

countries on both the national and regional levels. Dahl docs, however, devote significant parts of her analysis to explaining how the national and regional politics of the Nordic Baltic countries 'complicated' US foreign policy and altered the 'American perception of the strategic situation' of the region (pp. 46, 105). Dahl describes the various factors that played important roles in the relationship's evolution such as Sweden's 'silent partner'-status in NATO (pp. 27-32), Denmark's 'alternative majority' in the 1980s (pp. 42-6), and the RAND Corporation in the 1990s (pp. 70-81). She also offers insights into why the Nordic-Baltic region recently 'ascended' and will continue to ascend the ladder of United States' strategic concerns, citing a range of positions that include a speech by Jesse Helms (p. 89) on the 'revanchist ambitions' of Russia (p. 91).

The book is divided into two sections: the first examines the dynamics of the relationship through the prism of Containment strategy and the second through the lens of unipolarity. Both sections highlight several important military and political-economic transitions in 'US-Nordic-Baltic relations': for instance, when the 'Northern Flank... became the Northern Front' during the Cold War (p. 34, emphasis in original) and when 'the three Baltic countries had become a fully integrated part of the Nordic region in terms of security' during the late 1990s (pp. 58, 78). Security dilemmas and regional 'rivalries' also frame much of Dahl's historical account. The dilemmas that are discussed include how to provide security assistance to the Nordic-Baltic countries without provoking Russia and thus risking regional stability, while the rivalry between Denmark and Sweden for regional influence and ambition is a further theme that runs through both sections of the book.

The historical account is, however, marred by a couple of problems. The first set of problems consists of relatively minor issues related to editing. Sentences are sometimes lacking periods (p. 37) or commas are used as periods (p. 15). Such mistakes became so distracting that I caught inconsistencies that I would probably not catch such as when a 'forward slash' would be used in the phrase 'US-Nordic/Baltic relations' (p. 77) but a 'dash' ('US-Nordic-Baltic relations') on the very next page.

The next issue is more serious in that some descriptive narratives lacked footnotes or had very weak citations. For instance, there was no citation to support the likely claim that 'the other NATO allies' saw 'the Danish footnotes' as 'a severe break with the basic principles of solidarity and loyalty to the Washington Treaty' (p. 44). Furthermore, it was disconcerting to read that the following source was the foundation for an argument about why an artillery gun was returned to Sweden: 'According to a person present at the ceremony' (p. 74, footnote 176).

While the book should be considered a primer on the subject, it is not for the uninitiated. For example, while the book could be assigned to students, a professor would need to provide addendums and annexes to the book such as a list of the meaning of acronyms (for example, IFOR, SFOR, KFOR and ISAF), timelines for important Nordic-Baltic events and even a glossary of terms (for example, *Visegrad countries*).

Dahl's discussions on the regionalization of security, the 'gray zone', as well as the impacts of individuals such as Ron Asmus are informative to scholars wanting a concise presentation on how and why the region has become 'one of the most critical strategic areas of Europe' in American policy circles (p. 105). However, important

parts of the history presented are underdeveloped. For example, I would like to have known who the 'small number of individuals at the State and Defense Departments and the White House that took a personal interest in Baltic security' in the early 1990s were, and how they challenged the dominant American perception at the time that the Baltic states were 'simply *indefensible*' (p. 67, emphasis in original). In other words, I found myself wanting more explanation on specific issues that go to the heart of the book's title. I believe, at times, that the book is too concise for its own good.

Nevertheless, because there is a 'relatively short supply of scholarly studies in the field' (p. 16) of security in the Nordic-Baltic region, the book is recommended for scholars interested in the region's geopolitical history.

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Monumentaalne konflikt: mälu, poliitika ja identiteet tänapäeva Eestis

PILLE PETERSOO & MAREK TAMM (eds)
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The unfortunate upheavals over the relocation of a Soviet war memorial in central Tallinn in April 2007 provided a sobering wake-up call for those students of international relations who remained wedded to a liberal democratic vision of post-Cold War international politics. As this compelling book demonstrates, however, there are still analysts of intra-societal relations who believe that Russia's behavior towards neighboring countries with sizable Russian communities is somehow irrelevant when discussing the prospects for building functioning 'multicultural democracy' in the former Soviet space. The question of whether a society can be comprehensively analyzed and understood without much regard to its international environment is a staple methodological hurdle for all social science. This variation on the perennial 'agent-structure' problem in the study of the formation and transformation of collective identities is usually solved by clarifying one's analytical focus and limits at the outset: laying out one's reasons for preferring either the *intra-societal* or *international* level of analysis. This collection of articles and documents marks an opening of a potentially abundant well of literature on the politics of commemoration in the post-Soviet space. It ambitiously aims to contextualize the 'Bronze Soldier' crisis in the broader socio-political predicament of today's Estonia by providing a 'multi-perspective and interdisciplinary' (p. 11) analysis of the event. Yet, a key perspective in the investigation of the 'Bronze Soldier' case has been missed in the book, thus leading to a dangerously unbalanced account of this 'monumental conflict' in Estonia. Whilst providing an insightful and nuanced analysis of the intra-Estonian context of the 'Bronze Soldier' crisis with its 'monumental prologues' and 'afterthoughts' (for example, Siobhan Kattago's thick reading of the 'Bronze Soldier' monument against the backdrop of Norbert Elias' theory of the civilizing process, pp. 51-69), the general approach of the book remains isolated from the foreign- and

security-political background of the crisis, ignoring the role of Russia proper in the unfolding of the 'April events', as well as its impact on the overall memory politics of today's Estonia.

This critique applies to both the analytic and 'archival' parts of this collection. Besides turning a blind eye academically to the interplay of Estonia's sensitive geopolitical setting and its long-delayed 'memory work' on the legacy of World War II, the list of political statements and legal acts related to the 'Bronze crisis' as presented in the book does not include (although it would have benefited from) the relevant statements by Russian politicians along with the respective reactions of Estonia's Western partners on the very crisis.

After all, the 'Bronze Soldier' controversy was also an example of Russia meddling in the domestic politics of its former satellite. It marked an attempt to marginalize and isolate Estonia in Europe via a vicious propaganda campaign pointing to the alleged 'heroization' of Nazism and efforts to 'rewrite the history of World War II' in the country. By initiating economic sanctions and tolerating cyber attacks, calls for the replacement of the Estonian government, and attacks on the Estonian embassy in Moscow, Russia's leaders also sought to test the limits of the European Union and NATO's internal cohesion and tolerance. While one of the editors of the current work does emphasize – albeit only in an introductory interview – the role of Russia's policy towards the Russian minority in Estonia, this crucial aspect of the 'Bronze crisis' nevertheless goes virtually unnoticed in this book, with the exception of Karsten Brüggemann and Andres Kasekamp's article on the politics of history and the 'war of monuments' in Estonia (pp. 70–91). The latter authors rightly point to the difficulties stemming from Estonia's complex subaltern position in World War II in balancing its current 'memory work' between the multiple (and indeed often conflicting) pushes and pulls of Russia and the West. Importantly, they identify respect towards 'others' and (h)stories as a necessary precondition for the democratization of collective memory, as opposed to the 'sacralization' of a single orthodox version of past events (p. 87). Altogether, this contribution with its empathic understanding of the different players in Estonia's 'monumental conflicts' is perhaps the most comprehensive reading of the 'Bronze soldier' crisis in the volume and it would serve as a well-balanced introductory text for a reader unfamiliar with the issue.

A fascinating socio-historical overview of the development of Estonia's 'monumental memoryscape' against the backdrop of a dense excursion into the theoretical literature on collective memory is provided by Marek Tamm and Saale Halla in their opening chapter of the book (pp. 18–50). The discussion of different periods in Estonian monumental history (i.e. 'monumental legitimization' of the 1920s–1930s, 'monumental occupation' of the 1940s–1980s, and 'monumental restitution' since the 1990s) is illustrated with a good selection of relevant photographs. It is difficult to disagree with the authors' conclusion about the dubious benefit of the policy of 'monumental revanchism' (pp. 45–7). However, their resolute lack of empathy towards the efforts of 'memorial militants' ['Those who fight for the protection of our tragic experiences of the past will never allow us to get rid of them' (p. 47)] is nevertheless questionable, both from a theoretical and from a practical political point of view: on the one hand, it may be argued that certain 'memory work' and social mourning is a crucial element in the 'healing' of the collective self; on the

other hand, the public is likely to resent efforts by elites to coordinate this process of 'coming to terms with one's past' in a heavy and openly top-down manner.

Theoretically the most intriguing, if not also the most controversial account of the book, is offered by Aleksandr Astrov's analysis of the political–juridical structure of the 'Bronze crisis' against Carl Schmitt's infamous 'state of exception' (pp. 92–111). Arguably, the roots of the crisis lie in the Estonian state's decision of the early 1990s to 'leave out' its Russian-speaking population by 'including them under its jurisdiction via their exclusion from its juridical order by refusing them citizenship' (p. 107) (*sic!*). While the author's analytical model is intellectually intellectual, it would have benefited from a less selective consideration of the facts on the ground as well as from further regard to the broader international determinants of Estonia's current ethnopolitical setting.

The analytical part of the volume aptly concludes with Maaris Raudsepp's reflection on the 'April events' from the perspective of dialogical psychology (pp. 155–88). However, her sensible call for 'polyvocality, dialogue and social flexibility' (p. 169) runs up against the question of whether dialogue – in the commonsense and compromise-seeking understanding held by liberal democracies – is in fact possible under circumstances where one party has serious difficulties in coming to terms with historical facts that undermine the memonomical narrative constitutive of its glorifying self-image as a nation (i.e. Russia's predecessor's illegal occupation and annexation of the Baltic states).

Nonetheless, if only for its opening up of the scene for further academic and political dialogues on the complex interplay of memory, identity, and foreign and security policy in today's Estonia, this is an important and interesting book for a wide readership in social and cultural studies.

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