THE BALTIC CONFIGURATION:
THE ROLE OF THE BALTIC ENTENTE IN THE MENTAL MAPPING OF THE ESTONIA, LATVIA & LITHUANIA, 1934-1940

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ABSTRACT

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are customarily grouped together as distinct region, routinely referred to as the 'Baltic States'. These three republics were independent during the interwar period (1918-1940), though they were occupied by the Soviet Union subsequent to the Second World War. The prevailing scholarly consensus is that this widespread popular perception is a result of their collaborative national movements for the reestablishment of their national sovereignty during the Soviet period; particularly during the 1980s and early 1990s.

Based upon the related theoretical foundations of Mental Mapping and Constructivism as practiced within International Relations theory, this thesis explores the contribution of the Baltic Entente (1934-1940) to the development of the idea of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania constituting the 'Baltic States'. The Baltic Entente was the first legislated trilateral cooperative initiative between the three states; essentially endeavouring to unify foreign policy and internal legislature of the three states. Utilising the theoretical approaches of Mental Mapping and Constructivism, the rhetoric and discourse of the eleven diplomatic conferences of the Baltic Entente are analysed. The purpose of this exercise is to determine whether or not the notion of the 'Baltic States', at a governmental level, existed prior to the Second World War.

The findings of this enquiry suggest that the idea of such a concept was present during the interwar period. This suggests that the development of the

notion of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania constituting a particular region was not solely the result of the Soviet occupation of the three republics.

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INTRODUCTION: MENTAL GEOGRAPHY & THE 'BALTIC STATES'

Regions are not naturally occurring phenomena. Like nation-states they are socially constructed concepts devised in order to make sense of the world in which we live. This activity, whether conscious or unconscious, is commonly referred to as mental mapping; resulting in mental geographies of how people, individually or collectively, conceive society and the surrounding world. The idea that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania constitute a distinct region, collectively known as the 'Baltic States', is such an example of the conscious construction of a mental geography.[1]

Broadly speaking, a mental geography is an imaginary diagram which is used by individuals or collectives to mentally map the world in which they live. Early studies into mental mapping were typically produced by means of the aggregation of a quantity of hand-drawn maps by a number of individuals; however, mental mapping can also be performed through utilising speech acts and textual sources. With the latter in mind, this thesis will examine the contribution of the political initiative known as the Baltic Entente (1934-1940) – the first coordinated political initiative of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania that was legislated – to the mental mapping of the 'Baltic States' employing the theoretical approach of Constructivism as found within International Relations.

Constructivism offers a theoretical and methodological tool for the excavation of mental geographies from the past through the hermeneutic analysis of textual sources where their cartographic counterparts are absent. Mindaugas Jurkynas, in his research

[1]Pärtel Piirimäe, 'The Idea of "Yule Land": Baltic Provinces or a Common Nordic Space? On the Formation of Estonian Mental Geographies', *Baltic Worlds*, Vol. 4, № 4 (2011), p. 36.

into notions of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian unity, or as he terms it 'Baltic brotherhood', has utilised such a theoretical and methodological approach which shall be discussed in greater detail in the subsequent chapter.[2] More specifically, in the third chapter, the Baltic Entente initiative will be examined for its contribution to the mental mapping of the 'Baltic States' through official rhetoric and discourse. With regard to what 'official' rhetoric and discourse denotes, it precisely means the textual remnants of the eleven conferences of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian foreign ministries during the six years of activity of the Baltic Entente initiative. The analysis is further informed by discourses of sovereignty, most notably the work of Marko Lehti.[3] As Eero Medijainen has remarked, greater emphasis is placed on the issue of sovereignty in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuanian than in other localities.[4]

The Baltic Entente represented a new phase in the history of the republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, as it was the first formal trilateral political agreement between the three states. As such, it is somewhat surprising to find that there is a dearth of scholarship on this historic episode. Bronius Kazlauskas' *L'Entente Baltique* was the first treatment of the Baltic Entente initiative.[5] The publication offers a comprehensive background of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian history, followed by an examination of the various region building projects which appeared concerning the latter named states

[2] Mindaugas Jurkynas, 'Brotherhood Reconsidered: Region-Building in the Baltics', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. 35, № 1 (2004), pp. 1-31; Mindaugas Jurkynas, *How Deep is Your Love? The Baltic Brotherhood Re-Examined* (Vilnius: Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius University, 2007).
[3] Marko Lehti, *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 am Main, Berlin, Bern, New York, Paris & Vienna: Peter Lang, 1999);Marko Lehti, 'The Baltic League and the Idea of Limited Sovereignty', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, NeueFolge, Bd. 45, H. 3 (1997), pp. 450-465.
[4] Eero Medijainen, 'The Baltic Question in the Twentieth Century: Historiographic Aspects', in James S. Amelang& Siegfried Beer (eds.), *Public Power in Europe: Studies in Historical Transformations* (Pisa: Edizioni Plus – Pisa University Press, 2006), p. 116.
[5] Bronius Kazlauskas, *L'Entente Baltique* (Paris: Librairie du Recueil Sirey, 1939).

during the first decades of the twentieth century. Kazlauskas analyses the nine Baltic Entente conferences that took place between 1934 and 1939. Although there were eleven conferences in total, Kazlauskas' *L'Entente Baltique* was published in 1939, before the eleventh conference in 1940, and was presumably being written whilst the tenth was taking place. A revised and updated edition of this work was published in 1976, entitled *The Baltic Nations: The Quest for Regional Integration and Political Unity*, with Kazlauskas adopting the contracted name of Bronis J. Kaslas; used pursuing an academic career in the United States following the Second World War.[6] On the whole, Kazlauskas was well disposed towards the Baltic Entente initiative, viewing their endeavours in a favourable and optimistic light. Nevertheless, the updated 1976 edition, although including an enquiry into what happened in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania between 1939-1941, does not include the tenth and eleventh conference.

The latter led Edgar Anderson to remark that the tenth and eleventh conferences "have been overlooked by scholars studying the Baltic Entente."[7] This utterance would appear to be directed at Kazlauskas' work as between the latter's 1976 publication and Anderson's 1978 'The Baltic Entente: Phantom or Reality?' there was no dedicated treatment of the political initiative.[8] Nevertheless, Anderson is somewhat more critical of the Baltic Entente, viewing it as a link in a chain of twenty wasted years wherein Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania may have developed an effective level of cooperation. 'Phantom or Reality?' is a succinct work, merely surveying the general trends throughout the period of

[6]Bronis J. Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations: The Quest for Regional Integration and Political Liberty* (Pittston, PA: Euramerica Press, 1976).
[7] Edgar Anderson, 'The Baltic Entente, 1914-1940: Its Strength & Weakness', in John Hiden & Aleksander Loit (eds.), *The Baltic States in International Relations between the Two Wars*, Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia, 3 (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 1988), p. 92.
[8] Edgar Anderson, 'The Baltic Entente: Phantom or Reality?', in V. Stanley Vardys & Romauld J. Misiunas (eds.), *The Baltic States in Peace and War* (University Park, PA & London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978), pp. 126-135, notes: 217-219.

the initiative. However, ten years later, much like Kazlauskas, Anderson provides an expanded account of this work in the form of 'The Baltic Entente 1914-1940: Its Strength and Weakness'.[9] Anderson's lamenting of the lost possibilities of the Baltic Entente survives in this work, however, for the first time an account of all eleven conferences is provided. The account is condensed though nevertheless comprehensive; moreover, appraisal of primary sources shatters the amiable image of endeavours of the Baltic Entente initiative expounded by Kazlauskas.

The most recent dedicated study of the Baltic Entente was produced by the Latvian Institute of International Affairs, written by Inesis Feldmanis and Aivars Stranga, in the form a concise manuscript entitled *The Destiny of the Baltic Entente, 1934-1940*.[10] Like the abovementioned works, Feldmanis and Stranga examine the circumstances that led to the establishment of the Baltic Entente, however, unlike the previous chronological studies they adopt a thematic approach. A great deal of attention is paid by Feldmanis and Stranga to the policies of Europe's major powers and the diverging foreign policies of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. They adopt a pessimistic view of the trilateral endeavour, as Anderson did; branding it as a cooperative endeavour that only existed on paper.

As a footnote, all of these authors use an inaccurate vocabulary in narrating the histories of these three states during this time period. Moreover, inaccurate vocabularies abound amongst scholars of the field of 'Baltic Studies' in general. The problem is use of the term 'Baltic States' to collectively designate the three states. As Andres Kasekamp has expressed, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania "are not the Baltic States with a capital 'S',

[9] Anderson, 'Strength & Weakness', pp. 79-99.
[10] Inesis Feldmanis & Aivars Stranga, *The Destiny of the Baltic Entente, 1934-1940* (Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 1994).

as in the United States".[11] The situation becomes more complicated when considering orthographic conventions. Kristian Gerner has commented on the problematic nature of the distinction between the terms 'Baltic States' and 'Baltic states', noting that "as they have been traditionally used, represent two different concepts, in terms of historical, empirical semantics, rather than lexicographic definitions. The first term denotes Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania" whilst the "second could theoretically denote the states that border on the Baltic Sea".[12] Furthermore, conventions for the capitalisation of the term have been shifting in English language usage; as such many terms traditionally written in uppercase are now lowercase, i.e. what used to be denoted by the term 'Baltic States' is increasingly designated as the 'Baltic states'.[13] Nevertheless, discussions of capitalisation conventions do not address the problem of the retroactive usage of the designation. In other words, the term 'Baltic States' – or for that matter 'Baltic states' – is employed as a narrative tool before there was even the perception that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania formed a coherent political unit. This, as is demonstrated later in this enquiry, is a prominent example of the mental mapping of a perceived region, which once it has fallen into popular usage, as in the instance of the 'Baltic States', is difficult to circumvent when discussing that geographical locality.

As David Weberman has remarked, it is incontrovertible that "descriptions of past historical events will and must always be reconceived not just because of the unearthing of new documents or the changing interests of the historian but because of the peculiar

[11] Andres Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. viii.
[12] Kristian Gerner, 'The Baltic States – How Many?: A Story of a Historical Coincidence', *Baltic Worlds*, Vol. 4, № 4 (2011), p. 52.
[13] Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, p. 54.
For the purpose of convenience, this work will exploit this discrepancy of capitalisation distinctions in the following manner: 'Baltic States' shall be employed when discussing instances of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania being perceived as a coherent political entity. In most instances however, for reasons that will presently become apparent, the long-handed formulation of 'Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania' will be used.

narrative structure of historical understanding."[14] The same can be said for the names by which we designate episodes and entities. For example it is well-know that the term 'Byzantine Empire' was a later ascription of historians to the eastern branch of the Roman Empire. A similar kind of affair has occurred in relation to the republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania: the convention of retroactively designating them the 'Baltic States'. This retroactive naming of the three states is a type of neologism, comparable to a retronym, wherein a new name is ascribed to an object or concept to distinguish it from its original or later version, typically through the introduction or use of an adjective. The concept in this case is that the republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania constitute a particular region with a discernible collective identity; the adjective is 'Baltic'. This raises the question of what exactly is 'Baltic'.

'Baltic' principally has four distinct yet intersecting meanings: geographic, political, linguistic/philological and ethnic.[15] The geographical variant directly stems from the Baltic Sea and is presumed to have been the primary occurrence of the usage of the word. There are two prevalent theories regarding the origin of the word itself, one is easily refuted whilst the other has been shrouded by the passing of time. The first, as Endre Bojtár describes it, is "a rather widespread but erroneous belief the term *mare Balticum*," or rather 'Baltic Sea' is derived directly from the Latvian and Lithuanian words for 'white'; *Balts* and *Baltas*, respectively.[16] Bojtár convincingly argues that the present day terminology of Latvians and Lithuanians for the Baltic Sea, *Baltijas jūra* and

[14] David Weberman, 'The Nonfixity of the Historical Past', *The Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. 50, № 4 (1997), pp. 749-750.
[15] For a thorough discussion of the four distinctions of the term 'Baltic' in the English language see Endre Bojtár, *Foreword to the Past: A Cultural History of the Baltic People* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1999), Ch. 2, 'The Origins and Meaning of the Term 'Baltic', pp. 6-12.
[16] Ibid, p. 6; Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, p. viii.

Baltijos jūra respectively, are late-learned foreign borrowings from foreign languages. He achieves this through a discussion of the pre-twentieth century naming conventions of inhabitants of the Baltic Sea's littoral in respect of their geographic proximity to it, i.e. East Sea, West Sea, etc.[17] The second theory is that the word 'Baltic' is attributed to a linguistic invention of the eleventh century chronicler Adam of Bremen. In this theory, the geographic distinction for the Baltic Sea is assumed to be derived by the chronicler from the Danish word *bælte* (belt), an early loanword from the Latin *balteus*, conjured up in order to describe the body of water stretching across the land as though it were a belt.[18]

Although the geographical term 'Baltic Sea' was somewhat suffused, it gradually came to be widely used, particularly in the second half of the nineteenth century when German nobles in Livonia began to identify themselves as *baltische*; heralding the word's acquisition of political connotations.[19] Simultaneously, the term 'Baltic' was utilised in philological and linguistic studies, when the German scholar Georg H. F. Nesselmann (1811-1891) introduced it in his work entitled *Die Sprache der alten Preussen in ihren Überresten erläutert* (Berlin: G Reimer, 1845) to designate a distinct branch of the so-called Indo European family of languages, of which Latvian and Lithuanian are the principal survivors. Nevertheless, Bojtár notes that it took a while for Nesselmann's

[17] Bojtár, *Foreword to the Past*, pp. 6-7, *n*. 3. See also Jörg Hackmann & Robert Schweitzer, 'Introduction: North Eastern Europe as a Historical Region', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. 33, № 4 (2002), p. 362; Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, p. viii.
As a point of note, the Finns commonly referred to the Baltic Sea as the 'East Sea' despite it being located on their west. The general consensus as to this curiosity is that it is accounted for by the period of Swedish hegemony over the Finns. The Latvians called it the 'Great Sea' in contrast to the 'Little Sea', e.g. the Gulf of Riga. In turn, Lithuanians appear to have referred to the Baltic Sea as both the 'Palanga Sea' and the 'Žemaitian Sea'; the former a town and the latter (Žemaitia) a region in Lithuania.
[18] Bojtár, *Foreword to the Past*, p. 9; Karsten Brüggemann, 'Leaving the 'Baltic' States and 'Welcome to Estonia': Re-regionalising Estonian Identity', *European Review of History – Revue européenne d'Histoire*, Vol. 10, № 2 (2003), p. 349; Hackmann & Schweitzer, 'North Eastern Europe as a Historical Region', p. 362; Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, p. viii; Kevin O'Connor, *The History of the Baltic States* (Greenwood Press, 2003), p. 1.
[19] Piirimäe, 'The Idea of "Yule Land"', p. 38.

innovation to be adopted and the earlier convention of designating all of the languages of this branch as either Latvian or Lithuanian survived into the early twentieth century.[20]

Up until the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, the political nuance of the term 'Baltic' signified Baltic Germans (*Deutschbalten*), excluding all other inhabitants of the region. During the aforementioned peace negotiations, 'Baltic' gained a contrasting political meaning, denoting the republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and their inhabitants.[21] At times, throughout the 1920s and 1930s, the term also indicated Finland and Poland. This alternate political connotation of the earlier twentieth century supplanted the former usage, although, following the Second World War, the association with Finland and Poland was discarded. The latter in the present day represents a nearly forgotten widespread mental geography of the interwar period.

Finally, the so-called ethnic sense of the term is perhaps the most fluid, acquiring the meaning of one of the three previously described meanings depending on the context. For example – in terms Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians – in a linguistic sense, 'Baltic' designates Latvians and Lithuanians. Meanwhile, in a particular historic usage it denotes Estonians and Latvians as the former inhabitants of Imperial Russia's Baltic Provinces of Estland, Livland and Kurland, and in another, e.g. before the emergence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as independent republics in the early twentieth century, it indicates Baltic Germans.[22] In the present day, a geo-political variant of the so-called

[20] Bojtár, *Foreword to the Past*, pp. 10-11; Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, p. xi.
[21] Piirimäe, 'The Idea of "Yule Land"', p. 38.
[22] Ibid. As Karsten Brüggemann observes, and to complicate matters, the term 'Baltic' has its own connotations peculiar to the German cultural sphere, although they are not focal within this enquiry. See Brüggemann, 'Leaving the 'Baltic' States and 'Welcome to Estonia'', p. 350; Hackmann & Schweitzer, 'North Eastern Europe as a Historical Region', p. 362; Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, p. xi; Atis Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity: Chimera or Reality?', in Atis Lejiņš & Žaneta Ozoliņa (eds.), *Small States in a Turbulent Environment: The Baltic Perspective* (Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 1997), p.152. Similarly, the Russophone term *pribaltika* has its own particular nuances historical meanings.

ethnic sense of the term is dominant in everyday usage. 'Baltic' and its various synonyms typically indicate those things which are of or related to the republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. For example, Baltic peoples, languages, states, etc., refer to all three of the latter nations.

The term 'Baltic States' is inaccurate for denoting Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania during the early interwar period. The history of the three states from 1918 until 1934is elucidated in the second chapter, demonstrating that the use of the term 'Baltic States' to denote Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania during this period is inaccurate due to the proliferation of possible 'Baltic' configurations. At this point it will suffice to say that in 1918 three separate republics – Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – emerged as independent states from the ruins of the Russian Empire. As Kasekamp notes, "[i]t was not preordained that the three countries would today be commonly known as the Baltic states."[23] Although there are a number of precedents, such as the coordinating of their positions at the Paris Peace Conference and a joint appeal to the League of Nations for *de jure* recognition in 1919, and an (unobserved) agreement to embark jointly in peace negotiations with Soviet Russia the following year, there was no formal political trilateral agreement between the three states until 1934.[24] The latter agreement was the *Treaty of Good Understanding and Co-operation* of 12th September 1934, which inaugurated the so-called Baltic Entente, ushering in a new phase in the history of the relationship between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.[25] Nevertheless, even at this historic juncture in

Nevertheless, the contemporary usage of the term 'Baltic States' in all languages is analogous with that of the Anglophone world. Furthermore, in all languages the term is retroactively employed in the same manner as a narrative tool.

[23]Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, p. viii.

[24] Jurkynas, 'Brotherhood Reconsidered', pp. 6-7.

[25] Edgar Anderson, 'Toward the Baltic Union, 1927-1934', *Lituanus*, Vol. 13, № 1 (1967), p. 26.

the three states' histories it is difficult to develop a codified vocabulary. Throughout the interwar period the designation of a state as 'Baltic' fluctuated, at times incorporating Finland and Poland.

Whilst this phenomenon of retroactive use of the expression 'Baltic States' to denote the republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania is not the central issue of this research, it is inherently related to the issue of the mental mapping of the eastern littoral of the Baltic Sea and perceptions of commonality between the three nations. The development of this perception is traced throughout the thesis, the final analysis of which will be presented alongside that of the contribution of the Baltic Entente initiative to the mental mapping of the Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Moreover, the vocabulary utilised within the narrative of this thesis aims to contend with this phenomenon of retroactive naming, in respect of the term 'Baltic States'. For the most part, this simply entails the long-handed use of 'Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania', in substitution for the 'Baltic States', 'Baltic states', or "the lazy shorthand 'Baltics', patterned after the 'Balkans'."[26]

In examining the contribution of the Baltic Entente initiative to the early mental mapping of the 'Baltic States' this enquiry seeks to address the prevailing academic consensus that these three states came to be perceived as a distinct entity subsequent to

[26]Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, p. viii.
Within this thesis the order in which the three states are written is consistently alphabetically, when used to substitute the 'Baltic States', ascribing no particular importance to any of them. To date, there is a perceivable *tendency* within written works, particularly by Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians, to present the name of the state they are affiliated with first. This is not a matter of concern within this thesis, *per se*; however, the order in which the states are written is notable. For example, on the one hand, Estonians appear to gravitate towards naming them from north to south (Estonia-Latvia-Lithuania), coincidently, in alphabetical order. On the other hand, Lithuanians tend to opt for listing the states from south to north (Lithuania-Latvia-Estonia); each presenting their own state first. The order in which the three states are written in texts, particularly by indigenous and émigré individuals, is hitherto uncharted scholarly territory which may yield much information on the relationships and perceptions between the three nations. Latvia is most noteworthy in this matter, sandwiched between Estonia and Lithuania; sharing a common medieval history with the former northern neighbour and apparent linguistic and so-called ethnic affinity with the latter southern neighbour.

the conclusion of the Second World War, during the Soviet period. Furthermore, by utilising the theoretical and methodological tools of Constructivism, as found within International Relations theory, it is hoped that this enquiry will demonstrate the potential of using such an approach to reconstruct other past mental geographies.

CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: DECONSTRUCTING THE 'BALTIC' REGION

This enquiry into the concept of the 'Baltic States' rests upon two related theoretical foundations. The first, dating from the 1960s, is mental mapping which concerns the imagining of geographical space. The second theoretical approach, which emerged somewhat later during the 1980s, is Constructivism, or the social construction of reality as practiced in the discipline of International Relations.

The usefulness of these theoretical approaches lies in their interpreting of diplomacy as it relates to the combining of three adjacent states that are often treated in literature under the single rubric of the 'Baltic States'. At first glance, there are many other states sharing the Baltic littoral: Denmark, Finland, Germany, Poland, Russia and Sweden. However, in the present day, it is only Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania that have been grouped together under the term 'Baltic'. Furthermore, as Kristian Gerner notes, "[b]efore World War I, only four states bordered on the Baltic Sea: Sweden, Russia, Germany, and Denmark – four states that are no [considered] 'Baltic' in the least."[27]This raises questions such as how did this discourse develop and what purpose did it serve those who employed it?

In order to examine the mental mapping of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the early twentieth century the political rhetoric and discourse of eleven conferences of the

[27] Kristian Gerner, 'The Baltic States – How Many?: A Story of a Historical Coincidence', *Baltic Worlds*, Vol. 4, № 4 (2011), p. 52.

Baltic Entente initiative will be analysed, forming the template of the present enquiry. In other words, the interactions of policy makers will be examined in terms of cooperative activities in order to view how the three states were mental mapped during the period. As this research began with the idea of testing the consensus that the idea of the 'Baltic States' emerged after the Soviet occupation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the textual remnants of the Baltic Entente initiative will be examined in order to address the extent to which Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were depicted as a unified and coherent area, or rather entity during the period.

1.1 MENTAL MAPPING THE FORMATIVE 'BALTIC STATES'

As a thorough discussion of the multifaceted debates concerning constructivism is beyond the scope of and superfluous this enquiry, this theoretical excavation will focus upon the principle tenets of the sociological theory of Constructivism and how they inform the Constructivist perspective of International Relations theory. The first studies into Mental Mapping were performed in the 1960s by Kevin Lynch, notably in his *The Image of the City*, a classic work of spatial perception.[28] Lynch demonstrated how people construct a sui-generis urban geography which gave rise to a short-lived scholarly movement that called for the 'mental mapping of the world'. It is not just the urban environment that can be mentally mapped, but also large expanses ranging from the smallest locality to the entire world and everything in between.[29]

[28] Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960).
[29] Pärtel Piirimäe, 'The Idea of "Yule Land": Baltic Provinces or a Common Nordic Space? On the Formation of Estonian Mental Geographies', *Baltic Worlds*, Vol. 4, № 4 (2011), p. 36.

This conventional type of mental mapping requires subjects to draw or colour maps, and in the course of constructing a mental map a number of subjects' cartographic depictions will contribute to the final map. Subjects' maps are usually analysed by simple aggregation and the final map elements are found which are common in the individual maps. As the researcher may need to remove certain uncommon elements and emphasise other, the resulting mental map is as much the product of the researcher's imagination as it is that of the subjects'.[30] However, as there are no such hand drawn maps from the interwar period concerning the 'Baltic States' an alternative method of analysing this locality during that temporal period must be sought.

Mental maps are traditionally thought of as imaginary diagrams which people use to navigate physical spaces. However, this thesis is prepared with the idea that mental maps can also be depicted through words. A simple example would be if one person gives another a set of directions from one point to another; they effectively create a mental map of the physical space that needs to be navigated. Therefore, 'mental mapping', and related terminology, is used within this thesis in a broader sense; to describe an individual or collective point-of-view of the world.

People do not only verbally create such basic (and often temporary) mental maps as a set of directions. With their words people can depict vast expanses in accordance with how they view the world, the places that they belong and the people that they align themselves with. Therefore, in the absence of hand-drawn maps of the interwar period, this investigation will utilise the words used by policy makers to mentally map their position within the world.

[30] For information on the construction of mental maps see Peter Gould & Rodney White, *Mental Maps* (London: Routledge, 2002), 'Appendix: The Construction of Mental Maps', pp. 157-164.

Lynch asserts that mental maps are constructed from three components that are manifest together in reality: identity, structure and meaning.[31] In the first component subjects are identified, rather in the sense of individuality as opposed to commonality. In the case of this enquiry the subjects are Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In the second discernable spatial patterns between the subjects and the observer(s) are identified. Finally, the third element is the ascribing of meaning by the observer(s) – either emotional or practical – of the individual subjects and their constructed mental patterns, in addition to their own relationship to these constructs.[32] In other words, individual subjects are linked together in some way either for practical or emotional reasons and the observer(s) views themselves as having some sort of relationship to this construction.

Fortunately, the locating of primary sources for this enterprise was made considerably easier by the publication of sources by the Lithuanian Institute of History in a volume entitled, *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika 1918-1940 metais* [The Idea and Practice of the Unity of the Baltic States, 1918-1940].[33] However, the publication of these sources within a single volume, whilst convenient, is not without its drawbacks. The textual sources of this volume are all reproduced in Lithuanian translation, without recourse for the reader to the original language of the documentation. As such, the publication lends itself better to the research of political history as particular aspects of linguistic and textual analysis are unable to be performed. Nevertheless, the Lithuanian translations are suitable for the task at hand as this research project is

[31] Lynch, *The Image of the City*, p. 8.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Zenonas Butkus, Česlovas Laurinavičius, Rimantas Miknys & VytasŽalys (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika 1918-1940 metais* [The Idea and Practice of the Unity of the Baltic States: 1918-1940] (Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos institutas, Vilniaus universitetas, 2008).

concerned principally with the holistic representation of the relationship between the three states as opposed to specific linguistic features of the material.

1.2 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY

The basis of the theory of knowledge known as social constructivism within sociology is that the social reality is created and maintained through the interaction of groups of individuals. Individuals perceive the realities of everyday life subjectively, which through communicating with others experiencing a similar reality, or rather intersubjective communication, develop a social construction of that reality. In other words, as Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann describe it, "a reality interpreted by men and subjectively meaningful to them as a coherent world."[34] Therefore, under the latter premise, a phenomenon which may appear natural or obvious is in actuality socially constructed, such as the notion, or mental geography of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania constituting a distinct region. Any such concept or notion appears where an overwhelming majority are in mutual agreement.

The latter notwithstanding, perceptions of a social reality, created through the agreement of members of that reality, appear non-arbitrary. Once such ideas take root amongst any given group of people, they are heuristically accommodated and reintegrate new realities of common perception, perpetually.[35] That is to say, the construction of new realities is a continuous process. As Berger and Luckmann assert, "new ideas may appear

[34] Peter L. Berger & Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York, NY: Anchor Books, 1967), p. 19.
[35] Mindaugas Jurkynas, *How Deep is Your Love? The Baltic Brotherhood Re-Examined* (Vilnius: Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius University, 2007), p. 36-41.

when the old ones no longer adequately explain the empirical phenomenon existing at hand."[36] Innately they develop as a means of convenience for the purpose of communication.

The subsequent chapter which deals with the various hypothetical configurations of a 'Baltic League' or union during the interwar years demonstrate that the construction and reconstruction of social reality is a structural adjustment to changing objective realities. Hectic diplomatic relations concerning the establishment of a Baltic alliance depicts that "the reality of everyday life seeks to integrate the problematic sector into what is already unproblematic", attempting to establish or re-establish social order.[37]

Nevertheless, there is a difference between socially constructed reality and objective reality, or rather, reality independent of mutual social agreement. John R. Searle determines this distinction as being between a physical reality which exists independently of human minds and one of a perceived social environment that exists because of it.[38] The social construction of reality begins with the appearance of a new phenomenon that requires accommodation in the multitude of notions already held. As such, reality is conceptualised, structured within temporal and spatial coordinates, within which even commonplace experiences captured by the human mind alter the reality of human life. Or, as Berger and Luckmann would have it, "the reality of everyday life is organized around the 'here' of my body and the 'now' of my present."[39] Whilst this is effectively the perception of a personal conceptualisation of everyday life there is a societal counterpart; the shared perception of a collective.

[36] Berger & Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, p. 200.
[37] Ibid, p. 38.
[38] John R. Searle, *The Social Construction of Reality* (New York, NY: Free Press, 1995), p. 2.
[39] Ibid, p. 36.

Humans live in a shared temporal world, which is experience and perceive differently. Nevertheless, in order to interact with one another humans need a means of communicating, i.e. verbal and written languages, made up of words with common meanings. Through the vehicle of language people are able to mutually adjust their experiences and perceptions into a form of communication. As words need to be selected from a limited (albeit considerable) bag of common words, terms and expressions, all communication is inherently intersubjective as it is not possible to determine if someone is successfully conveying what they mean to communicate precisely. Nonetheless, this is the route through which a concept is conceived and arrives into the communal pot of socially shared knowledge. Despite its perceivable (although altogether undeterminable) limitations, language, in its various forms, is all that humans have to communicate with, and as such have to be made the best of.

Ultimately, a consensus is required for any particular social fact, or reality to become one of common and widespread perception. Therefore the social order of things is a product of Man; wherein we find the link to the Constructivism of International Relations: as social order is a product of Man it is inherently a social construct. As Emanuel Adler asserts, "constructivism believes that International Relations consist primarily of social facts, which are only by human agreement."[40]

Social Constructivism in International Relations developed during the course of the 1980s. Recounting the process through which it developed will be omitted here as it does not serve any particular purpose for the enquiry. Mindaugas Jurkynas remarks that Constructivism emerged in International Relations theory as a "middle ground" between

[40] Emanuel Adler, 'Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics', *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 3, № 3 (1997), p. 323.

the Rationalist and Reflectivist paradigms that dominated the discipline; taking the best of both approaches.[41] Whilst Rationalists are concerned with material factors by which reality can be objectively analysed, Reflectivists hold that reality is intersubjective and therefore that it cannot be objectively analysed. Constructivists meanwhile share the epistemological understanding of the objective analysis of reality with Rationalism and the ontological notion of reality's intersubjectivity with Reflectivism.[42] Directly reflecting Searle's idea, outlined above, of the physical reality that exists independent of human minds and that of one which exists because of it. Nevertheless, Constructivists in the fields of International Relations are in accord with the idea that what is known about the reality in which we live derives predominantly from what society knows, or rather perceives of it. As Adler notes, the temporal world "is not entirely determined by physical reality and is socially emergent."[43]

With regard to a 'region', such as the 'Baltic States', from a Constructivist perspective they are inscribed into existence through acts of speech.[44] These speech acts are inevitably utilised as political tools, as territory is after all a considerable commodity. As such, the invention and reinvention of geography is a political act, and the study of regions conceptualises the employment of terminology, with particular focus on the 'We' and 'They' dichotomy. The latter therefore necessitates the hermeneutic approach of discourse analysis, as utilised by Jurkynas, in order to examine the intersubjective content of political speech acts and determine the presence of the notion of the 'Baltic States'.[45]

[41] Jurkynas, *How Deep is Your Love?*, pp. 25-26.
[42] Ibid, p. 26.
[43] Adler, 'Seizing the Middle Ground', p. 324.
[44] Iver B. Neumann, *Regions in International Relations Theory: the Case for a Region-Building Approach* (Oslo: NUPI, Research Report, 2002), p. 15.
[45] Jurkynas, *How Deep is Your Love?*, pp. 43-46.

CHAPTER II: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: THE ROAD TO THE BALTIC ENTENTE, 1918-1934

The republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were established in the chaotic wake of the First World War and the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917; declaring their independences during 1918 on 23rd February, 18th November, and 16th February, respectively. Edgar Anderson has remarked that they came "into this world as more or less unwanted children."[46]The victorious Entente powers had harboured hopes of an indivisible Russian state re-emerging from the turmoil of the Bolshevik Revolution.

This was only the beginning of the struggle for independence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in terms of garnering international recognition. This process began with the recognition of the three states by the Soviet Union in 1920 and was only resolved in 1921 for Estonia and Latvia, and 1922 for Lithuania with the *de jure* recognition of the Entente powers of Britain, France and the United States.[47]Although all three states had become members of the League of Nations in 1921, Lithuania's full recognition was delayed by territorial disputes with Poland which will be delineated presently.

In 1918, the newly declared states (without firmly established borders) were thrown directly into wars of independence against three common antagonists; namely the

[46]Edgar Anderson, 'Military Policies and Plans of the Baltic States on the Eve of World War II', *Lituanus*, Vol. 20, № 2 (1974), online at http://www.lituanus.org/1974/74_2_02.htm, retrieved 14th April 2011.
[47] Inesis Feldmanis & Aivars Stranga, *The Destiny of the Baltic Entente, 1934-1940* (Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 1994), pp. 12-13; Malbone W. Graham, 'The Recognition of Baltic States in the Configuration of American Diplomacy', in Jüri G. Poska (ed.) *Pro Baltica: Mélanges dédiés à Kaarel R. Pusta* (Stockholm: Publications du Comité des amis de K.R. Pusta, 1965), p. 145; Georg von Rauch, *The Baltic States: The Years of Independence, 1917-1940* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1974), pp. 81,103.

Bolsheviks, or rather Red Army, the German *Freikorps* and the White Army. Despite the adversities that assailed them, which included territorial disputes between the three fledgling states during the early years of independence, the three states succeeded in emerging from this maelstrom as recognised members of the international community of nations.[48] As three small states within the Versailles system of security which emerged after the First World War, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were propelled to seek out cooperative and federative projects in order to safeguard their sovereignty.[49] Alone any one of them did not have the potential military strength to ward of either of their two hulking neighbours – Weimar Germany and the Soviet Union – who had historically coveted their geographically strategic territories on the Baltic Sea's eastern littoral. As such, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were inclined to protect their hard-won independence through seeking out collaborative and federative projects with other states in an attempt to preserve their national sovereignty.

This chapter recounts the procession of federative projects concerning the eastern littoral of the Baltic Sea through which Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania passed during the early twentieth century. Overall there was a proliferation of hypothetical state-cluster configurations under consideration at any one time; illustrating, as Atis Lejiņš observes, that the idea of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania constituting the 'Baltic States' "was not something that could have been taken for granted."[50]

[48] Jānis Stradiņš, 'Beginnings of the Intellectual Entente of the Baltic States (1920-1935-1940)', *Scientific Journal of Riga Technical University*, Vol. 18 (2011), p. 11.
[49] See Feldmanis & Stranga, *The Destiny of the Baltic Entente*, Ch. 1 'The Baltic States and International Security in Europe after World War I', pp. 8-21.
[50] Atis Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity: Chimera or Reality?', in Atis Lejiņš & Žaneta Ozoliņa (eds.), *Small States in a Turbulent Environment: The Baltic Perspective* (Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 1997), p. 154.

Developments of the period within International Relations were complex and multifaceted. Therefore a comprehensive account of the involvement of all states in these proceedings lies outside of the range of this account. Only the events within International Relations concerning Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, individually or collectively, will be considered. With regard to other states, particularly major powers, references are made to them so far as they had a direct effect on the development of a state-cluster initiative within the region.[51]

Edgar Anderson has written a series of comprehensive accounts of the diplomatic conferences of various interstate initiatives for the purpose of forming an alliance system covering the eastern littoral of the Baltic Sea in a series of articles from the 1960s.[52] Similarly, Marko Lehti's seminal work, *A Baltic League as a Construct of the New Europe*, thoroughly examines the various endeavours to form a Baltic League between 1918 and 1927.[53] Bronius J. Kazlauskas also wrote cursory accounts of the proliferation of federative projects of the 1920s and early 1930s.[54] Rather than reproducing the vacillating developments which led to the establishment of the Baltic Entente, the focus

[51] The effect of major power politics upon the republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania during the interwar period has been a topic of much discussion in historical literature. References are made throughout this thesis to such secondary literature wherever relevant; nevertheless, for a practicable understanding of this aspect of the enquiry the reader should consult the following works: David M. Crowe, *The Baltic States and the Great Powers: Foreign Relations, 1938-1940* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993); Stanley W. Page, *The Formation of the Baltic States: A Study of the Effects of Great Power Politics upon the Emergence of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959); Hugh I. Rodgers, *Search for Security: A Study in Baltic Diplomacy, 1920-1934* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1975).

[52] Edgar Anderson, 'Toward the Baltic Entente: The Initial Phase', in Jüri G. Poska (ed.) *Pro Baltica: Mélanges dédiés à Kaarel R. Pusta* (Stockholm: Publications du Comité des amis de K.R. Pusta, 1965), pp. 41-61, same as in Edgar Anderson, 'Toward the Baltic Union: The Initial Phase', *Lituanus*, Vol. 14, № 1(1968), pp. 17-39; Edgar Anderson, 'Towards the Baltic Union 1920-27', *Lituanus*, Vol. 12, № 2 (1966), pp. 30-56; Edgar Anderson, ''Towards the Baltic Union, 1927-1934', *Lituanus*, Vol. 13, № 1 (1967), pp. 5-28.

[53] Marko Lehti, *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 am Main, Berlin, Bern, New York, Paris & Vienna: Peter Lang, 1999).

[54] Bronis J. Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations: The Quest for Regional Integration and Political Liberty* (Pittston, PA: Euramerica Press, 1976), Ch. 2 'Toward the Goal of a Baltic Union', pp. 118-167.

of this chapter will be to convey the political maelstrom from which the latter initiative emerged. Therefore, this chapter will merely outline the prevalent trends in Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian foreign policy throughout the 1920s and early 1930s in order to provide a historical background to the Baltic Entente initiative examined in the following chapter.

2.1 THE INITIAL SCENE, 1918-1920

At the beginning of the twentieth century, particularly during the final stages of the First World War a number of regional state-clusters were envisioned that incorporated Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Amongst these hypothetical state-clusters were, for example, the ideas of an Estonian-Finnish federation, popular in Estonia after Finnish volunteers helped defend the fledgling republic against an encroaching Red Army during the Estonian War of Independence; an Estonian-Finnish-Latvian configuration; and, a union between Lithuania and Poland.[55] As Eero Medijainen notes, these earlier forecasts of regional configurations "were the stuff of salon discussions between individual scholars and certainly remained on an unofficial level."[56]

Perhaps the earliest of such hypothetical configurations, and one which went beyond an unofficial level, was that of a Latvian-Lithuanian state which can be traced back to the mid-1880s. Nevertheless, the idea of a Latvian-Lithuanian state,

[55] Anderson, 'Strength & Weakness', p. 80; Anderson, 'Phantom or Reality?', p. 128; Anderson, 'Toward the Baltic Entente: The Initial Phase', pp. 41-61; Jörg Hackmann, 'From 'Object' to 'Subject': The Contribution of Small Nations to Region-Building in North Eastern Europe', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. 33, № 4 (2002), pp. 417-421; Andres Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 104; Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', p. 154; Rauch, *The Baltic States: The Years of Independence*, pp. 107-111.

[56] Eero Medijainen, 'The Baltic Question in the Twentieth Century: Historiographic Aspects', in James S. Amelang& Siegfried Beer (eds.), *Public Power in Europe: Studies in Historical Transformations* (Pisa: Edizioni Plus – Pisa University Press, 2006), p. 113.

predominantly expounded by Lithuanian émigré publicists, notably Jonas Šliūpas (1861-1944), collapsed during the second decade of the twentieth century due to Latvian concerns that Lithuanians were pro-German.[57]

Part of the reason that none of these latter examples of proposed state-clusters got off the ground was due to the turbulent events occurring in the three fledgling republics. The respective independence wars of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were legacies of the First World War and the Bolshevik Revolution.

Of the proposed federative state-cluster projects, the idea of a 'Baltic League', as envisaged by Ants Piip (1884-1942) and Kaarel Robert Pusta (1883-1964), members of Estonia's delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, was one of the largest and most ambitious.[58] It was from this notion of a Baltic League that later alliance projects adopted the form of envisioned relationship between the states concerned. The prerequisite of the project was the concluding of a series of economic and political alliances between three groupings of states: "the Scandinavian (Denmark, Norway, Sweden); the eastern Baltic

[57] Anderson, 'Strength & Weakness', p. 80; Anderson, 'Phantom or Reality?', p. 128; Anderson, 'Toward the Baltic Entente: The Initial Phase', p. 42; Anderson, 'Towards the Baltic Union: 1920-1927'; Mindaugas Jurkynas, 'Brotherhood Reconsidered: Region-Building in the Baltics', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. 35, № 1 (2004), p. 6; Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations*, p. 119; Antonius Piip, 'The Baltic States as a Regional Unity', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 168 (1933), p. 175; Vytautas Žalys, 'The Return of Lithuania to the European Stage', in Edvardas Tuskenis (ed.), *Lithuania in European Politics: The Years of the First Republic, 1918-1940* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1999), pp. 99-100. For a thorough discussion of Lithuanian notions of a Latvian-Lithuanian state see James Montgomery Wollen, 'A Forgotten Episode: The Idea of a Latvian-Lithuanian State, c.1885-1920', in Laura Laurušaitė & Silvestras Gaižiūnas (eds.) *Dvitautos ir aštuoni regionai: baltiška, tautinė, regioninė savimonė literatūroje ir kultūroje* [Two Nations and Eight Regions: Baltic, National and Regional Identity in Literature and Culture], forthcoming. Originally presented as a paper entitled 'The Fragmentation of the 'Lithuanian Race': The Latvian Nation in the Works of Lithuanian Intellectuals, 1885-1920' at an international conference of the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore, entitled Dvitautos ir aštuoni regionai: baltiška, tautinė, regioninė savimonė literatūroje ir kultūroje [Two Nations and Eight Regions: Baltic, National and Regional Identity in Literature and Culture], on 30th March 2012. See also, Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations*, pp. 118-123.

[58] Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 80; Rodgers, *Search for Security*, p. 14. For comprehensive studies of the idea of a Baltic League see Lehti, *A Baltic League as a Construct of the New Europe*; and, Marko Lehti, 'The Baltic League and the Idea of Limited Sovereignty', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, NeueFolge, Bd. 45, H. 3 (1997), pp. 450-465

(Finland, Estonia, Latvia), and the southern Baltic (Lithuania, Poland)."[59] The intention behind the notion of a comprehensive Baltic League was to ensure, as Pusta remarked, that the "Baltic Sea does not become a Russian sea or a German lake".[60]

On a less ambitious scale the idea of a 'Baltic' alliance, or union materialised in two forms: a small grouping of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and a larger one including the latter three states in addition to Finland and Poland.[61] The former materialised with the signing of the *Treaty of Good Understanding and Co-operation* on 12th September 1934; meanwhile the latter disappeared with the divergent interests of the states concerned, becoming an all but forgotten example of regional mental mapping in the early twentieth century.

There were two missed opportunities, as Edgar Anderson refers to them, to consolidate an association of states of some description covering the eastern littoral of the Baltic Sea in 1920, whilst the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian independence wars were still underway. The first was to form a trilateral union of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania through a secret conference of military leaders convened in what became the twin border town of Valga, Estonia and Valka, Latvia. This meeting took place on 6th January, in the wake of an already notable collaboration of military forces between the three states, and

[59] Rodgers, *Search for Security*, p. 14.
[60] Document № 2. 1918 m. lapkritis-gruodis, Paryžius. – Estijos diplomato, jos delegacijos prie Paryžiaus Taikos konferencijos nario R. Pustos straipsnis, raginęs sukurti Baltijos ir Skandinavijos šaliųsa jungą, susietą gynybos, ūkio ir koordinuotos užsienio politicos saitais [November-December 1918, Paris: Article of Estonian delegation diplomat to the Paris Peace Conference, [Kaarel] R. Pusta, calling for a Baltic and Scandinavian union with associated defence and coordinated economic and foreign policy links], in Zenonas Butkus, Česlovas Laurinavičius, Rimantas Miknys & Vytas Žalys (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika 1918-1940 metais* [The Idea and Practice of the Unity of the Baltic States: 1918-1940], (Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos institutas, Vilniaus universitetas, 2008), p. 93: "Baltijos jura neturi tapti nei Rusijos jura, nei Vokietijos ezeru".
[61] Anderson, 'Strength & Weakness', p. 80; Anderson, 'Phantom or Reality?', p. 128; Lehti, *A Baltic League as a Construct of the New Europe*, p. 92;Lehti, 'The Baltic League and the Idea of Limited Sovereignty', pp. 453-455; Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', p. 154; Stradiņš, 'Beginnings of the Intellectual Entente of the Baltic States', p. 11.

agreements were made for the exchange of war materials, periodic meetings and a proposed military alliance that was intended to form a base upon which political leaders could build.[62] The latter fell apart due to the emerging fears of political intrigues amongst the nascent Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian governments. Furthermore, within a month of the latter conference, Estonia concluded an armistice agreement with the Soviet Union in the form of the *Treaty of Tartu* on 2nd February. Although Latvia and Lithuania also concluded treaties with the Soviet Union, the *Treaty of Riga* on 11th August and the *Soviet-Lithuanian Treaty* on 12th July, respectively, as Medijainen has noted, the Estonian-Soviet treaty "helped to break the international blockade established against the Bolsheviks", causing consternation amongst the Latvians and Lithuanians as well as further a field.[63]

Almost concurrently, the second 'missed opportunity' was the opportunity to conclude a larger Baltic union of Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. The first step towards the consolidation of this project was undertaken at an international conference which took place in Helsinki over 15th-23rd January. This conference was convened in order to deliberate upon the feasibility of a defensive grouping of the five states and was closely followed by the western powers with their own diverging

[62] Anderson, 'Military Policies and Plans'; Anderson, 'Toward the Baltic Entente: The Initial Phase', p. 48; Anderson, 'Towards the Baltic Union: 1920-1927'.

[63] Eero Medijainen, 'Article 5: Permanent Neutrality in the Tartu Peace Treaty, 1920', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. 41, № 2 (2010), p. 202. The texts of the treaties are available in the League of Nations Treaty Series, online at http://www.worldlii.org/int/other/LNTSer/1922/92.html (*Esthonia* [sic] *and Soviet Republic of Russia – Peace Treaty, signed at Tartu, 2nd February 1920*: LNTSer 92; 11 LNTS 30); http://www.worldlii.org/int/other/LNTSer/1920/63.html (*Latvia and Russia - Treaty of Peace, done at Moscow, and completed and signed at Riga, 11th August 1920*: LNTSer 63; 2 LNTS 195); and, http://www.worldlii.org/int/other/LNTSer/1920/2.html (*Lithuanian and Soviet Government of Russia – Peace Treaty and Protocol, signed at Moscow, 12th July 1920*: LNTSer 2; 3 LNTS 105), retrieved 15th May 2012.

interests.[64] The respective representatives of the aforementioned states met again to discuss the matter of a defensive alliance at Bulduri (near Riga) from 6th August-6thSeptember; approving the proposal of a regional non-aggression pact, arbitration convention and defensive military agreement, in addition to the idea of a Baltic Economic Council with a common economic and monetary union.[65] The labours of the Helsinki and Bulduri conferences were intended to be ratified by the participating states before 1st January 1921; as Georg von Rauch observed, it would appear as though "a pan-Baltic bloc was beginning to emerge."[66]

Nevertheless, the work towards such a regional federation was dashed by the Polish occupation of Vilnius.[67] The Polish administration of Józef Piłsudski (1867-1935) had, on 7th October, agreed to recognise Vilnius as the capital of Lithuania; however the following day Piłsudski issued orders to General Lucjan Żeligowski (1865-1947) to stage a *coup d'état* and recapture the city. By 9th October, Vilnius and the surrounding region were occupied by Polish troops.[68] Vilnius was a factor which cannot be underestimated in the repeated failures to conclude a federative state-cluster configuration throughout the interwar period.[69]

[64]Alberts Varslavāns, 'Baltic Alliance and International Politics in the First Part of the 1920s', in John Hiden & Aleksander Loit (eds.), *The Baltic in International Relations between the Two World Wars*, Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia, 3 (Stockholm: Centre for Baltic Studies, University of Stockholm, 1988), p. 44. See also, Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations*, pp. 129-131.
[65] Crowe, *The Baltic States and the Great Powers*, p. 7. For a detailed account of the Bulduri conference see Marko Lehti, 'The Dancing Conference of Bulduri: A Clash of Alternative Regional Futures', in Martyn Housden & David J. Smith (eds.), *Forgotten Pages in Baltic History: Diversity and Inclusion* (Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2011), pp. 71-94; Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations*, pp. 137-142; and Stradiņš, 'Beginnings of the Intellectual Entente of the Baltic States', pp. 12-13.
[66] Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 80; Varslavāns, 'Baltic Alliance and International Politics', pp. 45-46; Piip, 'The Baltic States as a Regional Unity', p. 174; Rauch, *Years of Independence*, p. 108.
[67] Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 80
[68]Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations*, pp. 147-148; Page, *The Formation of the Baltic States*, p. 182.
[69] Anderson, 'Military Policies and Plans'; Feldmanis & Stranga, *The Destiny of the Baltic Entente*, p. 14; Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', p. 155.

The Lithuanian national movement and nation-building programme were built around the idea of pronounced differences between the Lithuanians and the Poles, and the notion of the historic city of Vilnius as the nation's eternal capital had been a rallying point and a Lithuanian national historic symbol. However, the occupation of Vilnius was not a straightforward matter of Poles capturing a 'Lithuanian' city. Vilnius, as the title of Laimonas Briedis' *Vilnius: City of Strangers* suggests was a city without a so-called ethnic majority during the interwar period.[70] Alfredas Bumblauskas, in his 'The Heritage of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: Perspectives of Historical Consciousness' outlined how the multinational heritage of the once expansive Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which at its zenith spanned the territory between the Baltic and the Black Seas, can be found within Vilnius alone.[71] The so-called multi-ethnic legacy of the city is as much Polish, Jewish, Belarusian, Russian, Tartar, etc., as it is Lithuanian. Nevertheless, in the newly declared Republic of Lithuanian of the interwar period, as Česlovas Laurinavičius aptly describes, "the ordinary so-called Lithuanian of the new generation had a stereotype hammered into his head to the effect that he could not live without Vilnius."[72]

As such, the progress towards the conclusion of a larger 'Baltic' union at Helsinki and Bulduri was lost, and subsequently "the establishment of a federal union embracing both Lithuania and Poland was clearly impossible."[73]Moreover, as Inesis Feldmanis and

[70] Laimonas Briedis, *Vilnius: City of Strangers* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2009).
[71] Alfredas Bumblauskas, 'The Heritage of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: Perspectives of Historical Consciousness', in Grigorijus Potašenko (ed.), *The Peoples of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania* (Vilnius: Aidai, 2002), p. 7.
[72] Česlovas Laurinavičius, 'Lithuanian General Aspects of Domestic Policy, 1918-1940', in Alvydas Nikžentaitis, Stefan Schreiner & Darius Staliūnas (eds.), *The Vanished World of Lithuanian Jews*, On the Boundary of Two Worlds: Identity, Freedom, and Moral Imagination in the Baltics (Amsterdam & New York, 2004), p. 113.
[73]Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations*, pp. 147-148; Page, *The Formation of the Baltic States*, p. 182; Jurkynas, 'Brotherhood Reconsidered', p. 7; Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', p. 155; Piip, 'The Baltic States as a Regional Unity', p. 174; Rauch, *Years of Independence*, p. 108; Robertas Žiugžda, 'Lithuania in

Aivars Stranga describe, "the Polish-Lithuanian dispute acted as a bitter magic circle to paralyze the defensive system of" Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania collectively.[74]Whilst there continued to be a number of federative projects in play at any one time, they could not include both Lithuania and Poland, presenting a region that could be easily exploited by third parties.These federative projects can be divided into three different categories: quadruple, triple and dual alliances.

2.2 THE QUADRUPLE, TRIPLE &DUAL ALLIANCES, 1920-1933

Following the Polish occupation of Vilnius, Lithuania withdrew (to a certain extent) from its association with the building of a 'Baltic' regional formation. It became preoccupied with the recovery of Vilnius and the surrounding region, viewing its best chance of regaining the territory through courting the major powers of the Soviet Union and Weimar Germany. Meanwhile, as the third decade of the twentieth century was beginning, the other participating states of the Helsinki and Bulduri conferences continued their endeavours "as the Baltic quadruple entente."[75]

Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Poland attempted to continue their cooperative effort through a series of periodic meetings of their foreign ministers; in addition to sporadic meetings between ministers and various expert and professional conferences between 1920 and 1925. However, their endeavours were hampered by the divergent interests of the parties concerned. Broadly speaking two preponderant attitudes can be discerned;

International Relations in the 1920s', in John Hiden & Aleksander Loit (eds.), *The Baltic in International Relations between the Two World Wars*, Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia, 3 (Stockholm: Centre for Baltic Studies, University of Stockholm, 1988), p. 61. Quotation from Rauch.

[74] Feldmanis & Stranga, *The Destiny of the Baltic Entente*, p. 14.

[75] Piip, 'The Baltic States as a Regional Unity', p. 174.

dividing the states in a latitudinal fashion between north and south. Estonia and Finland were orientated towards cooperation with the Scandinavian countries, with the trope of the "good old Swedish days" being common within Estonia (as it was to a lesser extent within Latvia) throughout the period.[76] Meanwhile, Latvia and Poland were more enthusiastic about the prospect of a quadruple alliance between the four states, albeit not necessarily in accord with one another.

On the one hand Poland, by far the largest of the four states of the quadruple entente, had designs that betrayed her delusions of grandeur. She attempted to unite the four states under her own leadership; presenting a domineering attitude which did not go down well with the other states.[77] As such, to a certain extent there was a nascent trilateral cooperation of Estonia, Finland and Latvia which excluded Poland the so-called quadruple entente; though it never truly got off the ground. Conscious of such cooperation efforts on the Baltic Sea's eastern littoral that excluded her, Poland became somewhat critical of the idea of a small Baltic union, fearing that such a regional unit might pose a threat to herself.[78]

On the other hand Latvia, quite possibly the most enthusiastic of all the states on the Baltic Sea's littoral concerned with pursuing a federative cooperation initiative, maintained a cordial relationship with her southern neighbour Lithuania throughout the interwar period. Latvia's sympathetic disposition towards Lithuania was not so much

[76]Tiina Kirss & Rutt Hinrikus (eds.), *Estonian Life Stories* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2009), pp. 265; Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', p. 155; Owen Rutter, *The New Baltic States & their Future: An account of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia* (London: Methuen & CO. Ltd., 1925), p. 117. See ValtersŠčerbinskis, 'Looking for Neighbours: Origins and Development of Latvian Rhetoric on Nordic 'Closeness'', in Marko Lehti & David J. Smith (eds.), *Post-Cold War Identity Politics: Northern and Baltic Experiences* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), pp. 158-164.

[77] Anderson, 'Military Policies and Plans'; Anderson, 'Phantom or Reality?', p. 127; Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 80.

[78] Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', p. 155; Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, p. 120.

based upon – or rather disguised as – notions of so-called ethnic and linguistic kinship, as witnessed in the earlier Lithuanian proposition of a federative Latvian-Lithuanian state, as it was based upon pragmatic security concerns: Latvia wanted a solid bloc separating Germany and the Soviet Union and the absence of Lithuania in the quadruple entente was an undesirable weakness in their security system.

The Soviet Union played a hand in the impeding of any form of 'Baltic' cooperation, most tellingly by exploiting Lithuania's desire to recover Vilnius and the surrounding region, which determined the latter state's foreign policy throughout the interwar period. For example talks regarding a treaty between Latvia and Lithuania in 1926 fell apart when the Soviet Union informed Kaunas (the provisional capital during the occupation of Vilnius) that they would not remain impartial in the eventuality of a Polish attack upon Lithuania.[79]

As Lithuania actively courted both Germany and the Soviet Union for their support against Poland in the Vilnius dispute she was a prospective foothold for either of the two major powers. As such, Latvia's cordial relationship was not received well by the other three states of the quadruple alliance. In the case of Estonia and Finland, the two states were attempting to gain the favour of the Scandinavian countries, or more precisely Sweden, who was ill-disposed to the prospect of cooperating with Lithuania. At the heart of the problem was Lithuania's desire for Estonian and Latvian military support in the reacquisition of Vilnius and in its dispute with Poland. However, Estonia and Latvia were not prepared to offer such assistance.[80] Whilst the principal reason for the reluctance of

[79] Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity, p. 156; Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, p. 120; Žalys, 'The Return of Lithuania', pp. 108-110.
[80] Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', p. 155; Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, p. 120.

Estonia and Latvia in this respect was the Vilnius dispute, there was no less concern over the Memel/Klaipėda issue that later emerged between Germany and Lithuania.

Memel, as it was commonly called during the interwar period is the German name for the city of Klaipėda, which following the First World War was detached from Germany, becoming a protectorate of the Entente powers. Both Lithuania and Poland laid claim to the region along ethnographic lines, however, not wishing to wait for an unfavourable decision, the Lithuanian government staged a revolt and presented the Entente powers with *fait accompli* claiming that the city was 'Lithuanian', at least in spirit. With this manoeuvre taking place in January 1923, little could be done to improve relations between Lithuania and Poland. Meanwhile, Weimar Germany maintained their usual relations with Lithuania. However, Nazi Germany later desired the reacquisition of the city and the surrounding region, adding to the international tension of the 1930s.

To add a further level of complication to the landscape of foreign relations, notable cooperation also existed, to various degrees, at a bilateral level between Estonia and Latvia. Unlike the earlier discussions of hypothetical state-clusters that immediately followed the First World War, these efforts advanced fully to the level of high politics with the two states concluded a political and military alliance on 7th July 1921.[81]

Meanwhile, Sweden, valuing her neutrality above all else in her foreign policy, viewed Lithuania in her active dispute with Poland over Vilnius and the pervading Memel/Klaipeda issue with Germany as a dangerous factor. On a number of occasions Sweden discretely voiced concern over cooperation with Lithuania to Latvia. Fully aware of Sweden's sentiments, Estonia and Finland were loath to lose favour with her over Latvia's advocacy of cooperation with Lithuania. Naturally the two Finnic-speaking

[81]Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', p. 156.

states generally viewed Latvia's cultivation of Lithuanian cooperation unfavourably; although that is not to say that everyone was obstinately opposed to the prospect of collaborating with Lithuania.

Despite the initial controversy of the Memel/Klaipėda incident, whilst Latvia extended considerable diplomatic support to Lithuania during the incident, partly in the hope that its resolution would normalise Polish-Lithuanian relations, the incident appears to have influenced Estonia's outlook. Her minister in Riga, Julius Seljamaa (1883-1936), remarked in February 1923, following the incident, upon the possibility of the inclusion of Lithuanian in the Estonian-Latvian alliance.[82]Furthermore, the Estonian Foreign Minister, Aleksander Hellat (1882-1943) visited Latvia and Lithuania during May of the same year in order to develop better commercial relations between the three states and broach the matter of a trilateral union. As ever, the main thorn of contention was Lithuanian-Polish relations over the Vilnius issue. Nevertheless, Ernestas Galvanauskas (1882-1967), the Prime Minister of Lithuania, assured Hellat that the difficulties were not insurmountable and that they were no sufficient reason to preclude a closer relationship with Estonia and Latvia. The latter notwithstanding, Galvanauskas rejected outright the idea of inviting Poland to join such an alliance.

Side by side, two other 'Baltic' configuration endeavours emerged, known as the 'Baltic' triple ententes. The first was that of Estonia, Finland and Latvia, who in certain instances excluded Poland from their activities. This configuration did not come to pass however because of Finland's pronounced orientation towards the Scandinavian countries; critical of Latvia's attempts to draw Lithuania into the cooperation, largely

[82] Anderson, 'Towards the Baltic Union: 1920-1927'.

over the thorny issue of the latter's opposition to the Poles.[83] Estonian-Finnish relations on the other hand continued to draw closer, even after the Baltic Entente, which constituted one of the significant factors to its failure.[84] The second was composed of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania; the three states today commonly known collectively as the 'Baltic States'. Nevertheless, Estonian, Finnish, Latvian and Polish cooperation continued into the late 1920s until it petered out when Poland turned its attention towards the West. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian republics each only experienced a short period of so-called democratic rule. In all three states, soft dictatorships were established. These occurred in 1926 in Lithuania and 1934 in Estonia and Latvia.

It was out of this myriad of political relationships that the Baltic Entente emerged. However, there was no distinctive or coherent plan to develop such a political initiative between these three states. The Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian cooperative effort that was devised in 1934, as will be seen below, was the result of pragmatic political decisions in response to the turbulent developments within European politics throughout the interwar period.

2.3 FORGING THE BALTIC ENTENTE, 1934

It was from the political maelstrom outlined above that the Baltic Entente initiative emerged. As mentioned earlier, the three states came into existence without clearly defined borders; this caused friction between them as in a number of instances they each

[83] Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, pp. 119-120; Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', p. 155; Zara S. Steiner, *The Lights that Failed: European International History, 1919-1933* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 533.
[84] Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', p. 155; Rauch, *Years of Independence*, p. 183.

lay claim to the same territories. After their collaborative efforts during their independence wars, and during their search for international recognition, consolidation of their borders was one of the initial areas of rapprochement between the three states.

The frontier dispute between Latvia and Lithuania centred on the town of Daugavpils. Eventually it was ceded to Latvia with border adjustments that allowed Lithuania access to the Baltic Sea during the independence wars with the help of international arbitration of members of the League of Nations; the border between the two states was consolidated in 1921.[85] For the consolidation of their border with Estonia however, Latvia had to wait a little longer. Nevertheless, the meandering process through which legislated Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian cooperation came to be, began with the bilateral collaboration of Estonia and Latvia. An alliance of mutual defence was struck in 1923 after the settlement of a border dispute over the town of Valka/Valga (which was divided), and the island of Rohnu in the Gulf of Riga was ceded to Estonia. War-time financial obligations were also resolved. This mutual defence agreement provided for military support in the event of aggression towards either country from a third party for a period of ten years.[86] It was an expansion of a trade treaty concluded between the two states in July 1921. It was again expanded and extended for another ten years in February 1934 by outlining the coordination of the foreign policy of Estonia and Latvia and allowing for the entry of other countries into the union; subject to the mutual agreement of the two participants.[87]As Georg von Rauch asserts, the latter was a

[85] Rauch, *Years of Independence*, pp. 99-100; Žalys, 'The Return of Lithuania', p. 102.
[86] Rauch, *Years of Independence*, p. 181; Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, p. 120; Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', p. 156.
[87] Anderson, 'Military Policies and Plans'.

provision intended specifically for Lithuania.[88] The impetus for these actions was the elevated Nazi and Soviet threat to their respective sovereignties.[89]

One of the principal factors that had hindered Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian cooperation until this point was their differing perceptions as to which of their neighbours posed the greater threat. Whilst Latvia had been equally concerned about Germany and the Soviet Union, Lithuania considered the latter her sole supporter in her conflict with Poland, who was in turn viewed as a vital ally by Estonia and Latvia.[90] As such Lithuania had remained outside the 1923 treaty because Estonia and Latvia were unwilling to assist her in the territorial disputes with Poland. When both Germany and the Soviet Union signed non-aggression treaties with Poland early in 1934, Lithuania found herself completely isolated. Subsequently she initiated intense negotiations with Estonia and Latvia with regard to closer collaboration.[91]

On the 25th April 1934, the Lithuanian government informed her Estonian and Latvian counterparts that she sought to pursue more intimate cooperation between the three states.[92] An *Aide memoire* of Juozas Urbšys (1896-1991), the Secretary General of the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry, set the tone and the first steps were taken in a fairly intensive five-month negotiation of the Baltic Entente.[93] Essentially, the memorandum

[88] Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', p. 156; Rauch, *Years of Independence*, p. 181.
[89] Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', p. 156; Rauch, *Years of Independence*, pp. 180-181.
[90] Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, p. 122.
[91] Ibid, pp. 120, 122; Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', pp.156-157; Rauch, *Years of Independence*, p. 182.
[92] Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 81; Feldmanis & Stranga, *The Destiny of the Baltic Entente*, p. 30.
[93] Document № 181. 1934 m. balandžio 25., Kaunas. – Lietuvos vyriausybės memorandumas Latvijai ir Estijai, kuriame siūloma tiksliau apibrėžti tarpusavio beadradarbiavimo pricipus ir rūpintis, kad Baltijos šalys savo veiksmais nepakenktų nė vienai iš jų, turinčių specifinių problemų [25th April 1934, Kaunas: Memorandum of the Government of Lithuania to Latvia and Estonia, which proposes to define more precise principles of mutual cooperation and to ensure that the Baltic countries do not jeopardise one another with their actions or specific problems], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 502-503; Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations*, pp. 173-175.

calls for close cooperation between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and offers a list of vague principles upon which 'Baltic solidarity' might be founded.[94]

The memorandum states that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are vitally interested in maintaining their independence and that any factors affecting the independence of one of them must be the concern of all three states. Urbšys' communiqué elaborates upon the duty of the three states to spread the common idea of 'Baltic' unity in their countries and maintain their unity in international politics, whilst denying that the three states have any irreconcilable conflicts or interests. Nevertheless, the document does indicate that due to their different geographic situations and histories Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania could have specific problems and should, in the name of unity, refrain from any domestic or foreign policy act able to harm any one of the three states.

Two points distinguished Urbšys' memorandum from previous communications between the governments of Lithuania and her northern neighbours. First it acknowledged that the Estonia and Latvia were unable to assist them militarily in the dispute with Poland; second, Lithuania agreed to exclude the matter of Vilnius from discussions. Until this point, the Lithuanian government's unwillingness to come to a compromise with other states in relation to its conflict with Poland had been the major obstacle to virtually all of the various proposed cooperative alliances within the region.[95] It signalled a change of attitude of the Soviet Union towards such an initiative. The Soviet Union had previously been opposed. With the growing power and potential threat

[94] Rodgers, *Search for Security*, p. 96.
[95] Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 81.

of Nazi Germany she abandoned her opposition to the federative projects, fearing that a politically disunited region on her western frontier would endanger her security.[96]

Riga and Tallinn acted with notable caution to the Lithuanian memorandum. Three weeks passed before the secretary-generals of the Estonian and the Latvian foreign ministries agreed to receive concrete proposals from Lithuania in respect of forming a regional alliance.[97] However, two preliminary conferences were organised between the Estonian and Lithuanian foreign ministers, Seljamaa and Stasys Lozoraitis (1898-1983), respectively, and the Secretary General of the Latvian Foreign Ministry, Vilhelms Munters (1898-1967), to discuss the technicalities of a trilateral alliance.

During the first preliminary conference, which took place over 7th-9th July, Lozoraitis expressed the conviction that all three participating delegations were not just seeking benefits for their own state. He spoke briefly about how the participants were endeavouring to improve the international situation of all three states; strengthening their peace and security. Munters similarly stressed that the three states did not have any egoistic designs in seeking to draw closer together and were thus contributing to greater security in their part of Europe.[98] The conference resulted in the agreement upon matters concerning the principles of cooperation and the necessity of a joint foreign policy. The matter of 'specific problems', referring to the Polish occupation of Vilnius and the

[96] Anderson, 'Military Policies and Plans'; Feldmanis & Stranga, *The Destiny of the Baltic Entente*, pp. 27-29; Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity', pp. 156-157; Rauch, *Years of Independence*, pp. 195-196.
[97] Feldmanis & Stranga, *The Destiny of the Baltic Entente*, pp. 30-31; Rodgers, *Search for Security*, p. 96.
[98] Document № 182. 1934 m. liepos 7 d. Kaunas. – Lietuvos ir Latvijos delegacijų vadovų kalbos pirmojoje Baltijos Antantės sudarymo parengiamojoje konferencijoje [7th July 1934, Kaunas: Lithuanian and Latvian opening speeches of the delegation heads in the preparatory conference of the Baltic Entente], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 504-505.

surrounding region, was postponed until the next conference, which they decided to organise in Tallinn or Riga in the near future.[99]

The second preliminary conference later took place in Riga on 29th August, at which an agreement was reached concerning the methods for coordinating the foreign policies of the three states. Additionally, several formulas for the resolution of problems between the parties, should they arise, were considered; and, the rule that any new relations of the three states must be registered in an agreement was approved. The procedure established for the Estonian and Latvian in the 1934 agreement had to be replaced by one for the cooperation of all three countries. The Lithuanian delegation presented a formulation of the specific problems that was essentially acceptable to Estonia and Latvia; should specific problems arise, they would be resolved outside the cooperation principle.

Lozoraitis indicated that Lithuania would only be treating the Vilnius question as a specific problem and that it did not have any other problems of specific concern to Estonia and Latvia. The Latvian and Estonian delegates proposed including the exception to cooperation in the annex of the agreement; however, Lithuania did not accept this point. In addition, Estonia and Latvia demanded that the exception to cooperation allow them to express their opinion about Lithuania's specific problem. Lozoraitis agreed, while insisting that the expression of an opinion should not weaken Lithuania's position on the Vilnius issue.[100]

[99]Document № 183. 1934 m. liepos 10 d., Kaunas. – "Eltos" pransešimas apie pirmosios Baltijos Antantės sudarymo parengiamosios konferencijos rezultatus [10th July 1934, Kaunas: "ELTA" [Lithuanian News Agency] notice of the results of the first preparatory conference of the Baltic Entente], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, p. 505.

[100]Document № 185. 1934 m. rugpjūčio 29 d., Ryga. – "Latvijos, Estijos ir Lietuvos [II] parengiamosios konferencijos, skirtostrijų šalių bendradarbiavimo sutarties sudarymui, protokolas" [29th August 1934, Riga: "Protocol to the preparatory conference of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania [II] for the treaty of the

Thus, having finally navigated the contentious Vilnius issue, the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian delegates signed the *Treaty of Good Understanding and Co-operation* on 17th September 1934. The third article reads:

> The High Contracting Parties recognise the existence of the specific problems which might make a concerted attitude with regard to them difficult. They agree that such problems constitute an exception to the undertakings laid down in Article I of the present Treaty.[101]

To which a secret agreement signed at the same time as the treaty indicates that the Estonian and Latvian representatives noted that their states had no "specific problems that might require the application of the abovementioned agreement of the 3rd article"; whilst the Lithuanian representative noted that "the 3rd paragraph shall be applied only to the problem of Vilnius."[102]

three countries"], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 506-515; Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations*, pp. 175-176.

[101] Article 3 of the *Treaty of Good Understanding and Co-operation*, the Treaty is available online at http://www.worldlii.org/int/other/LNTSer/1934/227.html, retrieved 24th of November 2011.

[102] Document № 187.1934 m. rugsėjo 12 d., Ženeva. – Slapta Lietuvos, Latvijos ir Estijos deklaracija, aiškinanti, kad Santarvės ir bendradarbiavimo sutarties trečiajame straipsnyje minimos specifinės problemos liečia tik Vilniaus klausimą [12th September 1934, Geneva: Secret declaration of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia explaining that the specific problem in article three of the unity and cooperation agreement applies only to the Vilnius question], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, p. 518: "3-iojo straipsnio nuostatos būtų taikomos tik Vilniaus problemai."

CHAPTER III: THE BALTIC ENTENTE& THE MENTAL MAPPING OF ESTONIA, LATVIA & LITHUANIA, 1934-1940

The Baltic Entente represented a new phase in the history of the republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. With the signing of the *Treaty of Good Understanding and Co-operation* on 12th September 1934 the three republics entered for the first time into political cooperation sanctioned by treaty. Although there were precedents to this cooperation, as described in the previous chapter, with the emergence of the Baltic Entente the three countries began to present themselves internationally and domestically as a unified political entity.

Treatments of the Baltic Entente have thus far focussed predominantly on political aspects. With the exception of alternating optimistic and pessimistic interpretations – discussed during the introduction – accounts of its activities differ little.[103] The present chapter is concerned with the activities of the Baltic Entente that contributed to the mental mapping of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as a distinctive region; namely the 'Baltic States'. Therefore, a survey of the political history of the period merely provides orientation to the main narrative of the text.

[103] See Edgar Anderson, 'The Baltic Entente: Phantom or Reality?', in V. Stanley Vardys & Romauld J. Misiunas (eds.), *The Baltic States in Peace and War* (University Park, PA & London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978), pp. 126-135, notes: 217-219; Edgar Anderson, 'The Baltic Entente, 1914-1940: Its Strength & Weakness', in John Hiden & Aleksander Loit (eds.), *The Baltic States in International Relations between the Two Wars*, Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia, 3 (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 1988), pp. 79-99; Inesis Feldmanis & Aivars Stranga, *The Destiny of the Baltic Entente, 1934-1940* (Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 1994), pp. 45-59; and, Bronis J. Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations: The Quest for Regional Integration and Political Liberty* (Pittston, PA: Euramerica Press, 1976), Ch. 4 'Activity of the Baltic Entente' pp. 182-207.

With regard to the nature of the cooperative activities of the Baltic Entente, it pursued a variety of economic, legislative and cultural enterprises. Three distinct periods can be discerned in the initiatives: 1) an early period of enthusiastic efforts to consolidate regional cooperation in various fields; 2) a lull in such activities; and 3) an ineffective final bid to retain their sovereignty during the early years of the Second World War.

3.1 AN ENTHUSIASTIC BEGINNING, 1934-1936

At the first of the periodic conferences – convened in Tallinn from 30th November-2ndDecember – none of the parties present took minutes of the discussions. With regard to the formalities of the conferences of the Baltic Entente, each delegation was able to take their own minutes, although they were not obliged to do so. Nevertheless, the host organisation, the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was required to produce a summary to be distributed through diplomatic channels.[104]

Although the summary and a separate record of the decisions of the conference are not as detailed as the minutes and other textual sources produced during later conferences, they are nonetheless informative. It is evident that representatives of the three states discussed procedures of providing diplomatic and political support to one another, and modes by which they could strengthen economic and cultural ties. In the later conferences where minutes are available, although considerably detailed, they do not yield a great deal of information with regard to the mental mapping of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania during the period of the Baltic Entente initiative. For the most part, the

[104]Zenonas Butkus, Česlovas Laurinavičius, Rimantas Miknys & Vytas Žalys (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika 1918-1940 metais* [The Idea and Practice of the Unity of the Baltic States, 1918-1940] (Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijosinstitutas, 2008), p. 524.

minutes are concerned with economic and legislative matters that are reiterated in the speeches of the foreign ministers, although some information on cultural activities is noteworthy. As such, for the most part, this examination of the textual sources of the conferences will focus upon the speeches of the heads of the three delegations. Nevertheless, other sources will be utilised wherever relevant.

The Estonian and Lithuanian delegations were headed by their foreign ministers, Julius Seljamaa and Stasys Lozoraitis, respectively; the primary representative of the Latvian delegation was Vilhelms Munters, the Secretary-General of the Latvian Foreign Office.[105] At this time the Foreign Minister of Latvia was also the country's Prime Minister, Kārlis Ulmanis (1877-1942).[106]

The opening speech of the conference's host, Seljamaa, was preserved in the archives of the Lithuanian legation to Paris to where it was communicated through diplomatic channels. It was reproduced at length by Bronius Kazlauskas and later quoted by Edgar Anderson. Assuming its faithful reproduction by Kazlauskas, it immediately verifies the break from the preceding period and the beginning of a new phase in the relationships between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania:

> I recall with great satisfaction having had the pleasure of taking part, ten years ago, in 1924, in the Conference of the Foreign Ministers of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania at Kaunas. But there is a great difference between the Conferences of the past and the present, considering the differences in the very principles on which they are based. We no longer need to seek out methods and forms for common collaboration, as was true at the time of the 1924 Conference and those preceding it. That period, which lasted a little too long, in the light of the common interests of our peoples, is now at an end. We are now at the point of entering a

[105] Ibid; Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 82; David M. Crowe, *The Baltic States and the Great Powers: Foreign Relations, 1938-1940* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), p. 24; Feldmanis & Stranga, *The Destiny of the Baltic Entente*, p. 45; Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations*, p. 183.
[106] Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 84.

> new stage. Henceforth, a new page is being written in the history of the collaboration of our nations.[107]

Although Seljamaa claimed that their collaboration is "[b]y the common and specific wish of our three peoples", indicating Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians, and underscoring the idea of unity through the use of first person plural pronouns, there is no immediate evidence of the notion of a 'Baltic' community. Nevertheless, the use of the expression 'Baltic' to determine Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanians was certainly in use by policymakers at this point, though not necessarily as official political rhetoric.

During a reception with Ulmanis on the way to the first conference of the Baltic Entente Lozoraitis expressed his joy that on his visit to Riga, en route to Tallinn, he was the first Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs to do so under the rationale of the *Treaty of Good Understanding and Co-operation*. He stated that "[o]n that day [12th September 1934] the Baltic States entered a new period" to which he had the pleasure to contribute his "modest efforts".[108] This demonstrates that diplomats had adopted the term to denote the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian republics.

As compared with later meetings, the sparse texts of the first conference do not reveal a great deal of information regarding the mental mapping of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Seljamaa's opening address, which appears to be the only extant speech, ends

[107]Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations*, p. 182.

[108]Document № 189. lapkričio 30 d., Ryga. – S. Lozoraičio kalba, pasakyta per priėmimą pas K. Ulmanį vykstant į Taline rengiamą pirmąją Baltijos Antantės konferenciją [30th November, Riga: S. Lozoraitis' speech during the reception of K. Ulmanis, travelling to the forthcoming first conference of the Baltic Entente to be held in Tallinn], in Butkus, et al (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 522-523: "Tą džiaugsmą man padvigubino tai, kad mano kelionė yra pirma Lietuvos užsienių reikalų ministerio kelionė mūsų rugsėjo 12 d. santarvės ir bendradarbiavimo sutarties režimui įsigalėjus. Tą dieną tarp trijų Pabaltės valstybių prasidėjo naujas laikotarpis, prie kurio igyvendinimo turėjau malonumo prisidėti ir savo kukliomis jėgomis, vykdydams idėją, kuri visados buvo viena iš vadovaujamų mano krašto ir jos vyriausybės idėją."

underlining the political situation within Europe that acted as a catalyst for the formation of the Baltic Entente:

> Our greatest desire is to contribute to the maintenance of peace in Europe and thus to fulfil the obligations laid upon us by the League of Nations, of which we are fervent supporters. We are fully aware of the demands which present conditions impose upon nations, not only in their own affairs, but also in international relations. The world situation forces us to follow events closely, to calculate coolly, without emotion, and to act with prudence and caution.
>
> We could achieve nothing by separate action; we must coordinate our forces. This is the only way in which we shall succeed in making eastern Europe a factor on the side of peace on the scales of Europe. Our strength lies in the union.[109]

Furthermore, within Seljamaa's speech similarities can be seen with the earlier self-proclaimed 'mission' of the abovementioned concept of a Baltic League. Whilst the latter larger project envisioned the maintenance of peace through the safeguarding of the freedom of the entire Baltic Sea, the Baltic Entente was now predominantly, and pragmatically, focused on the eastern littoral.

Unlike earlier hypothetical statements on state-clusters the various proposals put forward during the course of the conference were acted upon. Mixed commissions were established which set to work in order to present results during the next conference of the Baltic Entente. However, Anderson notes that the discussions of matters where the sensitive issue of sovereignty arose were invariably postponed.[110]

Consideration was given as to whether, and to what extent to inform the populaces of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania of the proceedings and results of the conference. Whilst representatives believed "it was desirable that, as far as possible, the work of the conference of the three countries is informed by public opinion [...] it was decided to inform the media and other of the results of the conference only if

[109]Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations*, p. 183.
[110] Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 83.

necessary".[111] Nevertheless, in subsequent meetings the conference resolutions were effectively rewritten as press releases and distributed to the international press. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that in such press releases the listing of the three states separately is interchangeable with the term 'Baltic States' without exemplification. This indicates two things. Firstly that policymakers were promoting the idea of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as the 'Baltic States' and secondly that there was no apparent need to explain this concept to the public.

In accordance with the protocol agreed upon at the end of the first conference, the second conference was convened in Kaunas: It was agreed that, after the first conference in Tallinn, the second would be held at Kaunas, the third at Riga, and subsequently in the order of Tallinn-Riga-Kaunas thereafter. At the second conference – over the course of 6th-8th May – once again, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were represented by Seljamaa, Munters and Lozoraitis.

The month before the second Baltic Entente conference the Soviet Union approached Estonia, Latvia and Lithuanian with individual offers of bilateral treaties of mutual assistance; the intention being to change the much discussed Eastern Locarno Pact from that of an alliance system to nonaggression treaties.[112] The first signs of weakness in the Baltic Entente emerged as Estonia and Latvia had to dissuade Lithuania from making an immediate favourable response.

[111] Document № 190: 1934 m. lapkričio 30 – gruodžio 2 d., Talinas, - Estijos, Latvijos ir Lietuvos užsienio reikalų ministrų pirmosios konferencijos reziumė [30th November-2nd December 1934, Tallinn: Summary of the First Conference of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Foreign Ministers], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, p. 526: "Konferencija nusprendė, jog pageidautina, kad, kiek tai įmanoma, apie josdarbus trijų šalių viešoji nuomonė būtų informuojama. Bet turint galvoje, kad Konferencija yra uždara, buvo nuspręsta informuoti spaudą ir kt. Apie Konferencijos rezultatus tik būtinu atveju".

[112] Crowe, *The Baltic States and the Great Powers*, pp. 24-25.

During his opening address at the second conference, Seljamaa noted that everything they had hoped to achieve in terms of the alignment of legislature had not been realised. Nevertheless, the proactive attitude towards the initiative continued with Seljamaa announcing that "an important issue in the Baltic States" was resolved where "a legal office conference has managed to reach an agreement" and that "results will be presented in the present conference."[113]

As it can be seen, the term 'Baltic States' is employed by Seljamaa within the proceedings; and, given the frequency with which it is used by the delegates in the second and subsequent conferences one would assume that it was also utilised within the first. The latter is particularly likely when considering the speech of Lozoraitis in Riga which preceded the initial conference which had denoted Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as the 'Baltic States'.

In his own opening address, Munters was concerned with the future of the Baltic Entente with regard to the collective security of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, in addition to Eastern Europe in a wider sense:

> No factor with reference to Eastern Europe can be a matter of indifference to the Baltic States. Their location imposes on them a responsibility not only in regard to their own interests, but also towards world peace, which can only be durable when constructed on the basis of a permanent nature which can guarantee the widest collective cooperation of nations and the provision of a satisfactory solution for all.
> In this sense, the Baltic policy, in my opinion, should have two characteristics: it must be intentionally independent, but also at the same

[113]Document № 195.1935 m. gegužės 6 d., Kaunas, - Estijos ir Latvijos delegacijų vadovų kalbos pradedant antrąją Baltijos Antantės konferenciją [6th May 1935, Kaunas: Speeches of the heads of Estonian and Latvian delegations from the second conferences of the Baltic Entente], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, p. 539: "Mūsų istatymdavystės suvienodinimas yra vėl intrauktas [sic] in dienotvarkę, ir, nors visi pirmos užsienų reikalų ministrų konferencijos iškelti klausimai nebuvo galutinai išspresti, vis dėlto turime pripažinti, kad atliktas didelis darbas, kuris teikia vilties, kad netrukus bus prieitas susitarimas. Be to, tuo pačiu laiku buvo iškelta kitų inžymios [sic] svarbos klausimų, dėl kurie Baltijos valstybių juridinio biuro konferencijai pavyko pasiekti susitarimą. Jos rezultatai bus pateikti dabartinei konferencijai."

> time that independence must have a creative nature and avoid becoming passive.[114]

Once again there is the overture of a broader 'mission' to be shouldered by these three republics with regard to the maintenance of lasting peace. Moreover, Munters discerns a distinct 'Baltic' policy of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania within International Relations.

At the third conference, convened in Riga on 9th-11th December 1935, the Estonian and Lithuanian delegations were once again headed by Seljamaa and Lozoraitis. Although Munters was present, as the conference took place in Latvia, Ulmanis, the President of Latvia and Foreign Minister, lead the Latvian delegation and chaired the meeting. Whilst they continued their concerted effort to bring their legislature into alignment in various fields, the international situation, which had been complicated by the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, was the principal topic of discussion. The Italian-Ethiopian conflict had undermined faith in the League of Nations as a vehicle for lasting peace, though the representatives of the conference remained loyal to the principles of the Covenant.

Atis Lejiņš has stated that although the *Treaty of Good Understanding and Co-operation* did not contain either the word 'Baltic'. Nor did it contain the word 'Entente' as diplomats were cautious of using the French expression for 'understanding', and no doubt because of the association of the term with the Entente powers.[115] Nevertheless, it came to be known as such and as can be seen in the resolutions of the third conference,

[114]Ibid, p. 540: "Joks elementas, liečias Rytų Europos politinę konsteliaciją, negali būti abejingas Baltijos valstybėms, ir jų padėtis joms uždede atsakomybę ne tik savo pačių interesų atžvilgiu, bet ir visuotinės taikos atžvilgių, kurie bus patvari tik jei bus sukurta nuolatinio pobūdžio pagrindais, laiduodama kuo plačiausią kolektyvinį tautu bendradarbiavima ir tuoteikdamą visiems patenkinamą išsprendimą. Šia prasme Baltijos politika, mano nuomone, turi turėti du ypatumus: ji turi būti apgalvotai nepriklausoma, bet tuo pačiu laiku ta nepriklausomybė turi pasižymeti kūrybiniu pobūdžiu ir vengti supasyvėti."
[115]Atis Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity: Chimera or Reality?', in Atis Lejiņš & Žaneta Ozoliņa (eds.), *Small States in a Turbulent Environment: The Baltic Perspective* (Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 1997), p. 157.

the term 'Baltic Entente' entered into official political rhetoric. In the third article of the resolutions, it was stated that "[a]cknowledging it is desirable for the Baltic Entente to be represented in the League of Nations, the Conference decided to launch diplomatic efforts to prepare" for the installation of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian representation in that international organisation.[116]

With the fourth conference convened in Tallinn between 7th-9th May 1936, where Munters once again joined Seljamaa and Lozoraitis as the chief representative of his country, 'Baltic States' graduated into the title of the official proceedings. The titling of the documents forewent the distinction of each state in formulations such as 'Conference of the Foreign Ministers of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania' and similar, and instead appropriated the umbrella term 'Baltic States'. For example, the official title given to the resolutions of the fourth conference was the "Fourth Baltic States Ministers of Foreign Affairs Conference, held in Tallinn 7th-9th May 1936, decisions."[117] Moreover, in an official statement issued to the press, Lozoraitis asserted that "As you can see, our [Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian] Baltic understanding is healthy, strong and completely normal" and "has achieved real concrete fruit."[118]

[116]Document № 202. 1935 m. gruodžio 11 d., Ryga. – Trečiosios Baltijos Antantės konferencijos rezoliucijos [11th December 1935, Riga: Resolutions of the third conference of the Baltic Entente], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, p. 572: "III. Straipsnis: Pripažinusi pageidautinu, kad Baltijos Antentė būtų atstovaujama Tautų Sajungos Taryboje, konferencija nutaria pradėti diplomatinius veiksmus, kurie paruoštų sąlygas minėto atstovo kėlimui."
[117]Document № 222. 1936 m. gegužės 9 d., Talinas. – Ketvirtosios Baltijos Antantės konferencijos nutarimai [9th May 1936, Tallinn: Fourth Baltic Entente Conference decisions], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, p. 612: "Ketvirtosios Pabaltės Užsienių Reikalų Ministeriu Konferencijos, įvykusios Taline 1936 m. gegužėsmėn. 7-9 d., nutarimai."
[118]Document № 223. 1936 m. gegužės 9 d., Talinas. – S. Lozoraičio pareiškimas, kuriame įvertinti ketvirtosios Baltijos Antantės konferencijos rezultatai [9th May 1936, Tallinn: statement of S. Lozoraitis, which evaluates the results of the Fourth Conference of the Baltic Entente], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, p. 616: "Kaip matote, mūsų Baltijos santarvė yra sveika sveikutėlė ir visiškai normaliai"; "yra pasiekusi tikrai konkrečių vaisių."

3.2 THE PERIOD OF STAGNATION, 1936-1938

By the time of the fifth conference of the Baltic Entente initiative, Freidrich Akel had replaced Seljamaa as the Estonian Foreign Minister. Anderson states that Akel was viewed by his contemporaries "as an ardent "polono-germanophile" who had publicly made disparaging remarks about the Baltic Entente."[119]At this conference, held in Riga on 9th-10th December 1936, Lozoraitis once again represented Lithuania, whilst Munters, now promoted to the office of Foreign Minister, headed the Latvian contingent.

Whilst international political tensions continued to escalate the delegates nominally remained faithful to the League of Nations. However, although they declared that they still preferred collective action, their faith in their current endeavour evidently wavered as discussions arose concerning whether or not other means of safeguarding peace might prove effective. Nevertheless, the representatives of the three states opted to continue a policy of non-intervention, particularly in respect of the Spanish Civil War which had recently broken out.[120]

The sixth conference was convened in Kaunas over the course of 1st-3rd July 1937. Munters and Lozoraitis once again represented Latvia and Lithuanian, whilst August Rei, filling in for an ailing Akel, headed the Estonian delegation. Rie was, as Anderson describes "an old fighter for cooperation among the Baltic States."[121]It would appear that the initiative benefited somewhat from the reintroduction of a pro-'Baltic' Estonian representative. The sixth conference as such is the least hesitant of the period of the initiatives stagnation. For example, whilst discussions of the Spanish Civil War initially dominated the meeting, Munters stated that

[119]Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 85.
[120]Ibid, p. 86; Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations*, p. 198.
[121]Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 86.

> events in Spain are taking place far from us, and we have neither strategic nor material interests there. Nevertheless, we have played our part loyally in helping achieve the policy of non-intervention and we have followed closely each success and each setback in European solidarity. It only remains for us to follow the path we have chosen and to develop and strengthen our mutual relations even more. Then our common voice will resound more loudly when speaking in unison on behalf of peace and friendship among nations.[122]

Even within this period of stagnation the notion of a duty to safeguard international peace through collaborative action, at least within their region, is still present. Moreover, the term 'Baltic States' was still in common usage in the official proceedings of the initiative. Though the events in Spain were taking place far away, the three states continued to offer their support to the maintaining and strengthening of border control systems around Spain.[123]

At the seventh conference, convened from 9th-11th December 1937, in Tallinn, Akel had returned to represent Estonia opposite his Latvian and Lithuanian counterparts, Munters and Lozoraitis. Anderson states that "the atmosphere was poisoned" although the delegations carried out their work in a routine fashion.[124] Despite alternative opinions of the representatives of their cooperative efforts, from this conference we can see that the Baltic Entente had certainly influenced the mental mapping of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania abroad. For example, Akel, himself not particularly well disposed to the initiative, noted that

> in other lands there has been for some time an increasing awareness of the independence of our foreign policy; and that we are being recognized as a positive, stabilizing factor in Europe, whatever, the motives of this recognition of the situation may be.[125]

[122]Ibid, p. 87.
[123] Ibid.
[124]Ibid, p. 89.
[125]Ibid.

As such, it is evident that the concerted action and spirit of unity that was at least broadcast through the media and diplomatic channels had been recognised as a stable aspect of International Relations. The latter undoubtedly influenced the mental mapping of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania amongst foreigners who were unfamiliar with the three republics; seeing them act in apparent accord with one another.

The latter would appear to verify the statement of Lozoraitis during his opening speech where he stresses that the Baltic Entente has not diminished in significance with regard to the deteriorating international situation, noting that the initiative is operating in accordance with its resources.[126]Meanwhile, Munters, during his own speech denoted that the success of the Baltic Entente initiative was dependent on the maintenance of good relations between the member states; acknowledging the tension over the pro-German (i.e. anti-'Baltic') mood which had taken root amongst notable figures in Estonia.[127]

Recognising that their collaborative activities were being taken note of abroad, the conference concluded that the cooperative efforts of the Baltic Entente had strengthened the international position of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Such a perception of how they were viewed by third parties may well have had influence on the mental mapping of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Perceiving that collective action had brought them positive recognition in the international arena was no doubt an incentive to cultivate the notion of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as a distinct region. In any event, the participants resolved

[126]Document № 246. 1937 m. gruodžio 9 d., Talinas. – Lietuvos ir Latvijos užsienio reikalų ministrų kalbos pradedant septintąją Baltijos Antantės konferenciją [9th December 1937, Tallinn: Opening speeches of the Latvian and Lithuanian foreign ministers at the seventh conference of the Baltic Entente], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 666-667.
[127] Ibid, pp. 667-668.

to remain apart from ideological struggles and that their policy of non-interference was justified and played a part in the preservation of peace.[128]

Whilst Munters and Lozoraitis continued to represent Latvia and Lithuania, by the time of the eighth conference, held on 10th-11th June 1938 in Riga, the Estonian Foreign Minister had changed once again. Now, Karl Selter headed the Estonian delegation. In Lozoraitis' opening address, later distributed to the media after the conference, stressed the positive success of the Baltic Entente's first seven conferences; moreover, it remarked that whilst remaining sovereign to their own nations, the delegates are working closely together.[129] There is a discernable element of caution in this speech, underlining the vested interest that each delegation had in their respective nations. Nevertheless, the emphasis on close cooperation is accompanied by the incorporative term of 'Baltic'.

Munters remained steadfast in his assertions from the previous conference. In his opening speech he determined that the political situation of the "Baltic States" since the last conference has not become more complicated and that universal peace has been strengthened through its consistency.[130] Meanwhile, Selter remarked that every day new developments were taking place on the international chessboard, and as such International Relations was becoming a difficult affair. He concluded that the members of the Baltic Entente must be open, loyal and be inclined to work more closely together.[131]

[128]Document № 247. 1937 m. gruodžio 11 d., Talinas. – Septintosios Baltijos Antantės konferencijos rezoliucijos [11th December 1937, Tallinn: Resolutions of the seventh conference of the Baltic Entente], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 668-670.
[129]Document № 254. 1938 m. birželio 10 d., Ryga. – S. Lozoraičio kalba pradedant aštuntąją Baltijos Antantės konferenciją [10th June 1938, Riga: Opening speech of S. Lozoraitis at the eighth conference of the Baltic Entente], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 690-691.
[130]Document № 255. 1938 m. birželio 10 d., Ryga. – Latvijos ir Estijos užsienio reikalų ministrų kalbos pradedant aštuntąją Baltijos Antantės konferenciją [10th June 1938, Riga: Latvian and Estonian foreign ministers speeches from the eighth conference of the Baltic Entente], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 692-693.
[131]Ibid, p. 693.

During the course of the eighth conference, despite his earlier speech, Selter declared that Estonia intended to announce her absolute neutrality, that is to say the Scandinavian type, and proclaimed that Estonia should no longer observe the sixteenth article of the Covenant of the League of Nations, which bound her to come to the aim of other League members who became victims of belligerence. Although his impromptu announcements betrayed an inclination to dispense with the Baltic Entente, Selter invited Latvia and Lithuania to join Estonia in a concerted action. Selter, who Anderson describes as "an able financier […] without any experience in diplomatic affairs", was a luminary of those Estonians that took a disparaging view of the Baltic Entente.[132]

The ninth conference fared no better for Selter's impromptu announcements. Munters continued to counter Selter's motions and was joined by Juozas Urbšys, the new Lithuanian Foreign Minister; a known supporter of the Baltic Entente and Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian cooperation. The ninth conference was held in Kaunas on 1st-2nd February 1939, after a seven month respite. A communiqué was issued to the press after the conference stating that the orientation towards neutrality corresponds to the interests of the three states, and would contribute to a lasting peace. Furthermore, it stated that the ninth conference gave the initiative fresh motivation.[133] Appearing with the communiqué in the Lithuanian newspaper *Lietuvos aidas* (Lithuanian Echo) were official statements from the three foreign ministers. Urbšys stated that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, by acting together, will also maintain neutrality during wartime.[134]Meanwhile, Selter

[132]Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 89.
[133]Document № 267.1939 m. vasario 3 d., Kaunas. – Devintosios Baltijos Antantės konferencijos komunikatas ir Lietuvos, Latvijos, Estijos užsienio reikalų ministrų pareiškimai konferencijai pasibaigus [3rd February 1939, Kaunas: Ninth Baltic Entente conference communiqué and Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian foreign ministers' statements at the end of the conference], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 713-714.
[134]Ibid, p. 714.

affirmed that the ninth conference had 'strengthened and deepened' the cooperation of the Baltic Entente members.[135]Finally, Munters indicated that the nine conferences of the Baltic Entente had been a "school of good will" and had pushed Baltic cooperation further along.[136]

During the conference however, as Anderson notes "relations between the Estonian and Latvian delegations were strained and frosty" while "Urbšys tried his best to underplay the differences between his northern neighbors."[137] Selter announced that he disapproved of the way that the Baltic Entente was regarded by other states. Furthermore, he disapproved of the frequent use of the term 'Baltic Entente', considering the maintained stress on the common interests of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to be ambiguous and undesired.

As in the previous conference Selter had a number of suggestions to make the Baltic Entente a somewhat more desirable initiative. Firstly, in future collaboration between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, only internal matters should be considered; there should be one conference each year instead of two; and, they should forego annual visits by statesmen from the neighbouring states to celebrate the anniversary of each of the declarations of independence; for "him one such courtesy visit every five years would be enough."[138]

From this period of stagnation we can see that the construction or the mental mapping of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as a distinct region was forestalled by the negative stance adopted by two of the Estonian representatives. Nevertheless, it would

[135]Ibid, p. 715.
[136] Ibid.
[137]Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 90.
[138] Ibid.

appear that earlier concerted efforts had resulted in the international community perceiving the three states as a distinctive feature of European politics. As the Baltic Entente continued to circulate information to the media which depicted the cooperative effort without divergent opinions, there would have been little evidence for the general public to observe that there were contentious differences of opinion amongst the diplomats.

3.3 BALTIC ECLIPSE, 1939-1940

As Eero Medijainen states, "the most salient question and still most central Baltic problem in the 20th century was (and at least for historians, will continue to be, far into the future) what happened in 1939-1940 and why."[139] Due to the scope of such a question, this enquiry will not venture to offer an interpretation. As such, this section will focus only on the concerted effort which the delegates of the Baltic Entente adopted during the process of the 'Baltic eclipse'. The latter phrase was coined by Ants Oras, an early figure of comparative Baltic history, in order to describe (what he considered would be) the temporary loss of the independence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.[140]

Anderson observes that the tenth and eleventh conferences "have been overlooked by scholars studying the Baltic Entente."[141] Indeed, Kazlauskas' *The Baltic Nations*, the most extensive text on the Baltic Entente initiative, does not mention the final two conferences that occurred. Instead, Kazlauskas sums up his analysis:

[139]Eero Medijainen, 'The Baltic Question in the Twentieth Century: Historiographic Aspects', in James S. Amelang & Siegfried Beer (eds.), *Public Power in Europe: Studies in Historical Transformations* (Pisa: Edizioni Plus – Pisa University Press, 2006), p. 117.
[140]Rein Taagepera, 'The Struggle for Baltic History', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. 40, № 4 (2009), pp. 456, 459-460.
[141] Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 92.

> Nine Conferences had been held between November, 1934, and February, 1939, and there was no question that the existence of the Baltic Entente was justified by its accomplishments. Collaboration among the three associated states, the principal aim, had been achieved at the conference table and in all areas of Baltic domestic and international life. As the three countries looked back over the five productive years of the Entente, they realized that their gains were not only due to the solidarity constantly guiding the efforts of their governments, but also, and perhaps above all, to the common conviction shared by all the people that the words 'union' and 'strength' are synonymous. 'Strength' for the Baltic nations did not signify physical or military power in 1939. However, if Pusta's project of a large Baltic League of 1918 had not been ruined by selfish intrigues and greed, the three small Baltic republics might have become an important element even in military strategic consideration in preserving the balances of power in Eastern Europe.[142]

Fortunately for the Baltic Entente initiative, Ants Piip, another "old fighter for the Baltic Union", replaced the dismissed Selter as the Estonian Foreign Minister by the tenth conference.[143]Piip was an ardent supporter of cooperation between the three states, as were his Latvian and Lithuanian counterparts, Munters and Urbšys. Once again the three countries were working on the same page despite the escalating calamity on the European political scene. At the beginning of the tenth conference, convened in Tallinn on 7th-8th December 1939, Piip addressed his Latvian and Lithuanian opposites apologising for the activities of his predecessor and a particular circle of anti-'Baltic' Estonian public figures.[144]

The conference began with a report by Urbšys on the implementation of the decisions of the previous conference. The conference, now with all representatives on board, began to make progress. They decided to organise a mutual postal service and paid a great deal of attention to the matters of economic cooperation and problems in the three

[142]Kaslas, *The Baltic Nations*, pp. 206-207.
[143]Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 92.
[144] Ibid.

republics.[145] The latter was partly in relation to a covert effort in relation to the predominantly discussed economic situation of their states by harmonising and coordinating their efforts to contend with reality of the economic problems of the war.[146]Despite their revived cooperative efforts, and in light of the wartime situation, they decided, rather than adopting written resolutions, to prepare a press report.[147] In principal they established close economic cooperation and mutual assistance; explored ways and methods of maintaining contacts with the outside world through Finland and Sweden; made arrangements for the channelling of sensitive economic and political information; and, determined to maintain neutrality during the Finno-Soviet War.[148]

The final conference of the Baltic Entente initiative was convened in Riga from 14th-16th March 1940, coinciding with the conclusion of the Finnish Winter War. Munters once again headed the Latvian delegation, being the only individual to represent his country throughout the initiative. He was joined again by Piip and Urbšys, for what would be their last meeting in the face of the turmoil erupting throughout Europe.

Nevertheless, according to Anderson the representatives expressed their satisfaction in relation to noticeable improvements in relations between the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian nations. The latter provided them with the encouragement to

[145]See Document № 280.1939 m. gruodžio 7-8 d., Talinas. – Dešimtosios Baltijos Antantės konferencijos posėdžių protokolai [7th-8th December 1939, Tallinn: Tenth conference of the Baltic Entente minutes], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 737-739.
[146]Document № 281. 1939 m. gruodžio 8 d., Talinas. – Dešimtosios Baltijos Antantės konferencijos rekomendacija dėl ekonominių ryšiųpalai kymo [8th December 1939, Tallinn: Tenth conference of the Baltic Entente recommendation for economic liaison], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 740-741; Document № 282. 1939 m. gruodžio 11 d., Kaunas. – E. Turausko atmintinė apie dešimtąją Baltijos Antantės konferenciją [11th December 1939, Kaunas: E. Turauskas memo of the tenth conference of the Baltic Entente], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 741-742.
[147] Document № 280., p. 739.
[148]Document № 282.1939 m. gruodžio 11 d., Kaunas. – E. Turausko atmintinė apie dešimtąją Baltijos Antantės konferenciją [11th December 1939, Kaunas: E. Turauskas memo of the tenth conference of the Baltic Entente], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 741-742; Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 92.

pursue an increase in their economic and cultural cooperation, whilst continuing to observe neutrality.[149]For example, proposals to create faculty departments for the languages of the other two nations as well as to encourage exchanges of scientists and students are unanimously adopted.[150]The delegates decided to convene regular meetings of leading officials of the ministries of foreign affairs; strengthen the cooperation the press managers of the same ministries; and, in order to exchange information.[151]

Finally, it was agreed that the next Baltic Entente conference would be convened in Kaunas during September 1940.[152]However, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania formally lost their independence one month before, during August after the arrival of the Soviet forces, and the activities of the Baltic Entente initiative ceased.[153]

Due to the wartime situation, it was not practical for the delegations to overtly expound the idea of their states forming a distinct region; nevertheless they were still referred to as 'Baltic' throughout the discussions. This shows that it was an accepted notion amongst the foreign ministers, not merely a rhetorical tool employed for the purpose of economic and political matters. It would appear that there was a genuine concerted effort undertaken by the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian diplomats during the tenth and eleventh conferences of the Baltic Entente. Resembling the earlier years of the initiative when it was established due to common concerns regarding their larger

[149]Document № 289.1940 m. kovo 16 d., Ryga. – Vienuoliktosios "Baltijos santarvės konferencijos komunikatas" [16th March 1940, Riga: Eleventh Baltic concord conference communiqué], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 765-766; Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 92.
[150]See Document № 288.1940 m. kovo 14-16 d., Ryga. – Vienuoliktosios Baltijos Antantės konferencijos posėdžių protokolai bei jų priedai [14th-16th March 1940, Riga: Eleventh Baltic Entente conference minutes and annexes], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 760-765.
[151] Ibid.
[152]Document № 289.1940 m. kovo 16 d., Ryga. – Vienuoliktosios "Baltijos santarvės konferencijos komunikatas" [16th March 1940, Riga: Eleventh Baltic concord conference communiqué], in Butkus, et al. (eds.), *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika*, pp. 765-766.
[153] Anderson, 'Strength and Weakness', p. 92.

neighbours, the outbreak of the Second World War appears to have motivated cooperative efforts. Of course the personal dispositions of the respective foreign ministers also played a part in the revival of their collaboration.

CHAPTER IV: DEDUCTIONS &CONCLUSIONS

There are two predominant views taken by individuals who are opposed to the idea of a collective 'Baltic' aspect to the Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as a distinct region. The first is that it is a fabrication of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian émigré, politically active outside the Soviet Union following the Second World War.[154] As this enquiry has demonstrated, to a certain degree such ideas, at least in a political sense, were present during the interwar period. Moreover, such notions were certainly promoted by policymakers, whether they themselves believed in them or not. The second view is that such idea come are hoisted upon the Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians by foreigners who know little of the three countries or their inhabitants. An excellent example of this latter point of view is found within the remarks of Andrejs Plakans:

> Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians – the three adjacent peoples living on the eastern littoral of the Baltic Sea – each developed an intellectual stratum from within its own ranks only in the second half of the nineteenth century. Ever since, these three small sets of educated person have been chafing at the idea – always propounded by outsiders – that they and their homelands really constitute a *region* and that they were derelict in a sacred duty if they did not strive to realize that regional ideal. It is not surprising therefore that books […] – grouping these three people and their states together – tend to come from Baltic-area historians. There is no endemic tradition of *Baltic-area* historical writing in any of the three lands; the themes locally have been distinctiveness, individuality, and particularism and the few *Baltic* histories that do exist

[154] Nevertheless, the industrious activities of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian émigré over the course of the twentieth century no doubt broadcast the perception of the 'Baltic States' to a wider audience that the Baltic Entente had done. See for example Toivo U. Raun, 'Transnational Contact and Cross-Fertilization Among Baltic Historians in Exile, 1968-1991', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, forthcoming 2012; and, Rein Taagepera, 'The Struggle for Baltic History', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. 40, № 4 (2009), pp. 451-464.

> are very recent products, and for the most part present three separate national histories bound together between two covers.[155]

With regard to the latter, this enquiry has demonstrated that these notions were promoted by individuals who were not only the policymakers of their day, but also in many respects were founders of their respective national states.

More specifically, this enquiry has highlighted the problematic retroactive usage of the term 'Baltic States' to collectively denote the republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania prior to 1934; after which a discernable political initiative, namely the Baltic Entente, against which distinct temporal meaning to the idiom was founded. Prior to 1934, and indeed thereafter throughout the interwar period, the term 'Baltic States' – increasingly styled 'Baltic states' in present day capitalisation conventions – was fluid and at times incorporated Finland and Poland. Moreover, in particular instances the term could also be used to designate all those states which flanked the Baltic Sea, more commonly referred to as the 'Baltic countries' in the present day.

The often inaccurate usage of retroactively naming Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as the 'Baltic States' obscure particular widespread historical mental geographies, into which more than the three titular states of this enquiry were incorporated. These examples of the alternative mental mapping of 'Baltic' in the present day are near forgotten in popular knowledge. However, during the early twentieth century they were suitably prevalent, or at least expounded, in order to remain a prominent feature of International Relations throughout the 1920s. Such alternative notions had not yet dissipated by the late 1930s. The most conspicuous example of the latter is the listing of Finland within the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact as a 'Baltic' state.

[155] Andrejs Plakans, [untitle review of *The History of the Baltic States*, by Kevin O'Connor], *The History Teacher*, Vol. 39, № 1 (2005), p. 133.Emphasis as in original.

This enquiry has demonstrated that the idea of the republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania comprising a distinct geo-political entity was both present and publicly promoted in the rhetoric and discourse of the foreign ministers of those three nations. Their motivation for doing so, as denoted within the secondary literature cited throughout this enquiry, was an attempt to safeguard the sovereignty of their three nations. In respect of the role which the Baltic Entente played in the mental mapping of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as the 'Baltic States', as it has been demonstrated in the previous chapter, was quite obviously one that officially promotion such a perception. Nevertheless, in this respect the Baltic Entente is merely a single link in a chain that appears to have begun being forged notably earlier than the initiative itself.

The swift, or rather immediate, adoption of the term 'Baltic States' in order to collectively denote Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania after the inauguration of the Baltic Entente suggests that categorising these three republics as 'Baltic' was already an established convention sometime before the initiative began its activities. Moreover, broadcasting information to the public utilising the term 'Baltic States' to denote Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania without exemplification – that is to say, distinguishing them from Finland and Poland for example – indicates that this notion was suitably pervasive so as not to require clarification. Of course popular opinion and public reaction within the three states to such a concept are an altogether different matter. For example, it is often stated that term 'Baltic' only has significant meaning for Latvians – 'sandwiched' between the other two nations – whilst in the present day it has negative connotations for Estonians and Lithuania has since reconciled herself with Poland, which since the 1990s

represented Lithuania's so-called 'path to Europe'.[156] Nevertheless, such questions of public response to the idea of the 'Baltic States', both in the present day and during the interwar period, are entirely different matters requiring alternative theoretical and methodological approaches.

The Baltic Entente initiative, whilst not creating the notion of the republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, propagated the idea. Whilst the individual personal views of policymakers may not have been in accord with such a concept it was nevertheless broadcast to the public through the media. As the notion of these three states constituting the 'Baltic States' emerged prior to the Baltic Entente, the initiative did not construct the perceived region, although it was nevertheless a concerted political effort aimed at influencing the mental geography of the wider public, both domestically and internationally.

Furthermore, although the initiative began enthusiastically and entered a period of stagnation before an ineffective revival of their concerted effort there was an ever present overtone of a duty or mission to safeguard not only their own respective sovereignty but also to do their part in the maintaining of lasting peace; at least within their own sector of Europe. The notion of this role bears a striking resemblance to that of the earlier proposed Baltic League; envisaged as a means of contributing to the safeguarding international peace through sustaining the freedom of the Baltic Sea. With the latter in mind, it appears that the term 'Baltic' acquired an additional political connotations after the First World

[156]Endre Bojtár, *Foreword to the Past: A Cultural History of the Baltic People* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1999), p. 7, *n*. 4; Atis Lejiņš, 'The Quest for Baltic Unity: Chimera or Reality?', in Atis Lejiņš & Žaneta Ozoliņa (eds.), *Small States in a Turbulent Environment: The Baltic Perspective* (Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 1997), pp. 159-160; Pärtel Piirimäe, 'The Idea of "Yule Land": Baltic Provinces or a Common Nordic Space? On the Formation of Estonian Mental Geographies', *Baltic Worlds*, Vol. 4, № 4 (2011), pp. 36-39.

War; one which the Baltic Entente initiative attempted to ideologically occupy as a temporal coordinate.

APPENDIX I: THE CONFERENCES OF THE BALTIC ENTNETE INITIATIVE, 1934-1940

Conference №	Location	Start Date	End Date	Principal Representatives
I	Tallinn, Estonia	Friday, 30th November 1934	Sunday, 2nd December 1934	Estonia: Julius Seljamaa Latvia: Vilhelms Munters Lithuania: Stasys Lozoraitis
II	Kaunas, Lithuania	Monday, 6th May 1935	Wednesday, 8th May 1935	Estonia: Julius Seljamaa Latvia: Vilhelms Munters Lithuania: Stasys Lozoraitis
III	Riga, Latvia	Monday, 9th December 1935	Wednesday, 11th December 1935	Estonia: Julius Seljamaa Latvia: Kārlis Ulmanis Lithuania: Stasys Lozoraitis
IV	Tallinn, Estonia	Thursday, 7th May 1936	Saturday, 9th May 1936	Estonia: Julius Seljamaa Latvia: Vilhelms Munters Lithuania: Stasys Lozoraitis
V	Riga, Latvia	Wednesday, 9th December 1936	Thursday, 10th December 1936	Estonia: Friedrich Akel Latvia: Vilhelms Munters Lithuania: Stasys Lozoraitis
VI	Kaunas, Lithuania	Thursday, 1st July 1937	Saturday, 3rd July 1937	Estonia: August Rei Latvia: Vilhelms Munters Lithuania: Stasys Lozoraitis
VII	Tallinn, Estonia	Thursday, 9th December 1937	Saturday, 11th December 1937	Estonia: Friedrich Akel Latvia: Vilhelms Munters Lithuania: Stasys Lozoraitis
VIII	Riga, Latvia	Friday, 10th June 1938	Saturday, 11th June 1938	Estonia: Karl Selter Latvia: Vilhelms Munters Lithuania: Stasys Lozoraitis
IX	Kaunas, Lithuania	Wednesday, 1st February 1939	Thursday, 2nd February 1939	Estonia: Karl Selter Latvia: Vilhelms Munters Lithuania: Juozas Urbšys
X	Tallinn, Estonia	Thursday, 7th December 1939	Friday, 8th December 1939	Estonia: Ants Piip Latvia: Vilhelms Munters Lithuania: Juozas Urbšys
XI	Riga, Latvia	Thursday, 14th March 1940	Saturday, 16th March 1940	Estonia: Ants Piip Latvia: Vilhelms Munters Lithuania: Juozas Urbšys

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