



A Popular Geopolitics of the Refugee Crisis in Europe: The Re-actualization of Identity-driven Geopolitical Narratives in Estonia

Alexandra Yatsyk

To cite this article: Alexandra Yatsyk (2018): A Popular Geopolitics of the Refugee Crisis in Europe: The Re-actualization of Identity-driven Geopolitical Narratives in Estonia, *Geopolitics*, DOI: [10.1080/14650045.2018.1486300](https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2018.1486300)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2018.1486300>



© 2018 The Author(s). Published by Taylor & Francis.



Published online: 02 Nov 2018.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

A Popular Geopolitics of the Refugee Crisis in Europe: The Re-actualization of Identity-driven Geopolitical Narratives in Estonia

Alexandra Yatsyk

Uppsala Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, University of Uppsala, Uppsala, Sweden, and Center for Cultural Studies of Post-Socialism, Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia

ABSTRACT

The article examines the question of how the refugee crisis in Europe re-actualizes the existing national geopolitical narratives and affects the border-(re)drawing of European political communities. I particularly refer to the Estonian experience, which I examine through two different case studies. The first one focuses on the refugee issue as seen from the perspective of fostering a less nationalistic and more heterogeneous identity in Estonia, expressed in the language of contemporary art. The second one addresses the perceptions of the refugee debate by Russian speakers in Narva who directly relate this question to their personal experiences with integration into Estonian society since the fall of the Soviet Union. I analyse both issues within the framework of popular geopolitics that tackles cultural representations of territories, spaces, and identity politics from the viewpoint of vernacular, home-grown, and routine meanings, to bring this culturally focused approach to the foreground of research into politically sensitive phenomena.

Introduction

In 2016–2017, Estonia was supposed to accept 550 asylum-seekers from the warzones of Syria and Iraq under the current European Union (EU) migrant relocation and resettlement plan (Vahtla 2017). However, the Estonian government's compliance with this EU-mandated refugee¹ acceptance programme appears to be mostly formal (Kaljurand 2015b). In practice, the political debate over the refugee quotas was one of the issues that revealed a split within the EU, where Estonia has also voiced its concern, although not as vocal as its Central European partners (Petsinis 2016). In July 2016, Raivo Küüt, a Deputy Secretary General for Public Order and Migration Policy of the Estonian Ministry of Interior, expressed reservations against quota-based refugee acceptance and advocated for making decisions on a case-by-case basis (Err 2016).

CONTACT Alexandra Yatsyk  ayatsyk@gmail.com  Uppsala Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, University of Uppsala, Box 514, SE 75120 Uppsala, Sweden.

© 2018 The Author(s). Published by Taylor & Francis.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

This article addresses the refugee crisis in Estonia as it has re-actualized existing identity-driven geopolitical narratives, which are discussed here in two contexts. The first aims at connecting the potential influx of refugees since 2015 to Estonian migration to Nordic countries during World War II. The second deals with the migratory flows during the Soviet occupation that included mass-scale colonization and Russification of the local population, whose descendants widely consider the concomitant Russian speakers as Soviet-era immigrants. The major arguments behind this comparison are predominantly ethical. In the first case, the parallels with historical circumstances when Estonians were forced to leave their country and were welcomed by others triggered a series of (geo)cultural discourses and imageries that prioritize values of tolerance, compassion and diversity. Yet, when it comes to the second case, the narratives of those who identify themselves as descendants of the Soviet-time settlers lack consistency; in fact, they are locked in a conceptual trap. On the one hand, they reproach the Estonian ethnic majority for unfriendly attitudes to cultural “strangers” and “aliens”; yet, on the other hand, the Russian speakers are as sceptical towards non-European refugees as the ethnic Estonians.

It is an interplay of these two political contexts that constitutes the starting point and the trigger for my analysis. The puzzle here is as follows: why and how has the eruption of the refugee crisis re-actualized identity-driven geopolitical narratives and imageries? And has this re-actualization contributed to further integration or, instead, to the polarization of political debates in Estonia?

I approach these issues from the research perspective of popular geopolitics that tackles cultural representations of territories, spaces and identity politics (Berg 2003; Dittmer and Gray 2010; Moisio et al. 2013) from the point of view of vernacular, home-grown and routine meanings frequently left without proper attention in political analysis. Following this approach, I analyse discourses unfolding beyond the political elite, power holders and power seekers on the example of two different case studies. The first one reflects the attitudes to and perceptions of migration produced by Estonian artists, who in general demonstrate the inclusive attitudes towards immigrants. As for empirical data, I mostly focus on visual Estonian art on the topic (including photos, video and documentaries) performed at the exhibitions in Tartu, Tallinn and Narva in 2015–2017. I also analyse some of the most popular products of Estonian TV and film industry on the refugee issue, including the feature film *Sangarid* (*Dissidents*, dir. Jaak Kilmi, 2017) and sketches by the TV comic group *Tujurikkuja* (‘Mood Spoiler’).²

The second case study is based on findings of 24 in-depth semi-structured interviews taken in 2015–2017 in Narva, a city with majority Russian-speaking population, who are mostly descendants from the Soviet-era immigration. In contrast to the Estonian discourse on migrants and refugees that

is well articulated in both political and art debates, I examine the opinions and attitudes of the Russian-speaking residents of Narva and the Ida-Virumaa region, which are scarcely expressed in Estonian contemporary culture. The field research entailed interviews with the representatives of the local NGOs that work with migrants, refugees and other socially marginal groups, including drug and alcohol addicts, juvenile delinquents and elderly. I also interviewed local cultural entrepreneurs, journalists of the local Russian-language state radio and TV, social activists, public sector employees as well as an MP from the leftist Centrist Party (Eesti Keskerakond). The questionnaire I used was aimed at assessing the impact of the refugee crisis in Europe on the debates in Estonia's Russian-speaking community about its cultural, national and political identity. The interviews were conducted in Russian with each lasting at least an hour. All respondents were bilingual (Russian and Estonian speakers). They had diverse backgrounds (some of them were born in Estonia, some came to Narva during the Soviet times) and citizenships (Estonian, Russian or the stateless status).³ Their age cohort ranged from 25 to 55.

The article consists of three parts. In the first section, I place the Estonian case in a wider set of political issues related to the Europe-wide refugee crisis. The second section addresses the refugee issue as seen from the perspective of fostering a less nationalistic and more heterogeneous identity in Estonia, expressed in the language of contemporary art and performative practices. The third part is focused on the perceptions of the refugee debate by Russian speakers in Narva who directly relate the issue to their personal experiences with integration into Estonian society since the fall of the Soviet Union. In the conclusion, I compare national identity narratives by the Estonian artists with those of the Russian-speaking community.

Contextualizing Estonia Against the Backdrop of the Refugee Crisis

In this part of the article, I examine the general public perceptions of the refugee crisis in Estonia, as they are articulated by the national authorities and expressed through opinion polls. The latter reflect migrant-weary attitudes in the Estonian society. A majority of Estonians believe that only victims of war and persecution should be accepted into the country. Thus, according to the survey by Turu-uuringute AS group conducted in September 2015, 29% of Estonian population thought that Estonia should not participate in the resolution of the refugee problem, and another 42% considered that participation should be different from providing shelter to refugees (ViruProspect 2015a). As Turu-uuringute AS's survey by January 2016 says, 21% of all respondents considered refugees to be the biggest problem the Estonian society then faced (Postimees 2016a). A survey of 2016 by Kantar Emor group revealed decrease in criticism

towards refugees (30% in 2016 against 40% in 2015) (Republic of Estonian Government 2016; Voog 2016, 6). In 2016, over 90% of respondents agreed that it is important that refugees work, accept Estonian culture, values and language. As all these polls demonstrated, the overall attitudes towards refugees depend on social, economic and political positions of respondents: less educated people and elder social groups were more sceptical of refugees (Voog 2016, 6). In 2016, the voters of the Reform Party (31%), Pro Patria and Res Publica Union and EKRE (22%) ranked refugees as the biggest problem. Policy experts pointed to the controversy of these figures, as by that time “not a single refugee has arrived in Estonia under the quota”, and blamed the media for creating a negative atmosphere in the society (Postimees 2016a).

The eruption of the refugee crisis has made the Islamic factor more visible in public debates. Kristiina Ojuland, the former Foreign Minister (2002–2005) and the founder of a conservative People’s Unity Party (Rahva Ühtsuse Erakond), viewed refugees as even more threatening for Estonia’s national security than the possibility that Russia will use its military to subjugate Estonia (Baltnews 2016). Oujiland’s openly Islamophobic credentials were confirmed in April 2016, when she called for a ban on the Quran in public places (Postimees 2016b).

This rhetoric, matching many far-right voices in other EU member states, is grounded in a significant shift in threat perceptions in the Estonian society. According to one study, for Estonians, the key factors “affecting peace and security around the world in 2016 are the activities of the Islamic State and the military conflict in Syria, immigration of refugees to Europe and activities of terrorist networks (respectively, 67%, 63% and 62% of the respondents agreed that the factor has ‘certainly’ an effect on peace and security)” (Veebel, Ploom and Kasekamp 2016, 43). They also discovered that fewer Estonians consider Russia’s increased assertiveness vis-à-vis its “near abroad” as a threat to peace and security (only 35% of respondents think this way) and quite surprisingly this factor has declined in importance in 2016 (Veebel, Ploom and Kasekamp 2016, 45).

The domestic dimensions to the refugee debate are closely interrelated with geopolitical dynamics in wider Europe. The refugee crisis has put the Estonian government in an ambiguous position, making it strike a balance between considering strong conservative attitudes in the society and a chance to use the whole situation for the sake of cementing Estonia’s adherence to the principle of pan-EU solidarity. The Estonian government is largely defined by the adherence to EU-wide agenda. Marina Kaljurand, when she served as the Estonian Foreign Minister in 2015, made this clear by saying that with regard to the refugee crisis, Estonia views the crux of the problem in solidarity because the migration crisis is a challenge for all of Europe and a test of humanity for Europeans (Kaljurand 2015a). In the words of Marju

Lauristin, an Estonian member of the European Parliament, “one of key domestic psychological problems of Estonians boils down to a scarce understanding of our belonging to the rich West that presupposes sharing all its troubles...We ought to comprehend how we correspond to the values that were foundational to Europe at its inception” (Err.rus 2015).

This remains a sensitive issue for the public discourse because it elucidates the flip side of the Estonian ethnic nationalism that might distance this country from the norms espoused by the EU. Estonia’s case demonstrates that political elites have to manoeuvre to find a compromise between the discourses of indispensability of Europe for Estonian independence and survival, and a variety of Eurosceptic narratives. At the same time, EU-issued directives regarding accepting the refugees in 2015 represented an instance when Estonia experienced post-national pressure, which refers to conditions whereby the international community challenges the “state sovereignty and the national government’s right to establish its own criteria for nationality and citizenship” (Hogan-Brun and Wright 2013, 254). Estonia’s earlier encounters with post-national pressures date back to the 1990s when European institutions were persuading Tallinn to relax legislation regarding integration of ethnic non-Estonians (Kolstø 2011, 156).

It is at this point that Estonia’s Russian-speaking community becomes a political factor shaping the refugee debate. In May 2015, Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves (2006–2016) stated that public reservations over the refugee question and immigration as a whole should not be disconnected from the “colonization” under the Soviet rule and its long-term ramifications (Tambur 2015). Indeed, during the Soviet period, Estonia had one of the highest rates of migration by Russian speakers of all the Soviet republics, which drastically altered the ethnic balance from about 4–7% of Russian-speaking minority before the Estonia’s occupation by the Soviet Union in 1944 to about 40% just in a matter of several decades (Kasekamp 2010). This mass inflow resulted in the subtle imposition not only of the Russian language, but also of Russian cultural, political and economic interests (Kreindler 1988, 11–13). Soviet-time migrants represented different cultural attitudes and values based on the “Soviet-type collectivism, including obedience to the party elite, denial of market relations, and paternalism and collectivism in workplace relations” (Lauristin and Heidmets 2002, 21). Seen from this perspective, the majority of the Russian-speaking community is perceived by Estonians as “migrants according to international law because they have crossed an international border when they moved to Estonia”, which was illegally annexed by the USSR (Kuus 2007, 73).

Ilves attributed the conservatism of Russian speakers to their location “on the front line” (Kaljurand 2015) and thus exposure to various conflicts and controversies unfolding in Estonia. In the context of this study, two factors loom large. One is a controversial impact of the crisis in Russia-EU relations

on the Russophone population of Estonia. As Ilves noted, “Europe is in a very serious crisis right now...because of the re-nationalisation of European politics...partly brought on by the refugee crisis” (Bahovski 2016). Yet, the discourse related to this crisis encompassed historical allusions that morph into othering Russia as the successor of the Soviet Union:

A country like Estonia is sustainable as a country only within a broader union of like-minded states based on common values and enjoying a common currency, a common economy and free trade...For a country like mine to stand alone—this is delusional; this is how Estonia lost its independence in 1939–40. This kind of naive belief that if we declare ourselves neutral then we will be left alone...You cannot have open borders within Europe without strong closed borders on the outside. (Bahovski 2016)

The second factor has to do with increasing coherence within both the Estonian majority and the Russian minority, along with the growing distance between them. In comparison to 2002, solidarity amongst ethnic Estonians in 2014, in fact, stayed at the same level – it increased only by 1%, from 85% to 86%. Feelings of togetherness of Russophones with ethnic Estonians slightly decreased by 4 percentage points, from 19% in 2002 to 14% in 2014. In contrast, solidarity of Russians living in Estonia with Russians in Russia proper significantly increased in this period, moving up from 56% in 2002 to 75% in 2014. Yet, the shared group feelings amongst Russians in Estonia didn’t change during these 12 years and remained on the level of 52–53% (Vihalemm 2016).

In the meantime, the refugee crisis has brought to the fore the previous state programmes aimed at integration of Russian speakers into the Estonian society. Ex-minister of culture, Laine Randjärv (rightist Reform Party), pointed out that the level of xenophobia has been increasing, as the vice mayor of Tallinn, Mihhail Kõlvart (leftist Centrist Party) drew attention to the lack of humanism in Estonian government towards ethnic minorities in the last 20 years (RusPostimees 2016).

To conclude, arguably comparisons between the Estonian government’s policies towards the Soviet-era migrants and the newest wave of refugees appear justifiable, because in both cases the core of the debate is how to “overcome the historical legacy of defensive nationalism in order to create the concept of a democratic Estonian nation” (Lauristin and Heidmets 2002, 20). In this regard, the immigration debate in Estonia has been remarkably consistent with the identity-making issues being at stake – national integrity and the space for diversity and multiculturalism on the one hand, and survival of the Estonian nation and adherence to European norms, rules and principles on the other.

Estonian Artists Searching for “Common Grounds”: Opening Up to Immigrants

Unlike the national political establishment that vacillates between anti-migrant rhetoric and the EU-promoted liberal agenda, Estonian artists mostly construct the migrant-friendly narrative. It pivots around the Estonian national experience of being refugees during the World War II and the Soviet occupation. Since 2014, a number of books, films and exhibitions focused on this topic were produced across the country. The majority of them addressed the tragic remembrance of the nation’s survival and suffering in exile and immigration.⁴ As an example, Anna Hints’s project *Collect Our Story* (Kogu Me Lugu), performed in 2015 in Võru, Kuressare, Valga and Narva, tells the stories of 50 Estonian families, who were either deported from Estonia, or lived under German and Soviet occupation (Morton 2015). In 2016, the Swedish Baltic Art Center organized a photo exhibition *Stories of Migration – then and now*, which was held at the Museum of Occupation in Tallinn. The Center also sponsored a film project in which youths from Sweden, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania participated in the typical for the World War II period refugee boat trip across the Baltic Sea. The purpose of it was to help them reassess the current refugee crisis by experiencing the deprivations that the Baltic refugees had faced during the World War II (BAC 2016). Edgar Tedresaar’s performance *Teekond vabadusse* (The Journey to Freedom), which took place at Tartu Art Gallery in 2016, addresses the same topic, depicting the fleet of the Estonian refugees to Sweden on boats during the World War II (Kunstimaja 2016). The contest *Comers, Goers and Stayers* held in Estonia in 2016 is an example of artistic resignification of popular geopolitical imageries by means of introducing them into the global political agenda to represent “the different identities of Estonians as migrants, the integration of new communities and respecting diversity from the nineteenth century until today” (EV100 2016).

The cartoon by Arnold Sepp and Endel Kõks *Mis teha – siin ta on* (*What to do – (s)he is here*), written in 1947 and reissued in 2014 in English translation, in words of its editor Ilvi Jõe-Cannon, would “give a psychological uplift to thousand” (Sepp and Kõks 2014, 4) new refugees, as it did to Estonians in wartime. The cartoon tells a story of Märt Murakas and his family, who were sent by the Nazi authorities to Germany as *Östarbeiters*, and later were liberated by the American forces, who accommodated them in the camp for the “displaced persons” (DP). Recalling his experience in Germany, Märt Murakas ironically described the harsh requirements imposed by the Nazi authorities on the Estonian labourers as the “lifestyle in accordance with the European rules” (Sepp and Kõks 2014, 36–39). However, after the liberation, he and his family had to survive under difficult conditions when they were treated as Nazi collaborators (Sepp and Kõks

2014, 74). The cartoon ends with Murakas pondering about the fate of DPs, as he awaits another possible deportation and yearns for a place that he can finally call home. He posits this question: “The planet had suddenly become so small that little DP did not fit in its desert or the green fields; where is the place for him?” (Sepp and Kõks 2014, 111).

Kristina Norman, a well-known bilingual Russian-Estonian artist, discussed the similar topic in her documentary *Common Ground* (2013). She addressed popular narratives about immigration through telling two inter-related stories about Estonian refugees, who fled from the Soviet occupation in 1944 to Sweden, and today’s asylum seekers from the “third world countries” living temporarily at the Illuka Reception Centre near Jõhvi, a small Estonian village. The film described everyday life of the refugees, including their living conditions, facilities, financial means and other practicalities. Yet, the key problem is not material: it is the refugees’ total exclusion from the Estonian society. In the words of the one of the Illuka centre’s residents, “Nobody comes here to talk to us...every days it’s only trees” (Norman 2013, 23:10). This social alienation represented a sharp contrast to Estonian refugees’ story during the World War II, when the local population in Sweden accepted Estonians looking for safety as members of the Swedish society. Yet, today the locals treat the residents of the Illuka Centre, who represent diverse cultural backgrounds, as exotic and even dangerous. As one of the asylum seekers recalled:

when we go to the village or to the city, people come to look at us, they want to touch us, it is very difficult...in JõhviI’ve met a guy. I don’t know whether he was Russian or Estonian, but when he saw me for the first time, he ran to me and greeted me. He touched me as if I was very strange, he rubbed his skin against mine, to see if my skin leaves a stain on his. It hurt me a lot. My little experience made me scared of Estonian people. (Norman 2013, 28:49)

Kristina Norman’s narrative ultimately became critical of not only Estonia’s migration policy, but also of the post-Soviet nation-building in this country. Another asylum seeker explained,

this place is totally isolated from their communities...I think it’s enough to know their mentality. That they have no place for asylum seekers...It is written on papers that asylum seekers are having a good life. Of course, if you ask me about this camp, this building is good for living, for sleeping....but I am talking about the society. We are totally isolated. We have no idea what the Estonians look like. (Norman 2013, 30:42)

Birgit Püve’s photo exhibition *Varjupaik* (Shelter), which took place in Tallinn Art Gallery in 2017, developed the same issue, presenting a series of photos depicting Tallinn’s streets and shops as the residents of the Vao centre for asylum seekers see them. This was accomplished through the appearance of shadowy figures of refugees, who were reflected in the windows of beautiful boutiques to emphasize their social exclusion. The artist suggested that the

difficulties they face whilst trying to assimilate make Estonia a transit state, meaning that they will continue their journey (Sepp 2017).

Estonia as a transit country is in the focus of the *Dissidents* film (Sangarid, dir. by Jaak Kilmi, 2017). Its plot depicts a comic story of three Estonian youngsters who in the middle of the 1980s escaped from the Soviet Estonia to Finland and then to Sweden, finding themselves in roles of cultural strangers, misbehaving, misinterpreting and misusing the hospitality of the two host Nordic countries. Ultimately, out of three only one Estonian was capable of integrating into the Swedish society. In the final scenes that extended the story to today's Estonia, he incidentally encounters a group of immigrant children locked in the ferry compartment and evidently hungry. Being a migrant himself, the Estonian ex-escapee, as a sign of solidarity with the underage refugees, gave them a wrist-watch that many years ago had belonged to his deceased friend. This gesture nicely revealed the ambiguity of attitudes to contemporary refugees in Estonian society, especially amongst those who experienced migration to other countries: the gift was largely symbolic, affective and momentary. It left the impression that the solidarity with refugees is largely superficial as it reflects unwillingness to invest appropriate resources into resolving this issue.

Images of refugees as “absolute Others”, who are “dangerously criminal and exotic” were criticized in a number of Estonian exhibitions, including *On Disappearing and For Vanishing* held in Tartu in March 2016, *The Travellers: Voyage and Migration in New Art from Central and Eastern Europe* (Ektermann 2017) and *Welcome me Estonia. Добро пожаловать в Эстонию. Tere tulemast mulle Eestis* (Triisberg 2016), which took place in Tallinn in 2017–2018. In the words of Estonian art critic Airi Triisberg, this art narrative challenges “the conservative phantasms of social, cultural and ethnic homogeneity stigmatising certain ethnic groups as alien” (Triisberg 2009, 105), and raises a wider geopolitical issue of different face(t)s of the “radical Other” in the eyes of the ethnic Estonian majority. Estonian cultural debate on these issues refers to post-colonial theory, including Homi Bhabha's ideas of “the third space” and Irit Rogoff's “unhomed geographies” (Rogoff 2001). It is meant to contest “the power of the state with its various apparatus for granting rights and deterring issues of belongingness” (Triisberg 2009, 100–101). The nationalist dark feelings towards both “domestic” (Russian speakers) and non-domestic (new) migrants are also collected and presented in an exaggerated manner by Estonian comic group *Tujurikkuja (Mood Spoilers)*. In their performance, they provocatively combine the music of the non-official anthem of the Estonian 1989 Independence movement *Ei ole ükski ükski maa (No country stands alone)*,⁵ with highly intolerant and xenophobic lyrics towards “aliens” as all of those who are non-ethnic Estonian (Külmoja 2016).

Remarkably, the migrants-friendly representations, grounded in the ethnic Estonian memories of the World War II, are stretched far beyond the issues of national identity and embrace the wide range of cosmopolitan values of

diversity, hybridity and heterogeneity. Some Estonian performers and cultural figures critically addressed the sympathies to ethnic and racial homogeneity existing within the far-right nationalist groups much prior to the refugee crisis. Back in 2007, an Estonian artist with Ukrainian roots Tanja Muravskaja in an artwork *Positions* has self-portrayed in explicitly Oriental attire against the backdrop of Estonian national flag as a gesture of radical diversification of Estonian national identity and its irreducibility to ethnically “authentic” components. Another piece in the same series pictured three young right-wing extremists, again with Estonian national flag, which reminds about dangers of appropriating national identity by extremists (Muravskaja 2018).

To sum, the domestic critique, when it comes to the cultural representations of migrants and refugees, often addresses Estonia’s nation-building policy as rigid and lacking in empathy. This remains a sensitive issue for the public discourse because it elucidates the flip side of the Estonian ethnic nationalism that might distance this country from the norms espoused by the EU. In other words, the widespread demonization of migrants and refugees in Estonian public discourse makes finding common ground “a naïve hope” (Ojavee 2016).

The View from Narva: The Refugee Crisis and the “Double Immigration”

Discourses on migration by residents of Narva amply demonstrate how the identity-driven narratives on ethnic minorities re-articulate the rhetoric of political exclusion as triggered by the refugee crisis. The Estonian city of Narva and the adjacent region of Ida-Virumaa are widely considered as a Russian-language enclave with the population characterized by the Soviet-style mentality, which is culturally and politically remote from the dominant Estonian majority (Kallas 2016; Kattago 2008; Pfoser 2015; Trimbach and Shannon 2015; Zabrodskaja 2015). Many popular and academic works portray the Ida-Virumaa region and Narva as sources of a peculiar identity, which is very different from other Estonian lands (Khvostov 2013; Raik 2014). Decaying local economy, high level of unemployment and intensive outflow of youth from the city, combined with the proximity to hostile Russia produce a hardly attractive image of this region.

Many Russian speakers trace their identity to the Soviet times, and, on this basis, consider themselves “aliens”, even if they were born in Estonia and have Estonian passports. Many of them felt betrayed both by Russia and independent Estonia that equally abandoned them. As a representative of Narva in the Estonian parliament notes,

it is very painful, all this psychosis about citizenship rights...of those who had Soviet roots and were constantly under the threat of deportation...They thought [about Estonians] that if they had lived peacefully with those guys, they would

continue to do so...People just had no idea what would occur to them after the independence.⁶

Paradoxically, this discourse of alienation can be interpreted as an acceptance by a significant part of the Russophones of the Estonian “act of interpellation”: the majority named them “immigrants”, and they – although reluctantly – admitted this status and formed their identity on the basis of this distinction, including the preference for Russian or “grey” passports over Estonian ones. As a representative of the local branch of a foundation working with migrants points out,

when it became legally possible to obtain Estonian passport through accomplishing integrationist or language requirements, many people just had no opportunity to do so. Someone has worked as a sailor and was physically absent, for someone it was impossible because of his or her age. Imagine, all their lives they lived on this territory without knowing language, and suddenly they have to learn it. Opting for Russian citizenship or a foreign passport was, tactically, a simpler decision.⁷

Feelings of isolation and deprivation that many Russian speakers in Estonia had experienced in the 1990s are currently reproduced in different cultural and social forms. Some Russian speakers in Narva sarcastically consider Estonians working in the city as purportedly spreading Western civilization to non-Estonian groups and some Estonians share these feelings. As a representative of a local NGO working with EU educational projects mentions, “it is a typical perception of those Estonians who come to Narva for work, that they are like missionaries here....bringing European culture to us”.⁸

The Estonian language is the key marker of drawing boundaries between ethnic Estonians and Russians. In the opinions of many Russian speakers of Narva, the Estonian government isn’t sufficiently interested in integrating them: the position of the minister of integration has been abolished, and the existing Estonian language textbooks are of inferior quality.⁹

However, the widespread feelings of cultural and social deprivation and marginalization did not induce any symbolic solidarity with refugees. Moreover, the negative attitudes towards the prospects of accommodating refugees became a consolidating factor for the local polity in Narva. Thus, representatives of the Centrist Party in this city, as well as the Ida-Virumaa regional officials in 2015 reacted quite strongly to the Estonian government’s request to accept refugees. They declared that it would be impossible to integrate the refugees into the region, “where only a minority of the population is sufficiently integrated” (ViruProspect 2015b). Mikhail Stalnukhin, an ethnically Russian member of Estonian parliament from Narva, frames the key question in the following manner: “Are we ready to accept thousands and thousands of people of different culture, who believe that we are those who are responsible for all their misfortune?” (RusPostimees 2015)

In the worlds of Kristiina Ojuland, the resentment towards refugees could potentially serve as a force that will bring closer the Russian-speaking minority and Estonian majority. In February 2016, she noted: “The collection of signatures against accepting refugees demonstrated that the Russian-speaking residents of this country did not hesitate when they had an opportunity to sign it” (Stolitsa 2016). However, due to its alienation, Narva’s Russian-speaking community is sceptical that this could be accomplished. As a result, they perceive themselves as bystanders in the context of the unfolding refugee crisis. As a local politician explains,

we survived the hard times in the 1990s. We accrued migrant experience in the last 25 years. What else can threaten us? Multiculturalism doesn’t work..... It is an opinion here [in Narva] that ‘ok, if you can’t live with us, try living with them [refugees]. They [refugees] are avengers for us.¹⁰

The interviewees in Narva have reported a strong identity linkage to Russia:

people are really identifying themselves with Russia. A lot of families watch Russian TV, have Russian flags in their cars and say about themselves that “we are Russians”...One day I saw that my son had written in his Estonian language notebook a slogan “Russia is the best”...I can remember another example, when in November, shortly after Turkey had shot down Russian fighter jet, my daughter’s class was supposed to go to Turkey for a study trip. Tickets were already bought and our partner there was very reliable. But the majority of parents refused to travel.¹¹

As consumers of Russian state media, Estonian Russian speakers find themselves under a strong influence of the dominant interpretation of the refugee crisis as an existential security threat. In this context, Moscow is eager to misrepresent Estonia as a xenophobic (Lenta.ru 2016) and even Nazi-friendly (Klenskii 2016) country, which resurrects a ploy that the Kremlin propaganda had used for years. At the same time, Moscow propaganda seems to be sympathetic with promoting the portrayal of Estonia as a disloyal EU member due to its reluctance to open up to a more multicultural model of society, which dates back to the decade-long debate on the rights and the status of Russian speakers in this country (Utro.ru 2016). Moscow argues that Estonia, as all Baltic states, now faces a destabilising prospect of mass refugee inflow (Veretennikova 2017) because of its adherence to the EU and NATO (Orlov 2015). The overarching thrust of the argument is that Estonia would be better off with Russia rather than the EU (Sikorskii 2016). However, unlike what it did in Germany, Russia did not make any efforts to mobilize the Russophone community on the basis of protesting against immigration; yet, the Kremlin-coordinated information policy is undoubtedly supportive of those voices (like Kristiina Ojuland, the founder of a conservative liberalist

People's Unity Party), who commented on and reacted to the refugee discussions in a highly alarmist tone (Braghiroli and Makarychev 2017).

Despite harbouring strong affinity for Russia, most Narva residents tend to view it as a distant motherland. This is due to the perception that Russia does not care enough about its compatriots in the Baltic states. As Narva's representative in the Estonian legislature puts it, the Russian diplomatic service in Estonia is inefficient with regard to winning hearts and minds of local Russian speakers. He adds, "They are really not interested in people, it is only about money".¹² Others think that Russia wants to politically patronize Russian speakers in Estonia, which is unacceptable for many of them. Some of the respondents feel as if they are suspended in the limbo of *double internal immigration* being excluded both from Estonia and Russia. As a local historian notes, "double internal immigration means that we reject neither Estonia, nor Russia, yet we live within our own space".¹³

In fact, Moscow's interpretation of the refugee crisis and its consequences for Europe has only limited purchase in Estonia. Narva's Russian speakers view Europe ambivalently. On the one hand, it is seen as a source of potential dangers, including those related to the refugee crisis. Eurosceptic attitudes are nurtured by the disappointment with the European institutions as guardians of minority rights after 2004, which is widespread in Russophone community (Cianetti and Nakai 2017, 5). But on the other hand, the EU is also perceived locally as a source of inspiration and attraction. A large part of professional communities in Narva with strong connections with the EU is certain that Estonia as a member of the EU should be prepared to share the common risks, and in particular those associated with the refugee crisis. EU foundations in cooperation with their Estonian partners have launched a number of projects focused on working with different categories of immigrants, such as *Our People* (aimed at social adaptation of migrants) and *Reading Club for Migrants* (project run by the City Library of Narva since 2013). According to one interviewee, because at present no Middle Eastern refugees have settled in Narva, the experience of programmes focused on migrants with non-Western cultural background is used for working with socially marginalized groups in Narva, including alcoholics, drug addicts and former prisoners.¹⁴ As a representative of local NGOs dealing with people with migrant background points out, "all these speculations about 'new' and 'old' migrants remind a discussion about 'the clean' and 'the dirty'. Today all this stuff looks irrelevant. There are new challenges for both Estonia and the EU".¹⁵

Paradoxically, many Russian Estonians in Narva feel more isolated from the Estonian national culture than from the European milieu in which they see more chances to become a part of a trans-national and cross-cultural society. As one respondent mentions, "almost the whole generation of 40 years old plus here watch Russian TV and is very sarcastic about the

EU: ‘what they will try next time?’ They have a Russian-minded vista. But their children, involved in EU projects, feel very international and even more European than Estonian”.¹⁶ This explains why many local civil society activists in Narva think that Estonia will ultimately have to accept refugees in compliance with the EU directives. A representative of a local NGO points out in this regard:

We have already had an international experience, and we had a sense that we cannot stay at periphery of the world developments. We can’t avoid this, and this is our geographical destiny. Thus there is no difference how we perceive the situation [with refugees in Estonia], this wave will affect us anyway...This is something global, you have to be ready when time comes to protect yourself to survive.¹⁷

Arguably, the collective identity of Narva is constructed as an object of policies of actors “each of whom might be considered as external”, thus articulating the local in-between identity as “premised on feelings of despair, deprivation, disillusionment and abandonment - either by Russia or Estonia, or by both” (Makarychev and Yatsyk 2016, 102). Hence, these two countries exert influence on identity-making in Narva, turning it into a hybrid phenomenon, encompassing the EU liberal values, Estonian national ethnic-based narrative and Russia’s appeal stemming from the Soviet legacy.

Conclusion

In this article, I examined the Estonian cultural landscapes engendered by discourses and representations of refugees and (im)migrants. The lens of popular geopolitics helped me to identify two clusters of discourses and imageries that are particularly affected by and sensitive to the refugee crisis. One is of liberal/cosmopolitan background and overtly sympathizes with comprehensive assistance to refugees and facilitation of their integration with Estonian society. This stand, ethically articulated as a pivotal element of Estonian politics of acknowledging and appreciating the efforts of many Western countries who willingly accommodated Estonian escapees during World War II, in the meantime extends to the understanding of globalization as a driver for greater mobility of people and lesser restrictions from nation states. The second cluster is shaped by the discourses of the Russian-speaking Estonians who identify themselves with the Soviet-time enforced mobility of labour force, with the concomitant grievances about cultural alienation and claims laid against what they consider as Estonian assimilation policy. As I have mentioned, the centrality of their own experiences of resettlement and hardship of integration does not evoke any pro-refugee narratives amongst the Russian-speakers who remain deeply sceptical about the newcomers being resettled in their neighbourhood, along with the effectiveness of the Estonian government in this policy domain.

Both clusters contain counter-hegemonic potentials, either contesting manifestations of ethnic nationalism in the Estonian society enhanced by fears of the probable social, cultural and economic destabilization (in the first case), or the Estonian nation-building policy as rigid and lacking in empathy (in the second case). However, the first cluster is grounded in much more consistent and coherent set of nodal points referring to the liberal values of multiculturalism, diversity, de-bordering and inclusion. When it comes to the second cluster, its narratives look more controversial. On the one hand, the Russian-speaking community – being under the double pressure as “descendants of the Soviet occupants” and an ethnic minority – shares the dominant anti-refugee fears. On the other hand, they can’t articulate these attitudes in a straightforward way, because this might lead them to accept and even legitimize the agenda of Estonian nationalists whom they consider staunchest political enemies and accuse of setting mechanisms of exclusion and consequent borderlines differentiating and distancing the Russophones from the Estonian national mainstream. This precarious situation leaves Russian Estonians largely passive and even indifferent towards the refugee issue, presenting it as a challenge to the Estonian government.

However, the two groups of discourses, being strikingly dissimilar in many of their positions, are not isolated from each other. As I have found out, within the Russophone community there are professional groups that take the recent wave of immigration as a serious pan-European problem, and invest their efforts in tackling it at a local level. The liberal art community of Estonia, sending positive message to refugees, definitely incorporates Russian speakers in their discourses and imageries, and makes efforts to extend the practices of participatory art to the Russian-speaking regions. In fact, the refugee crisis could be understood as a more general phenomenon, which prompts the re-actualization of the nation’s older traumatic experience and suggests agenda for further research focused on the emergence of right-wing populism as one of the pivotal issues of modern times. Against this backdrop, public’s strong demand for the socially and culturally inclusive society remains one of the main antidotes against this threat in Estonia.

Notes

1. In this article, I use the terms “migrants” and “refugees” interchangeably. The former denotes people, who are driven to leave their countries of origin due to economic reason; whereas, the latter refers to those, who flee conflict and war. The wave of refugees and migrants that overwhelmed the EU makes drawing distinctions very difficult.
2. *On Disappearing and For Vanishing* (Tartu Art Museum, 2016), */Рефлексия: взгляд внутрь/изнутри* [Refleksiya: vzglyad vnutr'/iznutri]. Vol II” (Narva College, 2016), *The Artist Gaze. Self-portrait* (Tartu Art Museum, 2017) and *In the Trails of the Boat Refugees* (Tartu University, 2017). I also analyse the films *Common Ground* (dir.

Kristina Norman, 2016,) *Sangarid (Dissidents*, dir. Jaak Kilmi, 2017), and other media sources.

3. Bearers of so called a “grey passport”, or an “alien passport”, introduced by the Estonian government in 1993 for those who were not residents of Estonia until 1938 or of their descendants. A “grey passport” permits living in Estonia and travel within the EU and to Russia without a visa, but it is not an equivalent of an Estonian passport.
4. See more about Estonian contemporary art and refugee crisis in Makarychev and Yatsyk (2017).
5. See more on Singing Revolution in Estonia in Yatsyk (2016).
6. Interview with a member of Estonian parliament representing Narva, Narva, August 2016.
7. Interview with representatives of the Migration Fund, Narva, August 2016.
8. Interview with representative of NGO running EU-Estonia educational projects on refugees and migrants, Narva, August 2016.
9. Interview with representative of NGO running educational EU-Estonia’s projects on refugees and migrants, Narva, August 2016.
10. Interview with a member of Estonian parliament representing Narva, Narva, August 2016.
11. Interview with a representative of NGO running educational EU-Estonia’s projects on refugees and migrants, Narva, August 2016.
12. Interview with a member of Estonian parliament representing Narva, Narva, August 2016.
13. Interview with a local artist and historian, Narva, August 2016.
14. Gruntdivg learning Partnership “Different ways of self-realisation in the European community 2013–2015”, *New bridge*, available at www.uussild.ee.
15. Interview with a representative of the local NGO, working in the EU-Estonia project focused on people with migrant background, Narva, August 2016.
16. Interview with a representative of NGO running educational EU-Estonia’s projects on refugees and migrants, Narva, August 2016.
17. Interview with a representative of the local NGO, working in the EU-Estonia project focused on people with migrant background, Narva, August 2016.

Funding

This publication was prepared under the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence in European Studies VOICES+co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union [565693-EPP-1-2015-1-RU- EPPJMO-CoE]. This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

References

- BAC. 2016. In the trails of the boat refugees. *Baltic Art Center*. <http://www.balticartcenter.com/projects/balticboat/>.
- Bahovski, E. 2016. Toomas Hendrik Ilves: Europe is in serious crisis because of the re-nationalisation of politics. *Diplomaatia*, May. <https://www.diplomaatia.ee/en/article/toomas-hendrik-ilves-europe-is-in-serious-crisis-because-of-the-re-nationalisation-of-politics/>.

- Baltnews. 2016. Кристина Оюланд: Русские Танки - Это Не То, Чего Жителям Эстонии Надо Бояться [Kristiina Oyuland: Russkie Tanki — Eto Ne To, Chego Zhitelyam Estonii Nado Boyat'sya]. *Baltnews.ee*, April 4. http://baltnews.ee/voice_of_the_people/20160404/1014648199.html.
- Berg, E. 2003. Some unintended consequences of geopolitical reasoning in post-soviet Estonia: Texts and policy streams, maps and cartoons. *Geopolitics* 8 (1):101–20. doi:10.1080/714001012.
- Braghiroli, S., and A. Makarychev. 2017. Redefining Europe: Russia and the 2015 refugee crisis. *Geopolitics*. doi:10.1080/14650045.2017.1389721.
- Cianetti, L., and R. Nakai. 2017. Critical Trust in European Institutions: The Case of the Russian-Speaking Minorities in Estonia and Latvia. *Problems of Post-Communism* 64 (5):276–90. doi:10.1080/10758216.2016.1237292.
- Dittmer, J., and N. Gray. 2010. Popular Geopolitics 2.0: Towards new methodologies of the everyday. *Geography Compass* 4 (11):1664–77. doi:10.1111/geco.2010.4.issue-11.
- Ektermann, M. 2017. A round table on post-socialism, post-colonialism, nationalism, traveling and belonging. *Kunst.ee*, 4. <http://ajakirikunst.ee/?c=magazine&l=en&t=a-round-table-on-post-socialism-post-colonialism-nationalism-travelling-and-belonging&id=1868>.
- Err. 2016. Estonia less than enthusiastic about proposed EU asylum system change. *Err*, April 7. <http://news.err.ee/v/3fc82d69-6f26-4ca7-8989-cf69d44b29f6>.
- Err.rus. 2015. Марью Лауристин: Между Эстонией И Странами Запада Может Появиться Стена [Mar'yu Lauristin: Mezhdue Estoniei I Stranami Zapada Mozhet Poyavit'sya Stena]. *Err.rus*, September 11. <https://rus.err.ee/216951/marju-lauristin-mezhdue-jestoniej-i-stranami-zapada-mozhet-pojavitsja-stena>.
- EV100. 2016. Seven Winners of Estonia 100 Art Competition Announced. *EV100*, March 21. www.ev100.ee/en/seven-winners-estonia-100-art-competition-announced.
- Hogan-Brun, G., and S. Wright. 2013. Language, nation and citizenship: Contrast, conflict and convergence in Estonia's debate with the international community. *Nationalities Papers* 41 (2):240–58. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00905992.2012.747502>.
- Kaljurand, M. 2015a. Испытание Для Европы [Isпытanie Dlya Evropy]. *Postimees*. <https://rus.postimees.ee/3373747/ispytanie-dlya-evropy>.
- Kaljurand, M. 2015b. Migration crisis is a trial by fire for all of Europe. *Diplomaatia*, October. <https://www.diplomaatia.ee/en/article/migration-crisis-is-a-trial-by-fire-for-all-of-europe/>.
- Kaljurand, R. 2015. Estonia's 'Virtual Russian World': The Influence of Russian Media on Estonia's Russian Speakers. *Diplomaatia* 147. www.diplomaatia.ee/en/article/estonias-virtual-russian-world-the-influence-of-russian-media-on-estonias-russian-speakers-1/.
- Kallas, K. 2016. Claiming the diaspora: Russia's compatriot policy and its reception by Estonian-Russian population. *Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* 15 (3):1–25.
- Kasekamp, A. 2010. *A History of the Baltic States*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kattago, S. 2008. Commemorating liberation and occupation: War memorials along the Road to Narva. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Routledge. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01629770802461225>.
- Khvostov, A. 2013. *Страсти По Силламяэ [Strasti Po Sillamyae]*. Tallinn: Kite.
- Klenskii, D. 2016. Русофобия И Неонацизм В Эстонии [Rusofobiya I Neonatsizm v Estonii]. *REGNUM*, December 18. <https://regnum.ru/news/2218901.html>.
- Kolstø, P. 2011. Beyond Russia, becoming local: Trajectories of adaption to the fall of the soviet union among ethnic Russians in the former soviet republics. *Journal of Eurasian Studies* 2 (2):153–63. doi:10.1016/j.euras.2011.03.006.
- Kreindler, I. T. 1988. Baltic area languages in the Soviet Union: A sociolinguistic perspective. *Journal of Baltic Studies* 19 (1):5–20. doi:10.1080/01629778700000231.

- Külmoja, I. 2016. No country stands alone – Except Maybe Syria! *UT Blog*, January 15. <http://blog.ut.ee/no-country-stands-alone-except-maybe-syria>.
- Kunstimaja. 2016. Edgar Tedresaar 'Teekond Vabadusse/Journey to Freedom' 05. 05.– 29. 05.2016/Monumentaalgalerii. Tartu Art House, May 1. <http://kunstimaja.ee/2016/05/4577>.
- Kuus, M. 2007. *Geopolitics Reframed, Security and Identity in Europe's Eastern Enlargement*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lauristin, M., and M. Heidmets. 2002. Introduction: The Russian Minority in Estonia as a theoretical and political issue. In *The challenge of the Russian minority. Emerging multi-cultural democracy in Estonia*, ed. M. Lauristin and M. Heidmets, 19–31. Tartu: Tartu University Press.
- Lenta.ru. 2016. Не Приходите В Мой Дом [Ne Prikhodite v Moi Dom]. *Lenta.ru*, March 31. <https://lenta.ru/articles/2016/03/31/migrants/>.
- Makarychev, A., and A. Yatsyk. 2016. Russia–EU Borderlands after the Ukraine Crisis: The Case of Narva. In *Neighbourhood perceptions of the Ukraine Crisis*, ed. K. Stokłosa and G. Besier, 100–15. London & New York: Routledge.
- Makarychev, A., and A. Yatsyk. 2017. Estonia and the refugees: Political discourses and artistic representations. *Global Affairs* 3 (1): 1–13. doi:10.1080/23340460.2017.1316593.
- Moisio, S., V. Bachmann, L. Bialasiewicz, E. Dell'Agnese, J. Dittmer, and V. Mamadouh. 2013. Mapping the political geographies of europeanization: National discourses, external perceptions and the question of popular culture. *Progress in Human Geography* 37 (6):737–61. doi:10.1177/0309132512472093.
- Morton, E. 2015. Abandoned Estonian train station in shared memory art project. *The Calvert Journal*, July 10. <https://www.calvertjournal.com/news/show/4389/estonian-train-station-shared-memory-art-project-station-talks-voru>.
- Muravskaja, T. 2018. Tanja Muravskaja. Artist Portfolio. *Tanjamuravskaja*. Accessed May 20. http://www.tanjamuravskaja.com/TanjaMuravskaja_Portfoolio_2.pdf.
- Norman, K. 2013. *Common Ground*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKiiyHyvs84&feature=youtu.be>.
- Ojavee, S. 2016. LAIVI: My success is your opinion. In *On dissapearing and for vanishing at the Tartu Art Museum*, 11. 03.-29.05.2016. *Exhibition guide*, ed. R. Artel and S. Ojavee. Tartu: Tartu Art Museum.
- Orlov, S. 2015. Эстония Полыхнула Ненавистью К Беженцам [Estoniya Polykhnula Nenavist'yu K Bezentsam]. *Svobodnaya Pressa*, September 4. <http://svpressa.ru/world/article/131049/>.
- Petsinis, V. 2016. The Refugee Question in Europe: 'South' vs. 'East.' *Opendemocracy*, January 7. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/vassilis-petsinis/refugee-question-in-europe-south-vs-east>.
- Pfoser, A. 2015. Between security and mobility: Negotiating a hardening border regime in the Russian-Estonian Borderland. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 41 (10):1684–702. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2015.1015408.
- Postimees. 2016a. 1 in 5 respondents in Estonian survey see refugee issue as biggest problem'. *Postimees*, February 18. http://news.postimees.ee/3588993/1-in-5-respondents-in-estonian-survey-see-refugee-issue-as-biggest-problem?_ga=1.85635801.1111549236.1458244389.
- Postimees. 2016b. Оюланд Предложила Запретить Коран [Oyuland Predlozhila Zapretit' Koran v Obschestvennykh Mestakh v Estonii]. *Postimees*, April 3. <https://rus.postimees.ee/3641495/oyuland-predlozhila-zapretit-koran-v-obshchestvennyh-mestah-v-estonii>.
- Raik, K. 2014. *Моя Нарва: Между Двух Миров [Moya Narva: Mezhdyy Dvykh Mirov]*. Tartu: Petrone Print.
- Republic of Estonian Government. 2016. The general attitude of estonian residents towards migration and refugees has significantly improved. *Republic of Estonian Government*,

- December 6. <https://valitsus.ee/en/news/general-attitude-estonian-residents-towards-migration-and-refugees-has-significantly-improved>.
- Rogoff, I. 2001. *Terra Infirma: Geography's Visual Culture*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.
- RusPostimees. 2015. Официальный Ответ Нарва-Йыэсуу: У Города Нет Возможности Принять Беженцев [Ofitsial'nyi Otvet Narva-Iyesuu: U Goroda Net Vozmozhnosti Prinyat' Bezhentsev]. *Rus.Postimees*, September 11. <https://rus.postimees.ee/3324561/official-nyy-otvet-narva-yyesuu-u-goroda-net-vozmozhnosti-prinyat-bezhencev>.
- RusPostimees. 2016. Кылварт: Наша Система Не Готова К Приему Беженцев [Kylvart: Nasha Sistema Ne Gotova K Priemu Bezhentsev]. *Rus.Postimees*, March 30. <https://rus.postimees.ee/3636835/kylvart-nasha-sistema-ne-gotova-k-priemu-bezhencev>.
- Sepp, A., and E. Kõks. 2014. *Mis Teha, Siin Ta On. Pagulase Elu Piltides/Refugee. Refugee Life in Pictures*. ed. Ilvi. Jõe-Cannon. Salmistu: Eesti Diasporaa Akadeemia.
- Sepp, H. 2017. Vaat' Kõrvalt Näotut Emigranti. *SIRP*, October 6. <http://www.sirp.ee/s1-artiklid/c9-sotsiaalia/vaat-korvalt-naotut-emigranti/>.
- Sikorskii, D. 2016. Эстония Без России: Вместо Железных Дорог – Беженцы [Estoniya Bez Rossii: Vmesto Zheleznykh Dorog – Bezhentsy]. *Ekonomika Segodnya*, April 16. <https://rueconomics.ru/169236-estoniya-bez-rossii-vmesto-zheleznyh-dorog-bezhency>.
- Stolitsa. 2016. Кристина Оюланд: Беженцы – Это Большая Проблема, Которая Объединяет Живущих В Эстонии Людей [Oyuland: Bezhentsy - Eto Problema, Kotoraya Ob"einyayet Zhivuschchikh K Estonii Lyudei]. *Stolitsa.ee*, February 8. <http://stolitsa.ee/122059>.
- Tambur, S. 2015. Migration crisis polarizes opinions in Estonia. *ERR*, May 5. <https://news.err.ee/115897/migration-crisis-polarizes-opinions-in-estonia>.
- Triisberg, A. 2009. Between nation and people: On concepts of (Un)belonging. In *After war*, ed. K. Norman, 88–108. Tartu: Center for Contemporary Arts.
- Triisberg, A. 2016. "Feminist Art Strategies in the Migration Debate." *Kunst.ee* 2. <http://ajakirikumunst.ee/?c=magazine&l=en&t=feminist-art-strategies-in-the-migration-debate&id=1573>.
- Trimbach, D. J., and O. Shannon. 2015. Russians in Estonia: Is Narva the next Crimea? *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 56 (5):493–504. doi:10.1080/15387216.2015.1110040.
- Utro.ru. 2016. Эстония Не Примет Беженцев [Estoniya Ne Primet Bezhentsev]. *Utro.ru*, June 2. <https://utro.ru/news/2016/06/02/1284674.shtml>.
- Vahtla, A. 2017. Minister: No plan to discuss new refugee resettlement scheme at present. *ERR*, September 28. <http://news.err.ee/633024/minister-no-plan-to-discuss-new-refugee-resettlement-scheme-at-present>.
- Veebel, V., I. Ploom, and A. Kasekamp. 2016. Estonian perceptions of security: Not only about Russia and the refugees. *Journal on Baltic Security* 2 (1):35–70.
- Veretennikova, K. 2017. Нерусские Идут! [Nerusskie Idut!]. *Versia.ru*, February 27. <https://versia.ru/evrosoyuz-zaselyaet-vymirayushhuyu-pribaltiku-bezhencami-iz-afriki-i-azii>.
- Vihalemm, T. 2016. What factors divide and consolidate Russian population in Estonia? *Integration Challenges in a Radicalizing World*, November 29–30. Tartu. <http://www.slideshare.net/misakonverents/prof-triin-vihalemm-what-factors-divide-and-consolidate-russian-population-in-estonia>.
- ViruProspect. 2015a. За Лето Отношение Жителей Эстонии К Приему Беженцев Ухудшилось [Za Leto Otnoshenie Zhitelei Estonii K Priemu Bezhentsev Ukhudshilos]. *ViruProspect*, September 4. <http://prospekt.ee/respublika/2960-za-letu-otnoshenie-zhiteley-estonii-k-priemu-bezhencev-uhudshilos.html>.
- ViruProspect. 2015b. Ида-Вирусские Самоуправления Готовы Сказать Беженцам 'нет' [Ida-Viruskie Samoupravleniya Gotovy Skazat' Bezhentsam 'net']. *ViruProspect*, September 8. <http://prospekt.ee/politika/2995-ida-viruskie-samoupravleniya-gotovy-skazat-bezhencam-net.html>.

- Voog, A. 2016. Arvamusuuring Eesti Elanike Hoiakutest Pagulastesse', [Opinion Polls on the Attitudes of Estonian Residents towards Refugees]. https://www.valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/failid/arvamusuuring_eeesti_elanike_hoiakutest_pagulastesse_nov.2016.pdf.
- Yatsyk, A. 2016. Shaping Estonian: National identity in film, art and song. In *Suturing the ruptures: Seams and stitches in the Baltic Sea Region*, ed. A. Makarychev and A. Yatsyk, 197–226. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Zabrodskaia, A. 2015. 'What is my country to Me?' Identity construction by Russian-speakers in the Baltic countries. *Sociolinguistic Studies* 9 (2–3):217–41. doi:10.1558/sols.v9i2.26885.