

Interethnic Relations and the Acculturation of the Non-titular Population in Estonia and Lithuania: A Sociopsychological Perspective

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ABSTRACT. The empirical social-psychological study of interethnic interaction in Estonia and Lithuania was a part of the project “Democratisation and The Ethnic World: models of regulation of ethnopolitical crises”. The main aim was to study a social-psychological discourse of interethnic relations and the degree of its overlap or contradiction with the ethnopolitical (public) discourse. In this paper, we shall focus on some data from this project that regards acculturation and those elements of the discourse that have to do with adaptation of the non-titular populations to the changing contexts of their societies in a time of broad political and economic reforms and democratisation.

Introduction

The survey was carried out in October-November 1996 in the capitals of Estonia and Lithuania among the titular ethnicity and among the Russian residents. The data that was analysed come from 32 Estonians, 35 Russians from Estonia, 34 Lithuanians, and 42 Russians from Lithuania who were chosen on the basis of random sampling. All of the surveyed were residents of the capital cities; the majority of them worked, had families, and were relatively far from politics. The samples are weighted according to sex and age.

The methods used come from empirical research and are mainly oriented to the actualisation of social-perceptive images of cross-cultural interaction: method of ethnic auto- and heterostereotypes (Katz D., Braly K.W. 1933), Bogardus' scale of social distance (Bogardus E.S. 1959), “Who am I?” test (Kuhn M. & Mc Partland T. 1954), measure of satisfaction with realisation of the life sense of Crumbought (1968) adapted by Yadov and Muzdybaev, etc. There has been also a focus on so-called ‘ethnic’ values and ‘universalist’ Western values such as democracy, human rights, and liberalism for studying the relationship of these value blocks in the consciousness of different groups and their leaders.

Identity block

We calculated the share of answers (the open ended question ‘Who am I?’ – Kuhn & McPartland’s test) that refer to ethnicity and those that refer to citizen-

ship/civics (Table 1). Ethnic belonging is most significant for Estonians and Lithuania's Russians, and much less significant for Lithuanians and Estonia's Russians. Concerning that, 5.7 percent of Russians in Estonia and 4.7 percent in Lithuania indicate negative self-characteristics related to their ethnic background¹.

Naming oneself as a citizen of one's respective country is most frequent among Lithuanians (23.5 percent), and significantly less so among Estonians. It is mentioned by some Russians in Lithuania but does not appear at all among Estonia's Russians. Certain parity between the two types of identification is noticeable only among Lithuanians, while all other groups have a predominantly ethnic dimension, completely unpaired with the civic in the case of Estonia's Russians. These data reflect the complex relationship between ethnic and civic identity and the fact that the ratio between them in each group may be shaped by different reasons.

In outlining the project, we assumed that the identity structure of most respondents in the surveyed settings ('border of East and West') would be complex due to the specific background of overlapping ethnic, religious, and political influences. The differing structures of self-identity were confirmed by the answers to the range of suggested identity options, where respondents would answer "Who do you feel to be the most?" (Table 2).

Among the Estonians, ethnic identity clearly dominates, followed by civic and European options. Estonia's Russians also have ethnic identity in first place, followed by identification as a citizen of Estonia and as a citizen of the former USSR. Among Lithuanians, ethnic identity is also first, but civic identity does not lag far behind, as in the situation among Estonians. Lithuania's Russians stand out with high rate of identification as a citizen of the former USSR; both groups in Lithuania have a clear layer of religious identity. Thus, ethnic identity is number one in the self-identification structure of all the groups. Citizen of a country is the second most highly rated option among the titular groups and Estonia's Russians; a feeling of European identity in the titular groups is paralleled with a feeling of being a citizen of the former USSR among the Russians.

What is the basis of the prevailing ethnic identification? The basic elements which are felt to tie the respondents with their co-ethnics are language, culture, and way of life (Table 3). There are also differences: Land and nature are significant sources of self-identification for the titular ethnic groups, but not for Russians. Psychology and history predominates among the Lithuanian Russians and means that their ethnic identity is primarily idealistic.

¹ Such as 'other origin', 'stranger', 'immigrant' (in Russian: "иностранец", "иностранка", "иммигрант").

Acculturation

Group stereotypes

The major dilemmas that lay in the basis of a certain acculturation model regard the relation to one's own ethnic culture (and background/belonging) and to the culture of dominant ethnicity. The same issues shape the attitudes of the dominant ethnic groups vis-à-vis the groups of other ethnicities.

The study of ethnic auto- and heterostereotypes is one of the methods to analyse the aforementioned relations. We asked the respondents to list five features characteristic of the typical members of their own ethnic group, and five features of the neighbouring ethnicity. The answers received were divided into three clusters: prevailingly positive features; positive and negative features; prevailingly negative features (Table 4).

Russians in both Estonia and Lithuania exhibit tense social-psychological mechanisms that are defensive in relation to influence from other cultures. This is confirmed by the high rate of predominantly positive autostereotypes. The 'titular ethnicities' have fewer outstanding positive autostereotypes, which reveals a positive self-perception without the defensive psychological tension.

As heterostereotypes show, both groups in Estonia see each other as having more negative than positive features. This means that both groups are closed inside themselves and defensive mechanisms are active in their group consciousness, supposedly preventing the influence of the outsider culture. The same picture of group consciousness (with a still higher rate of heterostereotypes) comes from Lithuania's Russians. The Lithuanians, however, feel a lot more comfortable, which is reflected in a higher rate of positive stereotypes about Russians.

Another indicator is emotions related to ethnic background/belonging, in other words, positive or negative self-identification with one's ethnic group (Table 5). While positive identification prevails in all the groups, the titular ethnicities have higher rates than Russians. Russians, especially Lithuania's Russians, have a rather high rate of negative feelings related to their ethnicity. This means that there is an evident negative element (in emotional terms) in their ethnic identity: Understanding oneself as Russian is connected to negative feelings.

Socialising

An important indicator for assessing acculturation is the degree of involvement in social circles of an ethnicity other than one's own, especially in one's free time. In the research, we asked the respondents to identify with whom they mainly socialise (in ethnic terms) at work and during leisure time (Table 6). In spite of the fact that the percentages of Estonians and Russians in Estonia are quite comparable (roughly 60 percent and 40 percent), they barely get in touch at work

or socialise in intra-ethnic circles. In Lithuania this separation is not as clear, and there is higher rate of Russians who are surrounded by co-workers from the titular ethnicity; however, it is quite surprising that most Russians (less than 9 percent of the population) succeed in communicating equally with Lithuanians and Russians when working, while a fourth of them stay in predominantly Russian circles. Taken generally, it seems that both titular and minority ethnic groups are successful in avoiding or seeking to avoid interethnic communication.

The differences are even sharper when leisure socialising is compared, especially in Estonia: Estonians practically do not socialise with Russians, and only 17 percent of Russians communicate with Estonians. In Lithuania the separation is less pronounced – about a third of Lithuanians and a fourth of Russians are involved in interethnic communication during leisure time. The question then is what the reasons are for such a sharp division and closure in the separate ethnic ‘rooms’: language barrier, antipathy, or something else? Let us review these factors in more detail.

Language barrier as a dividing factor

The knowledge of languages is better viewed in dynamic terms, in particular on the basis of three generations: the parents of the respondents, themselves, and their children (Table 7). According to the responses, the middle generation knows Russian best, and a large share of their parents also know the language. However, a fourth of the children have no knowledge of Russian, and less than a fifth know it well. The vector of exclusion of the Russian language by the Estonians is evident. At the same time, Russians exhibit the opposite vector, with each generation knowing Estonian better. The poor knowledge of the elder generation is not surprising as many of them spent part of their life in Russia. It is notable that Russian children already know Estonian to a greater degree than their Estonian peers know Russian.

What surprises in Lithuania (after noting that it is middle generation that knows Russian best) is that children of the respondents know Russian relatively well. It means that vector of excluding (*отмежевение*) the Russian language is not really evident among Lithuanians. While Lithuanians lead in their knowledge of language of the out-group (in all generations), Lithuania’s Russians also know Lithuanian quite well, especially the younger generation.

In general, even though the official language is not known by the Russian residents well enough yet, there is a clear trend of increasing knowledge of the respective languages. This leads one to believe that the language barrier will no longer be among the reasons for interethnic separation. However, this is not an entirely mutual process in Estonia, as the vectors of knowing the out-group language are opposite in majority and minority groups.

Apart from the language barrier, there can be also other reasons for the distances between the groups (see Table 8). Not knowing the language of the out-

group is admitted as a barrier by 46 percent of Russians in Estonia and 31 percent in Lithuania. Lithuanians and about a fifth/fourth of the Russians in both countries mention the specific behaviour of the ethnic out-group. Almost a fourth of Lithuania's Russians assume there is antipathy towards them from the side of Lithuanians. A slightly smaller part of Estonia's Russians and Lithuanians think the same about their neighbouring group. Only a small portion of Estonians admitted they feel some antipathy. Apparently this question was not simple for the 'titular' ethnicities – around half of them refused any specific answer; a fifth of the Russians also omitted it. In any case, language does not seem to be the crux of the problem for the dominant groups in the Baltic countries.

Social distance and tension in interethnic relations

When checking the degree of and the barriers for accepting the out-group member (in the questionnaire, we used a modified version of Bogardus's scale of social distance), we noticed that quite a large portion of all groups (~31-45 percent) is ready to accept the ethnic out-group member as a spouse, but only a small portion of the titular groups (9 percent) agrees to accept Russians as spouses for their children (Table 9). This could be an indicator of an emerged vector of distancing from the Russians.

From the suggested list of causes of interethnic tension, the titular nationalities mainly noted the unwillingness of the Russians to obey the law (Estonians emphasise it more, Lithuanians less), the discrepancy between the law and the expectations of Russians, and the difficult historical legacy. Russians of both countries agree that the laws don't match their expectations but do not think at all that Russians do not wish to obey the law. At a similar rate (43 percent) as the dominant groups, they agree that the reasons for the tension lie in the historical past. But the range of reasons with significant rates indicated by Russians is quite broader, including 'economics', 'competition for power and redistribution of wealth', and 'radical nationalism' (23 percent by Estonian Russians is the highest rate) – extending beyond the narrow "unwillingness" to obey the law.

So, respondents in all groups indicated the burden of the past, which most likely means the policy of the USSR in the Baltic countries during the Soviet period. The end of Soviet rule might have been expected to mean the removal of the main cause of the tension and, accordingly, improvement in interethnic relations. However, the majority in all groups noted that state independence had little influence on the *interpersonal* relations between the members of the titular and Russian groups. Sixteen percent of Estonians indicated that independence improved the attitude of the Russians they know, and none of the Lithuanians and Estonians surveyed mentioned the complication. From fourteen to seventeen percent of Russians in both countries, however, feel that the attitude of their acquaintances from the majority ethnic group towards them has worsened. There

are sharper differences in evaluating the change of interethnic relations after the gain of independence in general terms (rather than in terms of acquaintances as above). The majority of Estonians declare a considerable or relative improvement (75 percent). A third of the Lithuanians indicate some improvement and a third indicate some worsening. The majority of Russians indicate a relative or considerable worsening in interethnic relations after independence (68 percent in Estonia and 69 percent in Lithuania). Evaluations of the current situation (Table 10) confirm the same general tendency: The majority groups perceive interethnic relations in their country as more or less good, and Russians feel more tension (although a considerable portion of Russians, especially in Lithuania, also admit that relations are 'calm').

Suppression of rights

It seems quite logical to assume that differences in those evaluations may have to do with the suppression of the rights of the minority population; it has to be noted that it also refers to the suppression that could have taken place in the past, and in relation to the 'titular' population. Quite a high number of Russians in both countries indicate the suppression of their rights; as do almost half of the Estonians and less than a fifth of the Lithuanians (Table 11). In psychological terms, current experiences outweigh the memories about the suppression of rights in the past.

For those segments of the titular groups who did declare that they have experienced the suppression of their rights due to their ethnic background, the spheres of culture, politics, and social mobility (Estonians) or culture and politics (Lithuanians) dominate. Besides public services and political rights in Estonia, and services and education in Lithuania, Russians in both countries mention employment (getting a job) and social mobility (advancement at work) at high rates (Table 12). Although the sphere of employment appears as most critical, it is quite complicated to obtain direct measures of discrimination. Instead, we inquired about the attitude to the very principle of taking ethnic background into account in employment² (Table 13). Half of the Estonians, 18 percent of the Lithuanians, 3 percent of the Russians in Estonia, and 7 percent of the Russians in Lithuania accept the principle of ethnic discrimination. Seventy-three percent of Lithuanians, 93 percent of Lithuania's Russians, 41 percent of Estonians, and 31 percent of Estonian's Russians disagree with it. Two-thirds of the Russians in Estonia could not answer this question. This hesitation and the differences in the answers of Estonians and Es-

² Question: Some people think that when there is a shortage of jobs, employers should give priority to people of the titular ethnicity instead of people from other ethnic backgrounds. Is that just, in your opinion?

tonia's Russians is a clear indicator that employment relations are not free from the influence of ethnicity.

Some differences in mutual perceptions

In measuring the attitude to the laws regarding citizenship (Estonia) and language (Lithuania), we asked the respondents to assess to what degree these laws are fair, and how they would assess the issue if they belonged to their ethnic out-group. The majority of Estonians consider the Citizenship Law as unjust but either necessary or useful for the country (50 percent); the same perception is expected from the Russians (by 56 percent). However, the majority of Estonia's Russians consider the law to be unjust, unnecessary, or even harmful for the country's future (63 percent); 26 percent admit it is useful or necessary. Russians expect that 25 percent of Estonians would also think that the Citizenship Law is unfair, unnecessary, or harmful (in fact, 3 percent of Estonians do). It shows that Estonians and Russians have no clear picture of how the neighbouring ethnic group perceives the problematic law; rather, they expect the other group to think in their way. This is largely determined by the closed circles of intra-ethnic communication, which does not allow the verification of opinions concerning other groups.

Most Lithuanians see the Language Law as necessary at this stage of development (53 percent), and around a fourth consider it as the only fair case possible. But they expect the Russians to be less positive about this law and see it as unjust though necessary for the country (62 percent). In fact, only a fourth of Russians admit it; 62 percent see the law as unnecessary, unfair, or harmful. Russians in Lithuania also have some illusions, but to a lesser extent: the rate of those who would consider the law unjust if they were Lithuanian corresponds with the real rate among the Lithuanians (~26 percent), and rate of those who would see the law as unjust yet necessary is also close (45 percent in Russian view; 53 percent in fact). No Lithuanians believed that the law was unjust, despite the expectations of some Russians.

The Russian respondents were asked whether they knew any instances when state officials would 'soften' the requirements of the aforementioned laws in practice. About a third of them in each country claimed to know such cases. The prevailing explanations as to the possible reasons behind this behaviour of the officials are 'softness, humanism' (Lithuania) and 'understanding the unfairness of the law' (Estonia). However, Russians in Lithuania also suspected the officials to have more profane motives such as 'demonstrating one's superiority' and 'economic advantage' (i.e., expectation of a bribe). Most respondents look at such officials 'with understanding', although again, there are noticeable attitudes of 'indifference' or 'despise' (around 24 percent in Lithuania and 20 percent in Estonia).

Assessing the country of residence

After the previous discussion of a range of factors that shape the sociopsychological climate for the adaptation of non-titular groups, let us review a few typical statements that some Russians would make in an attempt to assess their situation in the new environment of the independent states. Fifty-seven percent of Russians in Estonia and 60 percent in Lithuania disagree that 'For people like us, living conditions in Russia are worse than here'. Concerning 'Conditions in this country are better than in Russia for improving one's life quality', 46 percent of Russians in Estonia are positive, but almost two thirds of Russians in Lithuania do not believe so. Seventy-four percent of Estonia's Russians and 43 percent of Lithuania's Russians do not think they could find a place in Russia easily (in case of necessity). Sixty-three percent of Russians in Estonia see certain advantages of their situation in comparison to Russia ('more order, more stability, possibility to earn rather than steal, better protection of property), while the majority in Lithuania do not (yet 21 percent mention some advantages: 'there's no war, authorities at least pretend to account to the people, salaries are paid, autonomy'). Thirty-one percent in Estonia and 29 percent in Lithuania assume there are no disadvantages in their country of residence in comparison to Russia; others most often mention distance from the culture, danger of assimilation, exclusion, inequality on nationality basis, suppression of rights, etc.

The distribution of reasons that could possibly stimulate a Russian resident of Estonia or Lithuania to move to Russia shows that factors of ethno-cultural type prevail (Table 14). Once again, we see the difficulties in acculturation, such as the language barrier and the wish to live among one's 'own kind' (in Estonia, absence of citizenship is also an important factor). In the groups of our Russian respondents, about half in Estonia and a third in Lithuania visit national-cultural associations, to which they primarily come to fulfil such expectations as 'to remain Russian without moving to Russia,' 'socialise the children into the Russian culture,' and to realise 'the spiritual needs'. In Estonia, they mention defence of rights (31 percent) more often than in Lithuania; in Lithuania, some more have mentioned social support (21 percent). However, about a third in each respondent group declared that they don't see any sense in such associations.

Internal logic of interethnic attitudes

The discourses and the perceptions of interethnic relations are differently reflected in the consciousness of the four groups discussed. It is quite likely that the mass media may have had enormous influence in shaping those psychological attitudes of the titular population that would justify and support the internal

policy towards the Russian populations. Whatever the whole set of opinion-shaping factors is, we are interested in understanding how interethnic attitudes are formed and on what they are based. Here we shall try to note the links between different attitudes and opinions which altogether constitute the ‘internal logic’ of understanding the ‘Russian issue’.

As the “New Russian Diaspora” project has revealed, understandings of the situation of Russians clearly differed both between countries and between the titular and Russian groups within countries³. There were 26 statements about the Russians for respondents to assess. After this, factor analysis was carried out and generalising statements were extracted. In the consciousness of Estonians, the exclusion/repulsion (*отторжение*) of Russians and demand for their loyalty and obedience for the law prevail, in spite of the fact that statements related to obedience and loyalty have received considerable acceptance among the Russians themselves. Among the Estonians, there was no group of interrelated attitudes that would be responsive to the Russians’ wish for ‘justice and equal treatment’. Again, it seems quite a contrast given the evidence of the ‘stay and obey’ attitude among the Russians. This deafness and mechanical (rather than emotional) attitude is reinforced not only by the external influence of mass media or politicians, but also by the closed social circles that prevent closer communication and breakthrough of the externally supplied stereotypes. In the consciousness of Lithuanians, two tendencies compete: defending independence from Russia and Russians, and acceptance of Russians, with a slight prevalence of the latter. In contrast to Estonians, both the Lithuanians and the Russians themselves exhibited some analogous perceptions of the Russians’ situation: they note the fear of Russians regarding their fate, and have adequate responses of ‘pity’ and ‘human kindness’. Among Lithuania’s Russians, the attitudes of ‘obedience to the law,’ ‘attitude to acculturated,’ and ‘Lithuanian patriotism’ are apparent (along with fear and understanding of inequality). In Lithuania, there are coinciding vectors that give hope for the smooth integration of the ethnic groups into some kind of political nation (for more, see Lebedeva 1997: Ch.3 and Appendix). These results were the background for a further study of interethnic perceptions. Further, we present the correlation analysis of various attitudes from the “Democratisation and the Ethnic World” project (Tables 15-18). By tracing the links between specific variables, we can see what underpins more general attitudes and ethno-political trends.

Estonians (Table 15). The justification of ethnic discrimination in the consciousness of Estonians rests on the image of Russia as an enemy of the country’s independence and is based on trust in the mass media of Estonia. The Citi-

³ The project was carried out in 1994-95 with support of The McArthur Foundation. See Lebedeva 1997.

zenship Law then appears justified and fair, and the reason for interethnic tension in the country supposedly lies mainly in the unwillingness of Russians to adapt (obey the law). Russian values are approached negatively; this judgement is closely linked with the prevalence of 'an eye for an eye' type of justice. Closure in mono-ethnic circles (spending free time with Estonians mainly) helps to maintain the conviction that the success and recognition of the country by the international community does not depend on the humanistic or moral character of the laws. Another trend is also evident, albeit much softer. Opinion that morality and justice should be matched in law relates to a perceived lack of Russian values in the country. Radical politicians are judged as unacceptable and dangerous no matter whose side they are on.

Estonia's Russians (Table 16). Closure in mono-ethnic circles (free time with Russians mainly) correlates with perceiving the authorities as strange and hostile. The evaluation of independence depends considerably on whether one knows the titular language (knowledge allows a more positive attitude). Knowledge of Estonian allows a more negative evaluation of Russian values and an acceptance that law and morality may differ. Length of residence has an influence on the perceived expulsion of Russians by means of the Citizenship Law.

The perceived weakness of Russian values in the consciousness of Russians is connected to the conviction that morality and law should be in accord. Obedience to the law is conditioned by the fairness ('morality') of that law in their consciousness. If all residents have to pay taxes, all of them should be entitled to citizenship. The perceived unfairness and cruelty of the law leads to uncertainty about the future and dissatisfaction with democracy. Conviction about the unfairness and harm of the Citizenship Law is linked with increased social (interethnic) distance and ethnic intolerance.

Lithuanians (Table 17). Trust in the Lithuanian mass media is related to satisfaction with life, increased social distance with the Russians, and a belief that the Language Law is fair. The refusal of ethnic discrimination is based on accord of law and morality. Knowledge of the Russian language relates to the conviction that citizenship must be granted to all residents; it is also connected with a more negative evaluation of Western values.

The lesser emphasis on ethnicity in self-identification is matched by close social distance to Russians. At the same time, Lithuanian patriotism allows one to treat the law and morality separately. Personal political activity, though, implies a requirement to match the law and fairness. Trust in parliament and government is also linked to a conviction that democracy depends on the accord of the law and common human values. The belief that radical politicians are a source of danger is linked to satisfaction with democracy. Conflict between Lithuanians and Russians is not seen as a likely danger, and this is connected with a positive attitude towards Russian values.

Lithuania's Russians (Table 18). Emphasis on ethnicity in self-identification by the Russians in Lithuania relates to confidence about the future; it also brings certain emotional support ('understanding') to the officials who in practice would soften the requirements of the Language Law. Disagreement with ethnic discrimination corresponds to satisfaction with life. The perceived suppression of rights is linked to dissatisfaction with how democracy works in the country. Personal involvement in politics has to do with perceived unfairness of the law. The judgement that radical politicians are dangerous relates to the conviction that democracy depends on accord between the law and common human values.

Positive ethnic identification is connected to a positive attitude towards Russian values. Ethnic tolerance (positive hetero-stereotypes) implies a positive attitude to Western values. A pro-independence attitude depends on communication with Lithuanians. The decreasing social distance with Lithuanians is brought about by children speaking the titular language.

Conclusions

The results of this study reveal that the acculturation process of the Russians in the given Baltic countries has been going on at an urgent pace and therefore has some features of crisis.

Forced ethnicity

As an outcome of ethno-cultural isolation and the dominance of ethnocracies in the state-building process, part of Estonia's Russians are experiencing a crisis of ethnic identity. This crisis could be well described as a 'syndrome of thrust, or forced, ethnicity'. The syndrome of forced identity includes tight correlation (at the level of $p=0,01$) between the following:

- a) increase of the ethnicity-relevant identity markers in self-identification;
- b) rise of the so-called 'ethnic' values ('to remain Russian', 'to live among Russians');
- c) rise of negative emotions associated with one's ethnic background;
- d) neglected rights of ethnic minorities;
- e) negative heterostereotypes;
- f) increasing cultural distance in relation to the titular ethnic group;
- g) attitude to migrate.

When there is no attitude to migrate, the given syndrome appears as 'escape from ethnicity,' expressed through acceptance of the suggested scheme of strict assimilation and abandonment of the previous cultural background. It is inter-

esting to note that in the Russian consciousness, the attempts to decrease the cultural distance towards Estonians happened to be related to a negative evaluation of Russian values and an allowance for incongruence between morality and law. This is not really surprising since the same cluster appears in the consciousness of the Estonians.

Estonia. Ethnopolitical discourse. The aforementioned changes in the ethnic identity of some Russians in Estonia are directly connected to the ethnopolitical social-psychological discourse that dominates the consciousness of the titular ethnic group. The social-psychological discourse of interethnic relationships has an effect on the consciousness of Estonians through the strong influence of the mass media, which uses the image of Russia as an enemy of independent Estonia. Then, there is a direct link to justify the ethnic discrimination of the splitter of this Russia which illegitimately resides on Estonian soil.

Presently, the variants of acculturation suggested by Estonian society for the non-titular population look gloomy: assimilation or segregation in the best case, and marginalisation in the worst, though most likely, case. The emphasis on categorising people on the basis of ethnic background also involuntarily makes the titular ethnic group experience internal contradictions and sacrifice moral principles. This emphasis is certainly not the very best socio-psychological background for building new statehood and may cause a delayed crisis to rise from general resentment, when mechanisms of psychological compensation (the justification of immoral decisions by referring to political goals; exaggerated optimism, etc.) will no longer be effective in resisting reality. At present, the illusion of the dominant ethnic group that "everything is going well" is supported by the division of the communication circles into the intra-ethnic. This largely artificial division is less a consequence of the limited knowledge of the Russian language by the Estonians, and more an unwillingness on the part of Estonians to socialise with the Russians (possibly also due to covert feelings of moral contradictions).

The Russians express a very strong willingness to acculturate into Estonian society and hope that the Estonian government will realise the injustice of the current situation and will take some steps in favour of the Russians. However, very strong feelings of dissatisfaction with life, repression (*подавленность*), and no hope in chances to improve one's situation go along with the aforementioned.

Lithuania. There is a different social-psychological background of acculturation of the non-titular (Russian) population in Lithuania. Lithuanians do not refuse to learn Russian, are positive about Russian values, and declare their state as multiethnic. Along with the significant ethnic identity, civic identity has a definite place in their consciousness.

Russians in Lithuania have a positive ethnic identity and an 'escape from ethnicity' has not been noticed. They realise their cultural isolation from the

core of the Russian culture and seek to diminish this gap. Many politicians in Lithuania (both Lithuanians and Russians) state that civil society already exists in Lithuania, and the perceived injustice of the Law on Language stimulates the Russians to be active in politics, which can be seen as a feature of a relatively developed democracy.

Along with the above, there are certain difficulties in acculturation for the Russians. The difficulties may have to do with the smaller population and reduced social support. Many of the Russians born in Russia, especially the elderly, experience certain psychological difficulties in acculturation and transformation of ethnic and civic identity. If the attitudes of the prevalent population are directed towards the comprehensive integration of non-titular nationalities, there will be better chances for the Russians in Lithuania to cope with these psychological difficulties.

Background of culture

The empirical sociopsychological research in Estonia and Lithuania reveals that the political discourse of interethnic relationships created by political leaders and political parties has significant influence (especially through the mass media) on the discourse of the population. Nonetheless, there are discourses in the group (ethnic) consciousness of the respondents in all of the groups surveyed that are opposite to the ones prevailing in politics. According to my understanding, a given discourse is influenced by moral imperatives stemming from a broader background of culture: the moral legacy of Christianity, principles of justice, and broadly taken humanist values. Consequently, the laws and principles of social order are perceived and assessed from the point of view of those moral-ethical perceptions (no matter within which ethnic group). If the newly formulated principles of social order contradict the (much less visible) moral criteria of popular consciousness, then the proponents of the new order must invest considerable effort to legitimise and balance the contradiction between the ‘need for justice’ and the ‘mistaken reality’.

I suppose that due to this, the psychological mechanisms of causal attribution of Estonia’s population (especially Estonians) are in constant tension. They have to connect the real and the ideal. Moreover, the great significance attributed to ethnicity in Estonia has an important social-psychological function: It removes the Russians from the in-group (group of ‘us’) and introduces the mechanisms of intergroup relations (in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination). Group consciousness somewhat eases the burden of contradiction felt by an individual: In relation to ‘strangers’, even non-ethical behaviour is acceptable, especially when it is justified by historical offences and the presently complicated demographic situation.

Mapping coexistence

The single evaluation of the situation and policy outlines are, of course, complicated. However, the introduction of 'double standards' in order to justify current political gains may have an effect similar to a time bomb as it damages the ethical bases of popular (and ethnic) consciousness. International experience concerning the development of multiethnic societies suggests striving for policy that does not require necessary cultural losses (assimilation) from the non-titular population, does not encourage 'ghetto-isation' (segregation), nor leads to a combination of the two that would result in marginalisation. The education and social legislation of such societies could emphasise the benefits of pluralism and teach about the social and personal costs of prejudice and discrimination. The national surveying of knowledge and attitudes towards multiculturalism could help in monitoring and achieving a harmonious social climate. But the changes in social institutions must cope with the cultural diversity.

On the individual level, the non-titular population must learn that there are benefits, such as psychological security and social support, in maintaining one's culture. This may be achieved through the activities of cultural organisations, which would also lead towards decreasing assimilation-related stress. On the other hand, increased participation in public and governmental institutions (education, employment, legislation, etc.) could decrease separation-related stress and would help to realise the danger of marginalisation (when neither maintenance of the cultural background nor participation in the dominant society are achieved).

What needs an emphasis, is that acculturation and integration means mutual accommodation. The mutual concessions must be made evident: the school system and other state services on the dominant ethnicity side, and loss of certain elements of the original culture on the side of the acculturating groups (those elements that may nonetheless seem valuable, but are not adaptive). In spite of the apparent difficulties in managing the mutual accommodation process, other policy directions (not seeking integration) may lead to bigger losses, especially in case of segregation or marginalisation (Berry 1991).

Psychological evidence shows that people with no clear sense of self (i.e. without the 'own' cultural identity, which in fact needs a certain degree of support) and those who experience prejudice and discrimination on a regular basis pay a high psychological cost. Such a situation brings costs to the dominant population as well (through un-avoidable social conflict and social control). At the same time, those members of the minority cultural groups who refuse to understand and accept the main elements of the host society risk invoking dissatisfaction within the dominant culture, ultimately leading to conflict.

After a certain point, it becomes quite complicated to teach the advantages of and nurture the acceptance of multiethnic societies. Some of them, however, are worth listing an extra time: 1) it gives more colour to life; 2) it encourages healthy competition; 3) and most importantly, it increases the adaptive abilities of the society. This means that the social system has richer resources of alternative life styles in itself when it faces ecological or political crises.

In case of *de facto* multiethnic societies in Estonia and Lithuania, it is hard to expect any other more successful strategy of acculturation by the non-titular ethnicities than integration, i.e. tendency to preserve own cultural background along with the tendency to absorb (*овладеть*) the culture of the ‘titular’ ethnicity. However, it requires some form of multicultural ideology from the side of the prevalent ethnic group that would include acceptance of the existence of different ethnocultural groups in society and uninhibited accommodation of the social institutes to the needs of the different cultures. The current popular tendency to see ‘open society’ and ‘ethnically divided’ society as contradictory is little misguided: Both tendencies are important for successful development. The point is a harmonious balance between the two. In the context of our research, it means that people attempting to acquire new social identities must not be forced to give up their cultural background in exchange (as is the case of juxtaposed cultural and civic identity). Preserving both of these basic elements of a positive social identity is a precondition for ethnic tolerance, and therefore, social peace in a given region.

The form of social organisation for preserving both aspects of identity could be a viable Russian diaspora that would offer civic involvement without losing cultural background (I have argued for the diaspora model in the Baltics in Lebedeva 1997). Even though such a diaspora model is sometimes viewed with suspicion by politicians, it would allow for the harmonious development of the non-titular population from the sociopsychological point of view. Thus, the emergence and organisation of a Russian diaspora is actually in the best interests of both minority individuals and the state.

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TABLES

Identity block

TABLE 1. Ethnic and civic self-identification in the Kuhn-McPartland test (answers to the question “who am I?”)

Self-identification / (%)	Estonians	Estonia's Russians	Lithuanians	Lithuania's Russians
Ethnic	56,3	31,5	35,3	42,8
Civic	9,4	0	23,5	4,7

TABLE 2. Self-identification on the suggested option list.

Self-identification / (%)	Estonians	Estonia's Russians	Lithuanians	Lithuania's Russians
Citizen of the world	18,75	11,4	14,7	19
European	31,25	5,7	41,2	14,3
Citizen of the USSR	6,25	28,6	5,8	52,4
Ethnic identity	87,5	62,8	70,6	71,5
Half-Estonian/-Lithuanian, half-Russian	0	20	4,1	0
Citizen of the respective country	31,3	54,3	55,9	9,5
Catholic	12,5	0	20,6	0
Orthodox	0	0	2,9	21,5
Resident of the respective country	0	11,4	0	45,2

TABLE 3. The uniting elements: What ties you with your co-ethnics?

What unites / (%)	Estonians	Estonia's Russians	Lithuanians	Lithuania's Russians
Land, nature	28,1	5,7	32,4	4,7
History	31,3	17,1	17,6	30,9
Language	84,4	91,4	79,4	90,4
Culture	46,9	40	26,4	73,8
External outlook	6,3	0	2,9	4,7
Way of life, customs	62,5	54,3	70,6	28,6
Psychology	21,9	51,4	26,5	35,7
Religion	21,9	11,4	14,7	11,9
Other	0	2,8	0	0
Hard to say	3,1	0	0	0

Acculturation

TABLE 4. Group stereotypes

Type of stereotype / (%)	Estonians	Estonia's Russians	Lithuanians	Lithuania's Russians
AUTOSTEREOTYPES:				
Positive	43,8	74,3	55,9	73,8
Positive and negative	28,1	8,6	20,6	11,9
Negative	9,3	5,8	17,5	11,9
No answer	18,7	11,4	5,8	2,4
HETEROSTEREOTYPES:				
Positive	12,5	17,2	50	26,2
Positive and negative	15,6	14,3	11,7	23,8
Negative	53,1	57,2	29,4	45,2
No answer	18,7	11,4	5,8	4,7

TABLE 5. Emotional identification with one's ethnic background/belonging (%)

Emotional background:	Estonians	Estonia's Russians	Lithuanians	Lithuania's Russians
Positive	90,3	82,8	91,6	85
Negative	12,5	14,3	5,8	30,9
No answer	18,2	14,8	5,6	2,4

TABLE 6. Circles of socialising (%)

Socialise mostly with	Estonians	Estonia's Russians	Lithuanians	Lithuania's Russians
AT WORK:				
'titular' ethnicity	93,8	2,9	64,7	14,3
'titular' ethnicity and Russians equally	6,2	34,3	35,3	57,1
Russians	0	62,9	0	28,6
AT LEISURE:				
'titular' ethnicity	93,8	0	67,7	0
'titular' ethnicity and Russians equally	6,2	17,1	29,3	23,8
Russians	0	82,9	0	76,2

TABLE 7. Knowing language of the out-group (%)

% Knowledge of the language:	<i>Estonians</i>			<i>Estonia's Russians</i>		
	parents	respondents	their children	parents	respondents	their children
good	50	43,8	18,7	0	11,4	22,9
average	18,8	34,4	21,8	22,8	22,8	37,1
bad	12,5	18,7	3,1	14,3	51,5	11,4
No knowledge	12,5	3,1	25	34,3	14,3	8,7

% Knowledge of the language:	<i>Lithuanians</i>			<i>Lithuania's Russians</i>		
	parents	respondents	their children	parents	respondents	their children
good	52,9	82,3	35,3	7,1	42,9	38
average	26,5	17,7	23,5	19	38	35,7
bad	11,7	0	2,9	26,2	16,7	9,5
No knowledge	8,8	0	5,8	21,4	2,4	0

TABLE 8. Reasons of hardships in interethnic communication

Reasons: / %	Estonians	Estonia's Russians	Lithuanians	Lithuania's Russians
I don't know their language	9,4	45,7	0	30,9
They don't know my language	15,6	2,8	17,6	0
Peculiarities of their behaviour	9,4	20	20,6	26,2
I assume there is antipathy from their side	0	17,1	14,7	23,8
I feel antipathy towards them	6,25	0	0	2,3
Other	6,25	2,8	2,9	9,5
No answer	53%	20	44	21,5

TABLE 9. Indicators of social distance between ethnic groups (%)

Ready to accept an out-group member as:	Estonians	Estonia's Russians	Lithuanians	Lithuania's Russians
Citizen of a country	3,1	0	14,7	0
Colleague at work	9,4	5,7	0	2,3
Neighbour (in residence)	21,9	20	11,8	14,3
Personal friend	21,9	11,4	23,5	14,3
Relative – as a spouse of a child	9,4	14,3	8,8	23,8
Spouse	31,35	45,7	41,2	38,1

TABLE 10. Evaluation of the current state of interethnic relations (%)

Relations are:	Estonians	Estonia's Russians	Lithuanians	Lithuania's Russians
Very good / благополучные	12,5	0	8,8	2,4
Calm / спокойные	65,6	28,6	73,5	40,5
Tensed / напряженные	15,6	62,9	2,9	52,4
Critical / критические	0	5,7	0	2,4
Hard to say	6,2	2,8	11,8	2,4

Suppression of rights

TABLE 11. Suppression of rights due to ethnic background (in the past and/or present, %)

Intensity:	Estonians	Estonia's Russians	Lithuanians	Lithuania's Russians
Often	6,3	20	5,8	19
Sometimes	40,6	51,4	11,8	59,5
No	34,4	20	73,5	14,3
Hard to say	12,5	8,6	8,8	7,1

TABLE 12. Spheres of the ethnicity-related suppression of rights (%)

Spheres:	Estonians	Estonia's Russians	Lithuanians	Lithuania's Russians
Getting a job	6,3	31,4	0	38
Advancement at work	12,5	28,5	2,9	38
Communication at work	3,1	5,7	0	7,1
Social insurance	3,1	17,1	2,9	9,5
(Public) Services	9,4	34,3	2,9	23,8
Culture	12,5	11,4	5,9	19
Education	9,4	11,4	2,9	23,8
Political rights	12,5	31,4	5,9	19
Other	0	0	0	0
Have not experienced suppression	53,1	25,7	79,4	16,7

TABLE 13. Evaluation of the principle of ethnic discrimination in employment (%)

	Estonians	Estonia's Russians	Lithuanians	Lithuania's Russians
Agree	12,5	0	2,9	4,8
Rather agree	37,5	2,9	14,7	2,3
Rather disagree	34	14,3	61,7	26,2
Completely disagree	6,3	17,1	11,7	66,7
Don't know	6,3	65,7	8,8	0

TABLE 14. Reasons for potential migration (%)

Reasons:	Estonia's Russians	Lithuania's Russians
Material hardships	25,4	30,9
Absence of citizenship	31,4	2,3
Language barrier	42,8	38,1
Departure of friends and acquaintances	8,5	19,1
Wish to live among 'own kind'	31,4	57,1
Other	5,7	11,9
No answer	25,7	11,9

Correlation analysis

Tables 15–18: correlation coefficient is valid on the level:

* – p = 0,05; ** – p = 0,01; *** – p = 0,001

TABLE 15. Results of correlation analysis: Estonians

Nr.	Dimension x	Dimension y	Corr. coef.
1	Agreement with ethnic discrimination	Russia is a danger for the country	40*
2	_____”_____	Trust in Estonian mass media	53**
3	_____”_____	Citizenship has to be limited	49**
4	Reason of tension is unwillingness of the Russians to obey the laws	Citizenship Law is fair	51**
5	_____”_____	Success and recognition depend on harmony between the laws and common human values	51**
6	Interethnic relations have improved	Independence has had positive influence	48**
7	_____”_____	Solidarity with government/ authorities	50**
8	_____”_____	Radical politicians in Russia are a danger for the country	39*

TABLE 15 continue

Nr.	Dimension x	Dimension y	Corr. coef.
9	_____”_____	Citizenship has to be limited	43*
10	Russian values are not strong enough	Morality and justice have to be in harmony in the laws	51**
11	Negative attitude tw. Russian values	“an eye for an eye”	47*
12	Taking part in politics is risky/ dangerous	Citizenship has to be limited	63***
13	_____”_____	Citizenship Law is fair	42*
14	Radical politicians in Russia are a danger for the country	Citizenship has to be limited	53**
15	_____”_____	Radical politicians in Estonia are a danger for the country	55**
16	Russia is a danger for the country	All the citizens must learn the language	64***
17	_____”_____	All the citizens must obey the law	70**
18	Satisfaction with democracy	Trust in the ruling party	42*
19	_____”_____	Trust in Estonian mass media	46**
20	Free time with co-ethnics (Estonians) mainly	Success and recognition does not depend on harmony between the laws and common human values	36*
21	Positive auto-stereotypes	Positive hetero-stereotypes	64**
22	Negative auto-stereotypes	Reason of tension is unwillingness of the Russians to obey the laws	42*

TABLE 16. Results of correlation analysis: Estonia's Russians

Nr.	Dimension x	Dimension y	Corr. coef.
1	Free time with co-ethnics (Russians) mainly	Poor knowledge of the titular language	45*
2	_____”_____	Government/authorities is / are strange and hostile	53**
3	Good knowledge of the titular language	Pro-independence attitude	45*
4	_____”_____	Solidarity with government/authorities	51**
5	Interethnic relations have deteriorated	Government/authorities is / are far from people's troubles	38*
6	Length of residence in the country (Estonia)	Citizenship Law is / are aimed at expulsion of Russians	45*
7	_____”_____	Dissatisfaction with democracy	41*
8	Russian values are not strong enough	Success of democracy depends on morality of the laws	43*

TABLE 16 continue

Nr.	Dimension x	Dimension y	Corr. coeff.
9	Independence has had negative influence (on quality of life)	Government/authorities is / are strange and hostile	50**
10	Uncertainty about the future	Citizenship Law must be 'softened'	42*
11	_____”_____	Government/authorities is / are strange and hostile	60***
12	_____”_____	Distrust in the ruling party	44*
13	_____”_____	Distrust in parliament	46**
14	_____”_____	Dissatisfaction with democracy	36*
15	_____”_____	Officers have not softened the application of the law	45*
16	Conflict between Estonians and Russians is a danger for the country	Radical politicians in Estonia are a danger for the country	46**
17	Taking part in politics is risky/dangerous	Radicalism in politics is danger for the country	46**
18	Dissatisfaction with democracy	Officers have not softened the application of the law	67***
19	All the citizens must obey the law	Morality and justice have to be in harmony in the laws	38*
20	Citizenship Law is unfair	Citizenship Law is unfair also from the point of view of titular ethnicity (Est.)	68***
21	Desire for citizenship	Absence of citizenship is a reason behind Russian emigration	41*
22	_____”_____	National (Estonian) patriotism	36*
23	Living in Estonia is better than in Russia	Young age	46**
24	Positive auto-stereotypes	Positive hetero-stereotypes	44*
25	_____”_____	Success of democracy depends on morality of the laws	41*
26	Negative hetero-stereotypes	_____”_____	46**
27	Good knowledge of the titular language	Negative attitude tw. Russian values	45*
28	_____”_____	Morality and justice must not coincide in the law	36*
29	Children know the titular language	Problem of Russians is exaggerated	48**
30	Increased social distance with titular ethnic group (Estonians)	Independence has had negative influence	44*
31	_____”_____	Citizenship Law is unfair and dangerous	38*
32	Problem of Russians is urgent	Citizenship Law is unfair	41*
33	Citizens must pay taxes	Citizenship must be available for all	41*

TABLE 16 continue

Nr.	Dimension x	Dimension y	Corr. coef.
34	Morality and justice have to be in harmony in the law	_____”_____	42*
35	Officials have softened the application of the law	They did so because they realised that the law was unfair	78***

TABLE 17. Results of correlation analysis: Lithuanians

Nr.	Dimension x	Dimension y	Corr. coef.
1	Satisfaction with life	Independence has had positive influence	42*
2	_____”_____	Trust in Lithuanian mass media	42*
3	_____”_____	Increased social distance with Russians	37*
4	Good knowledge of Russian	Morality and justice have to be in harmony in the law	41*
5	Interethnic relations (with Russians) have improved	Trust in the opposition	45*
6	_____”_____	Have experienced suppression of rights in the past	41*
7	_____”_____	Positive attitude tw. Western values	38*
8	_____”_____	Russia is a danger for the country	38*
9	Disagreement with ethnic discrimination	Problem of Russians is exaggerated	42*
10	_____”_____	Morality and justice have to be in harmony in the law	37*
11	Positive attitude tw. Western values	Independence has changed life	60***
12	Trust in Lithuanian mass media	Increased social distance with Russians	41*
13	Conflict with the Russians is not a danger for the country	Russia is not a danger for the country	56***
14	Radical politicians in Lithuania are a danger for peace in the country	Satisfaction with democracy	56***
15	Satisfaction with democracy	Trust in the parliament	49**
16	Trust in Lithuanian mass media	Language Law is fair	42*
17	All citizens must obey the law	Language Law is fair	51**
18	_____”_____	Language Law is also fair from the point of view of Russians	49**
19	Acquaintance with the Language Law	Language Law expresses the care about Lithuanian language	64***
20	Positive auto-stereotypes	_____”_____	36*
21	Positive hetero-stereotypes	_____”_____	40*

TABLE 17 continue

Nr.	Dimension x	Dimension y	Corr. coef.
22	_____”_____	Radical politicians in Russia are a danger for the country	50**
23	Good knowledge of Russian	Negative attitude tw. Western values	41*
24	_____”_____	Granting citizenship is a solution for the problem of Russians	38*
25	Agreement with ethnic discrimination	Old age	50**
26	Positive attitude tw. Russian values	Conflict with the Russians is not a danger for the country	36*
27	Language Law expressed the care about reviving Lithuanian language	Language Law is not fair but is useful at this point	36*
28	Lithuanian patriotism	Morality and justice must not necessarily coincide in the law	46**
29	Political activity	Morality and justice have to be in harmony in the law	37*
30	Trust in parliament; trust in the ruling party	Success of democracy depends on morality of the law	39*
31	Ethnic self-identification is negligible	Small social distance with Russians	37*

TABLE 18. Results of correlation analysis: Lithuania's Russians

Nr.	Dimension x	Dimension y	Corr. coef.
1	Ethnic self-identification is outstanding	Certainty about future	31*
2	_____”_____	Understanding of those officials who have softened the application of the laws	37*
3	Satisfaction with life	Disagreement with ethnic discrimination	45**
4	Socialising with titular ethnicity (Lithuanians)	Pro-independence attitude	30*
5	_____”_____	Willingness to learn titular language (Lithuanian)	36*
6	Knowledge of titular language (Lith.)	Attitude of Lithuanians has improved	37*
7	Reason of tension is language barrier	Positive attitude tw. Western values	32*
8	Attitude of Lithuanians has become worse	Officials have not softened the application of the law	34*
9	Interethnic relations have deteriorated	Have experienced suppression of rights in employment	40**
10	_____”_____	Dissatisfaction with democracy	37*
11	_____”_____	Language Law is unfair	38*

TABLE 18 continue

Nr.	Dimension x	Dimension y	Corr. coeff.
12	Interethnic relations are balanced/ calm	Independence has had positive influence	36*
13	_____”_____	Radical politicians in Russia area danger for the country	34*
14	_____”_____	Language Law concerned with the care about reviving Lithuanian language	32*
15	Have experienced suppression of rights	Problem of Russians is urgent	34*
16	_____”_____	Increased social distance with titular ethnicity (Lithuanians)	32*
17	_____”_____	Independence has had negative influence	42**
18	_____”_____	Language Law is aimed at expulsion of Russians	31*
19	Disagreement with ethnic discrimination	Language Law is unfair	37*
20	_____”_____	Success of democracy depends on the morality of the law	31*
21	Influence of Russian values is too weak	Officials have not softened the application of the law	35*
22	Uncertainty about future	Government/authorities is/are strange and hostile	35*
23	_____”_____	Distrust in any mass media	42**
24	Was born in Lithuania	Language Law concerned with the care about reviving Lithuanian language	43**
25	_____”_____	Wants to be a Lithuanian citizen	38*
26	_____”_____	Young age	39**
27	_____”_____	Independence has changed life	35*
28	Was born in Russia	Wants to be a Russian citizen	36*
29	_____”_____	Language Law is aimed at expulsion of Russians	44**
30	_____”_____	Independence has had negative influence	34*
31	Wants to be a Lithuanian citizen	Knows titular language (Lith.)	31*
32	_____”_____	Interethnic relations have improved	37*
33	Officials have softened the application of the law	Understanding of those officials who have softened the application of the laws	31*
34	Positive auto-stereotypes	Positive attitude tw. Russian values	40**
35	Positive hetero-stereotypes	Positive attitude tw. Western values	46**

TABLE 18 continue

Nr.	Dimension x	Dimension y	Corr. coef.
36	Satisfaction with life	Independence gives feeling of certainty about future	49***
37	Children know titular language (Lith.)	Decreased social distance with titular ethnic group (Lithuanians)	35*
38	Western values have too much influence	Negative attitude tw. Western values	34*
39	_____”_____	Language Law is unfair	44**
40	Language Law is unfair	Political activity	51**
41	Radical politicians in Lithuania are a danger for the country	Language Law is aimed at expulsion of Russians	31*
42	_____”_____	Success of democracy depends on morality of the law	36*