

**The Rhetoric of Youth Living  
by Baltic Sea:  
Mutant and Mobile Political Spaces of Citizens**

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## ***For You, Baltic Sea***

*The sun of the West*  
rises behind the Baltic Sea

The sun of the East, in turn  
goes under the Baltic

And only You, as a third,  
know  
How the global light  
confuses even the birds winding in the West

...and You see  
how an Eastern bird, after a long time  
has risen into the air  
and tries to reach You  
– and dazzles

Couldn't You already give us our peace  
for sailing together through the air  
in the middle of Your Sea  
Or do You always have to rock and toss,  
split the sun  
And polarize the views

As a destiny for the thirds,  
roaring windy lives for us

Or have You become excluded  
by dollar power  
and pollution  
voided over You by the rut of territories

And it is a late peace  
to wait for a wind anymore?

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# I.

## New Citizenship

In this empirical interpretation and article I consider and discuss young people as political citizens in separated schools in coastal towns situated in Estonia, Russia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Denmark and Finland. The basic issues being considered are their identities and the rhetoric by which they construct their meaningful everyday life and world view. This provides some understanding of the social space in which young people are participating as political citizens.

Dramatic changes have occurred in the borders and contexts of political citizenship and culture among young people in the region of the Baltic Sea. Modernisation, individualisation and the end of the Cold War have created more potential, inconsistency and "Lebensraum" for participation and dialogue. The individualistic point of view associated with the European marketisation, the limits and crises of welfare systems (or states), ecological problems and the polarisation of citizens into the groups of losers (marginality) and successful individuals are the tendencies breaking up the conventions of active citizenship. When political identities and the mobilisation of collectives (classes, regions, nations and religions) are disintegrating and the political arenas are becoming bureaucratised, it is not easy to speak about traditional citizenship with social rights and national political movements and elections.

Participation in democracy (e.g. elections and party membership) is viewed cynically or taken loosely on both the north-western and south-eastern coasts of the Baltic Sea. As young people themselves put it, "the system is all plugged up" or "politics is dishonest, monastic Latin; a dirty game of empty promises." At the same time uncertainty and the 'risk society' (Beck 1993) require modern reflexive citizenship, individual competencies in 'life politics' and global, critical perspectives and initiatives. But not all young people are ready for this modernisation, flexibility and universalism; the failures of young people are "becoming autonomised" and self-condemnation has become more popular. Especially in countries which previously experienced "real socialism", many groups unsuccessful and unemployed of young people have become total "outsiders"! These young people in turn have "totalising" (Heitmeyer et.al.1992) solutions for their hard life situations; some extreme, natural, national, technical and authoritative cultures are rising up. Global and capitalistic competition confuse these tendencies and this is reflected in several ways in distanced and safe perspectives and gemeinschafts.

Nation-states lose a lot of their position and status in the face of globalisation, markets and individualism. At the same time we are witnessing the particularistic, ethnic and national-populist movements reflecting the historical repressive experiences, debility and impatience in the Baltic Sea area. "New citizenship" is living based on situational, cultural and local factors. These bases are often smaller than the nation-states. It is easy to see reasons like the ecological, ethnic, economically competitive and life-managerial facts in the background. Along with provincial networks and local initiatives, the "Spirit of New Regionality" (or the Idea of Baltic Sea) means optimism and trust in the new trans-national co-operation and alliances of regions (such as Arctic projects, Pomerania, The Nordic Council of Ministers, Baltic councils and conferences, "globalism in the spirit of Greenpeace", networks of peace and youth and ecological norms and agreements).

## **Are there Utopian Maps in the School Essays Gathered Around the Baltic Sea?**

These initiatives could produce alternatives to the metropolises of power. This kind of new regionality, partnership and networking could be a part of construction a bridge into the "global village" – into global but at the same time local and individual responsibility and citizenship (e.g., ecology, religion, feminism and civic networking via modern technology). Together with these tendencies, regions, territories and political 'spaces' are being transformed, becoming problematised and conflicting in the dynamic ways. 'Regional' and 'cultural' differences – the polarising and utopian potentials to change the world and ecology for the better – are essential resources for 'identity politics' among young people living around the Baltic Sea. With these competencies young people are themselves able to define their cultures, 'places' and fields of action; they are able to grow up to become new political subjects.

The research problem for my study is regional and civic identities around the Baltic Sea: Is this area uniting or disintegrating? Is it possible in the era of globalism/particularism and legitimisation problems of political systems to separate social, ecological and political responsibilities and identities? Which kind of conflicting identities could we find in the Baltic Sea region – will we face a "new regionality or territoriality" after the traditional nation states? What kind of coherence might we find in the rhetoric, identity politics, images of enemies/ opponents and/or polarising tendencies? Are we living witnesses to a new dimension of harmonisation or of polarisation? Could these values being marched forth mean new interpretations or horizons reflecting on the new universal and ecological citizenship and its possibility of development? This research project is relevant to initiatives of foreign policy, cultural and ecological co-operation and youth movements in this part of the world.

## **What is "Political" (in the) Social and Spatial Identification?**

Categories such as "political act", "political identification" and "political participation" are the conceptual objects of and arenas for political discussion. And they are also, in a (late)modern way open concepts and terms in this text corpus. This is also a question of semiotic/cultural/ideological power; those groups which produce or maintain the hegemonic concept(s) of politics or identification have the essential power in society. For this concrete project, the concept of politics is a term of (rhetorically motivated) action, linked to "politicisation" and "politicking" (taking a political position, identity). If we have stable political concepts built up according to a strict order (e.g., during the cold war around the Baltic Sea) we have no room for changes, choices and political evaluation. On the other hand, in the situations where those norms and conceptual limits are unstable, transforming and flourishing (e.g., in the era after the Berlin Wall) we have political chances, room for problematisation and possibilities to spatialise the maps.

"Politicisation" refers to the problematising and disputing of new problems and aspects of social life and areas in society; and "politicking" is seen in specific actions, expressions of political competence and virtuosity in the informal, situated and contingent activities of facing risks, reflecting modes of (young people's) identity and changing the world (Paakkunainen 1993, 35-49; also see Palonen 1993, 10-12, for relevant conceptual background).

In terms of youth initiatives the new social phenomena (e.g., ecological problems, socialisation into a risk society with declining labour markets, life management among nationally and internationally marginalised areas and groups, the world of so-called third sector partnerships, new social movements and (in)formal associations and networks, and everyday life and its lack of standardised solutions and norms) are highly fascinating fields for politicisation. This is where we meet the new participants, which change according to the local and mixed contexts – variations achieving the global villages and the specific problems in question. Sometimes the official, conventional and legal borders are breaking. Here the 'identity politics' and borders cannot be read as cartography; we are speaking about new communalities (an interesting contribution, see Maffesoli 1996, 63-) and their interpretations of new social and spatial conditions in the context of the risk society (Beck 1993 and 1995). Here the productive and political moment is present.

Young people are motivated to bring about changes simply in order to manage their lives and to conform to the principle norms and standards of their life ethics and biographies. It is not purely a question of an ideological "self-service store" or "supermarket" as a (commodificative) paradigm for children's and young people's potential participation in the competition of the market economy; it is also a question of tradition and new consciousness – professional sources of information and folklore needed for making ethical and political decisions in the course and according to the map of life.

In the busy lives of (late)modern young people, the choice of life situations and principles to live by are not always voluntary, harmonious or practically motivated; there is an ever increasing number of choices to be made, and a decreasing level of (inner) compulsion involved in making them. Adolescents and young adults have to act, identify and throw together an ad hoc social chart to 'navigate' by on the basis of contingent, impure, profane and often contradictory life situations. Life is not seen in terms of a positive utopian vision or 'goods' of the future (as seen in socialism, religion and national welfare ideology with its goods like the right to a pension); on the contrary, it is full of options containing elements of personal, ethical, and even global risks and 'bads'. The risks and the bads are composed of the ecological problems and pollution, technological threats, manipulation of genes, nuclear power, the silent power of economy in the form of global and regional marginalisation and segregation and the decrease or end of labour. (Beck 1991 and 1993.)

## Political Space

Societal and political reflection and the building of "self" and "territory" happen in language and between identities. Thus societal structures are "in the eyes of the beholder", only existing through each action and practical language. The identity of the young person building his or her own subjectivity, i.e. self-understanding, refers to those interpretations with which actors outline their operational goals forms and motivation for themselves. **From a political perspective, the political space in which the actors define their own conflicts and goals, as well as their relationships with other active groups and opponents and their respective goals, is also defined through self understanding. While serving as a basis for the identity which the young person or young people want to take or create for themselves, "political space" is largely a question of what tends to be a rather small politicised area or space, and of the politicking which goes on in that space, involving different levels of political competence and virtuosity.**

Thus political research is especially interested in situations in which the homogenous and **natural world and area are problematised**, for example in relation to privileged group divisions made by the elders when the re-defining happening "down below" among the young people breaks down the homogeneity and one-dimensionality of these divisions of privilege. It is often in the interest of young people to become part of the regional and spatial distribution process (youth facilities, positions in the Baltic councils and Council of Europe or EU), but just as often it is a question of political resources and virtuoso skills to re-define spaces which have not yet been outlined (streets, schools, departments, states and the (age)limits of cultures). Why are young people as an age group or as culturally "other" excluded from certain spaces? What equivalent requirements could be "politically realistic"? How do young people define their spontaneity, intimacy and privacy in relation to the public? How does young people's panic or fear create common collective and dynamic possibilities for joint action and new spaces?

Thus it is not a question of the physical-geographical or factual-empirical any more than it is a matter of a historical or architectural place (such as the polis, agora, parliament, town council, cabinet or some formal-administrative institution) other than when the actors/writers themselves want to define it for themselves as such. In opposition to the concept of the political as a sector (the political sector theory, according to which politics make up one area in life as part of the culture or entirety) we have the hypothesis of politics as an aspect: each and every thing, area, space, relationship or problem can sometimes be potentially political and controversial territory – subject to controversies, struggle and play. Even the most radical version of the aspect concept of politics does not contest the significance of geographical (in this case, for example, the Baltic Sea), institutional (Baltic councils or joint initiatives) or (shared) historical paradigms, but it "requires that **any spaces whatsoever can at least sometimes, in some context be politicised and they can function as fields for politicking**" (Palonen 1993, 89-, with quote from page 162).

One must still be careful in analysing these fields. Modern flexible administration and policy, "giving responsibility" (e.g., in crisis areas and municipalities) and operating in a networked fashion, in many senses function by stating the requirements for identity. "Agreements" built through networks and (previously unofficial) communities and partnerships implicate the imperative: "Know your place!" This is often a matter of a two-sided strategy: one is to behave as though one were a member of a sovereign, autonomous community. And using the "ethic of entrepreneuring" people are drawn into a commitment to norms binding the behaviour and responsibility of all. Through the use of positive examples attempts are made to normalise the resident's personal identity, after which his residential context as well is to be normalised by way of language pictures. Here the personal and the collective become dependent upon each other. Through institutional rhetoric – in which there are echoes of the inner voice of behavioural control – the imperative is established: "Know your place!" It exhorts us: "Know who you are!" and "Know where is here!" (For a model of this argumentation see Hänninen 1998, 109, 115, 126 and 127; for background see Foucault 1988, 11-137 and Rose 1996.)

Recognising "selfhood" and "place" is the point of departure for modern administrative instances and the object of identification speech. Networking and individual tailoring are, according to critiques of civilisation, the refinement of life control and bio-politics, the technology of productive use of power. They are recognisable as discourses which define objects and subjects: ways of presenting things to us and defining them for us, to influence what happens in our heads, in other words how we think. The institutional fabric is held together with the plaster of identity definitions. In this study I also attempt to investigate the identities of young people, and the detachment and independence of the discourse which produces these identities in relation to systems of governing life, place and self (and their technologies). It should thus advance the study of systems of government from the perspective of life (for a detailed interpretation of Foucault's critique of life control see Vähämäki 1988) and the contemplation with regard to political regulations.

## Politics of Identity

The possibility of societal change, politics and space to choose, comes directly from a **signification of a (regional) identity style**. For example Giddens<sup>1</sup> even sees a solution for the oppositions between player and structure in the concept of "bi-level structure". In this way socially recognised and maintained structures (or areas<sup>2</sup>) are both the accomplishments of human effort and the means of that accomplishment (the recursive nature of social life).

The development of an interesting and controversial (power) structuring theory has brought Giddens to his theory of "reflexive modernity", in which everyday political, power and parliamentary relationships become important. Symbols and identities, levels of differentiation and function, are also part of the structuring of these relationships. Active citizenship both renews and changes power relations. On the one hand we are dependent, for example, on professionals, the media and discursive technology and information producers; on the other hand different sorts of "self-projects" and life-political decisions of principle give the individual resources and competencies to survive with his or her own self-identity in times of social uncertainty and crisis. Self-identity can develop in two modern political ways. A modern reflexive lifestyle can signify an "emancipatory" or "self-realising lifestyle". Clearing the way for one's own playing field and cultural concepts is a significant part of the function and struggle for advancement within this lifestyle, which is inevitable for the intentional and strongly self-expressive player.

These new communities are often discursive and in their style emotional, imaginary, virtual, spectacular in the own media reflexiveness and project oriented. The preliminary findings of this research support many of Maffesoli's (1996) conclusions, in which individualism does not mean egocentrism but rather a new kind of temporary communal significance. And though the living places and cultural societies of young people on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea are "going through the blender", leaving them facing more social scarcity than those on the northern and western shores, and though they depend more on collective styles of argumentation, they come out with a certain gallows humour their significations, as well as imaginary, lighter and utopian forms which transcend creative scarcity.<sup>3</sup>

Though strong local and new regional identities can be an expression of the fragmentation of life and its significations, at the same time they are a precondition for "dialogical democracy", from the control of feelings and regional self-discipline to global dimensions. Also time-space practices liberated from traditional *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* contain their own cultural and regional identity. The building of self-awareness and self-expression are in fact struggles for identity, of which the use of power is a routine feature. Young people's cultural and regional identities, through which young people become the potential subjects of politics, can be seen as the possibility for **identity politics**, the relevant moments of which are attached to life politics (cf. Beck's 'sub'-politics, Beck-Giddens-Lash 1995). **The cultural and regional self-understanding and reflection of young people, their political citizenship, may be taken as the permeating theme and object of this research project.**

According to Pekonen's (1991, 18-19; Jukarainen 1996, 23-) politico-logical interpretation, culture and identity, our way of perceiving and understanding the world, are also built in two ways. It becomes apparent that the symbolic structures of culture chosen by the society, in which meanings, values and preferences are imbedded, affect people's ways of experiencing and thinking about the world. Thus we can speak of people's **ways of approving knowledge as legitimate**. In a way Pekonen (1993, 52-54; cf. Bourdieu 1977, 170), in the spirit of Bourdieu, asserts that a binding rhetorical definition successfully put forward by some event or (un)official community represents authoritative language; thus the speech is directly legitimised. On the other hand tradition and symbolic structures must continuously be the

objects of currently functioning renewing, repeating signification. The representations of relations between things and people which happen through language not only imitate or reflect reality; they also form practices by which things are given changeable (counter)meanings. **Linguistic representation is a creative event**, where the attempt to influence surrounds the factual reality. The speaker's project is to re-create an already existing community or thing so that it becomes compatible with internal personal experience. Ricoeur also speaks of the same Freudian aspect of language, when "presenting" or "making present" is an expression of sublimation, where the regressive (archaeological past) and the progressive (teleological future) meet in a semi-dialectical way (Pekonen 1994; from primary sources of Ricoeur 1970, 456-58 and Hägglund 1991, 54-). **The dynamic of changing significations can be labelled as identity politics.**

## The Empirical Text Corpus

The basic documents and empirical material for this project (201 school essays and 22 historical essays written in the Derzavin Lyceum<sup>4</sup>) has been essays written in schools in each of the countries surrounding the Baltic Sea (in towns along the coast, excluding Germany and Sweden). My interest has been in school essays written by 16-18 years old high school students on themes and subjects concerning youth, social region and the Baltic Sea. The assigned topics for these essays have been: 1) The Baltic Sea – A Sea of co-operation and conflicts? What disturbs me at this moment. 2) My friends and opponents (enemies) around the Baltic Sea. 3) My values and comrades in the life and politics of my neighbourhood. 4) The Baltic Sea and ecology.

These titles were intended to draw out political imagination and national conflicts, portraits of the opponent and trouble makers, but then also the basic grounds for social life, lifestyles and functional preconditions for living together; the ecology title in particular brings the risk society dimension into the discussion. These question horizons or thematisations coming from a political science direction significantly both open up and limit the meanings of the young people's Baltic contacts. Besides these, the means of collecting material from the seven countries involved has left its own relevant traces in the study. I would rather not publish the names of the schools involved here, but the means of their selection is relevant in terms of setting the limits of relevance in interpretation.

Schools from Sweden and Germany were not interested in participating in this writing event, in spite of my having sent dozens of letters to both countries and offering small incentive payments. The active Baltic participation promoted by the foreign policy leadership of these countries and cultural spirit of the age is not reflected in the agendas of schools there. In Finland participation went without any problems: every third school responded positively to my proposal. The school selected was from the city of Espoo, a dynamic urban milieu bordering on Helsinki (43 essays). In Denmark a writers' school was located through the national contact person for the Baltic Sea Project (a network of schools on environmental science and ecological issues) in a small city milieu outside of Copenhagen (27 essays). Putting together material from Russia was a problem. I could not get any writings from the Baltic seacoast (St. Petersburg in particular) and I ran into the motivational problem of "Russian marvels" (the rhetoric and everyday practice of withdrawing promises); a network of personal acquaintances, however, made the writing event possible in Petroskoi, a small city with all of the painful aspects of social life typical for the Karelian region, from unemployment to scarcity in everyday life (25 essays). I also succeeded in getting writings from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania quite easily with the help of non-academic personal contacts. These came from the major maritime cultural cities of Tallinn (25 essays), Riga (34 essays) and Klaipeda (32 essays) respectively. The project also met with enthusiasm in Poland, with participation from a school in Gdansk, an industrial city which is economically and culturally reaching out into the Baltic (16 essays).



Young women and young men were fairly evenly represented in the text corpus. For very different reasons all of the secondary schools chosen as writers' shops for this project had good reputations and the social background and personal habitus of the students was primarily middle class. These factors were discovered from, besides the essays themselves, information concerning the schools and information provided by the writers (their parents' professions and their own career hopes). The middle class nature of the material and the limited number of schools sampled (only one per participating country) does not provide any possibility of nationally and socially representative and correct textual interpretations, though the texts open up a rich picture both of young people's Baltic Sea landscapes and world views, and of the institution of school essays itself as a "national" structure, or the breakdown of its formal structure (Paakkunainen 1991, 26-120). Interpretive references to nationality are entirely correct only in relation to the schools in which the essays were written. Both the variations in style and argumentative structure of these texts and general information about differentiations in cultures of verbal expression among youth groups and schools from many countries show that differences between schools tend to be quite large – often greater than national differences (e.g., Piirimäe 1995 and Heiskanen 1998).

## Methods of interpretation

In terms of the methodology of this analysis and the hermeneutical rules of thumb I am following, I am relying on traditional quantitative comparison (classification of the texts) and rhetorical and argumentative analyses of these young people's meanings in their writings and documents. The central theme of this research – the writers' regional and national identities – procedurally leads to doing primarily a textual analysis of the research material; to analyse the meanings of the descriptions given in the texts in a way that is relevant to the political territory in question. Writing about political space and territory here means the problematisation of experiences of specifically political situations. This is supplemented with (historical) source critique and with material in the form of various documents and interviews gathered to clarify factors about the groups of writers, their frames of reference and their horizons of expectation. The native language teacher from each of the seven schools and active textual translators<sup>5</sup> from five countries have been interviewed either directly or through correspondence.

In addition to the concept of political region, the relevant aspects and argumentative structures of the text corpus are the choice of topic; the thematization and contextualisation of subject; the use of terms such as politics, politicking and politicisation; the legitimisation of arguments; the (in)formal forums and auditories of texts; "who's one of us" or "who's our enemy" repertoires; the construction of conflicts; relations between ecological and social spaces/spatialities/regions/boundaries; the size of the space; distances, centre-periphery relations, styles, metaphors, ethos, pathos and logos. (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1971, Gadamer 1986, Palonen 1993, Burke 1969 and Hodge-Kress 1988). How are the young people writing themselves into the culture and its (polarised) distinctions and discriminations, ecology, region, agenda and language games?<sup>6</sup>

The nature of the modalities and the choices of 'narrative I' in the texts, preconceptions and (school essay writing) "preliminary contracts", factuality, ethos, pathos and logos (Perelman & Olbrechts – Tyteca 1971, 67-75 and 158-160) as well as the oppositions, definitions and bases for "other", metaphors of sea, land and air by which the "speakers" in the texts insure the rightness and desirability of their goals arise at the center. The strong opposition and competitor dimensions of centre and periphery as well as friend and foe come to be the turning point of interpretation here. In addition to the significations of

land, sea and air (cf. esp. Schmitt 1942), vertical and horizontal relations express deictic structures, and the pronouns for place and use of adverbs come out as part of what is to be understood as a pragmatic reading programme.<sup>7</sup>

Broadly understood word pictures (Burke 1988; Ricouer 1978, 47-55) and with them reflexive stylistic choices (Paakkunainen 1991, 50-) are included in the analysis and in pointing out the articles attached here I have tried to succinctly describe the way in which these young people carve out political space for themselves (Paakkunainen 1995B, 70-105; cf. also Levinson 1983, Hodge-Kress 1988, 37-78, Grice 1981, 20-). In the description of metaphors I lean on the four "master tropes" outlined by Burke (1969, 503-07; for concrete example of interpretation see Palonen 1997, 14-16). The **dialectical or ironic trope** is polisemic and often sarcastically entertaining, where the writer himself also joins into the game and questions his own role. The **perspective or metaphor** generally signifies a point of view where the world lacks symmetry; thus the characterisations of "that being like this" or "this being like that" describe phenomena with the vocabulary of another field or territory. **Reduction or metonymy** returns the concept, relationship or thing to something simpler. It has as its strategy to "express some phenomenon or space which is immaterial, invisible and difficult to conceptualise by making it material, visible and conceptual" (Burke 1969, 505). **Identification and synecdoche (representation)** attaches some substance and part of something in a synonymous way. Aristotle too emphasised that to be sensitive to metaphors one must have "an eye for similarities". Synecdoche displays – shallowly but affectively – a representative detail or example.

As to style I rely on my theory of the four-part field of political speech (Paakkunainen 1991, 121-140; summarised in English in Paakkunainen 1993; for a point of comparison in artistic literature see Hernadi 1972).<sup>8</sup> The "**pejorative**" involves an aggressively negative variation of the political relationship, when the cursing and emotional aspects of language are at the surface, always relying on powerful words and the world of excrement to make an impression. The "cynical" heckling disappointment can turn to the negative humour of hating authority, always presenting a sarcastic circus, theatre and game through irony and taunting. Speech involving "**critical**" distance in values and concepts in many senses progresses beyond sarcasm reflexively, in terms of world view and investigating to the point of practical participation. The "**constructive**" genre refers to political "passionlessness" or satisfaction, which can lead to the realisation of pluralistic values and to analytical "on the one hand / on the other" commentary, or in a round about way to a position in journalism or even an outside position.

The concept of political space in this study is thus a rather more abstract conceptual unit than concrete spatial concepts. Such concrete concepts can be considered for example as dimensions<sup>9</sup> of the political space in which political aspects can be problematised in the study: "space", "place", "site", "area", "surface", "territory", "locus", "position", "environment", "milieu". The primary focus of this study, however, will be on levels more relevant to politics and the use of power. Thus the young people's texts and speech are to be contextualised in explicated political divisions as well as through "we" based and conflict articulating identities, described in terms of international political allegiances and oppositions, new areas and more ideological power relations (à la relations of location according to the classic centre vs. periphery dimension). But this is not enough;<sup>10</sup> we need more political types of space relations.

These are in particular the following:<sup>11</sup> 1) **Unified space** means, e.g., objective and undisputed definitions of space where we can find, e.g., common and united external tasks. Young scouts, with their unquestioning way of relating to the rules and functions of their organisation and fatherland, can be taken a paradigm here. 2) **Supreme power space** is the sort where the role of the supreme authority is better recognised than in the previous. The relationship with this power can be more relative and fragile than the structure of a conquered area. The shared identity of Polish Catholic young people is an example

of this sort of political space. 3) **Divided space** is where the different sides have (according to the *cuius regio eius religio* paradigm) been given their own, sometimes unbalanced, areas of (supreme) influence. A practical example of this is way in which Estonia's Russian speaking and ethnic Estonian youth cultures function as a division of "areas of advantage". 4) **Neutralised space** means that the area and milieu is excluded from (the current stage of) the game, struggle or supreme control. This is the point of many young people's "diplomatic" concept of the protection of the Baltic Sea environment. 5) **Disputed space** develops immediately when one side chooses to politicise an area: for example when young people take part in a Greenpeace action against neutral rights to technically and economically use the Baltic Sea. 6) **Diffused space** can take concrete form, for example, as a "grey zone" or through an area non-actual in the enemy-relations. Alternative movements' ways of relating to the outcast, marginal, "spent" or "social" operate according to this paradigm.

## Understanding Young People's Texts: A Colourful Spectrum of Views

In addition to survey based on (post)behavioristic research strategies and conventional participation analyses, we have to use the tools of modern hermeneutics and rhetorical analysis (Paakkunainen 1991, 1993, 1995B and 1998A and C) in understanding the special political aspects of young peoples' *weltanschauung* and reading texts written by young Europeans. On the basis of such empirical research it is safe to state the conclusion that a thesis suggesting the de-politicisation of contemporary young people does not appear to be justifiable these days; not only because such a thesis is often put forward by members of established social and political cultures with "vested interests" to defend, but far more importantly, because claims of this general sort cannot really be opposed or defended without specifying one's standpoint – one's criteria concerning the thematic or temporal aspects of the argument. Furthermore, those presenting such arguments generally do not realise that such concepts as "politics" are today susceptible to opposing and even incommensurable interpretations (e.g. different forms of 'life-political' or 'sub-political' viewpoints). These interpretations in particular should be studied, not the plus or minus appraisals of such labels as "politics" by various audiences.

My hermeneutical case studies of the Finnish and Baltic young people in the late 80s and 90s lead to some important conclusions. First of all, it is impossible to speak of "youth" as a collective singular in the sense of a subject adopting a more or less unified position; rather, the internal divisions among young people are at least equally strong as those among older adults, both in their attitudes towards politics and in the figurative language they use to describe political phenomena. As a general tendency, however, we can detect a more or less clear, generation-bound shift from one paradigm to another.

This shift appears to be explicitly negative: a rejection of the collective and institutional paradigm of established forms of politics. What comes instead of this in the texts of young authors, however, is a wide and colourful spectrum of views and mobile political spaces. Established politicians "...are functioning way up there somewhere". Social, cultural and regional differentiations and identities have political aspects, but they are distanced from "real, established politics". This distance is a given presupposition (Perelman) for many young people and their everyday language contains some ironical metaphors in this regard: "My peer group is changing me and I'm resembling them more and more[...]: we're not racists, we try to do well in school, we live with our families and believe in everlasting love, we work on maintaining our friendships, we fight against drugs and we don't trust politicians". (17-years old boy in the Finnish text corpus.)

These individualistic and elastic tendencies are a relatively new phenomenon. They involve stylistic and symbolic experimentation and a shameless drive to break up the conventional political ideologies and collectives. All this embarrasses politicians, researchers and other adults. The establishment is not ready for living, rapid-fire critiques, irony and civil competence. It has only a minimal understanding of the emotional and cynical styles maintaining their voices and identities in the midst of a psychedelic and bureaucratised risk society. In addition to individualistic actions, many young people, especially those with an advanced degree of literacy, are ready to join together with each other in exploring the possibilities of some literary and imaginary worlds (see the following interpretation inspired by the Appadurai 1990) to make political contributions, and they will not leave their work unfinished! In their back pockets we find an alternative that points beyond the old democracy founded on the power of collectives: "Warning: Talented cynics may already be here today!" (18 year-old girl in the writer's Finnish text corpus from the year 1989).

## II.

### Basic Conclusions About Texts Written by Young People Around the Baltic:

#### DENMARK

##### Hectic Danish essayists

The text corpus gathered from Denmark lends to the interpretation of the fragmented citizens' identity of young students in (late)modern European nation. The rhetoric of Danish writers is, in comparison with the contributions from Finland, the other "Western country" in the text corpus, more emotional and concrete. There is a postmodern style, conscious of its uncertainty and focused on distinctions between the spirit of the Central-Europe and polemics among the NATO-Countries. This 'emotionality' and 'concreteness' present themselves in biographical notes, reminiscences and changing pictures with gleams of hope, problems and dead fish. Young people from the Danish school dare to be positive narcissists, their using pencils to shape the personal, negative and cynical material and feelings in impressionistic, intimate and sceptical ways. No one-dimensionality and black-minded pejoratives to be found here. Awful experiences are related using emotional worlds and associations. Psychedelic and impressionistic expressions and the transformations in the same texts are allowable. In the background of these stylistic choices and aspects of ethos are the European pluralistic traditions, urban youth cultures and their present hectic nature. At the same time we get the feeling from the Danish text corpus that there are no clear authoritarian audiences nor presuppositions of idyll in this small state's foreign policy.

Denmark is a part of Western Europe and young essayists have rather unsystematically summarised their thoughts concerning the Baltic Sea by saying that it is situated mainly in north. This Sea is sometimes *"so small that it disturbs me"*. This relative distance and the flexible postmodern impressionism produce the uniquely Danish relation into the Baltic Sea. Young discussants dare to be in uncertain, transforming the (post)modern condition where there are no stable bases for arguing nor general views of the surrounding world. Their basic sorrows and impressions are focused on the fishing industry and the record length bridge being constructed just now between Sweden and Denmark: *"Our welfare state is lavishing money needed for solving real social problems on bridges."/ "We have managed without the bridge, with the ferries sailing between Denmark and Norway... There has always been the freedom to sail."/ "The bridge is increasing the solidarity between Scandinavian countries in a dangerous Europe."/ "I love the Baltic Sea near the island of Bornholm... I always met my man among the reeds near the beach and these associations have been with me all these years."/ "I go fishing on the shores of Baltic... and I see the distress and dangers that animals and fish face there."/ "I go swimming at the beaches and I see the chaotic situation like the disappearance of oxygen, the giants of the fishing industry, the oil slicks over the suffering plankton, the tests of DNA controlling the potential ships turned the waste waters into the sea and the dying seals that used to be the symbols of the area."*

The expressions of ecological and political issues do not indicate a traditional self-confidence and claims for law-and-order. On the contrary, the Danish participants wrote rather short essays, not taking the whole writing event very seriously: *"On behalf of our editorial staff I'd say that's enough for now"*, and they were ready to recognise their weaknesses in reporting facts and interpretations on the circumstances in the Sea. The basic postmodern attitude and approach of *"it was pleasure"* is popular – and from what we read it seems that this also applies to other areas of their life. Even labour market and employment issues are not taken so seriously: *"the working place must be a pleasure"*. This uncertainty is part of their impressionistic and late-modern speculation and reflective consciousness. The lack of knowledge and explicated unconsciousness doesn't always mean fear. Instead of the developmental standards, a linear path into the future and simple enlightenment they have a sceptical consciousness without black-and-white differentiations.

## The Unstable East in the Danish Interpretation

This reflective and contradictory way of citizens' life leaves room for reflective and subpolitical (life political) learning, as well as reorientations in the economy and the revisions in the basic modern enlightenment projects. This orientation breaks down belief in the power of knowledge. Political learning and chance always have their negative, dissociative and disorientation aspects, such as in crisis situations; something is always disappearing or being discarded. The sub-political provocation in the life political situation is not always conscious of the direction of movement, 'narrative-minds' are egocentric, but changeable: *"forwards or backwards, who knows!"* Insecurity and desperation are often transformed into acts and demands for hope and 'caring' – or on the contrary. This interpretation was a common way for the Danes to conclude their essays. *"The Sea is dying with its animals, fish and plankton, but there is still something we can do and I hope that future generations are able to fish and eat around the Baltic."* Negative utopias and catastrophes on the one hand and "caring" on the other, *"to help poor countries... and to continuously keep on them about their responsibilities to clean up the oil they have dumped into the Sea"* – are present, in the same time. And sometimes it is possible to confront Fortuna ('lukket') with personal solutions – by bridging the gap between hopeful idealistic and practical active motivations regarding all of Europe eco-problems by using the European political system of fixed norms and quotas. *"We must conduct studies, test and try to provide resources for strategic initiatives... relevant to the ecological status quo."*

The special term used to express the repertoire of ecological issues is the milieu or environmental policy ("miljøpolitik"). This is a concept of the so-called sector policy, full of managerial and professional connotations, but here it is used with a wider meaning, consisting of a large repertoire of ecological and social actors and projects. Formal activities, such as demanding quotas to prevent unlawful and depleting fishing practices, have their side by side the informal and radical provocateurs. Greenpeace and its publicity have a powerful position in discussions among Danish (early)youth. A film entitled "A Drop in the Sea" sponsored by Greenpeace was presented some months ago on Danish TV. The paradigm of its name is significant for the active youth. The concept of environmental policy has many late-modern and politicking aspects: networking, project-orientation and co-operative means are a part of discourses in 'miljøpolitik'. These initiatives are expanding into the East. Intellectual provocation seeking concrete expressions and co-operative initiatives are gaining the victories over the "strangeness" and "otherness" in the area. *"Denmark, Sweden and Finland have Western projects and development available to them"*, and these nations *"have to support the poor countries in the East – Germany and the Scandinavian countries have to be the locomotive to pull these trends forward"*.

As a part of this social-green argumentation – the discursive "landscape" or community (Appadurai 1990) – there is a clearly Western oriented and conventional verbal images: *"We can see a surprising pluralism among the former member countries of Warsaw Pact and Eastern Block [...] not many years ago we had lot of soldiers in Bornholm to keep the communists away from our territory."* In many essays the 'naturalisms' and 'dependencies' collapsing after the fall of the iron curtain are noticed in terms of emancipative terms and ethos. But *"...the primary responsibility for pollution in the Baltic Sea lies with Russia and the three Baltic countries."/**"The Post-Soviet empire is hard to control and manage; it is living in a period of change encompassed by strange operational principles, if we compare their life circumstances with our own."* These remarks are thickening the 'postmodern' haze in the risk society (in the terms of Ulrich Beck postmodernism and risk society are incompatible). The world is not only divided by the borders on the map; time is fragmented and there is a dramatic plurality of intentions and conflicts from different periods and based on different rationales. The global and positive visions are covered by corrosive tendencies, competitive striving after material and postmaterial values, and democratic and "totalising" solutions. Political cultures around the Baltic Sea have mutant faces from different eras. Surprisingly the Baltic 'other' is now among us, and at the corner of the Sea, in Denmark, it is easy to see.

In the 'linguistic landscapes' (Appadurai 1990) of two or three Danish boys the drama of potential war constructs the narrative focus of their stories. There are some connections to the simulations of interactive computer games and their strategic solutions. It is also possible to consider these applications as the "imaginative communities fully estranged from the real world (of politics)" where the highly technical and commodified language of the game and its meanings live their separate life. But this rhetoric of the 'logi of quantity' (Perelman 1971, 85) has its strategic dimension and at least associative connections to the (semantic) power politics and its rapid and ambivalent transformations after the Wall. "Cocktail" is a fruitful example here, a trope of synecdoche, describing postmodern feelings in the face of the media-war in the Balkans. We should not speak here about reflections of the risk society; the game practice is too light and its base is in dramatic solutions, and just like in the media world, the dramatic and surprising turns have the power to shock and provoke.<sup>12</sup> These young Danish writers reduce the field of European politics down to a strategic game, status quo or (which is quite close) the game theory of power. The war may be *"...close by in Europe...Russia is not satisfied with the situation where NATO has extended into Poland"!/ "The war in the Balkans has actualised the role of Russia with its weapons arsenal... We see a 'cocktail' of different interests in the Balkans and I'm worried about this danger of explosion."/* *"The USA and the nations around the Baltic Sea are worried about the strategic position of Denmark...It takes only half an hour to put the mines into the Danish straits and the Sea is closed!...I'm a little bit afraid of this situation and its possibility...Russia may break its relations and dialogue with NATO. The situation is not clear..."*

## The focuses in the Danish spaces

The writers do not believe in objective unified space or simple divided space other than perhaps in relation to NATO and the West, which they believe to be some inevitable pluralistic and thoughtful structural space for mobility, where there is still a noticeable activity level. Moving outward from this NATO space we come to the "instability" and "guilt for polluting the sea" of the Baltic states. Though the Danish writers also used environmental politics as a sector concept, they fluently and abstractly connected private and public space in their "environmental experience". Personal politics do not remain just a matter of everyday choices – they can be utilised in diffused spaces as well

(common shores, mixed cultures) and they can create disputed space through their own drama and action. The personal and emotional ways of experiencing these spatial relations, psychedelicalness and abstraction (e.g., the ambivalence of national borders) are part of the postmodern "mixed" and impressionistic spatial experiences which make room for imagination and movement. The (narrative) self dares to be present; it can change; live as many and move in many spaces.

## FINLAND

### Navigating between cynicism and realism

A lack of seriousness in relation to school essays is also noticeable in Finland.<sup>13</sup> During the 80s and 90s the rhetoric of school essays converged with everyday language and its pragmatic and rustic metaphors and expressions. Finnish writings were not, in the Danish fashion, set in their experiences of sea shore areas, reed covered coasts and coves as a part of their personal lives. The commitment to the textual ethos and pathos is not that intimate (Perelman-Olbrechts-Tyteca 1972, 60-62). Rather, a few young people wrestling with life problems identified their emotional connections with their "sea docks".<sup>14</sup> Nowadays the authoritarian audience for Finland's school essays written about political themes (in this case the native language teacher of each class and the Finnish political science researcher) is no longer strict, one-dimensional and full of expectations for reflections of matter-of-fact, analytical or nationalistic and pluralistic styles.

Contemporary conventions for school essays tolerate sceptical or flexible individualism – even pejorative emotional expressions and taunting. The common social narratives and values and standards of essay writing have died. Sometimes a reader has a feeling that the whole classical model of Aristotelian rhetoric has disappeared (into an other forum, e.g., into the professional discussions) and we have no classical or traditional authority to test our strength with and 'listen to' (Gadamer 1986). Instead of these collective (national, religious, ideologically European class culture related or even scientific-rational) bases for 'Weltanschauung' we have the light and 'petrified' metaphors of everyday talk and so-called mixed and changing "imagined communities" (described in abstract and difficult terms by Maffessoli 1996) living in sceptical and changing media societies, with their traditions and discourses on local, national and global levels. But this fragmentation of heavy collectives, lines and classical styles doesn't mean the end of discussion and argument (compare the debate on knowledge and internet, Barker 2000, 154-177) in the major part of the texts.

Most of the Finnish writers have an explicitly distanced and sceptical horizon in relation to the conventional political system and its actors (politicians, parties and ideologies). This moralistic and cynical distance is not so actively manifested in the Danish essays, where the political establishment is not a target for moral or pejorative accusations strengthened by simple metaphors of synecdoche and metonymies (politics as "*practise swindling*" or "*double-dealing*" and "*shit-talking*"). Young Finns have a certain difficulty in navigating their way through these sorts of themes and writing analytical texts that are critically, clearly and reflectively argued. The gap between the political elite and the everyday life of youth is remarkable. This ambivalent and negative style in political writings is in conformity with the passive participation in the elections and low membership rates in political organisations: only half of those under thirty



years old vote in national elections and only one or two percent are recruited into political parties and youth organisations.

This distance and formation of political identity in relation to "real politick" or remaining outside of it roughly indicates two things among the Finnish writers. Some relate to politics in a moralising way and leave life decisions and the problematisation of "given" borders to be and largely remain part of that world of "politics" with its "dirty players, steeped in TV publicity, independently over people's heads". Political publicity and the "establishment" as well is dependent on this basic moralism in national society (against identities formed by publicity). Others, however, open some projects in the traditional field of politics or participate in matters concerning themselves and their immediate environment and in discussions about re-defining things, professional and spatial relations.

## **The Finnish Idyll – New Dialogues, Spatial Reflections and Professional Humanism**

This above mentioned critical and active distance from the 'polity' doesn't mean that young Finns have a lot of powerful and action-centered alternatives, real voluntarism. "New social movements" are at the level of concrete texts only in the (media based) fields of humanism, declarations to protect animals, solidarity with certain radical activists and principal readiness for action. In one essay the prevention of cruelty to animals explicates a metaphor for humanism around the Baltic! None of the writers, however, tells of his or her own participation in actions by new-left or ecological groups. The ecological and alternative choices are the part of everyday life: the social practices of equality and social care, consumption and traffic in Baltic Sea and around its shores.

The powerful technological and economically liberal argumentation in Finland can also lead to an alternative kind of conclusions and oppositions. Especially the ecological consciousness of many writers (evident in a good third of the Finnish essays) is worthy of respect. It has been developed and reflected in the schools. The facts about the ecological status quo and pollution around the Sea stand side by side with active citizens' resentment when faced with the Sea's blankets of blue-green algae.

In the facing of ecological risks we could find this special Finnish horizon of everyday life and concrete, non-dramatic movement without any stunts involved between the local, national and global scenes. The focus is on the prosaic presentation of ecological responsibility. Ecological awareness is a kind of "weight on our shoulders" – where the traditions of political means, necessities and difficulties in "doing something" are present. Only a few ecological discussants are drawing a colourfully negative and dramatic picture of an ecological catastrophe. In addition to the some visions of death and apocalyptic blue-green algae, we find prosaic touches regarding pollution and breakdown of the ecological status quo.

The Finnish specialities in the eco-political evaluation of the Baltic Sea area are comments about 'cross-water', the problems of low-salted waters moving slowly in the direction of Atlantic Ocean and changing over slowly; the experiences of algae at the summer villages and beaches; and the contradictory influence of colossal ferries sailing between Finland, Sweden and Estonia. Then there is the basic sad and relatively recent experience, of the ferry *Estonia* going down in a storm off the Finnish coast with close to

a thousand Baltic persons on board. In their different individual situations and communalities young persons are able to link their personal ideas on the one hand to ecological risks and foreign political options and on the other hand to the function of the contingent risk society and international fronts. But this relation, the way in which two contingent politics of the risk society meet, does not have much to do with Fortuna and political play with contingency and risky choices.

Among the writers we find many who describe the basic choices of the risk society, in whose texts we see only faintly the school's role as an ideological filter. The farming of rainbow trout and its availability on the market is just as close as the rise and fall of the Baltic Sea – the realisation of which could lead to a functional awakening: *"Algae blossoming increases every summer. Reasons are sought for and also found. The most popular explanations are fish farming, feed production, field fertilising, sewage emissions, ship traffic and many other factors add to this endless burden, from which we ourselves suffer most. It is useless to search for guilty parties; everyone can influence matters in their own way if they just find the energy to try. Rainbow trout just 19,90 mk/kg! Alternatives can be found if we just look for them. (Sea salmon is more ecologically sound, though a bit more expensive). OPEN YOUR EYES!"*

Some students are acting against technocracy with the humanistic and philosophical terms. *"Everyone can see the bad ecological condition of the Sea"*, but this natural thought held by many people has, according to the writers, nothing to do with the real motivation for change and traditions of 'caring'. One talented young person interprets the happy-go-lucky passive attitudes among youth in the spirit of Ulrich Beck's (1993) subpolitics using the terms *"the Nintendo generation"* and *"amoral and non-humanistic Nokia-People"*. According to this young humanist with her admiration for high-minded and noble individuals, professional ethics have ceased to be of interest to her peers – Finnish young people are thinking only of salary as a basis for choosing an occupation. These ironic metaphors offer a certain perspective regarding the political and risk-societal aspects of knowledge, conventions of political socialisation and profession. In addition to the ironic comments pointed at the Nokia and Nintendo corporations, this writer also gives a set of sarcastic asymmetries between the conceptual and value oriented dimensions, such as *"philosophy/Jari Sarasvuo"* (a relatively popular Finnish author in the genre of "success manuals"), *"heroes of the working class/Social Democrats"* and *"economic success/moral attitudes"*.

The decay of late-modern solidarity and mutual care moves many; often it can also lead to abstract and surprising conclusions, for example in the forms of escape to the countryside, idealising poverty and traditional equal rights politics (cf. the "abstract moralities" in Perelman-Olbrechts-Tyteca 1972, 77-78): *"The ground around our neighbourhood are a mess since they are no one's private property. Residents here are too busy... and they get involved in each other's lives only if the other's actions disturb their own well-being... well maintained grounds and human relations are something you can look for out in the countryside.../ People all have the same value regardless of their wealth and opinions, or so they say, but as a poor utopian myself I don't feel that I get the same sort of treatment as the rich. This can be seen in the shop, when the salesperson would rather serve the important looking fur bearer than me... I feel like I belong only with my own family and friends."*

The shortening of the physical and social distances between countries around the Baltic through tourism, business, cultural exchange and the active life on the big ferries sailing around the Nordic part of the Baltic Sea, are building up the New Baltic where people know and need the others. And against this horizon it's a crazy and economically irrational idea to pollute the environment. This realism is not only part of post-war peace-making spirit of European Union, sometimes it takes the social (community) form of 'social dancing or dialogu'. In the continuing risk society of nuclear and chemical weapons we must have cultural dialogues and 'touches' as a possible means to overcome old prejudices and dangers, *"the Finnish bias and common sense"*. Just as the Estonian people have a tradition of song festivals as a

national cultural defence against the Soviet Empire, *"the Baltics need to develop the tourist business in such an intimate way that people will get in touch with each other and live and love with each other"*.

Many texts from Espoo are a form of critique of the power and logic of capital over ecology; and here the junior "novelists" are using the rhetoric of struggle between two concepts and values: 'money' versus 'indifference'. These correspond with the dimensions of observing and valuing ('philosophical pairs', cf. Perelman-Olbrechts-Tyteca 1972, 420-60). Setting up oppositions, however, does not open in the direction of discussing globalism (global ethics or political institutions) but rather towards the immediate ethical circle natural relations of irresponsibility/responsibility. The specific voice in this critical front against instrumental economic rationality is an existential one; a 'sartrean' individualist is with ironic pathos analysing the western stereotypes of male individualism and facing their lightness on the shores of the 'deep-thinking' sea. A writer gives himself to the sea (neutralised space) and its superiority: *"It is storming and manifesting its extremes and power; there You have the possibility of peaceful space and solving the contradictions"*.

Liberating, personalising and anthropomorphizing the sea (space) – so that the sea can speak to other spaces or actors and show the destructiveness of people's individualistic materialistic pursuits – is also seen in a few of the other texts. In these humanistic and existential experiences it is not an accident that some conventional youth and peace organisations in Finland and Russia organise their organisational activities as cruises or sailing trips. *"You can take and atmosphere with you"* and egocentric conflicts can push it aside. Neutralised or diffused (natural) space can be a possibility to transcend real supreme power or disputed spatial relations. In addition to being a question of argumentative reflexiveness and the rhetoric of inevitability brought on by the ecological crisis, there can also be a form of deep experiential catharsis.

### **...and More Harmonious or Disciplinary Identities Living in "Härmä"<sup>15</sup>**

On the other side of Finnish political culture we find the refreshed rhetorical conventions of conservative patriotism (*"Home, God, Fatherland"*), with pejorative jokes about the other nations in the Baltic neighbourhood mischievously expressing racism. The naturalisation of borders and types of persons, racism, can at times, in two or three populist essays, be militant. Most often it is in the form of hints like, *"around the Baltic there are people of many different appearances..."* Sometimes these black-cynical right wing remarks try to emphasise Finland's new freedom after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Strict nationalism is a way of "striking back" (Keränen 1998). Some issues in Finland and the three small Baltic states provide the basic elements for constructing this conflict – tensions between 'new right or discipline-minded groups' and new 'social-green' individuals – as a new basis for political mobilisation: 'totalising' and 'law and order' values versus the social argumentation of green and new-left individualism (Heitmeyer 1992 and Paakkunainen 1996a). The above mentioned identities also often rely on strict values and loyalties against global, mixed or impure fields and interactive relationships.

These communities are reflected in the different kinds of language games. The 'ethnic' circle is not large and powerful, only a few young people find their basic enemy in their immediate neighbourhood, *"among foreigners" ... "my own enemies live in the capital district... which I really don't get out of myself"*. Finland is in ethnic, linguistic and social senses an extremely homogeneous nation, which is reflected in the text corpus in premises like the national history of "hard work" and the **drama of the Second World War**. Modern self-discipline, the spirit of enterprise and education have formed Finland as

an "idyll" – a model for the "undeveloped" Baltic states. The modalities of texts are here most often assertive and injunctive (Perelman-Olbrechts-Tyteca 1971, 158-165): when the imperatives or truths that rely on this sort of context and common language game are relativised, or if they are presented to a global audience, they can take on "prayerful" (ibid., 160) tones.

A large group of these writers are part of the 'discursive communion' or "liberal camp", manifesting social and private idylls expressed in two-faced argumentation: with the liberal rights and norms of private space, or with intimate, family-centred ideas and traditions. Sometimes the pathos and ethos of these groups are approaching the one-dimensional and traditional rhetoric of 'rating' in civil society. Strict ideas of the inward voice, honest standards and one-dimensional ways of understanding people and the truth are the main starting narratives and presuppositions of these young conservatives and populists. Contingent and disputed spaces and societies are seen as dangers. The generation of young new-conservatives have easily adopted the one-dimensional, popular slogan (here analysed as a clear modality): "the function of adults is to set limits for youth and children."

The basic contradiction between post-cold war cultures here is the politically non-dramatic distance between developed Scandinavian countries and the countries where everything and everyone is "resting on their buttocks" and the ecological catastrophes are "waiting behind the door". Surprisingly often this argumentation is united with "technological" comparisons and discourse (community) and its cold considerations. We see the same when we look at the sovereign play of politicians in the media, and we follow the problems and reform attempts in the Baltic States and Russia through the rhetoric of returned problems, the "stagnation" of the forces of nature and tautology.

The Finnish young people's irony concerning the idyll they live in also has a cynical and distant spirit of antagonism here: "a desperate co-operation between Finland and Estonia"; "Finland is giving and the Estonia is taking"; "it's a basic fact that the Sea is separating our nations and producing the division of labour"; "You, the other Baltic partner, try just a little bit – like we do in Finland!"

In addition to the contradictions between above mentioned 'soft' and 'hard' communities of 17 and 18-year-old discussants, there are many implicit and explicit forms of impatience towards the former Soviet countries (not only Russia, but also Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania). Poland is seen as being, in its own way, more flexible and often good-natured in spite of its problems with pollution. Denmark and Germany as the western democracies have some historical problems, and Sweden has so much to do with Finns that it is not easy to speak about it. The chaotic and insecure feelings towards Russia recorded in the text corpus sound like they are coming from the very hearth of danger. Yet in spite of this reflection of anarchy, the texts explicate the need for economic and political co-operation in the region. The new morality is expressing itself in clear formulas while tossing accusing glances here and there: "the industry is spewing poison" ... "The Russians are using the Sea as a dumping ground" ... and "excrement like an artillery". The Russian demands for territory and sea are taken down as threats to peace and the tanks and tankers of Soviet Union and Russia are described with black irony.

## Weight on Finnish Shoulders

Although young Finns, especially in a European comparison, value freedom and social contacts quite highly, this doesn't mean that they are celebrating or manifesting the flourishing freedom in post-wall Finland. We could even say that there is a lot of the political realism and status quo reflection of a petty state – carefulness, prejudgement and anticipation of the changes between the 'superpowers' and in European relations and politics. As we saw in the interpretation above, the ecological awareness is a kind of "weight on our shoulders" – and we can see this same waiting cautiousness in political imagination in all spheres and spaces. This is a special tradition of Finnish foreign policy, having been ruled by strong presidents (Paasikivi, Kekkonen, Koivisto), even in the period known as "Finlandization" (a German, often pejorative term) which emphasised Finland's unique style of cringing and self-censorship under the threat of the Soviet Union. On the other, hand Finland's development during the period of the welfare state (1960-) have been undramatic; the younger generation has had no experiences of escalating political conflict manifested in strict formulas or symbols of the nation-state and the authoritarian legitimisation around it.

In the circumstances since the Cold War, young Finns haven't expressed many radical imagination or idealistic speculations as to how to politically use this new 'contingent' freedom and space for choices and concrete utopias. We cannot find many strong and critical considerations in their analysis of the present drastic changes taking place in European political culture – e.g., the transformation of NATO, different kinds of interventions in the Balkan crisis and the global power of financial investments. These dramatic changes have happened mainly in unobserved and silent 'space' – behind diplomatic facades. Ulrich Beck (1993 and 1995) interprets this situation with the claim that we have found that the rapid tempo of new status quo politics and its diplomacy is a part of the political facade-based system.

In European politics drastic transformations are happening in the shadow of this facade – e.g., the roles of Western-based political and military networking and the German national army (Bundeswehr) have changed dramatically. Ecological space, regions and citizen identities are still viable, but they have a kind of "weight on their shoulders" like the Soviet Union used pressure on the Finnish political imagination and space ten years ago. There is no large elastic room for dramatic new solutions and ecological visions. The young Finnish writers show a preference for professional groups taking their political responsibilities. The writers' "I" (narrative mind) is more like the journalists' pencil than surgeons knife. The consciousness of Finland's status as a petty state and its history of neutrality are also reflected here in the Finnish terms of anticipation (Russian/Soviet/ Russian – German). The contingency of the world is available only in short steps when we are choosing a professional path in the context of petty state realism. In some nice anecdotes we see this style of continuously locating the status quo: "We are living on the shores of a natural cross-water", which is reflected in the political level stated in the old formula of Finland: "we are cross-water in the middle of two worlds, anticipating the moves of the West and East."

## The focuses in the Finnish spaces

The heroic tale of Finnish survival is individually and varyingly reflected in these young writers' texts. It skilfully ties together the guarded and reflected small nation consciousness and common space. This sort of identity – regardless of its dramatic testing and the political nature of its conception – can last surprisingly long. Likewise common realism can, without breaking, open both to defending humanistic values and professions in disputed spaces and rhetorically operate in ceaseless cynicism and according to common sense in supreme power space reflections or in disputed spaces for the functions of nations surrounding the Baltic Sea. This idyll is encouraged by the welfare state ideology and sceptical ("let the bosses handle it") awareness of the international balance that the leaders have created, which has its common destiny with the balancing of the establishment above the disputed spaces of one's own country. Humanistic journalism, internet technology and professional competence in various fields can be strengthen this sort of balance and institutional reflexiveness<sup>16</sup> in the risk society, "as long as your back leg is firmly planted on the ground and you stay low". Finnish publicity encourages this style of speaking: space for ethnic and economic success, cynical national speech, the difficulties of handling integration for immigrants rarely break into young people's discussions "in the land of one truth". Self-irony finds the limits of balance, but generally both the drivers of unified space organisation and those reflecting the borders are cautious. A few young people use the sea as a neutralised or diffused space, closing it off to selfish competition by dancing with others or, in an existential tone of voice, the power and space of the sea is to be used as a humanistic resource. "Global" space as well opens slowly; secondary school students conquer the world with their idyll, as home made individuals, not as the bold global avant-garde.

## POLAND

### Politicking in the Polish Text Corpus

In the Polish essays, where the thematic focus has been concentrated on ecological reflections, live a concrete utopia. Discussants are analysing the political space, real moments and possibilities in the political life with hopeful terms. Among the writers we cannot find any (romantic) traditionalists, pure cynical accusers or hard core sceptics. Poland's text corpus is the most modern and flexible among the source materials in the present research and analyses. Its more flexible, serious and reasonable in a modern way, reflecting more factual information than the Finnish and Danish contributions. On the other hand, the messages in the Polish writings have no postmodern fragmentary and sceptical aspects like the Danish had with their 'not-so-serious' applications and variety of (personal) remarks.

Other basic attributes describing the style, metaphors and spaces in this corpus of Northern Central-Europe were 'international/global' and 'free'. The nation-state of Poland does not dictate functional space or collectivities. The international and the global come together with local experience. On the other hand freedoms in spatial and problem centred (punctually variable) observations have not meant narcissistic me-talk, postmodern detachment or stylistic experimentation. Young writers from Gdansk have no clear authoritarian audience such as the "father of nation" or a one-dimensional teacher. They are expres-

sing themselves freely in a way that leaves the room for concentrating on the different ways of structuring modern problems without dogmas or clear conventions. The 'internationalism' of data here means the unique freedom to move about in literary genres. It was a surprisingly fact for me that young Polish writers wrote without traditional pathos of patriotism. The few patriotic terms used in the texts do not show essayists being pressured to repeat something; instead of this authoritarian traditionalism they are extending and straining the meanings of patriotism in the face of the risk society. The pupils living in Gdansk are expressing their views without bitterness against the big powers in the East and especially in the West.

They have a rich and fresh way of reflecting on global and European political life without the myths and borders of nation states. On the other hand they criticised themselves (ironic intellectualism), their state and its politicians and had the most radical conclusions concerning new social movements and networks – the basic and intimate relationship between political space/rhetoric and action! At the same time some contributors have a persuasive way of taking some distance from the EU and NATO, the Western way of life without national pathos. The Polish young writer is, at least in this collection of essays, the most risky modern, politicking and politicising subject.

The contextualisation of the writings had only a few 'Gemeinschaft'-style and traditional solutions. They stated it rhetorically: *"How is it possible to get back the sacredness of the Baltic Sea?"* *"The ideal of the sea reminds me of my home...the deep blue Sea is a challenge to protect it..."* The romanticism here relates to the aesthetic dimensions of nature (in the spirit of the late 60's and Marcuse 1977). Here the return into the nature is primarily a prosaic means of emphasising the dialogical and aesthetic more than the technical. In the texts we are not able to find any organic and stable biological terms. Even some negative visions of nature have their own aspects of beauty/ugliness: *"Dirty strips of oil replace the jellyfish"*. Some sensitive prosaic writers describe with the aesthetic visions and contrasting disillusionment the changes which have taken place in the "wild" playgrounds of their childhood: *"...unusually beautiful beaches covered with the branches and the pieces of bigger trees, and with a carpet formed by shells and pieces of amber. You are able to smell a salt in the wind.... Nevertheless...after the years the crowds of tourists are changing this natural environment. Everywhere there are trampled plants. The walking masses are leaving behind them refuse heaps. The pine forest nearby has been destroyed by amber seekers..."* As a part of their positive utopias, writers spoke of a positive future on the shores of Baltic: *"to have a holiday there at the clear beaches together with children and grandchildren like our father and mother used to have..."* As a part of the utopian genre a 17-year-old girl is carrying her a camera, *"everything is happening like in a movie"*. In the spirit of Polish film-making this artist is constructing the episodes and contrasts, describing the desirable idyll and contemporary negative impressions given by the surrounding nature in the late spring.

## Critiques of Old Europe in Poland

In their historical reflection the 17 and 18-year-old discussants from Gdansk spoke of their independence and learning processes after the times of the Iron Curtain. Only some grand narratives of Poland's history lived on in the essays, e.g., the drama of the people living in Livonia. The focus of historical navigation was in the stabilisation of Poland's situation after the Cold War. *"Countries like Poland and Finland were the objects of attack by the major powers. The Soviet Union and Germany destroyed hundreds of thousands of people on the European continent. The fighting of little Finland against the Red Army became one of the best-known periods in the War. During the 90s the situation stabilised in the area of the Baltic Sea....The*

*import and export businesses are thriving and sailing onward all the time under a good wind – especially when countries from the former Eastern-Block will be able to join the European Union...*

Another writer "bales" this stabilisation in more realistic terms: *"Domination of the Baltic Sea has been the goal of many states...E.g. Sweden tried transform the Baltic Sea into its own Mediterranean Sea... History shows us that it is possible to defeat an enemy but not several of them together. To provoke a war with Russia would be a big mistake."*

One clear sign of the ideological stabilisation of the Polish culture of young 'intellectuals' is the 'Renaissance' of European enlightenment ideas being interpreted in the spirit of the risk society (the second modern', Beck 1993 and 1995). Writers are conscious of their country's particular pollution problems and the responsibilities on Polish shoulders, and they have taken this risky situation seriously as a part of their personal and human reflection. We have to change our behaviour, discontinue the linear beliefs in increasing growth at nature's expense. *"I'm most worried about the lack of reasonable and logical thinking around the shores of the Baltic...E.g., people who are throwing out jars of preserves...they don't understand that the corrosiveness of these materials releases compounds into the water which are dangerous for the flora and fauna living there...Anyway, people who do this kind of inconsiderate act have no idea how these things work...My father would say of this sort of person that if their brains are not better developed through education than that then they must represent some other species, not of the Homo Sapiens. I agree, exactly."*

*"Unkind campaigns or reforms won't help us if we behave in such an infantile manner as the men driving their cars around and throwing trash out into the surrounding nature... the only advice I'm able to give for such people is that they have to think what they are doing and not behave in such an infantile way. I'm amused by these people acting in such a thoughtless way." / "I call out for enlightenment in this, one of the most polluted lands of middle Europe...By the destroying of our environment and land we are destroying ourselves." / "The European...freedom from fear has its limits."*

These kinds of formulations and ways of interpreting are typical of the Polish way of learning in the spirit of the enlightenment while looking at the new kind of risky situations (punctual learning and commitment without simple and hegemonic 'qualifiers'; cf. Perelman 1971, 126). Personally and as a part of different groups gathered to face the concrete problems, you have to make choices on different levels, face pluralistic kinds of concrete and professional challenges and participate in various discussions concerning ecological decisions and norms. The writers of Polish text corpus are managing this pluralism – they have written deep and pluralistic presentations of ecological reflections. They have drawn ecologically spatialised, situational and sub-political maps for themselves.

The texts are not stuck on clear distinctions between different kinds of spaces and styles. They are full of special anecdotes and short stories<sup>17</sup> about relevant ecologically risky situations, catastrophes and solutions. *"It is better to give up a swimming because of invisible bacteria spreading skin diseases and other kind of infections." / "Fish spawn is becoming more and more poisoned by this dangerous bacteria." / "The Baltic Sea is a kind of cistern collecting all the foulest matters." / "The big ports of the shore are the most troubling places. There we may see the biggest catastrophes of marine ecology." / "The danger of elements like phosphorus, chlorine and nitrogen is extremely high because they are causing a reduction in oxygen. These chemicals are flowing into the Sea from our big rivers in particular." / "Ships cause a great deal of damage, releasing dirty water, especially waste oil, into the sea. This is forbidden and sanctioned but it still happens, even today."*



## Poland – In the Middle of Europe

Surprisingly often there are some aspects of positive learning present. Young students of Gdansk *“are happy and delighted”* with learning processes and changes in ecological thinking. *“We have had positive experiences in dealing with the problem of illegal oil dumping by ferries... Sanctions have functioned...”*<sup>1</sup>*“The ships from Sweden and Norway will act as a positive model in being careful to keep the Baltic clean. They are organising special educational institutes... building special new filters for their motors and they are environmentally sound products e.g. in their cleaning processes.”*<sup>2</sup>*“Some years ago the number of codfish decreased dramatically, due to the algae sinking down to the bottom causing a release of hydrogen sulphide. But after some purifying projects we have seen a return of codfish to the Baltic shores.”*<sup>3</sup>*“The so called Black Lists are an effective means in the struggle against pollution. Through choices in our consumption it is easy to react and act ecologically in our world... the majority of entrepreneurs have taken the system of certificates in environmental protection seriously, out of their own interests (e.g., JSO 14001).”*<sup>4</sup>*“We have an agreement between Poland and Estonia for the protection of seals. We have had inspiring experiences.”*<sup>5</sup>*“The EU and the new Baltic members in EU will bring in new resources and technology for the protection of the Sea.”*

As an ecological and cultural area the unity and holism of the Baltic Sea has various parallels with the Mediterranean Sea and the Great Lakes of North America. In some global way scaled visions the Baltic have only a relative value. In cultural and business speculations, the Baltic has taken back its dynamic role of the 'Hansa' times (an old Germanic trading agreement around the Baltic) and through this business relationship the destinies of nations around its shores are blending together...and inter-dependencies are rising up in different places and on different levels.

The careful orientations and positive reflections do not mean that Polish young people living by the Baltic Sea will escape Polish responsibilities in facing the ecological crisis. *“It is a shame for us to recognise the real situation. Especially Poland and the countries belonging to the former Soviet regime – Russia, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia – are the biggest polluters in the area. These countries have no capital and they have had a low consciousness concerning ecological matters... Poland has been one of the most contaminated countries since the Second World War... And there were the Eastern countries, being left in poor shape economically... and the rich Western countries (especially Sweden).”*<sup>6</sup>*“Nowadays we are fully conscious of the values which caused the malice. Change is in the hands of the people, we are able to correct the development, but all this has taken much time for our fatherland... E.g., the grey seal was disappearing, but nowadays we are opening up a new home for them...”*

The disintegration of the old political blocs has given room for dialogue between all of the nations concerned regarding diplomatic negotiations aiming for harmony around the Baltic. *“Short distances offer a chance of co-operation but at the same time they mean crowded conditions”*<sup>7</sup>*“We have our contradictions, although the voices in our heads may say otherwise...”* The concrete and wild debates over pollution and national responsibilities are living their own life in the meaning structures of these texts. Poland is in the middle of these discussions, contradictions and opponent structures, and this is not a pure implicit and historically contextualised fact (observation or modality) and (in the action reflected) moment in the corpus. These drastic transformations are not happening in the shadow of the facade of new Europe, as is often the case in Finland.

In the essays we catch glances of the different strains in the debates between these countries. *“The business matters.”*<sup>8</sup>*“There is a grating debate between Denmark and Poland and conflict concerning fishing rights and economic territories in the sea.”*<sup>9</sup>*“Poland, Denmark and Germany hold joint naval exercises in the Baltic Sea.”*<sup>10</sup>*“Everyone is responsible. The same waves wash up against all of our shores and lands.”* The West

and the Super Powers receive their own fair share of criticism. *"Some newspapers in Holland have rated our levels of pollution as rather high... but meanwhile they have their own risky business of a different sort..."* *"The Germany is in the top in the ranking list in standardisation of cleaning process."* *"The German people have special standards (EU directives /KP) for fishing, they must fulfil the length of norm... and that's why the coastal areas are full of flies swarming off of the dead fish."* *"The most polluting rivers are coming down from Poland, Russia and Germany"* *"The Russian people are dumping their radioactive waste materials, causing dangerous algae increases in many areas..."*

## ***The Polish 'Landscapes' in Young People's Writings***

As we have noticed, the textual landscapes of the Polish students not simply legitimise the official policy in Poland and the writers seldom side with the conventional political bodies and the organisation of Polish political system. Young actors have accepted active roles in civil society in the spirit of the best traditions of the critics in the Middle-Europe during this century. We find informal, flexible and critical movements in and between the texts (intertextuality). This also concerns the style, thematisation and changing 'deixis' in the meaningfully life of the texts. This same modern transparency, together with a situation and problem bound style of consideration, is reflected in the following categorisation, distinction of imagined communalities in Poland – or especially here, in the Polish 'landscapes'. In addition to the genres analysed above, we have here: 1) the aesthetic and utopian visions, 2) the risk-taking expression of enlightenment ideas, 3) "politicking discourse in the global and European worlds", 4) "radical fanaticism", 5) "supports for ecological norms and sanctions" and 6) the "eco-political activism in the public sector and its eco-policy".

The "politicking discourse in the global and European worlds" is a varied group of unique international intentions and politicising interests. The basic case here is a business-conscious writer who doesn't want to identify herself as a Baltic person. *"To put it simply, I have to say that Poland belongs to Europe, not to the shores of Baltic Sea. We could be proud of our Baltic history, but the such organisations as NATO and the EU are also composed of other important countries, like the United States of America and the Great Britain... In spite of the Baltic's stormy past and its business quarrels, this area is in the best possible way ready to the high level increase of economy. Our nations are attaching themselves to the Trans-European organisations."*

An other writer is taking "Janus-faced" and ironic distance from the 'Westernisation' and foreign models of Polish development, carrying a modern nation-state identity in her back pocket. *"Everywhere I look along my walk to school I can see shops, Western cars..., they are disturbing my peaceful morning... Yeah! Poland has for some years marched towards Europe – with long strides... Behind these circumstances are, naturally, the politicians homogenising us with the other European countries – paying no attention to the price of this development... the thirst for freedom has produced a need to follow the models of Germany and Holland... We are living in a Polish error... We end up buying strawberries from the Netherlands rather than from our own country, helping raise their standard of living rather than our own... The reform of wealthy services in our public sector was carried out by Bismarckian model... Everything would be okay if we could respect our own identity and the Polish dimension in various life sectors... We have to be more flexible in facing foreign tendencies. Maybe NATO will help us here..."*

## The "Fanatics" in the Polish political culture

The Polish writing genre is conceptually and vitally linked to the German intellectual sphere and the tradition of the active "bürgerlichkeit" and "bürgerinitiative". An interesting genre in Gdansk reflecting the global dimension is constituted by global ecogism, radical eco-political and fanatic activists. It is also possible to consider these 'radicals' as a separate group. In the texts there are a lot of references to the eco-political groups, informal and new social movements and Green Peace. And those activities have got many results and winnings with positive significance and principal relevance. Their (in)formal projects are a part of everyday life and discussions among youth in Gdansk. Those projects have the action motto of the 60s: *"politics is the art of the impossible."* Life-political choices are tied to radical provocation and institutional learning from crises. *"A handful of activities and enthusiastic freaks are able to perform miracles..."* *"Through the actions of ecologists it was possible to shut down the nuclear plant in Zarnowiec."* *"I have an irresolute and potentially aggressive feeling after my friends' project... I have no real position for political influence... My friend tried to influence the top bureaucracy in Gdansk with two well argued letters – without feedback."* *"We have to understand that the enormous and rapidly gathered economic profits and functions of a dynamically increasing economy are behind ecological crisis."*

*"There is a small group of people fighting for the protection of nature, they are so-called fanatics. Because of their small number they are not able to stop continuous economical growth. The most famous of these leagues are... Greenpeace, Amnesty International, the Green movement, and many others,...their names and acronyms vary slightly, but their goals are same... E.g. they are acting against the destroying of rain forests... Some years ago Greenpeace attacked the oil works in Szczecin and Gdansk. After such campaigns those companies have changed; they are now trying to build up new identities and are willing to produce new systems and trials for pollution-free production... We are able to control the function of our official sector in eco-policy, but that's not enough, we have to take care of these kinds of practices ourselves..."* The same writer, a seventeen years old young man, continues on to present the most sophisticated vision of 'politicking' (e.g. co-operative and militant strategies and tactics versus the common sceptical paradigm or perspective of politics as a breaking one's promises) in a whole Baltic text corpus: *"However, in present times all the ecological movements around the Baltic Sea are quarrelling and bickering with each other. The day when those ecological pseudo-parties come together to form an aggressively active organisation will be one of the most beautiful moments in my life. That league will be able to keep its promises and won't just toss its declarations into the air."*

"The supporters of norms and sanctions" and "the activists co-operating with a public sector" are, also, powerfully argued groups (and small virtual 'landscapes') among the youth of Gdansk. Their arguments are often common. They see the situation in Poland as offering new hope due to changes in the rationale of public policy in environmental issues. *"It is possible to notice these reforms in our states and our towns' ecological policies". As we have seen above the policy is formed by the subsidies, subventions and low-interest loans and a special repertoire of support policies for actors in ecological fields. The so-called black lists and systems of certification are part of the means here. One essential part of this repertoire is the system of sanctioning the potential polluters of land, air and water."* The norms of international agreements and statements have been debated and ratified; we have to take them seriously in a globalised world. *"Legitimate law matters, not only money."*

## The focuses in Polish spaces

Relations with NATO and the West appear to function paradoxically at least in terms of the critical cultural capital in circulation among the young people of Gdansk. They leave spatial and temporal room for manoeuvre and maintain sovereignty to move situationally and punctually, labelling problems and political goals beyond national and Cold War mentality borders. The young writers of the text corpus politicise and politicise maps so sophisticatedly and skillfully (cf. Palonen 1993, 121-136 ja 243-257) that they could be capable of something like a political calling, actionism, even "the impossible" and contra-final playing of many games and taking advantage of political spaces and the asymmetry of language. On the other hand political realism is no stranger to them: if the Finns stress their Russia related realism in telling how, "even after you've beaten ten ruskie bastards there still comes... the eleventh" (from "The Unknown Soldier" by Väinö Linna), then the Poles stress the impossibility of beating too many enemies. Furthermore their position in the middle of Europe makes room for creating and developing divided and disputed space in many directions and on many levels. Polish culture has included game experience and vague, diffused underground cultures and confusions, which were able to rise up rapidly and turn from the unified and supreme power space determined directly by the Soviet Union, or a more or less divided space, to the disputed space of a critical modern and risk society and full measures and spaces of 'diffuse'.

## THE BALTIC STATES

### Some Common Features of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia

Three Baltic States, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia, live interesting and diverse sorts of everyday lives in their cultures and politics. They are small neighbouring states and they have shared many elements of fate and occupation periods (colonised together by Lithuania-Poland, Sweden, Russia/the Soviet Union and Germany) at different times in their history. In comparison with Denmark and Finland these three little nations are intensively interested in and proud of their history. Some of the writers need the history and its legitimating linearity and narrativeness. It is easy to notice their politics of history and dramatic (not-so-linear) narratives of national histories: "...if you don't know your past, you are living without a future." / "You are not able to navigate without historical maps." / "The circle of expeditions and the stories of struggles are uniting our countries in brotherhood" / "You could hear the stories from the seamen, "foxes of the Sea", but the world remains open." Myths and legends about the Baltic Sea are important; part of a living folklore, especially in Lithuania. They are also warm, piquant, romantic and inspiring tales for the foreign ear from the other side of the Baltic to hear.

In the years following the collapse of 'real existing socialism' (Bahro) the historical justifications for the pacts made during and after the Second World War were presented in 'hot and hectic' ways. A memory of one's own "nation, home and citizenship" gave the potential for private political dissidence. Another possibility was "to arrange a fugitive flight over the Baltic Sea to the peace and security waiting on the other side." History was, more than the social and political facts of near future, the first issue on the political agenda, because of its basic meaning for national existence and identity, legitimisation and

security. Historical consciousness can be an important hegemonic element of political identity, sometimes making it the first issue or space to fight for (Gramsci 1971). This basic interpretation and wise present tense orientation for the tradition play a role similar to the classical function of identity, supporting and securing. They are relevant elements or cultural sediments for other kinds of continuing identities and in their stabilisation, politicking and politicising young people are not remaining historically fixed or stuck in abstract nostalgia.

In the same spirit many remarks on national or collective construction and a kind of carefulness in the face of contradictions, secularisation and (late or post)modern ideologies are often an implicit part of the Baltic text corpus. In every country on the eastern shores of the Baltic students are mentally well equipped for writing events; their choices of style and arguments are serious and stable in comparison with the Finnish and Danish contributions. Most commonly essayists have no relevant objections to the conventional wishes of teachers and they have analysed with care and anticipated the potential – perhaps a universal – audience for their texts. The authoritarian audience of these essays is also present. That/he/she has, most often, something to do with the common organiser of social impatience and her/his concern for divisions in national entities; a kind of identity producing 'the smallest common denominator'.

These types of "national-collective super-egos" are diversified and developing in the Baltic States as well. And this rhetoric and these arguments have many traditional aspects and "stabilisers" – or they are distinctively moving and looking after themselves in the linguistic space between the (post)modern (the days after extreme modern in the real existing socialism) and traditional worlds. Here the transformations from the securing of basic existential structures into the modern period means the rhetorical opening of the national and international arsenals of dynamic social, cultural and economic actors: meanings, differences and divided and disputable subjects and bases of values instead of the terms emphasising ethnic, religious, territorial and geographical structures and facts that have a continuous and united character or nature. In addition to returning to the past and the legitimate (nation-)state, countries have to open up to the future and fight for their identity in relation to "the other" in many projective fields and in the culture of dynamic global paradigms (cf. Saukkonen 1999, 48-74 and Giddens 1991). Significant audiences, authorities and others are not always physically present and often identities change when the dialogical relationships change (Perelman 1971, 6-10). Small societies and states in particular cannot form relationships in a closed way; identities cannot be in a state of stable completion, but rather they are in a continuous cycle of renewal (Keith & Pile 1993, 26-30). Identities are impure and mutant. Identity politics are not just a matter of destructively locking things in and/or out, but rather a reflexive and imaginative way of life (see esp. Pulkkinen 1998, 108-10). This traditional-modern-postmodern-terminology's "craziness" also emphasises in this text corpus that young people write prosaically, with blended stylistic genres and "open honesty", unafraid of presenting ideas which are still being developed. On the other hand nearly all of the essays – including those forms of expression living off of traditional materials – are open and polysemous, not excluding other (opinions).

In a wider and uncomplicated sense it is possible to speak of social change and a synthesis of identities from the 'traditional' to 'modern' between the following antithetical pairs: periphery-centre; old-new; rural-urban; national-international; community(collective)-individual; tradition-instrumental rationality; political systems of legitimate state and diverging interests and parties – nation and unity as a metaphysical value and community; internationalism – nationalism; politics – antipolitics (Pekonen 1987). The extreme traditionalists and conservatives are living according to this model in a hyper-historical existence, seeking contact only with God, Nature, Nation and Sea; while the more modern versions have to use 'traditional' culture and the narrative of the nation in a flexible way, taking fragments, symbols and situation of history for their own use.

## Traditionalism in the Baltic States

Politically the analogous pair of opposites is living to the extreme, interpreting the nature of the political system and its status quo. First of all, the conservative approach leaves itself dependant on tradition understandings, such as fate, strict authority, norms and natural patterns of life with its everlasting and perpetual movements and biological conditions: the good facts and bad crises are continuing endlessly. We only found one or two essays<sup>18</sup> of this sort among all those from the three secondary schools in the Baltic States. The more popular and romantic political application of traditionalism in the eastern area of the Baltic Sea region leaves space for (modern)transformation, imaginative synthesis and 'lyrics' in the spirit of tradition and its appreciation, and draws political peace, power, silent meanings and stable symbols from history, nature or existentially basic wisdom and contexts. The naturalistic tropes are often prefigurative, emotional, rhythmic and illogical metaphors.

Secondly, the modern version of 'national' and 'historical tradition' is choosing, breaking and uniting in a modern way, relevant history and nation for flexible and often universal audiences. Here it practices with new playing styles, polysemy and compromises for political purposes, action, contingency and 'Spielraum'. In the modern version of the nation(state) it is possible to speak of politics, differences and articulation problems, but this speculation and aggregation have the limits of state-bound legitimisation and reason. An ideal in the practices of modern nation-state-bound rhetoric is to use modern values and concepts without traditional unities, black-and-white differentiations and holisms. There the different language games are seeking after the status quo between the (inner) social interests and powers in a nation-state and in (external) relations with other (super)powers' interests, demands and frontiers. The last phase here is to find the special and 'reasonable' point or situation for the stabilisation of these status-quo dimensions (reasonable relations between inner and outer choices).

The national constructions and "to-be-nationally-on-tiptoe" are varieties of the art of national politics. Social groups, their existence and living are 'secure identities'. It is not easy to have many-faced, contradictory or rapidly changing cultural and social identities – they are not an open arsenal or subject for political discussions – and if they are, they are serious problems threatening the status and existence of the nation, like the problems of citizenship and language between Balts and Russian speaking minorities. The variations on these national 'super-egos' are, in the analyses of political freedom and space, especially relevant political questions.

The Lithuanians have a romantic minded traditionalism and naturalism as a rhetoric of cultural reconstruction and safe identity. In spite of its genre, with symbols and images full of biologisms and stable metaphors, it is a fascinating, as it has a lyrical power of expression and a unique repertoire among the political language games seen in this study. The Estonians have adopted a more flexible and instrumental 'patriotic' rhetoric of economic terms and petty-state-bound reason. Maybe the Latvians are the most (late) modern and reflective society of these three in terms of pluralistic communities, discussions and risk consciousness.

# LITHUANIA

## Romantic Naturalism in Lithuania

Romantic naturalism is a style which permeates the Lithuanian text corpus, strongly emphasizing the author's own national culture. The biological, natural and existential metaphors, metonymies, analogies and 'symbols' or 'icons' running between the Sea and the people, nation and life-situations saturate the comparisons, parallels and textual meaning structures. And they have perspective-based, reductionist, identifying and even dialectical (ironical) types of linguistic use (Burke 1969). The 'romantic' styles and existential reflections are full of deep-thoughts and literary references and quotes from writers ranging from Hemingway to Goethe and Shakespeare; and we cannot omit the national and local poetry of Lithuania, e.g., Dirgela, Neris and Mykolaitis-Putinas writing about the '*drama of the daughter rising up from the sea*', '*the kingdom of lost ships*' and '*restless waves through the land and society*'. In the Lithuanian tradition of lyrics and language, these metaphors have extra value and meaning in a symbolic and iconic dimension (Ricoeur 1978), which is hard to understand in its full richness without the ability to speak Lithuanian.

Various kinds of life experiences and aspects are interpreted and crystallised by the marvellous parallels with the changing tempo, character and 'feelings' of the sea. Maybe the main feelings relating to the abstractly written 'points', 'sites,' 'positions' and 'milieus' at the beach are peacefulness, the chance to walk and moments for existential thinking. That large body of water and its horizon are the continuous reference for national pride and beauty, but on its shores and beaches you cannot be superciliousness; the sea can put you in your rightful position and show its serious and fierce countenances with its strong winds, storms and deathly deepness. At the seaside you can find peace, but the provocation and setbacks are there too. The harmonious life is a often fixed one. The sea is unpredictable and contains a "natural" connection with the "other" and danger, adventure with the risks of navigation and the openness of its raw power – unlike administration centred land powers, steeped in organisation (regarding the origin of the "risk" terminology see Giddens 2000; concerning land and sea power discussions, Schmitt 1942 and Klinge 1984).

Young Lithuanians write that twenty-four hours is the same amount of time in the Sea and in the individual's life, because God has made it so. Almost all major events and life solutions in families and individual life biographies happen on the shores of the Baltic Sea, from marriages and falling in love to feelings of sorrow and suffering and the casting of the deceased's ashes over the water. "*The life has begun at the Sea.*" It is a source of love and place for being transported with joy and amazement. You may lose yourself or experience something strange and singular while gazing at this horizon. People experience ecstasy, marvellous inspirations and deep existentialist feelings there. The sunset is the most popular 'icon' in these stories: "*Everywhere there is a peacefulness, it doesn't blow, the sky is becoming red melting into the Sea.*"

But the sea can take also the shape of a lover, child, friend, guardian angel, father or mother in their various and changing states of mind, roles and feelings. The sea is able to cry, answer to his/her name, yell, growl, gnash and screech. These activities are extremely close to the shared metaphors of modern hermeneutics (Gadamer 1986 interpreted in the humanistic way emphasising the reflexivity and 'application' with tradition) describing the relation between tradition and people (or the "I"): we have to listen, take the voices of tradition seriously. The authoritarian voice of tradition and classics may 'strike' our ear,

provoke us and keep us in motion. In the spirit of modern hermeneutics, the movement of tradition could be like a wave, steps in a dance or a change in an language game: *"The Sea is, for her part, quieting you with her monotone."* Or you are living like a small wave: *"The billows are playing with each other."*

And when You are thrown into the game/dance/movement of waves, you have to take it seriously; otherwise you are the one who breaks the game. And when you are within the movement as a part of the communion between sea, shore and land, it takes you over and carries you away. It could be your destiny; the conclusion or the end of the movement could be the 'third' intended in nobody's preliminary purposes. In the students' essays we can read this dialogue: *"It is the will of Sea that we listen her... It is not necessary to be nearby the Sea to hear her voice... Sometimes she is crying in loud voice; sometimes she is easing our mind."*

This language game based on biological and natural metaphors has a special linguistic space for the choice of situations, moods and genres (commonalties in natural romanticism); on the other hand, it is continuously growing and spreading itself into the social shores, identities and territories. The metaphors, unique models and mental and physical 'districts' of the Sea are possibilities for political peace and concrete peace making. If we are considering the use of the word 'peace' in the text corpus of whole Baltic region, it is easy to see that here, in Lithuanian prose, it has its most popular use.

The word 'peace' has lost its meaning as a designation for political protest movements (as in the new-left genre of the sixties): The Baltic Sea is no longer a Sea of peace movements; it is or it exists as a possibility for peace. *"It is a part of life; a perfect mediator."* Here again, we have a connection with the classics of modern hermeneutics (Gadamer and Heidegger): language ("Sprachlichkeit") is the medium of the life, like the Sea in natural world. We have come up from the Sea onto the shores, and after that the Sea could be a traditional metaphor in the linguistic construction of the world. In addition to the other interpretations of peace (for walks, for deaths and drowning, for mood), *"The Baltic Sea is a sea of the peace – brotherhood."* *"For us – people living in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – the Sea is the Road of the Baltic. We wanted to share our most important moment of present times, our clarification of freedom and independence, with the Sea. We have an urge to tell it first to the Sea. It connects the hearts of the peoples."*

In the ecological discourse, we find the medium of the Sea and its beauty and unique context standing in dialectical opposition to expressions concerning the present ecological state of the Sea. *"You must not profane and scandalise the Sea... it is necessity to guard it."* *"We must learn to pick up the rubbish on the shore, we have to respect the glamour of the Sea."* The writers are able to find here, in addition to romantic and biblical 'deixis', conflicts and oppositions in dimensions of value. For the Lithuanian young person the Sea has been the 'Land of Amber' or the 'Palace of Amber' (hundreds of notes), but nowadays there are big problems with oil extraction and pollution threatening the lives of animals, stones and amber. In many ways the traditional life of the sea is challenging the one-dimensional 'modern', that has taken the shapes of real socialism or materialistic West.

Some young people write lists of the concerns most responsible of pollution. But these critical comments are quite cautious – examples of the era of transformation from the 'Gemeinschaft'– oriented social thinking into a modern mindset. Many writers utilise enlightenment ideals, critical comments on the urban milieu of *"stinking asphalt"*, institutionally organised campaigns, discourse about responsibilities for future generations and references to ecologists as a professional managers.

The social contradictions and politics which we are analysing in this Lithuanian school have many evasive or romantically naive features. The sea here is both a context and a parallel. *"We must learn to*



*honour, love and highly value the sea."/ "The mayor of the town has to thank the sea for its role in employment."/ "If you are a rich person, you are not able to admire the sea."/ "No one really quarrels at the sea."/ "The sea is also able to provide inspiration for politics."/ "Modern" (instrumental) conceptual aspects are only seen in passing in the Lithuanian essays. "The benefits of the tourism business"/ "Nowadays economic competition is tight, which also has some negative results"/ "the economic-scientific networks in the Baltic"/ "the links of the chain from the fishing net to the ship, industry and shop"/ "the benefits and gains of fishing as the basis of good food"/ "Of course I will travel to the USA."/ "As a part of our orientation to the West."*

## **From the sea to the synergetic socialism?**

Many textual fragments are connected with 'wholeness' – a kind of naturalistic organism with some humanistic and subject-centred connotations and cohesions. But there are some modern contradictory and political moments, too; one writer is speaking about the Lithuanian "Butinge-business" oil-industry project planned near the Latvian border that has raised a strong critiques from the neighbouring states.

At the beginning of this century European intellectuals were developing the so-called energetic state theory, with a different sort of human (economical, political and cultural) activity as the component in this system of synergy (Ruutu 1924, where he developed the energetic national socialism and the paradigms of petty states' foreign policy). The genre of essays has much to do with this version of petty state constructionism and its special realism: wholeness and its politically articulated moments. Those theories anticipated the modern welfare state. Even the Lithuanian approach to foreign policy, risk and negative utopias emphasises the same intellectual sources and lines. Getting out of the crises and managing the external situations depends on the economical use of national energy and its rational and politically careful practices. The Lithuanian version of the energetic state theory (socialism) is manifestly naturalistic, emphasising cohesion and lyrically oriented political monism; and, as we see above, life's risks and solutions are like the classical problems in maritime power or maritime identity of security and risk: "We have to follow a line of politics without provocation... this situation where the Soviet Union has collapsed and we have new friends in the West could be the short-term situation... We have to be careful in choosing new friends and enemies... If we try our best and God is gracious... we will make no enemies."/ "If the Sea will dry up, we have to throw away all hope and life as a whole."/ "But what importance do you have to the Sea?"/ "Human beings are only a piece of dust, at the guard of the nature."

## **Focuses of the Lithuanian spaces**

To Lithuanians the culture of maritime power and political space are metaphorical, and they open up life's problems and choices in a classical way, as though they break free from the factuality of everyday life and form a sort of security producing common space. The meaning of life and its problems are certainly considered there, but they do not divide the space or openly speak of supreme power spaces. One could rather think of the lyrical unity opening specifically so that the diffused significations and spaces (language games) of the sea liberate or the sea is used as a neutralised space

for the defence of life. Thus naturalism or traditionalism turn into contemporary means of securing one's own life and change during heavy times. The political identity of this school in Klaipeda is thoroughly cultural – not the (narcissistic) exaltation of individual freedom, but rather the exaltations of individuals' literary expression skill. Individuals write in a genre where the specific colourful nature of politics is not noticeable in the same way that it is in the Polish writings, for instance, but rather politics live in the classical forms of the old maritime power in becoming metaphors.

## ESTONIA

### 'Objective' Movement Towards the West in Estonia

Estonian students have adopted a more flexible, variable and instrumental style of 'patriotic' rhetoric of economy and petty-state bound reason, but at the same time there is a growing sense of social pressure to keep a distinctive distance from things Russian. Among the Estonian texts there are only a few analogies with nature: *"The sea is shaped like a guardian angel, a kneeling woman."* This goal-oriented self-discipline and national project, constituted by a series of modern reflections, has had results, at the least according to the Estonians themselves: they believe it will be the first of the Baltic countries to enter the European Union. *"The business trips from Estonia to Finland have turned around, now they are shopping here."/**"The education system is producing the modern smelt in furnace of will!"**"We have to work and propagate our nation in the world."*

Even if they are firmly conscious of their own patriotic narrative and drama, and the differences between Slavic, Baltic and Scandinavian ethnic and cultural traditions, in a goal-oriented sense they have shaped a petty-state strategy. The favoured tenses in these essays were present and future, choosing qualifications with a view towards shielding and advancing their own culture (advancing economic functionality by creating production facilities and infrastructure) and the strictness, dogmatism, imperative and direct sense of modalities (Perelman 1971, 120-160) refer – diverse lacklustre ways, but still – to action, programmatic movement. Regardless of their habits of literary reflection and thematisation, Tallinn's young writers often speak "to the referee of distance running" (as the authoritative audience for the texts). And yet they are aware of many sorts of problems, demanding competencies and the necessary tactics and strategies in this run. The runner must take his world.<sup>19</sup>

And here the insecure and indefinite status and image of their own land and state is primarily a challenge – a basis for modern development. But there are the unique nuances of confusion and surprising situations – the new European status, which is continuously undergoing serious revision, is not a clear and unequivocal fact. But the Estonians are continuously(!) coming up with new identity politics: *"We are not experiencing strangeness in the fields of matters around the Baltic Sea; everything happening there concern us."/**"We belong in the Europe; that's an objective reality and value"*. Under these circumstances of nation-state building, the Estonian people have to state the issues, slogans and interpretations overcoming insecurities many times, after which they may have a more stabile nature; the expressions, tautologies and linguistic practices are producing new 'thrusts' and conventions, sporting play. New interpretations and applications have a political dimension for politicking, reform and identity politics.

They have their own reflections on the phenomenon of the "Finlandization" which the Finns considered in the above analysis. In the context of this geo-political evaluation young writers have the Mediterranean Sea. *"For the big nations with their ongoing super-power game, the 'Goliath-Actors', the sea is just one of the strategic waters for the worlds' ways of war; for small states like ours this territory is the only one we have, small 'David-Actors' have no other room."/ "The resources and power of co-operation in the area are increasing the range of sound..."/"But we have to be conscious of the relativity of our voices."/ "The Euro-integration and the nation are walking together, step by step."* These ways to unite the elements of inner and outer are the basic postulates of realistic foreign policy a la 'realism' in the terms of Bismarck, von Treitschke and Paasikivi (the first post-war president of Finland). The significance of the strategic position of the Baltic Sea is also related to its scarcity of power resources and competition, the alternative to which is a mutually understood balance: *"Because the best way to prevent other nations from gaining a dominant position is to dominate yourself, there is tough competition in the Baltic. This is very difficult to control, since seafaring is flexible but at the same time operative. Everyone understands the danger involved if someone captures the sea."*

## Status quo in Estonian politics

E.g., in the rhetoric of Estonian young people the basic formula of 'realism' concerns the map as a source of realistic 'truth' without any idealistic, normative or national illusions. *"We have to remember the fact that the USA and Great Britain missed us during the struggles of the Second World War."* But Estonian students are not only reading maps and interpreting. In the spirit of its successful neighbourhood, Finland, as David in the old story in the Bible, they are presenting a programmatic vision of *"...Estonia as a bridge between unstable Russia and Germany."/ "It is possible to rise up from being a peripheral border area of the North... in the future we will have the same sort of pride as Germans have nowadays... In the near future we will have the same sort of life style constructed on the basis of logic and natural law as in the West."* The economic miracle is one part of the petty state utopia in Estonia and its foreign policy realism. The choice of West is, as stated above, natural and clear; there is no room for failure.

In co-operation with the other Baltic states it is possible to avoid *"too great of contradictions"* in that *"a flourishing country in the area is not an obstacle for the others"*. The principles of unity here, even more than in Finland, are making an impression upon their writings, which will be reflected in official foreign political space (understood here as an essay for a foreign researcher). *"Without unity we are going back down the road of hate, success, possibilities, sorrow and coercion."* Direct connections and agreements between nation-states are a relevant part of politics.

International deals and contracts – in addition to the Baltic programs, councils and norms or EU-centred directives and agenda, even the agreements drawn up during the 70s, like the Charter of European Security and Co-operation (1974) – are in mind. This is no accident. These kinds of legalised international formulas guarantee the protection of petty states with an unstable past. By them small states have their controlling means and possibilities of territorial management. But there is a more idealistic dimension too. The business (and cultural and social) contacts between people living their simple lives in civil society is important; it will connect and bind people together. *"We have to establish port services with Finland and, in special way, with Russia."*

But the Estonian students are no longer able to all be friends or silent regarding problems in dealing with the Russian speaking minority, or with Russians in general. Foreign pressures are regulating the treatment of the Russian speaking minority in present day Estonia. Many Estonians have strong opinions against Post-Soviet persons and attitudes. *"We are told to have friendly interaction with them, and no one is asking whether or not this is OK with us!"* In their essays these writers manifest the Nordic orientation of Estonia and believe in Nordic equality, Nordic social structures and Nordic support in moments of crises; but Russia is not party to such activities. These writers reductionistically place responsibility for the bulk of the region's political problems on the shoulders of an unstable Russia. *"Not everyone 'wants to look through their fingers' at the contradictions involved and then stress co-operation with them."* The presentation of one's own wishes and claims may have serious consequences: *"we are in danger of returning to Soviet times where we too would get dirty."* Some writers are ready to use the 'naturalised' expressions and racist judgements against Post-Soviet people and Russians: *"Colonial occupation is in the nature of Russian people", or, "Russia is living in the Asian tradition and there is the danger of a coup-d'etat"*. These comments relate to the history of the Soviet Union and Russia during this century and it is easy to see (in rhetorical terms at least) their militant or "totalizing" aspect.

Many domestic political problems are further increasing this impatience, which is articulated in the political arena as the swaying of political opinions and party orientations or in the increasing friction and polarisation between different kind of social groups. In the domestic politics *"there are the strong circles and then those who are left behind"*. This contradiction also finds its way into the text corpus, in the form of tax-payers vs. "social cases" living a normal life. Among the essays there are some distinctive liberal criticisms of the public sector. The domestic problems articulated here and the tense debate concerning the Russian question tells us about the tensions in the modernisation (in the sense of social integration and mobilisation needed here) process in Estonia. The articulation and publicity of these difficulties are hard to build up; modern and common identification spaces, channels and pluralism aren't functioning in Estonia. Faith in the Western programme fills these holes and dams up *"a release of frustration"* and prevents ethnic and social problems coming to a head and being solved.

Fishing rights of have long been a source of colourful debate and accusations between Estonia and Latvia. Poland also gets its own special treatment in these texts: *"Poland is oriented towards Central-Europe, but the rebuilding of this region is in the interest of whole Baltic area. They must have our solidarity."* The ecological world view helps here, by which it is easier to find common ground by reflecting on the total ecological risk involved and other common problems: *"...many international projects are examples of co-operation...students from different countries together with environmental protection societies and volunteers try to remove the effects of oil pollution. Local civic groups also bring conflicts into the area, and they cannot be approached on the basis of co-operation in areas like ecological problems, crime, tourism and trade."/* *"Pollution doesn't just mess up one country's environment, but also those of their neighbours... certainly we all want to take care of our planet, but not all countries have the resources for this. It is the responsibility of more developed countries to help poorer ones, which have difficulties getting by on what they have. Environmental protection has a close relationship with economics. Countries become competitors. The boycott of Estonian freighters by Finnish labour organisations shows the critical state things have come to. The official reason for this is the underpaying of Estonian seamen, but behind this is a need to weaken the position of competitors. This conflict only benefits third (on-looking) states."* In some Estonian essays we can find interesting ways of determining Baltic citizenship: the picture includes all of the people living around the rivers flowing down to the Baltic Sea; whereas some Lithuanian contributors, on the other hand, include Ukraine, the Czech Republic and Slovakia into the region. Maritime countries around the Baltic are identifying their 'own specific circles' in the discussion of the Baltic world.

## The focuses in the Estonian spaces

Estonians understand the ways and play signals of the West. They struggle to defend a utopian unified space and the Western way of life. This promise and utopian space displaces all alternative concepts of political space, though Russia is seen as a threat of supreme power space and partner in divided space in the concrete, physically present and literal reality of the situation. This project signifies "objective" (fatalism from the period of orthodox marxism) finality, where contingency and places for reflection are not always recognised. Finland's position is between the ideal and the achieved realistic-suspenseful space consciousness of reflection and anticipation. For some the impatience associated with Slaviness, naturalism, goes overboard and things can no longer be ignored: portraits of the enemy arise in rhetoric and physical encounter. A mirage is seen on the road to the space of utopian harmony; it is at the same time so close – you can reach out and touch it in places – and so far away on the "horizon of the poor" due to many forms of self-control.

## LATVIA

### Modern, Contradictory Latvia

Perhaps Latvia is the most modern of the three little countries on the eastern shore of Baltic in terms of its political rhetoric. Besides its intense difficulties with Russian people and economy it has cynical and pluralistic communities, multi-faceted discussions and a lot of risky consciousness among young students. In a polemical and sarcastic way we could set the Latvian situation in opposition to the naturalistic-romantic state of mind among Lithuanian people: "*We have no time to mediate on sunset.*" This basic view of the country's political culture has its background in the serious social problems and cynical critiques of the political system and realities that are articulated in these texts.

The cynicism reminds us the situation in the modern West as in Germany (Hoffmann-Lange 1995) and Finland where 'politics is seen as the game of dirty players' and there is a clear distance between the citizens and the political elite. But the situation in Latvia is different because of its flagrant social segregation and marginalisation processes and pressures to get an 'honest' and more stable political government in the country instead of "*the scattered and corrupted party structure*". As we know from the histories of small European states, this kind of crisis is a cross of two alternatives: you are able to learn from crises and grow stronger than ever before, but the manager or the 'guardian' of crises may also be a semi-totalitarian charisma or group.

It is not easy to judge how serious the social problems in this nation-state really are, e.g. in comparison with those of the neighbouring states, but it would be fair to say that these problems and the lack of legitimisation in the function of parliament and politicians are articulated from many angles in the text corpus. Many writers and especially the young people of Russian origin analyse the high unemployment and the inhumanly low as the direct causes of expanding criminality and other extreme problems. One writer is "*willing to get back the esteemed Soviet regime to solve these problems of an insecure society*".

The everyday life without minimum wages is referred to in the texts as *"surviving"*. It is *"...not worth giving birth to new children"*. There is no real opportunity for advancement in the life after education: *"You will run into corruption and lack of valued work... Prices and salaries are developing at different rates."* *"The lack of market control and the low level of subsidies for farmers have generated a large economic crisis"*, as well as individual dramas. Here the argumentation and the ethos of the texts are based on clear contradictions and the pathos is to address us with the social drama and distinctive classes (with a 'normal' locus).

People are divided into two basic categories: *"an extremely rich group and the 'normal' majority living in indigent circumstances."* In some texts the well-off persons are referred to as the *"well-educated and the elderly"*. It's emphasising the differences in the horizons of people's possibilities, an essential basis for political intentions and strong reactions. The social demands and voices of protest are remarkable, but nothing happens. *"The Latvian people don't have any experience of holding power in their own country."* EU decision makers have noticed major social problems here and complained about them, which has had the effect of further increasing the instability of the government.

A noticeable portion of these young people have *"...nothing to do with daily politics; they have to concentrate into the everyday life and money matters all of the time"*. Politics is not only a vain effort, it is directing feelings of powerlessness into political alienation (social identities of young and poor people living their shadow lives) and the need for a sudden catharsis of political power relations and identities. The classical rhetorical theory tells us how the censorship or the complete ambivalence between the speaker and the powerful audience could take us into the world of violence (e.g. Perelman 1971, 55-58). On the other hand, this simply moralism (populism), 'naive ethos' and basic cynicism and pejorative attitude can often be refined into an ethos of 'fair' modernisation and a critique of corruption and dispersed political life, where the play of conglomerates and selfish interests is taking place. *"We are currently living in an industrialised society and the basic challenge is the discussion of our transformation into a service-based society. It does not depend on just our own individual activities; the political situation is an essential problem. It is very hard to predict future changes in Latvia's political life. There are a lot of political parties with strong intentions to slow down the development of the country. The parties are usually connected to the diversified interest groups possessing large financial resources and connections. And, naturally, every group with serious power has its own media (especially newspapers). This is fundamentally wrong(!) for them to own the largest and most 'respectable' newspapers which have begun to lobby the controversial and selfish interests of particular groups. I am strongly against such conglomerates in our politics. Parties might be granted fair subsidies from the state budget."*

## **Anti-political Tendencies in Latvia?**

The remarks concerning the media and rhetorical tricks played by politicians and the modern popular paradigm of politics as "empty promises and words, with no results" (regarding the tendencies in Finland, see Paakkunainen 1993) supplement the picture of an envy-based political culture full of models for dirty games. The situations in the West and East where these cynical political world views are popular are in an essential way different. The pressures and cynical taunting in Latvia are charged with the semi-militant emotions and bitterness, deeply rooted in social impatience. The fragmented political elite and the majority of people are living in their own worlds without significant contact with each other. In the

background we must notice the national structures of economical problems, the popular claims to a Western life-style in the Post-Soviet era and traditions and interventions of Post-Soviet and Russian ideologists and capital in Latvia. *"The Russian crises in the economy has caused our sufferings."* Young people have to face many different kinds of crises at the same time; it would be a 'miracle' if they were to successfully find a way to overcome the social and economic problems of their Post-Soviet heritage as part of the same process.

An other side of this sceptical coin of Latvian politics there are the special desires and abstract thoughts of the (disciplinary) utopia trying to achieve national unity. These visions of the future have much in common with the issues of importance to the Lithuanian people, but they are not explained through self-controlling metaphors or "naturalisms" but in wretched rhetoric full of modern and many-faced populism. *"It is entirely necessary to speak about our future only on a scale of after one hundred years or so; it is not reasonable to speak about our present irresponsibility in politics".* *"The people working in state administration and the public sector are good people... not the politicians".* *"We have to teach everyone to show respect for the nation-state... and cooperative principles."* *"Our states in Baltic region are ineffective and incompetent, although they have the function and character of long-term durability."* *"We have to find more friends... and no more enemies."* *"There are... 'more than enough' parties in Latvia. We have to reduce the number of them down to minimum for the people's sake."* In many cases the arguments are based on 'natural' modalities and pre-agreements such as 'people,' honesty and truth; they often represent a one-dimensional ethos and unreflected images preventing pluralistic discussion. Some writers think that political democracy will be revived by re-establishing its clear functioning or body with entirely new outside actors.

Remembering the recent history of Latvia, it is understandable that there is no strongly constructed, pluralistic and busy life of civil society. State bound conventions (e.g., the synecdoche of correct politics as administration) are alive. There are only modest efforts to promote the politically relevant level of associations, interest organisations and parties between individual common people and the state. But there are several textual observations of a new kind of civil society rising up. *"The nation-states have to wake up and open their hands and support the initiatives and ecological projects organised by volunteers on the shores of Baltic."* *"The Baltic Sea Project (organised by institutions and teachers of education ministries and schools all around the Baltic Sea/KP) is a good example of an autonomous practice."* This process can be read of in the Latvian text corpus. People are intensively expressing and 'writing out' their unsatisfied needs and pangs, but they have an unbelievable ability to endure sufferings and level of tolerance. The political culture, however, has room to breathe. The consciousness of political contradictions, abilities to speak about negative utopias and ideas for reform tell us about the Latvian energy to build up a modern kind of civil society and transparent management of the state.

The young discussants have a lot of ideas to develop the welfare state, which is also a condition for economic development. Sometimes this kind of pre-Keynesian program means the reform of education after the Scandinavian model, sometimes interpretations produce the ideas of status quo between ecology and economy, *"the challenge of the century"* and simple thoughts about redistribution by the public sector. As in Estonia we can hear the liberal voices with an international pathos coming out of the text corpus: *"The Baltic is the perfect place for developments in logistics, and this kind of business activity, like the functional diversification in the business around tourism, is able to provide a sufficient flow of money to supplement the weak state budgets of the newly independent states which have emerged in the region... Baltic contacts are extremely important because of the rare opportunities in interstate cultures..."* Among the reform ideas there are some interesting ones concerning the need to protect the cultural, artistic and scientific fields in global economic competition, and versions of projects in cultural and sport co-operation: *"Rock and folk song festivals"* and *"a Nordic Basketball League"*.

## Apocalypse and deep-realism

Young people in Latvia have a dauntless and daring approach to ecological problems. The biology of Sea is well known in Latvian schools: *"The Sea of amber treasures is turning into a channel of faeces."* Writers are able to label them all with biological and psychedelic terms or with dark irony, although they are dealing with the foreign policy and interests of foreign powers. Surprisingly often we hear the ethos of modern outspokenness: *"Some time ago some groups were selling the products of nuclear technology... and no one knows which kind of nuclear stocks are at the bottom of the Sea."/* *"The risk of infection and diseases, like cholera, has been returning."/* *"The dirty waters of Riga are thrown straight into the Daugava River, flowing to the Baltic Sea."/* *"The waste waters are more dangerous to nature than chemical weapons!"/* *"We pick up a lot of phosphorus with the amber from the Baltic Sea."/* *"The water is full of old ammonia"/* *"Money matters; it means everything."*

From these impressions and sarcastic metaphors for deep-realisms and black irony, it is not a far to the apocalyptic series of negative utopias. Young people writing these apocalypses consider ecological themes to be part of their life; they will not hand responsibilities over to other countries. They are acting and playing as crisis provocateurs, providing bases for reflection, but at times we find such expressions of attitude as: *"...let it be... change is no longer possible... Ecological education has been terribly neglected."/* *"...we will find ourselves without the place where the wind is strolling. The sun is setting in the evenings behind the horizon just to come back and rise up again tomorrow morning. There will be no room for seals, mallards and swans to sleep on Latvian shores; there will be no more Latvian maritime scenery left. We are not used to think in such an apocalyptic way.. We are happy.. just to live according the order of the given day."/* *"It is easy to imagine a horrible future for us."/* *"We are willing to change only after the dead seals show up on the beaches."*

Surprisingly often the Latvian essays also serve as declarations regarding neighbouring nations and peoples. In addition to the above mentioned surrealistic and apocalyptic remarks and rhetorical ethos, we also find many pointed and offensive abuses, reductionistic metaphors and accusations against neighbouring countries, and not only for Russia. *"Our conflict with Estonia concerning fishing areas has an impressionistic name: the "Sprat War"...sometimes we have to learn from the experiences of the Estonian state"/* *"Estonians are big swine; they snatch up all the fish in the Baltic."/* *"The Estonian people have themselves to blame, although the convention has been for them to blame others..."* Relations with Lithuanian partners in particular are full of disputes and quarrels. *"The nuclear power centre in Ignolina is incredibly dangerous."/* *"There have been the "Great War" and the "Egg War" between our state and Lithuania... Even if we as neighbours must bear some responsibility for such things, these kinds of problems must be solved."/* *"The oil problem around the Butinge is extremely polarised and Lithuania selfishly regards itself as a centre of Europe."/* *"We have received no response from Lithuania."*

*"The Soviet heritage"* is clearly and explicitly reflected in these essays. Sometimes this critique takes the form of impressionistic pejoratives. The expressions like *"Voices of the past"* and *"tongue-tied culture of Soviet times"* are used to explain the present problems in the text corpus. But there are, yet, hot and open questions between Russians and Latvians. *"The Russian people and powers show an attitudes of supremacy in their present behaviour",* and, *"The Russian moguls of industry are playing with our economy"*. There are some remarks implying the politicisation of ethnicity in the natural terms: *"I doubt whether they (Russians), as a rule, would be able to learn anything."*

The Latvian-speaking majority have strict and legal arguments concerning the norms of language competency for the Russian speaking people as a basis for full citizenship and rights. *"They have to learn our language and start to honour our nation."* On the contrary, Russian speaking young people have their



own strict rhetoric of "law-and-order" in defending their rights and 'Lebensraum'. But these declarations are not endless or unlimited. Some Latvian-speaking discussants are attempting to pacify this "lack of realism": *"You cannot make noise with Big Boys."* *"...there is an important connection between our 'internal' disagreements and our relationship with Russia. If there would be a communist regime in Russia attempting to re-unite all of the former Soviet republics under a common flag, it would be the greatest threat... for the whole European continent as well."*

The political culture in Latvia is indeed open, remarkably contradictory and colourful. And here too are its basic political problems and hopes (spaces to produce future opportunities). We may read this in the nature of Hope, Destiny and Fortuna living around Latvia. All of these are living in the essays from Riga. Sometimes these writers are aware of the serious political contingency and are looking for an explanation in the structure of the state: *"If the politicians will find compromise concerning our problems that would be a winning in bet."* *"I want hope for our land – in both the inner and outer senses of the word."* *"Is the lucky talisman dead or alive?"* *"I want to live in Austria or Finland!"* But, there are, also, some classical utopias; *"The mutual co-operation between Baltic countries has the capacity to produce everything imaginable in the world. I would like to have the underwater town, or maybe a tunnel would be enough for me."* Abstract and 'New Age' utopias are living side by side with the black irony and the Fortuna of individual life in the risk society. It is impossible to think of Latvia without its crying spectacle of contradictions, ambivalencies and many-faced political Fortuna and its political lived spaces textualised by hectic and talent pencils.

## The focuses in the Latvian spaces

We cannot find any Perelmannian (purist) entirely 'fictive' elements in the texts. Drama and fiction are part of the everyday life of Riga's young people. The political portion of moment of most writers here is the interpretation of "unsurpassable", apocalyptic or "crazy" experiences, where fictive elements are needed, at least temporarily, for room to manoeuvre and a survival identity. Confronting uncertainty and Fortuna are opposites of stability; thus we can also find literary and political originality, unique contradictory political spaces and ways of grasping things. It is just this looking for a unique democratic space within the Baltic region that for its part leads to confronting the spatial aspects of politics. It is not a question of just articulating benefits and values, but of a place for politicking and politicizing, a space for articulation and solution.

(An appropriate level of) hopelessness can, more clearly than a "hope-everything-goes-well" conclusion, point out the spaces for hope or flashes of light (cf. Frankl's 1959 logo-therapy paradigm: "From Death camp to Existentialism"). A significant portion of young people from Riga want to build a democratic unified space which would be defined as non-political or outside of democracy, or they defend the neutral space of functional democracy. Most writers, however, create and renew disputed spaces with their doubts and contextual dramatics. This also leads to many socially and ethnically divided spaces. Suspicion and lines of division reinforce on the one hand the basic ambivalence towards the political establishment, and on the other the apocalyptic visions of uncertainties and ecology – which can relativise all political fields and spaces or give a new impetus to modernisation initiatives and demands for spaces being opened up. There is no common space for "polity" or "transparency"; all spaces move and are political, able to overshadow and swallow each other

– Fortuna is part of fateful and everyday decisions. Fortune/misfortune and the reality/non-reality of political space (Perelmannian philosophical dialectics) are present. The construction of political spaces and their contradictory illumination is a place for many gifted young Latvians to display political virtuosity and strut their stuff: essay writing at the end of the millenium could be unusually open, sophisticated and advantageous.

## RUSSIA

### The Risky Situations of Young People from Petrozadovsk – From Super Power Reflections to Universal Law

Russian young people come slower to post- Cold War phases and historical reflection in comparison with the other countries involved. The internal district of Russia, the school and the teacher involved had a central role in the articulation of the young people's will, the literary genre and the thematic orientation here. The teacher from the school in Petroskoi (or Petrozadovski) leaves, e.g., the question of guilt for the Winter War open,<sup>20</sup> herself holding the Soviet Union responsible, and most students write of the "black holes" in Soviet history as forgotten unknowns. Still a few of her students write of guilt in a contradictory fashion: *"The Soviet Union proposed a peaceful solution to all of the problems and the Finnish side pushed aside all of the attempts on our side. Finland was... on Germany's side. For all of the results of these two wars Finland has only itself to blame."* Another young person, like most of the rest, wrote in her conclusion: *"War has never solved anything. Solutions have come from common understanding, desire to help. I hope that my generation will try to create a world without war, destruction and sorrow. I want to ask for the forgiveness of those my country has attacked."* The writers thought of the contexts, timetables and functional intentions of the event in terms of super-power politics and place the actions of Finns as well in a dubious light in terms of their alliance with the Germans, but still Finland receives, almost always, absolution for its sins *"after a long silence"*. But still the historical consideration continues after a sort and shows how the difficulties of the Winter War were a lesson for the Soviet Union in the basic attitude of the second world war.

Conditions in contemporary Russia have, according to this new material, changed the military strategy of the super-power. There are implicit (e.g., in identity formation in relation to cultural and political borders with the Baltic states) and explicit (e.g., weaknesses in distinguishing between national and universal norms) difficulties in conceptualising Russia's identity as a great power. But still essays concerning Baltic subjects often conclude in holistic hope for a peaceful and economically better world. At the same time they open up to the West: values and institutions that are clearer than for previous generations can move towards continental Europe even in terms of military alliance. (Cf., e.g., Mitev 1999 and most Eastern European survey findings.) The moments and bases of interpretation for (super)power relations were discussed in the texts, but not in menacing tones and shades. *"The end of the Cold War and good relations between Russia and NATO provide better conditions for ecological progress in the Baltic region."*

Reasons for pollution were spoken of in this respectable Karelian school just as knowledgably and thoroughly as in the three Baltic States – regardless of the fact that Petroskoi is not geographically situated on

the seacoast. Some young people focused on the problems of purifying the unsalted waters of Ladoga (Laatokka in Finnish language) the pollution history of which these students are personally familiar with. The ecological problem was not given to them or natural, real socialism's antiquated thought of repressing nature is no longer around in any form: *"All countries are caught up in ecological problems. Problems are part of nature and part of mankind, and sometimes as part of nature mankind must take up nature's problems as issues of conscience",*<sup>1</sup> *"In nature...a person does evil to himself directly."* Risk facts and writers who speak of them tautologically, politically explosive themes do not go unconsidered: oil spills and agricultural problems, various forms of heavy metals and synthetic chemicals, acid rain and forest cutting, algae blooms, heavy shipping traffic, the flow of polluted rivers, reproductive problems of sea mammals and the world of microscopic animals, the mystery of the death of starfish and placton are considered.

## Modern Publicity and Contemporary Avantgards!

15 exhortations in Karelian essays. The attribute 'Slavic' was not mentioned here, as it was in some Finnish, Estonian and Latvian texts, where this concept was used to define a potential 'enemy'-attitude! The writers have the politically far-sighted idea, which certainly would have been tested in school, of facing the Baltic States over historical wrongs, which still should not be avenged by oppression of the Russian speakers in these countries after the fact: *"Germany's attack against the Soviet Union started the Great War. After that began horrible deportations. There were many wrongs done in these. Four hundred thousand Lithuanians, one hundred fifty thousand Latvians and fifty thousand Estonians were deported. This spread an even greater hatred of Russians among these peoples...Then it was still claimed that these countries joined the Soviet Union willingly!"*

"On the Other Hand" Rhetoric Around the Baltic "The way our people are treated" still comes up soon as the second approach of borderline identity, which is evaluated in terms of a universal ethos and modern political pathos: *"The Baltic States were forced to join [the Soviet Union, KP]...some portion of the people there accepted Soviet politics. Repression deepened people's bad feelings towards Russians... As democracy was expanded, only in 1990, independence made it possible... in Latvia and Estonia bad language laws have been passed...even though it messes up families in the process, not everyone can have citizenship. Russian speaking people are discriminated against in these countries. International laws should be the same everywhere."*<sup>1</sup> *"Amber! We say this word and we see before us the cold Baltic Sea... Though we try to give our sort of system to those wild countries it doesn't seem to be of any use...they were the first to leave the union. They got up on their own feet, started their own currencies and set up their industries. They succeeded well in becoming independent, but there have been problems that have followed. Russian speaking people are suffering there. They are not given citizenship and they remain second-class citizens. It is difficult for them to get work or a decent education... I was visiting in Latvia and Estonia and I can say that as young people we weren't treated too badly. We were received well: I also hope that all questions are discussed in co-operation and mutual understanding."*

Sometimes the Baltic States' picture of Russians as the enemy is over-historialised and naturalised: *"...all Scandinavian countries helped the newly independent Baltic States. But citizenship was not given to Russians, though they were born there and some were married... cultural contacts were cut off... My family knowing and feeling danger, I can say directly that there has always been a hatred against Russians and all of Russia in the Baltic States."* Sometimes ethnicity is connected with nations' survival polemics and views of the Baltic States' history of great Catholic powers, when they tried to spread their culture: *"It would be*

*better if the state [Russia, KP] would be a union rather than a federation... The question arises, did the Baltic States force themselves to join the Soviet Union? ...In petty states [the Baltics, KP] a unified ethnic basis maintains a warlike nature... In these countries wrong thinking language laws were adopted, which are not humane and are against the law and the spirit of the world." And then, perhaps in a unique way, accusations of Nazism break out: "After Perestroika the Baltic States were given independence. Difficulties with Russia began. The underlying reason was the poor treatment of Russian speaking people in these countries. A Nazi voice and a brutal attitude towards Russians arose in Estonia and Latvia...But a greater question is transport in the Baltic Sea...In 1992 there came an agreement between Russia and Estonia on the release of pollutants... The earth is home to us all." The socialisation of young people steps into a sort of political spotlight: "Linguistic contacts between countries, in particular those between Russians and the local people of the Baltic coast, most affect children; from among them new "Hitlers" may arise. Cold and hot war bring their own logic. In fragmented and unstable conditions as well identity in relation to others, here former almost our people, is important. At the same time Germany and Nazism seems still to form a thinking sediment for some young people and their Russian (safe) identity.*

National self-critique concerning ecological problems, historical perspectives, a multi-faceted orientation towards the present and international co-operation within the context of universal law were the focal points in the corpus from the Karelian district of Russia. Russian students whose writings appear in the corpus were aware of Russian problems with their political identity and system. The large scale of Soviet heritage and the space for Russian young people to come and go with their every day problems and social security networks was present in everyday domestic life and its contingency is reported in some textual fragments. In another kind of case, *"we have to live in harmony with nature, otherwise it will turn its back on us!" / "Unless environmental protection becomes a priority ...the end may come for our lives and our whole civilisation!"* Or in an essay we are presented with "Nostradamus" as a symbol of the end. Many contributors in the West think that these kinds of mystic dimensions, which come out surprisingly clearly in some school essays, are indistinguishable part of the Russian spirit. In Latvia, for instance, there are mysterious forces of destiny confronting us in the ecological sphere, which are, paradoxically but still somehow, open for risky learning: *"It is supposed to happen in a way that people take charge of the environmental cleaning issue... otherwise mankind's second nature will lead all of civilisation and society to their demise...In our time there is a fear of living. Nostradamus, who lived in the sixteenth century, wrote that in the seventh month of the year 1999 something terrible would happen, and from then on. The tolerance of nature has its limits, and revenge may come... We all know that nothing in particular happened in that month, but who knows what can happen if nature is no longer able to keep up its patience...Each person must stand responsible before nature. This we can learn from the American Indians; our destiny is in nature."*

The unified space of the Russian nation is not under control, but young people seem to give it modern possibilities. The Soviet Union is explicitly gone: Scandinavians represent a utopian space, the Winter War and conquest of the Baltics were illegitimate, only after the Soviet power had ended did the ecological situation receive publicity. Only the historical and (counter)identity maintaining role of Germany, the "Nostradamuses" (diffused space) in the Russian sediment and universal hopes tell of their direct heritage. Militantism (for peace) is nearly gone. Schools and their teachers, like other social support networks, are reflected in the identities and spaces of young people. A social survival identity is reflected in abstract and safety seeking world statements. Russia (the Soviet Union) functions in history and in the future; now it is difficult to speak between their own social immediate significance and the world. Unregulated freedom which calls into question the spaces it moves in has a strong signifying relationship with the Past, but in the process of thematising spaces it tends to run into regressive matters: the lack of national democracy and responsive space, "our people's" problems in the Baltic States. In the aforementioned "competition" they are coming from a supreme power space and are trying to take disputed space and by argument turn it into divided or even unified space.

## Focus of the Russian spaces

When there are no clearly defined political relationships or spaces, disputing and dividing them also involves ambivalence and problems – even a semi-mystical dimension. Mixed spaces also give special impetus to individualistic and populist thoughts and symbols – non-institutionality, anarchy and the Russian situation are, at least in this Karelian school, open to universal discussion, and the references of the essay project can move from natural science to universal norms and from Nostradamus to Greenpeace. This vaguery and occasional openness is also downplayed in the West: Why can't Russia's "Americans" (rich culture) be enough for much and many? Is the West in a hurry to get Russia's development under Western conceptual control (cf. Berglund-Hellén-Aerobrot 1998)? As in other countries, ecology means genuinely universal challenges and breaking down boundaries, which does not mean escaping from political responsibility for one's own area. On the contrary, it arranges and analyses professional arguments and their intentions, but the shortage and ambivalence of economic and societal resources leave young people to search for space to deal with matters and to hope for civil courage; space for universal justice, "we-hope-for-the-best"-conventions and the chaos of existing means of survival and signifying. Of all forms of writing, the school essay perhaps leaves the least room for individualism, though the detachment of many writers says something about the richness of the (literal) meanings and choices involved, of the movement within economic poverty.

### III.

## Illustration of Living Genres using Political Space

The following illustration explicates the main textual genres used by young people studying in the cities around the Baltic Sea analysed above. The vertical axis illustrates the global (universal) vs. local dimension, showing the rhetorical movements and oppositions involved. The horizontal axis illustrates the transition from the modern (collective mobilisation and modern self-limitation, or, in Beck's 1993, terminology, the 'first-modern') towards the risk society (individualism, global risks, contingency, or in Beckian terminology, the 'second-modern'). These axes will provide us with eight rhetorical forms and focuses concerning political space, region or 'imaginary landscapes'. Conventional maps are mixed here; they have become spatialised. Two main focuses – placing the actual young people from different countries in the picture – demonstrate the positions and argumentative bases of the different text corpuses gathered from the towns around the Baltic. **The identifying focuses here mean the spatial dimension of arguments, ethos and horizons present in the texts:** especially the basic rhetorical thematisations, contexts and reflections, metaphors, deictic and "who's one of us" -locations, adverbs of place and in particular types of space relations. Because of the nature of the textual contributions – part of living an mobile, sceptical, theme-bound and projective genres – it is better to speak of two main spatial focuses for each school corpus.

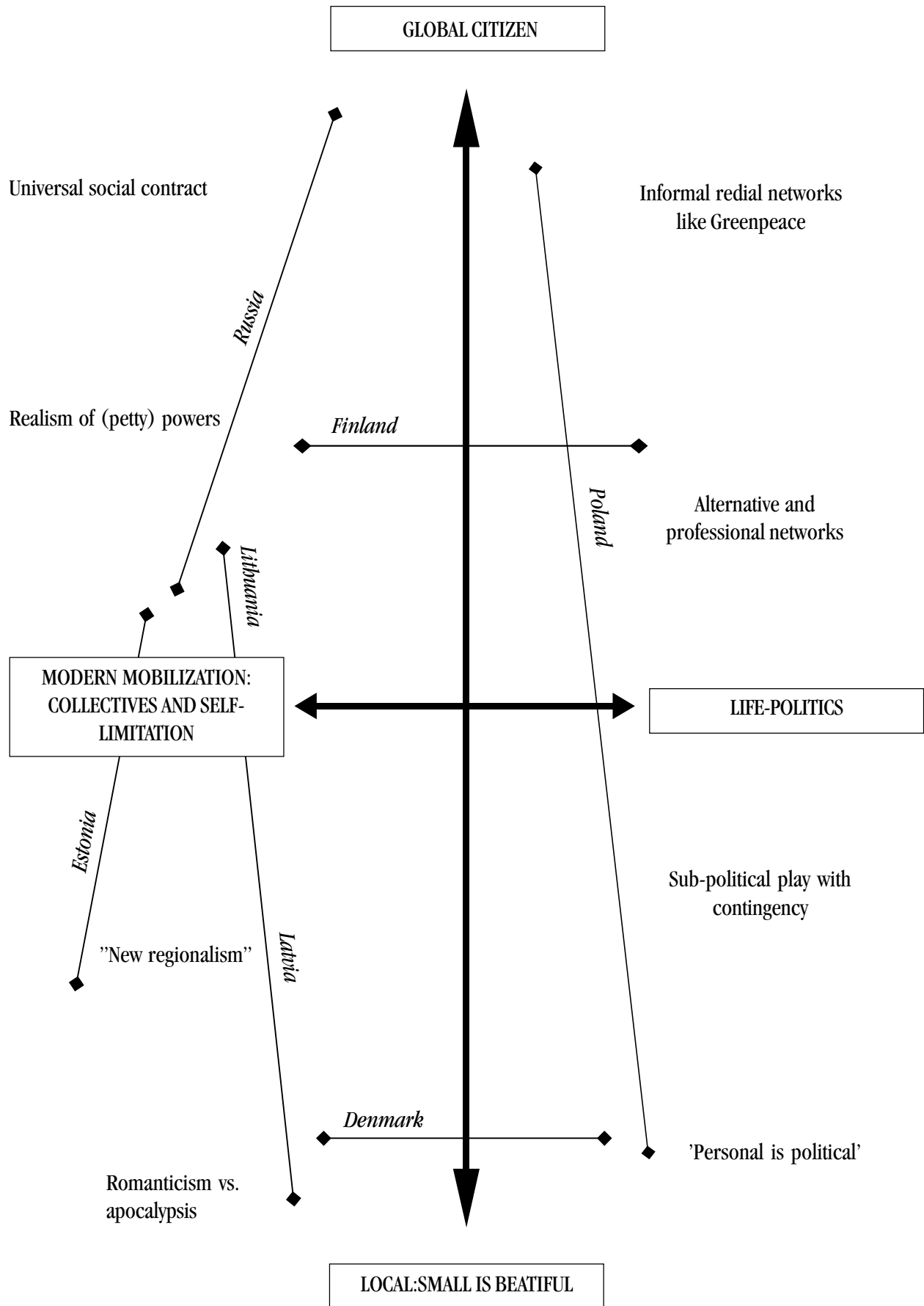


ILLUSTRATION: The spatial Focuses in the Texts gathered around the Baltic

Everyday choices and the pleasure principle, the fragmentary experience of the life of the Baltic Sea and impressionism connect with the "small is beautiful" focus of the **Danish text** corpus. They send into motion personal risk experiences and politics stays in the feeling based circle of personal choices. In **Finland's Espoo** cautious small state consciousness opens in the direction of individualism and anticipation of problems. Humanistically understood professions can be the expression and the focus of this sort of international risk-societal understanding and anticipation. **Polish culture** of the NATO period has had game experience and disorganised, diffuse and underground culture and multiple meanings, which have been able to rise up and rapidly turn directly from the unified space and Supreme power space determined by the Soviet Union, or from more or less divided space, to the critical modern disputed space and complete diffusion of the risk society. This works both in personal political "zooming" and on the global level, in informal, radical political networks.

The maritime culture and the metaphors coming out of the factuality of **Lithuanian young people** make room for contemplating the existential and political boundaries of small state realism. The young people from the school in Klaipeda express themselves in classical forms which often reach their peak in an individual romantic life focus. In the writing samples of **young people from Riga** the small state's survival, the contradictory focus of Fortuna, is actualised through internal and external pressures. Often this politically tense struggle takes on apocalyptic forms, negative utopia and the hectic risky reflection. To the **students of Tallinn** the focus of utopia is a more concrete and "objective" finality: a Western style and standard of living. Achieving this goal space is a frantic pursuit and its assurance remains the goal of a new sort of territorial security and self-discipline. The alternatives of life politics are set aside. **Russian political ambivalence** is present in the search for focus among the students from Petrozadovsk. Political identity and its continuation are supported by the most unusual materials, from Nostradamus to ecological self-punishment. Russian societies' survival identity wavers in abstract and security seeking world statements and appeals to universal rights.

## **Basic Conclusions: Mutant Faces of Identities**

As we have seen young citizens have no common or global identities, collective lines or discussion cultures around or across the Baltic Sea. There are no clear programmes, common identities and large networks used and organised by Baltic youth. Young students living in the cities around the Baltic Sea are not particularly politically decisive; they are constantly changing their attitudes and areas of scepticism. **Argumentative structures and bodies of the texts have mutant and mobile faces** and they are living in different times, rhetorical contexts and rooms. In these local, culturally heterogeneous language games and spaces – and sometimes nationally sensitized or some way nationalistically articulated genres – the Baltic Sea forms a loose discussion theme, landscape and theatre with mobile and floating subjects.

Baltic co-operation, European integration and global patterns of development do not mean common social compulsions or blanket concepts for young people. These 'neo-regional' or universal tendencies can be found in young people's texts, but they are interpreted in contradictory ways, using the political contexts and language games of the rich and other sorts. The powers of the nation-state and modern group ideologies are not totally dying on the south-eastern shores of the Baltic, but they have lost the binding control of having a monopoly on "imaginary communities" (see Appadurai 1990). They are considered, sensitive and sometimes delicate ways reflected and re-formulated in texts, also through the



rather traditional language game of 'poetry' and 'petty-state-consciousness'. **The cultures of the Baltic Sea live on in the texts of young people, but they have been changed into the chests and treasures of new identities.**

Even if young people's texts have same kind of topics, such as 'The Baltic Sea – A sea of co-operation and conflicts? What disturbs me at this moment,' or 'The Baltic Sea and ecology,' especially among the school essays written in Poland, Finland and Denmark, it is hard to find modern collectivist and linear contributions. References to movements and cultural and 'contemporary' mutations, on the other hand, are easy to find. Life on the shores of the Baltic Sea is not predictable and dressed up as a common programme the way it used to be; no one speaks of the militant struggle for peace, the Unique Global Vision or technocratic planning anymore! No authorities or old standards govern the social or physical life and existence of the Baltic region. Mentalities change. Everlasting and life-long operational spaces, territories, jobs, educational programmes and trading practices are no longer around. It is not a question just of European uncertainty and freedom after the Wall, but also of a techno-economic revolution and young people getting frustrated with stable and continuous directions and values in life.

Bauman (1992, 6-29 and 1995, 44-55) traces most of the ethical and ecological problems and 'mistakes' of our time back to the modern. These mistakes have left people as passive speakers, cynical spectators, as the omnipotent modern economic and political apparatus functions. **To him the modern represents precisely those elements which are absent from textual material moving in a postmodern direction: "universalism, commonality, monotony, organisation and clarity."** Real socialism signifies for Bauman in particular the extreme of modernity. Its defeat did not mean the rise of modernism, but its fall: "With Communism the ghost of modernity is vanquished" (1993, 180 ; and cf. Lagerspetz 1998). At the same time he critically points out cultivated and disciplined "directedness" – that "it is characteristic of modernity to see history as a movement which has a common logical direction for all" (based on the interpretation of Jallinoja 1995, 38). Although "modernist" economic and political construction programmes make up the scheme and literary horizon in many essays from Russia and the Baltic states, there are alternatives offered to these structures, mentions of abuse and ironic references, ethical and individual room of risk society for manoeuvring and paradoxes; young people often continue on from what they are taught in school and official economic programs.

## **The Home Hearth, Modern Subjects and Nation Reflected in the Imaginary World**

Often these 'imagined worlds' are media-based – rising up and coming down according to different living thematisations – according to the ecological, economic and cultural terms of a "virtually tourist mentality" and European reflection. Here the freedom, consistency and political space which has arisen since the Cold War is in intensive use. The identity politics of young people – creatively old and new in their own (essay) titles and practices – is at its most intensive precisely when (territorial) borders, arguments and identities change and multiple factors (alternative identities) and problems to be dealt with by everyone come into consideration. It is possible to group these texts of young people, reflecting on global worlds and those around the Baltic Sea, according to **five imaginary landscapes** delineated by Appadurai (1990; regarding interpretation, see Heiskanen 1998, 368-371). At the same time we will see that natio-

nal, traditional collective and ethnic bases for interpretation no longer suffice for comprehending the themes in question. It is impossible to use the classification and periodisation of the basic sociological terms – traditional, modern and postmodern – in a coherent and logical way: they are bound to their theoretical presuppositions and aspects present in the textual interpretation of school essays. On the other hand, the global world or its ethics (of construction) will be with us for a long time to come, in the contradictory, mixed and extremely contingent future. Rarely do young people actualise or strive for the 'imaginary world' of clean and global operation and ethical universals.

There are, however, similar genres of modern and hectic scepticism, tendencies towards and hopes of building symbolic and sometimes even functional social meeting places and imagined communalities living in every nation-state breaking up the strict borders of these states, home places and value systems. Instead of the traditional imaginary societies (the nation-state, native region), "imaginary worlds" can arise (Appadurai 1990; regarding interpretation, see Heiskanen 1998). Precisely these many new "imaginary landscapes" are the themes, discourses and considered problems in which most young people confront the greed of nation-states and test their limits. At the same moment when the young people of the Baltic states seriously consider the internal cohesion of their political systems, they can relativise small state questions with arguments of ecology or the dialectics and economy of the risk society.

1) The "**ethno-landscape**" refers to the real but unstable and fluid cross-border contacts between friends, tourists, fellow students, co-workers and immigrants. 2) The "**techno-landscape**" refers to technology which in a new way is "unplaceable", defying physical borders. 'High tech' and heavier technology have no regard for their physical location or place of application, breaking down human spatial consciousness, geography and architecture and the aesthetic world of imagination as well as social and political relationships and foundations of identity. 3) The "**financial landscape**" refers to the world of money and capital transfers, where many virtual manoeuvres relating to values incomprehensible to the average citizen take place. Appadurai's economic theme of "capital living over the top of people's heads" does not, however, have an exclusive position in the world of significations in young people's texts.<sup>21</sup> 4) The "**ideological landscape**" for Appadurai means the non-committed or non-participatory political dimension. In this way "politics" is restricted to organisations, leaders and governmental procedures specifically referred to as political: 'international agreements', 'policing' or 'democracy'. In this theoretical horizon the enlightenment or the French Revolution are thus considered to be "ideological" rather than "political". It is not easy to see the role of identity politics in the ideological speculations of Appadurai. 5) But the "**media landscape**" includes multi-formed and multi-valued short and often generalised narratives of the media and the industry of arts and culture. Through their generalisation as well they stimulate the imagination, living life models and bases for projection – if attempts are made to reproduce stereotypical lifestyles in new contexts, they come to signify interpretation and the birth of 'new styles'. (Appadurai 1990.)

Appadurai's outline, however, lacks one horizon which is quite relevant to the school writings being considered: 6) the "**ecological landscape**", which is in many ways pictured as independent from or out of synchronisation with the horizon of interpretation living in the above (for a broader neo-differentiation and a typology of its spaces and operations, see Ferris 1993). Very few consider 'nature' to be part of the political sector. On the contrary, for some the ecological landscape dominates the other viewpoints described here as a basic risk and learning process. The Baltic Sea inspired especially ecological balance and discussion of the basic meaning of life, in which they were moving in an uncontrolled and politically risky field and the uncertainty and apocalyptic portions of the landscape lived all the time in anti-symmetry and limited dialogue with other in many respects more hegemonic landscapes.

In describing these Baltic landscapes or "theatres with mobile scenes and floating subjects", we might also use Bauman's more abstract and (here) supranationally interpreted concept of 'habitat', **with which he replaces sociology's strict, totallisingly outlined and normative social groups (such as class or national societies)**. The present individuals and groups are important interactive operatives in themselves, who operate with their landscapes relatively autonomously from social structures. Habitat is a fluid and changing place built around some punctual theme or landscape. This sort of home, "is not an absolute end unto itself, programme or doctrine which would define its nature and draw in the operatives, as is the status quo in modern normative groups" (Jallinoja 1995, 41; and for interpretation see Alapuro 2000, 103).

## **Creativity of Interpretation – The Difficulty of Commitment**

These imaginary worlds, horizons and 'landscapes' (of Appadurai's) or Baumanian habitats are present in these young people's textual corpus, in which the Baltic Sea and its social and ecological significance are sampled. They are often like shifting stages and they rely on symbols and various levels of experience, but they achieve the position of a literary horizon of interpretation, a position of interpreting the real world. The future looks contradictory and political – thoroughly subject to interpretation (cf. Palonen 1993). We can see this in the various textual landscapes and their miniatures: they are living, political and disutable far away from the distinctions of the 'black-and-white'. The textual landscapes and spaces are not dominating or predicting each others. Even universal capital, global structures and other such phenomena have their limits. They are not fatal subjects. The landscapes are 'exposing' each others in mobile ways, they have collisions and fusions – thus the mutuality is all the time changing the political aspects of landscapes. This is reflected in the identity politics of young people living around these landscapes. The personal voices and individualism – all the time confronting with collectives and institutions (of map) – are driving forces for mutantism or 'hybridization', where the identity mix seem to be rule rather than the exception today. Traditional and strict 'belonging' is faraway; young people are reflecting the limits of traditions and developing new landscapes and rooms or poetry and arms of their petty-states-identities adequate for their present problems and spaces for identity work and politics. (Kohli 2000, 130-32) On the other hand, young people are aware of the chaotic possibilities of hybridity, the danger to loose totally the 'belonging' identities. Appadurai as well says of the future only that landscapes and imaginary worlds are open, wavering and uncertain. Heiskanen fills this in a bit and comes close to the high school students' description of a mutant: "The contemporary world, whether it is considered to be global/globalising or not, is 'unruly' and thus perpetually uncertain" (Heiskanen 1998, 370).

The corpus of school essays collected also emphasises **the activeness of the writers**. If Appadurai and Heiskanen emphasise landscapes as 'given' or 'observable' viewpoints, then on the level of the textual material we find concrete interpretations, contextualisation and choices of perspective and metaphors as well: a combination of 'landscapes' together with paradigms, evaluation and crystalising, preferring and representing their distant and close up features and handles in concrete terms include important political (identity) choices and political spacing and locating. The landscapes are mutually dependent; in our material global tendencies and discourses (landscapes) are not only deterritorialised (cut off and separate from territorial bonds and moving from one context to another, still giving birth to various deterritorialised cultures and political interpretations and movements, Heiskanen 1998, 369-70), but people learn and reflect conflicting neo-territorial and global thoughts, messages, models of consumption and 'brain washings'.

Reflection is of course connected with the continuous presence of contingency, underlining possibility for choice and coercion, but also with falsely and ideologically 'patched together' means of survival, defensive reactions, simplifications and (voluntary) misconceptions. The people of a region do not easily form a homogenous and functional part of the global empires. The relationship between global organisations and landscapes on the one hand and citizens' own scale and self-understanding on the other does not always differ so dramatically from the relations and tensions between conventional centre and periphery or establishment and the lower classes in the modern world. Especially in Poland, Finland and Denmark, imagination is leaving the nation-state, its modern post-industrial mobilisation and collective societies behind, and some global and mixed global/European and Baltic images are arising in their place. The living genres of nation-state may still be involved in their refining and editing, depending on the case in question.

On the other hand, **radical and functional networks (based on concrete interaction, rhetorical mobilisation and face-to-face confrontations) are rather rare in the Baltic region.** Groups based on hobbies, historical interpretation, tourism and sports, and ecological movements such as Greenpeace or Baltic Sea projects, however, show that young people too have functional examples and their writings are not based solely on what they have read, imagined or seen dramatised in the media. Cross-border, national or state based spatial grounds for membership and identities and imaginary worlds are not just utopias then, as some researchers following after empirical material are prone to claim (Jukarainen 2000, 160-164; Soininen 2000 and Alapuro 2000). At this point no joint request of state social offices is responsible for general cooperative youth work for the Baltic region: more than a parliamentary platform, the co-operation looks like an umbrella for pragmatic projects, where concrete project workers are more struggling with the concerns and resource difficulties of the risk society than acting as political actors or diplomats for the nation-states.<sup>22</sup> The dramatic Nordic dimension means concern for the conditions of family members in the East and Baltic Sea ecology.

## **The Difficulty of Morally Participating in Common Projects In the Episodic and Chaotic Late-Modern World**

Citizen roles have changed from the tasks of 'sojourner', 'life's work performer' and 'decision maker' in the direction of the postmodern tramp, tourist and gambler's navigation (surprisingly Baltic and sea metaphors!). Here at the turn of the millennium, **navigating in life also includes aspects which are sometimes called "the art of mismeting"** (Bauman 1995, 130-).

This is the result of many patterns of development. Doing good is no longer easy; the results of well intended deeds are not easily foreseen or controlled. Sometimes it leads to addiction. "Not caring and choking off the autonomy of others are thus human life, but at the same time also the Skylla and Kharybdis of societal politics, life politics and social politics" (Bauman 1995, 66- ; as quoted in Karisto 1996, 250). Belief in political planning is also becoming extinct. It has been typical for modern thought to think of the unchangingness of the socio-cultural order. It was believed that the discrepancy between the goals and reality would be overcome by rational welfare politics; idealistic youth and science were to be the 'bringers of light' here (Allardt 1996, 220-241 and Karisto 1996, 246-48).

Politicians promises, or their being broken, are no longer the only 'political' option for cynical young people following world events or watching the media. The modern project kept political action and possible responsibility covered from individuals by shifting functions onto the shoulders of institutional functionaries (political authorities, the state and managers). On the other hand the freight train of modernity provided the protection of a morally and politically neutral or given language game: talk of given facts (e.g., the connection between economic growth, employment and equal rights) and inevitabilities (international competitiveness) – rhetoric of necessity” (Bauman 1993, Pekonen 1993 and Perelman-Olbrechts-Tyteca writing on quantitative loci and assertive modalities, 1971, 93-97 and 160- ). The postmodern period and the relevance of the instance of life politics have signified, also in the text corpus, the breaking up or opening of this covering. In this very opening of possibilities and visible force and possibility of choice (in the 'Lebensraum' of life politics). In this sense our era is for Bauman the era of politics (Bauman 1995, 20-43). ”If before life was too tightly defined, then now it is much to loosely defined; no single background factors determine choices any more” (Karisto 1993, 224-25).

This development in the direction of loosening orders in life is not to be confused with the abstract discussion of alienation. Identities connected to agendas, spaces and cultures live their own lives; forms of alienation – distance taking 'Entfremdung', experience anticipating the future or literal non-factuality – can be a small bit of "putty" of the survival of the poor, and drunken or unrealistic, the utopian horn of plenty for an anachronistic life which forgets surprising spaces. Contemporary spaces can be relativised; the moment lived is not the only possible space; the future as well is relative and for some can definitely relate to its struggling projects; Utopia influences the future. The Blochian 'principle of hope', which is realised through people's day dreams, always asks who we are and where we are going. There is always some NO involved: '**no-yet-conscious**' and '**not-yet-born**' anticipation. Night dreams remain rather passive, already lived life regressively and subconsciously considered. Day dreams on the other hand, take their character from those needs which are not met within the limits of real societies (Bloch 1975; Levitas 1979; Mannheim 1966; and Paakkunainen 1981, 172-).

Globalism has opened the world up for young people from Western democracies in particular. The 1990s put Western consumer space in the hands of Eastern European young people. This does not, however, does not seem to have been worth the trouble (Bauman's criteria for postmodern, 1993), but rather many other hopes in life and factors in societal organisation and politics bring the discussion of economics together.<sup>23</sup> The possibility of a Western lifestyle has also meant many new sorts of distance and sources of experiences of alienation. **The Utopias of school essays are also polarised** – in both the East and the West. Especially in mainland German youth research and philosophical traditions alienation and utopias can be examined as parallel phenomena, being mutually dependent. For example abstract "New Age" cultures (Denmark's computer game, Finnish cartoon adventures and Nostradamus reading in Petrozadovsk), at least for this overly serious researcher, point the way to particularism and irrationalism; to alienation from social subjects and a return to self-centred aesthetic unified culture and phantasm; to wild, private egotism (e.g., May – von Prondczynsky 1991, 170-; and cf. Paakkunainen 1998A, 136-140). On the other hand some social greens (realos) who distinguish themselves commendably in the Polish text corpus, want to transcend the conflict between the autonomous basis and the elite system, and they present a concrete political utopia – based on human middle-term advantage – of a "new social contract as the answer to global economic and cultural revolution" (belonging to the same paradigm, see Fischer 1998<sup>24</sup>). This political utopia, which takes advantage of the EU, the EMU and even NATO (Europe's unique unified political potential and starting point for universal action) sets as a global goals economic competitiveness, social justice, ecological sustainability and a republican form of democracy.

Some researchers are even ready to replace the modern post-industrial society's bases for mobilisation and conflicts (especially religion, nationalism, classes of wage earners, urban/rural and gender) entirely with **postmodern membership or partnership**, which in a sense problematises and politicises the existing status quo, the collective role of central political actors, the horizon of welfare and neutralising (universal) language games. They want to openly bring in as (social and life) political attributes and starting points particularism, multiple forms and group empowerment in place of the former principles of universalism, equality and uniformity (Thompson-Hoggett 1996; and Laclau's reply 1998, 66-). It is clear that as the socialist and bourgeois outlines that structure our pictures of society collapse and as the uncertainties of the risk society growing among our basic parameters break down and challenge our bases of understanding, we must be self-reflective – always posing the question of our own position and societal mobilisation (including factors of space, identity and area) over again. The heterogeneity of the material from the Baltic region is inspiring this interpretation. Groups and individuals in a late- or postmodern frame of reference cannot submit to a singular reading. Spatial changes and components reflect changeable and uncontrolled (contingent) representations in the individual subjects (Keith & Pile 1993 and Palonen's outline which inspired this work, 1993 and 1993B). Identity becomes the site and arena for a struggle for determination. In this regard this study too can be taken as postmodern, if you so desire.

## Nationally Productive and Variable Rhetoric

The textual material can also be outlined by schools. The material comes from only one school in each coastal nation. Thus the choice of grades is reflected in the structure and interpretation of the material. They can, however, be considered as powerfully expressive examples of the thought patterns of the nations' young people. The differences between schools can be quite large – even more significant than the differences between the nation-states. **The stylistic variety and individualism were considerable, ranging from writing styles taking advantage of the romantic and genres making good use of national narratives to modernist and on to hectic and apocalyptic styles of (post)modern writing.** Within the sample there we found students relying both on the form of factual material and conceptual argumentation and on fragmentary emotional and semi-lyrical forms of expression and impressions.

Some of the texts could be described as fragmentary and (post)modern, or even hectic<sup>25</sup>: especially in the fragmentary essays of students from Denmark, living with the pleasure-principle and writing in a rather free form style. In spite of this fragmentation in the West (from Denmark and in several texts from Poland and Finland) civil societies are also rising up on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea. And they too are developing a form of episodic and chaotic Baltic rhetoric. We see references to this building in the civil societies and political structure of ex-socialist countries and in the context of their international challenges and conflicts, which leave no room for a naive or politically innocent national re-building and consensus. One surprising fact is that of all these nations we find the most European and modern political youth culture among young people of Poland. Young people in Poland have viable politicking and politicising identities without institutional conventions and national borders. The European concepts and spirit, revitalising and reflecting the genre of the enlightenment (à la Beck's 'sub-politic') and even the Beckian networks of round-tables and Giddens' Third Line are present. Young people from Poland are even talented enough to discuss the ambivalence between universalism, global capitalism and Polish heritage.

In many writings the official, conventional and legal borders are breaking down. Here the 'identity politics' and borders cannot be read as cartography; we are speaking about new, constantly moving communities (see inspiring but somewhat vulgar interpretation, Maffesoli 1996, 63-) and their interpretations of new social and territorial spaces in the contexts of the risk society (Beck 1993 and 1995). E.g., social practices and the rhetoric of universal ecogism and late-modern fragmentation or Westernisation which are independent of the traditional *gemeinschafts* or even the structures of national *gesellschafts* (mobilised after the modern fashion) have their own time-space structures and ideas, as well as cultural and regional identities. These 'mute' or 'colour-blind' traditions of the threatening and challenging modern tradition attempt to push their way into the traditional modern. Thus we can at least in part separate the sector, reverie and corporation based field of politics from its stifling premises and allow for young people's polemics intended to better compose and handle their life and landscapes, the borders of which are under no one's exclusive control.

This learning process can be seen as part of the **Beckian vision: to be in transition from the ad hoc principles of "simple modernisation" and the mobilisation principle of the growth economy to a "reflexive stage"**. Here we speak of more political modernity, in which "that which was thought to be permanent is being reshaped. Modernisation thus happens as part of a process which tears down the modern's own structures" (Beck 1997, 159). From the politics of the established "political system" it is possible to get closer to sub-politics as well as its tensions and *visa versa*. In the risk society (e.g., in the face of the risks involving the division of labour, capital and techno-ecological developments affecting everyone in the Baltic region) the wind blows everywhere; sector politics and administrations as well, even economic decision makers have been aired out and shown to be uncertain in their operational repertoire (regarding contingent operational abilities, see Beck 1993; cf. Palonen 1994 and Paakkunainen 1999) and have been required to learn about innovative procedures and ethically responsible discursive landscapes.

Here the productive and political moment is the present. Even the interpretations and networks of young people can be a contribution or reflection which can leave its mark on institutional learning as well. This lesson is not always a dramatic bending point; in the Baltic region as well, states, youth organisations and youth networks hold discussions with each other in semi-official institutions. The background for everything though is what has been learned in unofficial landscapes and networks and the life and identity politics of individuals – the linguistic expression of young people (e.g., in school essays or letters to the editorial column of newspapers). This linguistic representation is a productive event that always makes an attempt to remove a social and cultural reality around people. The project of a writer is to rebuild the already real community or the state of affairs, where these circumstances are coming into harmonious relation with the inner experience of a human being. Ricoeur refers to the same aspect of language, when he writes that to make something real and present is an expression of sublimation, where the 'regressive' (archaeological past) and 'progressive' (teleological future) meet each others in a dialectical way (Ricoeur 1970; Pekonen 1994 and Hägglund 1991, 51-).

## Identity Politics: From Mapping Space to the Spatialisation of Maps (Bauman)

The dynamics of changing meanings could be called 'identity politics'. The constitution of self-consciousness and self-expression are, in fact, a striving with identity, of which the use of power is a routinised part. From the reading of school essays written on the shores of the Baltic Sea we can interpret the local and cultural identities according to which young people are rising up as a potential political citizens without formal norms, as the possibilities of identity politics. The essential moments of these identities are part of late-modern life politics (or Beck's 'sub-politics') (see esp. Beck-Giddens-Lasch 1995).

These new communities, light projects or temporary perspectives are often discursive, media-reflective and their style is constituted by emotional, imaginary, virtual and spectacular rhetorical forms. Maffesoli (1996) has also correctly interpreted the message of my text corpus from around the Baltic Sea: Individualism doesn't mean egocentrism; on the contrary, this basic modern tendency of individualisation needs temporal and thematically changing social meanings. But the basic shape of these tendencies is not new collectivism, (Pan)Europeanism or Globalism, but mutant movement in the life of young people's world of meaning.

And although the world views among young people living on the eastern shore of the Baltic have, especially in comparison with Western life situations, their base in the poor and scanty realities and their 'common' interpretation (by mobilising or constructive programs), they are mixing and exceeding the petrified traditions and producing some grim, light and (ironically or by the means of poetry) utopian ideas by breaking down and reinterpreting the conventions, nations and the borders of 'maps', traditions and language games. We are able to speak about a new kind of 'light cartography' developed in the spirit of cultural traditions.

Primary attention here is focused on the very **cultural identity** that is relevant from young people's perspective (Kivikuru 1990, 5-6), which is the opposite of the identity or concept of national and state legitimacy. As part of political culture its nature can be very clarified, popular or global and it is constructed in the spirit of the common sense of national society. The political space of young people – places to build their cultural identity – refer to this area of possibilities for political action. This space is contingent, tense and variable cultural identity. Thus it is also chaotic and uncontrolled (space). Cultural identity strongly distinguishes, gives possibilities for self-expression and supports both pluralism and a life of "unorganised" (Palonen 1993, and Paakkunainen 1994 and 1997C) identity. It can implicate or include hegemonic culture, features of synthesised and integrated layers of occupational or counter-culture. Laclau speaks here of the role "constituting the outsider". Relations do not form a closed system; one's "own" always affects the "other". Identities do not have perfect stability, but they rather live in a cycle of renewal (Laclau 1990). The imperfection and danger of identities produces a need to build identities (Weaver 1995, 20). **Nation-state identity** for its part is "mature" and approved by the people generally as a uniting and integrating ideology. It is still based on the people's own, if nowadays in many ways wavering, self-understanding.<sup>26</sup>

The identity of power in the late-modern interpretation and of nationality on the eastern shores of the Baltic is a dynamic concept, depending on culture, life-political projects and broader identities of safety. "We come from the same past, which is called totalitarianism, and we travel towards the same future, which is called Europe" (Meri 1996). Westernisation and Europe bring a cultural not-yet-realised identity of safety, in which its utopian potential lies. The prime minister of Denmark says using the freshest turn of



a phrase that the "Nordic dimension" is more than EU politicking: The Baltic states are part of the Nordic Family. We must do what we can so that our three friends can also become part of the European family. We know that becoming part of this family will take time, but one day they will each be able to look back and say that now I am a full family member."<sup>27</sup> The family involves more of the terminology of social and cultural identity than that of (real) politics and increased (nation-state) stability. As a metaphor it is close to the foundational harmony utopia and space which actors of contemporary realism predict. Many of the safe identities which people are striving after are there for some sort of assurance, as the present day incarnation of the not-yet-realised, and as a source of self-discipline.

Even if the strong locality and new regional (cultural and political) identities could be the examples of the richness of thematisation possibilities and fragmentariness of (late)modern life, they are, at the same time, living and flexible presuppositions for "dialogical democracy" reflecting different levels and identities of social reality. These dimensions could vary from self-identity (self-discipline and self-expression) and regional learning to the global perspectives, scepticism and reflections. In analysing the political and 'international' significance of spaces, identities and borders (Jukarainen 2000, 164-) we cannot remain staring at national or international rights or the maps drawn by the winners and the political establishment. Borders, landscapes and political spaces are present, the results of negotiations in the contacts of everyday life, "the political constructions of everyday life" (Wilson-Donnan 1998, 19). Concepts about spaces, their distribution and conflicts are thus rather difficult to change as well: some form of dialogue in search of legitimacy is needed to break down and develop foundational identities and concepts of space (e.g., aggressions between ethnic groups within a given nation-state).

**In this case especially, we see clear differences in political horizons between Western and Eastern self-discipline (self-limiting principles) and hopes concerning modern mobilisation and its positive and common products.** This 'gap' between Eastern actual construction of modern societies (dogmatic way conceptualised by "collective inevitableness" and individual strategies) and the disintegration of modern project in the West (life politics and individualism) has much to do with the forms of solidarity and writing genres in those countries – how and why are you writing essays just in (national) schools (who is the narrative mind and who is the authoritarian audience)? What is the end or the intention of writing? Does the institutional school essay reflect the writer's full repertoire?

## **Two Strategies for Self-Limitation Around the Baltic**

Adorno's interprets Ulysses in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* as, "the hero of the adventures [who] shows himself to be a prototype of the bourgeois individual", (Horkheimer-Adorno 1972, 43) insofar as self-affirmation and self-denial coincide in the latter. Ulysses' "self-assertion...as in all civilisation, is self denial" (1972, 68), but by the struggling in the mast this instrumental human being found his technical way to rational morality (Offe 1996B, 38-42). We could consider this principle as a basic formula for the enlightenment and modernisation – a basis for Western social and political grandiosity. Nowadays, however, the linear and progressive results of self-limitation have been criticised and rejected.

The theory of the risk society (Beck 1993 and 1995) problematises the objective and causal rationality of (scientific) modernity. The state is not a naturally functioning forum for the articulation of collective reason; the problem of order is apparently put back into the hands of individuals, for their

active networks and "round tables" whose action and self-binding are oriented towards enlightenment, solidarity and responsibility. "In the end", as Offe reads Ulrich Beck's theory, "the public, comprising citizens and lay persons, depends not only on practical self-help but also on the actors' own cognitive interpretation of the situation – along with the fairly obvious consequent risks of myth formation, panic mongering and "Angst communication" (Offe 1996B, 34-35).

Both in the West and the East we no longer have easy routes to liberation and "progress". The debate turns on the meanings of metaphors like self-restrain, self-limitation, responsibility and moderation. What do words like "brake" and "shackle" or "wrong move" mean? We are somehow aware in the Western context of the facts of what the risk society might mean in terms of the informal and formal reflection of individuals and (filtering) institutions: common learning steps and debates. But what are the responsive and symbolically productive channels and subjects of responsive feedback in post-socialistic countries? There is a major crisis of motivational energy: firstly, the chaotic development in economic life, social policy and producing the affirmative and rational enterprising spirit of the bourgeois individual. Almost all of our young friends writing from the post-socialistic countries took the process of writing quite seriously as a task to build up their 'civic spirit' (as opposed to the Danish school situation, where the whole writing process was treated either like an amusement or an unpleasant duty!) – keeping pace with the 'national' conventions for school essays. Instead of this "modernisation drive", the individualistic writers of West wrote in popular and colloquial language using more prosaic genres. These 'intentional strategies' left the room for a wide variety of arguments, forms and writing styles in texts (voices, first person references, genres, etc.).

Not all Europeans are as rational and instrumental as the theorists of "homo oeconomicus" are claiming (as seen in the writings of Estonian young people in text corpus); the thesis of "homo sovieticus" (as presented by Russian writers, with especially Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian prosaists reacting against it) in extreme ways points to a false, but unconditional, feeling of having a secure life style and fear of innovation and risk. But then somewhere in between we have the "homo hungaricus" (presented by Polish essayists) whose economic virtues have been nurtured and cultivated under the old regime – often in hidden, distorted and repressed ways.

Secondly, social policy and the transition to democracy have had dual impacts, deeply dividing reflections among the people living post-real-socialistic (Bahro 1979) countries. The outcomes have been "really risky and uncertain": "If democratic politics leads to results which – by intentional commission or by default – create a class of impoverished, excluded, hopeless, alienated, and marginalised, then there is not much to redeem democracy in the eyes of these citizens" (Offe 1996B, 260-261). These social experiences of excluded people keep the door open for authoritarian conclusions, regressive and particularistic leaders and movements. Several writers were aware of these dualities but the writers had no fully hopeless conclusions. Especially the writers in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia discussed these problems in the terms of status quo in their political system and strains on the Russian side. The analytical horizon was realistic, speculative and reflective – in a surprisingly intensive way, even in front of the political ambivalencies in Russia. Social destitution is here today, but young people have room for speculation, living and pluralistic genres and 'realistic' journalism of riskies concerning the realities of their small nations.

To a certain extent we find in the essays a feeling of being let down in terms of their expectations of Westernised life being "an authentic life of paradise on earth" – based on the fast paced and dramatic macro-structural changes they saw – not having been fulfilled. With their expectations of a consumer's utopia frustrated, it becomes stained and can fall apart (Lauristin 1995). To adjust to a patient waiting process the

individual must quickly adopt a new kind of self-discipline, which requires new virtues and resources: flexibility, patient waiting, peaceful anticipation of alternatives and on the other hand tough and long-term recognition and weighing of both individual and collective benefits, and tolerance for a badly unequal social distribution system. I might be asked, is this sort of peace and civility possible in situations where there is a lack of rational use of political resources and institutional reforms? This sort of sugar therapy and total crisis can be overcome only by individual motivation and inspiration which maintain the desire for renewal. The arguments, styles and national ethos of the young people's essays show that this inspiration lives.

According to Offe (1996) demanding political conditions are in particular expectations of rapid material changes, trust in foreign and international support, a successful social policy for the internal distribution of resources and the birth of the sort of national society which is able to create institutions or networks for intervening between articulating and expressing public benefits on the one hand and protecting the interests of the people on the other. Only a wild desire to westernise can explain this "paradox of unhappy transition" (regarding this concept, see Therborn 1996, 300-5), where people agree to wait for improvements in many areas of their lives over the less successful material conditions of the previous Communist command economy. The traumas of psychological tyranny, wavering personal integrity, repression and refusal of the whole life-world and memories of the closet society are still frightening. Perhaps not all can re-orient themselves; the world looks merciless and meaningless. A world fascinated with purifying totalising thoughts (fast, technical, violent and complete catharsis) can be seen as being in the same mould as the frustrated feelings and anticipation of the second world war among the soldiers of Versailles (Paakkunainen 1998A, 126-55; and Vogt 1997, 328-). A few essays among those from each country referred to impatience, with totalising styles and reductionist metaphors of societal relationships as a basis. They also operated according to principles of common sense and naturalistic modality. In no country, however, were these interpretations a controlling interest; they remained as shouts from the wings.

## Atomism or Civic Spirit?

The situation has been much easier in most West European countries, where an interval of several decades elapsed between introduction of political democracy and the rise of a fully developed welfare state and its underpinnings in an economic policy geared to full employment. The simple modern mobilisation of rational working ethos ('sweaty' and self-denial) and its political concurrent, collective mobilisation ('instrumental and self-disciplined'), are periods that have been lived through and reflected on by the majority of people in the West; while the culture of the East is just now being transformed into the "smelting furnace" of social democracy.

There are five procedures for democratic development in the New East – which also, in a distant sort of way, relate to several essay texts written in the spirit of the 'realistic' seeking and speculation: "...a formal constitution, a strong sense of national identity, charismatic leaders, a favourable international environment, and strong collective actors representing and at the same time shaping the forces within a differentiated (rather than atomistic) civil society – are probably necessary, though ultimately insufficient, conditions for the certainty of democratic procedures. What is also required, in addition, is a 'civic spirit' or a political culture which is widely shared within the population and which constitutes a democratic political community inspired by a sense of 'constitutional patriotism' (Jürgen Habermas) that transcends the boundaries of ethnic religious, or linguistic identities" (Offe 1996B, 259).

But the primary challenge for many ex-socialist human beings is the lack of social trust and social capital in the present "amorphous" and "atomised" context; they need reliable clues as to their own position in society, their relation to relevant others and their likely future. There is a turbulent social atmosphere hard to analogously relate to the experiences of the West in the past – or the anticipated future. This turbulence is reflected in the text corpus: at the same time it is a crises situation and contingent chance for politicking and politicising strategies. And that's why we have here the beautiful and exciting forms and metaphors interpreting this political situation and solutions in identity politics. Even the writers from Petrozadovsk have hope and flexibility in their search for unified political space and universal social contracts and their historical speculations and apocalyptic and ecological analyses. In the German speaking world they speak of the end of the social understanding and security of Western powers ("Gemütlichkeit") – from new impatience with weak "results" following former Eastern Europe's powerful "dumping" (economic support), (Karjalainen 1996, 50-55; and Paakkunainen 1998A, 4-35 and 166-). A few essays from Finland and Denmark join into this impatient and darkly cynical voice.

In the contexts of the Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) social impatience and games of political hard-ball with the utopias and desires for rapid social and economic development and secure national space-time ideas are confusing nationalistic-patriotic memories and nostalgia, sometimes even in 'apolitical' and romantic forms of rhetoric. These countries have and use different and 'fresh' discursive forms to 'govern' their inner contradictions – pollution problems and the challenges of foreign countries and policies – in a realistic way. They are building a status quo between these worlds of inner and outer challenge and moments in political life. Their everyday life as well is full of paradoxes. Turbulence with the past means the need to go back into the past – deep into the past. To analyse the recent past (The Soviet experiences of the 80s) is often a paradoxical project. In the repressed Soviet context it was easy to have a clear positive utopia and to be a dissident intellectual! But nowadays there is, according to many sociologists, only the concrete and individual utopia of money and surviving and the process of striving after it. It is not easy to form a utopia without its counter-reality: the world of shadow and alienation. There are some fascinating texts of mixed negative utopias: the apocalyptic ecological crises, the social contradictions exploding around them and the shadows of some sinister superpower serve to dramatise a real trauma, especially in Latvia.

**Surprisingly, the 'national' realism and Westernisation projects themselves represent distinctive and fertile means for the young writers on the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea. Here, we are able to read the tradition of small nations' realism:** The Finnish cautiousness in facing the problems of the risk society bring to mind the distressed condition of the Cold War. In Estonia young people are rushing towards the West and this 'realistic and objective line' subordinates all other values and contradictions along the way. Young writers in Latvia are somewhat ready and somewhat afraid of political conflicts but apocalyptic visions of ecological and social drama provide them with disturbing rhetorical material. Lithuanian young people have a talent for writing in an 'organic' genre, using a naturalistic narrative style to talk about clearing up the national and ecological crises, in which processes the society and sea are 'working together'.

At times this realism and motivating rhetoric of small nations is dissolving and disturbing the political imagination: sometimes the search for unified and harmonified spaces dominates future anticipation. **There is a certain ambivalence or turbulence in making good use of the contingency of the risk society and the disorder after the Wall.** 'Getting out' of the marginalising processes, international isolation or economic exclusion and anomic feelings is not always a cultivated or civilised project or solution. The profound transformation of the power components of two superpowers (in the Cold War period) into a world with one Western centre is present in the several texts. Sometimes this has meant the loss of many contingent playing resource and spaces (new regional identities) in political arenas.

Even if much of the rhetoric in the text corpus gathered from the eastern shores of the Baltic is confessing the new power relations and the "USA as the First", there is a lot of powerless turbulence full of "modernist", regressive and apocalyptic metaphors: Nostradamus lives on in the rhetoric of Russian youth. Two or three Russian students had some superpower conventions and they have nostalgic difficulties in reforming their rhetorical apparatus concerning power relations, components and moments. Difficulties between the people of the Baltic States and their Russian speaking minorities ignite this rhetoric of opposition.

## Sometimes Nation and History "Strike Back"

But the basic problem of the risk society and civilisation – the ecological crisis (as an issue for global law and as a possibility for establishing co-operation and a universal society) – is opening the minds of young Russian writers. They are aware of Russian responsibilities and programmes with rapid time tables not always hidden behind "our European or global and universal responsibility". Sometimes Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian writers still have their invisible authoritarian 'Russian' audiences listening in their classrooms. We could hear the rhetorical voices of "Finlandization" in the Finnish contemplation; sometimes we are trying to forget the tradition, not to actively analyse it away. In the West (in Denmark and Poland) young people are interpreting the Russia-Syndrome with the confrontational strategies, via antagonisms: "The danger is the instability of Russia." "It is impossible to understand the transformation of Russia; does it have to be the old empire, the Soviet Union or something like us?" Among the sad Western reflections we find a temporal/historical distance from the turbulent world of post-socialistic countries. The space is sometimes in "the back yard", there among the anarchisms of no-clear-self-discipline and positive and productive developmental options.

Some of the children of *homo sovieticus* are finding a clear form of synthesis between regressive and progressive drives through the hard historical reinterpretation of Baltic interventions made by Soviet troops. This is a reversible process for the hard historical discussion and viewpoints which have been transforming the political agenda of the Baltic States since their liberation: the first political steps in the process were historically dubious and speculative; they wanted to "explode" the historical "truths" written in Soviet Union concerning "German and Soviet deals and interventions" in the satellite countries. These are examples of the rhetorical arguments and solutions rendered more difficult to making good use of in the contingency of life after the Berlin Wall.

The elastic and mutant faces of territoriality do not mean that there are no collective, strict and naturalised political stigmas and borders around the Baltic Sea. Cultural, ethnic and previously disputed territories are 'safe societies' for some writers, providing necessary minimums and guarantees of political autonomy. Sometimes in this text corpus the nationalism (or some *gemeinschaf*) "strikes back" (Keränen 1998, 13) in the contexts of hectic globalism and social and economical competition, in the mutant world of cultures and business. 'Nationalism', 'community' and 'ethnicity' have a new, revitalised and legitimate position in political discourse. Community is not for a major part of youth a clear space for authoritarian or totalitarian youth cultures naturalising differences between people and looking for simple or violent solutions to social problems. It could rather be a pluralistic and changing point of view in the production of voluntary dialogue regarding European life. Security is a special aspect of politics, and it is possible to broaden this aspect of 'security' or discuss extended security by breaking up the traditional militant character of (Cold War) security policy (see esp. Huru 1998, 11-34).

## On the Other Side of Black-and-White!

Especially the voices from the three small Baltic States, Poland and Finland are speaking about communities establishing a new security through discursive landscapes, tourism, cultural activities, economic development and civic contacts. But it is not easy to discuss 'security' in the risk society without any 'secure' or firm standards! Revitalisation of enlightenment ideals and individual or institutional learning and increasing reflexivity (of 'second modern') are not undialectical processes. Global politics need its universal standards and policies too (Beck 1999). The popular debate regarding universal norms (or the need for universal norms) with the rhetoric of hope can be seen in several of our texts, and they are well suited to the teachers' horizon of expectations as well.

It is not easy to handle the different kinds of problems and 'bads' of risk society rising up simultaneously as the results of different historical periods and moments inside and outside of the societies experiencing them. It is not easy to discuss together, e.g., ecological risks, the rights of small nations and the unstable political apparatus of Russia. For the most part of young people around the Baltic Sea are aware of this. The political situation is constantly fluctuating and this process has an impact on ways the thematising political spaces and identities. Having grand narratives or positive utopias as opposed to varying situations and individual solutions are taken as signs of dogmatism or craziness. The major gods and peace movements have died! Modern scepticism is a presupposition of the multicultural solutions of risk society. In this future horizon, no one will have success with the clean hands. **The present scepticism written out school essay corpus is many-faced, often mutant, speculative and not black-and-white oriented, providing room for flexible solutions and compromises in political playing with the risks of the global era.**

Regarding the tones of national realistic and romantic voices, in little metaphors of getting out of the margins and sceptical awareness we could hear the powerful rhythm and reflection of fragmented youth from the East. But this rhetoric is not hopeless; it is a serious and self-limiting voice in these school essays rising up from the "moral infrastructure" – not from militancy and naturalised differentiation – inspired by "civic spirit" and a desire to build up "constitutional" system and open discursive landscapes needed here.

## Bauman and the Modern Prison of Globalism?

This is the promise of Eastern European young people; their rhetoric no longer reflects pure regressive and paternalistic solutions and their message for young people in the West is clear: "we will not be your colony or marginal zone for you to simply normalise and cultivate." In this context it is important to read Bauman's warnings in his famous book entitled "Globalization – The Human Consequences", but it is encouraging to read in the portion of this text corpus from the Baltic States that this warning is not part of present reality around the Baltic Sea and Northern Europe. **Bauman's conceptual and critical foresight is not correctly caught up the basic mutant and contingent tendencies and political spaces around the youth cultures reflected in the Baltic text corpus.**

Bauman speaks of the modern effects of imprisonment in the situation where we have global law and local order. As a part of global normalisation there are vehicles reminiscent of prison technolo-

gies and disciplines, such as 'confinement', 'rejection' and 'exclusion': "...prisons served as laboratories in which trends ubiquitously present (though in a somewhat more diluted form) in 'normal' life could be observed in their most condensed and most purified shape. (Dick Hebdidge's seminal study *Hiding in the Light* corroborates this guess). If this were correct, then the effect of 'prisonisation' and the widespread popularity of the strategy of 'rejecting the rejecters', with all its self-propelling capacity, would go a long way towards cracking the mysterious logic of the present-day law-and-order obsession; it would also go towards explaining the apparent success of the stratagem of substituting that obsession for serious attempts to face the challenge of the accruing existential insecurity. It may also help to understand why exemption from global freedoms tends to rebound in the fortification of localities. Rejection prompts the effort to circumscribe localities after the pattern of concentration camps. Rejection of the rejecters prompts the effort to transform the locality into a fortress. The two efforts reinforce each other's effects, and between themselves make sure that fragmentation and estrangement 'at the bottom' remain the twin siblings of globalization 'at the top' (Bauman 1998, 127).

## **'Doubt' – A Room for Dialogue and the Pacification of Conflict**

We have hope and the contingent space for political learning and solutions. Politics is alive, and we are able to politicise the maps and politicking with the maps. In the terms of Bauman we are able to notice that we are moving from the mapping space into the era of the spatialisation of maps. Here the Eastern partners need dialogue with Western youth. Although there are no common programmes written in the spirit of "national soldiers" or in terms of the collective peace movements, or especially for this reason, young people from the different shores of the Baltic Sea have common space and rooms for sceptical talk and future solutions – area to come and go many times with different kinds of intentions and steps. Doubt is a promise – a promise of the relativised boundaries; doubtful young people have ironic and janus-faced symbols, mutant space and cards in their back pockets. Irony and its unstable and mutant distances are always able to face another irony. Dogmatics are not here, anymore. They are in many ways the relics of the present.

**In the era of the risk society and mutant political identities and spaces of young people we could speak of the 'pacification of the conflict'. Only black-and-white thinkers of have clear categories for the enemy.** A thoroughly doubtful society, beset by productive self-doubt and therefore incapable of truth, cannot produce pictures of enemies: "...pacifism and doubt are elective affinities. Truth and military originate from one and the same conceptual box./...It allows a pacification of the conflict that reconciles both sides, conflict and peace, so much that the two extremes, paradise and war, are ruled out, or at least become very improbable. Anyone who doubts is also struggling against false certainty, against the dictatorships of non-ambiguity and of the either-or. He cannot go to barricades and will not do so either, since doubt produces self-doubt and cares for it like a father for his son./...Doubting, something that appeared as weakness and decay to cultures of faith and certainty, now becomes a virtue, the launching point for productivity, for self-limited development, to which everything larger than life and generally accepted is alien because it negates the ultimate standards of humankind: reservations, uncertainty and 'yes-but'" (Beck 1997, 169-171 and compare Ojakangas 1999).

**Carl Schmitt (1942) has problematised the significance of land, sea and air – as dividing factors between people and nation-states, and from the perspective of the use of space – in an interesting**

way. Land powers can remain stable and guard a monopoly on the use of their lands. To him historical breakthroughs also mean revolutions in the use of space, which often take on the features of global mutants, signifying a shift from land to sea and air. Division of maritime areas and airspaces is a political breakthrough, requiring metaphorical divisions of space and the relativising of state relations that they require. **In the light of these young people's essays, inspired by Schmitt, we can speak of risk-societal reflexiveness in relation to land sea and air, where virtual and imagined landscapes which continuously break national and other established borders spatialise maps.** Schmitt's political theory with clear enemies and the logic of "either-or" was correct picture for analyzing the 'land' and 'sea' bound politics of his own times. But school essay corpus analysed here is promising us the open future and the pacification of conflicts, an era of 'air' and 'virtual' – mutant and unstable speculation, reflection and political play.

## Notes

- 1 This characterisation of Giddens's theory is primarily based on the following basic works: Giddens 1975, 1984 and 1991. Giddens attaches hermeneutics and rhetoric to tradition specifically through his theory of action.
- 2 For an example of a noticeable contribution, see Paasi 1986, where social institutions and organisations in particular are responsible for producing identity and means of socialisation.
- 3 "...it is just a 'pooling in common of the meanings' lived by the largest number. One could in this respect, refer to the etymology of the term *discourse*: *discurrere*, meaning to run in several directions, and to do so in a disorganised, chaotic, and aleatory manner. The discourse of the media, in the likeness of the social that no longer has precise orientations or that no longer believes in tales of overarching reference, has no pre-established purposes, but instead haphazardly expresses the passions, affects, and sentiments lived day to day in immediate existence./ Looking at it more closely, there is nothing catastrophic in such a perspective, and it only accentuates the importance of the 'we', the prevalence of a 'being-togetherness' that has no other purpose than being together. This is another way of describing an aesthetic style that privileges the fact of feeling in common, and so of recognising oneself in the mean, meaning in the media that express such a common emotion. Thereby postmodernity forsakes a logic of presentation in order to enter into a logic of perception. So we are concerned with a style of commutability in general that is no longer egocentric but rather is situated in a 'common interlocutory context'" (Maffesoli 1996, p.64).
- 4 The major Finnish newspaper Helsingin Sanomat organised for the eighth and ninth grades of the Derzavin Lyceum to write about Finland's Winter War. The newspaper published 22 of these essays on its internet homepage: [www.helsinginsanomat.fi/kotimaa/](http://www.helsinginsanomat.fi/kotimaa/) 26.11.1999.
- 5 My warmest thanks for translating this source material and holding clarifying discussions as to its content with me go out to the following active persons: Anni Männistö (Petrozadovsk), Juha Järvinen (Warsaw), Krista Künnapuu (Helsinki, Tallinn), Danila Gangnuss (Helsinki, Riga) and Laima Cerniauskaite (Kauniainen, Klaipeda). Without their support in this project nothing would have come of it.
- 6 This interpretation is presented particularly in the following basic texts: Hodge-Kress 1988, Fairclough 1992, Palonen 1993, and regarding hermeneutics Gadamer 1986 and Wachterhauser 1986; cf. Paakkunainen 1991.
- 7 cf. Palonen's way of reading more broadly: 1993, 165-173. Regarding deictic structures, see Levinson 1983, esp. x-xii; Paakkunainen 1991 and Volmert 1989, 253-.
- 8 This distinctly Finnish projection of political literary styles is based on two basic dimensions: (1) a proximal vs. a non-proximal relationship with the audience, and (2) an emotionally negative vs. a argumentative analytical relationship with politics. The "pejorative style" is built on emotionally negative politics and a proximal relationship. "Cynical" also means a more negative emotional position, but with its audience nearly universal (approaching the non-proximal). The "critical" uses a non-proximal style to present factual argumentation concerning the issues. The "constructive" genre remains factual about



- things, but compared with the "critical" it stays in close proximity to the audience.
- 9 Strassoldo 1993, 5-8; and regarding the translation see esp. Eräsaari 1995, s.92-93.
- 10 cf. esp. Ulrich Beck's idea of the *Entörtlichung* of politics: 1986, 314.
- 11 concerning the background of this investigation and the terms chosen see Palonen 1993, 156-166. These terms have already been translated and edited for use in Baltic research as part of this researcher's work.
- 12 In the Finnish text corpus there were two essays inspired by dramatic international news and tourism, but these not-so-serious narratives were more naive and they were closer to the genres of cartoons and fairy tales. The essays were full of presuppositions against other cultures told in the form of tourists' jokes, and one pupil located the problem of English football hooligans in the Baltic archipelago.
- 13 For a large-scale problematisation of the Finnish 'national' institution of the school essay, the sublime of school writing, see Paakkunainen 1991, 64-121.
- 14 "Looking out my window I see the waves of the Baltic Sea lapping against the shore or, like at this moment, the whole bay covered with ice... landscapes have followed me throughout my life so far... Though at the moment I hope to get out of these surroundings as soon as possible... I have problems with my mother and our fights have been heard all the way down on the end of the dock... everything seen has left indelible tracks in my mind."
- 15 This name will indicate the particularistic and regional dialect emphasizing "our Finnish clean spirit".
- 16 Halonen, Tarja (1997) Finland's role in Promoting Stability in Northern Europe: (p. 33-34) "Hundreds of co-operation projects, ranging from business training, agriculture and the development of telecommunications to environmental protection, are being implemented on the regional and local levels. New useful contacts between individuals, companies. Local and regional administrations in the borders areas have emerged from this co-operation./ The issue of possible NATO enlargement is a challenge to our region. Any changes in security policy should be carried out in a way that strengthens security. They should not happen at the expense of others."
- 17 Perhaps the simultaneous life of multiple styles is best realised in the Polish text corpus (cf. the four basic styles described above). The risk society's discussion of and responsibility for impure distinctions functions most effectively precisely within the genre of realism, where it can take refuge in all of the basic styles, attaining unique and contradictory situations and moments of "round table" decision (i.e., within alternative networks of a certain breadth). (Cf., regarding staff and (joint) action: Perelman 1971, 293; regarding style: Paakkunainen 1991, 121-140 and Hernadi 1972.)
- 18 In the tradition of pure conservative interpretation (tradition as nature or fate) the whole concept of politics or explicated identity politics is thrown away or used in threatening and pejorative ways.
- 19 Cf. the metaphor in which Finland took Paavo Nurmi's and Hannes Kolehmainen's place in the world. Sports metaphors from politics can also mean situations in which diving into the event is not seen as work or a task, but rather as the challenge of many games and stages, where bluffing is in place.
- 20 Previously published essay material can be found on internet at: <http://www.helsinginsanommat.fi/uutisarkisto/19991126/koti/991126ko70.html>
- 21 The young people who have written the text corpus do not report their own social or economic situations in a fatalistic way – the narrator-self is not the power object of economics or older generations, but rather an active interpreter. In the end the question of citizenship is that of the young people's own experiences and identities of political "presence" also in conditions of economic shortage and among its mute constraints: according to their ability they take charge and publicise the economically regulated conditions, their relation to other areas of life (Appadurai's "landscapes") and control of one's own life. **This political experience is valuable of itself and unsurpassed in supporting political subjectivity, and citizenship in fact.** Only a few Latvian, Estonian and Finnish young people in this text corpus showed signs of being "losers," which I predicted in the research plan: "In principle people have legal autonomy, but it guarantees them little power, none in fact, in income distribution, decision making or controlling their own spaces and ecological environments. From a research perspective it is obvious that the significance of traditional political mobilisation and democracy remains thin and in many ways ambivalent for young people. Especially recipients of social support have been left politically in quite a 'wounded position, to be attended by professionals and paternalistic structures.' In the East these are often in the world of 'outsiders', entirely beyond public and other care, where shortages must be overcome in concrete ways specifically according to the self-help principle, and where playing with both social and political contingency has central significance (Cullpitt 1992, 3-9; and Rose 1966, 37). Market forces have taken over everywhere, and it is impossible to separate from the social sphere and national rights and

- participation... ...political subjectivity cannot be replaced by any European social networking, programmes against marginalisation or their evaluations as professionally performed. In these projects as well young people often remain the objects of autonomous and political actors or their own thoughts concerning the structure of citizenship are not heard. There is especially weak understanding in the world of the post-war generations and wage-earner mentalities, which have immortalised their own survival code, their 'economic miracle' and their status quo agreements. For them to discuss success in individual competition with a 'looser' of the risk society – whose failure is individualised and autonomised – is just as difficult as for 'a blind man to speak of colours' (Beck 1993)."
- 22 The author of this article was present as a Nordic youth researcher at the Baltic Sea Youth Conference event in Lübeck in June, 2000.
- 23 For many a market oriented lifestyle is not even possible and especially young people who keep an ironic distance tend to shout, "Why the heck do we always have to be flexible", and "forget about tomorrow." Or in losing old friends a sigh can be heard from the road to secular success, "Hast du Was, bist du was", which as a play on words can be re-phrased as, "Hast du nichts, bist du nichts" (Vogt 1997, 324). Some still want to fit in, but not without irony: "...unemployment has a lot to do with the West, but this cannot lead to whining. In any case one has to be quick. My parents have already retreated [moved in search of work, KP]. Where there's a will, there's a way!" (Paakkunainen 1998A, s. 130-31). These ironic excerpts, the existence of language games or Brechtian 'entfremdung' alienations already point to a utopia related to an anachronistic consciousness (Marcuse) and alternative societal space.
- 24 Cf. Hautala 1998, where she more practically but clearly speaks of the politically utopian aspects of the EU and other such organisations.
- 25 The Western ideology of speed, "Time is money" is presented in the essays, but it has not achieved hegemony: young people do not believe that "democracy is sacrificed for speed and time has become an area for expansion": that space must be replaced with time; geopolitics with chronopolitics (Baier 1990, s.23-51). Yet still changes in standard timetables, traditional space and cultural moments continuously threaten order and on-going, predictable identities. Ways of coping with and overcoming problems do not converge like mute constraints (Paakkunainen 1998A, 20-22). Identities are often there just for "some kind of assurance": The mother of an Estonian family is often reminded that now they live under capitalism, "not somewhere else", and a child can defend an alternative concept of humanity by saying, "Mom, who says that life has to be easy?" (*Helsingin Sanomat* 11.11.1998, C1: "Viron lapsiperheet asuvat köyhyydessä"[Children's families of Estonia live in poverty]).
- 26 Saukkonen (1996, 11-) outlines national identity on many levels, especially those of being, unity, distinction and continuation. Likewise "the people" can be understood on the basis of population, genealogy, culture and feelings nationality.
- 27 Poul Nyrup Rasmussen at the conference on Nordic co-operation, as reported in the *Helsingin Sanomat* of November 11, 1998, page A9.

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