Theory 1945-1992*. Routledge, Padstow 1994, 201, also 197-198.

discussion on European unification from the start of independence to the time of Nazi German rule and from then to the period of Soviet occupation. During this time, the programme for unification changed from that of the liberal Paneuropean Union, to that of the racist Nazi New Europe, which gave impetus to the Western counter proposals that were promoted after the World War II by the European Movement. Despite this variety in international context and national situation, the research addresses one main question for the entire period: what were the reasons for Estonians supporting or opposing unification?

I have chosen to write my doctoral thesis as articles because this form better reflects its variety. The six articles start from the same question but consider different aspects of the same theme emphasising the changed environment. Furthermore, the articles give more scope for linking the discussion on Europe to a wider discussion on international politics. This introduction presents the research in a concise form. More importantly, I will define the concept of unification here, which links the articles together into a thesis. However, I will first justify the place and time for the research.

## **Spatial justification**

This research has two focuses. On the one hand, it concentrates on a programme of unification from a European centre and, on the other hand, Estonian reactions and discussions on this programme. Thus, the core of the research is actually on the national interpretations of these initiatives. This twofold approach attempts to offer a new

perspective for the history of these European plans and national Estonian history.

First of all, why Estonia? As this research on the history of European unification is conducted (mostly) in Turku, Finland, the peripheral aspect was evident from the beginning: i.e. how is the programme from the centre interpreted in a European borderland? From numerous alternatives, Estonia appeared most promising because it actually has a double peripheral nature: it is not only far from the centre but it also borders a significant, partly European, neighbour, Russia. This relation was assumed to play a considerable role in the discussion.

For a Finn, there were numerous practical reasons for the selection of Estonia, such as learning the language. However, this justification became rather irrelevant, because although most of the sources are in Estonian, they also contain a great deal of German and French, and, to a lesser extent, English. Nevertheless, the geographical vicinity of Estonia to Finland (and Turku), between which there is strong academic co-operation, assisted the progress of the research. Despite these ties, historically Estonia and Finland differ greatly from each other.

There were several indicators that Estonia could be a fruitful country for studying European discussion. First of all, the current European-wide opinion polls by the European Commission, i.e. Eurobarometers, have constantly indicated high support for the European Union in Estonia - much higher than in its neighbours. The latest Eurobarometer (EB 72) shows 62 per cent in favour of Estonian membership of the European Union. Only six per cent of Estonians consider membership to be "a bad thing".

Compared to the average figures of the EU27 (53% and 15%, respectively), Estonia is the country that is the seventh most in favour of national membership; only in Slovakia are people less against membership. In addition, nearly four out of five consider that Estonia has benefited from membership in the EU while fifteen per cent say the opposite.<sup>3</sup> If Estonians are interested in Europe now, it is probable, first of all, that they were interested in it in the past and, second, that they may be interested in the results of my research.

Secondly, the academic literature on European history contains some interesting references to Estonia. Norman Davies's *Europe: A History* is a renowned work on the history of all of Europe. The book includes several caption boxes and one of them is titled "Eesti". Allegedly, Otto von Habsburg, then president of Paneuropean Union, reminded his audience of a small European nation: "Don't forget the Estonians!...they are the Best of the Europeans." Davies himself is sure that small nations can cope in the Union and that, reciprocally, they benefit the Union.<sup>4</sup>

In the actual research literature, Carl H. Pegg's *Evolution of the European Idea* is the most illuminating example. Pegg has thoroughly surveyed the newspapers in several European countries, which is where I found information on the bold initiative in the League of Nations in 1931 by Estonians Jaan Tõnisson and Kaarel Robert Pusta to use governmental powers to enhance European, instead of national, thinking<sup>5</sup>.

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3 Standard Eurobarometer 72; Annexe of the standard, 13-14.  
[[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb72/eb72\\_anx\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb72/eb72_anx_en.pdf)] and Estonian factsheet  
[[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb72/eb72\\_fact\\_ee\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb72/eb72_fact_ee_en.pdf)] (retrieved 2/1/2010)

4 Norman Davies: *Europe. A History*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 1996, 944.

5 C.H. Pegg: *Evolution of the European Idea, 1914-1932*. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill

There is also a significant amount of international research on Baltic history, especially in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. More precisely *Baltic Nations and Europe* by John Hiden and Patrick Salmon and *Estonia. Independence and European Integration* by David Smith form a foundation for this work.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, Baltic co-operation in the form of annual conferences, either in America or in Europe, has been valuable.

Thirdly, Estonian historians have shed light on their previous European discussion, including the prospects for unification. It is worth mentioning Toomas Karjahärm's project (with Väino Sirk) on Estonian cultural life from the dawn of nationalism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Its second part, *Vaim ja võim. Eesti haritlaskond 1917–1940*, and especially the separate publication, *Unistus Euroopast*, comprehensively introduces Estonian opinions on European culture.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, more contemporary studies on Estonia's application to join the European Union includes reviews on historical predecessors, from the general and Estonian points of view.<sup>8</sup> Finally, the Documentation Centre of the library of the University of Tartu has collected and published many documents on the history of European unification on their website.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, the primary sources instantly provide a glimpse of Estonian activity. The catalogue on Paneuropean Union in the Historical Archives of the EU (PAN/EU 12: Book

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1983, 163.

6 John Hiden & Patrick Salmon: *The Baltic Nations and Europe. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the twentieth century*. Longman, London 1991; David Smith: *Estonia. Independence and European integration*. Routledge, London 2002.

7 Toomas Karjahärm: *Unistus Euroopast*. Agro, Tallinn 2003.

8 For example: Paavo Palk: *Euroopa ühendamise lugu*, Tuum, Tallinn 2003, 22-23; Ivar Raig: *Eesti tee Euroopa Liitu. Unistus paremast Euroopast*. Audentes University, Tallinn 2008, especially 48 - 63.

9 [[http://www.euroinfo.ee/index.php?cmd=e\\_ope\\_sj](http://www.euroinfo.ee/index.php?cmd=e_ope_sj)]

and printed material (extracts), on Paneurope) includes two German-Estonian articles: "Was bedeutet Pan-Europa für Estland" by H.P. Lilienfeld-Toal in 1925 and "Paneuropa, die Juden und Palästina" by P. Michelsohn, 1927<sup>10</sup>. I have not been able to find, however, any additional information on either of these authors. Another interesting person from among Baltic Germans is philosopher Hermann von Keyserling (1880-1946), who is also excluded from my research.

### **Movements, their sources, and the included articles**

The Paneuropean Union, led by Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, was the most important promoter of the unification of Europe during the interwar period. Anita Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler's *Botschafter Europas*<sup>11</sup> is the comprehensive introduction to the Paneuropean Union but concentrates on the Viennese perspective. Its archives were confiscated by the Red Army in 1945 and they are presently located at the Russian State Military Archives (RGVA) in Moscow, Russia. Some part of the original material has been copied to the Historical Archives of the European Union in Florence, Italy. I managed to visit the archives in Moscow only after writing the article "Pros and Cons of Paneurope" but the damage is nevertheless quite small: the correspondence between the Estonians and the Viennese centre dealt mostly with daily matters. For example, a list of Estonian members could not be found.

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10 [<http://www.warc.eui.eu/pdf/inv/inv-pan-eu.pdf>]. There has occurred quite an unfortunately usual mistake: Philipp Michelsohn was actually from Riga, Latvia. The short letter by Doctor Lilienfeld-Toal mainly supports the initiatives by Coudenhove-Kalergi and mostly ignores the Estonian situation. (HAEU. PAN / EU 12. H.P. Lilientfeld-Toal: "Was bedeutet Pan-Europa für Estland?")

11 Anita Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler: *Botschafter Europas. Richard Nicolaus Coudenhove-Kalergi und die Paneuropa-Bewegung in den zwanziger- und dreissiger Jahren*. Böhlau, Wien 2004.



Public sources have been more important in studying the Paneuropean Union, as Coudenhove-Kalergi himself underlined the importance to propagate his idea through the available mass media. In addition to his own publications, books, and journal (titled *Paneuropa*), he wrote effortlessly to national newspapers. Roughly a dozen writings by Coudenhove-Kalergi appeared in Estonian newspapers over the years especially in the most important *Päevaleht* and *Postimees*, and they inspired Estonians to have their say on the theme. The discussion on Paneurope is analysed in the article "The Pros and Cons of Paneurope".

Coudenhove-Kalergi was partly a reason for the French premier Aristide Briand to make an official proposal for studying and establishing a European federation within the League of Nations in 1930. Here, the official sources from the foreign ministries become crucial. In order to study a potential co-operation in drafting the national replies to Briand, I did not limit myself merely to the archives of the Estonian Foreign ministry but also consulted the respective Finnish and Swedish archives.

The anthology of the Briand memorandum in 1998 has only one reference to Estonia (and completely ignores Sweden and Finland)<sup>12</sup>. I have attempted to fill this gap with my article "Northern Replies to the Briand Memorandum in 1930. The European Federal Union in Estonia, Finland and Sweden"; the article is published in *Scandinavian Journal of History* 2007:3.

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12 Antoine Fleury & Lubor Jilek (eds): *Le Plan Briand d'Union fédérale européenne*. Peter Lang, Bern 1998.

The Baltic collaboration had been vitally important in gaining independence immediately after World War<sup>13</sup> and a comparison between continental unification and international co-operation within a more limited area was also relevant in the public discussion afterwards. The preliminary quantitative analysis on the catalogues in the Estonian Literature Museum in Tartu and the Estonian National Library indicated a strong negative correlation between the European and Baltic idea. The interest in the imminent neighbourhood seemed to have reached the ultimate bottom in the late 1920s, when the discussion on European unification was at its peak.

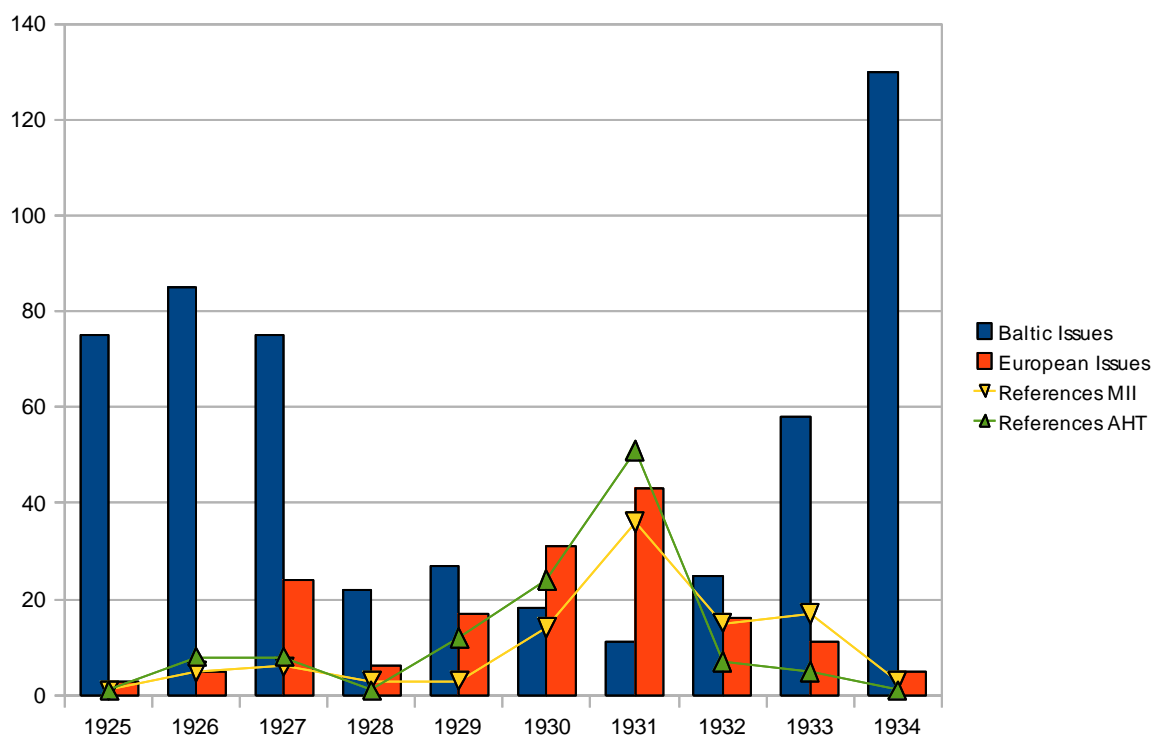


Figure 1. Popularity of Baltic and European issues

Although the catalogues cannot be considered as reliable indicators of actual publicity in the newspapers, this was enough to look closer into the articles on Baltic and European imaginations in a separate article "Narrowing the alternatives. Regional aspects in the

13 Marko Lehti: *A Baltic League as a Construct of the New Europe. Envisioning a Baltic Region and Small State Sovereignty in the Aftermath of the First World War*. Peter Lang, Bern, 1999.

Estonian discussion on European unification during the interwar period”.

The idea of European unification vanished soon after Briand's proposal and was resurrected as a counter-proposal for Nazi Germany's idea of New Europe. Like many exiled politicians from occupied Europe, Estonian Aleksander Warma pondered how to first restore his country's independence and then establish a more safe European system for all nations. In December 1942, he provided the US State Department with a paper titled *Questions relating to the consolidation of peace in post-war Europe*. The plan has been published in Warma's posthumous memoirs and his archives in the Baltic Archives at the Swedish National Archives include correspondence related to the plan. The published source material on the U.S. post-war planning (so-called Notter file) reveals simultaneous thinking within the Western allies. I compared Warma's plan to other contemporary blueprints in the article "Aleksander Warma's 1942 Plan for Consolidating European Peace".

Warma's collection, along with August Rei's collection, are also two of the primary sources when studying the Estonian exile politics in Sweden during the Cold War. They were organised as the Estonian National Council. The exile community rapidly established newspapers of which *Eesti Teataja* worked closely with the Estonian National Council and *Välis-Eesti* gave the opposition voices the place for publication. *Töotan üstavaks jääda*<sup>14</sup> is an extensive collection on the history of the Council but barely mentions its foreign policy, which certainly merits more research.

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14 Mart Orav and Enn Nõu (eds.): *Töotan üstavaks jääda... : Eesti vabariigi valitsus 1940-1992*. Eesti kirjanduse selts, Tartu 2004.

In Europe, the Estonian National Council collaborated mostly with the European Movement. It was a joint organisation of six various groupings aiming at the unification. Its correspondence is nowadays located in the Historical Archives of the European Union in Florence, Italy. The primary achievement of the European Movement was the Congress of Europe in the Hague in May 1948. To commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Congress, a conference was organised in Paris, in which I had the privilege to speak about the Estonian Arvo Horm and the Finn Hjalmar Procopé; the presentation, which was later published by Peter Lang, traced the events during the congress from the archive material and the immediate aftermath of its results in the newspapers.

The Estonians became members in the European Movement in January 1950 and they participated enthusiastically in its activities during the following years. However, the European Movement was itself searching for its role after the foundation of the Council of Europe and especially when the real integration started within the Coal and Steel Community. Emigrants from Eastern Europe were marginalised even within the European Movement and gradually Estonians started looking for alternative forums to promote their national cause. The final article "Unifying the divided continent" deals with the Estonian National Committee of the European Movement. Thus, this research ends in the year in which the narrative on European integration usually begins. I do not know what could illustrate more the contrasts and diversity of the history of European integration.

For a historical study, the justification of the time period is more crucial. Generally speaking, my goal was to overcome World War II as the ultimate point of departure of

international order and, in this case, European integration. Naturally, European unification has been a topic since the Middle Ages, and these discussions are documented in earlier research.<sup>15</sup> My research starts in the heyday of nation states: the aftermath of World War I. The dynastic empires of Eastern Europe were replaced by several nation states but, at the same time, various plans for restoring unity in the continent emerged. These contrary phenomena highlighted the question: how should nation-states, the new core elements of political order, act towards each other and in a larger environment? My focus is not so much on co-operation between states but rather on ideas on the interdependency of nations. This question is still relevant today and, hopefully, examples from the period in which it was the paramount question might be useful in presenting new ideas for the current discussion.

### **The concept of unification**

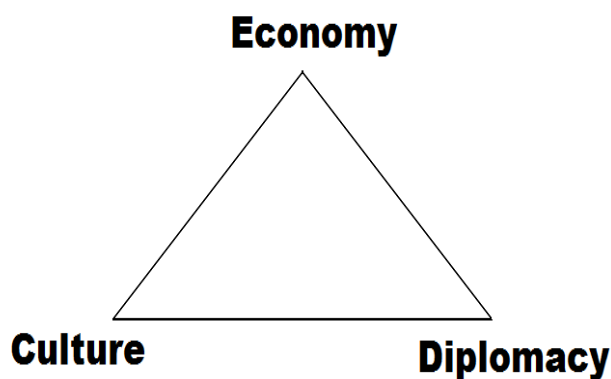
The lack of widely accepted European institutions is the second reason to focus on 1923–1957. They, such the EU, unintentionally define Europe, whereas earlier "Europe" was an idea, which had to be, or could be, defined ad hoc. Therefore, I primarily speak here about unification, but occasionally I also use integration as a synonym. Integration is used only once in my sources. This happened in the final year of 1957, when Heinrich Laretei (1892–1973) visited a conference of the Assembly of Captured European Nations in Strasbourg. He considered its main focus on the liberation of Eastern Europe as being

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15 For example: Gerard Delanty: *Inventing Europe: idea, identity, reality*. Macmillan, Basingstoke 1995; Heikki Mikkeli: *Europe as an idea and an identity*. Macmillan, London 1998; Wolfgang Schmale: *Geschichte Europas*. Böhlau, Wien 2001.

essential to "integration, i.e. to create some kind of United Europe, (integratsiooni, s. t. luua mingisugust Ühendatud Euroopat)".<sup>16</sup>

Besides for Alan Milward, René Girault was one of the founding historians of European integration. His project, "La puissance en Europe", was intended to look at the concept of power in four Western European countries over ten year intervals. Following the classical definition by Pierre Renouvin<sup>17</sup>, Girault divided power into six aspects: military, economic, colonial, political, public opinions, and decision-makers.<sup>18</sup> In my study, only three divisions are used: economic, diplomatic, and cultural. This triangle defines the concept of unification.



International co-operation takes place - or it can be imagined to take place - within these dimensions but to call such co-operation integration or unification, it has to contain all three dimensions. That is why Nordic co-operation does not qualify as unification.

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16 Heinrich Laretei: "EIRE konverentsi kokkuvõte". *Välis-Eesti* 12.5.1957, 2. On the development of European watchwords, see Bo Stråth: "Multiple Europes: Integration, Identity and Demarcation to the Other" in Bo Stråth (ed.): *Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other*. Peter Lang, Bruxelles 2000, 385.

17 See Pierre Renouvin and Jean-Baptiste Duroselle: *Introduction to the history of international relations* (translated by Mary Ilford) Pall Mall Press, Oxford 1967.

18 Dülffer 2009, 27-28. Dülffer probably instinctively uses the same tripartition.

Although it has a strong cultural and even economic basis, it lacks a joint diplomatic institution: the Nordic prime ministers meet regularly but make the decisions individually and independently. In the form shown, the economic dimension is the most important. However, the triangle can be inverted to emphasise the underlying cultural and diplomatic dimensions. As my research considers the time before the formation of institutions, it deals mostly with mental concepts: how this unification should start; what should be the first step and how that step could affect, or spill over to, other dimensions? For the same reason, actual integration in social or military dimensions has to be excluded.

Diplomacy refers to declarations and decisions by the politicians and joint institutions and economy to trading and other commercial actions. The third dimension is culture, which includes the exchanges of immaterial goods, visions, hopes, and fears. This dimension largely defines the territorial borders of the unified area. Recently, the common European culture or public space or identity has been proposed as a cure for stagnation in economic and diplomatic integration. The elite has turned to citizens for the idea of Europe but the declining turnout in European Parliamentary elections has been a matter of growing concern. There is a growing academic literature on this contemporary item of discussion and likewise on the historical research on an older European idea. Although the increase is now - like it was in the 1950s - obviously connected to the institutionalisation of the European Union, the literature usually nevertheless ignores the other two dimensions of unification.<sup>19</sup>

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19 For example: Anthony D. Smith: "National Identity and the Idea of European Unity." in *International Affairs* 1992:1, 55-76; Heinz Duchhardt: "Der deutsche Europa-Diskurs des 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts." in Włodzimierz Borodziej et al. (eds.): *Option Europa. Deutsche, polnische und*

## Results of the research

The six articles of my doctoral thesis have greatly expanded our knowledge of Estonian discussion on European unification. The Paneuropean idea was warmly welcomed by the former foreign minister, now Estonian minister in Paris, Kaarel Robert Pusta, who was also selected to join the Council of the Union. Professor Ants Piip<sup>20</sup> became the chairman of the Estonian Office and the Paneuropean Union also attracted other prominent individuals from the Estonian elite. Actually, from the top politicians, only Konstantin Päts is missing. Toomas Karjahärm states that Paneuropean discussion did not reach a very fundamental level<sup>21</sup>, but my broader look into newspaper articles has revealed justifications for or against that range from human psychology to military security.

Aleksander Warma drafted a radical plan for European re-organisation in 1942 but previous research has ignored it. Even in the Estonian literature, the proposal for a Baltoscandian Federation made by Lithuanian Kazys Pakštas in the USA is more known than the European draft by Warma, although the latter has been published in Warma's

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*ungarische Europapläne des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts. Band 1. Essays.* Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 2005; Achim Trunk: *Europa, ein Ausweg. Politische Eliten und europäische Identität in den 1950er Jahren.* Oldenburg, München 2007; Marie-Francoise Lévy & Marie-Noële Sicard: "Culture in the Public Sphere as an Issue of European Construction: Missions and Experiences." in Wilfried Loth (ed.): *Experiencing Europe. 50 years of European Construction 1957-2007.* Nomos, Baden-Baden 2009, 142-151; Wilfried Loth: "Europäische Identität und europäisches Bewusstsein." in Reiner Marcowitz (ed.): *Nationale Identität und transnationale Einflüsse. Amerikanisierung, Europäisierung und Globalisierung in Frankreich nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg.* Oldenburg, München 2007, 35-51; Hanna Kuusela & Otto Bruun (eds.): *Euroopasta ei mitään uutta? Kansalaiset Euroopan unionia etsimässä.* Gaudeamus, Helsinki 2009.

20 For more on Piip as professor of International Law, see Lauri Mälksoo: *Rahvusvaheline õigus Eestis. Ajalugu ja poliitika.* Juura, Tallinn 2008, 86-105.

21 Karjahärm 2003, 55.



posthumous memoirs<sup>22</sup>. Nevertheless, despite written in isolation and, therefore, being an original piece of thinking, Warma's plan is also an illustration as to how regional thinking was an essential element in post-war planning everywhere.

Just as little has been known about the activities of the Estonian National Committee of the European Movement (ENCEN) in the early 1950s. At the outset, the list of participants in the Congress of Europe in the Hague in May 1948 does not include Arvo Horm, but he was there delivering a declaration with the Lithuanian Juozas Landskoronskis on behalf of the Movement of the Baltic Federation.

I have tried to demonstrate that the ENCEN was an exceptionally active member organisation in the European Movement. Firstly, the European unification was the primary goal in their foreign policy. Estonians cherished the European Movement, because it allowed them to be among equals, with other Europeans. Secondly, they participated in relatively higher numbers, for example in the Central and Eastern European Conference in London in 1952. A comparison between the various national groups cannot be made, as the research on emigrant politics is only just now emerging; on the other hand, the dissertation on the European Movement simply ignores the emigrant groups in the movement's agenda<sup>23</sup>.

It is considerably difficult to estimate the success of European unification within the Estonian community as a whole, whether in the independent Estonia or exile community

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22 Aleksander Warma: *Diplomaadi kroonika. Ülestähendusi ja dokumente aastatest 1938-44*. Eesti Kirjanike kooperatiiv, Lund 1972; Karjahärm 2003, 58; Raig 2008, 58.

23 F.X. Rebatet: *The "European Movement" 1945-1953. A Study in National and International Non-Governmental Organisations working for European unity*. St. Anthony's College, Oxford 1962.

in Sweden. All things considered, the unification touched only the political elite and even there only a small part. The membership in the Estonian Society of the Paneuropean Union and ENCEM exceeded roughly a hundred persons.

Opposition was the clearest indicator of the popularity of a cause, even during the limited opportunities of the exile years in Sweden; quite expectedly, Warma's plan did not meet any opposition during World War II. However, on the other hand, he seems to have been the only Estonian who referred to federations in post-war planning instead of full independence.

It was in the interests of the unifiers to keep the topic on the agenda and the opposition emerged only towards sufficiently prominent issues. Furthermore, although it has been convenient to study the promoters of unification, these repeated stances reveal the incessant line of the opposition. For example, the claim that the political institution may harm European culture appeared during the interwar period and the Cold War. Rather than unity, segregation and divisions were characteristic of Europe's past.<sup>24</sup> The same stance was also taken by Heinrich Laretei in 1952. For him, the different nationalities comprised the main obstacle to unification. A common policy could not overcome the discord of national perspectives. "It is probable that only egoistic interests can do away with the barriers encountered on the way to the European federation. (Arvata on, et vaid egoistlikud huvid võivad koristada tõkked Euroopa föderatsiooni teelt.)"<sup>25</sup>

The fact that unification was both opposed and promoted for the same reasons

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24 For example J.: "E. Ü. R. – Euroopa Ühendatud Riigid". *Päevaleht* 20.9.1927, 2.

25 H. Laretei: "Idealism ja egoism välispoliitikas". *Välis-Eesti* 16.3.1952, 2.

highlights the national basis of discussion: the programme from the centre, or the context of the Estonian state, or that the discussants may have changed. However, the discussants were looking at the programme for what was best in their idea of national identity. The promoters regarded unification as a vital method to keep contact with the progressive Europe. Their opponents considered unification practically unfeasible and preferred another kind of international co-operation (Baltic in the interwar period and Atlantic during the Cold War).<sup>26</sup>

In the longitudinal perspective, some features emerged time after time. One of them was the comparison between the Baltic and European co-operation. Most of the time, the limited Baltic dimension was disparaged by the europeanists. It was only during the tranquil 1920s that the Baltic League remained an ideal model, which could be seen as a first step towards Europe – as an example of co-operation on a broader scale. At the same time, there was no need to take action on these miscellaneous visions and, therefore, the unification sceptics cited the Baltic case as an example of the futility of practical measures in international co-operation. When editing the reply to the Briand memorandum, the Estonian Foreign ministry failed to find a positive response from the desired partners, especially from Sweden, and to a lesser extent from Finland and Latvia. When the economic depression started in the 1930s, discussion on regional as well as European co-operation intensified, but it was held back by mutual complaints.

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26 This is a clear difference compared to the fundamental distinction in the Finnish discussion on Paneurope, where the promoters wanted to have stimuli from abroad to enhance the Finnish national idea, whereas the opponents preferred to protect the national essence from the external influences. Pauli Heikkilä: ”Meillä jo nyt on kaksi isänmaata, omamme ja Europa! Eurooppalaisuus suomalaisessa keskustelussa maailmansotien välisenä aikana”. in Laura-Kristiina Moilanen & Susanna Sulkunen (eds.): *Aika ja identiteetti. Katsauksia yksilön ja yhteisön väliseen suhteeseen keskiajalta 2000-luvulle*. SKS Helsinki 2006, 245–263.

Regional unions were fundamental in Aleksander Warma's plan of 1942, but they were relevant only as members of a larger European union. Furthermore, Warma refrained from naming the countries for each regional union but implied that three Baltic states were far too small. A similar approach continued in the European Movement. Although the Estonians supported collaboration with other emigrant groups and, therefore, also regional co-operation, it was more crucial to maintain this co-operation within the European dimension.

The contemporary actors themselves used the tripartition of diplomacy, culture, and economy in describing the unification. According to Pusta, "When supporting the Paneuropean Union, we are working for our own independence, economic success, and preservation of national culture. (Toetades Paneuroopa Liitu, töötame meie oma iseseisvuse, majanduslike hea käekäigu ja rahvuslise kultuuri alalhoidmise eest.)"<sup>27</sup> His triangular justification was an answer to his opponents, who highlighted the flaws of Paneurope in three themes: diplomatically a threat to the League of Nations, economically antagonistic against outsiders, and culturally inadequate development of a national idea.<sup>28</sup>

Later, during the Cold War, the Commission on Central and Eastern Europe of the European Movement worked for the aim that these "nations should, on the basis of equality, belong to a complete European society, culturally, politically, and economically (rahvad peavad kuuluma võldõiguse põhimõtte alusel Euroopa kui terviku perre, nii

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27 K. R. Pusta: "Paneuroopa liikumine ja selle lähemad ülesanded" in Hanno Runnel (ed.): *Kontrastide aastasada*. Ilmamaa, Tartu 2000, 118. Pusta's speech was originally published in *Postimees* 16/8 and 17/8/1929.

28 Ks: "Kõik-Euroopa pahed". *Postimees* 1.2.1927, 1.

kultuuriliselt, poliitiliselt kui majandusliselt)".<sup>29</sup> Accordingly, the ENCEM had three committees (political, economic, and cultural) to draft Estonian considerations for the Conference on Central and Eastern Europe of the European Movement in London of January 1952.<sup>30</sup>

Throughout the period, there was considerable confidence in the good will of politicians and decision-makers. Once they could be gathered together in one place, they could draft the guidelines and constitution for European unification. The diplomatic institution supported by the common culture would then automatically spread unification into other dimensions. This approach could be called federalist. More generally, the Estonian discussion on the European unification and especially the failure of these plans to materialise also illustrates the fate of the federalist approach in unifying Europe. In a similar fashion, the approach combining economical and diplomatic dimensions could be called functionalist and freetraders would combine the cultural dimension with the economical preference, at least by their distrust of diplomatic institutions. Nevertheless, it might be too feeble to use these conceptions to describe the sophisticated EU politics. They only apply in discussions on initiating the process.

During the early interwar period, the federalist approach was supported by the existence of the League of Nations, which was occasionally considered a nucleus of the future European federation. In general, Estonia, regarding its foreign policy, relied on the League of Nations and since Briand's memorandum meant establishing a European

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29 BA (Baltic Archives). Varma 27. Euroopa Liikumine ja Vahe-Euroopa. Ettekanne ELERK üldkoosolekul 11.12.1951.

30 BA. Varma 20. Considerations of Estonian Committee 11/10/1950. Warma had also earlier divided the unification in a similar manner. BA. Varma 28. Köne Euroopa ühtsusest (European Unity).

federation within the League of Nations, the Estonians wholeheartedly supported the idea.

The Estonian reply nevertheless highlighted the importance of actions in the economic field, because the League of Nations was considered the foundation by default. The federalist undertone, as such implies, regarding economics in the discussions, was not so much about trading and the exchange of goods but rather macroeconomics. Great Britain was the largest trading partner for Estonia and, therefore, there was no question as to whether it belonged to Europe or not.

An improved economy was considered a consequence of unification but not a justification for it. Warma was very short but even more certain about this: "Undoubtedly, it would also make for easier and more elastic coordination in labour and to some extent also in trade with its positive economic consequences. (Kahtlemata võimaldaks see ühtlasi tootvuse ja teataval määral ka kaubanduse hõlpsamat ja elastilisemat koordineerimist, millel on oma positiivsed majanduslikud järelused.)"<sup>31</sup>

The original programmes of the European centre also paid little attention to economy. The Paneuropean Union turned to focus on economic issues only in its latest phase. It founded the Paneuropean Economical Centre in Vienna in 1935. Businessman Joachim Puhk represented Estonia but, in the following year, declined to travel to the conference of the centre.<sup>32</sup>

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31 Warma 1972, 186.

32 RGVA 554-1-51, 116-139. Especially 122. Puhk to Coudenhove-Kalergi 15/1/1936.

The ENCEM was concerned about the prospective integration of Estonia into the European economy. They drafted a blueprint for the necessary financial assistance and encouraged other exile groups to do the same. Their reluctance, however, was one of the reasons for Estonians turning away from the European Movement. Simultaneously, the ENCEM began to acknowledge the new methods introduced in the West, which would make national economies obsolete. Arvo Horm envisioned the next phase, i.e. a "Europe of pools", where the Coal and Steel Community was accompanied by similar narrow unions on other fields as well. In the future, these unions would be joined together under the common constitution. The Six already seem to have agreed on this nucleus, which other Europeans, including Estonia, could later join.<sup>33</sup> In addition, during the second Economic Conference of the EM in 1954, the Estonian participant, economist Eduard Poom (1902–1986), stressed the need to follow the development in the West because Estonia would have to adjust to that after liberation. Protective measures could not be the method for reconstruction if a unified Europe abandoned mutual customs and tariffs.<sup>34</sup>

Warma observed the development of Western European institutions and although he recognised the economic nature of the EEC, he nevertheless regarded it as one part of the "process of European consolidation (Euroopa konsolideerumise protsessi)" and of Europe once again becoming the decider of its own fate. In addition, he was not concerned about unification comprising only a certain part of Europe, because "the further Europe has advanced on this path, the easier it is for it to assert itself on the

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33 Arvo Horm: "Mis toimub Euroopas?" *Eesti Teataja* 15/11/1952, 6.

34 "Uus Euroopa ilma tollipiirideta". *Teataja* 7.3.1954, 1; ME 965. Rebattet to Rei 22/12/1953; Rei to Rebattet 14.1.1954; Thibault to Rei 16/1/1954.

question of the unification of Central and Eastern Europe (mida kaugemale on edenetud sellel teel, seda kergem on Euroopal end maksma panna ka Kesk- ja Ida-Euroopa ühendamise küsimuses).” He considered the expansion as an essential part of the EEC and calculations were already completed for the first enlargement. It would take a long time before the EEC would arrive in Estonia, but in the meantime, the Estonians needed to follow its development “for the interest of restoring our nation's rights and independence (meie rahva õiguste ja riikliku iseseisvuse taastamise huvides).”<sup>35</sup>

The third dimension, a common European culture, was in various Estonian texts the ultimate beginning and the goal of unification. The initiative by Tõnisson and Pusta of European solidarity in 1931 has already been mentioned. Beyond the scope of my articles, Edgar Kant in 1942 stated in his article “Euroopa tulevikust” that it, “The Future of Europe”, “depends on solidarity, whether cultural, spiritual or the connection of fate (sõltub ühistundest, olgu kultuurilisest, meelsuslikust või saatuskaasluse ühistundest)”. According to him, only the first one existed sufficiently and significantly: “there are hardly any other areas on the planet, other cultural domains, where it occurs to a greater extent and more closely (vaevu on maakeral teisi alasid, teisi kultuurisõõre, kus see suuremal määral ning tihedamalt esineks)”. Spiritual solidarity did exist, but it had to be fostered.<sup>36</sup> Kant's last sentence first reveals the interaction between the dimensions and, secondly, the repeated call for action: Europe would not unite by itself (even with a

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35 A. Warma: "Mis edasi...?" *Teataja* 16.2.1957, 2-3.

36 Edgar Kant: "Euroopa tulevikust". *Postimees* 1/12/1942, 4. In addition to Kant, Jaan Tõnisson also speculated on the idea of European federation in December 1940 as a mean to restore peace in Europe. His article is, frankly, mostly a review of the long history of the idea of unification. Tõnisson, however, did not want to fall into pessimism in front of such a long list of failures. On the contrary, for him this list proved the strength and vividness of the idea, which had remained alive for such a long time. Jaan Tõnisson: "Euroopa föderatsiooni idee". *Eesti üliõpilaste seltsi album XI*, Tartu 1940, 64 - 74. See also "Kansainliittoajatus on terve ja oikea ja se tulee elämään kriisin yli". *Suomen Pienviljelijä* 5.8.1939, 1.



common culture) but it had to be united by its people.

Likewise, Aleksander Warma was confident in 1942 that a union could "act more effectively due to the mentality of increased general interests, which would emerge and forcibly gain impact within it (tõhusamalt kaasa mõjuda selles areneva ja saavutatud jõuga mõjule pääseva üldhuvilisema mentaliteedi tõttu)".<sup>37</sup> Moreover, in September 1954, when the European Movement organised a questionnaire among its member organisations, the Estonians proposed more drastic methods so that "wide masses adopt this idea," which was a prerequisite for the final unification.<sup>38</sup>

Although writing during World War II, in occupied Tartu, Edgar Kant rejected the idea of an external threat as the element of collective solidarity among Europeans, although he also discerns Europeanism from the international or general-humanistic idea: Europe should have some kind of borders and it should be discernible from its neighbours.

Accordingly, proposals for European unification were also plans for transforming international politics in general. This aspect played only a small part in Estonian discussion. The general trend relied on cordial relations between the large geopolitical entities, including the Soviet Union, even during the interwar period, which is perhaps surprising, first of all, because the Paneuropean Union had Russophobia and anti-communism at its ideological core. For example, Coudenhove-Kalergi asked the secretary of the Estonian Paneuropean Society, Mart Raud, for anti-communist organisations in Estonia in 1933. Raud assured "Estonia to be practically immune to communism (Estland

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<sup>37</sup> Warma 1972, 186.

<sup>38</sup> HAEU. ME 2271. ENCEM to Rebattet. September 1954.

eben für den Kommunismus praktisch immun sein).“ Due to an attempted coup d'état, communists were officially enemies of the state and regular news from across the border kept the citizens alert. All private collectives were against Bolshevism in one way or another.<sup>39</sup> The USSR was almost ignored, as it was believed to build "socialism in one country".

My preliminary aim was to erase World War II as the point of departure in integration history, but it turned out to be the turning point in the Estonian discussion on European unification. The Soviet occupation in 1940 and the memory of it, transformed the justifications for unification. Since Warma's plan in 1942, the threat from the East became the greatest reason for it. They were trying to establish the United States of Europe in order to escape from the Soviet Union, which was almost named the Socialist United States of Europe in 1922<sup>40</sup>. Warma also continued to point out this effect in the European Movement.

The turning point also concerns Europe as a whole, not only Estonia. Although having the Soviet Army in the heart of Europe was a decisive factor for unification, few dared to say it publicly. The Estonians made several attempts to include this fundamental reason in, for example, the conference resolution for London in 1952 but none of them had any success.<sup>41</sup>

In 1942, Edgar Kant paid much more attention to coherence among Europeans. Political

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39 RGVA 554-1-43, 294-295. M. Raud to Paneuropa-Verlag 7.4.1933

40 Aimo Minkkinen: "Leninin ja Stalinin riita Neuvostoliiton perustamisesta". *Idäntutkimus* 2/2005, 10-11.

41 BA. Varma 20. Considerations of Estonian Committee 11.10.1950.

unity in a certain "geopolitical space (geopoliitiliselt antud ruumis)" required the discernment of a supranational identity, which "does not betray the nationality, or opt out of love towards one's homeland, but lifts one morally to a higher level (ei reeda rahvust ega loobu kodumaa-armastusest, vaid need kõlbeliselt tõstab kõrgemale tasemele)". Kant found an allegory of how national identities had previously grown from tribal solidarities and that this could take place in the wider extent as well. According to Kant, it was "achieving unity in diversity (ühtsuse saavutamine mitmekesisuses)".<sup>42</sup>

The coexistence of national and European identities had started already in the Russian Empire. The Young Estonia movement and Gustav Suits (1883–1956), in particular, had declared "Let's be Estonians, but let's also become Europeans (Olgem eestlased, aga saagem eurooplasteks)"<sup>43</sup>; Suits was absent from the Paneuropean activities of the interwar period but engaged with the European Movement while in exile during the Cold War.

Estonians were not working for European unification, as such, but were rather improving the conditions for their own nationality. This primarily meant proving that Estonians are Europeans. Clearly, the question of European or Estonian culture is a larger topic than can be discussed here. As part of my methodology, I have limited research to the articles and other sources that only deal with unification; articles dealing with cultural Europeanism are thus excluded. There may have been articles defining European culture without any reference to unification at other levels but these were considered to be outside the area of research.

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42 Kant 1942.

43 Karjahärm 2003, 13.

This objective of coexistence between the national and European identity was popular but it was never tested. Although the current European Union differs in many ways from the Estonian blueprints of 1923–1957, it also constitutes a major change in the international situation. At the same time, the economy has extended beyond political borders and has become global. Nevertheless, national frameworks remain a crucial factor in both people's lives and world politics. Finding a balance between these three dimensions remains a continuous task for the future.



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This “European thesis” demanded a lot of traveling to visit archives and attend conferences. I had the privilege of staying – free of charge – in the apartments of many wonderful people.

I started the research as an exchange student in the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students at the University of Tartu, where Professors Andres Kasekamp and Eero Medijainen introduced me to the hidden past of the Baltic states.

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Besides traveling to foreign places, the researcher is required to read material in several languages and maybe even learn a new one. Therefore, I would especially like to thank all of my foreign language teachers, not only for teaching the language but also inspiring me to study; learning a language does not impair learning another one. Everyone I appreciate cannot be mentioned, but these are just a few most significant examples: Marja-Leena Hellemaa for English and Tuula Takala-Nurminen for Swedish and German in Kiukaisten lukio, and Katrin Jänese and Tiia Ristolainen for Estonian at the University of Tartu.

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Vanhempani ovat tukeneet parhaansa mukaan pyrkimyksiäni ja ovat kiitoksensa ansainneet.

Eur(oop)assa, 9.5.2011

Pauli Heikkilä

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