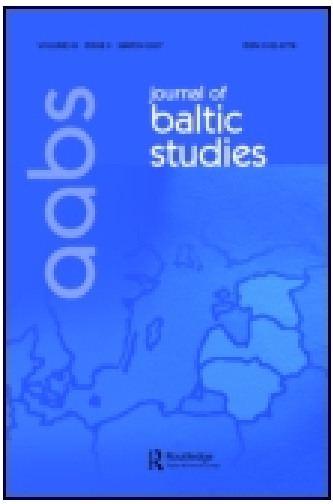

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The Politics of Energy and Memory between the Baltic States and Russia

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The book concludes by illustrating how identity is constrained by historiographical narratives and how the subsequent legitimizing political discourses can inform the path taken by the Baltic States from the Soviet Union to the European Union. Mole is not the first to look at the path from the USSR to the EU and NATO, nor is he the first to examine the role of identity and discourse in explaining this path. Nevertheless, where others have looked specifically at minorities or foreign policy or even meticulously at the adoptions of EU legislation in Baltic legislatures, Mole is the first to provide a broad-brush approach to the subject. I would like to have seen more theoretical contribution and rigor in the analytical approach, as well as a greater use of actual discourse to inform the analysis. Nevertheless, Mole has provided an interesting and well-written exploration of the Baltic states and their journey from persistent subjugation to EU and NATO member-states.

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University of Bath

The Politics of Energy and Memory between the Baltic States and Russia
AGNIA GRIGAS
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Recently there has been a spate of policy papers on the subject of energy politics, particularly since Lithuania has established the NATO Centre of Excellence for Energy Security in Vilnius, but this is the first scholarly monograph on Baltic-Russian energy politics. More academic research has been published on memory politics during recent years, spurred on by the relocation of the Soviet victory monument in Tallinn in 2007, and it is a rapidly expanding field.

Grigas deals mainly with the impact of domestic politics on foreign policy, i.e. relations with Russia. Her study seeks to explain (or "unpack") the sources of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian policies, rather than those of Russia. She examines developments during the first two decades of restored independence, from 1994 to 2012, placing Baltic governments on a scale of "cooperative" or "adversarial" politics towards Russia, interchanging these terms with "pragmatic" and "principled," respectively.

Her approach is to take four case studies: (1) oil, focusing on the closure of the Ventspils oil pipeline in 2003, the "temporary" closure of the Druzhba pipeline in 2006 after the Lithuanian decision to sell the Mažiekiai oil refinery terminal to a Polish company rather than to a Russian one, and the stoppage of the transit of Russian oil through Estonian ports in 2007 in response to the "Bronze Soldier" conflict; (2) gas, particularly decisions about ownership, beginning with privatization of the sector in the 1990s resulting in Russian control and concluding with the EU's Third Energy Package where Lithuania has been the first EU member state to proceed with the "unbundling" of supply and delivery infrastructure, which Gazprom continues to oppose tooth and nail; (3) Soviet Victory Day, specifically the Baltic presidents'

decisions to reject or accept invitations to commemorations in Moscow in 1995, 2005, and 2010; (4) historical justice, specifically the case of demanding compensation from Russia for Soviet occupation damages.

Grigas concludes that the most important factors determining the outcome in these cases were not Russia's policies, the influence of the EU or ethnic minorities, but rather Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian domestic political factors, especially the instrumental usage of principled policies for domestic audiences, and the influence of business interests. Her findings demolish the stereotype that Estonia and Latvia have worse relations with Russia than Lithuania because of the tension over their large Russian-speaking minorities. According to Grigas, Lithuania has been more bellicose towards Russia precisely because of the marginal role of ethnic Russians. Lithuania has demonstrably been the most adversarial of the three Baltic states regarding compensation demands, not attending Victory Day in Moscow, trying to wrest control over gas pipelines from Gazprom, and resisting Russian investment in the oil sector. Estonia, on the other hand, despite being adversarial (or principled) towards Russia on a political level, has been the most open towards Russian investment. Interestingly, this is because it has consistently pursued neo-liberal economic policies, while in Lithuania and Latvia the state has often favored politically well-connected local companies or businessmen. Latvia, as is often the case, lies somewhere between the other two, having begun as quite adversarial in the 1990s and becoming rather pragmatic in recent years, for instance in its relatively muted reaction to the construction of the Nord Stream pipeline.

Grigas shows that left-wing (and/or those with communist roots) parties or statesmen, while being inclined to be more accommodating with Russia, have been constrained by the domestic political costs of espousing such a position. A good example is Estonian President Arnold Rüütel's rejection of the invitation to the Victory Day parade in Moscow. In contrast, right-wing governments have in practice been more easily able to make pragmatic decisions since they are less open to the nationalist charge of being soft toward Russia. Unsurprisingly, she finds that parties behave more pragmatically in government than in opposition.

As for membership in the EU and NATO as a variable in the relationship, Grigas finds that it has not significantly changed the course of Baltic policies towards Russia, with the notable exception of the gas sector and direct challenge to Gazprom entailed in enacting the EU's unbundling directive. If anything, membership has emboldened the Baltic states to use their new leverage, most strikingly when Lithuania vetoed the negotiating mandate for the new EU–Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement in 2008.

One of the major strengths of the book is that it is genuinely comparative Baltic, though understandably (being née Baranauskaitė) the author had better access to Lithuanian sources than to Estonian or Latvian ones. The study also highlights the failings of Baltic cooperation. Though the three Baltic states share the same strategic goals, political coordination among them tends to crumble when faced with strong domestic political or commercial interests, a case in point being the difficulty in agreeing on a site for a regional liquefied natural gas terminal which would reduce dependence on Russia.

My main criticism of this study is that it is highly unusual to put energy politics and memory politics together. Furthermore, they are given unbalanced emphasis: four chapters deal with energy and only two with memory issues. In fact, it seems that the memory chapters have been tacked onto the end of the manuscript (originally a doctoral thesis at Oxford). The book would have been more coherent if it had dealt in more depth with energy alone, especially since it is obviously Grigas's field of expertise (not memory politics).

Grigas has missed some recent related academic studies on Baltic foreign policy or relations with Russia, such as those by Maria Mälksoo (2009), Eiki Berg and Piret Ehin (2009), Ausra Park (2005), Eva-Clarita Onken (2007), and Nils Muižnieks (2011). Methodologically somewhat problematic is that according to her references, it appears that she often bases her evaluation of an episode or a political decision on just one interview with a single Baltic diplomat or official.

Nevertheless, on the whole, this is an important and informative book. It challenges some of the common assumptions about Baltic-Russian relations, sheds light on the murky world of post-Soviet pipeline politics, and is a study which anyone researching the subject in the future will have to consult.

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