

6

Between Anvil and Hammer (1939–1953)

The rise of Stalin in the USSR and Hitler in Germany resulted in the destruction of Baltic independence. The 1940s were a tragic decade for the Baltic states. They suffered catastrophic population losses, during both war and peace, under three successive foreign occupation regimes: that of the Soviet Union in 1940–1, Nazi Germany during 1941–4 and the USSR again from 1944. Although the Baltic countries were non-belligerents in World War II, Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian men had to fight and die in the military uniforms of their two enemies. The heaviest losses were borne by the civilian population, who were targeted on ideological grounds: the Soviet regime deported ‘class enemies’ to prison camps in Russia; the Nazis exterminated the Jews on the basis of race. After the war ended, armed resistance to the Soviet regime continued in the forests, but was dealt a fatal blow with the mass deportations of 1949, part of the campaign to collectivise farming.

SOVIET ANNEXATION

As storm clouds gathered over Europe and rumours of impending war grew in 1939, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin negotiated with the British and French on the one hand and Nazi Germany on the other. Stalin had the luxury of deciding which of the ‘capitalist imperialist’ powers could offer the USSR the better deal. One of the principal sticking-points in the negotiations with the British and French was Stalin’s demand to allow the Red Army to traverse the territory of neighbouring neutral countries: the Baltic states. Hitler had fewer reservations since he was in a hurry to

invade Poland and wanted at all costs to avoid a two-front war as in World War I. On 23 August 1939 the world was shocked to learn that the two ideological arch-enemies had concluded a non-aggression treaty, often referred to as the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact after the foreign ministers who signed the agreement. The treaty included a secret protocol dividing Eastern Europe into spheres of influence: Finland, Estonia, Latvia, eastern Poland and Romanian Bessarabia (Moldova) fell under the Soviet sphere, while western and central Poland and initially also Lithuania were allotted to Germany.

After World War II, the Soviet Union justified the treaty with Nazi Germany and its subsequent annexation of the Baltic states as necessary to buy time to prepare for a German attack by moving its defences forward. However, the USSR acted as a loyal ally to Nazi Germany for almost two years, supplying it with vital resources, and the offensive nature of Soviet military plans suggest that Stalin had expected Germany and the Western capitalist powers to exhaust each other, as in World War I. Afterwards, the Red Army would have been poised to spread ‘Socialist revolution’ westwards across the fatally weakened continent.¹

Germany attacked Poland on 1 September 1939, triggering World War II. Hitler prompted the Lithuanians to use the opportunity to seize Vilnius from Poland, but they did not succumb to the temptation. Instead, Lithuania accepted an influx of 30,000 Polish refugees. The USSR invaded Poland on 17 September and immediately occupied Vilnius. After having successfully cooperated in destroying Poland, the USSR and Nazi Germany revised their pact on 28 September by trading Lithuania for a larger share of Poland.² Thus all three Baltic states came into the Soviet sphere and Stalin had fewer Poles to worry about. Stalin had wasted no time in securing his part of the bargain. He first set his sights on Estonia. Moscow created the pretext of a Polish submarine which had eluded the Nazi onslaught and found refuge in neutral Tallinn harbour. The Estonian authorities had interned the vessel, but it escaped and eventually joined the British navy. The Kremlin claimed that Estonia was unable to control its territorial waters and on 24 September demanded the immediate stationing of Soviet army, navy, and air force bases at strategic locations across Estonia. The Estonian delegation in Moscow was given only a few days to comply. The ultimatum was backed by an intimidating show of Soviet military force, and the Red Army was ordered to be prepared to invade Estonia on 29 September. The Estonian government caved in to Soviet pressure on 28 September, having secured a promise of non-interference in Estonia’s internal affairs.

An almost identical ultimatum to station Red Army troops on her territory was issued to Latvia the following week. Molotov bluntly told the Latvian foreign minister, Vilhelms Munters (1898–1967), that, like Peter the Great, the USSR needed ice-free ports on the Baltic Sea.³ Latvia bowed to Soviet demands on 5 October. The Lithuanian situation differed as Moscow used a carrot as well as a stick. As the USSR now occupied the eastern portion of Poland, Stalin offered Lithuania the return of Vilnius.⁴ The agreement with Lithuania was signed on 10 October. The USSR also demanded territorial concessions from Finland, but she refused to be bullied. The Red Army invaded Finland in November and the Finns resisted heroically in the Winter War until March 1940 when they sued for peace. Finland was forced to cede more territory than Moscow had originally demanded, but retained her independence. Many Balts later bitterly regretted that their leaders had not acted as resolutely as the Finns. At the time, however, Baltic leaders clung to the naïve illusion that, by not offering any resistance to the Red Army, their nations could somehow avoid the devastation of war.⁵ As the Nazi and Soviet fleets controlled the Baltic Sea, there was no hope for aid from abroad. Mobilising a common front of the three Baltic states was not considered to be a realistic option.

On 18 October, the same day as the Red Army entered Estonia, the first ship to transport Baltic Germans, who were answering Hitler's call to 'return home' to the German *Reich*, departed from Tallinn harbour. The resettlement of 14,000 Germans from Estonia and 52,000 from Latvia was hurriedly accomplished by spring 1940, although most were actually resettled on conquered Polish territory.⁶ A second, smaller round of resettlement took place in early 1941 after which only a few hundred, mainly elderly, people remained.⁷ Thus ended the history of the proud community which had been the ruling elite for seven hundred years. At the same time in early 1941, 52,000 Germans from Lithuania, mainly farmers inhabiting areas adjacent to East Prussia, were repatriated.

Until the spring of 1940, the Soviet bases' agreement regime functioned correctly (leaving aside the fact that the Soviets used airbases in neutral Estonia to bomb Finland; the Estonians did not dare to protest), although Moscow continually made new demands to expand the bases and bring in supplementary personnel. The Balts strenuously avoided any actions that Moscow could possibly consider provocative. After Hitler's dramatic military successes in Western Europe in spring 1940, however, it was only a question of time before the USSR increased pressure on them. As the world's attention was riveted on the German army entering

Paris, Stalin acted. As in 1939, Moscow isolated one state, this time in reverse order, with Lithuania first on 14 June and Latvia and Estonia two days later. Stalin's ultimata demanded an immediate increase in the number of Red Army troops in the Baltic states and the formation of 'friendly' governments. Three Soviet armies were prepared to move against the Baltic states and a total air, land and sea blockade of the Baltic states was imposed.⁸ The ultimata had been preceded by the absurd accusation that the Lithuanians had kidnapped Soviet soldiers who had gone missing from their bases. Soviet newspapers accused the Balts of sympathy towards the British and hostility to their ally Nazi Germany, and alleged that the Balts were secretly forming a military alliance aimed against the Soviet Union.⁹ Pressure was purposefully escalated: a passenger plane en route from Tallinn to Helsinki was shot down by Soviet fighters and a Latvian border guard post was attacked. This time, the Balts were given not days but only hours to decide their fate. In 1940 there could be no question of serious military resistance because the Soviet troops already stationed in bases across the Baltic states outnumbered the regular Baltic armies.

Only the Lithuanian president, Smetona, favoured resistance, but his government and military commanders did not support his position. Smetona fled the country after deputising his prime minister, Antanas Merkys (1887–1955). The leadership of the three Baltic states meekly acquiesced to Soviet demands without issuing any protest. In fact, they went even further than required by restricting movement at borders to ensure that nationals would not flee, misinforming their own embassies abroad about the true nature of the situation, and not making preparations for governments-in-exile. The Red Army's entry itself took place in an orderly manner as the Baltic governments did their utmost to prevent any incidents and maintain a façade of normality. The military occupation of the Baltic states was completed within a few days (by 21 June). Magnus Ilmjärv has aptly characterised this as 'silent submission'.¹⁰

There is perhaps some truth in the assertion that regime type explains the difference in behaviour between the Baltic states and Finland in 1939–40. In the Baltic authoritarian regimes only a small circle of individuals made decisions, whereas in Finland the views of the democratically elected parliament could not be ignored. In any case, the authoritarian regimes did enable a smooth transition to Soviet rule by keeping their own people uninformed or intentionally misinformed of the gravity of the threat to their independence. The Germans advised Baltic governments to agree to the Soviet demands, but intimated that they

viewed Soviet control as temporary. Baltic leaders hoped that they could break free of the Soviet grip when Germany eventually turned her arms against the USSR. They calculated that by fulfilling all Soviet demands and avoiding any potential provocations in the meantime, they might be able to hold their nations and institutions intact.¹¹

As soon as the Red Army moved in, street demonstrations were organised by communist activists, supported by Soviet armoured vehicles, to pressure the governments to resign. These events would later be characterised by the Soviet regime as ‘socialist revolutions’. To orchestrate the formation of pro-Soviet governments, senior Communist Party officials were immediately dispatched from Russia to the Baltic capitals: Leningrad party boss and Soviet Politburo member Andrei Zhdanov (1896–1948) to Tallinn; Andrei Vyshinsky (1883–1954), who gained international notoriety presiding over Stalin’s show trials in the 1930s, to Riga; the Soviet deputy commissar for foreign affairs, Vladimir Dekanozov (1898–1953), to Kaunas. These three men were Stalin’s pro-consuls, the real rulers of the Baltic states, during the next two months. They followed a plan roughly similar to that first devised by Zhdanov for implementation in Eastern Poland. Their first task was to determine the composition of the new Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian cabinets. The new pro-Soviet governments initially contained only a few communists, not only in order to create a false impression but also simply because there was a dearth of Communist Party members in the Baltic states. The new governments were headed by left-wing intellectuals: the Estonian physician and poet Johannes Vares (1890–1946), Latvian bacteriology professor Augsts Kirhensteins (1872–1963) and Lithuanian journalist Justas Paleckis (1899–1980). The new regime also reassured the anxious public by persuading some highly regarded progressive figures such as Tartu University history professor Hans Kruus (1891–1976) and Kaunas University literature professor Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius (1882–1954) to join the governments.

The Kremlin lacked the personnel or cadres to administer its new realm. At the end of 1939, there were 500 Communist Party members in Latvia and fewer than 150 in Estonia. The Lithuanian Communist Party was the largest, with over a third of its 1400 members being Jewish.¹² The leading Baltic Communists had remained in Soviet Russia after failing to obtain power in the wars of independence, but almost all of them were executed in Stalin’s purges of 1937–8. Ironically, the few original Baltic Bolsheviks who survived were those who spent the inter-war years in ‘bourgeois’ prisons in their home countries. After June 1940,

opportunist swelled the ranks of the Baltic Communist Parties. Viewing Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians as ‘counter-revolutionary’ nations, Stalin deliberately empowered the Russian and Jewish minorities.¹³ Nevertheless, Moscow still had to send thousands of Communist Party cadres from the USSR in order to control the new domains.

The next act in the synchronised Soviet script was ‘dechoiced’ general elections which took place simultaneously in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on 14–15 July, even though they had been announced only ten days earlier. The Communist Parties drafted the officially approved electoral slates, titled the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Unions of Working People all others who attempted to register as candidates were eliminated from the ballot. The ballot papers contained only one name, and although voting was mandatory, participation figures had to be falsified to show total support – some districts reported a turnout of 100 per cent. At their first session on 21 July, the new People’s Assemblies unanimously voted in favour of joining the USSR, although that possibility had not even been mentioned during electoral campaigns. As Presidents Päts and Ulmanis were no longer needed to sign decrees authorising the dismantlement of the state’s institutions, they were deported to the USSR, where they later died in captivity. Smetona’s flight allowed the Soviets to act more directly in Lithuania: arrests and deportation to the USSR of Lithuanian political leaders had already started before the elections. The new legislatures sent delegations to Moscow to present their ‘applications’ to join the USSR. The USSR Supreme Soviet granted their ‘requests’ and during the first week of August, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, one after another, became the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth Soviet Socialist Republics respectively.

After incorporation into the USSR, the Baltic marionette legislatures speedily and without any debate adopted new constitutions modelled on the Soviet system and renamed themselves the ‘Supreme Soviets’. The USSR Politburo approved the drafts of the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian constitutions on 22 August.¹⁴ The Baltic governments were re-formed on the Soviet model as Councils of People’s Commissars. The fellow-travellers and technical experts of the June governments were now replaced by an executive consisting of Communist Party members approved by Moscow. The initial three prime ministers were shifted to the ceremonial post of Chairman of the Presidium of the republican Supreme Soviet and trusted communists were appointed in their stead: Mečys Gedvilas (1901–81) in Lithuania, Vilis Lācis (1904–66) in Latvia, and Johannes Lauristin (1899–1941) in Estonia. After Stalin’s

plenipotentiaries had accomplished their task and departed, real power did not revert to the governments but to the First Secretary of the Communist Party: Antanas Sniečkus (1903–74) in Lithuania, Jānis Kalnberziņš (1893–1986) in Latvia, and Karl Säre (1903–43?) in Estonia. However, the Baltic Communist Parties themselves were now formally subordinated to the All-Union Communist Party.

Sovietisation had already begun before the annexation and proceeded rapidly: in July 1940 banks and large industrial enterprises were nationalised. Private homes larger than 170 m² (or 220 m² in the big cities) were nationalised. The maximum amount of land which could be retained by an individual farmer was restricted to 30 hectares. Confiscated land was redistributed in plots no larger than 10 hectares to landless peasants. These plots, however, were too small to be economically viable and served only to stoke up resentment and class conflict in the countryside, helping to pave the way for later collectivisation.

The wages of workers and civil servants were raised, but the standard of living plummeted precipitously, particularly after November when absurdly low exchange rates with the Soviet rouble were set for the Baltic currencies, effectively destroying the people's savings. Goods which were formerly readily available disappeared from shop shelves. Four months later, the *kroon*, *lats* and *litas* were withdrawn from circulation entirely.

The national armies, after a purging of senior officers, were incorporated into the Red Army as the 22nd Estonian, 24th Latvian and 29th Lithuanian territorial rifle corps. A Soviet Baltic Military District with its headquarters in Riga was formed in 1940. All sorts of voluntary organisations such as the YMCA, Salvation Army and Girl Guides were forcibly disbanded. In most respects, the former civil society was destroyed. The press, radio, literature and the arts were heavily censored and inundated with the Stalinist cult of personality, ceaselessly praising Stalin as the 'great teacher', 'brilliant genius of humanity', and so forth.

The predominant characteristic of the Stalinist system was terror. Its main instrument was the NKVD (Peoples' Commissariat of Internal Affairs) which included the regime's dreaded secret police with its vast powers of surveillance, arrest and detention. While initial arrests and deportations targeted political leaders, senior civil servants, police and military officers, entrepreneurs, clergy and Russian émigrés, the terror spread to include all walks of life – just about anyone could be accused of being an 'enemy of the people'. Terror reached a climax in the early hours of 14 June 1941 when simultaneous mass deportations were carried out

in all three countries. Those on the NKVD list were woken in the middle of the night and given a couple of hours to pack a suitcase. The families were then taken to the railway station where the men were separated from the women and children. The transit to Siberia lasted weeks. The freight cars were crowded, there was little food or water and many did not survive the long journey. 10,000 people from Estonia, 15,000 from Latvia and 18,000 from Lithuania were deported in this operation.¹⁵ Most of the men were sentenced to 25 years' imprisonment for 'counterrevolutionary activity' according to the notorious all-encompassing Article 58 of the Soviet Penal Code, which also applied retroactively to all those who had fought for liberty and opposed the Bolsheviks in 1918. Few survived more than a year or two in the inhumane conditions of the Soviet Gulag (forced labour camps).

NAZI OSTLAND

On 22 June 1941 Hitler launched a surprise attack against the USSR. German troops overran Lithuania in a matter of days, Latvia in a couple of weeks, and Estonia by September. The German invasion gave hope for relief from Soviet terror and the restoration of statehood. Baltic men formed guerrilla bands, mostly based on the pre-war civil guard and those who fled to the woods in the wake of the Soviet deportations. Fighting was most intense between Estonian partisans and Soviet 'destruction battalions' since the German advance stalled for several weeks in southern Estonia. The evacuation of Soviet personnel from Tallinn in August by the Soviet Baltic Fleet resulted in heavy loss of life (more than fifteen thousand people – one of the largest death tolls in naval history) as the convoy, attacked from the air and shelled by coastal artillery batteries, ploughed directly through a minefield laid by Finnish and German navies in the Gulf of Finland near Juminda.

As a result of the activities of the Lithuanian Activists' Front (LAF), headed by Colonel Kazys Škirpa (1895–1979), the Lithuanian ambassador who had remained in Berlin in 1940, the Lithuanians were best prepared for regime change. The LAF organised underground cells and prepared for liberation from the USSR. On 23 June, the day after the beginning of the German invasion, the LAF announced the establishment of a provisional government which would restore the institutions of the pre-war republic. The resistance organised by the LAF against the Soviet regime could be characterised as a mass national uprising. When the

German army marched into Kaunas on 25 June, they found the city already under the control of the Lithuania Provisional Government. Škirpa was slated to head the government but was detained in Berlin by the Germans. In his stead, Professor Juozas Ambrazevičius (1903–74), the minister of education, took the reins and proceeded to restore the pre-war Lithuanian administration. The Germans were caught by surprise by the establishment of the Lithuanian Provisional Government, but they nevertheless initially tolerated it. The provisional government had to cooperate with the Germans to function, but was unwilling to collaborate as simply a puppet administration and disbanded after six weeks. The fate of the Lithuanian provisional government dissuaded Latvians and Estonians from attempting to restore their independence in 1941.

In the Nazi new order, the Baltic states, together with most of Belarus, constituted *Reichskomissariat Ostland*, ruled from Riga by *Reichskomissar* Hinrich Lohse (1896–1964), previously the Nazi Party boss (*Gauleiter*) of Schleswig-Holstein. *Ostland* came under the jurisdiction of the Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Areas, headed by Alfred Rosenberg. Within *Ostland*, each Baltic state constituted a general district ruled by its own Nazi *Generalkomissar*. Parallel but subordinate to their own civil administration the Germans created a native self-administration (*landeseigene Verwaltung*), headed by a directorate (council in Lithuania). The Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian directorates were headed by Dr Hjalmar Mäe (1901–78), General Oskars Dankers (1883–1965) and General Petras Kubiliūnas (1894–1946) respectively. The Germans failed to enlist esteemed personalities to serve as their quislings. Mäe and Kubiliūnas had both been imprisoned in the 1930s for involvement in right-wing plots to overthrow the government; during the Soviet occupation Dankers and Mäe had both managed to resettle to Berlin and ingratiate themselves there. These were men whom the Germans felt they could trust to do their bidding.

Initial goodwill towards the Germans as ‘liberators’ quickly dissipated as the Baltic states were treated as occupied Soviet territory and the Third Reich retained the property nationalised by the USSR. The main aim of German policy was maximally to exploit the resources of the Baltic nations for the benefit of their war effort. Although having no intention of respecting native culture in the long term, in the eyes of most of the population the Germans nevertheless compared favourably to the communists because they allowed the national symbols to be used, religious instruction to be reinstated and many of the local organisations and institutions dissolved by the Soviet regime to be re-established. At least Nazi

repression and violence was predictable, whereas Soviet terror appeared random – individuals could suddenly find themselves classed as ‘enemies of the people’.

The Baltic experience of World War II differed from that of the rest of Europe because the Baltic peoples endured three brutal occupations by the two totalitarian powers. They had little opportunity to make morally untainted choices between two evils. The term ‘collaborator’, implying ‘traitor’, is, therefore, inaccurate for those individuals who cooperated with the Nazis in the Baltic countries, since the state to whom they owed allegiance had already been destroyed by the USSR.¹⁶

There was practically no armed resistance to the Germans, with the exception of partisans trained by Soviet forces to commit sabotage behind German lines. However, these found little support among the people and had only limited success in the Lithuanian–Belarusian border areas. The national opposition desisted from undermining the German war effort as it would have hastened the return of the dreaded Red Army. It viewed the USSR as ‘enemy number one’, whereas Germany was seen as the immediately less dangerous ‘enemy number two’.¹⁷

Surviving leading figures from the independence era who represented various former political parties, such as the Latvian social democratic leader Pauls Kalniņš (1872–1945) and the last Estonian prime minister, Jüri Uluots (1890–1945), formed underground national opposition groups which maintained contact with Baltic diplomats in exile in the West via Stockholm and relayed information about the Nazi occupation to the world. By 1944 they had managed to overcome their ideological differences and formed united, central organisations: the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania, the Central Council of Latvia and the Estonian National Committee. These were underground organisations which operated conspiratorially and were constantly hindered by the German security police, who arrested many of their leaders in 1944.

The Nazis had grandiose fantasies for the racial reordering of Eastern European populations. Hitler sought to create *Lebensraum* (living space) for German colonists and force the ‘racially inferior’ peoples eastwards. The Nazis regarded the Estonians and Latvians as the most ‘racially worthy’ among Eastern Europeans because of their perceived ‘Nordic’ racial characteristics, partly derived from centuries of blood intermingled with that of the Baltic Germans. *Generalplan Ost* foresaw that 50 per cent of Estonians and 25 per cent of Latvians were deemed racially valuable enough to be assimilated with Germanic colonists. The rest would be resettled eastward on Russian territory. The perspective for

the Lithuanian nation, not having the ‘benefit’ of blood intermingled with that of the Baltic Germans, was even less palatable.

The new occupier replaced class war with race war. For the Nazis, the first priority ideologically was the annihilation of the Jews. The Holocaust in *Ostland* can be divided into three phases: 1941 – the execution of the majority of the local Jews by SS *Einsatzgruppe A* (SS Operational Group A) and native collaborators; 1942 to spring 1943 – the exploitation of Jewish labour in ghettos; summer 1943 to August 1944 – the liquidation of the ghettos.¹⁸

Immediately on the heels of the military invasion, *Einsatzgruppe A* commanded by SS General Walter Stahlecker (1900–42) organised the murder of most of the Baltic Jews during the summer and autumn of 1941. Stahlecker immediately sought to instigate pogroms in order to give the appearance of spontaneity and local initiative, but had only very limited success in Lithuania and none in Latvia and Estonia.¹⁹ The Nazis ordered the Jews to be confined to ghettos, from where they were taken in groups to secluded locations to be shot and buried in large, open pits. The largest single such ‘action’ was conducted by SS General Friedrich Jeckeln (1895–1946) who was dispatched to Rīga in November 1941 by *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler (1900–45) to hasten the pace of the killings. On 30 November and 8 December, 25,000 Jews from the Rīga ghetto were marched to the sandy pine forest at Rumbula and executed.²⁰ By the end of 1941, most of the Baltic Jews had been killed. The first to be completely eliminated were the Estonian Jews: the Nazis declared Estonia *Judenfrei* (free of Jews) in December 1941 after having executed 950 Jews. Nevertheless, three-quarters of the tiny Estonian Jewish community survived by evacuating with the Red Army. The much more numerous Latvian and Lithuanian Jews had less time to escape the German advance in June 1941 and thus most were trapped.

After the initial massacres, the second phase, 1942 to spring 1943, was comparatively stable. The surviving Jews were confined to ghettos in Vilnius, Kaunas, Šiauliai, Rīga, Liepāja and Daugavpils, where the Germans exploited their labour. During this period the Nazis transported tens of thousands of Jews, primarily from Germany but also from Austria, Czechoslovakia and France, to *Ostland*. Many were executed immediately upon arrival, but most were sent to work in the ghettos or to camps supplying labour to Estonian oil-shale mines. The final phase of the Holocaust occurred after the Warsaw ghetto uprising. In June 1943 Himmler ordered the liquidation of the ghettos in *Ostland* and the placement of Jews under SS authority. The inmates of the Rīga ghetto were resettled to

the nearby Kaiserwald (Mežaparks) concentration camp, and the Kaunas and Šiauliai ghettos were compressed and turned into camps. The Vilnius ghetto was liquidated in September: its able-bodied inmates were transferred to camps in Latvia and Estonia, and those unfit for work – the elderly and children – were sent to be killed in Auschwitz. As the Red Army reached the Baltic in the summer of 1944, the Nazis evacuated the surviving Jews to concentration camps in the Reich, mainly Stutthof and Dachau, although some, such as the 2000 mainly Lithuanian Jews at the Klooga camp in Estonia, were hastily massacred on the spot. Altogether, about 95 per cent of Lithuania’s Jews, almost 200,000 people, were killed between 1941 and 1945.²¹ Likewise, of the 70,000 Jews who remained in German-occupied Latvia, only a couple of thousand survived.²²

As elsewhere in Nazi-occupied Europe, it would have been difficult for the Germans to carry out the ‘final solution of the Jewish question’ without some local collaboration. The most notorious perpetrator was a Latvian security police (*Sicherheitsdienst*) commando led by Viktors Arājs (1910–88) which murdered 25,000 Jews in Latvia and Belarus.²³ It would, however, be misleading to ascribe participation in genocide to ‘ancient hatreds’, since Jews had enjoyed a relatively good life in the three independent republics, and almost three thousand Lithuanian families rescued Jews during the Nazi German occupation.²⁴ The causal explanation is linked to the preceding year of brutal Soviet rule when Jews for the first time rose to positions of power, which created resentment because many Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians perceived them as having been complicit in the destruction of their statehood.²⁵ Communist terror ripped apart the social fabric of Baltic societies and desensitised them to violence. Nazi propaganda deliberately conflated communists and Jews into a single enemy (‘Judeo-Bolsheviks’). While many Jews had been empowered by the Soviet regime, Jewish businessmen and religious and community leaders were among the victims of Soviet terror.

The Nazis also exterminated the Roma, but their numbers were much smaller: 2000 in Latvia and about 500 in Lithuania and Estonia. In addition to the Jews and Roma, 18,000 Latvian, 7000 Estonian and 5000 Lithuanian civilians, some of whom were Russian or Polish, were killed during the Nazi occupation. Most of these were accused of collaboration with the Soviet regime. A group of victims who have received little attention are the Soviet POWs who died of starvation or disease or were killed in the inhuman conditions of German POW camps hastily erected in *Ostland*. The largest number of Soviet POWs, 170,000, perished on

Lithuanian soil.²⁶ The Germans ignored international conventions and acted according to their racial ideology, which deemed the Slavs to be an inferior race.

FIGHTING IN FOREIGN UNIFORM

Although the Baltic states were neutral in World War II, their citizens were forced to fight in the uniforms of the two totalitarian powers bent on the destruction of their nations. It was not uncommon for Baltic men to experience service in both the Red Army and Waffen-SS. The pre-war national armies which had been transformed into Red Army territorial corps were sent to training camps at the end of May 1941. There many of the officers were arrested and sent to prison camps above the Arctic Circle, primarily Norilsk, where most were shot. After the Nazi invasion, the remains of the former Estonian and Latvian national armies fought defensive battles in north-western Russia, suffering substantial losses. Subsequently they were sent to labour battalions in the Soviet rear, where a large number perished in appalling conditions during the winter of 1941. This fate was also shared by many Balts mobilised into the retreating Red Army in the summer of 1941, the largest number (33,000) of whom were Estonians, since the rapid advance of the Germans prevented the Soviets from carrying out conscription in Lithuania and Latvia.²⁷ After their brutal treatment in the Red Army, many Balts used the first opportunity when sent to the front line in the summer of 1942 to desert to the German side in order to return home.

Motivated by a desire for revenge against the Soviet regime and to liberate family members deported by the communists, several thousand Baltic men volunteered for German military service. Various police and auxiliary battalions were formed from Baltic volunteers who were mainly employed in guarding facilities and fighting Soviet partisans in the areas adjacent to *Ostland*. Some of these police battalions were directly involved in the execution of Jews in Belarus and Ukraine. The collaborationist self-administration sought greater autonomy for their countries (on the model of Slovakia) in exchange for promising to provide troops for the German war effort. Leading figures in the Estonian and Latvian directorates, Oskar Angelus (1892–1979) and Alfrēds Valdmanis (1908–70) respectively, prepared memoranda outlining such plans, but were opposed by *Reichskommissar* Lohse.²⁸ Seeking to bolster local support for the German war effort, Rosenberg made a modest proposal in this

direction to Hitler in 1943 but was rebuffed. However, as the fortunes of war turned against the Third Reich on the Eastern Front in 1943, the Germans made increasing efforts to recruit Balts. In contrast to the police battalions manned mainly by volunteers, the Germans began to conscript Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians for Waffen-SS legions. Since Eastern Europeans were not allowed to serve in the Wehrmacht (regular army), Baltic conscripts were assigned to Waffen-SS units and deemed ‘volunteers’ because mobilisation in an occupied territory contravened the Hague Convention. The Lithuanians and the Poles were the only nations of Nazi-occupied Europe not to provide a division for the Waffen-SS. An effective boycott campaign by Lithuanian patriotic underground organisations led the Germans to abandon recruitment for the Waffen-SS in 1943. Another form of protest was registered by 3500 Estonians who managed to avoid German service but still fought against the USSR by clandestinely crossing the Gulf of Finland and enlisting in the Finnish military. Failing to net as many men for cannon-fodder as they had hoped, the Germans exploited Baltic manpower in other forms. Over 125,000 Balts, the majority of them Lithuanians, were conscripted for labour service in Germany in the war industries.

The situation changed dramatically as the Red Army neared the borders of the Baltic states in early 1944. Balts who had earlier been reluctant to serve the Third Reich now grimly responded to the call to arms in order to defend their homeland. In February 1944, almost 40,000 Estonians were enlisted. During the war, 110,000 Latvian men were mobilised into German military units, half of them into the Latvian Legion (the 15th and 19th Waffen-SS divisions).²⁹

As attacks by Soviet partisans along Lithuania’s eastern border intensified in early 1944 as the Red Army approached, the Germans announced the formation of a Lithuanian territorial defence force headed by the respected Lithuanian general, Povilas Plechavičius (1890–1973) (who had earlier refused to go along with the Waffen-SS recruitment campaign). Unlike earlier failed attempts to recruit Lithuanians, this time more than twenty thousand men enlisted because the Germans promised that the men were to be used only on Lithuanian territory and that they would be commanded by Lithuanian officers. The Germans immediately had second thoughts about the unit, which they rightly suspected of preparing to become the nucleus of a Lithuanian national army, and attempted, with little success, to redirect the men to serve in units under German command. When they demanded that the Lithuanians swear an oath to Hitler, the Lithuanians deserted en masse. In May, Plechavičius

was arrested and several members of his staff were executed. Most of the men fled to the forests with weapons in hand later to re-emerge as the nucleus of the armed resistance to the Soviet regime.

The Red Army's thrust into Estonia on the Narva front was halted at the Tannenberg line (*Sinimäed*) by German and Estonian troops in July 1944. The Red Army suffered over a hundred thousand casualties while repeatedly trying unsuccessfully to smash through the German defences in the bloodiest single battle on Baltic territory.³⁰ However, German Army Group North, including Baltic combat units within it, did not have the resources or manpower to stop the advance of the Red Army further south. Vilnius had already been overrun in July and the Red Army sought to cut off Army Group North in Estonia by thrusting towards Riga. The Germans abandoned Estonia in September, just as Finland was concluding a separate armistice with the USSR. Riga fell in October.

As the Germans retreated and the Red Army poured into Baltic territory, Baltic patriots sought to re-establish independent governments. Many naively believed that a scenario similar to that of 1918 could reoccur: independence could be recovered if Baltic troops succeeded in hindering the Soviet advance until Nazi Germany capitulated to the Western Allies. The basis for this hope was the Atlantic Charter, which rejected territorial aggrandisement and supported the principle of national self-determination. This vision of the post-war world agreed upon by the USA and Britain in 1941 was incorporated in the Declaration by United Nations of 1 January 1942 to which the USSR was also party. However, the Balts were unaware that at the meeting of 'the Big Three' in Tehran in 1943, the US president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and the British prime minister, Winston Churchill, indicated that they would not oppose Stalin's desire to reimpose control over the Baltic states.

In September 1944, as the Germans abandoned Tallinn, the last pre-war prime minister, Uluots, whom the Estonian National Committee and diplomats in exile recognised as acting president, named an Estonian government headed by Otto Tief (1889–1976). However, most of the members of this government were arrested by Soviet forces within days, although Uluots managed to escape to Sweden and thus embodied the legal continuity of the independent republic. The underground Central Council of Latvia envisaged the German-uniformed home guard regiment led by General Jānis Kurelis (1882–1954) as the nucleus of a Latvian army which would defend Courland against Soviet military after Germany's capitulation. However, the council's plan was quashed in November 1944 by the Nazis, who executed eight Latvian officers and sent

thirteen hundred Latvian patriots to German concentration camps.³¹ In the final days of the war in May 1945, a futile attempt was made to form an independent Latvian government in German-held Liepāja to continue fighting against the Red Army. In Lithuania – mostly overrun by the Red Army by August 1944 – no attempt was made to set up a provisional government. The negative experience of 1941 dissuaded another attempt.³²

Upon re-establishing control, the Soviet authorities immediately conscripted tens of thousands of Baltic youths to replenish the ranks of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Red Army corps. The largest number, 82,000, were mobilised in Lithuania. Thousands of young men avoided conscription by fleeing to the forests and joining the national partisans. The remnants of almost thirty German divisions, together with one Latvian division, fought on in the encircled Courland pocket right up to the end of the war in May 1945. Tragically, in the final months of the war, the Latvian and Estonian Red Army corps were also deployed in Courland, sometimes fighting against their brethren.

While there was little love for the Germans, the imminent return of the Red Army gave rise to intense fear. Baltic citizens who had lost family members, relatives and friends to the Red Terror had ample reason to fear for their own lives and were eager to escape. No German propaganda was necessary to warn people of the new horrors which awaited them under renewed Soviet rule. Because of lack of transport, and the rapidly moving front line, escape was difficult. The German authorities only sanctioned movement to Germany, where the refugees were put to work in the war industry. Nevertheless, substantial numbers of Estonians and Latvians were able to flee to Sweden, in overcrowded fishing boats, although an unknown number perished in stormy seas. Those who had no access to boats chose evacuation to Germany: overland from Lithuania; by sea from Estonia and Latvia. Several German ships transporting Estonian and Latvian refugees were sunk by Soviet planes or submarines.

While refugees came from all walks of life, the intellectual elite was disproportionately represented. A large number of scientists, artists, writers, musicians, teachers and clergymen left their homelands for an uncertain future in order to avoid probable arrest. Proportionally fewer peasants fled – many could not bear to abandon their livestock. However, the main determinant was access to means of transportation. Those who lived near the coast, therefore, were overrepresented among the refugees. Altogether more than 140,000 Latvians, 75,000 Estonians and 65,000 Lithuanians fled their homeland.³³

Most Baltic military units retreated with the Germans and fought defensive actions in Germany in the final months of the war, including several thousand juvenile Baltic boys forcibly conscripted in 1944 to serve as Luftwaffe (air force) auxiliaries in Germany, mainly loading munitions for flak guns. After Germany capitulated, the refugees strove desperately to end up in the American or British occupation zones in Germany. The USSR sought to repatriate these refugees as Soviet citizens. However, unlike Ukrainians for example, the Balts were eventually saved from this fate by the Western policy of non-recognition of the Soviet annexation. Most refugees spent four or five years in displaced persons camps in Germany before resettling somewhere further removed from the perceived Soviet threat, chiefly the USA, Canada and Australia.

The face of the eastern Baltic littoral changed dramatically once again, in terms of both borders and populations, with the end of the Second World War. The boundaries of Poland were shifted westwards at the expense of Germany and to the benefit of the USSR. On the ashes of Königsberg, Stalin created a completely new entity in 1946: the Russian oblast of Kaliningrad, which formed a wedge between Lithuania and Poland along the Baltic Sea. The German inhabitants of East Prussia fled or were driven out and an entirely new Slavic population was brought in to repopulate the area. In the North, Finland managed to preserve its sovereignty and democracy, but lost Karelia and was made partly dependent on the Soviet Union. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were the only countries eliminated from the map of Europe, becoming constituent republics of the USSR. Furthermore, Stalin transferred the Petseri (Pechory) and trans-Narva regions (5 per cent of Estonia's territory) and the Abrene region (2 per cent of Latvia's territory) to the Russian SFSR. Lithuania recovered Klaipėda from Germany and Vilnius from Poland (although most of the territory south and east of Vilnius that Soviet Russia had recognised as Lithuanian in the 1920 peace treaty now became part of the Belarusian SSR).

Few other countries (Poland, the USSR and Yugoslavia) suffered greater population losses than the Baltic states. Latvia lost close to one-third of its population and Estonia almost as much.³⁴ Lithuania had fewer losses but would suffer the greatest losses in the post-war years. The war destroyed four historic ethnic-minority communities: the Baltic Germans, the Jews, the Roma and the Estonian Swedes.³⁵ In 1945 the Baltic countries were ethnically more homogenous than at any point in their modern history.

The population was partially replaced in the post-war years by newcomers, who originated mainly from Russian areas adjacent to Estonia and Latvia and who were directed voluntarily or non-voluntarily to participate in the reconstruction effort after the devastation of the war. German POWs were also used for reconstruction work. The Baltic republics were attractive since their standard of living and their level of development were significantly higher than those of Russia and the other republics of the USSR. The immediate post-war years witnessed a crime wave which was amplified by the numerous Russian carpetbaggers who took advantage of the situation.³⁶

Baltic cities were devastated by the war. Narva, Paldiski, Šiauliai, Klaipėda, Daugavpils and Jelgava suffered the worst physical damage. Typically, the cities were rebuilt in the standard style of a Soviet modern urban landscape; they did not have their historically valuable architecture restored. Narva was an extreme example of this, particularly since its population was also almost entirely new – Russians from across the border, as former residents were not allowed to return. Of the Baltic cities, Vilnius underwent the greatest transformation: it saw a change of regime five times during the war: Polish to Soviet to Lithuanian to Soviet to Nazi and back to Soviet. Most of its original inhabitants perished in the Holocaust or were relocated after the war. Between 1945 and 1947 Vilnius was Lithuanianised as 170,000 Poles were ‘repatriated’ from Lithuania to Poland. Ironically, the communists accomplished what pre-war Lithuanian nationalists could only have dreamt of.³⁷

RESISTANCE, REPRESSION AND COLLECTIVISATION

Armed conflict did not cease in the Baltic states with the end of World War II. Fighting against the Soviet occupation forces continued in the forests and swamps. Armed resistance was greatest in Lithuania. Whereas in Estonia and Latvia the ‘forest brothers’ were organised in small autonomous bands, the Lithuanian resistance managed in 1949 to establish a national central command, the Council of the Lithuanian Freedom Fighters, which was led by the Lithuanian pre-war army captain Jonas Žemaitis (1909–54). In Lithuania, an estimated 50,000 men and women participated in the fight against the Soviet regime, 20,000 of whom were killed; 13,000 were killed on the Soviet side.³⁸ In comparison, the scope and intensity of the conflict was not as great in Estonia and

Latvia, where the number of forest brethren killed in each country was approximately 2,000.

One of the reasons why Lithuanian resistance was significantly stronger was simply because there were more young Lithuanian men available. Compared to Estonians and Latvians, very few Lithuanians had been mobilised to serve in the Soviet and German armed forces during the war. Only in Lithuania had there been any notable organised resistance during the Nazi occupation, and it was relatively easy for the partisans to reorient themselves to fighting the other occupier. Furthermore, the tight-knit Catholic rural communities of Lithuania provided a greater support network for the guerrillas.

Soviet security forces purposely injected elements of civil war into the guerrilla struggle by forming ‘destruction battalions’ from weakly disciplined and poorly motivated local recruits.³⁹ Soviet operatives managed to infiltrate the resistance by posing as forest brethren, thus enabling them to betray partisan bunkers and their local supporters. Fake forest brethren occasionally also committed atrocities to turn local communities against the partisans. Great Britain recruited and trained agents from among Baltic refugees in order to establish communication with the resistance. However, almost all of those who were landed in their homeland were captured immediately since the operation was betrayed at its outset by Soviet infiltration of the British counter-intelligence service, MI6.⁴⁰

The resistance persevered in the hope that the Cold War which had developed between the erstwhile allies of the West and the Soviet Union would flare into a hot war, resulting in the liberation of the Baltic states. This illusion was finally extinguished after the USA stood by while the Red Army crushed the Hungarian uprising in 1956. The Hungarian uprising was also a watershed moment for the Baltic peoples’ relationship with the Soviet regime. They began to accommodate themselves to the permanence of the Soviet regime and no longer viewed it as one in a series of temporary military occupations. After Stalin’s death in 1953 most remaining resistance fighters accepted the amnesties offered by the Soviet authorities. Žemaitis was captured in 1953 and taken to Moscow, where he was tortured and personally interrogated by the Soviet security chief, Lavrenty Beria (1899–1953), before being executed. Nevertheless, a few forest brethren continued living beyond the reach of the authorities – the last known Lithuanian resister died as late as 1986.⁴¹

Upon their return in 1944, the Soviet security organs immediately arrested and deported those whom they deemed opponents and German

collaborators. Despite this massive new wave of political arrests, the Soviet authorities were temporarily somewhat tolerant of local norms and customs in the Baltic republics during the immediate post-war years of 1944–7 because it took time to build up the party and security apparatus and suppress the partisans.⁴² However, the years 1947–53 saw renewed repression as the goal of the Soviet regime was not simply military occupation but permanent incorporation of all aspects of Baltic societies within Soviet institutions. Terror was the chosen method to enforce compliance with the new order. The Stalinist regime’s paranoia was boundless, targeting not only ‘bourgeois nationalism’ but also ‘formalism’ and ‘cosmopolitanism’: a group of Latvian intellectuals who met informally to discuss contemporary French literature, for example, were imprisoned in 1951.⁴³ The Communist Party maintained tight control over ideology in all aspects of life in the USSR. In the final years of the Stalin era, the ‘cult of personality’ was a constant presence; praising the genius of Stalin, the great leader and teacher, was a public duty. Art, literature and theatre were heavily censored, with ‘socialist realism’ being the party’s preferred mode of expression. Paeans to heroic collective-farm tractor drivers and factory workers were ubiquitous. Books on the proscribed list were destroyed on a massive scale: in Latvia by 1950, for example, 12 million books and 750,000 periodicals had been removed from circulation.⁴⁴ For the Baltic nations, there were constant reminders of their ‘eternal friendship’ with their ‘big brother’ the Russian nation. History texts were rewritten to emphasise the ‘progressive’ role of Russia in the pasts of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Monuments and memorials from the independence era were demolished and new statues and plaques honouring communist figures and the Red Army were erected.

Throughout the Soviet era, ideological indoctrination was relentless, particularly in education. Young people were expected to participate in communist organisations, children in the Pioneers and youths in the Komsomol. To combat religion and to propagate atheism, the Soviet authorities introduced the subject of ‘scientific communism’ into school curricula. The Soviet regime permitted only registered churches to function and this was under strict state supervision. A number of churches were taken from their congregations and turned into museums, concert halls or simply warehouses. Since seminaries and schools of theology were closed, the major challenge for the churches was to train new clergy. They were already in a desperate situation since many had fled into exile in 1944 and the remaining clergy faced physical repression during the Stalin era. Of the Lithuanian Catholic bishops who did not escape into

exile, only one was not deported.⁴⁵ The last systematic deportation was of Jehovah's Witnesses in 1951.

In the immediate post-war years (1944–7), the Central Committee of All-Union Communist Party kept tight control over local decision-making by establishing special bureaus for the three republics, each led by a Russian comrade dispatched from Moscow to 'assist' the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Communist Party leaderships. The Soviet regime initially lacked sufficient personnel or cadres to administer its new realm. Although new party members were recruited rapidly during the first occupation in 1940–41, they had incurred many losses during the war. As of 1 January 1945, of the 3536 Communist Party members in Lithuania, 1127 were Lithuanians. Similarly, only 1263 of the 3592 in Latvia and 961 of the 2409 in Estonia were native-born.⁴⁶ Moreover, half of these were on the rolls of the repressive apparatus, the NKVD and NKGB, or the military. Within two years (1945–7) the size of the Communist Party membership increased five-fold. However, this was mainly the result not of co-opting locals but of the migration of party members from the USSR and from among the ranks of the demobilised Red Army. The Estonian and Latvian Communist Parties were built up with ethnic Estonians and Latvians whose parents or grandparents had emigrated eastwards in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. This external human resource for party cadres was largely absent in the Lithuanian case since most Lithuanian emigration had been westwards. These ethnic Estonians and Latvians were trusted because of their Soviet education and were assumed to be loyal to Moscow because they had no local power base.

Native communists were never entirely free from the suspicion of ideological impurity. At the height of paranoid Stalinism, the Estonian Communist Party first secretary, Nikolai Karotamm (1901–69), was accused of shielding 'bourgeois nationalists' within the party's ranks at the eighth plenary session of the Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party in March 1950. Karotamm was exiled to an academic post in Moscow and hundreds of others were expelled from the party. The purge also had a devastating impact on Estonian culture life since approximately one-third of all Estonian artists, writers, actors, musicians and university faculty were banned from employment in their profession.⁴⁷ Karotamm, nevertheless, was more fortunate than one of his accusers, the deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, Hendrik Allik (1901–89), who was sentenced to 25 years' imprisonment in December 1950. Ironically, Allik had already received a 25-year prison term for

his part in the failed communist insurrection in Tallinn in 1924.⁴⁸ Karotamm's main accuser, Ivan (later Johannes) Käbin (1905–99), the propaganda secretary of the party's Central Committee, who had been raised in Soviet Russia and came to Estonia after the war, became the new first secretary. A native-born Estonian would not lead the party again until 1988.

The Baltic republics were rapidly integrated into the highly centralised Soviet planned economy.⁴⁹ While large and medium-sized commercial enterprises in the Baltic republics had been nationalised in 1940, the remaining small businesses were eradicated by 1947. Private ownership of any means of production was forbidden. All production in the Soviet command economy was determined according to a Five-Year Plan produced by *Gosplan*, the State Planning Committee, in Moscow. The Communist Party 'dictatorship of the proletariat' was based on the state ownership of all means of production, both industrial and agricultural.

The final measure in irreversibly sovietising Baltic society was the destruction of family farms through the establishment of collective farms. The first steps had already been taken during the earlier Soviet occupation when farmers were stripped of landholdings greater than 30 hectares and small 10 hectare plots were created for previously landless peasants. This land reform was rescinded during the German occupation but was immediately reintroduced by the Soviet authorities after the war. From the Soviet viewpoint, this measure was also useful in smoothing the way for collectivisation later because it created new tensions and stoked up class conflict in the countryside between those whose land was taken away and those who received it. The first collective farms were established in 1947. Simultaneously, drastic tax increases were imposed on farmers in order to render private farming unviable and to force peasants to join the new collective farms. Nevertheless, very few farmers were willing voluntarily to surrender their livestock and property to the state. As in Russia and Ukraine in the early 1930s, Stalin's instrument of choice was terror.⁵⁰

Operation *Priboi* (Surf) was meticulously planned in Moscow and carried out without any warning in all three Baltic republics simultaneously during the night of 24–25 March 1949. It was officially aimed at 'kulaks', 'bandits' and 'nationalists' and their families. The Russian term *kulak* originally referred to better-off peasants, but in Soviet parlance it meant anyone whose farm managed to provide more than a bare subsistence for its owner. After the 1940 Soviet land reform, there were hardly any farmers who could be considered as wealthy. In fact, these terms were sufficiently elastic that almost anyone out of favour with

the local Communist Party bosses could end up being branded a *kulak*. Stalin aimed physically to ‘liquidate’ the kulaks as a class. The central authorities provided a quota of 30,000 families to be ‘resettled’ from the Baltic republics. All in all, 95,000 people (21,000 Estonians, 42,000 Latvians and 32,000 Lithuanians),⁵¹ almost three-quarters of whom were women and children, received a night-time knock on their door and were given an hour to pack their belongings. They were placed in cattle cars for a journey of several weeks in cold, cramped, inhumane conditions before reaching their final destinations in Irkutsk, Omsk, Tomsk and other oblasts of Siberia; it was a huge logistical operation, involving 76 trains to transport the deportees.⁵²

After the deportations, the remaining farmers hurried ‘voluntarily’ to join the new collective farms. Although the deportations initially resulted in more men fleeing to the forests, collectivisation succeeded in eliminating the bases of support for the resistance. By 1952 almost all farmers had joined the collective farms. Compared to the earlier 1941 mass deportation, more of the deportees survived and were able to return (although not necessarily to their homes) after the amnesties of the mid-1950s. Unlike 1941, most were not placed in prison camps but had to suffer resettlement in the harsh conditions of Siberia.

Although the March 1949 deportations represented the greatest of the crimes against humanity perpetrated by the Soviet regime in the Baltic countries, they were not the only such operation. The post-war deportation of those resisting collectivisation was most massive in Lithuania, with the first wave having already occurred in May 1948 when 11,400 families (40,000 people) were deported. After Operation *Priboi* there was a third massive deportation in October 1951 of 4000 families (16,000 people). Between 1944 and 1953 there were 34 deportations of various magnitudes in Lithuania. Altogether, 128,000 people were deported from Lithuania (5 per cent of the population) during the post-war period.⁵³

7

Soviet Rule (1953–1991)

After the death of Stalin, terror subsided, and Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians gradually accommodated themselves to the Soviet regime. Baltic Communist Party leaders manoeuvred, with various degrees of success, within the strict dictates of Moscow, while Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian intellectuals sought to defend their cultures in the face of rapid demographic change and Russification. Baltic societies were transformed from mainly agricultural to predominantly urban societies. Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians seized the opportunity created by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev’s reforms in the late 1980s to end the Communist Party’s monopoly of power through the Singing Revolution. Weathering extreme pressure from Moscow, the Balts worked together through peaceful means to restore their independence and gain international recognition in 1991.

THAW

Overt terror was no longer a necessary political tool for the Soviet regime after the death of Stalin in 1953, since Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian societies had been psychologically pummelled into submission and a permanent state of fear. Imprisonment on political grounds continued until the 1980s, but the number of arrests was on a much diminished scale: tens, rather than thousands, of individuals annually in each Baltic republic.¹ Amnesties were declared for various categories of political prisoners in the gulag. The surviving deportees began to return home in the mid-1950s, although many were not allowed to return to their former place of residence. Many had trouble reintegrating into society and were often viewed with suspicion. The new Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev (1894–1971), denounced Stalin’s Great Purge at the Twentieth Congress

of the Communist Party in 1956, signalling a relaxation of centralised authoritarian control, often referred to as the Thaw. Local authorities in the Baltic Soviet Socialist Republics gingerly began to test the limits of autonomy and cultural figures probed the boundaries of censorship.

Nevertheless, the USSR remained a single-party state where no political activity outside of the Communist Party was tolerated. The party and the government were parallel institutions with the former being decisive. The Leninist system of administration can be conceptualised as consisting of two power pyramids, the party and the government, with the latter contained inside the former.² At the apex of the outer, larger pyramid stood the first secretary of the Communist Party who was far more powerful than the head of government (the chairman of the Council of Ministers) or the titular head of the republic (the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet). To ensure the Kremlin's tight control over the local communists, the second secretary of the party was usually a Russian appointed by Moscow. The Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Communist Parties were themselves not free-standing entities, but simply branches of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU).

Upon Stalin's death, the Lithuanian Communist Party leadership quietly initiated a nativisation campaign, replacing party officials brought in from Russia with younger Lithuanians. In 1952 less than a third of the members of the Lithuanian Communist Party were ethnically Lithuanian; by 1965 almost two-thirds were Lithuanian.³ However, the limits of the Thaw became apparent most starkly in Latvia, where a group of younger, energetic, idealistic, native Communist Party members came to the fore led by Vilis Krūmiņš (1919–2000), the new second secretary (exceptionally a native Latvian in this position), and Eduards Berklāvs (1914–2004), the new deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers. They sincerely believed that building communism in Latvia would succeed if those sent to assist from Russia learned to communicate in the Latvian language. This idea proved to be too radical for the old guard and they were purged from the party. Although it is commonly assumed that the purge of the Latvian 'national communists' was the result of Khrushchev's dissatisfaction during his visit to Riga in June 1959, the purge was actually initiated by Arvīds Pelše (1899–1983), head of the Latvian Communist Party's Propaganda and Agitation Department, and supported by the local Soviet military leadership.⁴ It was a power struggle between the old-guard, Stalinist wing of the party and the younger, more nationally minded members. As in the earlier Estonian purge in 1950, personal ambitions played an important role: the main accuser of

the leadership, Pelše, became the new party boss. Hundreds of Latvian national communists were demoted or expelled from the party. Berklāvs, the main scapegoat, was exiled to Russia. However, unlike the violent purges of the Stalinist era, there were no executions or long prison sentences.

Lithuania was the only Baltic republic to avoid a purge of its Communist Party leadership. Antanas Sniečkus was the most durable figure among Baltic Communist Party bosses and was one of the longest-serving leaders in the entire Soviet bloc. He survived as Lithuanian Communist Party leader (first secretary) from 1936 until his death in 1974, adroitly managing to adapt himself to the changing policies and personalities in the Kremlin.

The post-Stalinist thaw also brought about efforts to rationalise and decentralise economic production. The most important step in that direction was the establishment in 1957 of Regional Economic Councils (*sovnarkhozy*), which transferred much of the operational decision-making to the republics, although they still had to adhere strictly to the guidelines of the Five-Year Plan produced by the State Planning Committee in Moscow. This reform helped the Baltic republics to equal their pre-war level of production and standard of living in the 1960s, almost two decades after the end of the war.⁵ However, in 1965 the Regional Economic Councils were liquidated in a reform which ostensibly aimed to increase the independence of enterprises but actually resulted in their being more dependent on the all-union ministries. In practice, this meant that enterprises responded primarily to the demands of their sector or branch in the all-union industry, and there was no longer any connection with economic developments in the home republic.

The immediate results of collectivisation had been disastrous for the economy: agricultural production fell precipitously in the early 1950s. The situation improved in 1958 when the collective farms began to pay money wages and were allowed to purchase their own tractors and farming machinery. Previously these had only been available on loan from state-owned machine tractor stations, which had now been dissolved. However, the continuing inefficiency of the collective farms is illustrated by the fact that the farmers' own small garden plots – constituting a fraction of the arable land – produced a substantial part of the national fruit and vegetable crop. These allotments were not only important for their survival but also enabled farmers to carve out a small autonomous space for themselves within the Soviet system.⁶

The Thaw enabled cultural production cautiously to free itself of the straitjacket of turgid ‘socialist realism’. The 1960s witnessed a cultural flowering of a new generation of writers and artists who pushed the boundaries of Soviet censorship and broke taboos. Within the USSR, the Baltic republics gained the reputation of being the ‘Soviet West’. Certainly, from the perspective of the rest of the Soviet Union, the *Pribaltika* looked and felt more European, with a more liberal atmosphere and greater contact with Western trends. Tallinn and Vilnius were hotspots of the jazz music scene in the USSR. Many authors hitherto banned in the USSR, such as Franz Kafka and Albert Camus, were first published in one of the Baltic republics, as were uncensored versions of some Russian classics.⁷ Some Russian intellectuals even sought internal refuge in the Baltic republics. The pioneering Russian semiotician Yuri Lotman (1922–93), whose career had been blocked in Leningrad because of his Jewish heritage, received a professorship at the University of Tartu. Alexander Solzhenitsyn (1918–2008) wrote much of his famous *Gulag Archipelago* manuscript during his stays at the summer house of his former cellmate in Estonia in the 1960s. Another future Russian Nobel Prize laureate, poet Joseph Brodsky (1940–96), who would later be expelled from the USSR, found Vilnius to be the most congenial place to express his creativity in the 1960s. Jūrmala, Palanga and Narva-Jõesuu were popular summer beach resorts among the intelligentsia from Moscow and Leningrad.

An important breakthrough in the move away from isolation was the opening of a passenger ferry service from Helsinki to Tallinn in 1965. This remained the only direct transport link – air, sea or rail – from the Baltic republics to outside of the Soviet bloc until the end of the 1980s. Proximity to Finland also gave the Estonians access to objective information about the outside world and a glimpse of consumer society via Finnish television broadcasts.⁸ The Lithuanians also had more varied sources of information than average Soviet citizens because of their closeness to Poland. Furthermore, many Baltic families had some contact, at least in the form of correspondence, with relatives in the refugee communities in the West and were aware that free, uncensored Baltic culture existed outside the boundaries of the USSR.

Vibrant exile communities had sprung up in such cities as Stockholm, Toronto, Chicago, Sydney and New York. Until the Thaw, not only the quality but also the quantity of Estonian-, Latvian- and Lithuanian-language publications produced by the refugees abroad was greater than that in their homelands. The political struggle for the exile community

focused on maintaining the non-recognition policy of the annexation of the Baltic states initiated by the USA in 1940 and followed by most Western countries. The Soviet authorities waged a continual ideological propaganda battle against the exiles. One of their more effective smears was to label émigré Balts as Nazi collaborators.⁹

STAGNATION

Although Khrushchev was removed from power in 1964 by a triumvirate led by Leonid Brezhnev (1906–82), hopes for the continuation of liberalisation lingered for a few more years. Remaining illusions were shattered with the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, which crushed the attempt by the reformist Communist Party leadership in Prague to create ‘socialism with a human face’. Brezhnev served as Soviet leader until his death in 1982, even though during the last few years of his life his mental and physical capacities were limited. The Brezhnev era would later be labelled as a period of ‘stagnation’. He was succeeded by Yuri Andropov (1914–84) and then Konstantin Chernenko (1911–85), both of whom quickly expired while in office. By 1985 the leadership of the CPSU appeared to be a gerontocracy desperately in need of fresh blood.

The conservative stagnation in the Kremlin was also reflected in the Communist Party leadership of the Baltic republics. The Estonian Communist Party was headed for almost three decades by Käbin, and the period in office from 1966 to 1984 of the Latvian first secretary Augsts Voss (1919–94) paralleled that of Brezhnev, but even they could not match the remarkable longevity of Sniečkus as the Lithuanian Communist Party chief. Equally as long-serving as the party leaders during this period were the chairmen of the council of ministers (heads of government): Valter Klauson (1914–88) in Estonia from 1961 to 1984, Jurijs Rubenis (1925–2004) in Latvia from 1970 to 1988 and Juozas Maniušis (1910–87) in Lithuania from 1967 to 1981, none of whom were native-born. The Latvian leadership had the best connections with the leadership in Moscow. Voss’s predecessor Pelše was promoted to the CPSU Politburo, the only Balt to rise to the highest political level in the USSR apart from the early Latvian Bolsheviks and the leaders of the pro-Moscow wing of the Party in the three republics in 1990.¹⁰

The late 1970s and early 1980s saw renewed repression, which corresponded with a change in leadership in the Baltic republics. When Sniečkus died in 1974 he was replaced by Petras Griškevičius (1924–87)

who occupied the position until his own death in 1987. Käbin was bumped upstairs to the ceremonial post of chairman of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet in 1978 and replaced by Karl Vaino (b. 1923), a Russified Estonian who had no local power base and was, therefore, absolutely loyal to Moscow. Voss was succeeded in 1984 by Boriss Pugo (1937–1991), who had headed the Latvian branch of the Committee for State Security (KGB). These leaders loyally followed the conservative Kremlin line and intensified the repression of dissidents in the early 1980s. They are also associated with a renewed campaign of linguistic Russification beginning in the late 1970s and typified by Vaino's speech at the 26th CPSU Congress in 1981, where he stated, 'For everything that we have achieved, we owe a debt of gratitude to our elder brother, the great Russian nation.'¹¹

After Stalin's death, individuals rarely joined the Communist Party for ideological reasons or for survival, but primarily for the advancement of their careers. Most individuals who were offered a promotion to a senior management position in their field of professional employment were expected to join the party. Few declined to do so. Party membership also gave some material benefits, such as priority in the queue for obtaining valued consumer goods such as telephones. The most distinctive privilege enjoyed by party members was foreign travel. The profile of the party membership in the 1960s and 1970s changed, therefore, to that of an organisation dominated by university graduates rather than representing the earlier ideal of a working class. This gradual shift increased professional competence within the party and increased the proportion of native-born Balts in the party, but weakened its ideological commitment.¹² Party membership among the republic's titular ethnic group was always highest in Lithuania. During the last 25 years of Soviet rule, more than two-thirds of the members of the Communist Party were ethnic Lithuanians, whereas the corresponding proportion in Estonia was approximately half, and in Latvia less than half.¹³

In the late 1960s a new type of non-violent opposition to the Soviet system arose in the form of 'dissidents'. These courageous individuals demanded that the authorities honour the rights laid down by the Soviet constitution. They were encouraged by the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe signed in Helsinki in 1975. Since the signatories, including the USSR, undertook to respect human rights, Soviet dissidents were able to refer to this international obligation in setting up 'Helsinki monitoring' groups. Broadly speaking, the dissidents could be categorised by their focus on universal human rights,

religious freedom or national identity, although such categorisation is somewhat artificial since all of these were obviously interlinked within the Soviet context, and in practice it was simply a question of emphasis. In Lithuania, where the struggle to defend the right to practise religion was strongest, this was clearly connected with aspirations of national freedom.

The Catholic Church and its priests played an important role in Lithuanian opposition to the Soviet regime. The longest-running underground publication in the entire USSR was the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* (1972–89).¹⁴ Amazingly, the KGB never discovered the identity of the priests editing the chronicle. Lithuanian dissent was given a significant moral boost by the election of the Polish cardinal Karol Wojtyła as Pope John Paul II in 1978 and the rise of the opposition Solidarity labour movement in Poland the following year. In the late 1960s and 1970s Lithuanian believers organised several petitions to the Soviet authorities, the largest being the gathering of 148,000 signatures for a Klaipėda church to be returned to religious use.¹⁵ As an universal organisation, the Catholic Church in Lithuania was more difficult for the KGB to deal with than the dominant Lutheran Church in Estonia and Latvia which was prepared to a certain extent to collaborate with the Soviet authorities.¹⁶ A similar pliancy characterised the Russian Orthodox Church in the Baltic republics, a leading figure of which was Aleksei Ridiger (1929–2008), who was born in Tallinn and descended from a Baltic German family. Ridiger served as the metropolitan of Estonia from 1968–86 and was elected Alexius II, Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow in 1990. The only truly anti-Soviet elements who could not be cowed were small groups of evangelical Christians and the Russian Old Believers.

Apart from the Catholic activists in Lithuania, the active dissidents were never more than a handful of individuals and their impact inside their countries was relatively limited. However, they had a more significant external impact by signalling to the world that there existed alternative voices to the official Soviet one. They were able to smuggle out to the West memoranda detailing Soviet repressions. Their most significant achievement was the Baltic Appeal to the United Nations in 1979, signed by 37 Lithuanian, 4 Latvian and 4 Estonian dissidents, on the 40th anniversary of the Nazi–Soviet pact, demanding that its secret protocols be published and its consequences be declared void. Baltic dissidents also developed contacts with dissident circles in Leningrad and Moscow. However, unlike famous Russian dissidents, such as nuclear

physicist Andrei Sakharov (who supported the Baltic Appeal), the Baltic dissidents were mainly ordinary men and women. Many had not had the opportunity to acquire a higher education since they had been in and out of Soviet prison camps since their youth. The dissidents were most active during the 1970s. However, the party leadership had little tolerance of dissent and by the early 1980s almost all the Baltic dissidents were again in Soviet prison camps.

In addition to organised activity, there were sporadic eruptions. The most dramatic act of protest was the self-immolation of 19-year-old student Romas Kalanta in central Kaunas in 1972. His funeral became a mass protest against the Soviet regime. Occasionally, rock music concerts also served as vehicles for protests. The largest spontaneous public manifestation in Estonia was a youth riot sparked by the cancellation of a punk rock concert, scheduled to follow a football match in Tallinn 1980. The heavy-handed response of the authorities to this event provoked the most noteworthy public criticism of the Estonian Communist Party leadership and its policy of Russification, the 'Letter of Forty'. Unlike the effort of the marginalised dissidents, the letter was signed by many of Estonia's most respected intellectuals, most of whom were also party members themselves. A letter by 17 Latvian Communists, detailing Russification, was published in the West in 1972.¹⁷

Dissent against the Soviet regime was also demonstrated by attempts to leave or defect from the Soviet Union. In 1970 Lithuanian sailor Simas Kudirka jumped ship in US waters, becoming a *cause célèbre* when the US coastguard returned him to the Soviet authorities who sentenced him to a ten-year prison term.¹⁸ As a rule, in order to ensure that a traveller returned home, the authorities did not permit family members to travel abroad together. When Estonian Valdo Randpere and his wife sought asylum in Sweden in 1984, the Soviet authorities would not permit reunification with their 13-month-old daughter.

The most dramatic change for Latvia and Estonia during the Soviet era was demographic. Both republics saw a massive influx from the East during the post-war years. While Estonia was over 90 per cent ethnically Estonian at the end of the war, by 1989 the percentage of Estonians in the population had dropped to 62 per cent. During the same time period, the percentage of ethnic Latvians in Latvia dropped from over three-quarters of the population to barely half. The disheartening prospect of becoming a minority in their own homeland appeared on the horizon.

Most of the newcomers were Russians directed for work assignments, but people came from all regions of the USSR. In the 1950s the influx

Table 2 Titular ethnic groups as a percentage of the population¹⁹

Soviet Republic	1945	1959	1970	1989
Estonia	94	75	68	62
Latvia	80	62	57	52
Lithuania	78	79	79	80

temporarily waned as many returned to Russia and the surviving deportees came home. The subsequent waves of settlers in the 1960s and 1970s were often industrial workers assigned for employment in large new industrial plants or in the military industrial complex. The locals particularly resented the fact that the newcomers were often given priority in the queue for sparse housing. The new residential districts consisted mainly of prefabricated apartment blocks which were identical to those elsewhere in the USSR, be it Armenia or Uzbekistan. Since this workforce was highly mobile, relocating from one region of the USSR to another as more attractive opportunities appeared, most did not bother to learn the local language and integrate into the local community and they therefore lived separate lives.²⁰ In addition, the massive Soviet military presence was an alien body. The larger cities of the Baltic republics, particularly Riga, the headquarters of the Soviet Baltic Military District, were popular locations for Soviet military officers to retire to.

Demographic change in Lithuania was far more limited than in Estonia and Latvia. Lithuania avoided the fate of its northern neighbours for four reasons: the country remained more agricultural in character and was not targeted for rapid industrialisation; the guerrilla warfare during the first decade of Soviet rule discouraged the arrival of colonists; the native leadership of the Lithuanian Communist Party was able to exert some influence over the movement of migrants; the Lithuanian fertility rate remained higher and family size larger.

During the Soviet era, all three republics shifted from a predominantly agricultural economy to one that was largely industrial and urban. In comparison with the rest of the USSR, there was a greater proportion of light industry, which was mainly determined by the pre-war structure of the economy. Enterprises which were well-known across the USSR were the State Electronics Factory (VEF) in Riga – the flagship of inter-war Latvia's electronics industry – producing radios and telephones, the Riga Autobus Factory manufacturing 'Latvija' microbuses, and the Lithuanian Snaigė producing refrigerators. For the USSR, industrial output was the ultimate measure of success. Coffee-table

books celebrating the achievements of the Baltic SSRs proudly featured billowing smokestacks. Concerns for environmental pollution did not have any place in this mindset. Oil shale reserves in Estonia were extensively exploited, with annual production peaking at 31 million tons in 1980. The oil shale was burned in the world's two largest oil-shale based thermoelectric stations near Narva.²¹ The Ignalina nuclear power plant in Lithuania started operating in 1983 and was designed to be the world's largest (6000 megawatt) at the time, supplying power to neighbouring Belarus and Latvia, but only two of the planned four reactor blocks were ever completed. In response to such developments, the Baltic republics were the first in the USSR to introduce legislation on nature protection in the 1950s, and conservation societies created by local activists in the 1960s gained huge memberships. The Soviet authorities often looked at conservation projects askance, considering them as a disguised form of nationalism, which, to some extent, they were. The first national park in the USSR was a local initiative established in 1972 at Lahemaa on the Estonian northern coast to preserve the area from further industrial encroachment.²² Although initially viewed with suspicion in Moscow, the Estonian promoters of the park were able to secure approval by buttressing their arguments with quotes from Lenin.

Despite the emphasis on industrial production, agriculture remained an important sector of the Baltic republics' economies. In the 1960s and 1970s, the Baltic republics became the leading dairy and pig-farming area of the USSR. Most of this production supplied the Russian market, primarily Leningrad. This period also saw the conversion of many collective farms into relatively more efficiently managed state farms (*sovkhозы*). By the 1980s, the salaries of collective and state farm workers surpassed average urban wages.²³ The Kirov collective fishery farm in Viimsi near Tallinn was reputedly the wealthiest in the USSR, engaging in various auxiliary economic production activities and providing its members with a high standard of living.²⁴ The more successful and dedicated farm managers built cultural centres and supported recreational activities for the local community. The Soviet authorities intended to provide collective farmers with modern conveniences, such as central heating, which led to the construction of large apartment blocks in small rural villages which had been converted to collective farm centres – a ludicrous rationalisation of the rural landscape.

The rigidly centralised control of the Soviet economy resulted in shortages and deficits in consumer goods, as well as products of shoddy quality. For the Soviet consumer, this meant long queues and the use

of bribery or 'gifts' to obtain scarce goods and services. For major purchases, such as a car, one first needed a purchase permit and then had to suffer a waiting period, often several years. A similarly long waiting period had to be endured to obtain a rental apartment or telephone. In an economy of scarcity, a network of contacts was the key to success. Those who had control over access to some goods or services, such as restaurant doormen, enjoyed a privileged status. Soviet life was full of absurd contradictions. Genuine Western consumer products not available in the local market, such as nylons, jeans, quality coffee, pop records and chewing gum, were highly prized by Soviet consumers. Plastic shopping bags bearing the logo of a Western company became status symbols in the 1970s.²⁵

Alcoholism became a major problem, contributing to poor work discipline, low productivity and serious social and health problems, resulting in low life expectancies, especially for men. Alcohol was inexpensive and was the socially acceptable way to relax. Along with increased alcoholism, the Soviet era saw a loosening of social norms, with high numbers of abortions, a decrease in the number of marriages, and an increase in the number of divorces and common-law unions. After Stalin's death, Soviet legislation allowed easy access to abortion (the main method of birth control), and both marriage and divorce were easily available, since there was no longer any religious aspect to these social covenants and rituals.

Although the Soviet slogan was the 'Baltic Sea – sea of peace', in fact it was a highly militarised region, being part of the USSR's front line during the Cold War. The territory of the Baltic republics was littered with bases for ballistic missiles, aircraft, warships and Soviet military personnel. For example, about 1 per cent of Lithuania's territory was under direct Soviet military control and more than 5 per cent of the territory was used by it in various ways.²⁶ The military not only dislocated the local residents, it damaged the environment. Not untypical was the long-range bomber aircraft base at Tartu where crews dumped fuel on to the ground in order to claim the requisite flying hours. As a border zone, much of the coastal area was off-limits: it was an area which had to be guarded not only from external infiltration but also, and more importantly, from citizens attempting to escape to the West. These restrictions disrupted the traditional maritime way of life of coastal Estonians and Latvians, who were also squeezed out of the merchant marine by Russians.

An onerous burden for young men was the obligatory two-year military service, which as a rule meant being sent outside one's republic.

This also meant occasionally fighting and dying in the USSR's foreign wars, such as that in Afghanistan in the 1980s. Thousands of young men from the Baltic republics were among those drafted for the clean-up of the nuclear disaster at Chernobyl in 1986 without being provided sufficient protection from radiation.

Although the Soviet constitution in theory guaranteed national self-determination for the republics, the guiding principle of Soviet cultural policy as defined by Stalin was the development of cultures 'national in form and socialist in content' which would ultimately be merged into 'one General Culture'. The Soviet concept of the *sliyanie* (fusion) of nationalities with Russian as the language of 'inter-national communication' was expressed explicitly by Andropov in 1982: 'Our final goal is obvious. It is, in Lenin's words, not only the convergence of nations, but their merging.'²⁷ The end product would be the *homo sovieticus* – a person without any specific national roots or identity, who would work in whatever part of the USSR that the authorities assigned him or her to, exemplified by the chorus of a Russian pop song of the Brezhnev era, 'My address is no house or street, my address is the Soviet Union.'

A vital part of the shaping of a new identity was the ideological indoctrination of children and youths in the Communist Party's Pioneer and Komsomol organisations respectively. Political lectures expounding the Party's position on current affairs were regularly organised at the workplace. The replacement of official holidays with new ones was also part of this process. Important Soviet holidays requiring mandatory participation in the commemorations and parades were 1 May, International Workers' Day; 9 May, Victory Day, the end of the Great Patriotic War (World War II); and 7 November, the Great October Revolution. In the USSR, Christmas was not a holiday and the regime attempted to displace it with the celebration of the New Year. In Latvia, the atheism campaign even involved the banning of the traditional Midsummer's Eve festivities, not only during the Stalinist era but also again during the 1960s after the purge of 'nationalists' in the Communist Party.²⁸

In practice, the sovietisation of the Baltic republics entailed linguistic Russification, as the Latvian Communist Party first secretary, Voss, made clear in a 1982 speech: 'Everywhere people very much strive for mastering the Russian language, and this striving manifests itself more and more widely. Therefore the party organisations and Soviet bodies constantly have to see to it that all conditions are created to satisfy the wish, which in our country is caused by the objective logic of the building of communism.'²⁹ The Balts, however, clung tenaciously

to their cultural traditions. The open-air summer festivals of song and folk dance in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which were held every five years and involved massed choirs of up to 20,000 singers and audiences of sometimes more than 100,000 people, were the most prominent manifestation. Although the content of the programmes was carefully vetted by the authorities, some songs escaped the censors' notice. An example of the balancing act between the official ideology and one's conscience (or reading between the lines) was Veljo Tormis's 'Lenin's words' which featured at the 1975 Estonian song festival and whose lyrics were about the right of peoples to self-determination. The song festivals often culminated in a powerful emotional outpouring as the massed choirs and the audience spontaneously sang unofficial patriotic encores together. As the totalitarian system maintained control over the population by the atomisation of society, these occasions provided rare moments confirming national identity and solidarity.

The 'creative intelligentsia', organised in creative unions (writers' and artists' associations), was relatively well supported by the state, provided that their artistic output remained within accepted boundaries. Writers and artists were held in high esteem by society and many were well known, even to the man on the street. Since there was limited public entertainment, people were voracious readers and provided the writers with a huge readership. Theatre attendance was popular and plays were considered important. Writers and artists who collaborated with the regime lived well. Nevertheless, there were several poets and novelists who pushed the boundaries of Soviet acceptance, and were highly respected and regarded as the conscience of their nation. Poetry became the most influential art form because it could express ideas which would otherwise have been censored.³⁰ Collections of poetry were published in great quantities, unimaginable in a free-market system, and often sold out quickly. Among the most influential and popular poets were Estonians Hando Runnel (b. 1938) and Juhan Viiding (1948–95), Latvians Ojārs Vācietis (1933–83) and Imants Ziedonis (b. 1933) and Lithuanians Vytautas Bložė (b. 1930) and Sigitas Geda (1943–2008). One way to resist Soviet homogenisation was to write about characters in earlier Baltic history. Works in this genre by Estonian novelist Jaan Kross (1920–2007) and Lithuanian dramatist Justinas Marcinkevičius (b. 1930) were hugely popular. Another popular method was the use and reinterpretation of old folk motifs and ethnographic traditions. Prominent practitioners of this approach were Estonian composer Veljo Tormis (b. 1930) and Lithuanian poet Marcelijus Martinaitis (b. 1936). Latvian

culture revived later than Estonian and Lithuanian culture because the political purge of the national communists in 1959 stymied development for several years.³¹

Some Baltic cultural figures, such as Latvian pop composer Raimonds Pauls (b. 1936), Estonian baritone Georg Ots (1920–75) and Lithuanian film director Vytautas Žalakevičius (1930–96), acquired fame across the USSR. On the other hand, many Baltic actors were typecast as German Nazis in Russian war films. Being denied free access to other European cultures, the Balts began interacting more intensively with each other. For example, triannual Baltic art exhibits in Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius were opportunities to experiment and to push the boundaries of official tolerance.³² A Baltic regional identity compromising Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania solidified during the Soviet period when there were very active cultural, scientific and athletic exchanges.

The lack of artistic freedom resulted in some of the most talented Balts, such as Estonian composer Arvo Pärt (b. 1935), Latvian violinist Gidon Kremer (b. 1947) and Lithuanian poet Tomas Venclova (b. 1937) leaving the USSR during the 1970s and early 1980s. More dramatically, some defected, such as the Kirov ballet dancer Mikhail Baryshnikov (b. 1948) who was a native of Riga. The only group allowed legally to leave the USSR (with some restrictions) were the Jews, who were permitted to emigrate to Israel, beginning in the 1960s.

Travel abroad to the West was the most prized reward for the loyal Soviet citizen, usually available only to prominent artists, world-class athletes and Communist Party members. Unexpectedly for the Soviet authorities, the strictly controlled contacts with the West proved to be a two-way street. For example, beginning in the 1970s when the Soviet authorities allowed trusted senior academics to participate in Baltic studies conferences in Stockholm, the ideological impact of their papers on the Western audience was negligible, whereas the contacts which were established facilitated the exposure of the Soviet Baltic academic establishment to Western literature. Ordinary citizens could not hope for more than an opportunity to travel in escorted groups within Eastern Europe and to bring back consumer goods unavailable at home.

THE SINGING REVOLUTION

By 1985 it appeared that Soviet rule was firmly entrenched in the Baltic states. However, the appointment that year of Mikhail Gorbachev as the

general secretary of the CPSU provided the opportunity for dramatic change. The USSR had devoted huge resources to an arms race with the USA during the ideological Cold War between the two superpowers but had neglected the production of consumer goods. Gorbachev realised that the arms race was not sustainable, particularly after US President Ronald Reagan launched the ‘Star Wars’ initiative in 1983. Stagnation and the dearth of consumer goods such as meat in the shops had become a common phenomenon. Gorbachev sought to make the USSR more efficient in order to compete with the West. In an attempt to achieve these goals, in 1986 he introduced the policies of *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (restructuring).

Unwittingly, Gorbachev unleashed forces that he could not control. Balts eagerly grasped the opportunity provided by *glasnost* to fill in the ‘blank spots’ of history. At first they proceeded cautiously, recalling that Khrushchev’s Thaw was soon followed by renewed repression. They began commemorating the victims of Stalin’s mass deportations. Dissidents organised ‘calendar demonstrations’ which marked officially unacknowledged historical events. Latvian human-rights activists, under the banner of Helsinki-86, organised the first of these in Riga on 14 June 1987 to commemorate the victims of the 1941 mass deportations. The first anti-regime demonstrations occurring simultaneously in all three republics were organised by dissidents on 23 August 1987, the anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Several of the organisers of these meetings were sent into exile abroad but the willingness of the authorities to use force was crumbling: the last use of force to break up political demonstrations was on 28 September 1988 in Vilnius.³³ The last remaining Baltic political prisoners were released from the gulag during 1988.

The first mass protests, in 1986 and 1987, were about environmental issues: the proposed building of a hydroelectric dam on the Daugava river, the expansion of open-pit phosphate mining in north-eastern Estonia, and the construction of a third reactor at the Ignalina nuclear power plant in Lithuania. At that time, it would not have been possible to organise large-scale demonstrations about political issues. These ostensibly apolitical environmental issues, therefore, provided the first opportunity for the expression of public discontent. The Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster in Soviet Ukraine in 1986 gave a strong impetus to public discussion of ecological concerns. Baltic activists were also deeply concerned about the demographic effect of the proposed large-scale projects, since they would bring about a substantial influx of labour from the

rest of the USSR, further tilting the negative demographic trend against the Latvians and Estonians. The environment provided the first opening for alternative public mobilisation and organisation. In the forefront was the Latvian Environmental Protection Club (*Vides Aizsardzības Klubs*). In Estonia, a similar role was played by the Estonian Heritage Society (*Eesti Muinsuskaitse Selts*), which started innocently by tidying up old cemeteries, but soon began restoring memorials from the war of independence.

Although the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Communist Party leaderships were reluctant, society eagerly seized the opportunity presented by Gorbachev's call for *perestroika*. One of the first benefits of *glasnost* for the people was the lessening of restrictions on travel abroad. As earlier, the Baltic states were seen as a laboratory for economic experimentation. Some of the first Soviet joint ventures with foreign companies were located in Estonia. In response to the all-union ministries' disregard for local conditions and opinions, four Estonian intellectuals published the Self-Managing Estonia proposal (IME) on 26 September 1987.³⁴ This initiative was met with disapproval in Moscow.

The drive for democratic reform became overtly political in April 1988 at the plenary meeting of Estonian Creative Unions. Speakers criticised the republic's party and government leadership, and some outspoken delegates even dared to question Estonia's belonging in the USSR. The creative intelligentsia, particular writers who had achieved great moral authority, played the leading role in broaching previously forbidden subjects and emboldening people to speak freely.

The first challenge to the Communist Party's monopoly of power came with the establishment of the 'Estonian Popular Front in Support of *Perestroika*' announced on a live television talk show on 13 April 1988 by its founding leader, economic planner and Communist Party member Edgar Savisaar (b. 1950). This initiative received Gorbachev's blessing: he saw it as a means of applying pressure on the republican Communist Party leaderships who were dragging their feet in implementing his reforms. The Popular Front rapidly gained tens of thousands of members and supporters across the republic and its example was quickly emulated in Latvia and Lithuania.

In spite of slogans of democratisation, in May the Estonian Communist Party leadership handpicked the delegates for the 19th Party Conference in Moscow as usual. In response, the Estonian Popular Front organised political protests. Unsanctioned all-night gatherings took place in June at the grounds of the Tallinn song festival, where the people

demanded the replacement of the old-guard Estonian Communist Party leadership and waved the banned national colours. Gorbachev rejected the plea of the beleaguered Karl Vaino to bring tanks onto the streets and instead appointed Vaino Välijas (b. 1931), the first native-born Estonian Communist Party leader since 1950. Välijas immediately signalled his willingness to work together with the Popular Front, and participated in the culmination of the Singing Revolution³⁵ – a mammoth rally organised by the Popular Front in September at the grounds of the song festival, where 250,000 people, one-quarter of all Estonians, sang in unison. The only word to describe the intense feelings of this time is euphoria. Anatol Lieven memorably described the song festivals as 'Rousseau's General Will set to music'.³⁶

Latvians and Lithuanians experienced their own 'new awakening', although this was not initially accompanied by political change. The long, hot summer of 1988 was full of feverish patriotic activity and new unheard-of democratic initiatives. The banned national flags appeared everywhere. Huge rallies attended by tens of thousands were held in Riga and Vilnius. A rally in Vilnius on 23 August brought out more than two hundred thousand Lithuanians. The Latvian and Lithuanian Communist Party leaderships managed to resist the winds of change for a few more months. The Lithuanian Communist Party leadership ordered the forcible dispersal of a demonstration organised by the dissidents of the Lithuanian Freedom League on 28 September, but this only served to demonstrate how out of step it was with times. In October, the old-guard Brezhnevite party and governmental leaders in Latvia and Lithuania were replaced by Gorbachev allies sympathetic to the nascent Popular Fronts. Algirdas Brazauskas (b. 1932), the physically robust and politically nimble party secretary responsible for industry, was promoted to the top job in Lithuania. He won immediate popularity by announcing the return of Vilnius Cathedral to the Catholic Church. In Latvia, the old guard was more entrenched, and the favourite of the Communist Party reformers, Anatolijs Gorbulovs (b. 1942), was made not first secretary but chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, while his predecessor in that post, the lacklustre Jānis Vagris (b. 1930), was given the executive job.

The three Popular Front movements held their formal founding congresses in October where they also pledged to work together. Their platforms called for democratisation and economic self-management, while stressing that their demands were based on the principles of Gorbachev's *perestroika*. Although they also had concerns such as making the titular language the official language, the Popular Fronts construed

themselves in a broader context than just as national movements. The Latvian Popular Front elected journalist Dainis Īvāns (b. 1955), a leading campaigner against the construction of the hydroelectric dam, as its leader, and the Lithuanian Movement for *Perestroika*, known simply as *Sajūdis* (Movement), elected musicologist Vytautas Landsbergis (b. 1932) to fulfil the same role. The founders of the Popular Fronts were mainly intellectuals, scientists and writers, but the movements rapidly burgeoned to include a vast cross-section of society, a membership of hundreds of thousands, the largest political movements ever in the Baltic countries. Subsequently, the Baltic Popular Fronts provided role models for 'non-formal' organisations and democratisation throughout the USSR.³⁷

At about the same time, organisations were created which were even more radical. Dissidents founded the Estonian National Independence Party on 20 August 1988, the first political party besides the Communist Party to be allowed to function in the USSR. The Latvian National Independence Movement was founded by the former communist Berklāvs and his supporters on 20 June 1988, and the Lithuanian Freedom League, which had previously been active underground in the 1970s, was now able to operate openly. Launched by dissidents, and initially viewed as marginal and dangerously radical, the discourse of these principled and uncompromising organisations was eventually adopted by the Popular Fronts.

Seeking to strengthen his position vis-à-vis his conservative opponents in the CPSU, Gorbachev initiated constitutional changes to create a presidential system. His package of constitutional amendments, however, alarmed the Baltic republics since it also dropped any mention of the right of secession from the Union. The Estonian Supreme Soviet reacted to this potential usurpation of power on 16 November 1988 by making its 'Declaration about Sovereignty', stating that republican laws had precedence over federal ones. The Kremlin's fierce criticism did not succeed in forcing the Estonians to back down, but did ensure that the Lithuanian and Latvian Supreme Soviets did not follow suit until six months later. Similar sovereignty declarations by other republics followed soon thereafter. These declarations seriously undermined the USSR, particularly when the Russian SFSR led by Boris Yeltsin (1931–2007) declared its sovereignty in June 1990.

In the first multicandidate elections held in the USSR in March 1989 – the elections to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies – candidates supported by the Popular Fronts won overwhelmingly in

all three republics. These deputies were to play an important role in explaining Baltic aspirations and forming alliances with Russian democrats. Furthermore, the activities of the Balts provided an inspiration for reformists and nationalists from other republics. During the sessions of the congress in Moscow, Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian deputies worked closely together to push for economic autonomy and the acknowledgement of the existence and condemnation of the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.³⁸

In May 1989 the Baltic Assembly met in Tallinn for the first time on the initiative of Popular Front deputies, and a Baltic council was initiated later as a format for Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian cooperation on the ministerial level. These bodies held regular meetings to coordinate activities and adopt resolutions explaining Baltic positions to the outside world. The Baltic Assembly organised a 600-kilometre human chain ('the Baltic Way') from Tallinn to Vilnius via Rīga: nearly two million people joined hands on 23 August 1989, the fiftieth anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. This unprecedented demonstration put the Balts' aspirations on the front pages of international newspapers and demonstrated the strength of Baltic cooperation and unity of purpose.

The collapse of the communist regimes in the USSR's Eastern European satellites during the autumn of 1989, particularly the fall of the Berlin Wall in November, emboldened the Balts by demonstrating that their dreams were not utopian. In the common narrative of the collapse of communism, the achievement of liberty in the Warsaw Pact countries opened the way for the captive nations of the USSR. However, it should be noted that the breakthrough in the Baltic republics had occurred already one year earlier. The Singing Revolution in 1988 had already brought a degree of freedom, although not yet democracy and independence.

TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE

By the end of 1989, the internal debate within the Baltic national movements between proponents of greater autonomy or outright independence had been resolved in favour of the latter. The republican Communist Party leaderships struggled to keep up with the pace set by the popular movements, but became increasingly irrelevant. In a desperate attempt to maintain some popular support, the Lithuanian Communist Party declared its independence from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

in December 1989. Realising the mortal danger that this move posed for the USSR, Gorbachev flew to Vilnius, but could not budge Brazauskas. Gorbachev's ultimate failure stemmed from the fact that he never appreciated the strength and genuineness of national sentiment in the USSR. Subsequently, the three Baltic Communist Parties split mainly along ethnic lines into old guard and pro-independence organisations. Only in Latvia were hardline communists, led by Alfrēds Rubiks (b. 1935), able to maintain control of the party organisation.

An unprecedented grass-roots movement – Citizens' Committees – emerged in Estonia in April 1989. The idea formulated by Trivimi Velliste (b. 1947), the leader of the Estonian Heritage Society, was to register the citizens of the pre-1940 republic and their descendants (including exiles) and to restore independent statehood on the basis of the popular will of the citizenry without any reference to Soviet institutions. By February 1990, most Estonians – 800,000 people – had registered themselves as citizens. The movement culminated in elections organised by the Citizens' Committees where 90 per cent of registered citizens voted on 24 February 1990 for an assembly called the Congress of Estonia.³⁹ The voluntary organisation of elections despite the opposition of the Soviet authorities was a remarkable achievement. Participation in the process was a psychological and moral breakthrough.

The congress elected an executive body known as the Committee of Estonia which was headed by dissident Tunne Kelam (b. 1936), one of the leaders of the Estonian National Independence Party. The committee did not attempt to exercise power but chose to remain purely a moral authority. In a certain sense, there was a historical parallel to the revolutionary situation in 1917 when both the provisional government and the Soviets claimed to be the ultimate authority. The national movement split between restorationists, who stressed the principle of legal continuity and viewed Soviet institutions as illegitimate, and the Popular Front, who sought to undermine the system from within by taking control of the Soviet institutions. The former did not trust the ex-communists leading the Popular Front, whereas the fundamentalists' approach appeared unrealistic to most. Although this led to rivalry and recriminations within the independence movements, in the end both approaches made an important contribution and their competition actually helped advance the Baltic cause. The fundamentalists forced the pace and ensured that the leadership of the Popular Front did not make any fatal compromises with the Kremlin, while the Popular Front could claim to be 'moderate' interlocutors with Moscow reformers.⁴⁰

Citizens' Committees were also formed in Latvia, but they did not gain the same amount of influence as the Estonian initiative. Nevertheless, as in Estonia, there was tension between the uncompromising and pragmatic wings of the national movement. No Citizens' Congress emerged in Lithuania because the national movement was united under the *Sąjūdis* umbrella. The restitutionist model had less appeal in Lithuania as a result of the fact that, unlike Estonia and Latvia, Lithuania had actually gained territory as a consequence of Soviet annexation and remained ethnically relatively homogenous.

The drive to independence became institutionalised when the Popular Fronts won majorities in all three Baltic republics in the first free Supreme Soviet elections held in February–April 1990. First Kazimiera Prunskienė (b. 1943) in Lithuania and then Savisaar in Estonia and Ivars Godmanis (b. 1951) in Latvia formed popular front-led governments. Most of the new government ministers were reform-communist technocrats. The chairmen of the presidiums of the Supreme Soviets (equivalent to heads of state) in Latvia and Estonia remained the high-ranking national-minded communists, Gorbunovs and Arnold Rüütel (b. 1928) respectively. The Lithuanians made a more radical break by electing *Sąjūdis* leader Landsbergis to the post. One of the first acts of the newly elected bodies was to discard 'Soviet Socialist' from their titles and restoring the symbols of the pre-war republics.

The renamed Lithuanian Supreme Council pressed ahead faster than the others and declared Lithuania's independence on 11 March 1990. The Kremlin predictably denounced this act as unconstitutional. The Estonians (on 30 March) and the Latvians (on 4 May) moved more cautiously by only declaring an intentionally ambiguous 'transition period to independence'. Moscow sought to bring Lithuania to heel with an economic blockade in April. After three months of hardship, a diplomatic resolution proposed by French and German leaders allowed both sides to save face: Gorbachev terminated the blockade and the Lithuanians 'suspended' their independence declaration.

In all three republics there were Communist Party hardliners who opposed democratisation and Gorbachev's reforms. Together with reactionaries in Moscow, they set up 'International Fronts' generally known as the Interfront (in Lithuania *Yedinstvo* (Unity)), as opposed to the Popular Fronts or national movements. The Interfronts' typical supporters were Russian-speakers (in Lithuania also ethnic Poles) employed in the Soviet military-industrial complex who were alarmed by the new language laws which made the titular language the official language of the

republic. They sought to maintain the dominant position of Russian as the 'inter-national' language (hence the name 'International Front'). The Interfronts first attempted to flex their muscles with strike actions in 1989, but these were stymied by Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians voluntarily stepping into the breach. Conflict was narrowly averted in May 1990 when Interfront mobs unsuccessfully attempted to storm the Supreme Council buildings in Rīga and Tallinn.

Baltic cooperation in this period could be compared to a team cycling race where one cyclist (nation) does the hard work for a few laps while the others follow close behind. The initial Latvian phase was briefest, starting with the environmental protests in 1986 and 'calendar' demonstrations in 1987; the Singing Revolution was led by the Estonians from the self-management proposal in September 1987 through to autumn 1989; the Lithuanians led the drive to independence beginning from late 1989 when the Lithuanian Communist Party split off from the CPSU. This sequence was largely determined by the demographic situation in each republic.⁴¹ Latvians acted first because they felt most acutely the existential threat of becoming a minority in their own country, but they could not push very far without provoking a strong counterforce among the Russian-speaking residents. The Estonian situation was more favourable, but they also could not risk putting all of their cards on the table at once. The Lithuanians awoke last but, being the most homogeneous and strongly united, were able to lead the final push to independence and overcome the sharpest confrontations.

Seeking to consolidate his power, Gorbachev vacillated between siding with the liberals or with the conservatives in the Soviet establishment. In the autumn of 1990 he aligned himself closer to the latter. The old guard sought to bring the Balts back into line by imposing direct presidential rule on the rebellious republics. The hardliners clearly hoped to act while the world's attention was diverted to the looming Gulf War. In December 1990 a series of a dozen low-yield bombs detonated outside various Soviet military installations and Communist Party buildings in Latvia. Moscow quickly put the blame on 'extreme nationalists'. The explosions resulted in no casualties, but the simultaneous formation by Soviet hardliners of a Latvian National Salvation Committee and the bringing in of additional Soviet military units, ostensibly to hunt draft-dodgers, indicated that the ground was being prepared for the restoration of Soviet order by direct 'presidential rule'. However, when the Lithuanian government unexpectedly collapsed as a result of economic difficulties on 7 January 1991, the conspirators shifted their focus

to Lithuania, mistakenly believing that the moment had come to capitalise on the perceived disunity in Lithuanian ranks.⁴² On the night of 12 January 1991 a shadowy Lithuanian National Salvation Committee declared that it was assuming power. Soviet military units were brought into the republic with instructions to seize control of strategic sites. Lithuanians heroically formed a human shield around the Supreme Council building, and 14 unarmed people died defending the television tower. The vivid and unforgettable image of that night, which was seen around the world, was of Lithuanians attempting to push a Soviet tank off the body of one of their fellows.

In addition to the courageous non-violent resistance and unwelcome Western media coverage, the hardliners were thwarted by the surprise visit of Boris Yeltsin, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian SFSR on 13 January to Tallinn, where he signed declarations establishing bilateral relations with the three Baltic republics. Yeltsin understood that the fate of democratisation in Russia hung in the balance and he called upon Russian troops not to act against the people. However, the danger had not yet passed. Barricades were hastily erected to defend public buildings in Rīga and Tallinn as Soviet Interior Ministry special units (OMON) escalated tension and the Latvian National Salvation Committee demanded the replacement of the government. On 20 January, OMON units ransacked the Latvian ministry of the interior in Rīga, killing five civilians in the process. Gorbachev's subsequent claim of ignorance of the violent crackdown and his blaming the events on local extremists was clearly disingenuous.⁴³

The resort to violence by the Kremlin only strengthened the resolve of the Balts in their aim of self-determination. Gorbachev's remaining strategy was to make separation as difficult as possible. To this end, he proposed a new union treaty to transform the USSR into a looser federation of republics. The Baltic governments boycotted Gorbachev's All-Union referendum scheduled for 17 March 1991 and pre-empted it with their own referenda on independence. On 9 February Lithuanians voted 91 per cent in favour of independence. On 3 March 78 per cent approved Estonian independence, and even in Latvia, with its large Russian-speaking minority, 74 per cent of residents supported independence on 3 March.

The situation in spring 1991 resembled a stalemate. The Balts sought fruitlessly to engage the Kremlin in negotiations about independence. The Baltic governments exercised almost all the functions of a state but did not control their own territory, even though they established their

own unarmed border guard services. Thus one of the crucial criteria for international recognition was lacking. The Kremlin continued to label democratically elected Baltic leaders as ‘extremists’ and attempted to destabilise the republics in order to discredit their drive for independence.

One of the most direct instruments for doing so were the OMON units which perpetrated multiple attacks in the first half of 1991. OMON units hunted Red Army draft-dodgers and seized telecommunications facilities, printing presses, and buildings claimed for the pro-Moscow Communist Party. The most brutal incident was the cold-blooded execution of seven Lithuanian border guards on 31 July 1991. Part of this strategy was to intimidate the Balts, but the main goal was to provoke them into some kind of violent response. International sympathy for the Balts depended on their peaceful and democratic behaviour. If violence could be provoked, then the Soviet authorities could implement direct presidential rule in the name of maintaining order. Remarkably, the Balts succeeded in keeping their cool during months of extreme pressure.

During this time, the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian Popular Front governments pursued international recognition. Although there were some high-level meetings with Western governments, these were mostly unofficial, in order to maintain international stability. While there was sympathy for the Baltic cause, the international community’s priority was to support Gorbachev’s reforms and end the Cold War. There was a tacit agreement that nothing should be done which might conceivably undermine or weaken Gorbachev’s position. Although most Western states adhered to the principle of non-recognition of the annexation of the Baltic states, as formulated by the USA in 1940, the message to the Balts was to be patient and not to rock the boat too much.⁴⁴

Although Gorbachev’s Union Treaty was rejected by the Balts, it also went too far for the Communist Party hardliners who organised a putsch in Moscow on 19 August 1991, the day before the scheduled signing of the treaty. They placed Gorbachev under house arrest in his Crimean summer residence. A State Emergency Committee (consisting mainly of members of Gorbachev’s own government and including interior minister Boriss Pugo, formerly Latvian Party boss) took control, claiming implausibly that Gorbachev was too ill to carry out his duties. The commander of the Soviet Baltic Military District, General Fyodor Kuzmin, announced the implementation of martial law to the Baltic governments, who refused to comply and condemned the coup. Soviet troop columns and OMON units were dispatched to the Baltic cities by the conspirators. They managed to take control of some key buildings such as the television

studios in Kaunas and the central telephone exchange in Rīga, but were thwarted at other strategic sites, notably the television tower in Tallinn. As in January, the Balts quickly erected barricades and people rushed out to protect important government buildings. Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians acted resolutely and in unison.

The putsch removed remaining doubts about the prudence of going forward with full independence. On 20 August Lithuania reaffirmed its independence and the Estonian Supreme Council voted to restore Estonian independence immediately, with Latvia following suit the next day. The decisive events occurred in Moscow where the conspirators did not count on the heroic defence of the Russian Supreme Soviet by Yeltsin. By 22 August the coup attempt collapsed and the troops returned to their barracks. Gorbachev returned to office but the power was now in Yeltsin’s hands.

Nordic and East European countries and the Russian SFSR led the wave of international recognition for Baltic independence which followed in the final week of August and culminated with the USSR’s grudging acceptance of the fact on 6 September. On 17 September the Baltic states were admitted to the United Nations. Three months later, Yeltsin dissolved the Soviet Union. Although the achievement of Baltic independence is usually attributed to the collapse of the USSR, the opposite is closer to the truth. The Baltic popular movements hastened the pace of democratisation within the USSR and undermined the foundations of the Soviet Empire.

8

Return to the West (1991–2009)

After the euphoria of the restoration of their independence, the Balts had to overcome many new challenges. They faced several years of a desperate economic situation which was the inevitable outcome of the transition from a command economy to a market economy. They also confronted the difficult tasks of state-building and dealing with the legacies of the Soviet era, including coming to terms with a radically altered demographic situation. The Baltic states set ambitious goals for themselves: a reorientation of their trade towards the West, integration into the European community, and attainment of the standards and conditions necessary for membership of the European Union and NATO.

BUILDING DEMOCRACY

As in their earlier period of independence, the three Baltic states chose similar frameworks for their new political systems. This was understandable because they were again reacting against their common previous regime and restoring their pre-war institutions. Just as in the 1920s, one of the main models for constitutional design that they followed was that of Germany. The Estonian constitution, drafted by a special constituent assembly, was again the first to be completed and approved in a national referendum in June 1992. The Lithuanian Supreme Council drafted a constitution which was also approved in a national referendum in October 1992. Latvia emphasised continuity with the pre-war republic in July 1993 by bringing back into force the 1922 constitution and simply making modernising amendments to it.¹

According to these constitutions, the head of state in all three republics is the president, whose powers are mainly symbolic. The Estonian and Lithuanian presidents are elected for a five-year term and the Latvian president for a four-year term,² and they can serve a maximum of two terms. The election of the Latvian president is by an absolute majority in the parliament. Estonia requires a two-thirds majority in the parliament, which in practice has been difficult to obtain. All presidential elections in Estonia, with the exception of the first, have, therefore, been decided in a specially convened electoral college composed of the members of parliament plus delegates from local governments. In a departure from the other two constitutional models, Lithuania followed the French style of directly elected presidency, featuring a run-off between the two front-runners. Although the Lithuanian system is often referred to as semi-presidential, the powers of the presidency differ little from those in Estonia and Latvia. However, the Lithuanian president's moral authority is clearly enhanced by the fact that his or her mandate is derived directly from the people.

All three countries have unicameral parliaments, the 101-seat Estonian *Riigikogu*, the 100-seat Latvian *Saeima*, and the 141-seat Lithuanian *Seimas*, which are elected for four years³ and have a 5 per cent threshold⁴ for political parties to gain representation. Unlike Estonia and Latvia, which opted for a parliamentary electoral system based on proportional representation and party lists, Lithuania chose a mixed system, similar to that in Germany, with half of the parliamentary deputies being elected in a first-past-the-post fashion⁵ and the other half by party list. The use of direct democratic means – referenda – has become a feature of only the Latvian political system, although 300,000 Lithuania citizens can also initiate referenda. Latvian citizens have on several occasions availed themselves of this instrument, since a referendum can be initiated by the collection of the signatures of 10 per cent of the electorate.

Estonia made the cleanest break with the Soviet past in its founding elections in September 1992 with the victory of Pro Patria (*Isamaa*), led by the youthful historian Mart Laar. The new government had few links with the past: several ministers, including Laar, were under 35 years of age, and three were émigrés. Laar's government immediately embarked on radical free-market reforms, liberalisation of the economy and privatisation. The election of the polyglot Lennart Meri as president emphasised the rupture. Meri, a writer and ethnographic film-maker, known for his erudition and whimsical humour, had established the Estonian Foreign Ministry in 1990.

In contrast, Lithuania stunned the world by being the first post-Soviet country to return the former communists (renamed as the Democratic Labour Party) to power in the October 1992 elections and their leader Algirdas Brazauskas as president of the republic in February 1993. The ex-communists' victory could be ascribed to the plummeting economy and dissatisfaction with Landsbergis' confrontational style, but also to the fact that, unlike the Communist Parties in Estonia and Latvia, the Lithuanian Party had deeper roots in local society. The Estonian and Latvian Communist Parties were strongly identified with foreign occupation and ethnic Russian dominance. Furthermore, Brazauskas, as the final first secretary of the Communist Party, had played a leading role in Lithuania's break from the USSR.

Latvia took the longest to establish its new institutions. It chose a middle path of continuity, with the victory of Latvia's Way, a centre-right party which grew out of the Popular Front, in the founding election of 1993. A government was formed under Valdis Birkavs of Latvia's Way. Guntis Ulmanis, a moderate figure, whose main asset was his surname which symbolised continuity with the pre-war state, was elected president by the *Saeima*.⁶

After living five decades in a one-party state, Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians were eager, but not well prepared, to participate fully in a free and open civil society. The connection between the new political parties and society was weak. Since the political parties were not based on any particular interest groups in society, the parties were formed mainly around personalities rather than socio-economic cleavages. This resulted in a volatile political party system, with frequent changes in party allegiances by the elected representatives, particularly in Estonia and Latvia during the 1990s. The second and third post-independence elections in all three Baltic states rejected the incumbent governments. Nevertheless, broad outlines of policy – free market reforms and integration with Western Europe – remained consistent.

The 1995 *Riigikogu* elections in Estonia were won by former premier Tiit Vähi's Coalition Party (*Koondarakond*), which touted its managerial experience. Vähi formed a coalition government, first with the Centre Party, headed by another former prime minister, Savisaar, and then with the liberal Reform Party, led by Siim Kallas, the former governor of the Central Bank. The Coalition Party managed to survive in office until the 1999 general election, but in the final two years it was a minority government led by former broadcaster Mart Siimann. The 1999 election gave a second opportunity for Laar and his Pro Patria Union, who formed a

centre-right coalition government together with the Reform Party and the social democrats.⁷ The Laar government completed infrastructural privatisation, but was weakened by the outcome of the 2001 presidential election, in which the failure of the governing parties to agree upon a joint candidate to succeed Meri led to the unexpected victory of a relic from the past, Arnold Rüütel. Rüütel had been Meri's main rival in the previous two elections, and in many respects was his opposite. Rüütel had served as the last chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, but had gained popularity for his pro-independence position during the Singing Revolution and enjoyed strong support from the countryside. After this setback, the government began to crumble, and it resigned in January 2002.

A new governing coalition was formed by the pro-business Reform Party and the Centre Party, the champion of the discontented. The new government was headed by the Reform Party's Kallas, previously finance minister in Laar's government, although the Centre Party held the majority of cabinet portfolios. This coalition of ideological opposites proved to be surprisingly effective. Estonian domestic politics since 1990 is best understood not by viewing it on a left–right scale, but by positioning around the wily Savisaar – consistently both the most admired and most vilified politician – and his Centre Party, the largest party but one which the other parties have sought to exclude from power.

The political landscape in post-Soviet Latvia has been chaotic and the political party system has not yet consolidated. Until 2006, every general election held since the restoration of independence was won by a new party which had not even existed at the time of the previous election. The 1995 general election was won with a mere 15 per cent of the vote by a new populist left-wing party, the Democratic Party *Saimnieks* ('The Master'), followed closely by a new populist right-wing party, the Popular Movement for Latvia, led by Joachim Siegerist (Zigerists), a controversial German-Latvian politician. Siegerist's party was kept out of office by a six-party coalition headed by Andris Šķēle, a prominent entrepreneur without political affiliation. After being forced out of office in 1997, Šķēle launched his own political party, the People's Party, which won the 1998 elections but had to allow Vilis Krištopans of Latvia's Way to head the new government.

After Ulmanis' second term ended in July 1999, the election of the new president by the *Saeima* was a cliff-hanger. The favoured candidate was the famous pop composer Raimonds Pauls but, after seven rounds



Map 7 The Baltic states today

of deadlock, the parliament voted for a compromise candidate, Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, a psychology professor from Montreal. She became the first female head of state in Eastern Europe. Her perfect command of English and French enabled her to make a mark internationally and her Thatcher-esque mannerisms won her the label of 'Iron Lady' of the Baltic states. While Estonian President Meri was the shining star, media favourite and international spokesman of the Baltic states in the 1990s, Vīķe-Freiberga played that role with poise and self-assurance at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Vīķe-Freiberga reappointed Šķēle as prime minister in July 1999. However, his governing coalition disintegrated in less than a year as a result of disagreements over privatisation. Subsequently, Andris Bērziņš of Latvia's Way formed a new cabinet based on the same four coalition parties, which managed to stay in office until the *Saeima*'s term expired in October 2002.

Compared to Estonia and Latvia in the 1990s, the political party system in Lithuania appeared to be more consolidated but also more polarised, with two large parties representing the left and right and alternately in power. The pendulum swung back to the right in the second general election in 1996, when the Homeland Union–Lithuanian Conservatives, the successor party to *Sąjūdis* and led by Landsbergis, won an absolute majority. No prime minister in the Baltic states has yet been able to serve the full term of one parliament. The longest-serving in the 1990s were Adolfas Šleževičius (1993–6) and Gediminas Vagnorius (1996–9). At the end of his first term as president in 1998, Brazauskas announced his retirement from politics. As his arch-rival Landsbergis fared poorly in the first round of the 1998 presidential election, it appeared that there was an opening for a new generation in Lithuanian politics, but Brazauskas' favoured successor, Artūras Paulauskas, lost in the second round to Valdas Adamkus, a retired US Environmental Protection Agency senior official, who had fled Lithuania as a teenager at the end of the war. As president, Adamkus did much to enhance Lithuania's bid for EU and NATO membership. Brazauskas' retirement proved to be premature, as in October 2000, leading a left-wing coalition, he trounced the right in the general election. After a brief spell of a minority government headed by the mercurial centrist Rolandas Pakšas, Brazauskas became prime minister in 2001 at the head of a majority coalition, and would remain in office for nearly five years.

POLITICS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

The first years of the new millennium witnessed a wave of new and successful insurgent populist parties in all three states.⁸ Although both the governing Centre and Reform Parties did well in the March 2003 Estonian *Riigikogu* elections, a new, populist centre-right party, Res Publica, which championed law and order, transparency and the fight against corruption, came out on top. Its leader, former state auditor Juhani Parts, led a new government which included the Reform Party. The Parts cabinet was exceptionally young and inexperienced, even by Estonian standards. Its popularity soon nosedived as a result of the government's failure to satisfy overinflated expectations. It managed to remain in office for two years until March 2005. The Reform Party's leader, the former mayor of Tartu Andrus Ansip – having taken over from Kallas, who had become a vice-president of the European Commission – became the new prime minister, and Savisaar's Centre Party replaced Res Publica in the government.

The Centre-Reform ruling coalition was split over the 2006 presidential election. President Rüütel was denied a second term by the narrow victory of Toomas Hendrik Ilves in the electoral college. Ilves, who grew up in New Jersey, had distinguished himself as the foreign minister who led Estonia into the European Union. With Ilves' election, all three Baltic states simultaneously had heads of state who had spent most of their adult lives in North America. Nevertheless, although several Baltic émigrés occupied positions of high visibility in public life, the number of those who actually returned to take up permanent residence in their homeland was in the hundreds rather than the thousands.

In the 2007 *Riigikogu* elections, the two main governing parties both increased their share of the vote, but the Reform Party managed to best the Centre Party. For the first time, a governing party won the parliamentary elections. Prime Minister Ansip, however, decided to drop his coalition partner and form a new government together with an ideologically closer partner, the Pro Patria and Res Publica Union, and also, initially, the smaller Social Democrats. Ansip became the longest continually serving prime minister in the Baltic states.

In Latvia, the new populist wave was initiated by the respected governor of the Central Bank, Einārs Repše, who resigned in 2001 in order to form his own political party, New Era. Campaigning on an anti-corruption platform, New Era triumphed in the 2002 elections, receiving

almost one-quarter of the votes cast and becoming the largest party in the *Saeima*. Repše's drive for transparency and accountability led to a row with his coalition partner, Latvia's First Party, another new populist party formed by entrepreneur Ainārs Šlesers. This resulted in the collapse of the government in February 2004. Indulis Emsis of the Greens and Farmers' Union formed a new, minority, centre-left government – notable as the first government in the world headed by a Green prime minister.⁹ However, his administration lasted only until December 2004 when Aigars Kalvītis of the People's Party formed a new centre-right coalition.

In the 2006 *Saeima* elections, the governing party, which claimed the credit for the rapid economic growth, was re-elected for the first time. Prime Minister Kalvītis' new government, however, soon faced a series of allegations of political corruption. Commentators had noted that three wealthy 'oligarchs', Šķēle, Šlesers and Aivars Lembergs (the long-time mayor of Ventspils, the port city which prospered from the Russian oil transit trade), enjoyed a large measure of influence over political parties in the government. Political and business interests appeared to be closely interconnected and Latvia had one of the least transparent systems in the EU for financing political campaigns. President Viķe-Freiberga left office at the end of her second term in July 2007, warning that the Kalvītis government was doing the bidding of the 'oligarchs' in introducing legislation which curbed the independence of investigative bodies. She was succeeded by the politically inexperienced orthopaedic surgeon Valdis Zatlers, whose election by the *Saeima* was greeted with concerns that he was a pliant figurehead for the ruling parties. The government's hasty dismissal of the anti-corruption bureau chief occasioned a large demonstration in November 2007 (dubbed the 'umbrella revolution') which forced Kalvītis to resign. Nevertheless, the same coalition continued to govern, led by the political veteran Ivars Godmanis.

In despair at having no way of influencing the government until the next elections, more than 200,000 citizens gave their signatures in support of a constitutional amendment which allowed one-tenth of the electorate to initiate a referendum to dissolve the *Saeima*. In August 2008, 97 per cent voted in favour of the constitutional amendment in a national referendum, but the turnout fell short of the required one-half of the electorate. Anger at the government and distrust of the political parties continued to mount, particularly after Godmanis was forced to curtail public

spending as the economic boom turned to bust. In March 2009 Godmanis resigned and was replaced by Valdis Dombrovskis from the New Era Party, whose main priority was to make draconian cuts in the state budget and restructure the economy in order to fulfil the requirements of the loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

In Lithuania, the shifts in power between the two large parties of the left and right was rocked by the rise of the new populist challengers in the beginning of the twenty-first century. In the presidential election of 2003, the disaffected – the losers in the transition period – rallied behind the populist mayor of Vilnius, stunt pilot Rolandas Paksas, who unexpectedly defeated Adamkus. Suspicions immediately arose regarding the sources of funding for Paksas' campaign. The *Seimas* impeached President Paksas in April 2004 after he unconstitutionally awarded citizenship to his main financial backer, Yuri Borisov, a Russian arms dealer. Adamkus was returned to the presidency in July 2004.

Astonishingly, after having fallen for one fraudulent populist, Lithuanians immediately turned to another: Viktor Uspaskich, an ethnic Russian who made his fortune in the food-processing business. His populist Labour Party won the 2004 *Seimas* election. However, President Adamkus made it clear that he would not allow the Labour Party to lead the government. The Labour Party therefore became a coalition partner in a government once again headed by Brazauskas, who symbolised continuity. The Labour Party crumbled when a double-accounting scheme for making payments to the party's MPs was uncovered in 2006, and Uspaskich temporarily sought refuge from criminal charges in Russia. The scandal prompted Brazauskas finally to retire in 2006. His long-time right-hand man, Gediminas Kirkilas, became leader of the Social Democrats and led the government until the general election in October 2008.

Renewing the traditional pattern of alternation between left and right, the conservative Homeland Union won the election, while the Social Democrats recorded their most dismal result. The old populists, Paksas and Uspaskich, were trumped by the newly formed National Resurrection Party, the vehicle of the popular television entertainer Arūnas Valinskas, who became chairman of the *Seimas*. His party became the junior partner in the new ruling coalition led by the Homeland Union's Andrius Kubilius. In the midst of the sharp economic downturn in 2009, Lithuanians elected Dalia Grybauskaitė, the European commissioner for budgetary planning, as their new president.

ECONOMIC REFORMS

After the euphoria of achieving recognition of their independence, the Baltic states faced several years of a desperate economic situation and the transition from a command economy to a market economy. Their economies were still closely connected to that of the former Soviet Union, which was rapidly descending into hyperinflation and chaos. In June 1992, while the IMF and the World Bank were advising the Baltic states to remain in the rouble zone since the great majority of their trade was with the former Soviet Union, the interim Estonian government, headed by Vähi, took the courageous step of being the first ex-Soviet country to introduce its own currency, the *kroon*. The reform succeeded in curbing runaway inflation, bringing goods which had not been seen for years back on to shop shelves and putting an end to the black market. Being pegged to the German mark through a currency board system, the *kroon* provided Estonia with the necessary financial stability to plough ahead with radical free-market reforms and laid the basis for economic recovery. Unlike Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania both introduced temporary currencies parallel to the rouble, the Latvian *rubelis* and the Lithuanian *talonas*, before establishing their own currencies, the *lats* (pegged to a basket of major international currencies) and the *litas* (pegged to the US dollar) in 1993.¹⁰

Estonia launched the most rapid and radical free-market reforms. The economic philosophy of the first government headed by Mart Laar was inspired by Milton Friedman and Margaret Thatcher and was coined 'shock therapy'. Laar's bold approach won plaudits from the IMF but angered farmers and pensioners, whose situation deteriorated markedly. Latvia followed Estonia's path with some delay, while Lithuania in the first half of the 1990s attempted to pursue a more evolutionary approach, which some have ascribed to Lithuanian society's more collectivist instincts as opposed to Estonian individualism.¹¹

The economies reached the bottom in 1993: the economy contracted by 16.2 per cent in Lithuania, 14.9 per cent in Latvia, and 9.0 per cent in Estonia. Inflation was 90 per cent in Estonia, 109 per cent in Latvia and 410 per cent in Lithuania. By 1996 recovery was well on its way: the economy grew by 3.3 per cent in Latvia, 4.0 per cent in Estonia, and 4.7 per cent in Lithuania, and inflation was brought down to 23 per cent in Estonia, 18 per cent in Latvia, and 25 per cent in Lithuania.¹²

Inefficient manufacturing enterprises, often relatively small units, could not compete successfully and were closed, resulting in substantial

unemployment, particularly outside the major cities. Industrial production which was geared for the Soviet market, particularly for military use, was rendered redundant. The economic reforms of the early 1990s brought with them substantial social costs, including a drop in the already-low life-expectancy rate, particularly of men. The rapid transition to a private market economy left various groups, notably pensioners, at a disadvantage. The new republics could not afford to pay ample pensions, yet the cost of living rose perceptibly as a result of market forces. After the straitjacket of communism, the new liberal regime seemed chaotic. Public order deteriorated and crime surged, particularly organised crime, popularly referred to as 'the mafia'. During the 1990s, intimidation of business rivals by violent means was not unusual. Corruption, a characteristic of the Soviet system, continued unabated.

A foundation for the creation of a market economy was the privatisation of property. Differing schemes were utilised by the three states. Housing and enterprises were most commonly purchased using privatisation vouchers which were issued according to individuals' employment record. Privatisation also involved returning land and buildings which had been forcibly nationalised by the Soviet regime to the original owners or their descendants. Restitution of property was an extremely difficult, complex and socially divisive process. Many disputes continued well into the second decade of independence.

Grossly overstuffed Soviet-era state and collective farms could not compete in a market economy and were dissolved. In order to function efficiently, many farms required modernisation – this in turn required capital investment. In a number of cases, attempts were made to run former state farms as cooperatives, but few of these succeeded. With the restitution of property to the original owners, or their heirs, much of the farmland was parcelled into smaller units, comparable to pre-war family farms. An outcome of these transitional processes was that there were many underemployed, as well as some unemployed, people in the countryside.

Like pensioners, these people were the casualties of the economic transition, and they lacked the initiative and capital to do much about it.¹³ Gradually, some enterprising farmers began to assemble larger, more economically viable tracts of farmland. They were able to do this because much of the land which had been returned to the original owners lay fallow, unused, since many owners lacked either the interest or the ability to exploit the land. These parcels of farmland were either sold to, or rented by, the entrepreneurs, who were willing to undertake farming as a modern

agribusiness. The transition to a market economy dragged on longer in Lithuania because, unlike in Estonia, the government did not immediately end subsidies for farmers. There were also differences in productivity, as reflected in the percentage of the population employed in the agricultural sector, with the highest percentage, and lowest productivity, in Lithuania.

The privatisation of large infrastructures which was carried out in the late 1990s and early 2000s occasioned political controversy and scandals. There were some shining successes, such as the privatisation of the state telecommunications companies, but also notable failures, such as the privatisation of Estonian Rail and the sale for strategic reasons of the Lithuanian Mažeikiai oil refinery to a US firm, which then sold it unexpectedly to a Russian company.

In the latter half of the 1990s, the Baltic states became among Europe's most attractive destinations for foreign direct investment.¹⁴ Estonia led the way by unilaterally introducing free trade and introducing radical initiatives in taxation: it was the first European country to introduce a flat rate of income tax (set initially at 26 per cent) in 1994 and to abolish the tax on reinvested corporate profits in 1999. Latvia and Lithuania soon followed suit by introducing the flat rate of tax, as did several other, mainly Eastern European, countries.

After the economic recovery of the mid-1990s, the Baltic states were hit hard by the Asian and Russian financial crises in 1998. The Baltic stock-market bubble burst and many Baltic companies whose main export market was Russia went bankrupt. Fortunately, the setback was only temporary and had the salutary effect of weaning Baltic companies from the eastern market and forcing them to reorient to the EU.

The tempo of economic growth soared in the first decade of the twenty-first century. The Baltic states were the fastest-growing region in the EU, and the 10–12 per cent growth in gross domestic product achieved in 2005–6 placed the Baltic states among the world's best economic performers. An area where Estonia led the way was the spread of information and communications technologies (ICT): the popular software application *Skype*, for example, which allowed voice calls via the internet, was developed in Estonia. Enthusiasm for ICT was also promoted by the public sector which championed 'paperless government'. In 2007, Estonia became the first country in the world to use electronic voting via the internet in a national election.

At the same time, the first years of EU membership saw an outflow of tens of thousands of individuals of working age who sought higher wages, as in the case of Estonian bus drivers and medical doctors to neighbouring

Finland, and Latvian and Lithuanian construction workers to Ireland and the UK, two EU members which did not restrict the entry of labour from the new member states.

The weakness in the remarkable economic success of the Baltic states in the mid-2000s was that the dynamic growth was fuelled not so much by producers but more by domestic consumption, particularly the housing construction boom driven by cheap credit provided by the Nordic banks which dominated the banking sector. A large trade deficit had always been a worrisome indicator of the real state of the Baltic economies. The crunch came in 2008, when growth stalled while inflation increased. The situation was compounded by the global financial crisis which started in September 2008. The Baltic states were plunged into double-digit negative growth in 2009 and had drastically to slash state spending. Latvia found itself in the greatest difficulties and was forced to take a loan from the International Monetary Fund in order to remain solvent and avoid the devaluation of its currency.¹⁵ The terms of the loan required sweeping reductions in expenditure, the raising of taxes and the rationalisation of the public sector.

SOCIETAL TRANSITION

The most dramatic Soviet legacy was the drastically altered demographic situation of Estonia and Latvia which had endured a massive influx of mainly Russian immigrants since World War II. Reconciling the interests and rights of the indigenous nations and Soviet-era settlers proved to be a complex and emotional conundrum, which also elicited much international attention (becoming the most studied and written-about aspect of Baltic life). The dominant ethnic group in the former empire suddenly found itself as a marginalised minority within the new nation-states. Tens of thousands of Russians and people of other nationalities from the former Soviet Union departed immediately after Baltic independence, but not nearly as many as some Latvian and Estonian nationalists had hoped. Most considered the Baltic states to be their homeland and enjoyed a noticeably higher standard of living than in other parts of the former Soviet Union. For many, there was no one awaiting their return.

Since Estonia and Latvia were restored on the basis of the principle of legal continuity, all those who were citizens prior to the Soviet takeover in 1940 and their descendants were recognised as citizens; all others had to apply for naturalisation. In practice, this meant that a large part of

the ethnic Russian population was left disenfranchised. According to the citizenship laws introduced in Estonia in 1993 and in Latvia in 1994, the key requirement for naturalisation was a language exam. The Russian minority in Estonia and Latvia was split into three groups: citizens, stateless persons and those who opted for Russian citizenship, primarily because it allowed visa-free travel to Russia. The Latvian citizenship law attracted severe international criticism for stipulating a quota system whereby only a fixed number of individuals from a certain age group could apply for naturalisation in a given year. Responding to international pressure, Latvia abolished the quota system in a referendum held in 1998.¹⁶ Clearly, the most important impetus for the liberalisation of the citizenship law was the prospect of EU membership.

The other instrument through which Baltic nationalists tried to reassert their dominance over the monolingual Russian settler community was the language law. Although having lived in the country for decades, many ethnic Russians had little knowledge of the Estonian or Latvian language and little desire to learn. As during the Soviet era, separate Russian-, Estonian- and Latvian-language schools continued to exist. In 1999 the Latvian parliament passed legislation which required not only all public institutions but also certain categories of companies in the private sector to conduct their business in Latvian. This law received international condemnation and the newly elected president, Vike-Freiberga, vetoed the legislation.

EU conditionality influenced the Estonian and Latvian governments' policies towards their Russian minority.¹⁷ By the end of the 1990s a shift in thinking had occurred, brought about partly by a more realistic assessment of the actual situation but chiefly by the need to meet EU membership requirements. Whereas in the first years after the re-establishment of independence many Estonians and Latvians hoped that many of the Soviet-era settlers would simply return home to Russia, by the end of the millennium the Estonian and Latvian governments had begun to realise that time alone would not solve the problem and that a more proactive approach was needed. Consequently, Estonia and Latvia adopted State Integration Programmes in 2000 with the declared aim of integrating Russian-speakers into society.

The implementation of the state integration programmes faced apathy and opposition. In 2004, Latvian Russians, including school children, demonstrated against changes to school curricula whereby 60 per cent of classes in Russian-language schools would be taught in Latvian. Estonia adopted a more cautious approach by introducing the first

Estonian-language subjects into Russian-language schools only in 2007. Within the EU, the rights of third-country permanent residents were brought into line with those of citizens in 2007. Paradoxically, although the EU has pushed for the faster naturalisation of non-citizens, the extension of the EU's Schengen regime in 2007 to include the Baltic states (allowing permanent residents with third-country (Russian) passports and those with Estonian and Latvian Aliens' passports to travel as freely within the EU as citizens) reduced the incentive for naturalisation. The integration of Estonian society suffered a setback in 2007 when the government's relocation of a Red Army monument in Tallinn caused a riot by Russophone youths. The statue was resented as a marker of occupation by most Estonians but cherished as a memorial for fallen Soviet troops by most Russophones. A breakthrough for the empowerment of the Russian minority in Latvia occurred in 2009 when 33-year-old Russian television journalist Nils Ušakovs, the leader of the Harmony Centre Party, was elected mayor of Riga.

Lithuania remained a much more homogenous society which did not face the same problems as its northern neighbours and thus could afford to grant citizenship automatically to all residents. In the early 1990s there was still some mutual mistrust in relation to the Polish minority who had largely sided with the *Yedinstvo* hardline communists against independence. Most of the Poles inhabited the countryside around Vilnius – the area which had been the subject of dispute between Poland and Lithuania in the inter-war era. There were fears that Poland could reopen the issue, but the Lithuanian and Polish governments signed a treaty in 1994 which respected the border and the rights of minorities, and the problem quickly faded.

After the collapse of the USSR, Balts who had joined the Communist Party were branded by many as 'collaborators' with the 'occupation regime'. On the other hand, party members themselves tended to justify their actions as having been purely pragmatic, often claiming that they joined the party to help their nation from within the Soviet system. Typically, they claimed that had they not occupied the position they did, then it would have been someone worse – a Russian with no sympathies towards the native culture. The Soviet era entailed moral and ethical compromises and it is therefore not possible to view it purely in terms which are black and white, only various shades of grey. By and large, a societal compromise emerged whereby only those who had worked for the repressive organs (the KGB) faced lustration. The past of a public figure was occasionally compromised when the media revealed his or her

role as a KGB informer. Most of the high-ranking communists in Estonia and Latvia did not continue in politics; they generally went into business (and often were quite successful because they were well connected) and thus did not present a political problem. An exception was Rubiks, the last leader of the Latvian Communist Party, who was briefly imprisoned for supporting the 1991 putsch, but was elected to the European Parliament in 2009. It was more of an issue in Lithuania since the successor to the Communist Party continued to govern. One reason why there were no 'witch-hunts' of former communists was the fact that Baltic societies are small societies where most people know each other through various social networks and where the limited pool of human resources would have been diminished by political retribution.¹⁸

Concomitantly with the political changes, the Baltic states experienced a religious revival in the early 1990s. When church attendance and religious rites were no longer proscribed by the State, christenings, confirmation classes and church weddings became fashionable. The Catholic Church in Lithuania and the Lutheran Church in Estonia and Latvia regained a public role, but Estonia and Latvia nevertheless remained two of the most irreligious nations in the world. Unlike the mainstream churches, the evangelical congregations enjoyed rapid growth, with many new churches built with the financial support of evangelical congregations such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Pentecostals and Methodists from the USA or Western Europe. Mormon missionaries, not to mention Hare Krishnas, were a common sight. On the one hand, this could be explained as a reaction to the repressive Soviet policies; on the other hand, it could be seen as a search for eternal values in societies undergoing rapid change, uncertainty and painful transition.

The new freedom broke down many formerly taboo subjects and liberated modes of behaviour. Soviet society had in many respects been deeply conservative, and Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian societies were forced to make up decades of social development in a few short years in order to follow the norms of their progressive Nordic neighbours on issues such as gender equality and the public display of homosexuality. The Russian minorities were notably more traditional in their values than Estonians and Latvians.

The 1990s was a contradictory period for culture and the arts and sciences. While they gained their freedom from Marxist dogma and censorship and were able to rejoin the international community, they lost most of the state subsidies that they had enjoyed under the Soviet regime. Museums, theatre troupes, orchestras and other cultural organisations had

difficulty remaining financially afloat. An important role in the development of a civil society was played by international funding bodies, such as those associated with the US-Hungarian philanthropist George Soros, whose foundations played a vital role in promoting an ‘open society’ and in developing non-governmental civic organisations.

Building a civil society proved to be no easy task: while the Soviet regime had destroyed personal initiative and accountability, the newly found freedom unleashed an entrepreneurial spirit which emphasised personal gain at the expense of social responsibilities. Status was now defined by the ownership of wealth, particularly status symbols such as expensive cars. A formerly egalitarian society rapidly became a stratified society. Within a few years, an economy of rationing and scarcity of consumer goods was transformed into a consumer society valuing instant gratification, as exemplified by large shopping malls. The cheaper prices and lower taxes in the Baltic states, when compared to Western European countries, attracted foreigners, notably Finnish tourists who brought cart-loads of alcoholic beverages in Tallinn, and young, rowdy British men for whom Riga was a favourite destination for stag party weekends. Probably the aspect of freedom which was most appreciated by citizens was the ability to travel. The world was now open to Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians, although it was several years before Western countries removed visa requirements. The opportunity to study abroad was particularly important for broadening horizons and bringing new ideas to Baltic societies.

RETURN TO EUROPE

After achieving independence, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania sought to distance themselves as rapidly as possible from the Soviet legacy. Their primary foreign-policy objective was to integrate quickly into European and international institutions. Two important milestones were the admission of Estonia and Lithuania into the Council of Europe in 1993 (Latvia’s entry was delayed by two years as a result of concern about the status of the Russian-speaking minority) and Estonian and Latvian membership of the World Trade Organisation in 1999 (Lithuania in 2001).

In the first half of the 1990s, while they were still outside of European structures, Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian cooperation played an important role. The formal institutions of cooperation, the interparliamentary Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers, which had

been established earlier in 1990 as forums for coordinating strategy in their struggle for independence, were developed further along the lines of Nordic cooperation. A Baltic free-trade area, established in 1994, was mainly for political reasons rather than for economic benefit, because the economies of the three countries compete with, rather than complement, each other, producing similar goods for the same markets.¹⁹ Estonian–Latvian–Lithuania tripartite cooperation was strongly encouraged by Western countries as a means of demonstrating their maturity and readiness for eventual membership of the European Union and NATO.²⁰

Cooperation with neighbours in their region, first and foremost the Nordic countries, particularly Finland, Sweden and Denmark, also played a crucial role in the successful transition of the Baltic states to a free-market economy and democracy. Expanding the zone of stability and prosperity in their region was also clearly recognised as being in the Nordic states’ own interest. From 1992 an institutional framework for cooperation was provided by the Council of Baltic Sea States, comprised of 11 members. The Nordic countries were the most significant investors in the region and supported the interests of the Baltic states in international organisations. By the end of the 1990s, a 5+3 format of the five Nordic countries plus the three Baltic states had become common for multilateral cooperation. Regional interaction was not only at an official level but also flourished at the grass-roots level: churches, schools, professional associations, sport clubs, cultural societies and various other components of civil society eagerly established a dense network of people-to-people contacts across the Baltic Sea. A special relationship blossomed between Estonia and Finland, not only because of the short distance between their capitals and Finland’s status as Estonia’s largest trading partner but also because of their linguistic kinship and close cultural ties. Similarly, Lithuania has enjoyed a close relationship with Poland. Particularly in its drive for NATO membership, Lithuania stressed its Central European character, as opposed to its Baltic identity. Likewise, Estonia, in trying to distinguish itself as the frontrunner for EU membership, sought to rebrand itself as a more attractive ‘Nordic’ country.²¹

After the withdrawal of Russian troops in 1994, the Balts could concentrate their energies on obtaining EU and NATO membership – the former to ensure economic prosperity and the latter to guarantee their security. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania submitted formal applications for EU membership in 1995, shortly after two of their closest neighbours and most important trade partners – Sweden and Finland – became EU

members. In the same year an association agreement with the EU was secured.

Owing to its more rapid economic reforms, Estonia was the only Baltic state among the five Central and Eastern European countries invited to commence EU membership negotiations in 1998. While this differentiation produced concerns about the future of Baltic solidarity, Estonia's success proved to be a great stimulus for Latvia and Lithuania. When the EU began negotiations with them two years later, they worked hard to catch up with Estonia in a race to close the negotiating chapters. The strategy of the Baltic states in the EU membership negotiations was to fulfil all the necessary criteria and to implement fully the EU's *acquis communautaire* (the body of EU legislation, treaties and case law) as quickly as possible, without presenting any awkward problems. They were in the most unfavourable starting position of the candidate countries, being the poorest and the only ones from the former Soviet Union. As Estonian President Meri perceptively stressed, the Baltic states needed to seize the window of opportunity – if they lagged behind, time would not work in their favour. Obtaining membership hinged on fulfilling the 'objective criteria' and doing the 'homework' set by the EU. In this, the Balts proved to be eager pupils; EU conditionality created the necessary domestic consensus for rapid reforms. In December 2002, accession negotiations were successfully completed at an EU summit meeting in Copenhagen.

Paradoxically, of the Central and East European candidate countries, opinion polls consistently showed the Estonians and Latvians to be the most sceptical about the benefits of EU membership, although the principal political parties were unanimous in their support for membership. As in many EU member states, there was a clear divergence between the political elite and the general public. The most popular argument of the opponents of EU membership was that, having recently escaped from an involuntary union, the Balts did not need to enter another union, where they would again have to surrender part of their sovereignty. The prospect of a higher standard of living, however, proved a stronger argument. In the national referenda held in 2003, 90 per cent of Lithuanians voted in favour of EU membership, but only two-thirds of Estonians and Latvians approved accession. Together with Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus, the Baltic states formally joined the EU on 1 May 2004.

The entire accession process – from application to membership – took almost nine years. The new members had to 'harmonise' their legislation

with the over 80,000 pages of the EU's *acquis communautaire*. The EU's conditionality forced them to undertake painful reforms, such as overhauling the legal system and imposing stringent physiosanitary regulations and costly environmental standards. One of the most difficult requirements for these small countries was the administrative capacity actually to implement the necessary EU standards. For Lithuania, the single most problematic issue was the EU's demand – as a result of safety concerns regarding the Soviet design of its reactors – that the Ignalina nuclear power plant be closed.

For Estonia and Latvia, the treatment of the Russian-speaking minority was the most sensitive political issue. Since the EU lacked competency on minority issues, it mainly deferred to the evaluations made by other international organisations, specifically the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the latter charged with monitoring the treatment of the Russian-speaking minority and making recommendations to help avoid potential conflict. As ethnic conflict erupted in the Balkans in the 1990s, many international observers feared that something similar could occur in the Baltic states. In 1993, Estonia and Latvia invited the OSCE²² to establish missions for the purpose of providing the international community with objective and reliable information about the treatment of the Russian minority and to promote dialogue. One of the final recommendations made by the OSCE high commissioner for national minorities, Max van der Stoel, was the abolition of the language requirements for elected deputies, which was followed only with great reluctance by the Estonian and Latvian governments – a clear example of conditionality in the EU accession process.²³ After the Estonian and Latvian governments undertook to implement the OSCE's recommendations, the OSCE missions in Tallinn and Riga were closed at the end of 2001. This stamp of approval by the international community cleared the way for Baltic accession to the EU and NATO.

Once inside the EU, the issues that the Baltic states prioritised during their first years of EU membership were increased competitiveness and the free movement of services, the promotion of an information society and the strengthening of the EU's Neighbourhood Policy, with particular regard to Ukraine, Moldova and the southern Caucasus. Having successfully completed the EU accession process, the Baltic states were well situated to transfer their knowledge and experience to other post-Soviet states.²⁴ EU enlargement also reinforced the trend towards closer cooperation among the Baltic and Nordic countries. Their interdependence was further elaborated when the EU adopted its Baltic Sea Strategy in 2009.

Initially, the Baltic states zealously guarded their newly won sovereignty, however, they quickly came around to the idea of supporting the deepening of European integration: the three parliaments ratified the EU's Constitutional Treaty, and later, in 2008, its revised version, the Lisbon Treaty, without much debate. Among the final steps in their full integration into the European Union was their accession to the Schengen regime in December 2007, which eliminated border controls within the EU. It also meant dismantling the border control points which had been erected among themselves in 1991. Lithuania and Estonia were expected to be among the first new EU member states to join the EU single currency in 2007, but were forced to postpone their hopes of doing this since their rapid economic growth raised inflation above the eurozone criterion. After the financial crisis in 2008, budget deficits became the new problem, but joining the eurozone still remained an important priority for Baltic governments, with Estonia set to adopt the euro in 2011.

Parallel to European integration was the process of the accession to NATO. The lesson from the first period of independence was that neutrality was not a viable option. The unhappy experience of 1939 taught the Balts not to rely on neutrality, although many in the international community recommended that they follow the example of neutral Finland, which enjoyed a good relationship with Russia. The Balts were afraid of being left in a 'grey zone' between the West and Russia. Membership of NATO was widely considered to be the only possible guarantee of Baltic security following independence. The Baltic states eagerly joined NATO's new Partnership for Peace programme in 1994, although there was apprehension that it was offered as a substitute for actual membership. The USA created a Baltic Charter in 1998 to reassure the Balts that they would not be forgotten, even though they were not included in NATO's 1999 Central European enlargement. The main argument against Baltic NATO membership was that, because of their geographic position, they would impossible to defend. The three Baltic states struggled hard to overcome Western apprehension that their membership would prompt a negative Russian reaction. While NATO sought to avoid antagonising Russia, there was nevertheless a steady stream of threatening remarks made by Russian politicians and officials. In addition to implementing the necessary military reforms, the Baltic states had to counter the widely held belief that the former boundaries of the USSR constituted a 'red line' for NATO that should not be crossed.²⁵

The Balts strove to surmount doubts by proving that small countries could contribute to the Atlantic Alliance, particularly through the

efforts of their peace-keeping troops, beginning with their service in the former Yugoslavia in the late 1990s. The Balts have sent personnel to almost every NATO mission. A key component in demonstrating their preparedness for membership of the alliance was Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian cooperation in forming a joint infantry battalion (BALT-BAT), naval squadron (BALTRON), air surveillance system (BALTNET) and staff college (BALTDEFCOL) in the latter half of the 1990s. Furthermore, Baltic governments pledged steadily to increase their defence expenditure to reach 2 per cent of GDP to conform with NATO's standard (a goal which has not yet been met).

The terrorist attacks against the USA on 11 September 2001 changed global security perceptions radically and helped to remove the remaining obstacles to Baltic membership of NATO. Baltic efforts were rewarded in 2002, when they were formally invited to join the alliance. As the USA prepared to invade Iraq in 2003, the US defence secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, rhetorically divided Europe into 'old' and 'new' – 'new' being understood as the ex-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, who supported the US position, as opposed to those Western European countries who did not. The Baltic states became full members of NATO on 29 March 2004. The most visible sign of NATO's presence are four fighter planes, which are based in Šiauliai, Lithuania and patrol Baltic airspace. They are contributed by NATO nations on a rotating schedule. Like most other new members from Central and Eastern Europe, the Balts have sought to preserve a strong transatlantic link. This perceived need for strong ties to the USA resulted in their sending soldiers to participate in the post-war security operation in Iraq. The Baltic states have also enthusiastically dispatched troops and civilian experts for the NATO operation in Afghanistan, even though they have suffered losses.²⁶ The number of military personnel participating in these missions may have been small, but in proportional terms the Baltic contribution has been among the largest of any country. In line with NATO's prioritisation of 'out-of-area' operations and rapid deployment, Latvia and Lithuania transformed their militaries into fully professional forces. Estonia, however, cautiously retained conscription and an emphasis on its own territorial defence.

RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA

Upon achieving independence, the most pressing concern for the Baltic states was the removal of Russian troops from bases on their territory.

US pressure was instrumental in securing the withdrawal of these troops from Lithuania in 1993 and Latvia and Estonia in 1994 after social guarantees were extended to retired Soviet military personnel remaining in the Baltic states.²⁷ Despite the withdrawal of Russian troops, the relationship between the Baltic states and Russia remained cool. Russia has been harshly critical of the status of ethnic Russians in Estonia and Latvia and the Balts' pursuit of membership of NATO. The Balts, in turn, were alarmed by Russia's assertion of its privileged sphere of influence in its 'near abroad'.

A key obstacle to improved relations between the Baltic states and Russia was the difficulty in ratifying border treaties. Agreements were reached with all the countries by the end of the 1990s, but Russia delayed signing the treaties in the hope of hindering the Balts' progress towards NATO and EU membership by keeping the 'conflict' unresolved. Although the Lithuanians ratified their border agreement with Russia in 1997, Russia ratified the treaty only as part of a package deal with the EU to resolve the issues of Kaliningrad transit in 2002.

Lithuania is the only one of the Baltic states to have the Russian Federation as its western neighbour, in the Kaliningrad oblast, the most highly militarised area of Europe. The regulation of the transit of Russian military personnel and equipment from Kaliningrad across Lithuania to Russia proper was a source of disagreement in the first half of the 1990s. Before Lithuania and Poland were scheduled to join the EU, Kaliningrad became the main bone of contention between Russia and the EU. Russia demanded visa-free transit rights for its citizens, while the EU opposed the creation of a 'corridor' in its future Schengen space. A compromise was reached in 2002 whereby Kaliningraders would be issued 'facilitated transit documents' rather than visas.²⁸ After the collapse of the USSR, Kaliningrad oscillated between an optimistic vision of being a 'Hong Kong of the Baltic', with ideas of a free-trade zone or even a 'fourth Baltic republic' and the pessimistic perception of being a 'black hole' of organised crime, trafficking and infectious diseases. However, in the twenty-first century, the prerogatives of the regions of the Russian Federation have been severely restricted by the central government under President Vladimir Putin.

The situation with Latvia and Estonia was more protracted because the Russian Federation had annexed parts of the Latvian and Estonian territory at the end of World War II. The Latvian and Estonian governments renounced their territorial claims in the hope that Russia would reciprocate by recognising the validity of the 1920 peace treaties and

thus acknowledging the legal continuity of their statehood. Although this did not happen, agreement was reached in 1999 and the text of a border treaty was initialled by the countries' respective foreign ministers. Further steps awaited Russia's renewed interest after the Balts achieved NATO and EU membership. The Estonian treaty was signed in Moscow in 2005 but Russia subsequently withdrew its signature. Russia objected to the references by the parliaments of Estonia and Latvia to the validity of the 1920 treaty, implicitly reaffirming legal continuity. Latvia eventually demurred and the Latvian–Russian border treaty was finally signed and ratified in 2007.

Despite expectations to the contrary, the relations between Russia and the Baltic states failed to improve after the latter became members of NATO and the EU.²⁹ Russia sought to portray the Baltic states as troublesome newcomers who should not be allowed to influence the policy of the two organisations towards it. This coincided with President Putin moving Russia away from democracy towards an authoritarian mode of government based on a revival of national pride. After the so-called democratic Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004, the Russian government began pursuing its interests in the post-Soviet space more aggressively. The Baltic states angered Russia by assisting the development of democratic reforms and moves toward the integration into the EU and NATO of former Soviet republics. For the Baltic states, this was both a moral and geopolitical imperative. After the Russian invasion of Georgia in August 2008, the Estonian president, Ilves, the Lithuanian president, Adamkus, and the Latvian prime minister, Godmanis, together with their Polish and Ukrainian colleagues, were the first heads of state to go to Tbilisi to demonstrate their solidarity with Georgia and to call for a tough EU response to Russian aggression. A delicate case of balancing between national interest and promoting democratic values has been the difficult relationship of Lithuania and Latvia with their neighbour Belarus, ruled since 1994 by 'Europe's last dictator', Alexander Lukashenko.

The Baltic states have become increasingly alarmed at Russia's use of its vast energy resources as a tool to reassert its status as a great power and to divide the EU, particularly since the Baltic states are completely dependent on Russian gas. The issue rose to the top of the political agenda after Germany and Russia struck a deal in 2005 to construct a natural gas pipeline (Nord Stream) underneath the Baltic Sea, purposely bypassing the new EU member states. The Baltic states responded by vigorously pressing for an EU common energy policy. In the 1990s the Baltic states enjoyed a lucrative oil transit trade with Russia, but this sector has been

subject to political risks. Russia stopped the flow of oil to Ventspils in 2003; in 2006 the pipeline to Lithuania was closed indefinitely when the Mažeikiai oil refinery was sold to a Polish company, not a rival Russian bidder. The oil transit trade through Estonia dried up after the relocation of the Tallinn Red Army monument in 2007. Russia intends to redirect further the export of its strategic resources to its own newly constructed harbours on the Gulf of Finland.

Questions of energy supply loom large on the Baltic horizon.³⁰ The EU's drive to reduce carbon emissions in order to tackle global warming threatens to increase further the Baltic dependence on Russian energy supplies. Estonia's only significant natural energy resource, oil shale, is heavily polluting and will eventually have to be phased out. In accordance with Lithuania's EU Accession Treaty, the Ignalina nuclear power plant was decommissioned at the end of 2009, even though it generated the majority of the country's electricity. The Lithuanian government has been slow to make adequate preparations for the future, and a plan for Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Poland jointly to build a new, safer nuclear power plant near Ignalina – potentially the largest Baltic cooperation project ever – has run into difficulties.

The central battleground between the Baltic states and Russia has become the interpretation of history, particularly the events of World War II. The Balts have sought Russian acknowledgement of the crimes of communism and the fact that Soviet rule amounted to 'illegal occupation', whereas Russia rejects 'the revision of history' and absurdly warns of the 'revival of fascism' in the Baltic states. Several commemorative events which have turned into flashpoints of bilateral relations are illustrative of the emotive power of the symbols of collective memory.³¹

The annual commemorative procession of elderly Latvian veterans who fought in German uniform has been loudly condemned by Russia, which even imposed sanctions against Latvia in 1998. Russia's ire was stirred by the International Public Tribunal on the crimes of communism conducted in Vilnius in 2000. The celebration of the 60th anniversary of Victory Day in Moscow on 9 May 2005 was another occasion where contested pasts clashed. The Estonian and Lithuanian presidents declined to attend the ceremonies since most Balts considered Soviet Victory Day to be the beginning of the long years of foreign occupation, rather than liberation. In 2007, Russia reacted with fury to the Estonian government's relocation of a Red Army memorial: the Estonian embassy in Moscow was blockaded by a Kremlin-sponsored youth group, Estonian websites were hit by massive cyberattacks, and Estonian goods were boycotted.³²

Russia displayed great annoyance at the decision of the Lithuanian parliament in 2008 to ban the public display of both Nazi and Soviet symbols. Neither the Balts nor the Russians are likely be able to convince the other to accept their narrative, but the real objective is to sway international opinion.

Apart from symbols, 'coming to terms with the past' has a legal dimension which has proved no less contentious. Baltic efforts to prosecute Soviet operatives for crimes against humanity have been vociferously opposed by Russia.³³ Claims for compensation occasionally voiced by Baltic politicians have been derided by Russia. Baltic and Eastern European governments and parliamentarians have persistently clamoured for resolutions condemning the crimes of totalitarian communism in international bodies such as the European Parliament, the Council of Europe and the OSCE, while Russia has taken active measures to defend the Soviet version of history and has repeatedly warned against 'rewriting history'. Balts who challenge the Soviet narrative of their 'liberation' in 1944–5 are routinely branded 'fascists'. The battle reached a new level in 2009 when the Russian president, Dmitry Medvedev, established a commission given the explicit task of combating the 'falsification' of history.³⁴

The above illustrates that history is not merely something which is restricted to the past and solely the concern of historians; rather, its legacy is almost omnipresent in the Baltic states today, especially in the relationship with Russia. History is not confined to textbooks: in the form of collective memory, it affirms identities, inflames passions and directly or indirectly influences policy-making. It is thus prone to use and abuse as an instrument of political manipulation, which denies its multilayered nature.

This book, however, has sought to contribute to understanding, in the hope that the Baltic region will never again experience a situation like that in the Soviet-era anecdote about two intellectuals discussing the country's future: one wonders what the future will hold in a decade, and the other resignedly replies that it is useless to speculate about the future when we do not even know what our past will be by then.

Notes

PREFACE

1. Endre Bojtár, *Forward to the Past: A Cultural History of the Baltic People* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1999), p. 7.
2. Bojtár, *Forward to the Past: A Cultural History of the Baltic People*, p. 9.
3. Birutė Masionienė, *Baltijos Tautos* (Vilnius: Aidai, 1996), p. 14.
4. Zigmantas Zinkevičius, Aleksiejus Luchtnas and Gintautas Česnys, *Where We Come From: The Origin of the Lithuanian People*, 2nd rev. edn (Vilnius: Science & Encyclopaedia Publishing Institute, 2006), p. 27.
5. Georg von Rauch, *The Baltic States: The Years of Independence, 1917–1940* (London: C. Hurst, 1974), p. ix.
6. There are more general overviews of Baltic history in German than in any other language. Two of the most recent are Ralph Tuchtenhagen, *Geschichte der baltischen Länder* (München: C. H. Beck, 2005) and Michael Garleff, *Die baltischen Länder: Estland, Lettland und Litauen vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 2001).
7. *The History of the Baltic Countries*, compiled by Zigmantas Kiaupa, Ain Mäesalu, Ago Pajur and Gvido Straube, 3rd edn (Tallinn: BIT, 2002).
8. Kevin O'Connor, *The History of the Baltic States* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2003).
9. Romuald J. Misiunas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence, 1940–1990*, 2nd updated edn (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993).
10. David Kirby, *Northern Europe in the Early Modern Period: The Baltic World, 1492–1772* (London: Longman, 1990) and *The Baltic World 1772–1993: Europe's Northern Periphery in an Age of Change* (London: Longman, 1995).
11. Jörg Hackmann and Robert Schweitzer (eds), *Nordosteuropa als Geschichtsregion* (Helsinki: Aue Stiftung, 2006); Jörg Hackmann and Robert Schweitzer (eds), ‘Mapping Baltic History: The Concept of North Eastern Europe’, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Special Issue, 33(4) (2002).

1 EUROPE'S LAST PAGANS

1. Valter Lang, *Baltimaade pronksi- ja rauaaeg* (Tartu: University of Tartu Press, 2007), p. 13.

2. *Prehistoric Lithuania: Archaeology Exposition Guide* (Vilnius: National Museum of Lithuania, 2000), p. 22.
3. Aivar Kriiska and Andres Tvaari, *Eesti muinasaeg* (Tallinn: Avita, 2002), pp. 25–32.
4. *Prehistoric Lithuania*, p. 26.
5. Aivar Kriiska, *Aegade alguses. 15 kirjutist kaugemast minevikust* (Tallinn: A Kriiska, 2004), pp. 51–2.
6. Lang, *Baltimaade pronksi- ja rauaaeg*, p. 16.
7. Kalevi Viik, *Eurooplaste juured* (Tartu: Ilmamaa, 2005); Enn Haabsaar, *Soome-ugri saamine* (Tallinn: Argo, 2009).
8. Richard Villems, ‘Marginalia on the Topic of Identity’, in Jean-Jacques Subrenat (ed.), *Estonia: Identity and Independence* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004), p. 21.
9. Valter Lang, *The Bronze and Early Iron Ages in Estonia* (Tartu: University of Tartu Press, 2007), p. 146.
10. Lang, *The Bronze and Early Iron Ages in Estonia*, p. 267.
11. The most common periodisation for the Iron Age in the Baltic states is the following: the Early Iron Age = 500 BC–AD 450, the Middle Iron Age = AD 450–800 and the Late Iron Age = AD 800–1200.
12. Lang, *The Bronze and Early Iron Ages in Estonia*, p. 265.
13. A rectangular stone cell, filled with smaller stones.
14. Lang, *Baltimaade pronksi- ja rauaaeg*, pp. 127, 209.
15. *Prehistoric Lithuania*, p. 90; Lang, *Baltimaade pronksi- ja rauaaeg*, pp. 251, 256.
16. Bojtár, *Forward to the Past*, p. 104.
17. *Prehistoric Lithuania*, p. 79; Lang, *The Bronze and Early Iron Ages in Estonia*, p. 268.
18. Andris Šnē, ‘Stammesfürstentum und Egalität: Die sozialen Beziehungen auf dem Territorium Lettlands am Ende der prähistorischen Zeit (10.–12. Jh.)’, *Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte*, Bd. 3 (2008): 33–56. See also Heiki Valk, ‘Estland im 11.–13. Jahrhundert. Neuere Aspekte aus Sicht der Archäologie’, *Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte*, Bd. 3 (2008): 57–86.
19. Lang, *Baltimaade pronksi- ja rauaaeg*, pp. 179, 233.
20. Lang, *Baltimaade pronksi- ja rauaaeg*, pp. 234, 281.
21. Andris Šnē, ‘The Emergence of Livonia: The Transformations of Social and Political Structures in the Territory of Latvia during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries’, in Alan V. Murray (ed.), *The Clash of Cultures on the Medieval Baltic Frontier* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), p. 64.
22. Lang, *Baltimaade pronksi- ja rauaaeg*, p. 284.
23. Lang, *Baltimaade pronksi- ja rauaaeg*, p. 265.
24. Marija Gimbutas, *The Balts* (New York: Praeger, 1963), pp. 153–4.
25. Lang, *Baltimaade pronksi- ja rauaaeg*, p. 205.
26. According to the Norse *Heimskringla* saga, six years later on a journey to Estonia his uncle recognised Olaf and bought his freedom. After many adventures, Olaf ruled as King of Norway from 995 until his death in 1000.

27. Zigmantas Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania* (Vilnius: baltos lankos, 2002), p. 24.
28. Anti Selart, *Livland und die Rus' im 13. Jahrhundert*, Quellen und Studien zur baltischen Geschichte, Bd. 21 (Köln: Böhlau, 2007), pp. 58–67.
29. Tomas Baranauskas, 'Saxo Grammaticus on the Balts', in Tore Nyberg (ed.), *Saxo and the Baltic Region: A Symposium* (Odense: University of Southern Denmark, 2004), p. 79.
30. Gimbutas, *The Balts*, p. 155.
31. Enn Tarvel, 'Sigtuna hävitamine 1187. aastal', in *Tuna. Ajalookultuuri ajakiri* 2(35), 2007, pp. 24–7.
32. Peep Peter Rebane, 'From Fulco to Theoderic: The Changing Face of the Livonian Mission', in Andres Andresen (ed.), *Muinasaja loojangust omariikluse läveni* (Tartu: Kleio, 2001), pp. 37–67.
33. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* translated by James A. Brundage (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).
34. The land of the Mother of God as opposed to the land of the Son in Palestine: Anu Mänd, 'Saints' Cults in Medieval Livonia', in Murray (ed.), *The Clash of Cultures*, pp. 194–5.
35. Iben Fonneberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades 1147–1254* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 139–42.
36. Although associated with the conquest of Tallinn, the legend apparently has its origins in an earlier Danish expedition against Viljandi (Fellin) in southern Estonia in 1208: John H. Lind, Carsten Selch Jensen, Kurt Villads Jensen and Ane L. Bysted, *Taani Ristisõjad – sõda ja misjon Läänemere ääres* (Tallinn: Argo, 2007), pp. 218–22.
37. The name Tallinn is commonly thought to have been derived from the Estonian words for 'Danish castle' (*Taani linna*). However, a linguistically more plausible explanation of the origin of the name is 'winter fort' (*tali linna*).
38. Selart, *Livland und die Rus' im 13. Jahrhundert*, pp. 86–121.
39. Andres Kasekamp, 'Characteristics of Warfare in the Times of Henry of Livonia and Balthasar Russow', *Lituuanus* 36(1) (1990): 27–38.
40. William Urban, *The Teutonic Knights: A Military History* (London: Greenhill, 2003), p. 29.
41. William Urban, *The Baltic Crusade*, 2nd edn (Chicago: Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, 1994), pp. 190, 196.
42. Evgeniya Nazarova, 'The Crusades against Votians and Izhorians in the Thirteenth Century', in Alan V. Murray (ed.), *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), p. 183. Anti Selart, *Livland und die Rus' in 13. Jahrhundert*, pp. 165–6, notes that the battle was not viewed as particularly significant by contemporaries.
43. Urban, *Baltic Crusade*, p. 198. The battle was immortalised in the 1938 film *Alexander Nevsky* by Sergei Eisenstein.
44. Zinkevičius, Luchtnas and Česnys, *Where We Come From*, pp. 114, 120, 126, 129–30.

45. Zigmantas Kiaupa, Jūratė Kiaupienė and Albinas Kuncevičius, *The History of Lithuania before 1795* (Vilnius: Lithuanian Institute of History, 2000), pp. 56–8.
46. Urban, *Baltic Crusade*, p. 301.

2 LITHUANIA'S EXPANSION AND MEDIEVAL LIVONIA (1290–1560)

1. Kiaupa, Kiaupienė and Kuncevičius, *The History of Lithuania before 1795*, p. 78.
2. Kiaupa, Kiaupienė and Kuncevičius, *The History of Lithuania before 1795*, p. 82.
3. Stephen C. Rowell, *Lithuania Ascending: A Pagan Empire within East-Central Europe, 1295–1345* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 132.
4. Rowell, *Lithuania Ascending*, pp. 57–8.
5. Rowell, *Lithuania Ascending*, pp. 239, 254.
6. Kiaupa, Kiaupienė and Kuncevičius, *The History of Lithuania before 1795*, p. 124.
7. Kiaupa, Kiaupienė and Kuncevičius, *The History of Lithuania before 1795*, p. 128.
8. Dov Levin, *Litvaks: A Short History of the Jews of Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2000), p. 44.
9. William Urban, *Tannenberg and After: Poland, Lithuania and the Teutonic Order in Search of Immortality* (Chicago: Lithuanian Research and Studies Center 2002) examines how the battle has later been used by nationalist historians.
10. Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania*, p. 76; Stasys Samalavičius, *An Outline of Lithuanian History* (Vilnius: Diemedis, 1995), pp. 40–2.
11. Samalavičius, *An Outline of Lithuanian History*, p. 47.
12. Kiaupa, Kiaupienė and Kuncevičius, *The History of Lithuania before 1795*, pp. 165–6.
13. Kiaupa, Kiaupienė and Kuncevičius, *The History of Lithuania before 1795*, pp. 219–20.
14. Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania*, p. 86.
15. The Uniate Church would become an important vehicle for this in the seventeenth century.
16. Daniel Stone, *A History of East Central Europe*, vol. 4: *The Polish-Lithuanian State, 1386–1795* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), p. 34.
17. Juhan Kahk and Enn Tarvel, *An Economic History of the Baltic Countries*, *Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia*, 20 (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 1997), p. 55.
18. Kiaupa, Kiaupienė and Kuncevičius, *The History of Lithuania before 1795*, p. 175.

19. From 1493, Ivan III began to style himself ‘the ruler of all Rus’.
20. Lithuania was at war with Muscovy in 1492–4 and 1500–3.
21. Garleff, *Die baltischen Länder*, p. 62.
22. Garleff, *Die baltischen Länder*, p. 64. Although only 60 of these castles belonged to the Teutonic Order.
23. Kakh and Tarvel, *An Economic History of the Baltic Countries*, p. 32.
24. Tiina Kala, ‘Põhja-Eesti kirikuelu 13.–14. sajandil: millisesse vaimulikku keskkonda tekkis Pirita klooster?’, *Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi = Studies on Art and Architecture = Studien für Kunsthissenschaft*, 4 (2007): 57.
25. The interdict was the strongest weapon that the papal curia could use against the Teutonic Order, i.e. forbidding church services and administration of the sacraments on the order’s territory: Kala, ‘Põhja-Eesti kirikuelu 13.–14. sajandil’: p. 58.
26. Priit Raudkivi, *Vana-Liivimaa maapäev. Ühe keskaegse struktuuri kujune-mislugu* (Tallinn: Argo, 2007), pp. 117–18. Pärnel Piirimäe, ‘Liivimaa maapäev Wolter von Plettenbergi ajal (1494–1535)’, *Ajalooline Ajakiri 1/2(123/124)* (2008): 85–8.
27. Andris Šnē, ‘The Emergence of Livonia’, p. 68.
28. Garleff, *Die baltischen Länder*, p. 36; Kakh and Tarvel, *An Economic History of the Baltic Countries*, p. 66.
29. Kirby, *Northern Europe in the Early Modern Period*, p. 29.
30. Aivar Kriiska, Andres Tvaari, Anti Selart, Birgit Kibal, Andres Andresen and Ago Pajur, *Eesti Ajaloo Atlas* (Tallinn: Avita, 2006), p. 41; Ilmar Talve, *Eesti kultuurilugu. Keskaja algusest Eesti iseseisvuseeni* (Tartu: Ilmamaa, 2004), p. 57.
31. Kirby, *Northern Europe in the Early Modern Period*, p. 23.
32. Talve, *Eesti kultuurilugu*, p. 56.
33. Urban, *Teutonic Knights*, p. 260.
34. Kaspars Klavīš, ‘The Significance of the Local Baltic Peoples in the Defence of Livonia (Late Thirteenth–Sixteenth Centuries)’, in Murray (ed.), *The Clash of Cultures*, pp. 337–8.
35. Among the Lithuanian graduates of the University of Königsberg was Martinus Mosvidius (Martynas Mažvydas), who produced the first Lithuanian book *Catechismus* (1547).
36. Talve, *Eesti kultuurilugu*, p. 104.
37. An Estonian-, Latvian- and Liv-language Lutheran Catechism is known to have been published in Lübeck in 1525: Pēteris Vanags, ‘Die Literatur der Letten im Zeichen von Reformation und Konfessionalisierung’, in Matthias Asche, Werner Buchholz and Anton Schindling (eds), *Die baltischen Lande im Zeitalter der Reformation und Konfessionalisierung: Estland, Livland, Ösel, Ingermanland, Kurland und Lettgallen. Stadt, Land und Konfession 1500–1721*, Part 1 (Münster: Aschendorff, 2009), p. 264.
38. Rimvydas Šilbajoris, ‘Notes on Mažvydas’ Little Book of Good News’, *Lituanus*, 44(1) (Spring 1998): 57–8.
39. Kirby, *Northern Europe in the Early Modern Period*, p. 68.
40. Selart, *Livland and die Rus’ im 13. Jahrhundert*.

3 THE POLISH–LITHUANIAN COMMONWEALTH AND THE RISE OF SWEDEN AND RUSSIA (1561–1795)

1. Robert Frost, *The Northern Wars: War, State, and Society in Northeastern Europe, 1558–1721* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), p. 26.
2. Stone, *The Polish–Lithuanian State*, p. 62.
3. Artūras Tereškinas, *Imperfect Communities: Identity, Discourse and Nation in the Seventeenth-Century Grand Duchy of Lithuania* (Vilnius: Lietuvos literatūros ir tautosakos institutas, 2005), pp. 17–19.
4. Tereškinas, *Imperfect Communities*, p. 257.
5. Stone, *The Polish–Lithuanian State*, pp. 119–20.
6. Frost, *The Northern Wars*, pp. 64–5.
7. Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania*, p. 136.
8. Andrejs Plakans, *The Latvians: A Short History* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, 1995), p. 49.
9. Plakans, *The Latvians: A Short History*, pp. 51, 54.
10. Courland was only able to hold on to these two colonies for a few years before they were taken over by the British and Dutch respectively.
11. Boguslaw Dybaś, ‘Polen-Litauen und Livland im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert – drei Formen ihrer Verbindung’, in Jörg Hackmann and Robert Schweitzer (eds), *Nordosteuropa als Geschichtsregion* (Helsinki: Aue Stiftung, 2006), pp. 348–51.
12. Stone, *The Polish–Lithuanian State*, p. 167.
13. Andrej Kotljarchuk, *In the Shadows of Poland and Russia: The Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Sweden in the European Crisis of the Mid-Seventeenth Century*. Södertörn Doctoral Dissertations, 4 (Huddinge: Södertörns högskola, 2006), p. 67.
14. Kiaupa, Kiaupienė and Kuncevičius, *The History of Lithuania before 1795*, p. 286.
15. Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania*, pp. 124–5.
16. Enn Küng, *Rootsi majanduspoliitika Narva kaubanduse küsimuses 17. sajandi teisel poolel* (Tartu: Eesti Ajalooorhiv, 2001).
17. Witch trials began before the Reformation and continued until the 1730s. Unlike elsewhere in Europe, the majority of those accused of casting magic spells were men: Aleksander Loit, ‘Reformation und Konfessionalisierung in den ländlichen Gebieten der baltischen Lande von ca. 1500 bis zum Ende der schwedischen Herrschaft’, in Matthias Asche, Werner Buchholz and Anton Schindling (eds), *Die baltischen Lande im Zeitalter der Reformation und Konfessionalisierung: Estland, Livland, Ösel, Ingermanland, Kurland und Lettgallen. Stadt, Land und Konfession 1500–1721* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2009), pp. 189–90.
18. Mati Laur (ed.), *Eesti ajalugu IV. Põhjasõjast pärisorjuse kaotamiseni* (Tartu: Ilmamaa, 2003), p. 15.
19. Kakh and Tarvel, *An Economic History of the Baltic Countries*, pp. 60–3.
20. Laur (ed.), *Eesti ajalugu IV*, p. 190.
21. Frost, *The Northern Wars*, pp. 265–7.

22. Laur (ed.), *Eesti ajalugu IV*, p. 35.
23. Margus Laidre, *Dorpat 1558–1708. Linn väe ja vaevu vahel* (Tallinn: Argo, 2008), pp. 655–7.
24. Frost, *The Northern Wars*, p. 13.
25. Kahk and Tarvel, *An Economic History of the Baltic Countries*, p. 73.
26. Laur (ed.), *Eesti ajalugu IV*, p. 161; Plakans, *The Latvians: A Short History*, p. 63; Kiaupa, Kiaupienė and Kuncevičius, *The History of Lithuania before 1795*, pp. 254–5.
27. Arvo Tering, 'Baltische Studenten an europäischen Universitäten im 18. Jahrhundert', in Otto-Heinrich von Elias (ed.), *Aufklärung in den baltischen Provinzen Russlands: Ideologie und soziale Wirklichkeit* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1996), p. 126.
28. Michael H. Hatzel, 'The Baltic Germans', in Edward C. Thaden, Michael H. Hatzel, C. Leonard Lundin, Andrejs Plakans and Toivo U. Raun, *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855–1914* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 151.
29. Heide W. Whelan, *Adapting to Modernity: Family, Caste, and Capitalism among the Baltic German Nobility* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1999), p. 9.
30. Whelan, *Adapting to Modernity*, p. 19.
31. Laur (ed.), *Eesti ajalugu IV*, p. 74.
32. Whelan, *Adapting to Modernity*, p. 26.
33. Or in the case of Courland's *Landesbevollmächtiger* until 1795 at the Polish court in Warsaw.
34. Reinhard Wittram, *Liberalismus baltischer Literaten. Zur Entstehung der baltischen politischen Presse* (Riga: Löffler, 1931), p. 85, cited in Ea Jansen, *Eestlane muutuvas ajas. Seisusühiskonnast kodanikuühiskonda* (Tartu: Eesti Ajalooarhiiv, 2007), p. 42.
35. Christian Kelch (1657–1710), cited in Hatzel, 'The Baltic Germans', p. 114.
36. Kahk and Tarvel, *An Economic History of the Baltic Countries*, pp. 84–5.
37. August Wilhelm Hupel (1737–1819), cited in Arnolds Spekke, *History of Latvia: An Outline* (Riga: Jumava, 2006), p. 255.
38. Laur (ed.), *Eesti ajalugu IV*, p. 193.
39. Kahk and Tarvel, *An Economic History of the Baltic Countries*, p. 83.
40. Many of the national activists of the mid-nineteenth century came from peasant households with a Herrnhuter background: Andrejs Plakans, 'The Latvians', in Thaden, *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855–1914*, p. 220.
41. Ralph Tuchtenhagen, *Zentralstaat und Provinz im frühneuzeitlichen Nordosteuropa*, Veröffentlichungen des Nordost-Instituts, Bd. 5 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2008), pp. 80–5, 176.
42. Grigorijus Potašenko, 'The Old Believers and Society in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century: Religious Tolerance and its Causes', *Lithuanian Historical Studies*, 6 (2001): 64.

43. Including Kant's most famous book, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, published in 1781.
44. Indrek Jürjo, *Aufklärung im Baltikum. Leben und Werk des livländischen Gelehrten August Wilhelm Hupel (1737–1819)* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2006).
45. Roger Bartlett, 'Nation, Revolution und Religion in der Gesellschaftskonzeption von Garlieb Merkel', in Norbert Angermann, Michael Garleff and Wilhelm Lenz (eds), *Ostseeprovinzen. Baltische Staaten und das Nationale*, Schriften der Baltischen Historischen Kommission, vol. 14 (Münster: LIT, 2005), pp. 147–9.
46. Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania*, p. 125.
47. After 1673 every third session met in Grodno, Lithuania: Stone, *The Polish–Lithuanian State*, p. 179.
48. Stone, *The Polish–Lithuanian State*, p. 183.
49. Anita J. Prażmowska, *A History of Poland* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 122.
50. Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania*, p. 351; Stone, *The Polish–Lithuanian State*, p. 283.
51. Memel (Klaipėda) remained outside the Empire as part of Prussia.
52. Levin, *Litvaks*, p. 62; Kiaupa, Kiaupienė and Kuncevičius, *The History of Lithuania before 1795*, p. 256.
53. Levin, *Litvaks*, p. 54.
54. See Immanuel Etkes, *The Gaon of Vilna: The Man and His Image* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002).

4 THE LONG NINETEENTH CENTURY UNDER TSARIST RULE (1795–1917)

1. Laur (ed.), *Eesti ajalugu IV*, pp. 206–7.
2. Of the 400,000 Napoleonic troops who passed through Vilnius on the way to Moscow in June 1812, only 8000 survived after retreating through the city in December: Laimonas Briedis, *Vilnius: City of Strangers* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2009), p. 105.
3. Burghers were excluded for owning landed estates, although this had been allowed earlier under Peter the Great: Whelan, *Adapting to Modernity*, p. 77.
4. Garleff, *Die baltischen Länder*, p. 74.
5. Plakans, *The Latvians: A Short History*, p. 86.
6. Kahk and Tarvel, *An Economic History of the Baltic Countries*, pp. 91–2.
7. It had initially been merged with Pskov guberniya (province or governorate) in 1772 and was transferred to Vitebsk guberniya in 1802.
8. Initially in 1795 there were two Lithuanian provinces, Vilnius and Slonim, which were merged into one Lithuanian province in 1796. In 1801 it was split again into two provinces: Vilnius and Grodno.
9. Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), pp. 27–9. Tomas Venclova, 'Native Realm Revisited: Mickiewicz's Lithuania and Mickiewicz in Lithuania', *Lituania*, 53(3) (Fall 2007).

10. Darius Staliūnas, *Making Russians: Meaning and Practice of Russification in Lithuania and Belarus after 1863* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), p. 30.
11. Levin, *Litvaks*, pp. 64–7.
12. However, the atmosphere became more restrictive again under Alexander III (ruled 1881–94): Levin, *Litvaks*, pp. 72–4.
13. Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
14. Men such as Herder, Hupel, Brotze, Merkel. See Chapter 3.
15. Svennik Hoyer, Epp Lauk, and Peeter Vihalemm (eds), *Towards a Civic Society: The Baltic Media's Long Road to Freedom. Perspectives on History, Ethnicity and Journalism* (Tartu: Nota Baltika, 1993), p. 53.
16. Ulrike von Hirschhausen, *Die Grenzen der Gemeinsamkeit: Deutsche, Letten, Russen und Juden in Riga 1860–1914*, Kritische Studien zur Geschichtswissenschaft 172 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), p. 352.
17. Vaira Viķe-Freiberga, ‘Andrejs Pumpurs’s Lāčplēsis (“Bearslayer”): Latvian National Epic or Romantic Literary Creation?’, in Aleksander Loit (ed.), *National Movements in the Baltic Countries during the Nineteenth Century*, Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia 2 (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 1985), p. 526.
18. Mart Laar, *Äratajad. Rahvuslik liikumine Eestis 19. sajandil ja selle kandjad* (Tartu: Eesti Ajalooarhiiv, 2005), pp. 366–7.
19. Uldis Ģermanis, *Läti rahva elurada* (Tartu: Ilmamaa, 1995), p. 145.
20. See Kristine Wohlfart, *Der Rigaer Letten Verein und die lettische Nationalbewegung von 1868 bis 1905*, Materialien und Studien zur Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung, vol. 14 (Marburg: Herder Institut, 2006).
21. Hans Kruus, *Eesti Aleksandrikool* (Tartu: Noor-Eesti, 1939).
22. Toivo U. Raun, ‘Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Estonian Nationalism Revisited’, *Nations and Nationalism*, 9(1) (2003): 141.
23. Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania*, p. 199.
24. Theodore R. Weeks, ‘Russification and the Lithuanians, 1863–1905’, *Slavic Review*, 60(1) (Spring 2001): 96–114.
25. Staliūnas argues that the print ban aimed to acculturate Lithuanians to the Russian language, a precondition for the more difficult step of conversion to Orthodoxy and the long-term goal of assimilation: Staliūnas, *Making Russians*, p. 303.
26. A. S. Stražas, ‘From Auszra to the Great War: The Emergence of the Lithuanian Nation’, in *Lituania*, 42(4) (Winter 1996), pp. 69–70.
27. A. S. Stražas, ‘Lithuania 1863–1893: Tsarist Russification and the Beginnings of the Modern Lithuanian National Movement’, in *Lituania*, 42(3) (Fall 1996), pp. 46–8.
28. Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania*, p. 196.
29. A. S. Stražas, ‘From Auszra to the Great War’, pp. 39–41.
30. Hatzel, ‘The Baltic Germans’, pp. 127–32.
31. Toivo U. Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians*, updated 2nd edn (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, 2002), p. 65.

32. Edward C. Thaden, ‘The Russian Government’, in Thaden, *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855–1914*, pp. 33–75.
33. Toomas Karjahärm, *Ida ja lääne vahel. Eesti-Vene suhted 1850–1917* (Tallinn: Eesti Entsüklopeediakirjastus, 1998), p. 303.
34. Ea Jansen, *Eestlane muutuvas ajas. Seisisühhiskonnast kodanikuühiskonda* (Tartu: Eesti Ajalooarhiiv, 2007), pp. 453–5.
35. Plakans, ‘The Latvians’, p. 252; Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians*, p. 78.
36. Andreas Kappeler, *The Russian Empire: A Multiethnic History* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2001), pp. 310–11, 407.
37. Percentages for Jews in the Empire as a whole.
38. Thaden, ‘The Russian Government’, p. 61; Toivo U. Raun, ‘The Estonians’, in Thaden, *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855–1914*, p. 308.
39. Hatzel, ‘The Baltic Germans’, p. 158.
40. Does not include the city of Narva, which was detached from Estland in 1722 and was administratively under the province of St Petersburg until 1917. Narva, nevertheless, enjoyed the same autonomous rights as the Baltic provinces.
41. Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians*, p. 72; *Latvijas vēstures atlants* (Riga: Jāņa Sēta, 1998), p. 28; Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania*, p. 196.
42. Plakans, ‘The Latvians’, p. 242; Raun ‘The Estonians’, p. 290.
43. Of these, 81 per cent were ethnic Lithuanians and 13 per cent were Jewish: Alfonsas Eidintas, *Lithuanian Emigration to the United States: 1868–1950* (Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas, 2003), p. 56.
44. From Dvinsk (Daugavpils).
45. Hirschhausen, *Die Grenzen der Gemeinsamkeit*, p. 58.
46. Daina Bleiere, Ilgvars Butulis, Inesis Felmanis, Aivars Stranga and Antonijs Zunda, *History of Latvia: The Twentieth Century* (Riga: Jumava, 2006), pp. 41–5.
47. Maie Pihamägi, *Eesti industrialiseerimine 1870–1940* (Tallinn: Ajaloo Instituut, 1999), pp. 23–73.
48. It joined the Russian Social Democratic Workers’ Party in 1906.
49. For a recent discussion of the 1905 Revolution, see Toivo U. Raun, ‘The All-Estonian Congress in Tartu, November 1905: A Reassessment’; Andrejs Plakans, ‘Two 1905 Congresses in Latvia: A Reconsideration’; Saulius Sužiedėlis, ‘A Century After: The “Great Diet of Vilnius” Revisited’, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 38(4) (December 2007): 383–432.
50. The figures for the victims of repression in the Baltic provinces during 1905–8 differ considerably. Karjahärm, *Ida ja lääne vahel*, p. 117, reports that 625 were killed by the punitive expeditions and 690 executed by military tribunals, while Jānis Bērziņš, ‘Piektajam gadam – 100’, *1905. gads Latvijā: 100* (Riga: Latvijas vēstures institūts, 2006), p. 39, claims that the total number of deaths was 2496. The same applies to the number expelled from the Baltic provinces: Karjahärm offers a figure of 2652; the figure provided by Bērziņš is double that.
51. Toivo U. Raun, ‘The Nationalities Question in the Baltic Provinces, 1905–17’, in John Morrison (ed.), *Ethnic and National Issues in Russian and East European History* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), pp. 121–30.

52. Karjahärm, *Ida ja lääne vahel*, p. 156; Stražas, 'From Auszra to the Great War', pp. 54–60.
53. Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania*, p. 220.
54. Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia: The Twentieth Century*, p. 53.
55. M. Bobe, S. Levenberg, I. Maor and Z. Michaeli (eds), *The Jews in Latvia* (Tel Aviv: Association of Latvian and Estonian Jews in Israel, 1971), p. 280.

5 THE SHORT ERA OF INDEPENDENCE (1917–1939)

1. Dates prior to February 1918 – when the Gregorian (Western) calendar was introduced in the Russian Empire – are given according to the Julian calendar. The Gregorian calendar was introduced earlier in those territories which fell under German occupation.
2. See Andrew Ezergailis, *The Latvian Impact on the Bolshevik Revolution: The First Phase: September 1917 to April 1918* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1983).
3. Georg von Rauch, *The Baltic States: The Years of Independence, 1917–1940* (London: C. Hurst, 1974), p. 43.
4. The Courland *Landesrat* had done so already in March. On 8 November, Courland joined Estland, Livland and Ösel in forming a regency council for a *Landesstaat*.
5. Eduard Laaman, *Eesti iseseisvuse sünd* (Stockholm: Vaba Eesti, 1964), pp. 403, 630; Karl Siilivask (ed.), *Revolutsioon, kodusõda ja välisriikide interventsioon Eestis, 1917–1920*, vol. 2 (Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1982), p. 204.
6. Reigo Rosenthal, *Laidoner – väejuht. Johan Laidoner kõrgema operatiivjuhi ja strateegia kujundajana Eesti Vabadussõjas* (Tallinn: Argo, 2008), p. 522.
7. Vejas Gabriel Liulevičius, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity and German Occupation in World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 243.
8. Karsten Brüggemann, 'Defending National Sovereignty Against Two Russias: Estonia in the Russian Civil War, 1918–1920', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 34(1) (2003): 22–51; For a comprehensive recent study of the North-western Army, see Reigo Rosenthal, *Loodearmee* (Tallinn: Argo, 2006).
9. In 1935 Piłsudski was buried in Cracow alongside Polish kings, but he had his heart buried in Vilnius: Snyder, *Reconstruction of Nations*, p. 70.
10. Snyder, *Reconstruction of Nations*, pp. 58–9.
11. France, Britain, Japan, Belgium and Italy, but not the US, which delayed recognition until 1922.
12. For the political party systems, see Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The Baltic States: A Survey of the Political and Economic Structure and the Foreign Relations of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938; repub. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1970), pp. 41–58; V. Stanley Vardys, 'Democracy in the Baltic States, 1918–1934: The Stage and the Actors', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 10(4) (Winter 1979): 321–35; von Rauch, *The Baltic States*, pp. 91–8.

13. Alfonsas Eidintas and Vytautas Žalys, *Lithuania in European Politics: The Years of the First Republic, 1918–1940* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1997), p. 113.
14. See Andres Kasekamp, *The Radical Right in Interwar Estonia* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000).
15. The one group specifically cited by Ulmanis – the Legionnaires, a small association of decorated veterans of the war of independence – were a marginal force and did not present a genuine danger.
16. Eidintas and Žalys, *Lithuania in European Politics*, p. 115.
17. Kasekamp, *The Radical Right in Interwar Estonia*, pp. 120–31, 151–2; Eidintas and Žalys, *Lithuania in European Politics*, pp. 116–16, 121–5; Leonas Sabaliūnas, *Lithuania in Crisis: Nationalism to Communism, 1939–40* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), pp. 25–40; Inesis Feldmanis, 'Umgestaltungsprozesse im Rahmen des Ulmanis-Regimes in Lettland 1934–1940' and Ilgvars Butulis, 'Autoritäre Ideologie und Praxis des Ulmanis-Regimes in Lettland 1934–1940', in Erwin Oberländer (ed.), *Autoritäre Regime in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa 1919–1944* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöning, 2001), pp. 215–98.
18. Eidintas and Žalys, *Lithuania in European Politics*, p. 122; Sabaliūnas, *Lithuania in Crisis*, pp. 41–2.
19. The German ultimatum over Memel in 1939 and the Soviet ultimatum to Estonia in September 1939.
20. Gediminas Vaskela, 'The Land Reform of 1919–1940: Lithuania and the Countries of Eastern and Central Europe', *Lithuanian Historical Studies*, 1 (1996): 116–32.
21. Vaskela, 'The Land Reform of 1919–1940', pp. 128–9.
22. Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia: The Twentieth Century*, p. 198.
23. Kahk and Tarvel, *An Economic History of the Baltic Countries*, p. 109.
24. Baltic Germans land-owners petitioned the League of Nations, claiming that the land reform acts constituted discrimination against an ethnic minority, but the League held that the issue was instead one of social justice: Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The Baltic States*, p. 30.
25. Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia: The Twentieth Century*, p. 55. See also Artis Pabriks and Aldis Purs, *Latvia: The Challenges of Change* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 16–17.
26. Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The Baltic States*, p. 103.
27. Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia: The Twentieth Century*, p. 194.
28. Toomas Karjahärm and Väino Sirk, *Vaim ja võim. Eesti haritlaskond 1917–1940* (Tallinn: Argo, 2001), pp. 21, 48, 50; Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia: The Twentieth Century*, p. 223.
29. Without Memel/Klaipėda region.
30. von Rauch, *The Baltic States*, pp. 81–5.
31. Table compiled from data in Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The Baltic States*, pp. 30, 33, 36; *Latvijas vēstures atlants*, p. 43; Jüri Viikberg (ed.), *Eesti rahvaste raamat. Rahvusvähemused, -rühmad ja -killud* (Tallinn: Eesti Entsüklopeediakirjastus, 1999), p. 373; von Rauch, *The Baltic States*, pp. 81–5.

32. John Hiden, *Defender of Minorities: Paul Schiemann, 1876–1944* (London: C. Hurst, 2004), pp. 116–17.
33. Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia: The Twentieth Century*, p. 237.
34. See Šarūnas Liekis, *A State within a State?: Jewish Autonomy in Lithuania 1918–1925* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003).
35. This idea was first proposed by Austrian socialists Karl Renner and Otto Bauer for the Habsburg Empire: John Hiden and David J. Smith, ‘Looking beyond the Nation State: A Baltic Vision for National Minorities between the Wars’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 41(3) (2006): 387.
36. Kari Alenius, ‘The Birth of Cultural Autonomy in Estonia: How, Why, and for Whom?’, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 38(4) (December 2007): 445–62.
37. At least 17,000 Latvians and 15,000 Estonians are known to have been executed, but the actual number of victims is undoubtedly larger: Professor Aadu Must (personal communication) and Björn Michael Felder, *Lettland im Zweiten Weltkrieg: Zwischen sowjetischen und deutschen Besatzern 1940–1946* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2009), p. 72. See also Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), pp. 335–9.
38. Nevertheless, secret military cooperation existed between Estonia and Finland whose coastal batteries could seal off the Gulf of Finland to hostile warships: Jari Leskinen, *Vendade riigisaladus: Soome ja Eesti salajane sõjaline koostöö Nõukogude Liidu võimaliku rünnaku vastu aastatel 1918–1940* (Tallinn: Sinisukk, 2000).
39. Eidintas and Žalys, *Lithuania in European Politics*, p. 143.
40. A few rare individuals living in Vilnius at the time, such as Czesław Miłosz, the Polish-American poet who won the Nobel Prize in 1980, could appreciate both sides of the story.
41. Magnus Ilmjärv, *Hääletu alistumine. Eesti, Läti, Leedu välispoliitilise orientatsiooni kujunemine ja iseseisvuse kaotus 1920. aastate keskpaigast anneksoonini* (Tallinn: Argo, 2004), p. 245.
42. Zenonas Butkus, ‘The Impact of the USSR on Lithuania’s Domestic Policy and its International Orientation in the Third Decade of the Twentieth Century’, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 38(2) (June 2007): 195–214.
43. Eidintas and Žalys, *Lithuania in European Politics*, p. 164.

6 BETWEEN ANVIL AND HAMMER (1939–1953)

1. Bogdan Musial, *Sihikul oli Saksamaa. Stalini sõjaplaanid lääne vastu* (Tallinn: Tänapäeva, 2009), p. 267. Original: *Kampfplatz Deutschland. Stalins Kriegspläne gegen den Westen* (Berlin: Propyläen, 2008).
2. Although a portion of Lithuania adjacent to East Prussia was still allocated to Germany under this agreement, the USSR occupied the entire country in June 1940. Nevertheless, the USSR paid 7,500,000 gold dollars in compensation to the Reich in January 1941 for this slice of Lithuanian territory: Alfred Erich Senn, *Lithuania 1940: Revolution from Above* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008), p. 146.

3. Albert N. Tarulis, *Soviet Policy toward the Baltic States 1918–1940* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1959), p. 155.
4. Although the USSR kept most of the territory south and east of Vilnius that it had recognised as belonging to Lithuania in the 1920 peace treaty.
5. August Rei, *The Drama of the Baltic Peoples* (Stockholm: Vaba Eesti, 1970), p. 263.
6. Gert von Pistohlkors (ed.), *Baltische Länder*, Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas (Berlin: Siedler, 1994), p. 540.
7. In this second wave of resettlement, *Nachumsiedlung*, during the Soviet occupation 17,000 left, but many of these were Estonians and Latvians who had German spouses or could claim German descent: von Pistohlkors, *Baltische Länder*, p. 541.
8. Ago Pajur and Tõnu Tannberg (eds), *Eesti Ajalugu VI. Vabadussõjast taasiseseisvumiseni* (Tartu: Ilmamaa, 2005), p. 155.
9. Molotov’s prime evidence for this absurd claim was the publication of the first issue of *Revue baltique*.
10. Magnus Ilmjärv, *Silent Submission: Formation of Foreign Policy of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania: Period from Mid-1920s to Annexation in 1940*, Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia 24 (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmien-sis, 2004).
11. Rei, *The Drama of the Baltic Peoples*, p. 263.
12. Liudas Truska and Vygaantas Vareikis, *The Preconditions for the Holocaust: Anti-Semitism in Lithuania. The Crimes of the Totalitarian Regimes in Lithuania*, vol. 1 (Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2004), p. 330.
13. Felder, *Lettland im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, pp. 90–3.
14. Toomas Hiio, Meelis Maripuu and Indrek Paavle (eds), *Estonia 1940–1945: Reports of the Estonian International Commission for the Investigation of Crimes Against Humanity* (Tallinn: Estonian International Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against Humanity, 2006), p. 217.
15. Hiio et al. (eds), *Estonia 1940–1945*, p. 377; Irēne Šneidere, ‘The First Soviet Occupation Period in Latvia 1940–1941’, in *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations, 1940–1991*, Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, vol. 14 (Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005), p. 41; Arvydas Anusauskas (ed.), *The First Soviet Occupation. Terror and Crimes against Humanity. The Crimes of the Totalitarian Regimes in Lithuania. The Soviet Occupation*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Margi Raštai, 2006).
16. Ruth Bettina Birn, *Die Sicherheitspolizei in Estland 1941–1944: Eine Studie zur Kollaboration im Osten* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), p. 258.
17. Andrew Ezergailis (ed.), *Stockholm Documents: The German Occupation of Latvia, 1941–1945. What Did America Know?*, Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, vol. 5 (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia, 2002), pp. 423–4.
18. Arūnas Bubnys, *The Holocaust in Lithuania between 1941 and 1944* (Vilnius: Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania, 2005), p. 3; Yitzhak Arad, ‘The Murder of the Jews in German-Occupied

- Lithuania (1941–1944)', in Alvydas Nikžentaitis, Stefan Schreiner and Darius Staliūnas (eds), *The Vanished World of Lithuanian Jews* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004), p. 177.
19. The most detailed analysis of the pogroms is to be found in Christoph Dieckmann and Saulius Sužiedėlis (eds), *The Persecution and Mass Murder of Lithuanian Jews during Summer and Fall of 1941*, Crimes of the Totalitarian Regimes in Lithuania, The Nazi Occupation, vol. 3 (Vilnius: Margi Raštai, 2006).
 20. Andrew Ezerailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944: The Missing Center* (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia, 1996), pp. 239–70.
 21. Arūnas Bubnys, 'The Holocaust in Lithuania: An Outline of the Major Stages and their Results', in Nikžentaitis, Schreiner and Staliūnas (eds), *The Vanished World of Lithuanian Jews*, p. 218.
 22. Aivars Stranga, 'The Holocaust in Occupied Latvia: 1941–1945', in *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations, 1940–1991*, Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, vol. 14 (Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005), pp. 172–3.
 23. Stranga, 'The Holocaust in Occupied Latvia', p. 167.
 24. Christoph Dieckmann, Vytautas Toleikis and Rimantas Zizas, *Murder of Prisoners of War and of Civilian Population in Lithuania*, The Crimes of Totalitarian Regimes in Lithuania, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2005), p. 377.
 25. Alfred Erich Senn, 'Baltic Battleground', in *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations, 1940–1991*, Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, vol. 14 (Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005), pp. 24–6.
 26. Dieckmann, Toleikis, and Zizas, *Murder of Prisoners of War and of Civilian Population in Lithuania*, p. 265.
 27. Tiit Noormets, Toe Nõmm, Hanno Ojalo, Olev Raidla, Reigo Rosenthal, Tõnis Taavet and Mati Õun, *Korpusepoisid. Eesti sõjamehed 22. eesti territooriatkorpuses ja 8. eesti laskurkorpuses Teises maailmasõjas aastatel 1940–45* (Tallinn: Sentinel, 2007), pp. 237, 239.
 28. Seppo Myllyniemi, *Die Neuordnung der Baltischen Länder 1941–1944: Zum nationalsozialistischen Inhalt der deutschen Besatzungspolitik* (Helsinki: Suomen Historiallinen Seura, 1973), pp. 210–13.
 29. Valdis O. Lumans, *Latvia in World War II* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), p. 296.
 30. Laar has calculated 30,000 Soviet troops killed and over 130,000 wounded, but this is probably exaggerated. The German side lost over 2000 plus 8000 wounded: Mart Laar, *Sinimäed 1944* (Tallinn: Varrak, 2006), p. 325.
 31. Lumans, *Latvia in World War II*, pp. 367–70; Geoffrey Swain, 'Latvia's Democratic Resistance: A Forgotten Episode from the Second World War', *European History Quarterly*, 39(2) (April 2009): 241–63.
 32. Romuald J. Misiunas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence, 1940–1990*, 2nd updated edn (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), p. 67.
 33. Kaja Kumer-Haukanõmm, 'Eestlaste Teistest maailmasõjast tingitud põgenemine läände', in Kaja Kumer-Haukanõmm, Tiit Rosenberg and Tiit

- Tammaru (eds), *Suur põgenemine 1944. Eestlaste lahkumine läände ning selle mõjud* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2006), p. 36; Kārlis Kangeris, 'German Plans for Retreat from the Baltics: The Latvian Case', in Kumer-Haukanõmm, Rosenberg and Tammaru (eds), *Suur põgenemine 1944*, p. 47; Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania*, p. 334.
34. Of the 2,000,000 inhabitants of Latvia in 1939, only 1,400,000 remained in Latvia in 1945: Valters Nollendorfs (ed.), *Latvia under the Rule of the Soviet Union and National Socialist Germany 1940–1991* (Riga: Museum of the Occupation of Latvia, 2002), p. 89. However, this figure includes all those who were conscripted, deported or fled as refugees. Many of these later returned to Latvia. A more precise figure is 17 per cent or 325,000 citizens: Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia: The Twentieth Century*, p. 418.
 35. Almost the entire Swedish minority in north-western Estonia and on the Estonian islands, 7000 people, were evacuated by the Swedish government to Sweden in 1943–4.
 36. Olaf Mertelsmann, *Der stalinistische Umbau in Estland: Von der Markt- zur Kommandowirtschaft* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 2006), p. 131.
 37. Theodore R. Weeks, 'Population Politics in Vilnius 1944–1947: A Case Study of Socialist-Sponsored Ethnic Cleansing', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 23(1) (March 2007): 76–95.
 38. Pranas Morkus, 'The Call to Arms (1944–1953)', in Birutė Burauskaitė and Pranas Morkus, *Resistance to the Occupation of Lithuania: 1944–1990* (Vilnius: The Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania, 2002), p. 20.
 39. Tiit Noormägi and Valdur Ohmann (eds), *Hävitajad. Nõukogude hävituspataljonid Eestis 1944–1954* (Tallinn: Riigitarhiiv, 2006); Virginija Rudiene (ed.), *War after War: Armed Anti-Soviet Resistance in Lithuania in 1944–1953* (Vilnius: The Museum of Genocide Victims of the Genocide and Resistance Research Center of Lithuania, 2007).
 40. A popularising account is Tom Bower, *The Red Web: MI6 and the KGB Master Coup* (London: Aurum, 1989). See also Märt Männik, *A Tangled Web: A British Spy in Estonia. The memoirs of an Estonian who fell into the clutches of MI6 and the KGB*, translated and introduced by the Earl of Carlisle (Tallinn: Grenadier, 2008).
 41. Arvydas Anušauskas (ed.), *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States* (Vilnius: Du Ka, 1999), p. 44.
 42. Jelena Zubkova, *Baltimaad ja Kreml 1940–1953* (Tallinn: Varrak, 2009), pp. 98–9.
 43. Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia: The Twentieth Century*, p. 351.
 44. Heinrihs Strods, 'Sovietization of Latvia 1944–1991', *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations 1940–1991*, Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, vol. 14 (Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005), p. 223.
 45. V. Stanley Vardys, *The Catholic Church, Dissent and Nationality in Soviet Lithuania* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1978), pp. 75–6.
 46. Zubkova, *Baltimaad ja Kreml 1940–1953*, pp. 110–11.
 47. Most of these individuals were able to resume their professions after the death of Stalin: Toomas Karjahärm and Väino Sirk, *Kohanemine*

- ja vastupanu. Eesti haritlaskond 1940–1987* (Tallinn: Argo, 2007), p. 224–7.
48. In a further ironic twist of fate, Allik managed to recover his position in 1965 after he was amnestied in 1956: Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence*, pp. 82, 149.
 49. For the most detailed analysis of Stalinist economic policy in a Baltic republic, see Mertelsmann, *Der stalinistische Umbau in Estland*.
 50. For the most comprehensive study of collectivisation in a Baltic republic, see David Feest, *Zwangskollektivierung im Baltikum. Die Sowjetisierung des Estnischen Dorfes 1944–1953*, Beiträge zur Geschichte Osteuropas 40 (Köln: Böhlau, 2007).
 51. Heinrihs Strods and Matthew Kott, ‘The File on Operation “Priboi”: A Re-Assessment of the Mass Deportations of 1949’, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 33(1) (Spring 2002): 20.
 52. Strods and Kott, ‘The File on Operation “Priboi”’, p. 18.
 53. Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania*, p. 308.

7 SOVIET RULE (1953–1991)

1. Pabriks and Purs, *Latvia: The Challenges of Change*, pp. 36, 40.
2. Senn, ‘Baltic Battleground’, p. 19.
3. Birutė Burauskaitė, ‘The Unarmed Resistance (1954–1990)’, in Birutė Burauskaitė and Pranas Morkus, *Resistance to the Occupation of Lithuania: 1944–1990* (Vilnius: Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania, 2002), p. 24.
4. William Prigge, ‘The Latvian Purges of 1959: A Revision Study’, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 35(3) (Fall 2004): 211–30.
5. Pajur and Tannberg (eds), *Eesti Ajalugu VI*, p. 300.
6. Diana Mincyte, ‘Everyday Environmentalism: The Practice, Politics, and Nature of Subsidiary Farming in Stalin’s Lithuania’, *Slavic Review*, 68(1) (Spring 2009): 31–49.
7. Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence*, p. 159.
8. Mati Graf and Heikki Roiko-Jokela, *Vaarallinen Suomi. Suomi Eestin kommunistisen puolueen ja Neuvosto-Viron KGB:n silmin* (Jyväskylä: Minerva, 2004), pp. 169–89.
9. Andrew Ezergailis, *Nazi/Soviet Disinformation about the Holocaust in Latvia: Daugavas Vanagi: Who are they? Revisited* (Riga: Occupation Museum of Latvia, 2005).
10. Those appointed to the final CPSU Politburo in 1990 were Mykolas Burokevičius, Alfrēds Rubiks and Enn-Arno Sillari, the first secretaries of the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian Communist Parties, respectively, after their split into pro-independence and pro-Moscow organisations.
11. Pajur and Tannberg (eds), *Eesti Ajalugu VI*, p. 311.
12. Mikk Titma, Liina Mai Tooming and Nancy Brandon Tuma, ‘Communist Party Members: Incentives and Gains’, *International Journal of Sociology*, 34(2) (Summer 2004): 72–99.

13. Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence*, pp. 359–60.
14. Hoyer, Lauk, and Vihalemm (eds), *Towards a Civic Society: The Baltic Media’s Long Road to Freedom*, p. 217.
15. V. Stanley Vardys and Judith B. Sedaitis, *Lithuania: The Rebel Nation* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997), p. 86.
16. Rein Ruutsoo, *Civil Society and Nation Building in Estonia and the Baltic States: Impact of Traditions on Mobilization and Transition 1986–2000 – Historical and Sociological Study* (Rovaniemi: University of Lapland, 2002), p. 126.
17. The letter was unsigned, but it was later revealed that Berklažs had been the main author.
18. Vardys and Sedaitis, *Lithuania: The Rebel Nation*, p. 88.
19. Table compiled from data in Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence*, p. 353; Plakans, *The Latvians: A Short History*, p. 153, 158; Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians*, p. 247. The figures for 1945 are estimates.
20. Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence*, p. 215.
21. Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence*, p. 238.
22. Robert W. Smurz, ‘Lahemaa: The paradox of the USSR’s first national park’, *Nationalities Papers*, 36(3) (2008): 399–423.
23. Pajur and Tannberg (eds), *Eesti Ajalugu VI*, p. 316.
24. Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence*, p. 231.
25. For a systematic catalogue of absurd contradictions in Soviet life, see Lauri Vahtre, *Absurdi impeeria* (Tallinn: Tammererraamat, 2007); Enno Tammer (ed.), *Nõukogude aeg ja inimene. Meie mälestused* (Tallinn: Tänapäev, 2004).
26. Kiaupa, *The History of Lithuania*, p. 312.
27. Michael Bruchis, ‘The nationality policy of the CPSU and its reflection in Soviet socio-political terminology’, in Peter J. Potichnyj (ed.), *The Soviet Union: Party and Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 125.
28. Pabriks and Purs, *Latvia: The Challenges of Change*, pp. 32–6.
29. Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia: The Twentieth Century*, p. 526.
30. Rolf Ekmanis, ‘Harmonizer of Disharmony: Latvian Poet and Editor Māris Čaklais’, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 40(2) (June 2009): 216.
31. Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence*, p. 161.
32. Vardys and Sedaitis, *Lithuania: The Rebel Nation*, p. 94.
33. Thomas Lane, *Lithuania: Stepping Westwards* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 102.
34. *Isemajandav Eesti* (IME) – the acronym means ‘miracle’ or ‘wonder’ in Estonian – was proposed by four members of the Communist Party, Edgar Savisaar, Siim Kallas, Tiit Made and Mikk Titma: Rein Taagepera, *Estonia: Return to Independence* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993), pp. 128–30.
35. The term ‘Singing Revolution’ was invented in June 1988 to denote the peaceful nature of the dramatic political change by artist Heinz Valk, an inspiring orator for the Estonian Popular Front: Henri Vogt, *Between Utopia*

- and Disillusionment: A Narrative of the Political Transformation in Eastern Europe* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2005), p. 26. The remarkable role of choral singing in Estonia's peaceful transformation is vividly shown in *The Singing Revolution*, a documentary film by James and Maureen Tusty (Mountain View Productions, 2007).
36. Anatol Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and the Path to Independence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 113.
 37. Nils Muižnieks, 'The Influence of the Baltic Popular Movements on the Process of Soviet Disintegration', *Europe–Asia Studies*, 47(1) (1995): 3–25; Mark R. Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 161. Baltic events also influenced the later developments in Chechnya. The first two presidents who fought against Russia for their nation's independence, Dzhokhar Dudayev and Aslan Maskhadov, witnessed the Singing Revolution while serving as senior Soviet military officers in Estonia and Lithuania, respectively.
 38. For an inside account of the work of the Baltic members of the USSR Congress of Peoples' Deputies, see Heiki Lindpere, *Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact: Challenging Soviet History* (Tallinn: Estonian Foreign Policy Institute, 2009).
 39. Taagepera, *Estonia: Return to Independence*, pp. 174–5.
 40. Andres Kasekamp, 'Paths to Baltic Independence', *Slovo: A Journal of Contemporary Russian and East European Affairs*, 5(1) (December 1992): 26–7.
 41. Rein Taagepera, 'The Baltic Perspectives of Estonian Turning Points', *Acta Historica Tallinnensia*, 4 (2000): 13.
 42. Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, p. 245.
 43. Ainius Lasas, 'Bloody Sunday: What Did Gorbachev Know about January 1991 Events in Vilnius and Riga?', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 38(2) (June 2007): 179–194.
 44. Kristina Spohr Readman, 'Between Rhetoric and Realpolitik: Western Diplomacy and the Baltic Independence Struggle in the Cold War Endgame', *Cold War History*, 6(1) (February 2006): 1–42.

8 RETURN TO THE WEST (1991–2009)

1. Unlike the Estonian and Lithuanian constitutions, the Latvian one had not been altered in the 1930s during the era of authoritarian rule. Substantial additions – the establishment of a constitutional court and 27 paragraphs on civil and human rights – were made to it in 1998: Hermann Smith-Sivertsen, 'Latvia', in Sten Berglund, Joakim Ekman and Frank H. Aarebrot (eds), *Handbook of Political Change in Eastern Europe*, 2nd edn (Cheltenham: Elgar, 2004), p. 131.
2. The first presidential election in Estonia was only for a four-year term and the first two elections in Latvia were only for three-year terms.
3. Initially three years in Latvia. The Lithuanian Supreme Council was renamed *Seimas* in 1996.

4. Latvia and Lithuania initially had a threshold of 4 per cent.
5. A two-round run-off electoral system as in France was employed in Lithuania until 2000.
6. The best analyses of the evolution of the current political party systems are provided by the respective country chapters – Estonia by Mikko Lagerspetz and Henri Vogt, Latvia by Hermann Smith-Sivertsen, and Lithuania by Kjetil Duvold and Mindaugas Jurkynas – in Berglund, Ekman and Aarebrot (eds), *Handbook of Political Change in Eastern Europe*, and the respective country chapters – Estonia by Evald Mikkel, Latvia by Artis Pabriks and Aiga Štokenberga, and Lithuania by Ainė Ramonaitė – in Susanne Jungerstam-Mulders (ed.), *Post-Communist EU Member States: Parties and Party Systems* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).
7. The social democrats were officially named the 'Moderates'.
8. Allan Sikk, *Highways to Power: New Party Success in Three Young Democracies*, Dissertationes rerum politicarum Universitatis Tartuensis 1 (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2006).
9. Emsis's actual green credentials were questionable: David J. Galbreath and Daunis Auers, 'Green, Black and Brown: Uncovering Latvia's Environmental Politics', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 40(3) (September 2009): 342–5.
10. All three currencies were later pegged to the euro.
11. Zenonas Norkus, 'Why did Estonia Perform Best? The North–South Gap in the Post-Socialist Economic Transition of the Baltic States', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 38(1) (2007): 21–42.
12. European Commission, *Regular Report from the Commission on Estonia's Progress towards Accession* (Brussels, European Commission, 1998), p. 51; European Commission, *Regular Report from the Commission on Latvia's Progress towards Accession* (Brussels, European Commission, 1998), p. 56; European Commission, *Regular Report from the Commission on Lithuania's Progress towards Accession* (Brussels, European Commission, 1998), p. 50.
13. On the liquidation of collective farms and its consequences for rural communities, see Ilkka Alanen, Jouko Nikula, Helvi Pöder and Rein Ruutsoo, *Decollectivisation, Destruction and Disillusionment: A Community Study in Southern Estonia* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001) and Sigrid Rausing, *History, Memory, and Identity in Post-Soviet Estonia: The End of a Collective Farm* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
14. Magnus Feldmann, 'The Fast Track from the Soviet Union to the World Economy: External Liberalization in Estonia and Latvia', *Government and Opposition*, 36(4) (2001): 537–58.
15. The International Monetary Fund approved a €1.7 billion rescue loan as part of a €7.5 billion bailout which included the European Union (€3.1 billion) and Nordic countries (€1.8 billion).
16. Nationalists opposed to the liberalisation of the citizenship law initiated a national referendum, but 53 per cent of voters approved the legislation in the referendum held on 3 October 1998.
17. Vello Pettai and Kristina Kallas, 'Estonia: Conditionality amidst a Legal Straitjacket'; David J. Galbreath and Nils Muižnieks, 'Latvia: Managing

- Post-Imperial Minorities'; Dovile Budryte and Vilana Pilinaite-Sotirovic, 'Lithuania: Progressive Legislation without Popular Support', in Bernd Rechel (ed.), *Minority Rights in Central and Eastern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 104–18, 135–65.
18. Anton Steen, *Between Past and Future: Elites, Democracy and the State in Post-Communist Countries: A Comparison of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997), pp. 93–8.
 19. Lane, *Lithuania: Stepping Westwards*, p. 187.
 20. Peter van Elsuwege, *From Soviet Republics to EU Member States: A Legal and Political Assessment of the Baltic States' Accession to the EU* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), pp. 118, 141.
 21. Mikko Lagerspetz, 'How Many Nordic Countries? The Possibilities and Limits of Geopolitical Identity Construction', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 38(1) (2003): 48–60. For a discussion of spatial narratives in identity discourse in the Baltic Sea region, see Marko Lehti, 'Possessing a Baltic Europe: Retold National Narratives in the European North', in Marko Lehti and David J. Smith (eds), *Post-Cold War Identity Politics: Northern and Baltic Experiences* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), pp. 11–49.
 22. Until 1995, the OSCE was known as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).
 23. Van Elsuwege, *From Soviet Republics to EU Member States*, pp. 286–7.
 24. David Galbreath and Jeremy W. Lamoreaux, 'Bastion, Beacon or Bridge? Conceptualising the Baltic logic of the EU's Neighbourhood', *Geopolitics*, 12(1) (2007): 109–32.
 25. See an insider's account of NATO enlargement by a key US State Department official during the Clinton administration: Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).
 26. Partly in recognition of these contributions, the 2006 NATO Summit was held in Riga and an indication of the strength of the relationship with the USA was the fact that US President George W. Bush visited the Baltic states on three separate occasions.
 27. The last Russian military installation, the radar station at Skrunda in Latvia, was demolished only in 1999. The best account of the international diplomacy to remove the Russian troops is Lars Fredén, *Återkomster: Svensk säkerhetspolitik och de baltiska ländernas första år I självständighet 1991–1994* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2006).
 28. Klaudijus Maniokas, Ramūnas Vilipšauskas and Darius Žeruolis (eds), *Lithuania's Road to the European Union: Unification of Europe and Lithuania's EU Accession Negotiation* (Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2005), pp. 297–348.
 29. Within the EU, Lithuania has taken a more uncompromising stance than the other Baltic states with regard to Russia. In the spring of 2008 Lithuania temporarily blocked the opening of negotiations for a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Russia.
 30. See Andris Sprūds and Toms Rostoks (eds), *Energy: Pulling the Baltic Sea Region Together or Apart?* (Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 2009).

31. Eiki Berg and Piret Ein (eds), *Identity and Foreign Policy: Baltic-Russian Relations* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009); Jörg Hackmann and Marko Lehti (eds), *Contested and Shared Places of Memory: History and Politics in North Eastern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2009).
32. Karsten Brüggemann and Andres Kasekamp, 'The Politics of History and the "War of Monuments" in Estonia', *Nationalities Papers*, 36(3) (July 2008): 425–48.
33. At the same time, the Simon Wiesenthal Center has accused the Baltic authorities of dragging their feet in bringing suspected Nazi war criminals to trial: Efraim Zuroff, *Operation Last Chance: One Man's Quest to Bring Nazi Criminals to Justice* (New York: Palgrave, 2009), Chs 10–12.
34. 'Russia sets up commission to prevent falsification of history', *RIA Novosti*, 19 May 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090519/155041940.html> (accessed 30 August 2009).

Chronology

11,000 BC	First nomads enter the Baltic region
9000 BC	Emergence of Kunda Culture
9000–5000 BC	Mesolithic period in the Baltic region
5000–1800 BC	Neolithic period
4000 BC	Emergence of Comb Ware Culture
3000 BC	Emergence of Corded Ware Culture
1800–500 BC	Bronze Age
500 BC–AD 450	Early Iron Age
450–800	Middle Iron Age
800–1200	Late Iron Age
1009	First recorded mention of Lithuania
1186	Pope appoints Meinhard first Bishop of Üxküll
1198	First crusade against the Livs
1199	Albert ordained Bishop of Üxküll
1201	Founding of Riga
1202	Establishment of the Swordbrothers
1206	Crusaders subjugate the Livs
1219	Danes conquer northern Estonia
1227	Subjugation of the Estonians by the Swordbrothers
1236	Swordbrothers annihilated at Saulė
1237	Swordbrothers merged with Teutonic Knights
1242	Novgorodians defeat Livonian knights on ice of Lake Peipus
1253	Mindaugas crowned King of Lithuania after adopting Christianity
1255	Riga elevated to archbishopric
1263	Mindaugas assassinated
1282	Riga becomes first Hanseatic town in Livonia

1290	Semigallians conquered, present-day Latvia fully subjugated by the Teutonic Order
1316	Gediminas becomes Lithuanian grand duke
1323	Vilnius established as Lithuanian capital
1343	St George's night uprising of Estonians
1346	Danes sell Estonia to the Teutonic Order
1386	Lithuanian Grand Duke Jogaila crowned King of Poland
1387	Adoption of Christianity by Lithuanians
1388	Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytautas grants privileges for Jews
1410	Defeat of the Teutonic Knights by Poles and Lithuanians at Tannenberg
1422	Peace of Melno; end of wars between Lithuanians and Teutonic Order
1435	Establishment of the Livonian Confederation
1481	First Muscovite invasion of Livonia
1524	Protestant reformation triumphs in Livonian cities
1525	First Estonian and Latvian book printed
1529	First Lithuanian Statute (law code)
1547	First Lithuanian book printed
1558	Tsar Ivan the Terrible launches the Livonian War
1561	Dissolution of the Livonian Confederation; northern Estonia under Swedish protection and the rest of Livonia under Polish rule
1562	Last Master of Livonian Order becomes Duke of Courland
1569	Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth formed
1579	Founding of University of Vilnius
1583	End of Livonian War
1585	Denmark sells the Bishopric of Courland to Poland–Lithuania
1588	Third Lithuanian Statute (law code)
1595	Establishment of Uniate Church in Grand Duchy of Lithuania
1629	Peace of Altmark grants Livonia to Sweden
1632	Founding of University of Dorpat (Tartu)
1642	Beginning of Duke Jacob's illustrious reign in Courland
1645	Sweden gains Ösel (Saaremaa) from Denmark
1655	Muscovite invasion of Lithuania; Act of Kėdainiai creating abortive Lithuanian–Swedish union
1689	Publication of Latvian-language Bible
1697	Great famine
1700	Start of Great Northern War

CHRONOLOGY

1703	Founding of St Petersburg
1709	Sweden defeated by Russia at Poltava
1710	Estland and Livland capitulate to Russia
1710–11	Devastating plague
1721	Peace of Nystad ends Great Northern War
1739	Publication of Estonian-language Bible
1772	First partition of Poland–Lithuania
1783	Empress Catherine integrates Baltic provinces into Russia
1791	Constitution for Poland–Lithuania
1793	Second partition of Poland–Lithuania
1794	Polish–Lithuanian uprising against Russia
1795	Final partition of Poland–Lithuania
1802	Re-establishment of the University of Dorpat (Tartu)
1802–4	Beginning of agrarian reforms in Baltic provinces
1812	Napoleon's invasion of Russia
1816–19	Emancipation of serfs in Courland, Estland and Livland
1824	Latvian Literary Society founded
1830–31	Polish–Lithuanian uprising against Russia
1832	Wilno (Vilnius) University closed
1838	Establishment of Estonian Learned Society
1840	Abolition of the Lithuanian Statute
1845	Orthodox conversion movement in Baltic provinces
1849	Peasants allowed to purchase land in Livland
1856	First regular Latvian newspaper – <i>Mājas Viesis</i>
1857	First regular Estonian newspaper – <i>Perno Postimees</i> ; Estonian national epic – <i>Kalevipoeg</i>
1861	Emancipation of serfs in the Russian Empire, including Lithuania and Latgale
1863–4	Polish and Lithuanian uprising against Russia
1864	Ban on use of Latin alphabet in Lithuanian
1868	Founding of Riga Latvian Association
1869	First Estonian song festival
1873	First Latvian song festival
1883	First Lithuanian newspaper – <i>Aušra</i>
1885	Start of Russification in Baltic provinces
1888	Publication of Latvian national epic – <i>Lāčplēsis</i>
1897	Latvians achieve control over first municipal government Wolmar (Valmiera)

CHRONOLOGY

1904	End of ban on Lithuanian and Latgalian publications using Latin alphabet
1905	Failed Russian Revolution; political mobilisation in Baltic region
1906	Retribution by tsarist punishment units; elections to Russian Duma
1914	Beginning of World War I
1915	Lithuania occupied by Germany; Latvian territory becomes frontline
1917	Collapse of tsarist regime; Bolshevik seizure of power
1918	Lithuanian, Estonian and Latvian independence declared
1919	Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians fight Russian Bolsheviks and German volunteers
1920	Peace treaties with Soviet Russia
1921	International recognition: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania join League of Nations
1923	Military alliance concluded between Estonia and Latvia; Lithuanian seizure of Memel
1924	Failed communist putsch in Tallinn
1925	Estonian Cultural Autonomy Law
1926	Smetona comes to power in Lithuania after military coup
1934	Coups d'état in Estonia and Latvia; Baltic Entente
1938	Polish ultimatum to Lithuania
1939	Nazi–Soviet Pact; Red Army bases in the Baltic states; resettlement of Baltic Germans
1940	Incorporation of Baltic states into USSR
1941	Mass deportations; German invasion; murder of the Jews
1944–45	Red Army reconquers the Baltic states
1945	End of World War II; resistance continues
1949	Collectivisation and mass deportations
1950	Purge of Estonian Communist Party leadership
1953	Death of Stalin
1956	Thaw under Khrushchev
1959	Purge of Latvian Communist Party leadership
1968	Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia ends Thaw
1972	Self-immolation of Romas Kalanta in Kaunas
1974	Death of Lithuanian Communist leader Antanas Sniečkus
1979	Baltic dissidents' appeal to the UN
1980	Youth riot in Tallinn

CHRONOLOGY

1985	Gorbachev becomes leader of the USSR
1987	First demonstrations against Soviet rule
1988	The Singing Revolution; Estonian declaration of sovereignty; establishment of Baltic Popular Fronts
1989	Baltic Way – human chain from Tallinn to Vilnius to demand freedom
1990	Election of pro-independence governments
1991	Independence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania recognised
1992–93	Constitutions adopted and founding elections; currency reforms; liberalisation of economies
1993–94	Russian troop withdrawal
1995	Baltic states apply for EU membership
1997	Estonia invited to begin EU accession negotiations
1999	Latvia and Lithuania invited to begin EU accession negotiations
2002	EU membership negotiations completed; invitation to join NATO
2004	Baltic membership of the EU and NATO
2006	NATO summit held in Rīga
2007	Riot over relocation of Red Army monument in Tallinn
2008	Drastic budget cuts in response to world financial crisis
2009	EU adopts Baltic Sea Strategy

Place Names

Current Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian	German	Russian (pre-1917)*	Other
Cēsis	Wenden	Kes'	Võnnu (Est.)
Daugava (river)	Düna	Dvina	Dźwina (Pol.)
Daugavpils	Dünaburg	Dvinsk	Dwińsk
Eestimaa	Estland	Estliandiia	Dyneburg (Pol.)
Gardinas	Garten	Grodno	Estonia
Jelgava	Mitau	Mitava	Hrodna (Bel.)
Karaliaučius	Königsberg	Kaliningrad (from 1946)	Grodno (Pol.)
Kaunas	Kowno	Kovno	Mitawa (Pol.)
	Kauen		Kowno (Pol.)
Klaipėda	Memel	Memel'	Kovne (Yid.)
Kurzeme	Kurland	Kurlandiia	Curonia (Latin)
Latgale	Lettgallen		Courland
			Lettigallia (Latin)
Liepāja	Libau	Libava	Inflanty (Pol.)
Lietuva	Litauen	Litva	Libawa (Pol.)
Liivimaa (Est) Vidzeme (Lv.)	Livland	Liflandiia	Litwa (Pol.)
Narva	Narwa	Narva	Lithuania
Nemunas (river)	Memel	Neman	Narva
Pärnu	Pernau	Pernov	Nieman (Pol.)
Peipsi (lake)	Peipus	Chudskoe	Parnawa (Pol.)
Saaremaa	Ösel (Oesel)	Ezel'	Peipus
Salaspils	Kirchholm	Kirhol'm	Osilia (Latin)

Current Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian	German	Russian (pre-1917)*	Other
Šiauliai	Schaulen	Shauliai	Szawle (Pol.)
Suvalkija	Sudauen	Suvalki	Suwalki (Pol.)
			Sudovia (Latin)
Tallinn	Reval	Revel'	
Tartu	Dorpatt	Derpt/Yur'ev	Tērbata (Lv.)
Trakai	Traken	Troki	Troki (Pol.)
Valga (Est.)	Walk	Valk	
Valka (Lv.)			
Valmiera	Wolmar	Vol'mar	Volmari (Est.)
Ventspils	Windau		
Vilnius	Wilna	Vil'na	Wilno (Pol.)
			Vilne (Yid.)
Žalgiris (battle)	Tannenberg		Grunwald (Pol.)
Žemaitija	Schamaiten	Zhmud'	Samogitia (Latin)
Zemgale	Semgallen	Zemgalia	Semigallia (Latin)

* Russian names prior to 1917 are mainly transliterations of German and Polish place names, whereas later Russian usage is primarily a transliteration of the current Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian forms.

Further Reading

GENERAL

Only two general histories of the Baltic states have been published in the English language. The first is a well-illustrated textbook, *The History of the Baltic Countries*, 3rd edn (Tallinn: BIT, 2002), written by a team of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian historians headed by Zigmantas Kiaupa, Ain Mäesalu, Ago Pajur and Gvido Straube, and funded by the European Commission explicitly to foster Baltic cooperation. More readable, but less reliable, is Kevin O'Connor, *The History of the Baltic States* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2003). These will undoubtedly soon be surpassed by Andrejs Plakans' forthcoming book in Cambridge University Press's *Concise Histories* series.

A survey of Baltic history from an economic perspective is provided by Juhan Kahk and Enn Tarvel, *An Economic History of the Baltic Countries*, Studia Baltica Stockholmiensis 20 (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 1997). John Hiden and Patrick Salmon, *The Baltic Nations and Europe: Estonia, Latvia & Lithuania in the Twentieth Century*, 2nd edn (London: Longman, 1994) is best on the diplomatic history of the inter-war era. David Kirby took the analysis to a new level when he first wrote about the wider 'Baltic World', including all the peoples and territories along the Baltic Sea rim in his *Northern Europe in the Early Modern Period: The Baltic World, 1492–1772* (London: Longman, 1990) and *The Baltic World 1772–1993: Europe's Northern Periphery in an Age of Change* (London: Longman, 1995). Together with Merja-Liisa Hinkkanen, Kirby also explores the maritime history of the region in *The Baltic and North Seas* (London: Routledge, 2000). Alan Palmer, *Northern Shores: A History of the Baltic Sea and its Peoples* (London: John Murray, 2005) is intended for a wider audience and is an ideal companion on a Baltic cruise.

INDIVIDUAL NATIONS

History writing has generally followed national lines and thus more has been written about Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania separately than together. Comparative study has been impeded by the lack of knowledge of the relevant languages and the fact that the concept of the Baltic states is a relatively recent one. For Estonia, the authoritative overview is Toivo Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians*, updated 2nd edn (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, 2002). A reliable textbook

is Ain Mäesalu, Tõnis Lukas, Mati Laur, Tõnu Tannberg and Ago Pajur, *History of Estonia* (Tallinn: Avita, 2004); a livelier account is Mart Laar, *Estonia's Way* (Tallinn: Pegasus, 2006).

For Latvia, the standard overview is Andrejs Plakans, *The Latvians: A Short History* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, 1995). A more detailed account of the modern era is Daina Bleiere, Ilgvars Butulis, Inesis Felmanis, Aivars Stranga and Antonijs Zunda, *History of Latvia: The Twentieth Century* (Riga: Jumava, 2006).

The only general survey of Lithuania in English is Zigmantas Kiaupia, *The History of Lithuania* (Vilnius: baltos lankos, 2002). The same author, together with Jūratė Kiaupienė and Albinas Kuncevičius, has written the definite account of pre-modern Lithuania: *The History of Lithuania before 1795* (Vilnius: Lithuanian Institute of History, 2000). A quick read is Stasys Samalavičius, *An Outline of Lithuanian History* (Vilnius: Diemedis, 1995).

Three highly useful reference books, containing entries on the most significant individuals, events and institutions, have been published by Scarecrow Press of Lanham, MD: Andrejs Plakans, *Historical Dictionary of Latvia* (1997), Saulius Sužiedėlis, *Historical Dictionary of Lithuania* (1997) and Toivo Miljan, *Historical Dictionary of Estonia* (2004).

NATIONAL MINORITIES

There is a rapidly expanding literature examining the various ethnic groups who have lived in the Baltic countries, with attention primarily devoted to the Jews of Lithuania and the Baltic Germans. Dov Levin, *Litvaks: A Short History of the Jews of Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2000) and Masha Greenbaum, *The Jews of Lithuania: A History of a Remarkable Community 1316–1945* (Jerusalem: Gefen, 1995) provide good overviews, while *The Vanished World of Lithuanian Jews* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004), edited by Alvydas Nikžentaitis, Stefan Schreiner and Darius Staliūnas, concentrates on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Šarūnas Liekis provides a detailed analysis of 'A State within a State?' *Jewish autonomy in Lithuania 1918–1925* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), and the most revered figure among Lithuanian Jews is the subject of Immanuel Etkes, *The Gaon of Vilna: The Man and His Image* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002). Latvia's Jewish community is covered by Josifs Steimans, *History of Latvian Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

Much has been written about the Baltic Germans by themselves, but these books have naturally been in German, the authoritative volume being Gert von Pistohlkors (ed.), *Baltische Länder* (Berlin: Siedler, 1994), in the series *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas*. In English, John Hiden and Martyn Housden, *Neighbours or Enemies? Germans, the Baltic and Beyond* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008) discusses the relationship between the Germans and the indigenous peoples of the region in the twentieth century. Hiden portrays a rare apostle of tolerance in *Defender of Minorities: Paul Schiemann, 1876–1944* (London: C. Hurst, 2004). Heide W. Whelan, *Adapting to Modernity: Family, Caste, and Capitalism among the Baltic German Nobility* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1999) dissects the life of the landed gentry in the nineteenth century, while Anders Henriksson, *The Tsar's*

Loyal Germans: The Riga German Community: Social Change and the Nationality Question, 1855–1905 (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1983) focuses on their urban compatriots.

EARLY HISTORY

On the prehistory of the Indo-European Baltic peoples, Marija Gimbutas, *The Balts* (New York: Praeger, 1963) has been highly influential but is now quite outdated. Endre Bojtár, *Forward to the Past: A Cultural History of the Baltic People* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1999) discusses theories of the origins and development of the Baltic peoples from a linguistic perspective. Two highly accessible publications on the prehistory of Lithuania are Zigmantas Zinkevičius, Aleksiejus Luchtanas and Gintautas Česnys, *Where We Come From: The Origin of the Lithuanian People*, 2nd rev. edn (Vilnius: Science & Encyclopaedia Publishing Institute, 2006) and *Prehistoric Lithuania: Archaeology exposition guide* (Vilnius: National Museum of Lithuania, 2000). The most detailed up-to-date archaeological research in English on any part of the region is Valter Lang, *The Bronze and Early Iron Ages in Estonia* (Tartu: University of Tartu Press, 2007).

For the Christianisation of the Baltic region, the classic single-volume overview is Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*, 2nd edn (London: Penguin, 1997). The most prolific scholar is William L. Urban. His books, *The Baltic Crusade*, 2nd edn (1994), *The Livonian Crusade*, 2nd edn (2004), *The Samogitian Crusade* (1989) and *Tannenberg and After: Poland, Lithuania and the Teutonic Order in Search of Immortality* (2002) have all been published in Chicago by the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center. Urban has also written *The Teutonic Knights: A Military History* (London: Greenhill, 2003). A major contribution to the field, which looks at developments from the perspective of the natives rather than that of the crusaders, is Stephen C. Rowell, *Lithuania Ascending: A Pagan Empire within East-Central Europe, 1295–1345* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). Recent studies on specific aspects of the crusades can be found in Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades 1147–1254* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), Nils Blomkvist, *The Discovery of the Baltic: The Reception of a Catholic World-System in the European North (AD 1075–1225)* (Leiden: Brill, 2005) and in two collections of articles edited by Alan V. Murray, *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier 1150–1500* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001) and *The Clash of Cultures on the Medieval Baltic Frontier* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009). The most important primary source is *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* translated by James A. Brundage (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), a participant's account of the early years of the Livonian crusade.

EARLY MODERN ERA

For the early modern period, most attention has been devoted to the contest between Sweden, Russia and Poland–Lithuania for dominance of the Baltic Sea

FURTHER READING

region. Stewart P. Oakley, *War and Peace in the Baltic, 1560–1790* (London: Routledge, 1992) chronicles the struggle for hegemony, and Robert Frost, *The Northern Wars: War, State, and Society in Northeastern Europe, 1558–1721* (Harlow: Longman, 2000) brilliantly analyses the military developments.

The history of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth is the subject of Daniel Stone, *The Polish–Lithuanian State, 1386–1795. A History of East Central Europe*, vol. 4 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001). Andrej Kotljarchuk, *Making the Baltic Union: The 1655 Federation of Kedainiai between Sweden and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania* (Saarbrücken: VDM, 2008) examines an episode when the Commonwealth almost broke apart. Artūras Tereškinas, *Imperfect Communities: Identity, Discourse and Nation in the Seventeenth-Century Grand Duchy of Lithuania* (Vilnius: Lietuvių literatūros ir tautosakos institutas, 2005) provides insights into the mentality of the Lithuanian nobility.

THE TSARIST ERA

The integration of the Baltic Provinces and Lithuania into the Russian Empire are the subject of Edward C. Thaden, *Russia's Western Borderlands, 1710–1870* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), his *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855–1914* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981) co-authored with Michael H. Haltzel, C. Leonard Lundin, Andrejs Plakans and Toivo Raun; Theodore R. Weeks, *Nation and State in Imperial Russia: Nationalism and Russification on the Western Frontier, 1863–1914* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1996) and Darius Staliūnas, *Making Russians: Meaning and Practice of Russification in Lithuania and Belarus after 1863* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007).

The rise of nationalism is addressed in *National Movements in the Baltic Countries during the Nineteenth Century*, Studia Baltica Stockholmiensis, vol. 2 (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 1985), edited by Aleksander Loit. Virgil Krpauskas, *Nationalism and Historiography: The Case of Nineteenth-Century Lithuanian Historicism* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 2000) and Tomas Balkelis, *The Making of Modern Lithuania* (London: Routledge, 2009) trace the construction of a modern Lithuanian national identity. Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003) contrasts the pre-modern and modern concepts of nation in the lands of the former Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Social and economic change at the turn of the twentieth century and its political ramifications are discussed in *The Baltic Countries 1900–1914*. Studia Baltica Stockholmiensis, vol. 5 (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 1990) edited by Aleksander Loit. Specific related topics are covered in Leonas Sabaliūnas, *Lithuanian Social Democracy in Perspective 1893–1914* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990) and Alfonsas Eidintas, *Lithuanian Emigration to the United States: 1868–1950* (Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas, 2003). Reginald E. Zelnik's *Law and Disorder on the Narova River: The Kreenholm Strike of 1872* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995)

FURTHER READING

uses a strike at a factory in Narva to examine larger issues of relations between the state, labour, industry and nationalities in the Russian Empire.

The experience of German soldiers in the 'Wild East' during World War I, primarily Lithuania and Latvia, is the subject of Vejas Gabriel Liulevičius's masterfully written *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity and German Occupation in World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). *The 1917 Revolution in Latvia* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1974) and *The Latvian Impact on the Bolshevik Revolution: The First Phase: September 1917 to April 1918* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1983) by Andrew Ezergailis examine the role of Latvia and the Latvians in the Russian Revolution. Surprisingly, there have been no recent English-language studies on the establishment of independent statehood to supplant Stanley W. Page, *The Formation of the Baltic States: A Study of the Effects of Great Power Politics upon the Emergence of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1970) which focuses on external factors. Estonian social democratic leader August Rei, a key participant in the events, chronicles the achievement and loss of independence in *The Drama of the Baltic Peoples* (Stockholm: Vaba Eesti, 1970). Alfred Erich Senn, *The Emergence of Modern Lithuania* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959) is still valuable.

INDEPENDENCE

The classic account of the independence era between the two world wars, and a pioneering work of comparative Baltic studies, is Georg von Rauch, *The Baltic States: The Years of Independence, 1917–1940* (London: C. Hurst, 1974). A wealth of information can be found in *The Baltic States: A Survey of the Political and Economic Structure and the Foreign Relations of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania* first published by the Royal Institute of International Affairs (London, 1938) and republished by Greenwood Press (Westport, CT, 1970). *The Baltic States in War and Peace, 1917–1945* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978), edited by V. Stanley Vardys and Romuald Misiunas, contains several important essays. Alfonsas Eidintas and Vytautas Žalys provide a comprehensive account of both foreign and domestic affairs in *Lithuania in European Politics: The Years of the First Republic, 1918–1940* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1997). There is as yet no equivalent survey of inter-war Estonia or Latvia.

The foreign policies of the Baltic states are examined in *The Baltic in International Relations Between the Two World Wars*, Studia Baltica Stockholmiensis 3 (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 1988), edited by John Hiden and Aleksander Loit. Alfred Erich Senn, *The Great Powers, Lithuania and the Vilna Question, 1920–1928* (Leiden: Brill, 1966) analyses Lithuania's major foreign policy dilemma, and John Hiden, *The Baltic States and Weimar Ostpolitik* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) concentrates on the perspective of Berlin. Baltic cooperation has been a popular subject, covered by Hugh I. Rodgers, *Search for Security: A Study in Baltic Diplomacy, 1920–1934* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1975), Bronis J. Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations – The Quest for Regional Integration and Political Liberty: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland*,

Poland (Pittston, PA: Euramerica Press, 1976) and, more recently, 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* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1999).

In contrast to external relations, domestic politics has received scant attention: the major works are Leonas Sabaliūnas, *Lithuania in Crisis: Nationalism to Communism, 1939–1940* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972) and Andres Kasekamp, *The Radical Right in Interwar Estonia* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), both of which are wider in scope than their titles suggest.

Several volumes on inter-war economic developments have been published in Stockholm University's *Studia Baltica Stockholmiensis* series: a collection of conference papers, *Emancipation and Interdependence: The Baltic States as New Entities in the International Economy, 1918–1940* (1994), edited by Anders Johansson et al.; Anu-Mai Kõll, *Peasants on the World Market: Agricultural Experience of Independent Estonia 1919–1939* (1994); Anu-Mai Kõll and Jaak Valge, *Economic Nationalism and Industrial Growth: State and Industry in Estonia 1934–39* (1998), and Jaak Valge, *Breaking away from Russia: Economic Stabilization in Estonia 1918–1924* (2006). International trade is analysed in Merja-Liisa Hinkkanen-Lievenen, *British Trade and Enterprise in the Baltic States, 1919–1925* (Helsinki: SHS, 1984).

The diplomatic prelude to the loss of independence is covered in David M. Crowe, *The Baltic States & the Great Powers: Foreign Relations, 1938–1940* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993) and in *The Baltic and the Outbreak of the Second World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), edited by John Hiden and Thomas Lane. Although polemical and outdated, Albert Tarulis, *Soviet Policy toward the Baltic States, 1918–1940* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1959) still provides a good overview of the subject. Magnus Ilmjärv has used Soviet archives to argue that the Baltic authoritarian governments were largely responsible for their own demise in *Silent Submission: Formation of Foreign Policy of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania: Period from Mid-1920s to Annexation in 1940*, *Studia Baltica Stockholmiensis* 24 (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 2004). The Soviet takeover is analysed in detail in Alfred Erich Senn, *Lithuania 1940: Revolution from Above* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008).

WORLD WAR II

Valdis O. Lumans provides a useful overview of *Latvia in World War II* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), while Geoffrey Swain examines events at the micro-level, focusing on the ethnically diverse eastern Latvian city of Daugavpils in *Between Stalin and Hitler: Class War and Race War on the Dvina, 1940–46* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004). A riveting and unconventional account of Latvia during the Second World War, interwoven with the experiences of his own family, is Canadian historian Modris Eksteins's *Walking since Daybreak: A Story of Eastern Europe, World War II, and the Heart of our Century* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999). Roger D. Petersen uses Lithuania

in the 1940s as his central case study to test the role of emotions in determining individual motivation in *Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) and *Understanding Ethnic Violence: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

On the Holocaust, and the role of Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians in it, the major works are Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), Joseph Levinson (ed.), *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944: The Missing Center* (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia, 1996) and Anton Weiss-Wendt, *Murder without Hatred: Estonians and the Holocaust* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2009). A useful collection of articles is *Collaboration and Resistance during the Holocaust: Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2004) edited by David Gaunt, Paul A. Levine and Laura Palosuo.

In all three countries, international commissions have been convened by the president of the republic to examine crimes against humanity committed during both the Nazi and Soviet eras. The findings of the Estonian commission have been published in two volumes edited by Toomas Hii, Meelis Maripuu and Indrek Paavle, *Estonia 1940–1945: Reports of the Estonian International Commission for the Investigation of Crimes Against Humanity* (Tallinn: Estonian International Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against Humanity, 2006) and *Estonia since 1944* (Tallinn: Eesti Mälu Instituut, 2009). The Commission of the Historians of Latvia has produced over twenty volumes of articles on various aspects of Nazi and Soviet rule, one of which has been published in English as *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations, 1940–1991*, Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, vol. 14 (Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005). The International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania has published a series of volumes reproducing archive documents and analyses, in the Lithuanian and English languages in parallel, on specific facets of Nazi and Soviet rule, notably vol. III, *The Persecution and Mass Murder of Lithuanian Jews during Summer and Fall of 1941* (Vilnius: Margi Raštai, 2006), compiled by Christoph Dieckmann and Saulius Sužiedėlis, and vol. IV: *The Second Soviet Occupation. Political Bodies of the Soviet Union in Lithuania and their Criminal Activities* (Vilnius: Margi Raštai, 2008), compiled by Vytautas Tininis.

THE SOVIET ERA

The neglected issue of the international status of the Baltic states during and after World War II is the subject of a volume edited by John Hiden, Vahur Made and David J. Smith, *The Baltic Question during the Cold War* (London: Routledge, 2008). James T. McHugh and James S. Pacy trace the activities of Baltic ambassadors in exile in *Diplomats without a Country: Baltic Diplomacy, International Law, and the Cold War* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2001). A legal perspective is provided by Lauri Mälksoo, *Illegal Annexation and State Continuity: The Case*

FURTHER READING

Poland (Pittston, PA: Euramerica Press, 1976) and, more recently, 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* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1999).

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FURTHER READING

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FURTHER READING

of the Incorporation of the Baltic States by the USSR: A Study of the Tension between Normativity and Power in International Law (Leiden: Nijhoff, 2003).

The pioneering overview of the Soviet period, the foundation for almost all subsequent works, is Romuald J. Misiusas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence, 1940–1990*, 2nd updated edn (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993). Two rather uneven volumes of conference proceedings, *The Baltic Countries under Occupation: Soviet and Nazi rule 1939–1991*, Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia 23 (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 2003), edited by Anu-Mai Kõll, and *Regional Identity under Soviet Rule: The Case of the Baltic States* (Hackettstown, NJ: Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, 1990) edited by Dietrich André Loeber, V. Stanley Vardys, and Laurence P. Kitching, cover a diverse variety of topics. A more focused collection of essays, *The Sovietization of the Baltic States, 1940–1956* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2003), has been compiled by Olaf Mertelsmann. A highly useful study aid is a collection of documents edited by Andrejs Plakans: *Experiencing Totalitarianism: The Invasion and Occupation of Latvia by the USSR and Nazi Germany 1939–1991: A Documentary History* (AuthorHouse, 2007).

For the post-war Soviet period, there are plenty of publications dealing with repression and resistance, but very little has been written about other facets of life during the post-Stalin era. The most reliable and comprehensive book on the resistance in all three countries is *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States* (Vilnius: Du Ka, 1999) edited by Arvydas Anušauskas. Dissent and resistance to Soviet rule is documented in Thomas Remeikis, *Opposition to Soviet Rule in Lithuania, 1945–1980* (Chicago: Institute of Lithuanian Studies Press, 1980), V. Stanley Vardys, *The Catholic Church, Dissent and Nationality in Soviet Lithuania* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1978) and Rein Taagepera, *Softening without Liberalization in the Soviet Union: The Case of Jüri Kukk* (Lanham, MD: University of America Press, 1984) which masterfully places the life and death of one dissident in a wider perspective. An oral history of the forest brethren is Mart Laar, *War in the Woods: Estonia's Struggle for Survival, 1944–1956* (Washington DC: Compass, 1992).

THE SINGING REVOLUTION

The most widely read account of the ‘Singing Revolution’ and the recovery of independence is Anatol Lieven’s incisive but at times patronising eye-witness account, *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and the Path to Independence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993). *The Baltic Way to Freedom: Non-violent Struggle of the Baltic States in a Global Context* (Riga: Zelta grauds, 2003), edited by Jānis Škapars, is a comprehensive collection of short texts by many of the leading figures in the Baltic popular fronts, with the main emphasis on Latvia.

Studies of an individual country’s experiences have been most abundant in the case of Lithuania: Alfred Erich Senn, *Lithuania Awakening* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990) and *Gorbachev’s Failure in Lithuania* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1995); V. Stanley Vardys and Judith B. Sedaitis,

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Lithuania: The Rebel Nation (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997), and Richard J. Krickus, *Showdown: The Lithuanian Rebellion and the Breakup of the Soviet Empire* (Washington DC: Brassey’s, 1997). Latvia is treated in Rasma Karklins, *Ethnopolitics and Transition to Democracy: The Collapse of the USSR and Latvia* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994) and Estonia is the subject of Rein Taagepera, *Estonia: Return to Independence* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993) and Rein Ruutsoo, *Civil Society and Nation Building in Estonia and the Baltic States: Impact of Traditions on Mobilization and Transition 1986–2000 – Historical and Sociological Study* (Rovaniemi: University of Lapland, 2002).

The ‘Singing Revolution’ is placed in the wider context of developments in the USSR by Kristian Gerner and Stefan Hedlund, *The Baltic States and the End of the Soviet Empire* (London: Routledge, 1993) and Mark R. Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). The role of Western diplomacy in the achievement of Baltic independence is one of the main subjects of Kristina Spohr Readman’s *Germany and the Baltic Problem after the Cold War: The Development of a New Ostpolitik, 1989–2000* (London: Routledge, 2004).

THE TRANSITION PERIOD

The transition period of the 1990s and recent history is treated most accessibly and comprehensively in *The Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania* (London: Routledge 2002), which consists of three separate books put within a single cover: David J. Smith, *Estonia: Independence and European Integration*, Artis Pabriks and Aldis Purš, *Latvia: The Challenges of Change*, and Thomas Lane, *Lithuania: Stepping Westwards*. Their work supersedes earlier volumes by Ole Nørgaard and Lars Johannsen, *The Baltic States after Independence*, 2nd edn (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1999) and Graham Smith (ed.), *The Baltic States: The National Self-determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994), which cover similar ground. A sympathetic but idiosyncratic approach is taken by Walter C. Clemens, *The Baltic Transformed: Complexity Theory and European Security* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001) which explains why the Baltics were more successful than the Balkans in the 1990s. *Baltic Democracy at the Crossroads: An Elite Perspective* (Kristiansand: Norwegian Academic Press, 2003), edited by Sten Berglund and Kjetil Duvold, looks at post-communist elite networks and the functioning of the new democracies.

The Latvian case is analysed in Juris Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) and Marja Nissinen, *Latvia’s Transition to a Market Economy: Political Determinants of Economic Reform Policy* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1999). Daina Stukuls Eglitis, *Imagining the Nation: History, Modernity and Revolution in Latvia* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002) discusses the yearning of Latvians for a return to ‘normality’ and Katrina Z. S. Schwartz, *Nature and National Identity after Communism: Globalizing the Ethnoscape* (Pittsburgh: University

FURTHER READING

of Pittsburgh Press, 2006) looks at the relationship between Latvian identity and the environment. The Estonian case is examined in *Return to the Western World: Cultural and Political Perspectives on the Estonian Post-Communist Transition* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 1999) and *Estonia's Transition to the EU: Twenty Years On* (London: Routledge, 2009), both edited by Marju Lauristin and Peter Vihalemm.

The Russian minority in the Baltic states has been the most popular research topic in recent years. A pathbreaker was David Laitin's *Identity in Formation: The Russian-speaking Populations in the Near Abroad* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998). Mark A. Jubulis covers Latvia in *Nationalism and Democratic Transition: The Politics of Citizenship and Language in Post-Soviet Latvia* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001), and Marju Lauristin and Mati Heidmets (eds), *The Challenge of the Russian Minority: Emerging Multicultural Democracy in Estonia* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2002) examines the Estonian case. David J. Galbreath, *Nation-Building and Minority Politics in Post-Socialist States: Interests, Influence and Identities in Estonia and Latvia* (Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag, 2005) covers both cases. Lithuania receives attention in Vesna Popovski, *National Minorities and Citizenship Rights in Lithuania, 1988–93* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993).

Dovile Budryte's *Taming Nationalism? Political Community Building in the Post-Soviet Baltic States* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005) analyses the role of historical memory in the relationship between the titular and minority groups in all three states. Indeed, memory politics have become a hot topic in the wake of the relocation of the Soviet war memorial in Tallinn in 2007, which was the main catalyst for *Contested and Shared Places of Memory: History and Politics in North Eastern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2009), edited by Jörg Hackmann and Marko Lehti.

The influence of international organisations on the evolution of minority policies are examined in Judith Kelley's *Ethnic Politics in Europe: The Power of Norms and Incentives* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004) and Elena Jurado, *Complying with European Standards of Minority Protection: The Impact of the European Union, OSCE and Council of Europe on Estonian Minority Policy, 1991–2000* (Saarbrücken: VDM, 2008). *Minority Rights in Central and Eastern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2009), edited by Bernd Rechel, contains excellent chapters on the impact of EU conditionality on Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION AND FOREIGN RELATIONS

A comprehensive analysis of the process of joining the European Union is Peter Van Elsuwege, *From Soviet Republics to EU Member States: A Legal and Political Assessment of the Baltic States' Accession to the EU* (Leiden: Brill, 2008). An exhaustive account of the Lithuanian case is *Lithuania's Road to the European Union: Unification of Europe and Lithuania's EU Accession Negotiation* (Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2005), edited by Klaudijus Maniokas, Ramūnas Vilipauskas and Darius Žeruolis.

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The most notable recent scholarly analyses of Baltic foreign policies are dominated by a constructivist approach, highlighting the centrality of identity in international relations: Eiki Berg and Piret Ein (eds), *Identity and Foreign Policy: Baltic-Russian Relations* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009); David Galbreath, Ainius Lasas and Jeremy W. Lamoreaux, *Continuity and Change in the Baltic Sea Region: Comparing Foreign Policies* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008); Merje Kuus, *Geopolitics Reframed: Security and Identity in Europe's Eastern Enlargement* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), and Maria Mälksoo, *The Politics of Becoming European: A Study of Polish and Baltic Post-Cold War Security Imaginaries* (London: Routledge, 2009).

OTHER LANGUAGES AND JOURNALS

In addition to the selection of English-language books included in the above survey (and, of course, to research published in Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian), there is a rich literature on Baltic history (primarily that of Estonia and Latvia) in German. Recent introductory surveys similar in scope to the present work are Ralph Tuchtenhagen, *Geschichte der baltischen Länder* (München: C. H. Beck, 2005) and Michael Garleff, *Die baltischen Länder: Estland, Lettland und Litauen vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 2001). The most comprehensive and authoritative history of the three Baltic countries ever in any language promises to be *Das Baltikum: Geschichte einer europäischen Region*, in three volumes currently being edited by Karsten Brüggemann, Konrad Maier and Ralph Tuchtenhagen. There is also a substantial literature on Baltic history in Russian, much of which was produced during the Soviet period by Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian scholars. However, there are some important recent works by younger Russian scholars, notably Elena Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml' 1940–1953* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2007). Additionally, there is a significant amount of research in Finnish, mainly on Estonia, and in Polish, mainly on Lithuania. References to some of these works can be found in the endnotes.

As for academic journals, *Journal of Baltic Studies* is the main source. *Lituanus* is the best for Lithuanian topics. Articles on Baltic history appear regularly in *Slavic Review*, *Slavonic and East European Review*, *Europa-Asia Studies* and *Nationalities Papers*. *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* also publishes some articles in English.

Index

Abrene region, 140
Academia Gustaviana, 51 *see also* University of Tartu
Act of Kėdainiai, 49
Act of Krèva, 25
Acts of Horodło, 26
The Acts of the Apostles, 40
Adamkus, Valdas, 177, 180, 195
Afghanistan, 158, 193
agriculture, 2, 3, 5, 7, 30, 70, 114, 115, 145, 149, 156, 183–4
collectivisation and collective farms, 101, 130, 143, 145–6, 149, 156 *see also* land reform, peasantry
Alexander I, 68–9
Alexander II, 71–2, 75, 77
Alexander III, 83
Alexander Nevsky, 17
Alexis, 49, 50
Alexius II (Patriarch), 153
Algirdas, 23–4
Allik, Hendrik, 144
Alunāns, Juris, 77, 78
Ambrzevičius, Juozas, 132
Ammende, Ewald, 117
Ancylus Lake, 2
Andropov, Yuri, 151, 158
Andrusovo, Peace of, 50
Angelus, Oskar, 136
Anglo-German naval agreement, 122
Anna, 56, 63
Ansip, Andrus, 178
Anvelt, Jaan, 100
Arājs, Viktors, 135
Archbishop of Lund, 11, 34

Archbishop of Riga, 15, 18, 22, 31, 35, 39 *see also* Buxhoevden, Albert von
Archbishopric of Riga, 31, 34, 35
Aspazija (Elza Rozenberga), 85–6
Atlantic Charter, 138
Augstas gudrības grāmata no pasuāles un dabas, 61
Augustus II, 53, 62
Augustus III, 62–3
Aukštaitians, 6, 17
Auschwitz, 135
Auseklis, 85
Aušra, 82, 86, 88
Austria, 25, 43, 45, 63–4, 66, 93
Baer, Karl Ernst von, 56
Baltic Appeal, 153–4
Baltic Assembly, 165, 188
Baltic Council of Ministers, 165, 188
Baltic Entente, 122
Baltic Germans, 51, 52, 55–8, 60, 61, 64, 68, 69–71, 76, 77, 78, 79–80, 83–4, 85, 86–7, 91, 92, 93, 95–6, 97, 99, 100, 113, 114, 116–17, 118–19, 126, 133, 134, 140, 153
Baltic German nobility, *see* Baltic Germans, *Ritterschaft*
Baltic Ice Lake, 2
Baltic languages, 4
Baltic Sea, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 26, 36, 37, 51, 55, 72, 122, 126, 140, 157, 190, 196
Balts (Indo-European tribe), 1, 4, 6, 18–19, 21
Barclay de Tolly, Michael, 69

Barons, Krišjānis, 78
Baryshnikov, Mikhail, 160
Basanavičius, Jonas, 81–2, 91
Belarus, 6, 21, 64, 132, 133, 135, 136, 140, 156, 195
Bellingshausen, Fabian Gottlieb von, 56
Beria, Lavrenty, 142
Berklāvs, Eduards, 148, 149, 164
Berlin, Isaiah, 89
Bermondt-Avalov, Pavel, 103
Bērziņš, Andris, 178
Bērziņš, Jānis, 119
The Bible, 39, 56, 59
Birkavs, Valdis, 173
Bishop of Üxküll, 12
Black Plague, 25
Black Rus', 9, 18
Black Sea, 9, 25
Blaumanis, Rūdolfs, 85
Blože, Vytautas, 159
Bolsheviks, 96–99, 101–5, 113, 119, 128, 131, 151
Bona Sforza, 30
Brazauskas, Algirdas, 163, 166, 173, 177, 180
Brendenken, Christoph, 76
Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty, 98, 101
Brodsky, Joseph, 150
Bronze Age, 1, 4–5
Brotze, Johann Christoph, 61
Bund (General Jewish Labour Union of Lithuania, Poland and Russia), 90
Buxhoevden, Albert von, 12
Buxhoevden, Friedrich Wilhelm von, 69
Buxhoevden, Hermann von, 31
Byzantium, 9
Čakste, Jānis, 92, 99, 107
Calvinism, 39, 49–50
Casimir IV, 28, 29, 31
Caspian Sea, 9
Catherine I, 56
Catherine II (the Great), 59–60, 63, 66, 85
Catholicism, 17, 21, 22, 25, 26, 28, 29, 39, 40, 46, 47, 48–9, 50, 62, 77, 81, 82, 85, 88, 108, 112, 142, 143, 153, 163, 187
Caupo, 13, 14
Central Council of Latvia, 133, 138
Central League of Veterans of the Estonian War of Independence, *see* Vaps movement
Cēsis, Battle of, 101
Cēsis (Wenden), 32, 37, 103
Charles (Duke of Södermanland), 47
Charles IX, 45
Charles X, 49
Charles XI, 52, 53
Charles XII, 53–4
Charles of Moravia, 22
Cheka, 90, 101
Chernenko, Konstantin, 151
Chernobyl, 158, 161
Chodkiewicz, Jan Karol, 47, 62
Christianisation, 7, 9, 11, 24, 25, 32, 40, 44
Christianity, 1, 11, 12, 18, 20, 22, 24, 29, 59 *see also under* specific entries
Christina, 52
Chronicle of Livonia, 13, 15
Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, 153
Churchill, Winston, 138
Cimze, Jānis, 78
Cistercian Order, 32
Čiurlionis, Mikalojus, 86
Cold War, 142, 157, 161, 170
collective farms, *see* agriculture
collectivisation, *see* agriculture
colonisation, 17, 31, 32, 34, 36, 57, 87, 99, 133, 155
Comb Ware Culture, 3
Committee of Estonia, 166
Communist parties, *see under* individual countries
Comsomol, 158
Confederation of Targowica, 64
Congress of Estonia, 166
Conrad (Duke of Mazovia), 16

INDEX

Constantinople, 9, 30
 Corded Ware Culture, 3, 4
 Cossacks, 49
 Council of Baltic Sea States, 189
 Council of Europe, 188, 191, 197
 Council of Lithuania, *see Taryba*
 Council of the Lithuanian Freedom Fighters, 141
 Counter Reformation, 46, 47, 50
 Courland, 31, 34, 42, 48, 49, 55, 56, 61, 63, 66, 69, 70, 71, 72, 77, 83, 84, 87, 91, 93, 94, 97, 98, 99, 102, 103, 138, 139
 Duchy of Courland, 46, 48, 63, 66
 Bishopric of Courland, 41, 48
 Cracow, 25, 29, 39, 44, 49
 Crimean War, 72, 75
 Curonians, 6, 8, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 31
 Czechoslovakia, 111, 123, 134, 151
 Dachau, 135
 Dankers, Oskars, 132
Dannebrog, 14
 Daugava river, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 42, 94
 Dekanozov, Vladimir, 128
 Denmark, 1, 3, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 31, 34, 37, 41, 48, 53, 189
 deportations, 54, 124, 129, 130, 131, 136, 142, 144, 146, 147, 154, 161
Die Letten, 61
 Dmitry Donskoi, 24
 Dnieper river, 6, 9
 Dombrovskis, Valdis, 180
 Dominicans, 32
 Dorpat (Bishopric), 31, 34
Drang nach Osten, 17
 Duma, 92–3
 Dünamünde, 32
 Durbe, Battle of, 18
 Dzerzhinsky, Felix, 90

East Prussia, 77, 78, 80, 81, 82, 88, 93, 94, 103, 119, 126, 140
 education, 51, 64, 67, 72, 78, 81, 84, 85, 95, 115, 116, 118, 132, 143, 144, 153 *see also* schools
 Eisenstein, Mikhail, 89
 Eisenstein, Sergei, 89
 Elizabeth of Habsburg, 29
 emigration, 68, 82, 87, 88, 92, 116, 130, 144, 151, 160, 173, 178
 Emsis, Indulis, 180
 Enlightenment, 60, 61, 68, 77
 Entente powers, 99–103, 105
 Eric XIV, 41
 Ernes, Battle of, 41
 Erzberger, Matthias, 98
 Estland, 46–7, 51–8, 61, 66, 69–72, 75, 84, 87, 95, 99
 Estonian Alexander School, 79
 Estonian Citizens' Committees, 166, 167
 Estonian Constituent Assembly, 113
 Estonian cultural autonomy law, 118
 Estonian Heritage Society, 162, 166
 Estonian Learned Society, 76, 78
 Estonian National Committee, 133, 138
 Estonian political parties
 Centre Party, 174, 175, 179
 Christian Peoples' Party, 107
 Coalition Party, 173
 Communist Party, 106, 128, 129, 130, 144, 147, 149, 151, 152, 154, 162, 163, 164
 Farmers' Union, 107
 Fatherland Union, 110
 National Independence Party, 164, 166
 New Farmers, 107
 People's Party, 107
 Pro Patria, 172, 173
 Pro Patria and Res Publica Union, 178
 Reform Party, 173–4, 178
 Res Publica, 179
 Social Democrats, 175, 179

INDEX

Estonian Popular Front in Support of Perestroika, 162–5, 166, 167, 170
 Estonian Provincial Assembly, 96, 99, 100
 Estonian Provisional Government, 99
 Estonians, 4, 6, 11, 13–6, 18, 34, 52, 61, 71, 77, 78, 79, 80, 83–6, 88, 90, 91–3, 95–6, 100, 102, 103–4, 105, 106, 116, 119, 123, 126, 129, 132, 133, 135, 136, 137, 139, 142, 144, 146, 147, 150, 154, 157, 158, 162, 163, 164, 166, 167, 168, 171, 174, 185, 186, 187, 188, 190
 Estonian Salvation Committee, 97
 Estonian Swedes, 140
 European Union (EU), 172, 178, 183, 184, 185, 186, 189–92, 194, 195, 196, 197
 Faehlmann, Friedrich, 77
 famine, 43, 50, 54, 55, 58, 87, 88
 farming, *see* agriculture
 Fellin, *see* Viljandi
 Feodor, 48
 Ferdinand (Duke of Courland), 63
 feudalism, 20, 31, 34, 36, 39, 41
 Finland, ix, 3, 11, 14, 34, 69, 85, 111, 118, 125, 126, 127, 131, 137, 138, 140, 150, 184, 188, 192, 196
 Finnic tribes, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 16 *see also* Finno-Ugrians
 Finno-Ugrians, 1, 4 *see also* Finnic tribes
 First Northern War, 43, 46
 Fölkersahm, Hamilkar von, 71
 forest brothers, 124, 138–9, 142–3
 Forselius, Bengt, 51
 'four-year diet', 64
 France, 45, 69, 72, 99, 105, 106, 120, 124, 134, 167
 Franciscans, 32
 Frederick II, 41
 Frederick IV, 53
 Frederick Augustus, 53, 62
Freikorps, 100, 102, 103
 French Revolution, 66, 68
 Friedman, Milton, 182
 Friedrich (Duke of Courland), 48
 Friedrich Wilhelm (Duke of Courland), 63
 Fulco (Bishop of Estonia), 11
 Galich-Volynia, 23
 Gaon of Vilna (Eliah ben Shlomo Zalman), 67
 Garlieb, Merkel, 61
 Geda, Sigitas, 159
 Gediminas, 21, 22, 23, 28, 79
 Gediminian dynasty, 21, 22, 23, 25
 Gedvilas, Mečys, 129
 General Jewish Labour Union of Lithuania, Poland and Russia, *see* Bund
Generalplan Ost, 133
Germania, 6
 Germanisation, 84
 German occupation
 World War I, 94, 96, 97, 98, 100, 102
 World War II, 124, 127, 133, 135, 142, 145
 Germany, 11, 12, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 31, 36, 37, 38, 39, 51, 55, 60, 83, 84, 93–4, 95, 96, 99–103, 105, 106, 110, 111, 115, 116, 117, 119, 120, 122–3, 124–8, 131–6, 137–41, 142, 145, 167, 172, 173, 181, 195, 196 *see also* Nazi Germany
glasnost, 161, 162
 Godmanis, Ivars, 167, 179, 195
 Golden Horde, 24, 25 *see also* Mongol Tatars
 Goldingen, 17, 37
 Goldman, Emma, 88
 Gorbachev, Mikhail, 147, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 166–71
 Gorbunovs, Anatolijs, 163, 167
 Gotland, 11, 12

INDEX

Grand Duchy of Lithuania, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28–9, 39, 43, 44, 45, 49, 50, 55, 60, 61, 62, 64, 66, 72, 73, 85
 Great Britain, 115, 142
 Great Depression, 109, 115
 Great Guild, 36
 Great Northern War, 43, 53, 55, 57, 58, 62, 76
 Grinius, Kazys, 108
 Griškevičius, Petras, 151
 Grybauskaitė, Dalia, 180
 Guild of the Black Heads, 36
 gulag, 131, 147, 161
Gulag Archipelago, 152
 Gulf of Finland, 9, 51, 55, 131, 137, 196
 Gulf of Riga, 6
 Gustav II Adolf, 47, 50, 51
 Habsburgs, 25, 29, 30, 45
 Hanseatic League, 20, 37
 Harrien (Harjumaa), 46
 Hartknoch, Johann Friedrich, 60
 Hasselblatt, Werner, 118
 Heifetz, Jascha, 89
 Henrican Articles, 45
 Henricus (of Livonia), 13, 15
 Henry (Duke of Bavaria), 22
 Henry IV, 23
 Henry the Lion (Duke of Saxony), 11
 Henry Valois, 45
 Herder, Johann Gottfried, 60, 61
 Herder Institute, 118
 Herrnhuter movement, 58–9
 Himmler, Heinrich, 134
 Hitler, Adolf, 120, 123, 124, 125, 126, 131, 133, 137
 Hohenzollern, Albert von, 40, 42
 Holm, 15
 Holocaust, 134, 141
 Holy Land, 13, 16
 Holy Roman Empire, 31, 40
 Hroch, Miroslav, 76
 Hungarian uprising, 142
 Hungary, 29, 190
 Hupel, August Wilhelm, 61
 Hurt, Jakob, 78, 80
 Ignalina, 156, 161, 191, 196
 Ilmārv, Magnus, 127
 Ilves, Toomas Hendrik, 178, 195
 immigration, 28, 60, 184
 Indo-Europeans, 1, 4
 industrialisation, 60, 68, 88, 92, 97, 114, 115, 155
 Inflanty (Polish Livonia), 42, 46, 47, 48, 63, 72 *see also* Latgale
 International Fronts (Interfronts), 167, 168
 International Monetary Fund (IMF), 180, 181, 184
 Iron Age, 4, 5, 7, 8
 Early Iron Age, 5
 Late Iron Age, 1, 6, 7
 Roman Iron Age, 5, 7
 Iron Wolf, 112
 Iur'ev, *see* Tartu
 Ivan III, 20, 31, 41
 Ivan IV (the Terrible), 41, 44
 Ivangorod, 41
 Īvāns, Dainis, 164
 Jacob (Duke of Courland), 48, 49
 Jadwiga, 25
 Jagiellonian dynasty, 25, 29, 30, 31, 44, 45
 Jagiellonian University, 39
 Jakobson, Carl Robert, 80
 Jannsen, Johann Voldemar, 77, 79, 80
 Jansons-Brauns, Jānis, 90
 Jasinski, Jakub, 66
 Jeckeln, Friedrich, 134
 Jehovah's Witnesses, 144, 187
 Jelgava (Mitau), 63, 77, 141
 Jersika, 7, 9, 12
 Jerwen (Järvamaa), 46
 Jesuits, 46
 Jews, 21, 25, 28, 49, 66, 67, 73, 76, 82, 85, 87, 88, 89, 90, 93, 94, 104, 106, 107, 110, 116–18, 119, 124, 128, 129, 134–5, 136, 140, 150, 160

INDEX

Jogaila, 24–6, 28
 John I, 14
 John II Casimir, 62
 John III, 46, 47, 62
 John Albert, 29
 John of Bohemia, 23
 Jolson, Al, 88
 Jungingen, Ulrich von, 26
 Käbin, Johannes, 145, 151, 152
 Kalanta, Romas, 154
Kalevala, 77
Kalevipoeg, 77
 Kalinin, Mikhail, 90
 Kaliningrad, 6, 140, 194 *see also* Königsberg
 Kalinowski, Konstanty, 76
 Kallas, Siim, 174, 175, 178
 Kalnberzījs, Jānis, 130
 Kalnīqš, Pauls, 110, 133
 Kalvītis, Aigars, 179
 Kant, Immanuel, 60
 Karelia, 140
 Karotamm, Nikolai, 144, 145
 Kaudzīte, Matīss, 85
 Kaudzīte, Reinis, 85
 Kaunas (Kovno), 72, 90, 93, 102, 108, 116, 122, 123, 128, 132, 134, 135, 154, 171
 Kernavė, 7, 17
 Kestutis, 23, 24
 Kettler, Gotthard (Duke of Courland), 42, 48
 KGB, 144, 152, 153, 186 *see also* NKVD
 Khrushchev, Nikita, 147, 148, 151
 Kiev, 9, 17, 22, 23, 25, 30, 50
 Kirchholm, Battle of, 47
 Kirhensteins, Augsts, 128
 Kirkilas, Gediminas, 180
 Klaipēda (Memel), 17, 26, 116, 119, 120, 122, 123, 140, 141
 Klauson, Valter, 151
 Knights Templar, 13
 Knopken, Andreas, 40
 Koidula, Lydia, 85
 Koknese, 12, 37
 Kölner, Johann, 80
 Königsberg, 37, 40, 60, 93, 140 *see also* Kaliningrad
Konrad Wallenrod, 73
 Kościuszko, Tadeusz, 66
 Kotzebue, August von, 56
 Kovno, *see* Kaunas
 Kraków, *see* Cracow
 Krastkalns, Andrejs, 96
 Kreigholm Cotton Manufacture, 89
 Kremer, Gidon, 160
 Kreutzwald, Friedrich, 77
 Krévé-Mickevičius, Vincas, 115, 128
 Krištopans, Vilis, 174
 Kross, Jaan, 159
 Krūmiņš, Vilis, 148
 Krusenstern, Adam Johann von, 56
 Kruus, Hans, 128
 Kubiliūnas, Petras, 132
 Kubilius, Andrius, 180
 Kudirka, Simas, 154
 Kudirka, Vincas, 84
 Kuldīga, *see* Goldingen
 Kulikovo, Battle of, 24
 Kunda culture, 3
 Kurelis, Jānis, 138
 Kurland, *see* Courland
 Kviesis, Alberts, 110
 Laar, Mart, 173, 174, 175, 181
 Lācis, Mārtiņš, 101
 Lācis, Vilis, 128
Lāčplēsis, 78
 Laidoner, Johan, 102, 109
 Laikmaa, Ants, 86
 Lake Ladoga, 9
 Lake Peipus, 2, 17
Landesstaat, 51
Landeswehr, 100
 land reform, 91, 107, 113, 114, 145
 see also agriculture
 Landsbergis, Vytautas, 164, 167, 174, 177
Landtage, 38, 51, 57, 59, 83, 96
 Lapua movement, 109
 Latgale, 47, 72, 85, 87, 93, 97, 102, 104 *see also* Inflanty

INDEX

Latvian Environmental Protection Club, 162
 Latvian Legion, 137
 Latvian Literary Society, 76
 Latvian National Council, 99
 Latvian National Independence Movement, 164
 Latvian National Salvation Committee, 168, 169
 Latvian political parties
 Christian Nationalists, 107
 Communist Party, 106, 128, 129–30, 144, 147, 148, 151, 158, 162, 163, 165, 167, 168
 Democratic Centre Party, 107
 Democratic Party *Saimnieks*, 174
 Greens and Farmers' Union, 179
 Harmony Centre Party, 186
 Latvia First Party, 179
 Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party, 90, 91, 96
 Latvia's Way, 174, 178
 New Era, 179, 180
 New Farmers, 107
 Peasants' Union, 96
 People's Party, 175, 180
 Latvian Popular Front, 163, 164, 165, 167, 170, 174
 Latvian Provisional National Council, 96, 99
 Latvians, 4, 6, 52, 61, 71, 77, 78, 79, 80, 83, 84–5, 86, 87, 88, 91–2, 93–4, 95, 96, 97, 100, 103, 105, 110, 116, 119, 122, 129, 132, 133, 135, 137, 139, 142, 144, 146, 147, 154, 157, 158, 162, 163, 168, 171, 174, 185, 187, 188, 190
 Latvian tribes, 6, 9, 19, 20
Latviešu Avīzes, 77
 Lauristin, Johannes, 129
 League of Nations, 105, 119, 120, 122
Lebensraum, 133
 Leitāns, Ansis, 77
 Lembitu, 14
 Lemsal, 37

Lenin, Vladimir, 96, 98, 100, 101, 104, 156, 158, 159
Leningrad, *see* St Petersburg
 Letter of Forty, 154
 Lettigallians, 6, 9, 13, 14, 15
 Levin, Dov, 67
 Lieven, Anatol, 163
Life of Saint Ansgar, 8
 literacy, 40, 59, 76, 85
 Lithuanian Activists' Front (LAF), 131
 Lithuanian–Byelorussian SSR (Litbel), 101, 102
 Lithuanian Freedom League, 163, 164
 Lithuanian Jewish Council, 67
 Lithuanian Learned Society, 76
 Lithuanian Literary Society, 76
 Lithuanian magnates, 29, 39, 44, 49, 62, 63 *see also* Lithuanian nobility
 Lithuanian Movement for Perestroika, *see* *Sajūdis*
 Lithuanian National Salvation Committee, 169
 Lithuanian nobility, 20, 25, 26, 45, 54, 61 *see also* Lithuanian magnates
 Lithuanian political parties
 Christian Democrats, 107, 108, 109
 Communist Party, 128, 130, 144, 147, 149, 151, 152, 155, 162, 163, 165, 167, 168, 174, 188
 Democratic Labour Party, 174
 Homeland Union–Lithuanian Conservatives, 177, 180
 Labour Party, 180
 National Resurrection Party, 180
 Populists, 107, 108
 Social Democratic Workers' Party, 90
 Social Democrats, 180
 Tautininkai (Nationalist Union), 108, 110, 112
 Lithuanian Popular Front, 163, 164, 165, 167, 170

INDEX

Lithuanian Provisional Government, 100, 113, 132
 Lithuanians, 4, 6, 9, 14, 16, 17, 18–9, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 28, 34, 44, 45, 47, 50, 53, 68, 73, 75, 76, 77, 80–1, 82, 85, 86, 88, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 98, 102, 103, 104, 105, 116, 120, 122, 125, 126, 129, 131, 135, 137, 139, 142, 144, 146, 147, 148, 150, 152, 159, 163, 167, 169, 170, 171, 174, 180, 188, 190, 195
 Lithuanian Statutes, 30, 45, 50, 72
 Livland, 14, 46, 47, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 66, 69, 70, 71, 72, 75, 77, 83, 84, 87, 89, 91, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 105 *see also* Livonia
 Livland *Landtag*, 70
 Livland provincial assembly, 96
 Livonia, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 26, 28, 31–42, 43, 44, 45–8, 51, 52, 72 *see also* Inflanty, Livland
 Livonian Confederation, 20, 22, 35, 41, 51
 Livonian diet (*Landtag*), 35, 51
 Livonian Order, 52
 Livonian War, *see* First Northern War
 Livs, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 117
 Lohse, Hinrich, 132, 136
 Lotman, Yuri, 150
 Low Countries, 23, 37, 38
 Lübeck, 11, 12, 36, 37
 Luftwaffe, 140
 Lukashenko, Alexander, 195
 Lüneburg, 37
 Luther, Martin, 39
 Lutheranism, 39, 40, 41, 46, 47, 48, 51, 55, 56, 58, 76, 78, 88, 102, 107, 153, 187
 Mackevičius, Antanas, 76
 Mää, Hjalmar, 132
 Magdalen-Ahrensburgian Culture, 2
 Magnus (Duke of Holstein), 41, 45
 Maironis, 86
Mājas Viesis, 77
 Manasein, Nikolai, 83, 84
 Maniušis, Juozas, 151
 Marienburg, 16, 26, 56
 Marijampolė Gymnasium, 81
 Martinaitis, Marcelijus, 159
 Medvedev, Dmitry, 197
 Meinhard (Bishop of Üxküll), 12
 Melnik Act, 30
 Melno, Peace of, 26
 Memel, *see* Klaipėda
 Meri, Lennart, 173, 174, 177, 190
 Merkys, Antanas, 127
Mērnieku laiki, 85
 Mesolithic, *see* Stone Age
 Mickevičius-Kapsukas, Vincas, 101
 Mickiewicz, Adam, 73
 Mindaugas, 17–18, 21, 77
 Mindugas II, 98
 Minsk, 18, 66
 Mitau, *see* Jelgava
 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, 125, 160, 165
 Mongol Tatars, 16, 17, 23, 24, 25, 28, 31 *see also* Golden Horde
 Moravian Brethren, *see* Herrnhuter movement
 Moscow, 23, 47, 48, 69, 80, 89, 94, 100, 125, 142, 144, 145, 149, 150, 151, 153, 162, 165, 167, 170, 171, 195, 196
 Munters, Vilhelms, 126
 Murav'ev, Mikhail, 75
 Muscovy, 22, 23, 24, 30–1, 37, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 50, 54
 Mussolini, Benito, 111
 Napoleon, 69, 70, 72, 73
 Narva, 37, 41, 46, 51, 53, 89, 103, 138, 141, 155
 Narva river, 16
 nationalisation, 101, 130, 132, 145, 182
 NATO, 172, 177, 189, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195
 naturalisation, 185, 186

INDEX

Nazi Germany, 94, 111, 119, 122, 124, 125, 126, 128, 131–6, 137, 138, 141, 142, 151, 153
 Nemunas Culture, 3
 Nemunas river, 6, 9, 17, 19
 Neolithic, *see* Stone Age
 Neva river, 9, 55
 New Current, 90
 Nicholas I, 77
 Nicholas II, 91, 95
 Niedra, Andrievs, 102
 NKVD (Peoples' Commissariat of Internal Affairs), 130, 131
 North-Western Russian White Army, 103
 Novgorod, 9, 15, 16, 17, 31, 37, 41
 Novgorodok, 9
 Nystad, Peace of, 54
 Olaf Tryggvason, 9
 Old Believers, 60, 79, 153
 Oliwa, Peace of, 50
 OMON, 169, 170
 Operation *Priboi*, 145–6
Ordinari Freytags Post-Zeitung, 76
 Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), 191, 197
 Orthodox Christianity, 9, 12, 17, 21, 22, 23, 26, 28, 29, 30, 48, 49, 60, 62, 71, 84, 85, 87, 117, 153
 Ösel, *see* Saaremaa
 Ösel-Wiek (Bishopric), 31, 32, 34
 Ostwald, Wilhelm, 89
 Ots, Georg, 160
 Pabaikas, Battle of, 28, 35
Pacta Conventa, 45
 paganism, 24, 59
 Pakšas, Rolandas, 177, 180
 Paleckis, Justas, 128
 Paleolithic, *see* Stone Age
Pan Tadeusz, 73
 Paris Peace Conference, 100 *see also* Versailles Treaty
 Pärnu, *see* Pernau
 Pärt, Arvo, 160

partisans, *see* forest brothers
 Parts, Juhan, 178
 Patkul, Johann Reinhold von, 52
 Päts, Konstantin, 95, 97, 99, 107, 109, 110, 111, 112, 114, 117, 129
 Paul I, 60
 Paulauskas, Artūras, 177
 Pauls, Raimonds, 160, 174
 peasantry, 8, 20, 28, 30, 32, 38–9, 48, 51, 52, 53, 55, 57, 58–9, 60, 61, 68, 69, 70–2, 73, 75, 76, 78, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 87, 89, 91, 93, 96, 101, 107, 108, 113, 114, 116, 117, 130, 139, 145
 Pelše, Arvīds, 148
 Pernau (Pärnu), 37
Perno Postimees, 77
Perestroika, 161, 162, 163, 164
 Peter I (the Great), 53, 54, 55, 56, 63, 83, 84, 126
 Peters, Jēkabs, 101
 Petrograd, *see* St Petersburg
 Petseri, 140
 Philip of Swabia, 12
 Piłsudski, Józef, 104, 108, 120
 Pilten (Piltene), 48
 Pioneers, 143, 158
 Plechavičius, Povilas, 137
 Plettenberg, Wolter von, 40, 41
 Podolia, 23
 Poland, 6, 20, 22, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30, 40, 43–50, 53, 54, 73, 75, 81, 90, 104, 119, 120, 122, 125, 126, 128, 140, 141, 150, 153, 186, 189, 190, 194, 196 *see also* Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth
 Poles, 11, 19, 21, 25, 28, 45, 47, 49, 53, 73, 75, 81, 82, 88, 90, 106, 107, 117, 120, 125, 137, 141, 167, 186
 Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, 41, 42, 43–50, 53, 61–7, 72, 83
 Polish National Central Committee, 75

INDEX

Polish-Soviet War, 104
 political parties, *see under specific countries*
 polonisation, 26, 44
 Polotsk, 9, 14, 44
 Poltava, Battle of, 54
 Pope Alexander III, 11
 Pope Boniface IX, 35
 Pope Honorius III, 13
 Pope Innocent III, 12, 13
 Pope Innocent VI, 35
 Pope John Paul II, 153
 Pope Martin V, 35
 Pope Nicholas V, 35
 Poska, Jaan, 96
Postimees, 91
 privatisation, 173, 174, 177, 182, 183
 Protestantism, 20, 39–40, 49–50, 51
 Pruskiene, Kazimiera, 167
 Prussia, 17, 19, 23, 26, 32, 39, 40, 42, 43, 60, 63, 64, 66, 69, 72, 73, 98, 99, 116 *see also* East Prussia
 Prussians, 6, 16, 18, 19
 Pskov, 9, 15, 17, 34, 41, 46
 Pugo, Boriss, 152, 170
 Pukuveras, 21
 Pumpurs, Andrejs, 78
 Purvītis, Vilhelms, 115
 Putin, Vladimir, 194, 195
 Rabbi Chaim, 67
 Radziwiłł, Janusz, 49
 Radziwill, Mikołaj, 39
 Rainis (Jānis Pliekšāns), 85
 Rastrelli, Francesco Bartolomeo, 63
 Reagan, Ronald, 161
 Red Army, 101, 102, 103, 104, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 130, 133, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 142, 143, 144, 170, 186, 193
 Red Guards, 97
 Reformation, 20, 32, 39–41
 refugees, 94, 116, 117, 125, 139, 140, 142, 150
 religion, *see under specific entries*
 Rennenkampf, Paul von, 93
 Repše, Einārs, 177
 Reval, *see* Tallinn
 Ribbentrop, Joachim von, 123
 Riga (Rīga), 2, 12, 15, 18, 22, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 42, 46, 47, 51, 53, 54, 57, 59, 60, 61, 76, 79, 84, 87, 88–9, 90, 91, 94, 96, 98, 99, 101, 102, 103, 110, 115, 117, 118, 128, 130, 132, 134, 138, 148, 152, 155, 157, 160, 161, 163, 165, 168, 169, 171, 186, 187, 191
 Archbishopric of, 34, 35
 Riga Latvian Association, 79
 Riga Latvian House, 79
 Riga Polytechnical Institute, 94
Ritterschaft, 51, 56, 57, 59, 69, 71, 84, 89, 99
 Roma, 135, 140
 Roman Empire, 6
 Romanov dynasty, 56, 83, 84, 93, 118
 Rome, 12, 13, 31, 34, 49
 Roop (Straupe), 37
 Roosevelt, Franklin D., 138
 Rosenberg, Alfred, 94, 132, 136
 Rothko, Mark, 88
 Rozentāls, Jānis, 86
 Rubenis, Jurijs, 151
 Rubiks, Alfreðs, 166, 187
 Rudzutaks, Jānis, 119
 Rumbula, 134
 Runnel, Hando, 159
 Rus', 1, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 28, 30, 41, 46
 Russia, 3, 6, 37, 44, 47, 51, 99, 103, 114, 115, 133, 136, 140, 141, 155
 Russian Empire, 43, 53–4, 55–60, 62–64, 66, 68, 69, 71, 72–3, 75, 76, 78, 80, 81, 82, 83–90, 92, 93–4, 97, 98, 101

INDEX

Russia (*cont.*):
 Russian Federation, 179, 180, 183, 185, 186, 189, 192, 193–7
 Soviet Russia, 98, 99, 101, 103–4, 105, 106, 116, 119, 122, 124, 128, 140, 141, 143, 145, 148, 149, 156, 164, 169, 171
 Russian civil war, 100, 103, 105, 117
 Russian Constituent Assembly, 96
 Russian minority, 169, 185, 186, 188, 191
 Russian Orthodox Church, *see* Orthodox Christianity
 Russian Revolution
 Revolution of 1905, 90, 91, 92, 93, 97
 Revolution of 1917, 95, 96, 97
 Russians, 60, 64, 85, 87, 96, 106, 117, 118, 140, 154, 157, 168, 184, 185, 194, 197
 Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party, 90
 Russian Volunteer Western Army, 103
 Russification, 60, 81, 83–7, 91, 99, 147, 152, 154, 158
 Russo-Baltic Wagon Factory, 89
 Russo-Japanese War, 72, 90
 Russo-Turkish War, 72
 Ruthenians (Eastern Slavs), 22, 48
 Rüütel, Arnold, 167, 174, 178
Rzeczypospolita, *see* Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth

Saaremaa (Ösel), 1, 11, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 34, 47, 56, 99
Sajūdis (Lithuanian Movement for Perestroika), 164, 167, 177 *see also* Lithuanian Popular Front

Sakala, 14
Sakala (newspaper), 80
 Sakharov, Andrei, 154
 Samarin, Yuri, 83
 Samogitia, 17, 18, 19, 22, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 50, 81

Samogitians, 6, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21
 Sarbievius, Mathias Casimirus, 46
 Säre, Karl, 130
 Sauerwein, Georg, 77
 Saulė, Battle of, 16
 Savisaar, Edgar, 167, 174, 175, 178
 Saxony, 12, 39, 62, 63
 Scalvians, 6
 Scandinavia, 1, 2, 4, 7, 8–9, 11, 13, 120, 123
 Schiemann, Paul, 117
 Schirren, Carl, 83
 schools, 51, 52, 60, 78, 79, 80, 81, 83, 84, 86, 91, 108, 116, 117, 118, 143, 185, 189 *see also* education
 Schwarzenberg, Johann Georg Eisen von, 59
 Second Northern War, 43
Segodnya, 185
 Self-Managing Estonia proposal (IME), 162
 Selonians, 6, 9, 14
 serfdom, 30, 48, 52, 53, 59, 66, 69, 70
 Šiauliai, 134, 135, 141, 193
 Siberia, 75, 87, 92, 131, 146
 Siegerist, Joachim, 174
 Sigismund (Holy Roman Emperor), 26
 Sigismund (Grand Duke of Lithuania), 28
 Sigismund II Augustus, 30
 Sigismund III Vasa, 46, 47
 Sigismund Augustus, 30, 40, 42, 44, 45, 46, 48
 Sigismund the Old, 30, 31, 40
 Sigtuna, 11
 Siimann, Mart, 174
 Singing Revolution, 147, 160–5, 168, 174
 Sirk, Artur, 109
 Skaryna, Francysk, 40
 Šķēle, Andris, 174
 Skirgaila, 25
 Škirpa, Kazys, 131, 132

Šlesers, Ainārs, 179
 Šleževičius, Adolfas, 177
 Smetona, Antanas, 95, 98, 99, 108–9, 110, 111, 112, 118, 122, 127, 129
 Smiglecius, Martinus, 46
 Smolensk, 31, 47, 50
 Smolino, Battle of, 41
 Sniečkus, Antanas, 130, 149, 151
 Solzhenitsyn, Alexander, 150
 song festivals, 79, 159, 162, 163
 Soros, George, 188
 Soviet Baltic Military District, 130, 155, 170
 Soviet Union (USSR), 90, 101, 108, 111, 119, 120, 122, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 131, 132, 133, 137, 138, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 148, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 160, 161, 162, 164, 165, 166, 169, 171, 174, 181, 182, 184, 186, 190, 192, 194
 Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), 130, 143, 144, 145, 147, 148, 149, 151, 152, 161, 162, 164, 165, 168, 169, 170
SS Einsatzgruppe A, 134
 Stahlecker, Walter, 134
 Stalin, Joseph, 119, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 138, 140, 142, 143, 145, 146, 147, 148, 152, 157, 158, 161
 Stanisław II Augustus, 63
 Stefan Batory, 45
 Stender, Gotthard Friedrich, 61
 St George's Night uprising, 34
 Stockholm, 11, 52, 133, 150, 160
 Stolbovo, Peace of, 51
 St Petersburg (Petrograd/Leningrad), 7, 51, 55, 56, 57, 58, 63, 66, 68, 69, 78, 80, 87, 88, 89, 90, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97, 101, 103, 128, 150, 153, 156
 Stolypin, Pyotr, 93

INDEX

Stone Age, 4, 8
 Early Stone Age (Paleolithic), 2
 Middle Stone Age (Mesolithic), 3
 New Stone Age (Neolithic), 3
 Stučka, Pēteris, 90
 Stulginskis, Aleksandras, 107
 Stutthof, 135
 Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania, 133
 Suwałki (Suvalkija), 66, 73, 81, 82
 Švitrigaila, 28
 Sweden, 2, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 34, 41–2, 43, 46, 47, 49–54, 55, 57, 62, 72, 138, 139, 154, 190
 Swidrian Culture, 2, 3
 Swordbrothers, 13, 14, 15–6
 Synod of Brest, 49

Tacitus, 6
 Tallinn (Reval), 14, 15, 34, 36, 37, 39, 41, 46, 51, 52, 54, 72, 76, 84, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 94, 96, 97, 101, 105, 109, 125, 126, 127, 128, 131, 138, 145, 150, 153, 154, 156, 160, 162, 165, 168, 169, 171, 186, 188, 191, 196
 Tammsaare, Anton Hansen, 115
 Tannenberg, Battle of, 26, 35, 38
 Tannenberg line, 138
Tarto maa rahva Nääddali-Leht, 76
 Tartu (Dorpat), 9, 37, 46, 51, 54, 69, 76, 79, 91, 112, 157, 178
 Tartu Peace Treaty, 104
 Taryba, 98, 99
 Teutonic Order (Knights), 1, 16–9, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 31, 32, 35, 40, 42, 73
 Thatcher, Margaret, 181
 Third Reich, *see* Nazi Germany
 Thirty Years' War, 51
 Thunder Cross, 110
 Tief, Otto, 140
 Tormis, Veljo, 159
 Tõnnisson, Jaan, 91, 92, 107, 109
 Treaty of Pereyaslav, 49

INDEX

- trade, 1, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 14, 20, 21, 22, 25, 36–7, 38, 51, 82, 89, 98, 172, 179, 181, 183, 184, 188, 189, 194, 195, 196
Traidenis, 18, 19, 21
Trakai, 17
trans-Narva region, 140
Tübelis, Juozas, 111

Ugandi, 14
Ukraine, 23, 49, 50, 54, 64, 136, 145, 161, 192, 196
Ulmanis, Guntis, 174, 175
Ulmanis, Kārlis, 95, 96, 99, 100, 101, 106, 109–10, 111, 113, 117, 129
Uluots, Jüri, 133, 138
Uniate Church, 49
Union of Lublin, 44
United States of America (USA), 88, 105, 138, 140, 142, 151, 161, 170, 187, 192, 193
University of Dorpat, 69, 83, 84, 89, 116 *see also* University of Tartu
University of Kaunas, 128
University of Königsberg, 39
University of Latvia, 116
University of Tartu, 116, 119, 128, 150
University of Vilnius, 46, 69, 73, 116
University of Wilno, *see* University of Vilnius
Urals, 4
urbanisation, 68, 89, 115
Ušakovs, Nils, 186
Uspaskich, Viktor, 180
USSR, *see* Soviet Union

Vācietis, Jukums, 101
Vācietis, Ojārs, 159
Vagnorius, Gediminas, 177
Vagris, Jānis, 163
Vaino, Karl, 152, 163
Valančius, Motiejus, 81
Valdemar II, 14
Valdemārs, Krišjānis, 78
Valdmanis, Alfrēds, 136
Valga/Valka, 35, 38, 96, 105
Valinskas, Arūnas, 180
Vāljas, Vaino, 163
Valmiera (Wolmar), 35, 37, 58, 69, 78, 87
Valters, Mīkelis, 90
Vanemuine choral society, 80
Vaps movement, 109, 110
Vares, Johannes, 128
Varpas, 82
Vasa dynasty, 46, 62
Velliste, Trivimi, 166
Venclova, Tomas, 160
Ventspils (Windau), 37, 48, 179, 196
Versailles Treaty, 105 *see also* Paris Peace Conference
Viiding, Juhani, 159
Viķe-Freiberga, Vaira, 177, 179, 185
Vilde, Eduard, 85
Viljandi (Fellin), 37
Vilnius, 17, 18, 21, 29, 30, 36, 39, 40, 46, 49, 50, 66, 67, 69, 72, 73, 75, 76, 84, 88, 90, 91, 98, 101, 102, 104, 105, 108, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 122, 123, 125, 126, 134, 135, 138, 140, 141, 150, 160, 161, 163, 165, 166, 180, 186, 196
Vikings, 8, 9
Vil'na (province), 72, 93
Visby, 11, 12, 36, 37
Virumaa, *see* Wierland
Vistula river, 6
Vitebsk, 72, 75, 77, 85
Voldemaras, Augustinas, 99, 100, 108, 111, 120
Volga river, 9
Vorskala, Battle of, 25
Voss, Augusts, 151, 152, 158
Votes (Votians), 7, 16
Vyshinsky, Andrei, 128
Vytautas, 24–6, 28
Vytenis, 21

Waffen-SS, 136, 137
Wagner, Richard, 89

INDEX

- Walk, *see* Valga/Valka
Warsaw, 44, 49, 62, 63, 75, 88, 104, 108, 119, 134, 165
Duchy of Warsaw, 69, 73
Watson, Karl Friedrich, 77
Wehrmacht, 137
Wenden, *see* Cēsis
Wenden, Battle of, 46
Wends, 11
Westphalia, 12, 35
Wiek (Läänemaa), 46
Wierland (Virumaa), 46
Wilhelm II, 99
William of Modena, 16
Windau, *see* Ventspils
Winnig, August, 99
Winter War, 126
Wiśniowiecki, Michał, 62
Władysław II Jagiełło, 25, 28
Władysław III, 28
Wolmar, *see* Valmiera
World Bank, 184
World War I, 68, 87, 88, 90, 93, 95, 100, 105, 114, 116, 125
World War II, 124, 125, 133, 141, 158, 194, 196
World Trade Organisation (WTO), 188

Yaroslav the Wise, 9
Yčas, Martynas, 93
Yeltsin, Boris, 164, 169, 171
Yiddish Scientific Institute, 117
Yoldia Sea, 2
Yotvingians, 6
Young Latvian movement, 80
Yudenich, Nikolai, 103

Žalgiris, Battle of, *see* Tannenberg, Battle of
Zapp, Walter, 115
Zatlers, Valdis, 179
Żeligowski, Lucjan, 104
Žemaitians, *see* Samogitians
Žemaitija, *see* Samogitia
Žemaitis, Jonas, 141, 142
Zemgals, Gustavs, 107
Zhdanov, Andrei, 128
Ziedonis, Imants, 159
Žalakevičius, Vytautas, 160