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Textanfang**Zusammenfassung****A Product of the Transition Pe****Interwar Experiences****A Future Region****The Contested Baltic Sea Area****Fußnoten****zur Startseite**

The Future of the Lost Future?

The Baltic Sea Area after the Transition Era

Marko Lehti

Zusammenfassung

Die Ostseeregion ist das Produkt einer Übergangszeit, das dazu diente, die Unsicherheiten während dieser Periode zu lösen. Diese Übergangszeit nähert sich langsam ihrem Ende, und eine neue internationale Ordnung zeichnet sich ab. Hat die Ostseeregion ein hinreichend starkes Image etabliert, um das Ende dieser Periode zu überstehen? Es steht in jedem Fall fest, dass die frühen Visionen von der Ostseeregion heute überholt sind. Die Region steht nicht mehr im Blickpunkt der Weltpolitik, sie ist vielmehr zu einer vertrauten Angelegenheit geworden, die weder große Sehnsüchte noch besondere Spannungen hervorruft. Dennoch wäre es falsch zu behaupten, die Ostseeregion sei im Verschwinden begriffen. Sie existiert weiterhin als Teil der networking society im Norden, wobei die involvierten Staaten deutlich weniger Interesse zeigen, die Region weiter zu entwickeln.

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Prediction is a difficult task in the field of social science; it is not possible to foresee the future as such. Assuming there are no imponderables – which is often not the case – one could extrapolate the previous development to arrive at a forecast. In order to predict what the BSA will look like in 2010, one must find the tools to construct the BSA of the future. In my opinion, history offers these tools. Studying the past provides the answer to questions such as “Why was the BSA conceived in the first place?” and “Why did the BSA become such a widely accepted spatial coordinate in the early 1990s?”. It is also possible to outline the ideal form of the BSA – how the future was imagined a decade ago– and then examine the direction taken by the development.

History also provides another example of Baltic Sea-based cooperation: that of the interwar period. The idea of a BSA was first introduced after World War I, leading to active cooperation among five Eastern Baltic states (Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland). This cooperation and the feeling of unity did fade after the mid-1920s, but the idea of the BSA had its supporters during the entire era. Hence, two narratives of the Baltics are available to predict the future of the BSA: that of the interwar and that of the early post-Cold War period.

A Product of the Transition Period

During the past 15 years, the image of the BSA has gained a well-established position in the spatial imagination of Northern Europe. More than a decade has passed since BSA-based cooperation began. Even

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as early as 1987/88 an initiative for a New Hansa was introduced in the German federal state of Schleswig-Holstein by the then Minister President, Björn Engholm.¹ Several alternative definitions for the idea of a BSA were proposed in a subsequent series of international conferences and seminars; the BSA became the potential vision for regionalization in Northern Europe. The year 1991, in which a group of Baltic Rim parliamentarians convened for the first time in Helsinki, saw the beginning of more institutionalized forms of cooperation. The Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the most prominent Baltic-wide organization, was founded in 1992, numerous other organizations followed during the next few years². The BSA as we know it today was created in the early 1990s.

All this activity and all these visions and dreams expressed a decade ago were responses to the greatest turning point in the history of our time: the collapse of the bipolar world. The Berlin Wall crumbled in 1989; the Soviet Union disintegrated a couple of years later. The breakdown of the old order was followed by a *formative moment* – an era of uncertainties.³ Previous self-evidences disappeared; the world became more unpredictable. A majority, particularly in the former West, perceived the blurring of the East/West divide as a threat, and attempted in different rhetorical ways to keep the former East alive as an image of the “other”. However, many also recognized that the world was becoming more flexible and that the new situation offered opportunities to shape one’s own brave visions. The ideas of a BSA obviously belong to the latter group. Therefore, I consider the BSA to be a *product of the transition period*.

Rhetoric on transition has become a regular discursive method to label the former East during the past decade and to preserve it as something still essentially different from the former West. Many observers are convinced that the transition era is now finally approaching its end and a new international order is emerging. The 11th September was in many ways a symbolic turning point; as Pertti Joenniemi argues in his article in the current volume, those terrorist attacks also affected the BSA. It is, in fact, more correct to state that the events of 9/11 accelerated the existing trends. The Baltic States achieved their long-term political goals when they were granted membership to the two symbolic ‘Western’ organizations – NATO and the EU. When these memberships will be finally realized next year, something will definitely have changed. Under the leadership of President Putin, Russia also intensified its proximity to the former West in recent years. Hence, there is no longer a security deficit among the Northern European states. Traditional security constellations are diminishing swiftly, but it remains unclear what the new premises will be.

In May 2004, the BSA will finally be transformed from a sea separated by the East/West divide (whether an Iron or a Silk Curtain) to an almost-inland lake of the EU, the uniformity of which is broken only by the Russian presence in the area: the problematic Kaliningrad region and St. Petersburg and its environs. Furthermore, the BSA will then be linked closely to the Euro-Atlantic space. These changes would certainly contribute to the visions of the future, where early dreams are fulfilled and old fears disappear. It is now propitious to investigate the role of the BSA in this new political environment.

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Interwar Experiences

Before analyzing current history, it is rewarding to recall and review the interwar years. On the one hand, the interwar years share striking similarities with the post-Cold War period; on the other hand, the eras are significantly different. The collapse of the Russian (Soviet) Empire and the appearance of the small sovereign Baltic States are characteristic of both turning points; a BSA was conceived during both formative moments as a vision for constructing a “brave new world”.

The BSA was first introduced and formulated as a political program in the aftermath of World War I. At least in Estonia and Latvia, the Baltic League was the dominating political vision in the early 1920s, which was later followed by the idea of Baltoscandia. The basis of this spatial thinking was an imagined space between Germany and Russia, including the Baltic States (with Finland) and the Scandinavian states. This space was perceived as a region of small and democratic nation-states. However, the plan envisaged combining these different states through several kinds of ties: joint organizations and regulations, a common currency, etc. At that time, however, the Scandinavians were not interested in cooperation with the Balts. Nonetheless, a unique form of regional cooperation emerged among the five eastern Baltic States: some 40 joint conferences were organized over a seven-year period. When this cooperation ended after the mid-1920s, however, the idea of a BSA was abandoned. It was revived briefly in the 1930s in academic discussions in the form of Baltoscandia – but without any political effects.⁴

If one cites the interwar period as a possible example for the current development, it is necessary to comprehend *why* at the time the BSA was essential and *why* it only lasted less than a decade. I would suggest that the problem of smallness made the BSA essential. Prior to the war, there was no experience of small nation-states in Europe (with the possible exception of the Balkans). Small states were not perceived as particularly viable entities. Before – and even during – the war, the Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians and even Finns would have been satisfied with an autonomous position within a federalized and democratic Russia; the step to full sovereignty was taken mainly because of the Bolshevik coup and the changes in the international situation. Before the war, the Baltic States were not even administrative units in the Empire (as they were in the Soviet Union). They had to commence the construction of their independence from scratch; they did not have political, legal or economic infrastructures of their own – no currency, no army, no law and not even any traditions of governance. At the same time, the three Baltic States were not recognized *de jure* until early 1921; hence, they were unable to partake in international cooperation or to sign international treaties. During this period of transition to full sovereignty, the Baltic group formed a community of solidarity, allowing all kinds of problems, either on security or on economic issues, to be solved jointly. “The power of a small nation is in its uniting with other small nations” was the Estonian expression of the dominant view in the early 1920s. The vision of a BSA was primarily functional and based on the similar fate and position of these lands in Europe. The so-called naturalizing argument,⁵ that of history or geography, was not widespread in the

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beginning; if history was mentioned at all, it was only current history. First later, in the 1930s, geography emerged as the main naturalizing argument for the BSA.⁶

Baltic cooperation already lost part of its significance when the Baltic States were recognized in 1921. The change in the international atmosphere until the mid-1920s effected an even more significant turn. The early years after the war were characterized by a certain degree of idealism and a readiness to create federations and leagues for securing peace; that also inferred a certain readiness to blur the limits of sovereignty for the sake of integration.⁷ By the mid-1920s, a new, more limited definition of sovereignty was established; now, the new nation-states became entities that were more exclusive. In international policy, different kinds of guarantee systems – such as that of the Locarno Pact – were planned and created to secure the existing *boundaries* of sovereign states. The idea of a Baltic pact was an attempt to adapt the BSA to this new world. Those efforts failed, however.

Another important reason for the waning of cooperation was that not everyone shared the idea and the mission. The Scandinavians had already refused to cooperate in 1920 and Finland remained throughout a reluctant Baltic partner and lost interest after the mid-1920s. Thus, the first experience of the BSA did not last beyond the end of the transition period – of which it had been the product. In returning to the beginning of the 21st century, the question that inevitably arises is: “Could the new BSA suffer the same fate, too?”

A Future Region

The new BSA was as much the product of the transition period as its predecessor and it was invented to resolve and conquer the uncertainties of the era. Does the BSA have a sufficiently strong and established image to survive the end of the transition era, or will the BSA become insignificant during the decade that follows? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to investigate why the BSA was required originally.

In 1989 and 1990, the general discussion on the content and possibilities of a BSA was launched all around the Baltic Rim. Then, the BSA was created as a *future region*. The question that must be asked is: “Why were the hopes for a new and better future channeled towards a BSA?” Prior to 1989, the experiences of the interwar years were long forgotten and the BSA was a non-existent unit for political co-operation. Thus, the BSA was a kind of blank page ready to be written on, but this does not explain why it was the BSA in particular, and not some other region, that was seen to be an essential construct of the new world.

According to my analysis, there were actually several needs to be satisfied, and the BSA fulfilled these requirements excellently.⁸ Firstly, to the Western mind, the disintegrating East appeared to pose different threats – from pollution and mafia-type crime to more abstract fears concerning the European order. Thus, the BSA was intended not only to supersede the old East/West division, but also to replace the Iron Curtain with a Silk Curtain. In addition, especially in the Scandinavian countries, there was a strong

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feeling of moral responsibility towards the Baltic States. Carl Bildt, in a speech in 1993, expressed the prevailing presentiment that Sweden had abandoned the Balts in the 1950s and that this should not happen again.⁹ Another side of this feeling of responsibility was the patronizing attitude of the Nordics towards the Balts, which has its roots deep in the Nordic self-image of being morally superior.¹⁰ A certain patronizing policy manifested itself clearly in the early phases of Baltic Sea cooperation, the original targets of which were selected by Scandinavian or German politicians. Part of the agenda of the First Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Baltic Sea States in Copenhagen in March 1992 was the idea of assisting the creation of new democratic institutions. The same rhetoric can be understood in terms of a Western mission to introduce a Western kind of democracy into the East, to standardize the BSA and, hence, to control a disintegrating East. The Baltic States can thus be described as a kind of 'Nordic Near Abroad'.¹¹ Apparently, the need to guide the Balts was a primary motive for founding the Council.

Furthermore, the fear of being marginalized in a new Europe was a key issue in the Nordic countries and in Northern Germany in the early 1990s. Then, Sweden and Finland had not become members of the EU. Moreover, a decade ago, the peoples in the North were initially frightened not only by the upheavals in the East but also by the deepening integration in the West and the rhetoric of the Europe of the regions.¹² The Nordic idea was so solidly anchored in the realities of the Cold War era that the collapse of the Soviet system and the emergence of sovereign States on the other side of the Baltic Sea not only affected the image of Eastern Europe but also shook the basis of the image of *Norden*.¹³ Therefore, there was a desperate need among the countries for a new region, one in which they could play a central role in the future Europe. The concept of a BSA appeared to satisfy this need. It was seen as a potential economic growth zone capable of challenging the established regions of Western Europe and, in particular, a region where the Swedes, Danes or Northern Germans – depending on who was doing the imagining – would be the most prominent nation in the region.

Furthermore, one must bear in mind that novel ideas were appealing in the midst of the change and that the new rhetoric about the Europe of the regions became such a novelty in the European North.¹⁴ All these various phenomena can be comprehended as different tactics to possess and manage the disintegrating East and to transform it from otherness to sameness.

The Contested Baltic Sea Area

Nowadays, a decade or more since the Baltic Sea-cooperation began, it is important to outline first the present guise of the BSA and determine how it corresponds to the early hopes and needs. Furthermore, the question arises as to whether these hopes and needs are still relevant. During the past few years, the image of the former East, in particular that of the Baltic States, has developed from that of a set of weak and unstable states to one of normal sovereign states – despite the fact that a relic of the 'Easternness' of the Baltics will undoubtedly dwell in the minds of the 'Western peoples'

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for a long time. Missionary aims in Baltic cooperation have already begun to dissipate: this was especially the case after the mid-1990s, when – as noted – the Baltic States established more clearly their position as normal sovereign powers.¹⁵ When the Baltic States eventually become EU and NATO members next year, I believe they will finally convince their neighbors of their adulthood as sovereign states. Therefore, the BSA is no longer required to control or even patronize the Baltic States that will be part of the same core of Europe. On the other hand, new regional initiatives such as the Northern Dimension Initiative are necessary to control and manage Europe beyond the future borders of the EU.

I am also genuinely convinced that Scandinavians, Finns or Northern Germans are no longer as fearful of their marginalization as they were a decade ago; they have now all found their place in the integrating Europe. The decade after the emergence of the new post-Cold War Europe was characterized as a kind of ‘hangover’, in which new identities and relations with the rest of Europe took shape. During the past few years, however, the Swedes and Danes in particular have obviously managed to re-evaluate their relation with Europe. The Nordic idea has not disappeared; the Swedes, for example, rediscovered themselves – as described by Lars Trägårdh – as ‘the most modern and most successful of nations’, only in new ways. The reluctant Europeanness characteristic to the Nordics is perceived not as a problem, but rather as part of Nordic self-esteem.¹⁶ I believe the need for alternative centers such as that of the BSA is no longer as urgent as it was. On the other hand, Nordic circumstances are no longer the same as they were before; there is now a greater openness towards the East. Even if the Nordics are not ready to take the Baltic States into the Nordic Council, the Balts have entered into various spheres of Nordic cooperation.¹⁷

The international order is also changing. At least at first sight, it appears as if modernity is hitting back; traditional actors – particularly the individual states – again dominate the development. The post-9/11 era has been characterized by the war against terrorism, the war of established sovereign states against a non-sovereign and non-territorial threat. In world politics, the remaining super power, the USA, dominates the scene in a more arrogant manner than a decade ago. At the same time, EU politics have emphasized the role of individual states and their conflicting interests more than regionalization, the blurring of boundaries and the development towards the European Federation. In the Baltic context Baltic Sea cooperation began as an initiative from below, but already the foundation of the CBSS in 1992 brought the control over the regionalization process back to the single states and thus took it away from the NGOs. The question arises as to whether there is any more need for this kind of a pilot region of new regionalism in the new international atmosphere.

Therefore, it seems that the BSA has already lost its position in the political forum, in the world of sovereign states. The BSA does not serve as an important argument in present-day European policy. This could change if the Balts and the Russians discover a new form of BSA. For them, however, the BSA has been hitherto more a functional rather than an identity-political issue.¹⁸ In the interwar years, the BSA was an Eastern Baltic initiative; in

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recent times, it has generally been a Western Baltic initiative; in the future, however, both fronts must contribute. The realization of EU and NATO membership next year may require the use of a Baltic Europe in order to emphasize one's own position and uniqueness. There is, however, little evidence thus far to suggest this. Even if the national identities of the Balts have changed, the BSA has not been used as a source for a new, more arrogant identity. Instead, the new identity is based more on the idea of successfully managing the transition era and the rapid adoption of an information society in the vein of 'old' Europe. The latter argument has also been characteristic of the Nordics in their re-evaluation of Nordicity. In the Estonian case, the Estonian Foreign Minister Kristina Ojuland coined the phrase of 'the tiny Tigers of Europe' in her speeches to describe the new image, a reference to the famous Asian Tigers of South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore.¹⁹ The recent debate concerning support for the military action in Iraq also clearly shows the difference between the candidate states who stood firmly behind the US-led bloc, and the Nordic states (excluding Denmark) and, in particular, Germany, who were more hesitant and argued for a peaceful solution.²⁰ Interests and needs still differ a lot – as it is also the case between the old and the new members of the EU – and it is rather unrealistic to believe that there would be a Baltic Sea-bloc in the EU in the future.

The BSA is obviously facing a period of change in the international atmosphere similar to the mid-1920s. Then, the BSA did not survive. Is Baltic cooperation waning in a manner similar to the 1920s? It is at least clear that the early vision of the BSA has not yet become outdated and that, even despite the drastic change in the international context, no new vision has been presented. These are not, however, merely the arguments for the disappearance of the BSA. It is also possible to find supporting evidence for the survival of the BSA. The comeback of modernity is still only apparent. Globalization, localization and integration within Europe are continuing and expanding processes.

The manner in which the natural existence of the Baltic Sea world is stated is fundamental to the survival of the BSA. To exist, its existence has to be justified. Different functional reasons – control of the disintegrating East, pollution, avoiding marginalization and so on – are important for explaining the necessity of Baltic Sea cooperation, but there has been only one clear argument for the *naturalness* of the BSA, and that has been based on history. The BSA, it was argued, was not a new region but rather something that was returning. However, explanations have differed as to what exactly it was that was returning. For the Northern Germans, it was the glorious days of the *Hansa*, when Lübeck was a leading town of the BSA, the Swedes recalled more the Viking era or their 17th-century Baltic Empire. During the Cold War years, the view of history was restricted within the limits of the existing state boundaries. It was only during the new formative moment that a country's own past could be seen in a context beyond its present boundaries.²¹ In the current narratives on the BSA, it is a question of extended national narratives recounted at a time when European dividing-lines and borders were blurring. Thus, the BSA was and is an identity issue, too, but Baltic identities are associated with national identities. After the transition period, is there still a need to narrate one's

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own nation into the BSA of the past? The boom of historical narration is certainly over, but, on the other hand, many of these narratives have continued their existence and found new expressions. The BSA has remained an important coordinate in new national narratives that can no longer be confined within the limits of current boundaries.

The main difference between the interwar and the post-Cold War years is, however, the level of institutionalization that has taken place in the 1990s.²² All the existing tens or hundreds of organizations and networks will, in my opinion, guarantee that the BSA will still exist in the year 2010 – the role and significance of the BSA in 2010 will be another question. Another major difference between the interwar and post-Cold War periods is the strong presence of civil society – the world of the NGOs – in cooperation. It was also present in the interwar years, but this forum currently still constitutes an expanding part of Baltic cooperation. The academic world offers an excellent example of this sphere.²³

Looking to the future, I believe the BSA will – or already has – become a ‘space of flows’. This term, used by Manuel Castells, outlines the difference between relations based on hierarchies and thus forming a ‘space of places’ and, on the other hand, those of networks, in which the relations are more or less between equals. According to Castells, the current world, based on the latest revolution of information technology and on the globalization of the economy, supports the emergence of a networking society.²⁴ It may nonetheless be possible that, even in the era of network societies, imagined geographical images are required to provide some framework for networking. If so, the BSA offers one established framework. It is quite impossible to forecast what meaning and reflections this existence of the space of flows will have, but it certainly will have some effect and it keeps the BSA alive and well beyond the political discourse. Europe is not returning to a modern era dominated only by sovereign states, but the processes of networking are continuing in several spheres of public life and they are blurring state boundaries. This development will accelerate when almost the entire BSA enters the EU. Most of its ventures – such as the newest Sixth Framework Program²⁵ – strongly support and guide networking. The BSA has already existed so long that its connections and ties offer an excellent ground for further networking.

The BSA is no longer in the spotlight of high politics. It has become a familiar issue, arousing neither great desires nor tensions. That is not to say, however, that the BSA has disappeared or is disappearing. It does continue to exist as part of the networking society of the North, but the states involved have lost much of their interest to develop and use the BSA. As a region, the BSA is a post-modern creation; it continues to exist very much beyond but not separate from the world of states. It also has characteristics of the modern era, however, since the foundation narrative of the BSA relies on national histories. This type of networking is not a novelty in the history of the BSA, though. In the pre-modern era, the BSA also offered a forum for several kinds of networks representing alternative forms to political spatiality.²⁶

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1 Männikkö, Päivi: "Periferiasta yhteistyön moottoriksi. Katsaus Schleswig-Holsteinin Itämeren-politiikkaan vuosina 1988 – 1995". In: M. Jokisipilä (ed.): *Ajankohta 2002. Poliittisen historian vuosikirja*. Turku 2002.

2 Lehti, Marko: "Possessing a Baltic Europe: Retold National Narratives in the European North". In: Idem and D.J. Smith (eds.): *Post-Cold War Identity-Politics. Northern and Baltic Experiences*. London 2003.

3 On the idea of the formative moment, see Ringmar, Erik: *Identity, Interest and Action. A Cultural Explanation of Sweden's Intervention in the Thirty Years War*. Cambridge 1996, 83 – 87.

4 For more about the Baltic cooperation in the 1920s, see Lehti, Marko: *A Baltic League as a Construct of the New Europe. Envisioning a Baltic Region and Small State Sovereignty in the Aftermath of the First World War*. Frankfurt a. M. 1999.

5 Naturalizing is the term used by Paasi, Antti: *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness: The Changing Geographies of the Finnish-Russian Border*. Chichester 1996, 35 – 36, 52; see also Neumann, Iver B.: "A Region-Building Approach to Northern Europe". In: *Review of International Studies*. 20 (1994), 58.

6 On the idea of Baltoscandia, see also Lehti, Marko: "Non-reciprocal Region-building. Baltoscandia as a National Coordinate for the Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians". In: *NORDEUROPAforum 2* (1998), 19 – 47. and Moisio, Sami: "Back to Baltoscandia? European Union and Geo-Conceptual Remaking of the European North". In: *Geopolitics*. 8 (2003) 1, 72 – 100.

7 Lehti, Marko: "The Baltic League and the Idea of Limited Sovereignty". In: *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*. 45 (1997) 3, 450 – 465.

8 I have analyzed the re-conception of the BSA elsewhere (see Lehti 2003, footnote 2). That study is the basis for this article. However, I intend not to stop at the end of the 1990s, but rather to examine also the state of the BSA at the beginning of the 21st century. The changes in the BSA have been more rapid than expected and it is essential to notice the most recent changes, i.e. the EU- and NATO-membership of the Baltic States.

9 Bildt, Carl: "Ruotsi ja Baltian maat". In: *Kanava*. 1 (1994)

10 On the roots and content of Nordic 'superiority', see Muział, Kazimierz: *Roots of the Scandinavian Model. Images of Progress in the Era of Modernisation*. Baden-Baden 2002.

11 Smith, David J.: "Nordic Near Abroad or New Northern Europe? Perspectives on Post-Cold War Regional Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Area". In: Lehti/Smith (eds.) 2003, footnote 2.

12 A good example is the seminar on the Europe of the regions organized by the Nordic Council on the 13th of November 1990. See in particular S. Jervell's presentation: "Norden i en ny europeisk arkitektur".

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In: *Parlamentarikernas roll i regionernas Europa. Rapport från Nordiska rådet's seminarium i Snekkersten 13 November 1990*. Malmö 1990, 32 – 46.

13 Wæver, Ole: "Nordic Nostalgia: Northern Europe after the Cold War". In: *International Affairs*. 68 (1992) 1, 77 – 102.

14 Wæver, Ole: "From Nordism to Baltism". In: S. Jervell (ed.): *The Baltic Sea Area. A Region in the Making*. Karlskrona 1992, 300.

15 Council of the Baltic Sea States: *The Action Programmes for Baltic Sea States Cooperation*. Kalmar 2nd – 3rd of July 1996. This program was set out as a basic document for Baltic Sea cooperation in the 5th Ministerial Session of the Council of the Baltic States. Here the change is already evident.

16 Trägårdh, Lars: "Sweden and the EU: welfare state nationalism and the spectre of 'Europe'". In: Lene Hansen and Ole Wæver (eds.): *European Integration and National Identity. The challenge of the Nordic states*. London and New York 2002, 173 – 174.

17 Jukarainen, Pirjo: "Norden is Dead – Long Live the Eastwards Faced Euro-North". In: *Cooperation and Conflict*. 34 (1999) 4.

18 Lehti 2003, footnote 2, 38 - 41; see also Raik, Kristi: "Estonian perspectives on the Northern Dimension". In: H. Haukkala (ed.): *Dynamic Aspects of the Northern Dimension*. Turku 1999.

19 Ojuland, Kristina: "Tiny Tigers will always be Tigers". Speech held in Berlin the 15th/16th of November 2002 and Ojuland, Kristina: "An EU of 25 and Estonia's role in it". Speech held in Brussels, the 23rd of October 2002. In: </www.vm.ee/eng/kat_140/arhiiv/-kuup_2002> on the 12th of December 2002.

20 Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania along with Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia signed in the beginning of February 2003 the "Declaration of Vilnius" where they gave full support to the US Iraq policy. See, for example, the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Homepage <www.vm.ee/eng/kat_39/3427.html#V10>.

21 Hackmann, Jörg: "Not only Hansa. Images of History in the Baltic Sea Region". In: *Mare Balticum* 1996; see also idem: "Past Politics in North-Eastern Europe: The Role of History in Post-Cold War Identity Politics". In: Lehti/Smith 2003, footnote 2.

22 See, for example: Suominen, Terhi, Esko Antola and Hiski Haukkala: *Networks in the Baltic Sea Region*. Turku 2000.

23 Excellent examples are the Baltic Sea School and the Berlin BalticSeaNet networks coordinated by the Humboldt-University (Berlin).

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