LATVIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS IN THE 20TH CENTURY

THE STUDY OF A GREAT POWER AND A SMALL STATE

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ABSTRACT

In 2004 long-established security concerns of the Republic of Latvia were finally counter-balanced by their accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance, and the consequential formal association to its lead member, the United States. By examining the history of Latvian-American relations, this study provides insight on the practices of U.S. foreign policy with Latvia before this alliance, seeking consistent elements of the United States' policy with small states, despite changing systemic conditions in the twentieth century, through the inquiry – how the United States addressed Latvia, and how this changed.

Aside from the void in studies of Latvian-American relations, this study is warranted by general lack of attention to small state-great power relations in academia. Based on a model that proposes an elemental difference between the foreign policy of small and large states, both in its creation and options, this project documents the successional changes in Latvian-American relations through a diachronic case study.

While the U.S. is not *just* a great power, this work shows that the Republic of Latvia is also not simply a small state. However, U.S. dominance is not over-emphasized; rather, by pointing to the *marked weakness* of Latvia, this work questions the likelihood of small state gains in certain great power-small state relations. By means of comparative analysis it is argued that the Republic of Latvia lacked access to the traditional capacity sources – a term used for concepts of power – preventing the "paradox of small states" from weakening realist assumptions, which are often rejected in small state studies.

The frame of the study, identifiable bilateral diplomatic exchange, provides the scope and level of this inquiry. The model of analysis examines U.S. practices and avoids evaluations that attempt to measure

small state gains or success, a fact, which differentiates this work from many others in the field of small state studies. The patterns in U.S. behavior were established from a systemic level of examination, a detailed case study presents *"what"* happened whereas conditions in the international system are relied upon to answer the question *"why"*.

Although guided by assumptions from the field of small state studies this work questions how these can be applied in understanding great power behavior towards a small state. Discussing sources of capacity illustrates how this concept is valid in establishing state capability and underscoring fundamental differences between great powers and small states.

Latvia's example supports arguments that small states cannot rely on certain, often assumed, consequential capabilities. The lack of these capacity based capabilities, the foundation for examples of small states achieving disproportionate gains in relations with larger states, show that certain assumptions are not transferable to all small states. In the Latvian example, the challenges of small state newness, including failing state legitimacy and structural weakness along with Latvia's spatial detachment from the U.S. prevented classical small state tools of leverage from being applicable. Yet, the theoretical assessment demonstrates that by first establishing the fact that Latvia was a limited capacity small state; this fact eases the identification of behavioral themes in the case study, creating an uncontaminated view of the United States' foreign policy behavior.

As a result, three consistent behaviors are identified: first, the most impactful was the U.S.' use of international law to serve its national interests. Second, the American use of friendship in place of alliances to ensure positive exchange with Latvia without creating obligations; and third, the bureaucratically effective approach to dealing with the Baltic as a whole. Theses primary behavior patterns are revisited in terms of large-small relations, a discussion which facilitates secondary inquiries.

The nature of great power-small state relations in IR are presented as transcending the concepts currently presented in other studies of large and small bilateral relations. Small states gravitate toward great powers in search of security, protection, partnerships, and resources, and based on the case study's example, this inclination creates higher threshold of acceptance for the behavior of a great state, and modifies the behavior of the small.

This work signifies that certain behaviors may likely be part of great power – small states relations, however unlike the other research focusing on small state behavior, this research presents a template for the further examination of U.S. behavior with limited capacity small states, like Latvia. It is deliberated that one of the key factors in influencing U.S. behavior towards a small state is the type of small state the great power is dealing with. This categorization is closely related to the capacity, capability and the utility the U.S. designates such states. As a result this research suggests that for the general study of small state-great power relations a broader definition of small state needs to be created, while academic exploration of more unitized small state definitions are necessary to study U.S. relations with these states.

KURZZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Im Jahr 2004 wurden die seit langem bestehenden Sicherheitsbedenken der Republik Lettland durch ihren Beitritt zur NATO und die daraus folgende formale Verbindung mit deren führendem Mitglied, den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika, endlich ausgeglichen.

Indem sie die Geschichte der lettisch-amerikanischen Beziehungen untersucht, ermöglicht die vorliegende Arbeit einen Einblick in die Methoden der US-Außenpolitik gegenüber Lettland vor dem Beitritt des Landes zum Nordatlantikpakt. Die Untersuchung zeigt, wie die USA sich gegenüber Lettland verhalten haben und wie sich dieses Verhalten im Laufe der Zeit verändert hat, und weist – trotz der sich im 20. Jahrhundert wandelnden systemischen Rahmenbedingungen – konsistente Elemente der Politik der USA gegenüber Kleinstaaten auf.

Neben der bestehenden Forschungslücke bei Studien zu lettisch-amerikanischen Beziehungen, ist die vorliegende Arbeit durch den allgemeinen Mangel an akademischer Aufmerksamkeit für die Beziehungen zwischen Kleinstaaten und Großmächten begründet. Basierend auf einem Modell, das elementare Unterschiede sowohl bei der Formulierung als auch in den Optionen zwischen den Außenpolitiken kleiner und großer Staaten vorschlägt, dokumentiert die vorliegende Untersuchung anhand einer diachronischen Fallstudie die zeitlich aufeinander folgenden Veränderungen in den lettisch-amerikanischen Beziehungen.

Die Untersuchung zeigt, dass die USA nicht nur eine Großmacht sind, dass aber auch die Republik Lettland in gleicher Weise nicht nur ein Kleinstaat ist. Dabei wird die Dominanz der Vereinigten Staaten jedoch nicht überbetont. Vielmehr stellt die Arbeit, indem sie die ausgeprägte Schwäche Lettlands aufzeigt, die Wahrscheinlichkeit infrage, dass sich kleine Staaten in bestimmten Großmacht-Kleinstaat-Beziehungen

Vorteile verschaffen können. Mittels einer komparativen Analyse wird argumentiert, dass die Republik Lettland keinen Zugang zu traditionellen Kapazitätsquellen – capacity, ein Ausdruck, der für die verschiedensten machttheoretische Konzepte verwendet wird – hatte. Dieses verhinderte, dass das „Paradoxon der Kleinstaaten“ die in der Kleinstaatenforschung oftmals zurückgewiesenen Annahmen des Realismus in zwischenstaatlichen Beziehungen schwächte.

Der Rahmen der Studie – identifizierbarer bilateraler diplomatischer Austausch – gibt den Umfang und die Ebene der Untersuchung vor. Das Analysemodell untersucht US-Methoden und -Verfahren und vermeidet dabei bewusst Bewertungen, die versuchen, die Gewinne oder Erfolge von Kleinstaaten zu messen. Dieser Umstand unterscheidet die vorliegende Arbeit von vielen anderen im Feld der Kleinstaatenforschung. Die Muster im Verhalten der USA werden durch einen systemischen Untersuchungsansatz identifiziert, wobei in einer detaillierten Fallstudie aufgezeigt wird, „Was“ passiert ist, während die Bedingungen des internationalen Systems herangezogen werden, um die Frage nach dem „Warum“ in den lettisch-amerikanischen Beziehungen zu beantworten.

Geleitet durch Annahmen aus dem Fachgebiet der Kleinstaatenforschung, hinterfragt die vorliegende Arbeit gleichwohl, wie diese Annahmen angewandt werden können, um das Verhalten von Großmächten gegenüber Kleinstaaten zu verstehen. Die Diskussion um die Quellen der „Kapazität von Staaten“ veranschaulicht die Validität dieses Konzeptes im Bezug auf die Etablierung der Leistungsfähigkeit (capability) eines Staates und die Hervorhebung der fundamentalen Unterschiede zwischen Großmächten und Kleinstaaten.

Das Beispiel Lettlands stützt das Argument, dass sich Kleinstaaten nicht auf bestimmte, oft vermutete, logisch folgende Fähigkeiten verlassen können. Der Mangel an diesen auf Kapazitäten gründenden Fähigkeiten, die die Grundlage für beispielhafte überproportionale Gewinne von Kleinstaaten in den Beziehungen zu größen Staaten bilden, zeigt, dass bestimmte Annahmen nicht auf bestimmte Kleinstaaten übertragbar sind.

Im lettischen Beispiel hinderten die Herausforderungen eines sehr jungen Kleinstaats, unter ihnen mangelnde staatliche Legitimität und strukturelle Schwäche, verbunden mit Lettlands räumlicher Distanz zu den USA, das Land daran, die klassischen „Kleinstaaten-Hebelwerkzeuge“ anzuwenden. Dennoch weist die theoretische Bewertung zunächst die Tatsache nach, dass Lettland ein Kleinstaat mit limitierten Kapazitäten war, weil dadurch aufgezeigt wird, dass genau dieser Umstand in der Fallstudie die Identifikation von Verhaltungsmustern erleichtert, da er einen unvoreingenommenen Blick auf das außenpolitische Verhalten der USA erlaubt.

Im Ergebnis werden drei konsistente Verhaltensweisen der USA identifiziert: erstens war das wirksamste Mittel die Nutzung internationalen Rechts zum Wohle nationaler Interessen der USA. Zweitens nützte der Gebrauch von „Freundschaft“ anstelle von Allianzen, um einen positiven Austausch mit Lettland zu sichern, ohne Verpflichtungen eingehen zu müssen. Und drittens war der verwaltungstechnische Ansatz effektiv, das Baltikum als Ganzes zu behandeln. Diese grundlegenden Verhaltensmuster werden in Bezug auf die Beziehungen von großen zu kleinen Staaten erneut aufgegriffen; eine Diskussion, die weiterführende Forschungsfragen anregt.

Es wird dargestellt, dass die Art des Verhältnisses zwischen Großmacht und Kleinstaat in den internationalen Beziehungen über die Konzepte hinausgeht, die momentan in anderen Studien zu bilateralen Beziehungen zwischen Groß- und Kleinstaaten vertreten werden. Auf der Suche nach Sicherheit, Schutz, Partnerschaften und Ressourcen fühlen sich Kleinstaaten zu Großmächten hingezogen. Im Beispiel der vorliegenden Fallstudie führt diese Tendenz dazu, dass die Akzeptanzschwelle für das Verhalten der Großmacht erhöht wird und sich das Verhalten des Kleinstaates ändert.

Die Arbeit verdeutlicht, dass bestimmte Verhaltensweisen wahrscheinlich Teil von Großmacht-Kleinstaat-Beziehungen sein können. Im Gegensatz zur gegenwärtigen Forschung auf dem Gebiet der Kleinstaaten bietet die

vorliegende Untersuchung jedoch darüber hinaus eine Mustervorlage für die weitere Untersuchung des US-amerikanischen Verhaltens gegenüber Kleinstaaten mit limitierten Kapazitäten, wie Lettland. Die Überlegung ist, dass einer der Schlüsselfaktoren im Verhalten der USA gegenüber einem Kleinstaat die spezielle Eigenart des Kleinstaates ist, mit dem die Großmacht sich beschäftigt. Diese Kategorisierung ist eng mit der Kapazität, den Fähigkeiten und dem Nutzen verbunden, den die USA solchen Staaten zuweisen. Als Ergebnis schlägt die vorliegende Untersuchung deshalb vor, dass für die allgemeine Forschung zu den Machtbeziehungen zwischen Kleinstaaten und Großmächten eine breitere Definition von „Kleinstaat“ entwickelt werden muss, während für die akademische Forschung stärker modularisierte Kleinstaaten-Definitionen notwendig sind, um US-Beziehungen mit diesen Staaten zu untersuchen.

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1 THE RESEARCH INQUIRY

USING THE SMALL TO UNDERSTAND THE GREAT

Although an entire field of research on small state behavior exists in the field of international relations (IR), the behavior of so-called great powers or super powers toward small states remains unaddressed.[1] As such states function in a world composed predominantly of smaller and small states, it has been and can still be argued that knowledge of small states is almost as important to an understanding of world politics as comprehension of great power politics.[2]

To aid in filling this research void, this present inquiry uses a case study to ask the primary question: *How has the United States addressed Latvia historically, and how has this approach changed*?

During the twentieth century, the foreign relations of the Republic of Latvia and the United States of America were greatly influenced by the capacity asymmetry between these two states. As is the general rule, the particular characteristics of Latvia – as a small state – influenced its relations with the United States; these then involve different considerations than interstate relations among equals, based on the differing levels of state capacity and the resulting foreign policy capabilities.[3]

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[1] This work's focus on the twentieth century will depict the United States as a great power reflecting its status during most of the selected timeframe (see generalized categories of states in Chapter II, Table 2.2).

[2] A. Vandenbosch, *Dutch Foreign Policy since 1815: A Study in Small Power Politics* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1959), 2.

[3] David Vital, "The Inequality of States: A Study of the Small Power in International Relations," in *Small States in International Relations*, ed. Christine Ingebritsen, Iver B. Neumann, Sieglinde Gstöhl, and Jessica Beyer (Reykjavik: University of Iceland Press, 2006), 77.

This inquiry serves to examine the foreign relations of Latvia and the United States in the twentieth century, based on an assumption that recognizes the value of understanding past foreign policy behavior and evaluating how it has changed in order to draw reasonable conclusions about the process by which it will evolve in the future.[4] This approach simultaneously leads to secondary research inquiries, including:

> Are the current methods for studying small state behavior applicable in a small state-great power constellation?
>
> Do specific great powers address all small states in a similar manner? And,
>
> If not, which factors play the greatest role in influencing great power behavior towards small states?
>
> Finally, can all small states rely upon and use great power behavior patterns as a means of capacity building in their relations with such a state?

The current understanding of large state–small state bilateralism, which implicitly addresses the capacity disparities between the United States of America and Latvia, remains relevant to this work as such disparities simplified the U.S. approach to its relations with Latvia, making the mechanisms or tools of U.S. policy toward this state more evident. This fact enables a clear identification and later examination of consistent themes in the United States' relations with Latvia, revealing three prominent behavioral practices: (1) the United States' use of such tools as flexible interpretation of international law to serve U.S. policy goals, (2) regional grouping (bundling) to address interstate issues in foreign relations, and (3) a tendency to offer ambiguous support in place of bilateral alliances.

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[4] For work successfully based on a similar assumption see: Karl K. Schonberg, *Pursuing the National Interest: Moments of Transition in Twentieth Century American Foreign Policy* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 283.

These primary findings not only create a framework for great power behavior towards certain small states, but also facilitate arguments, which address the secondary inquiries dealing with shortcomings in the study of small states – focusing mostly on the all too narrow understanding of what a small state is and how this definition changes depending on external factors and partners in foreign relations.

This analysis will show that Latvian–American[5] relations have been controlled by the U.S. based on an extended understanding of small state vulnerability discussed in this work, connected to both factors of small state newness and geographic distance from the U.S. which influenced U.S. foreign policy, or behavior towards Latvia. Furthermore, it will be shown that this understanding, centered on the historical capacity (power) of American foreign policy in the twentieth century, is confirmed by the intensity with which Latvian-American relations were altered to meet U.S. national interests. Showing that the capacity disparity between states like Latvia and the U.S. remained too large in the twentieth century for Latvia to utilize currently accepted ideas of small state leverage.

1.1 THE RELEVANCE OF GREAT–SMALL RELATIONS

Historically, there are two chief models for understanding a state's foreign policy behavior: (1) a conventional model founded on the traditional understanding of international relations, based on the assumption that all states are fundamentally comparable;[6] and (2) a model that proposes an elemental difference between the foreign policy of small and large states both in its creation and options.

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[5] Within this project the term "American" will be used in the expression Latvian-American relations to refer only to the policies of the United States.

[6] Maurice A. East, "Foreign Policy-Making in Small States: Some Theoretic Observations Based on a Study of the Uganda Ministry of Foreign Affairs," *Policy Sciences* 4 (1973): 491, citing Robert L. Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 1.

As IR remains a discipline that is both state and power-centric, generally the conventional model has been applied, and researchers eager to understand the United States, for example, have neglected to examine the implications of small states on U.S. foreign policy.[7] The academic neglect of the role of small states in great power foreign policy can be explained, as Maass chooses, by the fact that the focus in government and political science remains on the relations between great powers[8] and, whether "systematic or accidental," this neglect stems from the resultant understanding of international relations and corresponding theories.[9]

More specifically, realism's influence on the scholarly community has resulted in a focus on *power* (referred to here as capacity) and *structure* – both qualities that small states may lack – to produce case studies dominated by the subject of great powers and hence a comparatively limited sampling of states. Were IR to consider small states more broadly, it could gain valuable new empirical data sources, although the heterogeneity of small states should not be underestimated in the generalizations of such studies.[10]

The second model, seeing an elemental difference between small and large states offers a general framework for small state–large state bilateralism. This model is based on the logic that the interests of small states are different from the interests of great powers, which can only mean that their behavior is also different to some extent.[11] The field of small states studies has amply addressed the classical behavior patterns of

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[7] Christine Ingebritsen, et al. (eds.), *Small States in International Relations*. (Seattle; Reykjavik: University of Washington Press; University of Iceland Press, 2006), 3; Niels Amstrup, "The Perennial Problem of Small States: A Survey of Research Effort," *Cooperation and Conflict* 11 (1976): 163.

[8] Matthias Maass, "Davids and Goliath" (concept paper - unpublished, Berlin, 2008).

[9] Ibid.

[10] Iver B. Neumann and Sieglinde Gstöhl, "Lilliputians in Gulliver's World?" in *Small States in International Relations*, 4.

[11] Raimo Väyrynen, "On the Definition and Measurement of Small Power Status," *Cooperation and Conflict* 6, no. 91 (1971): 99.

small states, however, its generalizations fail to appreciably attend to issues that greatly affect certain small states, and Latvian-American bilateralism specifically exposes the weaknesses of the available framework and the limitations of current understanding. Research has focused on great power-small state bilateral relations, but such research has virtually ignored American relations with a singular small state outside of the United States' traditional sphere of interest. Rather, these *outside states* have seemingly been deemed insignificant in a discipline dominated, or at least significantly influenced, by realism. However, what is often ignored is that the U.S. is still required to deal with these geographically removed small states despite their apparent limited relevance to U.S. policy.

Studies of the relationship between small states and a great power or super power outside of the larger state's classical sphere of interest are rare.[12] Moreover, those who do examine the relationship between the United States of America and a small state do not necessarily look at the link from a great or even super power-small theoretical constellation but rather spotlight abstract issues using small state relations with the U.S. principally as illustrations, not as a central focus.[13]

In the hope of gaining an abstract understanding of the universal generalities of small states, research on small states has developed broad patterns for explaining behavior while failing to consider singularities or less common characteristics of small states. In addition, the European influence on small states studies has understandably created many

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[12] James Kurth, "The United States and Central America: Hegemony in Historical and Comparative Perspective," in *Central America: International Dimensions of the Crisis*, ed. Richard Feinberg (Teaneck, NJ; Holmes and Meier, 1982), 39.

[13] Two examples of bilateral studies of U.S.-small state relations which do look at these factors: Ahmed Noman and Kassim Almadhagi, *Yemen and the United States; A Study of a Small Power and a Super-State Relationship 1962–1994* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1996). Charles J. Bukowski, "Slovenian-American Relations in the Context of NATO Enlargement," in *Small States in the Post-Cold War World: Slovenia and NATO Enlargement* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2002), 53-82.

assumptions based on the relationship of larger-small contiguous states using geographic reality as a key source of a small state's capacity towards a larger partner. Finally, small states studies have failed to make an important differentiation that this present investigation develops: the difference between the handling of *established* small states versus *new* small states. As a result, most observations of small states lack an applicable paradigm for international neophytes,[14] making the "success strategies" of established small states the only applicable touchstone and ignoring the challenges and specifics for explaining new small state behavior and their treatment by great powers.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

The goals of this research are: (1) to address the primary research question using the most appropriate academic tools available – a case study guided by theoretical assumptions – while addressing the shortcomings of current assumptions, and (2) providing an introductory resource that highlights specific themes in the historical configuration of Latvian-American relations in the twentieth century. Of necessity, however, the scope of this research is limited and the investigation should be considered a first step in a general inquiry into American relations with certain types of small states.

An examination of Latvian-American relations must address the differences between these two states, their capacity, and resulting capabilities and how these differences affect their behavior in international relations with each other.[15] Therefore, a discussion of the main assumptions from the study of small states is a necessary element in

[14] One noteworthy work that deals with the structural challenges of new small states is Milan Jazbec, *The Diplomacies of New Small States: The Case of Slovenia with Some Comparison from the Baltics* (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate Publishing, 2001).

[15] Michael Handel, *Weak States in the International System* (London: Frank Cass, 1981), 3.

this process, taking place in Chapter II, where the main understandings and key issues will be introduced, as well as the difficulties of applying certain assumptions to a great power-small state study, as purposed here, while the following section addresses: the selection of the Republic of Latvia as counterpart to the inquiry how the United States addresses small states, the resources available on Latvia, and the framework and margins of the case study, including the selected model for methodology.

1.2.1 CASE STUDY: LATVIA, BOTH SUBJECT AND OBJECT IN IR

Towards the end of the twentieth century it became routine to depict the United States as the *only* superpower, the most influential country in the world. Throughout the last century, American influence on global economy, world diplomacy, global culture, and international military affairs has been researched extensively. In contrast, to question the relevance of a study that includes the Republic of Latvia is to confirm the inconsequential role to which small states have generally been relegated in the field of IR.

Although the control of Latvia, and for that matter, the entire Baltic region, has long been the objective of other (larger) states' foreign policies, Latvia has rarely been a subject of foreign policy studies,[16] possibly because most non-native scholars find a country-specific study of a geographic area with less than 2 million inhabitants academically inefficient and – despite criticism – tend to a broader Baltic focus. Nevertheless, this approach has produced a notable number of comparative works and continues to advance the consideration of the Baltic as a unit rather than as individual states. Ironically, Latvia can be viewed simultaneously as globally extraordinary and regionally ordinary.

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[16] Susanne Nies also justifies her work by pointing out these topical insufficiencies: "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik, Aspekte seiner Aussenpolitik [Latvia's International Relations, Aspects of its Foreign Policy] (1918-95)." PhD dissertation, (Bonn: Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, 1995), 5.

The selection of the Republic of Latvia for this study was based not only on the research gap on Latvian foreign policy, which this work seeks to fill, but on three important considerations: (1) the readily identifiable variances in Latvia's historical relations with the United States; (2) the general level of capacity that Latvia has shown through its foreign policy capability; and (3) the good quality of the relationship that both Latvia and America claim to nurture despite great variance in these relations.

Overall, Latvia presents an exceptional example of the international system's opportunities and dangers for certain small states. For example, in the twentieth century, Latvia was neither successful in creating major alliances, pursuing an effective policy of neutrality, nor generating an international niche to ensure the maintenance of long-term sovereignty and/or a comparatively relevant international role. After it gained sovereignty in 1918 the structural weakness within the country placed it at a disadvantage diplomatically. Subsequently, World War II alliance structures created a systemic transition that tolerated Soviet regional belligerence, forcing Latvia to lose *de facto* sovereignty until after 1990, when it regained sovereignty only to be re-confronted with the same structural weakness and newness. Newness, as the case study will illustrate, counteracts the potential advantages of diplomatic strategy and, given Latvia's lack of experience and extraordinary conditions, has great potential to explain the nation's general disadvantages.

Because of this, small state scholars familiar with Latvian political history may challenge the value of this examination because of Latvia's lack of significant "success" in international relations, a popular yardstick in small state studies. However, not only are Latvia's experiences in the past century a realistic representation of how some small states fared, placing it in a bilateral framework with the United States can make the role that the U.S. relegates to certain small states more evident.

In addition, small states studies often focus on the neutrality of Finland, Switzerland, and Sweden; the success of niche states like Luxemburg, Liechtenstein, and Monaco; or past and present bilateral alliances

between Moscow and Havana or Reykjavik and Washington. The findings are difficult to apply to states like Slovakia, Hungary, Lithuania, and Georgia. As with these latter, newness, subjugation, geography, and history have forced Latvia into the role of a frontier zone or continental turnstile with security concerns remaining the most consistent factor in its foreign policies.

RESEARCH ON LATVIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Holding true to the observation that both historically and politically, the Baltics have been the objective of conflicts, research from the early 1990s focused primarily on the fall of the Soviet Union and the international repercussions of the post-Cold War world. Previously, during the Cold War, members of the Latvian diaspora in the West had been primarily responsible for the available English literature on Latvia[17] with the aim, in many cases, to sustain knowledge about Latvia in the West. Specifically, these texts focused on historical aspects or reevaluations of power constellations during both world wars and the circumstance of the Soviet annexation of Latvia in 1940.

From the mid-1970s to the early 1990s, legal studies used Latvia and the Baltic as case examples in discussions of Cold War legal precedents.[18] After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, however, Anatol Lieven's 1993 *Baltic Revolution*, a product of his firsthand observations while

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[17] See Bibliography: Diaspora Authors 1920-1989.

[18] Robert A Vitas, *The United States and Lithuania: The Stimson Doctrine of Nonrecognition* (New York: Praeger, 1990); Stefan Talmon, *Recognition of Governments in International Law, with Particular Reference to Governments in Exile*: (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Christopher O. Quaye, *Liberation Struggles in International Law* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991); Steven Corliss, "Asylum State Responsibility for the Hostile Acts of Foreign Exiles," *Journal of Refugee Law* 2, no. 2 (1990): 181-210; William J. H. Hough, "The Annexation of the Baltics and its Effect on the Development of Law Prohibiting Forcible Seizure of Territory," *Lituanus,* 34, no. 2 (1988); James Crawford, "Execution of Judgments and Foreign Sovereign Immunity," *American Journal of International Law* 75, no. 4 (1981): 820-69.

stationed in the region from 1990–92 as a *Times of London* reporter, became one of the earliest available post-Cold War works.[19] Like other texts reflecting the limited general knowledge about Latvia in the west, a good portion of this work is devoted to its history, although Lieven, despite being a descendant of a Baltic-German family, distances himself from the sentimental attachments of other historical diaspora accounts from the 1950-1970s.[20] In the months following the publication of Lieven's book, several more English texts on the Baltics became available; however, it was Carl Bilt's widely quoted 1994 article, "The Baltic Litmus Test" that brought the issue of the Baltics to the foreground by arguing that Russia's policy toward the region was an important general foreign policy barometer.[21]

The first thorough and objective discussion of Latvia's foreign policy specifically was Susanne Nies' 1994 dissertation, which provides extensive information on the creation and history of Latvian foreign policy and a brief chapter on Latvian-American relations, a resource limited to those who read German. The literature on Latvia was also broadened in the mid-1990s through the contributions of Latvian academics who were often simultaneously involved in politics.[22] Such

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[19] Anatol Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*: *Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and the Path to Independence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

[20] See Roger Legvold, "Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Republics," review of *The Baltic Revolution*, by Anatol Lieven, *Foreign Affairs (*November/December 1993), 155.

[21] Carl Bildt, "The Baltic Litmus Test," *Foreign Affairs* 73, no. 5 (1994): 73-85.

[22] For example, Foreign Minister Artis Pabriks and Immigration Minister Nils Muiznieks wrote diligently, i.e., Artis Pabricks, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," in *Post Communist States and Nations* (London: Routledge, 2001), Nils Muiznieks, "The Influence of the Baltic Popular Movements on the Process of Soviet Disintegration," *Europe-Asia Studies* 47, no. 1 (1995):11-15. Likewise, Zaneta Ozolina, Dean of the Department of Political Science at the University of Riga and named a possible presidential candidate in 2006, produced the following works: "Baltic-Nordic Interaction, Cooperation and Integration," in *Small States in a Turbulent EnvInternational Relationsonment: The Baltic Perspective*, eds. Atis Lejins and Zaneta Ozolina (Riga: Latvian Institute of International AffaInternational Relationss, 1997); idem, *The Impact of the European Union on Baltic Cooperation* (Copenhagen: Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, 1999);

works were also supplemented by Marja Nissinen's 1999 *Latvia's Transition to a Market Economy*,[23] which, although fundamentally an economic thesis, can be generally seen as "a basic building block for the understanding of Latvia."[24]

From the mid - to late 1990s, the first round of NATO's eastern expansion spurred numerous works focused on the benefits and drawbacks of enlargement and Latvian membership – although these tended to focus primarily on the viability of NATO in a post-Cold War setting and often failed to deal adequately with Latvian security as an individual issue.

Just as research on the relevance of the Latvian diaspora began to be published, Grazina Miniotaite's articles on the development of Latvia's political identity and security made a further noteworthy contribution.[25] In addition, 2003 saw the completion of T. Schmidt's comprehensive

idem, N*egotiating Futures – States, Societies and the World: Proceedings of the International Conference*, Riga, November 11-14, 2004 (Riga: LU Akademiskais apgads, 2005); idem, *Expanding Borders: Communities and Identities: Proceedings of [An] International Conference*, Riga, November 9-12, 2005 (Riga: LU Akademiskais apgads, 2006); idem, *Latvia in International Organisations* (Riga: Zinatne, 2005).

[23] Marja Nissinen, *Latvia's Transition to a Market Economy: Political Determinants of Economic Reform Policy,* Studies in Russian and Eastern European History (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999).

[24] Juris Dreifelds, review of *Latvia's Transition to a Market Economy*, by Marja Nissinen in *Europe-Asia Studies* 51, no. 7 (1999): 1308-9.

[25] Grazina Miniotaite, "Convergent Geography and Divergent Identities: A Decade of Transformation in the Baltics," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 16, no. 2 (2003): 209-222; idem, "The Baltics: In Search of Security and Identity," in *Almost NATO*, ed. Charles Krupnick (Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), 261-97. Yossi Shain, "Ethnic Diasporas and U.S. Foreign Policy," *Political Science Quarterly* 109 (1994): 811-41; David D. Laitin, *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad*, Wilder House Series in Politics, History, and Culture (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998); Sven Gunnar Simonsen, "Compatriot Games: Explaining the 'Diaspora Linkage' in Russia's Military Withdrawal from the Baltics," *Europe-Asia Studies* 53, no. 5 (2001): 771-791; Jennifer Annemarie Skulte, "Returned Diaspora, National Identity and Political Leadership in Latvia and Lithuania" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2005); Valdis Lumans, *Latvia in World War II.* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006).

comparative analysis of the Baltics' foreign policy.[26] Subsequently, historical reanalysis became a popular means for discussing Baltic political enculturation and issues of security and sovereignty, culminating in the 2008 *The Baltic Question during the Cold War*, a collection of texts by prominent authors on the role of the Baltics during the Cold War conflict.[27] This work supplemented Sven Arnswald and Marcus Wenig's (2000) collection of essays, *German and American Politics towards the Baltic Area*, which offers a starting point for a more extensive examination of the role of Latvia in U.S. foreign policy.[28]

Many of the historically oriented works discussed here share common sources, most prevalently, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS), which includes official and internal United States' State Department exchanges that many works have quoted directly or from which they have drawn inferences. Discussion about U.S. policy toward the Baltics during the Cold War is briefly discussed in more recent works, which deal with declassified information.[29] However, while works by politically recognizable retirees from the U.S. State Department or intelligence agencies, offer interesting interpretations, they may not present a well-balanced examination of the United States' actions.

Overall, even though the research available to English-speaking readers provides a broad historical and comparative analysis of the three Baltic

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[26] Thomas Schmidt, Die Außenpolitk der baltischen Staaten: im Spannungsfeld zwischen Ost und West [The Foreign Policy of the Baltic States: In Conflict between East and West]. (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2003).

[27] John Hiden, Vahur Made, and David J. Smith, (eds.), *The Baltic Question During the Cold War*. (New York: Routledge, 2008*)*.

[28] Sven Arnswald and Marcus Wenig (eds.), *German and American Policies Towards the Baltics States, Perspectives of EU and NATO Enlargement* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2000).

[29] Gregory Mitrovich, *Undermining the Kremlin: America's Strategy to Subvert the Soviet Bloc*, 1947-1956 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000); Peter Grose, *Operation Rollback: America's Secret War behind the Iron Curtain* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2000); Robert M. Gates, *From the Shadows* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

States, it has not yet filled the void in the examination of Baltic bilateral relationships with larger noncontiguous states, including a great power. Nor has it made any attempt to consider the history of Latvian-American relations from the great power-small state perspective. Hence, this current study will attempt to contribute this missing aspect by building on the foundations created by other academics to focus on Latvia.

Although the following case study necessarily draws on particularly relevant academic texts for factual summaries and case representations, certain academic texts play a major role as reference in this work, such as the contributions of Nies, Schmidt, Pacy and McHugh, and Hiden. Besides official documents like treaties, agreements and meeting protocols, the analysis is based on historical material from federal libraries in Latvia, the United States, England, and Germany, as well as on recently declassified diplomatic dispatches, cables, and U.S. National Security Reports. The primary print sources accessed are from the archives of the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, as well as other internationally recognized newspapers, which offer insights into the information available at the time. To further emphasize and elaborate on the conclusions of these more traditional sources, this study also employs data from historical interviews[30] and from interviews conducted specifically for this research with political stakeholders in both Latvia and the United States.

In addition, presenting a discussion dealing with Latvian history requires first that several phrases be defined for the sake of understanding and continuity. First, any discussion of Latvia enviably leads to a discussion of "Baltic" or "the Baltic states," terms that refer to the commonly used grouping of the independent republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The description Baltic, or Baltic states, has been attributed to the

[30] "The Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training". Online at: http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/diplomacy/

nineteenth-century German expression *Balticum* and therefore has both a geographic and social origin.[31] This discussion will also interchange the English expression *Lats and Latvians* to describe the ethnic peoples of Latvia as well as citizens of the Latvian state.[32]

The term "second republic" has also been somewhat loosely applied to the Latvian state's second independence; however, some academics argue that this nomenclature is misleading as the Latvian state is actually the legal continuation of a state founded in 1918 and is thus an extension of, not a successor to, the initial (first) republic. Despite the fact that most legal opinions outside of Latvia see no problem with this description and question the validity of Latvia's claim to continuity, the government of Latvia holds strongly to the notion of state continuity. Consequently, an additional descriptive term is needed to differentiate between the historical period between 1918 and 1940 and the post-Soviet Latvia, or reinstituted Latvian state, in place from 1989 to the present. Indeed, other disciplines are even applying the term "postcolonial" to the Baltics.[33] Alternatively, because the Latvian parliament views the 1991 government as the continuation of parliamentary sessions during the interwar period, the reinstatement may be referred to as the *Fifth Saeima Republic*, again pointing to state continuity.

1.2.2 STRUCTURE AND MARGINS OF RESEARCH DESIGN

For the actual examination of Latvian-American relations, this project will mirror the methodology of the seminal work in small states studies,

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[31] Whereas this phrase is generally accepted and universally recognized, it remains a traditionally and culturally incorrect expression and according to some "a fairly new and a rather hollow concept." Hain Rebas, "Can the Baltics Be Defended," *Baltic Defence Review* 1 (1999): 24-35.

[32] In citing primary resources, Lats and Latvians will be interchangeable with the term "*Letts,*" an expression used in America to describe ethnic Latvians before and during the First World War.

[33] Violeta Kelertas, (ed.), *Baltic Post-Colonialism* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), 1.

Baker-Fox's 1959 *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II,* despite the fact that its processes were developed for multilateral exchanges rather than long-term bilateral exchanges.[34] Like Baker-Fox's work, in Chapter III a research-based chronologic examination of Latvian-American *bilateralism* is presented.

The focus on bilateralism is important as it frames the extent and level of the case study. Here, only the official interstate relations of Latvia and the United States are examined – in terms of identifiable diplomatic exchanges. The most simple and most customary type of foreign policy, bilateral diplomacy, encompasses issues ranging from the routine establishment of diplomatic immunities to the drawing up of formal alliances. Hence, the first section of the case study begins with Latvian attempts to gain international recognition of their newly founded republic.

The case study is divided into three parts: the first era, between approximately 1918 and 1940, is tied to the post-Versailles system; the second, between 1940 and 1990, corresponds to the Cold War or bipolar bloc system; and the third, from 1990 to 2000, the post-Cold War subsystem, leading up to the U.S. support for Latvian membership in NATO.

In this project, the second section of the case study represents the longest period in Latvian-American relations, although devoting a detailed section to the international relations of a state that *de facto* did not exist (due to the Soviet annexation) may seem both tedious and questionable. For example, most authors of general Baltic or Latvian foreign policy histories have referred to the 1940–1989 period in only a few pages or in footnotes, while others have chosen to discuss the Baltics in terms of the *Baltic Question* and how other more powerful nations have dealt with the

[34] Annette Baker-Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1959).

oddity of the U.S.-instituted policy of non-recognition.[35] Nevertheless, general knowledge about the extraordinary relations of Latvia and the U.S during the Cold War is so limited that such detailed discussion is warranted. Likewise, the inclusion of what could be seen as U.S. domestic elements in this study may seem contrary to a systematic approach. However in the opinions of both states, Latvian-American relations continued during the Cold War, and represent one abstraction of the Cold War conflict and illustrate a liberal U.S. interpretation of diplomatic norms.

The last section of the case study is the briefest, not only because of its short timeframe, but because a comparatively large amount of literature on this period of Latvian foreign relations already exists. Moreover, during this era, the increasing importance of international organizations weakened the traditional designation between bilateralisms and multilateralism, thereby challenging a pure examination of bilateralism as illustrated by the significance of American support for Latvia's NATO membership. Hence, this final section and this case study ends in 2000.

Chapter IV synopsizes the case study while reintroducing the elements of small states theory applicable to Latvian-American relations and pointing to behavior patterns in how the U.S. addressed Latvia. In this synopsis, some themes dealing with bilateralism run parallel to each other so that, although they naturally cross and are at time interwoven, this presentation of the findings aims to highlight important issues singly. Hence, this chapter may be most relevant for those more interested in theoretical application, while the case study has independent historical value.

Chapter V then concludes with a revisitation of the main research question and addresses the secondary inquiries and extended relevance of this project; the academic void in the study of small states geographically located outside of the commonly accepted sphere of U.S. interests and

[35] See Chapter III, section 3.2.

these states' bilateral relations with the United States. Finally, it calls for an expansion of the definitions of "small state" in the case of their relations with great powers.

FOREIGN POLICY PRACTICES WITHOUT EVALUATIONS

What becomes evident in Chapter III and later in Chapter IV is that this work purposely divorces itself from a typical component in small states studies, namely the discussion of gains or successes in small state foreign policy. This analysis focuses solely on the mechanics and margins of Latvian-American relations. It is principally concerned with the actual practices of the United States, and to look for great power behaviors, rather than subjective evaluations of Latvian or American foreign policy.

Studies of bilateral relations have often used quantifiable factors to convey the importance of relations in terms of trade, investment, natural resources, and total economic and military power. Although methodologically strong gauges of interaction, these points, which offer a measurement for the competition among states and view foreign policy as a maximization of gains and minimization of losses, can be more gainfully applied between states with power symmetries[36] than to all types of state-to-state relationships. Even though normative factors may be helpful in measuring state-to-state bilateralism, the asymmetries of great power-small state relations do not allow such a solitary focus.[37]

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[36] Mark Webber and Michael Smith, (eds.), *Foreign Policy in a Transformed World* (Harlow, UK: Pearson Education Ltd., 2002), 31.

[37] One option for empirical evaluation would be a portioned examination of tangible factors; however, the determination of the ratio (i.e., that America is 10/1, 20/1, or 56/8 to Latvia) is as problematic as the method of inference. Indeed, given that many researchers in small states studies depend on the tangible factors associated with economics to support their claims, the decision to exclude such empirical data is a critical issue.

2 SMALL STATES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

As pointed out, the particular characteristics of Latvia – unequivocally understood in this work as a small state for reasons addressed below – changed the form of its relations with the United States; that is why theses relations involve quite different considerations than Latvian relations with other states in the twentieth century. Explanations for these special considerations are found in the field of small states studies, and the often capacity-focused behavioral assumptions provide satisfying explanations for small state actions.

These same capacity-focused assumptions can also be used to understand how the U.S. addressed Latvia, although conclusions concerning U.S. behavior, which focus purely on the vast capacity asymmetry, are considered less satisfying as they generally do not sufficiently account for the possibility of small state successes in foreign policy. This methodical problem is far from new, earlier versions of similar considerations dealing with small and large state relations (although not necessarily small and great power state relations) are what actually developed into the field of small states studies, which gained standing in the late 1950s.

The assumptions underlying small states studies take into account the specific characteristics of such states to create reliable tools for understanding their behavior. However, disagreements exist in the field on such issues as definitions, concepts of power, the importance of variables like small state diplomacy or geography, the viability of methodological approaches (e.g. whether the level of analysis should be systemic, regional or domestic), and the ultimate question of whether such a paradigm is possible or even necessary, issues which need to be addressed before the theory's applicability to the case study can be discussed.

2.1 WESTPHALIA TO EASTERN EUROPE: ASSUMPTIONS IN TRANSITION

The study of small states can be traced back to the sixteenth century, with contemporary scholars becoming re-interested in the ability of small states to maintain their sovereignty and achieve policy goals beyond their own borders during the Cold War. Although the international environment has changed markedly since the Treaty of Westphalia, the idea of the inviolability of the nation state has remained a stable component of the international system. This notion of the nation state, a dovetailed concept of the internal and external authority of the state, is described by Hans Morgenthau as "the supreme legal authority of the nation to give and enforce the law within a certain territory and, in consequence, independence from the authority of any other nation and equality with it under the law."[38]

Interest in small states has a lengthy European tradition, dominated principally by German-speaking scholars throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and attributable to the plethora of German small states (*Kleinstaaterei*) before German Unification in 1871. Later, however, core concepts about the state and nation began to be transformed, and perhaps emblematic for the early twentieth century is the following claim by H. A. L. Fisher:

> Sooner or later the small states will go. They will be absorbed in larger political aggregates. They will follow the line of historical development, which has created the large modern states of Europe out of a mosaic of tiny, and warring fiefs. And nobody will regret their demise, least of all the citizens themselves.[39]

After the end of World War I, the creation of the League of Nations introduced new opportunities for small (European) states[40] that, in a

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[38] Hans Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations* (New York: Knopf, 1967), 305.
[39] H. A. L. Fisher, "The Value of Small States," *Oxford Pamphlets* 4 (1914).
[40] Amstrup, "The Perennial Problem of Small States," 167.

matrix of idealism, became a vital part in the new balance of Europe, exuding the symbolic importance of their existence in a system that respected sovereignty and did not challenge it. In this era, new understanding of the role of international law created a fundamental gravitation of the small state toward the League of Nations, tying the league to the idea of self-preservation. Yet, despite the dominance of idealism, skepticism about the viability of small states was clear even in the league,[41] and with its ultimate failure, the focus of post-World War II academia shifted to realism.

With the onset of the Cold War, even though the existence of nonaligned or neutral nations was certainly recognized as part of the post-war system, most nations that fell into the category of small states or small powers found themselves either under Soviet control or politically, economically, and ideologically cemented into the western bloc with their policies guided by the bipolarity of the time. Hence, the social sciences remained preoccupied with this emerging bipolarity until the role of small states in a strict bipolar system drew notice.[42]

Although various contributions to the study of small states were made between 1959 and 1975, the global process of decolonization introduced new themes to the study. Not only political scientists and social anthropologists but also economists focused on the causal chain in small states studies in which limited landmass and population lead to external

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[41] William E. Rappard, "Small States in the League of Nations," *Political Science Quarterly* 49, no. 4 (1934): 544-57. In 1920, Liechtenstein was denied membership to the League of Nations because it lacked the "attributes of sovereignty and maintained no army." See Neumann and Gstöhl, "Lilliputians in Gulliver's World?" 6,.which cites Sieglinde Gstöhl, "Der Mikrostaat als Variante des Kleinstaats? Erfahrungen mit UNO und EU," in *Kleinstaaten Kontinent Europa: Probleme und Perspektiven*, ed. Romain Kirst and Arno Waschkuhn (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2001), 106.

[42] Otmar Höll, "Introduction: Toward a Broadening of the Small States Perspective," in *Small States in Europe and Dependence*, ed. Otmar Höll (Vienna: 1983), 15.

dependence, external sensitivity and vulnerability, and ultimately the influence of external factors.

As a result of the enthusiastic searches for case studies, the meaning of the small state became quite flexible, weakening arguments in the field, until in 1975 Baehr curtailed the overall relevance of small states studies by claiming that the concept was not a useful tool for analysis.[43] In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the neorealist/neoliberalist camps showed some limited interest in using small states to support new concepts of power, paying some attention to states subjectively termed "small nations" that were unaligned with any major bloc of the time. Hence, examinations of Switzerland and Finland entered the bibliographies of many researchers.

On the whole, small states studies has remained an area for European scholars, and recent interest can be attributed to several factors including the recognition that the shared characteristics of small states offer a better basis for comparison and that more recent political crises have involved smaller sovereign entities. The most obvious reason, however, is the greater number of small states since the disintegration of the Soviet Union.[44] That is, once many former Soviet states became free to create their own foreign policies, creating a framework for understanding how small states affect and are affected by the international community increased in relevance. Subsequently, the expansion policies of the European Union (EU) also changed attitudes toward small states in the field of IR. For example, the 1995 enlargement of the EU shifted the balance between large member states and those that instinctively qualify as small. The next expansion furthered this imbalance, creating new opportunities and challenges for both these states and for academics.

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[43] Peter Baehr, "Small States: A Tool for Analysis," *World Politics* 27, no. 3 (1975): 546-66.
[44] Jazbec, *The Diplomacies of New Small States*, 38.

As a result, whereas initial studies of small states focused on the exceptional and positive examples of small state foreign policy, the current focus is more on *foreign policy orientation*, *multi- and at times bilateral behavior* and the *factors affecting the foreign policy decision-making process*, including systemic effects and domestic and institutional factors.[45] Indeed, the typical themes are *viability and vulnerability,*[46] *membership in international organizations*, *social and demographic problems,* and *defense and security issues*[47] specific to small states.[48] The development of the field is summarized in Table 2.1.[49]

2.1: SUMMARY OF THE DEVELOPMENTS IN SMALL STATES STUDIES

Timeframe	1950-1970s: The high point of small states studies, the Cold War, the proliferation of decolonization	1980s: "Standstill," the rise of global interdependence, the decline of the American role	1990s: Small state revival, globalization, regionalism, small state proliferation.
Dominant IR theory	Realism/ neorealism	Neorealism vs. neo-liberal intuitionalism	Rationalism vs. social constructivism
Small state themes	Defining "small," issues of size and foreign policy, security concerns, smaller states in international organizations	Economic interdependence, development issues	European integration, globalization processes, nationalism (ethnopolitical conflicts)

The new role of small states, not only in the EU but also as members of the United Nations (UN) or NATO, has "created a demand from

[45] Hey, *Small States in World Politics*, Chapter I.
[46] Eugenia Charles, *A Future for Small States* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1997).
[47] Miniotaite, "Convergent Geography and Divergent Identities.".
[48] Otmar Höll, (ed.), *Small States in Europe and Dependence* (Vienna: W. Braumueller, 1983), 60.; Omar A. Touray, *Gambia and the World: A History of the Foreign Policy of Africa's Smallest State 1965-1995* (Hamburg: Verband Stiftung Deutsches Übersee-Institut, 2000), 4.
[49] Adapted from Table 1.1 "Synopsis of Small State Studies," in Neumann and Gstöhl, "Lilliputians in Gulliver's World?", 16.

policymakers and diplomats for coherent and accessible analyses of the conditions and potential strategies of small states"[50] and has already led to discussions of *digressive proportionality* in international organization.[51] Therefore, as long as small states can maintain their equal representation in international organizations and the traditional concepts of sovereignty remain valid, their status in bilateral relations will continue to be reviewed.

Specifically, theoretical discussions of small states can be categorized according to two different aspects: the states' vulnerability and their influence.[52] Those that focus on state vulnerability tend to follow a (neo)realist scheme that emphasizes the role of the international system and external factors. In contrast, those focused on disproportionate power and influence base their thoughts on either neoliberal institutionalism or social constructivism and devote their attention to the nuances of power and the relevance of diplomacy and domestic issues.[53] Given the accepted theoretical directions and preconsiderations of what the key points of reference in a study should be, using possible combinations from diverse IR theories is both a luxury and a hazard for small states studies.

CURRENT UNDERSTANDINGS

The core issue in the academic field of small states studies is the normative difference in the capacity between states and the relative success – despite inequalities – of small states in foreign relations. That

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[50]Baldur Thorhallsson and Anders Wivel, "Small States in the European Union: What Do We Know and What Would We Like to Know?" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs,* 19, no. 4 (2006), 651.

[51] Roderick Pace, "Small States and the Internal Balance of the European Union," in *Enlarging the European Union: The Way Forward*, ed. Jackie Gower and John Redmond (Hants, England: Ashgate, 2000), 108.

[52] Handel, *Weak States in the International System*, 6.

[53] Neumann and Gstöhl, focusing on three groups divided among the theoretical lines, come to a similar conclusion: "Lilliputians in Gulliver's World?" 17.

is, the accepted stereotype of a small state as "a helpless pawn in world politics" has led to a traditional focus of inquiry in the field that can be summarized as: How do small states successfully pursue foreign policy in global systems that favor large states?[54]

To answer this question, known as the *paradox of small states*, academics in the small state field, accepting the traditional state-and-power-centric approach of IR, initially applied realism-based paradigms that focused on lack of power and structure. As small states currently constitute more than half of the existing states, the focus in this field is now shifting away from this paradox and the relevance of small state exceptionalism has lost ground.[55]

To apply the small states paradigm, it is obviously important to clearly define what makes a state small, particularly because the specific nature of the category "small state" is misleading. That is, whereas in IR (and this study), the phrase refers to "the overall size of a unit of the international states system,"[56] in other disciplines, the terms "small state" or "smaller" state frequently refer to a minimal level of government involvement in society or the national economy.[57] In addition, the word "small" has sometimes been interchanged with "weak," which ties it to the classical problem of power measurement;[58] that is, the phrase "weak

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[54]Neumann and Gstöhl, "Lilliputians in Gulliver's World?" 39.

[55] Lindell and Persson, "The Paradox of Weak State Power," 79-97.

[56] Matthias Maass, "The Elusive Definition of the Small State," *International Politics* 46, no. 1 (2009): 65-6.

[57] Francis Fukuyama, *State-Building, Governance and World Order in the 21st Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004): 22.

[58] Barry Buzan and Richard Musgrave, *People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations* (Brighton, Sussex: Wheatsheaf Books, 1983), 65-9. Here, it is important to differentiate between weak states and strong states and weak powers and strong powers. Sutton summarizes this difference in terms of capability and legitimacy: whereas both weak and strong powers should be examined based on their capability, weak states have low legitimacy and strong states have high legitimacy. See Paul Sutton and Anthony Payne, "Lilliput under Threat: The Security Problems of Small Island Enclave Developing States," *Political Studies* 41 (1993): 587. Although these arguments clarify the interchange of small and weak, literature does not adhere to these guidelines.

state" can signify either the low level of governmental control or the opposite of powerful in international affairs. The intention of the phrase *small state* is to refer to "the properties common to all states having a certain position in the international system," while the extended understanding of this political adjective can both refer to states that meet the criteria of small both in its traditional (normative) definition and in the reality that they cannot achieve their own security alone.[59]

As a result of the stigma of being weak and small, many states have rejected the label "small state" despite its utility as a distinctive category that in many cases enhances a state's ability to argue for independence.[60] Moreover, the term security is "positively value-loaded," while lack of security, or vulnerability, is negatively value-loaded.[61] This rejection also comes from the understanding that a small state is the lesser counterpart to "great power," a term referring to the largest countries in the international system each of which is fundamentally "capable, if necessary, of protecting itself and of defending its interests – by acting alone."[62]

This issue can be traced back to the European roots of small states studies[63] when resistance to being "small" resulted in the creation of various categories in IR (see Table 2.2).

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[59] Fukuyama, *State–Building, Governance and World Order*, 96. Henrikson, "Diplomacy and Small States in Today's World". Paper presented at the International Conference Diplomacy of Small States, Malta. 8-9 Feb 2007.

[60] Sutton and Payne, "Lilliput under Threat," 582.

[61] Hakan Wiberg, "Security Problems of Small Nations," in *Small States and the Security Challenge in the New Europe*, ed. Werner Bauwens et al. (London: Brassey's, 1996).

[62] Väyrynen, "On the Definition and Measurement of Small Power Status," 91.

[63] As Neumann and Gstöhl point out, "well into the twentieth century, in all European languages states were routinely referred to as *powers* (French *puissance*, German *Macht*…)". "Lilliputians in Gulliver's World?" 4.

2.2: CATEGORIES OF STATES

Micro-/Ministate	Small population and land mass, usually city-states: Vatican City, Liechtenstein, Monaco
Small state	Various parameters for definition; can be defined by vulnerability but also normative and behavioral factors: Denmark, Iceland, Latvia
Middle power	Used to describe states that neither qualify as small or great, have been identified based on behavior such as middle power diplomacy: Mexico, Italy, Japan, Canada
Great power	A state that can exert influence on a global scale; historically, a post-conflict victor: Post-1945 China, France, Soviet Union, United Kingdom, United States
Superpower/Hegemon	State with lead position in the international system with projectable power and resources having global influence: currently the United States

Thus, as Neumann points out, from the perspective of great powers, "small states were all those states that were not great powers, and that were not consistently insisting on being referred to as middle powers."[64] Nevertheless, the theoretical claims of the 1960s – that size has direct implications for policy – have been weakened by the current state of technology, which eliminates barriers and promotes regional integration. As a result, state size cannot be directly correlated to weakness, only with less comparative capacity. Hence, weak states, characterized by "lack of political and economic substance" may be small – but not exclusively so, meaning that the division between "small and great does not coincide with the distinction between weak and strong."[65] Neumann and Gstöhl underscore this point with a quotation from Durkheim: "Societies can have their pride, not in being the greatest or the wealthiest, but in being the most just, best organized for possessing the best moral constitution."[66]

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[64] Iver B. Neumann, (ed.), *Regional Great Powers in International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1992)., cited in Neumann and Gstöhl, "Lilliputians in Gulliver's World?" 6.

[65] Michael Stohl, "Failing the Failed: The Bush Administration and Failed States," *Harvard International Review* 29 (2008), and Neumann and Gstöhl, "Lilliputians in Gulliver's World?" 8.

[66] Emile Durkheim, *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* (London: Routledge, 1992), 75.

2.1.1 THE SMALL STATE AND ELUSIVE DEFINITIONS

Academically, there is little concurrence on what factors should be considered in classifying small states; rather, the definition is too often dependent on its provider.[67] Amstrup – extensively quoted but critical of small states studies' methodology – has identified two main problems: first, that "size is a very vague concept which easily lends itself to different interpretations" and second, that "the discussion of definition, almost exclusively concerned with one single independent variable" all but ignores the dependent variable.[68] These claims imply that size alone is insufficient for determining behavior, although Amstrup admits that behavior, as a dependent variable, is just as elusive a concept as size.[69]

This argument has been continually strengthened by the actions of states whose foreign policy behavior, based solely on considerations of geographic size and population, has not mirrored the expectations of some small state theorists. Prominent examples include the passivity of Western Germany, the aggressiveness of Israel, or the military buildup strategy chosen by Singapore.

Such inconsistencies have resulted in a wide array of reactions among academics spanning a continuum from those (e.g. Baker-Fox and Vital) who completely reject the necessity to even define small to others who have created heavily qualified, lengthy discussions of qualities and quantities. One seminal article by Amstrup categorized such diversity of academic influences in terms of six definition types (with overlapping elements), ranging from stringent tangible factors based on landmass, population, economy, and GNP to socialization, intuitive categorization,

[67] Sutton and Payne, "Lilliput under Threat," 580.
[68] Amstrup, "The Perennial Problem of Small States," 165.
[69] Ibid.

and perception (a categorization that, as the contemporary examples given in the footnotes indicate, is still valid).[70]

According to Amstrup, the first group of academics either avoids the issue of definition, as it is irrelevant to them, or they find the issue overly complex and contend that steadfast definition is unnecessary.[71] Some have circumvented the problem of definition either by avoiding a comparative framework and using behavior guidelines for a single states study or by including a framework in which smallness is intuitively clear.[72]

The second group attempts to connect size to particular "measurable characteristics" of states based on empirical studies that show "size to be an important factor underlying variation in [states'] international behavior."[73] These quantifiable factors usually include three key variables: population, area/landmass, and GNP.[74] They are also frequently based on the statistical technique of cluster analysis, which sets a range, at times very broad, with a specified ceiling to define small states.[75]

This goal of a quantifiable definition has also led scholars to employ "quantifiable criteria with fairly arbitrary cut-off points,"[76] an approach in conflict with the third, and more diverse, group, which sees the definition of small within a comparative framework between small and larger states

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[70] Ibid., cited in Jazbec, *The Diplomacies of New Small States*, 38.
[71] Amstrup, "The Perennial Problem of Small States," 165.
[72] See Noman and Almadhagi, *Yemen and the United States*.
[73] Maurice A. East, "Size and Foreign Policy Behavior: A Test of Two Models," *World Politics* 25, no. 4 (1973): 557., citing R. J. Rummel, "Some Empirical Findings on Nations and Their Behavior," *World Politics* 21(January 1969). See also Jack Sawyer, "Dimension of Nations: Size, Wealth and Politics," *American Journal of Sociology* 72 (September 1967).
[74] See Michael Handel, "Numbers Do Count: The Question of Quality Versus Quantity," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 4, no. 1. (1981): 223-60.
[75] Lisbeth Aggestam, "Role Conceptions and the Politics of Identity in Foreign Policy" (ARENA, Oslo, 1999), 194.
[76] Maass, "The Elusive Definition of the Small State," 67.

that "cannot be explained by the size variable alone" but also includes factors like the structure of the international system, geographical realities, and the domestic conditions in the small state.[77] Handel, for example, was using such an approach when he examined internal and external rather than absolute and relative factors.[78]

The fourth group concentrates on size as a perceptual quandary; that is, "states which perceive themselves as small are – by definition – small states."[79] Such use of self-perception as the defining factor seemingly balances the disparities between actual behavior and size. This perceptual factor was introduced into the definition debate by Rothstein's contention that "there is a psychological, as well as a material distinction between Great and Small Powers... Thus, a Small Power is a state which recognizes that it cannot obtain security primarily by use of its own capabilities, and that it must rely fundamentally on the aid of other states, institutions, processes, or developments to do so."[80] However, it should be noted that Rothstein's view – the use of "objective or tangible criteria ends by aligning states along an extended power spectrum so that it can only be said that B is stronger than A but weaker than C" – prevents the creation of a distinct group of small states.[81]

Examining power asymmetries based on perceptions rather than an objective power reality has several advantages. The most obvious, as alluded to in the first chapter is that inequality is such a subjective factor, that its objectification can only be based on problematic criteria. Yet because the existence of power inequalities between nations is incontestable, an appreciation of perceived power serves states better than the search for an objective analysis of power. That resulting observations

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[77] Amstrup, "The Perennial Problem of Small States," 166.
[78] Handel, *Weak States in the International System*, 68.; T. Schmidt, *Die Außenpolitk Der Baltischen Staaten*, 16.
[79] Amstrup, "The Perennial Problem of Small States," 166.
[80] Robert L. Rothstein, *The Alliance Policy of Small States* (New York:1963), 29.
[81] Ibid., 23, cited in Amstrup, "The Perennial Problem of Small States," 166.

may be incorrect simply mirrors the fact that power perceptions are often distorted and subject to change.

It is also important to differentiate between the relevance of self-perception by a state versus external perception of a state. As Braveboy-Wagner points out, states that are considered small globally may be comparatively large regionally. Moreover, because international systems based on regionalism coexist alongside a prevailing global system, a state that is not a major global power may still wield a marked regional influence. This reality is exemplified by Syria and Saudi Arabia, which are considered major regional powers even though their international influence is limited. Likewise, whereas all Caribbean states consider themselves small, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, and Barbados are perceived as big in their region. As a result, their smaller neighbors expect them to have a larger influence in global matters, which in turn forces them to act "big".[82]

This latter point emphasizes the important role that a nation's 'greatness' – as seen through its own self-concept – plays in how the nation acts and interacts internationally.[83] Equally important is how other nations view a small state. For example, because of Switzerland's export-based financial influence, its position in the international financial market, and the number of impressive international firms headquartered there, its diminutive aspects of military power and population have not historically affected judgments of its international influence.[84]

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[82] Jacqueline Anne Braveboy-Wagner, "The English-Speaking Caribbean States: A Triad of Foreign Policy," in *Small States in World Politics: Explaining Foreign Policy Behavior*, ed. Jeanne A. K. Hey (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 32.

[83] Neumann and Gstöhl, "Lilliputians in Gulliver's World?" 4.

[84] One popular example is the Federal Republic of Germany, whose self-characterization after reunification is a variation of self-conceptualization and how others conceptualize the nation. That is, whereas in the early 1990s, Germany was oriented toward a very humble political and security strategy on the world stage, internationally it was seen as a large nation or major power based on its economic

The fifth group of academics, presupposing that behavior patterns can define "essential characteristics of small state behavior which then can be generalized to other situations,"[85] focuses more on how states react to a specific situation. Identifying a pattern of behavior allows other factors to be ignored. For instance, according to Baker-Fox, the external pressure of a system-wide conflict can be an optimal point of departure that allows appraisal of "the power of each of the small states at each particular moment of the crisis" followed by an attempt to paint "a more generalized picture of the great power-small power confrontation."[86] Amstrup also points to Vital's choice of the "isolated, maverick, unaligned power, the small power alone – the state which can rely least on outside help and sympathy and which, by virtue of its situation, is compelled to make its own decisions on the basis of its own understanding of that situation and such available to it."[87] Elman uses a similar argument to qualify the U.S. as a small state in its early history, showing that quantifiable size comes second to behavior in this approach.[88]

Finally, the sixth group attempts to integrate the other approaches, resulting in efforts by both Väyrynen and Geser to formulate a classificatory scheme.[89]

Specifically, Väyrynen's model contains five different dimensions of varying importance:

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capacity, geographic size, and population: Hans Geser, "Kleinstaaten im internationalen System," *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 4, no. 44 (1992): 627-54.

[85] Amstrup, "The Perennial Problem of Small States," 166.

[86] Baker-Fox, *The Power of Small States,* 14. See also Maurice East, "Size and Foreign Policy Behavior: A Test of Two Models," *World Politics* 25, no. 4 (1973): 557-76.

[87] Vital, *The Inequality of States*, 6.

[88] Miriam Fenidus Elman, "The Foreign Policies of Small States: Challenging Neorealism in Its Own Backyard," *British Journal of Political Science* 25, no. 2 (April 1995): 190-91.

[89] Raimo Väyrynen, "The Position of Small Power in the West European Network of Economic Relations," *European Journal of Political Research* 2 (1974),143-78.

> Low rank/status, measured by quantifiable or perceptual data;
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> A high degree of external penetration;
>
> A specific type of behavior;
>
> The specific interests of small states compared with other states; and,
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> The specific role of small states; in particular, a specific role conception by the small state's decision-makers.

Geser's work, in contrast, represents a more contemporary effort to develop guidelines or indications for smallness that are meant to assist the organization of states into categories of absolute and relative. The resulting categorization can be summarized as follows: substantial perception (*substantialistische Sichtweise*), which encompasses state characteristics that can be objectively or substantially measured (e.g. in amount, value, and importance); the relational perspective (*relationistische Perspektive*); and the attributes of self-conceptualization (*Statuseigenschaftperzeption*). The first considers bigness or greatness to be an inherent characteristic of a state's social system, meaning that small states are those that are limited in certain resources, including territory, population, and GNP. The second perspective, which is subjective or relational, uses quantitative metrics like land mass, population, or military assets as a basis for placement within an international system. The third, which deals with a small nation's self-concept and how others perceive it, constitutes a holistic approach that tries to address the various characteristics of small states and the criticisms of definitions that seem insufficient.

As Amstrup's six categories underscore, there is at present no consensual definition, a deficit that Maass believes propels researchers to use their own individual delineations, which result in either impairment to "the possibility of comparing the findings of multiple studies" or the failure of arbitrary definitions to contribute much to the "broader, more general

understanding of the small state phenomenon." [90] In short, little progress has been made since Vital's 1971 suggestion that, rather than establish a definition, it is better to use a "loosely defined concept."[91]

This lack of an accepted definition of small, however, does not discount the existence of certain properties or characteristics common in smaller state. The possible properties of small states, as identified by Väyrynen, are: a "high degree of penetration," also referred to as systemic sensitivity, low rank or status internationally, the demonstration of typical small state interests, a distinct role in the international community and, a "given type" of behavior (elaborated on below).[92]

2.1.2 STATE CAPACITY AND THE IDEA OF CAPABILITY

One fact that initially made the study of small states popular in the twentieth century is that the very existence of small states lends validation to discussions of power that extends beyond what can be measured in terms of force. That is, the causal chain in small states studies that ties a limited landmass and population base to a weak defense structure, vulnerability, and external dependence also binds the idea of smallness to a certain concept of power. Power measured solely in quantitative units, such as military (or economic) ability, has not been able to and still cannot account for the current and past existence of small states: "History has yet to prove…that physical size may serve as the sole explanatory variable of a state's survival."[93]

However, by treating the existence or success of small states as a theoretical conundrum, academics have inadvertently supported the very

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[90] Maass, "The Elusive Definition of the Small State," 66.
[91] David Vital, *The Survival of Small States: Studies in Small Power/Great Power Conflict* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 4-12.
[92] Väyrynen, "On the Definition and Measurement of Small Power Status." 92-8.
[93] Zlatko Sabic and Charles J. Bukowski, *Small States in the Post-Cold War World: Slovenia and NATO Enlargement* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002), 6.

ideas they challenge – that small states are at a distinct disadvantage in the international system – strengthening the so-called rule by looking for exceptions. The existence of small states could still be justified through traditional concepts of power, which, when applied to the weak, Wolfers, like Morgenthau, sees as a byproduct of the "relationships among the great powers."[94] This viewpoint, however, allots insignificance to small states by relegating their actions to a "minor" status with "no direct bearing on the major struggle in which [the great powers] are involved" and implies that any perceived success is simply the result of being ignored and thus not blocked by larger states.[95] To revisit Morgenthau, as many (neo) realist-based small state academics have, "[a] great power is a state which is able to have its *will* against a small state… which in turn is not able to have its *will* against a great power."[96]

POWER OR CAPACITY?

The decisive question here is what is understood by *will*, both in terms of power and small state success. Motivated by the lack of cohesion between classical power stereotypes and the role of small states, the concept of the *power of the weak* as a form of small state *will* was popularized by Baker-Fox.[97] This shifted connotations of the word "power" and resulted in smallness being studied in terms of capacity, as in this work, which helps create a better dividing line between large and small beyond simple measurements of size. Therefore, *will* – to borrow Morgenthau's vernacular – is having the resources to achieve a state's national interests, however, as discussed below, a state also need the (cap) ability to use the available capacity.

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[94] Arnold Wolfers, see Chapter 7 in *Discord and Collaboration* (Baltimore: 1962).
[95] Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration,* 111.
[96] Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations,* 129.
[97] Baker-Fox, *The Power of Small States*, 2. Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration*, 111.

SMALL STATE CAPACITY SOURCES

In their review of available literature, Lindell and Persson examine "the paradox of weak state power" by identifying two main sources of small state capacity: (1) in terms of "the systemic or resources" and (2) from a "bargaining perspective."[98]

The first group of sources of capacity can be attributed to the classical normative estimation of a state's tax base, GNP, natural resources, and military capacity within the framework of the international system, often referred to as hard power.

The presupposition that powerful states have an advantage in bi and multilateral negotiations, based on their hard power has progressively been weakened. Nye is credited with supplementing classical power definitions with standardized ideas of hard and soft power, although Baker-Fox (and other small state academics) had already indicated an understanding of this concept prior to Nye:[99]

> The distinctive power of great states flows from the military strength. However the ability of a state to secure what it wants through the use of violence is only one mark of political power. There are other means, which may… be effective in excising influence or resisting coercion. Both great and small states can employ economic, ideological, and diplomatic methods…

This thinking shifted examinations of small states from their resilience, the question why they can maintain themselves, to capacity examination show small states can "reject pressure from overwhelming powerful close neighbors"[100] or influence much larger states through alliances.[101] In

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[98] Lindell and Persson, "The Paradox of Weak State Power," 80.
[99] Compare: Joseph Nye, "Limits of American Power," *Political Science Quarterly* 117 (2002): 545-59 and quote in Baker-Fox, *The Power of Small States,* 2.
[100] Erling Bjøl, "The Power of the Weak," *Cooperation and Conflict* 3, no. 157 (1968), 11.
[101] Robert O. Keohane, "The Big Influence of Small Allies," *Foreign Policy* 2 (1971), 161.

short, "the paradox of relatively resource-less states being able to exercise substantial influence in international relations."[102] The sources of soft power, which deal with influencing preferences via co-option and attraction, can be seen for small states as including nearly any non-military action, or as Lindell and Persson categorize it, the bargaining perspective.

Thus, a small state's total amount of capacity can be calculated by its tangible strengths (hard power) and multiplied by its ability to recognize and employ soft power. Besides the inalterable tangible resource considerations, Lindell and Persson also include the international system as a given in small-state power calculation because the system is "impossible or difficult for a small state to change."[103]

Specifically, because systemic change is fundamental and causes increased (for some states dramatically increased) vulnerability,[104] the systemic sensitivity of small states is well accepted in small states studies. Henrikson extends this contention even further by suggesting that judging the survival ability of a small state warrants equal examination of the "external conditions, or international situation," whereas under favorable conditions small states can not only survive but flourish, unfavorable conditions leave them "*inherently vulnerable*."[105] Another given in this equation is geographic reality, which, although uncontrollable by the state, represents either an advantage or extreme disadvantage.

The second category of capability sources, the bargaining perspective, allows examination of the outcomes of interstate relations. As mentioned, power concepts for small states evolved as the Cold War created a strict bipolarity that increased small state relevance in the major

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[102] Lindell and Persson, "The Paradox of Weak State Power," 79.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Hveem, "Small Countries under Great Pressure," 194.
[105] Henrikson, "Small States in World Politics," 5.

power struggles. From this viewpoint, the dominant power position of larger states should theoretically guarantee that larger state's foreign policy goals (or will) be met with non-cooperative, *laissez-faire* negotiation, a Smithian objective of untrammeled national interest under competitive conditions that fosters the maintenance of the status quo.

Although the distinction between negotiation and diplomacy and even state behavior is difficult to define, the division of this source of small state capability into subcategories may succeed in widening the appearance of options for small states; particularly as recent research on symmetric negotiations between Cold War blocs has indicated that asymmetry in some bargaining produces "faster, better agreements."[106] The key point here is that perceptions of equality in international relations can actually run interference when the specific behavior associated with a particular power status leads to deadlock. Hence, two equally powerful states, both experienced in dominating behavior, may counter each other, thereby creating an inadvertent and oft-unnoticed substitution of the actual issue with status issues.

A further advantage to inequality in international relations is that asymmetry can act as leverage. For example, based on his power concept, Zartmann asserts that parties with less capacity emerge with proportionally larger payoffs than expected by appealing to a common interest or by providing solutions to a common problem.[107] That is, a *quid pro quo* relationship is formed when the smaller state rents power from the stronger and pays for this power through reciprocal support in a future situation. One common form of such borrowing is the good neighbor policy, in which the state with less capacity claims that it deserves special consideration because of its geographical proximity (e.g. Canada and the United States). Small states can also use third parties as leverage through coalitions, internal factions, or joining with the enemy's

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[106] Zartmann, "The Structuralist Dilemma in Negotiation," 228.
[107] Ibid.

enemy. More complicated is the co-opting of external forces through warnings and predictions rather than through threats, promises, and the use of public opinion.

Another important option, given the prevalence of multilateral agreements, is to borrow power from the context of negotiations, a process facilitated through the use of rules, appeals to a higher authority, or the use of intermediaries and appeals to principal or precedence. Alternatively, weaker states can gain power by using the negotiation process itself to make moves at beneficial times, often with great attention to detail. Both these final points underscore the weight that small states place on international regulatory frameworks.

CAPABILITY OF SMALL STATES

What is important here is not how small state capacity differs from that of large states in form or source, but rather the capacity of small states and the resulting capability, or how they use it.[108]

Hence, current discussions of the appropriate level on which to examine small states should guide the field's development away from a classical concern with small state survival to a focus on the factors that differentiate small from large states. More specifically, three levels affect foreign policy-making in small states: the international (or global), the regional, and the domestic (or internal).[109] In addition, researchers have

[108] As Väyrynen points out, "the interests of small powers are at least to some extent different from the interests of great powers," which by logical extension means that their behavior is also different to some extent. See: Väyrynen, "On the Definition and Measurement of Small Power Status," 99.

[109] Noman and Almadhagi, *Yemen and the United States*, 2.

successfully argued that small states set themselves apart from larger states in three arenas: the economic, social, and political.[110]

The main dispute here arises from the widespread acceptance that the international system dictates the range of options available to small states and that these states "are dependent on the character of the international system in which they exist."[111] As Hey points out, if "sources of small state behavior were always or even usually found outside of domestic borders we could rejoice in the fact that small state foreign policy theory had found a parsimonious paradigm that has eluded most other areas of international relations."[112] However, in reality, all states in the international system are in some way unequal. As a result, a nation's self-determination is affected by the degree of its inequality in the international system, which makes the ties between the concept of small state and the discussion of state capability and/or power much too strong to be ignored.

Another problem is that this widely referenced concept of the international system's influence is rarely defined in small states studies. To address this weakness, this current work assumes that the power distributions and accepted norms during a historical epoch are usually bookended by a major conflict. Hence, the international system can determine, as it has in the past, the scope of small state foreign policy in the same manner as it does for large powers, and the extent to which the international system affects states can be dependent on factors beyond size.

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[110] Deborah Bräutigam and Michael Woolcock, "The Role of Institution in Managing Vulnerability and Opportunity in Small and Developing Countries" (Discussion Paper 37, United Nations University, 2001), 2.
[111] Lindell and Persson, "The Paradox of Weak State Power," 81.
[112] Hey, *Small States in World Politics*, 6.

2.1.3 FOREIGN POLICY BEHAVIOR DIFFERENTIATION

Scholars examining small state foreign policy have also acknowledged various behaviors that small states "either do, or are expected to, exhibit."[113] Principally, small states portray themselves as serving a considerable role in international order and justice rather than being just passive observers or plain consumers of security. They do so by tying their security to the norms of a particular international system, most often in terms of respect for their neutrality but also of global disapproval of the use of force.[114] This bond results in a high dependency on the good will of their larger direct neighbors either to tolerate its existence if the small state chooses neutrality, or to defend it in an alliance constellation.[115] Such state behaviors, which represent the logical options within the system to ensure or expand small state capabilities, include neutrality, alliance, or membership in international organizations.[116]

These examples can, however, be expanded into a more comprehensive outline of actions:

> Exhibiting a constricted functional and geographic range of engagement in foreign policy activities;
>
> Addressing a narrow scope of foreign policy issues;
>
> Exhibiting generally low levels of participation in world affairs and/or minimally emphasizing internationalist principals, international law, and other "morally minded" ideals;
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> Securing multinational agreements in joint multination institution whenever possible;
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> Choosing neutral positions;

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[113] Ibid., 5.
[114] Handel, *Weak States in the International System*, 266; Ernest J. Wilson, *Diversity in U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Routledge, 2004).
[115] For more, see Rothstein, Alliances and Small Powers, and Volker Krause and Christopher Sprecher, "Alliances, Armed Conflict, and Cooperation: Theoretical Approaches and Empirical Evidence," *Journal of Peace Research* 43, no. 4 (2006): 393-69.
[116] Jazbec, *The Diplomacies of New Small States*, 60.

> Seeking alliances, which in turn results in elevated dependence on superpowers for protection, partnerships, and resources;
>
> Spending a disproportionate amount of foreign policy resources on ensuring physical and political security and survival; and
>
> Cooperating to avoid conflict with or alienation by the more powerful states in the system.[117]

The liability of this list, however, is often seen in its inclusive nature; that is, although an accurate description of viable options, it is too long and contains some options that are mutually exclusive. Moreover, the considerable number of small states that do not and have not behaved according to this list raises doubts about the true weight of external influence and perhaps the general validity of the paradigm.

In addition, the range of choices listed above means that a small state must show flexibility in its foreign policy by adjusting it to blanket the cohesive options in a given system, which in turn sometimes impedes a consistent foreign policy.[118] Scholars addressing this point have claimed that flexibility in foreign policy, if a policy even exists, has been a typical feature of small states. Nevertheless, whereas foreign policy is a long range "basis on which decisions are made and acted upon," some argue that for a small state, a policy agenda is less important than its actual diplomatic acts.[119] Indeed, abundant historical examples of small states making gains via diplomacy confirm that "[t]o have a coherent foreign policy is important, but to have coherent diplomacy is most important for a small state."[120]

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[117] Hey, Small States in World Politics, Chapter 1.
[118] Alan K. Henrikson, "Diplomacy of Small States" (paper presented at the International Conference on Small State Diplomacy, Malta, 8-9 February, 2007).
[119] Ibid.
[120] Henrikson, "Small States in World Politics," 3.

THE ROLE OF DIPLOMACY

The diplomatic activity of a small state is important because it represents one of the few variables that it can influence independently, hence the broad understanding in small states studies that diplomacy is a key source of capability. However, diplomatic deficiencies can also place a small state at a disadvantage in that diplomacy exemplifies the fundamental differences in the functioning of small versus large-state foreign policy. Vital explains the significance of such differences as follows:

> The chief significance of these differences of scope and quality between the small and great powers' diplomatic machinery… lies in the sphere of information and intelligence, in knowledge of affairs, in the availability of data on matters as they arise and, if possible, before they arise, which is to say, in the capacity to prepare one's moves and execute them with the least risk of failure and with the highest probability of having chosen the correct alternative.[121]

Small states tend to have smaller foreign ministries and foreign services than their larger state counterparts, meaning their capacity to act is more limited. Such reduced capacity in turn limits the screening of international developments and thus the number and range of issues that can be considered.[122] Hence, in an effort to counteract what East refers to as a "mind-boggling inequality of resources," small state diplomacy has generally focused on increasing capabilities through the construction of niche roles,[123] which typically include the idealistic neutral, the champion of international law, and the development of highly specialized markets like banking and finance. Switzerland, Denmark, and the Netherlands are commonly cited examples of states whose influence in international relations is disproportional to their size. Not only are their diplomacies often credited for this success, their strategies are often examined as a

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[121] Vital, *The Inequality of States*, 22.
[122] East, "Foreign Policy-Making in Small States," 492.
[123] Ibid.

basis for developing macro models for general small state foreign policy.[124]

2.2 CHALLENGES OF EXAMINING THE GREAT WITH THE SMALL

The question of whether it is possible to create a *theory* that captures the essence of small state foreign policy can be answered with a qualified Yes.[125] The question of whether it is possible to understand the difference between small state and great power behavior towards each other with the aid of assumptions from past small state studies, on the other hand, demands more attention.

Research has shown the differences between large and small state's foreign policy conduct yet, how these differing behaviors may culminate in a great power's foreign policy with a small state and if general small state behavior differs towards a great power than with a larger state, has been left unaddressed. While small states studies take into account the specific characteristics of such states, there are few resources providing a methodological structure which look at the behavior of both small states and great powers towards each other in strict bilateral relations. This leaves the researcher with the tedious task of explaining methodological choices. However, this also presents the *opportunity* to contribute to neglected areas of research in this field, such as here with the problematic of studying small-great relations.

This research's main inquiry – How has the United States addressed Latvia historically, and how has this approach changed? – Can be answered by identifying the factors, which played the greatest role in *influencing U.S. behavior* towards Latvia. However, if the classical sources of small state capacity were not available to Latvia during the

[124] See Henrikson, "Diplomacy and Small States in Today's World."
[125] Hey, *Small States in World Politics*, 6.

case study's time frame, the factors that influenced U.S. behavior must obviously extend beyond the pure bilateralism of the intended case study.

Therefore, beyond the small state definition debate, which can be solved here by the use of a comparative field,[126] assumptions from the field of small states studies need to be addressed in order to illustrate that while the universalism of some suppositions are questionable to the study of great-small relations the establishment of their invalidly in specific bilateral relations can simplify such an examination.

2.2.1 ISSUES IN STUDYING NONCONTIGUOUS STATES

One key understanding in small states studies is that a small state can use its location as leverage in relations with a stronger neighbor, which points to the first problem of applying small state study's assumptions to certain bilateral relations.[127] The lack of any need to consider issues traditionally

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[126]The theoretical insufficiencies within the definition debate in small state theory, although they must necessarily be pointed out, are not paramount to the discussion of the Republic of Latvia because there is no dispute that compared to the United States; it is indeed a small state. It therefore reflects one advantage of using a bilateral relationship as an analytical tool; namely, that once a comparative field is created, the difference between the U.S. and Latvia leaves little doubt as to intuitive categorizations or empirical comparisons.

Moreover, independent of a relative framework, definitions that connect size with quantifiable attributes, use size as a variable conjoined with the international system and internal and external structures, or focus on international perception and self perception all produce the same, generally accepted, result: Latvia is a small state. See Goetschel, "Small States and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the EU,".; Juris Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Andreas Heinemann-Grüder, "Small States - Big Worries: Choice and Purpose in the Security Policies of the Baltics," *Bonn International Center for Conversion*, 21 February, 2002.; 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: Peter Lang, 1999).

[127] Harvey Starr and Benjamin Most, "A Return Journey: Richardson, Frontiers and Wars in the 1946-1965 Era," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 22, no. 3 (September 1978): 441-62., cited in Brian Gibbs and David J. Singer, *Empirical Knowledge on World Politics: A Summary of Quantitative Research 1970-1991*, Empirical Knowledge on World Politics (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993), 345.

involved in contiguous large-small state narrows the field of this current examination. This role of geography in state relations cannot be ignored because it strongly affects bilateral behavior.[128]

Indeed, small states have traditionally been divided into two categories: (1) countries geographically exposed and extremely vulnerable to attack by larger neighbors, and (2) those that have little reason to fear an attack on their territory. In terms of the first, a lack of natural boundaries makes the small state vulnerable to attack and occupation, and can create *border pressure*, so the state's policies are chiefly concerned with assurances against such an attack. As regards the second, even natural boundaries may be insufficient when a small state is centrally located in an aggressive international or regional system. Thus, it is important to note that while geography is static, geopolitical borders can change with power constellations and technology.

Relations among states studied from the geopolitical angle (see Table 2.3) underscore this fact and suggest that contiguous borders are an important structural attribute in the general study of international relations and explicitly for small states,[129] as shared boarders affect "interaction opportunities, and consequently, state interactions."[130] Most specifically, research has attributed a small state's continued existence to three factors: (1) limited outside interested in its territory, (2) its weight in a balance of power system, and/or (3) its role as a buffer state for a neighbor.[131]

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[128] Hey, *Small States in World Politics* 4., citing Vital, *The Survival of Small States*.

[129] According to Paul Diehl and Gary Goertz, contiguous states "have either a common land boundary or are separated by a body of water not exceeding 150 miles": "Territorial Changes and Militarized Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 32, no. 1 (1988): 103-23. However, states with bordering colonial territories have also been considered contiguous; see Harvey Starr and Randolph Siverson, "Opportunity Willingness and the Diffusion of War," *American Political Science Review* 84, no. 1 (1990): 47-67., cited in Gibbs and Singer, *Empirical Knowledge on World Politics*, 377.

[130] Starr and Most, "A Return Journey," cited in Gibbs and Singer, *Empirical Knowledge on World Politics,* 345.

[131] Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. II (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 910., cited in Handel, *Weak States in the International System*, 176.

Accordingly, the choice between the two main behavior options for a small state – neutrality/nonalignment or alliance building – is greatly influenced by its geography.[132]

2.3: STATE RELATIONS IN TERMS OF GEOPOLITICS

Type of Relation	Meaning	Example
Territorial	The degree to which neighboring states agree on their respective boundaries.	The boundary between Finland and the former Soviet Union.
Economic	Economic trade between different states affects the degree of its influence on international relations and can lead to the development of international alliances.	The large deposits of the metal manganese found in the Transcaucasus. The technological necessity of uranium. Natural resources also give "strategic depth."
Political	The degree to which a state exerts political control or influence over others, which may vary from direct political control (e.g., a colony) to informal relations of influence/domination or "special relationships."	Although the majority of colonial lands are now independent, the French state still exerts informal influence on them.
Strategic	Relationships that a given state chooses to enter into as a means of sustaining and enhancing its security or power, often an alliance.	The United States and Iceland in the 1950s. The importance of the Brenner Pass to Italy.

The *dominion maris Baltic*, for example, has been historically dependent on possession of the territory that includes present-day Latvia, a geographic providence that has made this area a reoccurring objective for stronger surrounding states. Hence, in line with Handel's assessment that small states on the periphery of the international system are in a much better position than those located in the center, the primary security predicament of Latvia and the entire Baltic region has been the struggle for dominance, whether latent or active. As a result, Latvia has found itself literally in the middle of not only many historic conflicts but also political and economic competition.[133] To illustrate this point, Table 2.4

[132] Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers*, 34.; Handel, *Weak States in the International System*, 70.
[133] Handel, *Weak States in the International System*, 72.

applies Handel's schematic of geographic elements to Latvia's geographic qualities.[134]

2.4: SUMMARY OF GEOGRAPHIC ELEMENTS APPLIED TO LATVIA

Possible advantage	Possible disadvantage	Latvia [135]
1. Large territory: (a) a higher probability of including a larger and more balanced variety of natural resources; (b) more room for strategic maneuvers.	Small: (a) lower probability of large and balanced variety of natural resources; (b) strategic disadvantage.	63,000 sq km; natural resources: peat, limestone, dolomite, amber, hydropower, wood, and arable land.
2. A combination of natural, easy-to-defend borders and difficult or impassable terrain.	A lack of easy-to-defend natural borders, and terrain conducive to fast troop advancement.	Plains and forests, no geographic boundaries other than the rivers. Located on the Baltic Sea, on the East European plain.
3. Geographic isolation (an island) or number of adjacent and weaker neighbors, preferably nonhostile (low border pressure).	A large number of bordering countries, more powerful and with conflicting goals (high border pressure).	Bordering Estonia to the north, Lithuania to the south, the Baltic Sea with the Gulf of Riga to the west, Russia to the east, and Belarus to the southeast.
4. Located on the periphery of the relevant system or subsystem, distant from the active center of the system, non-strategic locations	A central location in a system or subsystem (in conflict), that has strategic importance to the powers.	An inlet of the Baltic Sea shallows on a shallow gulf with a nonfreezing port, a coastline that extends over 500 kilometers.

When compared to the lack of border pressure experienced by states like Ireland, Sweden, Portugal, Chile, or New Zealand geographic factor become even more pronounced. Conclusions which are also supported by Diehl and Goertz's empirical study, showing that states are more likely to use force to defend nearby areas.[136] Likewise, studies showing that "great powers (the U.S, Soviet Union, UK, France, and China) tend

[134] Ibid., 76.
[135] Anton Parts, "Baltic States: A Brief Survey of Their Landscape, Economy, Population and Settlement," *Journal of Geography* 59, no. 7 (1957): 305-315.
[136] Diehl and Goertz, "Territorial Changes and Militarized Conflict," cited in Gibbs and Singer, *Empirical Knowledge on World Politics*, 198.

to ally themselves most frequently with nations" with whom they share a border provide additional support for the long-accepted fact that a small state's location is closely tied to its strategic importance for other states.[137]

Bjøl also places geography above all other factors to create a conceptual framework for the role of small states in international politics.[138] Like Handel, he includes classical geographic elements, using mountainous Albania and Switzerland together with the "obvious geographical advantages" of solving the security problem of island states like Britain, Japan, or Cuba. He also highlights the strategic value of position in a system, which, being dependent on the political relationships to and between great powers, as well as technological development, is, unlike morphology and climate, externally defined and dynamic.[139]

As an example of the dynamics of political geography, for Latvia, geography, which has long been a liability, is currently a utility. The United States has finally understood that Central European states, friends but long out of their sphere of interests, are in a location that now makes them relevant. Specifically, poor relations with Central Europe mean that the U.S. lacks a continental European site for its missile defense system, needed to protect the American east coast from nuclear attack. Not surprisingly, technology plays a major a part in this shift; for example, "[i]n 1948–49 when the U.S. Strategic Air Command consisted mainly of

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[137] During the Cold War, the role of geography in alliance creation decreased. For example, in the Versailles system, the rate of democratic alliance represented less than 50% of what would have been expected by chance, while in the initial Cold War period (1946-1965), the rate of alliances were twice as great. Moreover, according to Randolph Siverson and Julia Emmons, contiguous states were "not significantly more likely to have formed an alliance than noncontiguous" states: "Birds of a Feather: Democratic Political Systems and Alliance Choices in the Twentieth Century," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 35, no. 2 (1991): 285-306., cited in Gibbs and Singer, *Empirical Knowledge on World Politics*, 339.

[138] Bjøl, "The Power of the Weak," 158.

[139] Ibid.

B–29s, a base on Greenland must have seemed vital to the interest of the U.S., and thus Denmark was considered a decisive member of NATO."[140]

However, as Mitchell points out, it is not only the U.S. that has recognized this fact: access to this area is vital to all three Euro-Atlantic great powers. Without Central Europe, Russia lacks the transit routes to realize its plans of increased political influence in Western Europe, and the EU cannot consolidate its eastern flank and become a first-tier geopolitical player without CE cooperation.

2.2.2 NEW SMALL STATES AND LIMITATION

The additional deficits that place new small states in a subordinate position to not only larger powers but also other established small states requires an additional concept – the new small state – in small states studies. Such a categorization makes a small state's position based on concepts of capacity and capability more straightforward. Nevertheless, although the issue of "new" and "small" has only been addressed in tandem in a limited manner, it has already been negatively interpreted because the two terms seem synonymous with weak.[141]

Of all the challenges for a new state, the foremost is international acceptance, and therefore the status of equality and the protection of sovereign rights. Gaining such acceptance requires that certain basic conditions be present: a continuous territory, a stable population, and a working government, as well as the capacity to function in the

[140] Ibid.

[141] According to Oskar Halecki "The loose talk about a threatening Balkanization of Europe by the creation of 'new' small states was and is not only unfair to the Balkan nations – some of the oldest in Europe – but also an obstacle to any unprejudiced approach to the claims for self-determination in the region north of the Balkans," quoted in Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 152.

international system.[142] States are the necessary antecedent to an international system, which their sovereignty allows them to create. In this reflexive process, as Waltz points out, "changes in, and transformations of, systems originate not in the structure of the system but in its parts."[143] Therefore, established states are often hesitant to welcome new members into a system, either to maintain the system's integrity or retain control or influence. As illustrated in the case study, Latvia can be validly considered a new small state that was in 1918 and has been in the post-1990 era at an increased disadvantage.[144]

Most particularly in this example, the challenge of newness can be seen in its struggle to gain international recognition, an aim that preoccupies its foreign policy and carries over to the structural deficiencies that remain after diplomatic recognition. That is, because international assistance with the maintenance of new states is arguably more limited than that for established states, new state diplomacy is plagued by limitations of resources, training, and personnel that lessen the likelihood of the successful diplomacy that is key to a small state.[145]

NEW SMALL STATE CREATION

In general, small states have little ability to determine the international conditions affecting them, showing that the international system's environment the product of the larger, more powerful states within it and causing the large states to be a factor in the success or failure of the small

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[142] Jazbec, *The Diplomacies of New Small States*, 26; V. Ibler, "Rjecnik Meduarodnog Javnog Prava," in *Handbook of International Law* (Zagreb: Informator, 1987), 66., cited in Jazbec, *The Diplomacies of New Small States*, 27.; Calvert, *The Foreign Policy of New States*, 28.

[143] Kenneth Neal Waltz, "Reflections on Theory of International Politics: A Response to My Critics," in *Neo-Realism and Its Critics*, ed. Robert O. Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 343.

[144] "Such new states are weaker than the old empires…" claims Adam Watson in *Diplomacy: The Dialogue between States* (Routledge, 1991), 47.

[145] Peter Calvert, *The Foreign Policy of New States* (Brighton, UK: John Spiers, 1986), 18.; Lindell and Persson, "The Paradox of Weak State Power," 81.

states the system includes. Hence, rights of statehood are determined by their international recognition, both through bilateral *de jure* recognition and their membership in international organizations, both of which have demonstrated their own litmus tests for new states.

Of the five generally accepted forms of new state creation, the first four involve production of a new entity from parts of a former whole to generate a small, or at least smaller, state:

1. The dissipation of multinational states or empires;
2. The secession of parts of an established state;
3. The independence of provinces, vassal states, or colonies;
4. The creation of states based on international agreement; and
5. The joining of several states to create a single state.[146]

Points (4) and (5) in this list represent states that are less susceptible to external influence because of their accumulated size[147] or because their creation was based on international agreements (e.g., Israel). Being a result of a formal system consensus, their international acceptance is a foregone conclusion. In contrast, the most violent territorial transfers result from the previous three points – secession, dissipation, and independence movements – especially secessions from a contiguous territory that adds instability to the general system.

Besides power-sharing concerns, the small state's reputation for adding instability creates further reluctance for diplomatic recognition[148] in that large established states seem to follow Rothstein's sentiments: "If power

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[146] Jazbec, *The Diplomacies of New Small States*, 46.

[147] The size of a new state formed from the joining of several states places it at an advantage, yet despite prominent cases (e.g., German Unification), point five represents a rare example.

[148] According to Rothstein, "[s]mall powers were conceived as scavengers, forever seeking the crumbs left over from a great power": *Alliances and Small Powers*, 12.

corrupts, so does the lack of it."[149] Such vulnerability makes small states focus on survival, although pursuance of national interests need not necessarily be destructive to others. Yet, despite their vulnerability, small states have been accused of being oblivious to conditions in the international system.[150]

Mitchell recently used the phrase the "myopic mouse syndrome" to describe this shortsighted tendency to focus on issues of national importance while using smallness "as an excuse to ignore the big picture."[151] Whereas Mitchell's observations are based on contemporary Central Europe, Keohane used Taiwan as an earlier example of this practice, illustrating how a small state may "disregard or heavily discount the effects of [its] actions on the stability of international politics in general."[152]

Another view is that small states leap onto the bandwagon of, or seek ties with, the most important power of the region or system, disloyally jumping on and off when it suits their interests. These actions can cause unpredictability in a tight bi-polar system, with a small state tipping the scales in a manner so disproportionate to its status that larger states become wary of the self-centered security focus.[153] This wariness is often reflected in the time span between declarations of independence and diplomatic recognition of the small states from the large and great states.

Therefore, if established states traditionally show reluctance to recognize new states, how do states like Latvia receive legitimacy?

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[149] Ibid., 10.
[150] Calvert, *The Foreign Policy of New States*, 25.
[151] Wess Mitchell, "Gut Gebrüllt, Maus," *Internationale Politik* 7-8, no. 63 (2008): 78-84.
[152] Keohane, "The Big Influence of Small Allies," 162.
[153] Michael Sheehan, *The Balance of Power: History and Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 48.

It seems the answer is mainly through systemic shifts: changes in the international order create windows of opportunity for new states. In twentieth century Europe, as illustrated in Table 2.5, such creation can be seen in three key waves: after World War I, after World War II, and after the end of the Cold War.

2.5: ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW STATES IN EUROPE

World War I	World War II	Post-Cold War
Albania; Austria; Czechoslovakia; Hungary; Turkey; Finland; Yugoslavia; Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania; Ireland.	East and West Germany; North and South Korea; Iceland.	[(Re)emergent] Armenia; Azerbaijan; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Croatia; Macedonia; Moldova; Serbia and Montenegro; Slovakia and the Czech Republic; Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia.

As the table illustrates, the number of states fluctuates, and although these fluctuations may take place for several reasons, in Europe they most regularly coincide with systemic changes.[154] That is, when states form through points (1), (2), or (3) from the provided list, they are more likely to experience both the positive and negative effects of the international system on small states. Generally, transformations in a system are linked to a redistribution of power – resulting in more recent history from lengthy treaty negotiations – during a lag between the actual exercise of

[154] In Europe, the only new states that do not fall into the three major systemic transitions are Vatican City (1929), Cyprus (1960), and Malta (1964), which coincidently also qualify as small (or micro)states. For a comprehensive look at this phenomenon, see Diehl and Goertz, "Territorial Changes and Militarized Conflict," summarized in Gibbs and Singer, *Empirical Knowledge on World Politics*, 107. Specifically, Diehl and Goertz identified 725 territorial transfers between 1816 and 1980, whose frequency per quinquennium was unevenly distributed across time even when system size was controlled for. During this same period, 26 states were involved in at least 10 territorial transfers, with the United Kingdom (226), France (214), Germany (81), and the Soviet Union (69) carrying out the most frequent. The most common transfer process was "cession" (42 % of the cases) followed by "conquest" (15.6) and "annexation" (14.6 %). The most common transfer types were "interstate" (27.1 % of cases) and "colonial" (26 %).

new power constellations in the system and their legitimization. These time lags have proven extremely beneficial for groups with aspirations to create a state or alliance seekers.

With major powers distracted by post-conflict negotiations or conflict-exhausted resources, smaller and new states may pursue their national interests with an elevated degree of capacity. Hence, during all three systemic shifts in the twentieth century, some small states optimized their situation and further rooted themselves in the international community; others used the opportunity to form a state, while yet others faced increased risks.[155] These latter arise from the instability of system transitions in which, historically, "[s]mall [p]owers have been most endangered when the balance [of power] has been unstable or askew."[156] Then, as Hveem shows, swift and deep modification leads to reduced predictability because states are less able to monitor related aspects of the systemic transformation and its effects or the strategies available to adjust policy. The result is a decision-making process based on short-term priority that Hveem sees as a classical dilemma: "systemic pressures lead to short term policies, whereas the nature of systemic change and the extent to which it affects…require long-term strategies."[157]

According to Rothstein, because of limited resources and unreliable "friends," small states, and especially small new states, have "very limited time in which to correct mistakes."[158] In addition, the survival of small states in a system remains uncertain as they may find themselves "scarified in order to allow the weaker great power to recoup their fortunes."[159] Hence, the norms of a system often determine the level of

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[155] Helge Hveem, "Small Countries under Great Pressure: The Politics of National Vulnerability during International Restructuring," *Cooperation and Conflict* 22, no. 193 (1987), 194.
[156] Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers*, 187.
[157] Hveem, "Small Countries under Great Pressure," 194.
[158] Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers*, 25.
[159] Ibid., 35.

security in small states, which is influenced by either international organizations or a general, but often unenforceable, international consensus. As a result, while a new system is forming, established states may act either cautiously or belligerently, which in both cases sets precedence that may continue for the duration of the system. Therefore, new small states in a belligerent mode have lost their sovereignty during systemic shifts. As Weber puts it, when a balance of power disappears, "the small state usually disappears with it" (e.g., the disappearance of Moresnet on the Germany-Belgium map after World War I; the annexation of the Baltics and the Republic of Tuva after World War II).[160]

New States and Diplomatic Capability

The proliferation of states has led researchers to examine the working of diplomacy and conclude that although new states differ immensely, most achieved political independence and international legitimization *before* attaining and developing the capacities and skills necessary to take part in international relations. That is, after new small states have solved the problem of diplomatic recognition, domestic structural deficits still remain. Moreover, the diplomatic challenges for new states are widely recognized, leading Watson to suggest that current diplomatic practice implement changes that make diplomacy "safer, or more realistic, or more accessible to small and new states." [161] He likewise points out that "some of the newest, smallest and least experienced members of the states system have hardly yet achieved that degree of internal control which is usually considered a minimum for statehood, and their diplomatic contacts are still necessarily limited and embryonic."[162]

In more recent history, this situation has resulted in prolonged dependence on external factors, circumventing the independence to which

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[160] Weber, *Economy and Society*, 910.
[161] Adam Watson, *Diplomacy: The Dialogue between States*, 132.
[162] Ibid.

these states aspire. Of course, there have been exceptions, although debatably small. For example, Watson points to Egypt and Israel as new states that "have shown themselves to be highly competent both at bilateral and collective diplomacy, much more so indeed than many older states."[163] However, the inexperience of new states and their sheer numbers remain two key challenges for international society.[164]

Yet, despite these challenges, diplomacy remains a key component in small states studies because research has consistently shown that small state capacity in negotiations can be increased by the use of specific techniques; namely, protest diplomacy, quiet diplomacy, group diplomacy, niche diplomacy, enterprise diplomacy, and regulatory diplomacy.[165] To be effective, however, all such forms of diplomacy require three crucial factors to be effective: power, policy, and personnel.[166]

Whereas these factors and their definitions may be debatable, however, investigation has shown that when a state has well-schooled and experienced diplomats, it can use diplomacy as a counterweight to other inequalities. Yet there is a marked lack of research that objectively examines not only the relevance of a state's size but also its *ability* to perform in the international system.[167] That is, a state must know "its political and other interests, recognize both its strengths and its

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[163] Ibid.,158.
[164] Idem, "Chapter XI: The Diplomatic Needs of Less Developed States," in *Diplomacy: The Dialogue between States*, 158-75.
[165] Henrikson, "Diplomacy and Small States in Today's World," 3-8.
[166] Haas and Whiting, *Dynamics of International Relations*, 138.
[167] On page 110 of "Small States and the Internal Balance of the European Union," Pace discusses the financial aspect of small state diplomacy and its limitation in performing even the most basic state requirements, such as maintaining representations and information gathering and processing. However, like others, he has neglected to look at more in-depth aspects of diplomatic insufficiencies like limited training and experience. Likewise, in the *Diplomacies of New Small States*, Jazbec discusses certain challenges but, rather than being concerned with their role in foreign policymaking, sees the foreign offices of new small states as the "genesis of one of the basic state forming structures", 41.

weaknesses...," and optimally use the tools and supporting structures of diplomacy.[168] Whereas more recent studies claim that there are no "significant differences between small and large countries in terms of the quality of their institutions," the quality of small state diplomacy "matters more."[169] Hence, the self-perceptions and the recognition of limitations and options (that is, capacity and then capability) and institutional structures to support diplomacy discussed in the field of small states studies are not automatic to neophyte states.

How Long is New?

If newness presents extra challenges for small states, it raises the question of how long a state must exist to be considered new. According to Calvert, new states are those that have "relatively recently" obtained their independence, although the state of being new can ultimately cover a long period.[170] This current work argues that to define a state as new, newness should to be tied to the system of its creation and a state may even remain new as long as it functions in the international system of its creation.

This has several justifications. The first is the role that the perception of new plays in the external classification, refers to the fact that the newer a state is to the international system, the higher the caution of uninvolved states to recognize it or later defend it. For example, over half the new states attempting to gain international recognition between 1917 and 1922 remained unrecognized and failed.[171] Thus, although post-World War II

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[168] Henrikson, "Diplomacy and Small States in Today's World," 3. In "Small States and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the EU," Goetschel, citing Knorr, writes that "in order to be successful … a [small] nation needs an outward looking ordination, cross-cultural empathy, diplomatic skill, congruence between verbal projections and actual conduct, capacity to welcome mutuality of non-coercive influence", 13.

[169] Bräutigam and Woolcock, "The Role of Institution in Managing Vulnerability and Opportunity in Small and Developing Countries," 1.

[170] Calvert, *The Foreign Policy of New States*, 18.

[171] Such failure is exemplified by Alsace-Lorraine (1918), Banat Republic (1918), Bavarian Soviet Republic (1919), Belarussian People's Republic (1918); Irish

peace conferences dealt with the collapse of British and French colonial empires and the emergence of new small states that lacked the "required capabilities, both human and material, to survive on their own," the great powers were reluctant to officially take a position on their obligations toward such states.[172]

Second, academics often assume that if a small state can resist the systemic pressures of a transition in the international order, it can be considered steadfast or established. Hence, many small state academicians have chosen *established* small states as case studies. For example, Baker Fox focuses on the foreign policy successes of Turkey (1923) and Finland (1918), states that had been part of the international system for at least 35 years, were created in the Versailles system, and had withstood the systemic transition of World War II. These states were considered winners because they had resisted outside pressures. Indeed, the fact that some small nations emerged from World War II sovereign and "if anything, stronger than before" is what prompted the modern study of small states.[173] However, as a brief look at other small state foreign policy studies illustrates, such success stories have emerged from long-established states, with minimal academic focus on those that do not succeed.

Third, despite Jazbec's contemporary focus, his work implies a connection between new small states and the international system. That is, in addition to the "new" small states, Jazbec also identifies a group of "old" small states,[174] which is relevant because, although a small sample, all were established with past systemic changes.[175] In short, new small

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Republic (1919-1922), Latabansag (1921), Idel-Ural State (1917-1918), and the Republic of Mirdita (1921).

[172] See Duke E. E. Pollard, "International Law and Protection of Small CARICOM States," *CARICOM Perspective* ND66 (1966).

[173] Baker-Fox, *The Power of Small States*, 1.

[174] Jazbec, *The Diplomacies of New Small States*, 44.

[175] Jazbec's approach to defining "new" small states is, understandably, to limit the scope of his research. Hence, he bases his definition on states that became part of

states face additional deficits based on their level of international acceptance, internal instability, and political inexperience both domestically and internationally.

2.2.3 SMALL STATE SUCCESS, MEASURABLE?

Finally, in comparing the assumptions from the field of small state studies with the classical assumptions from the field of conflict studies the idea from the former, that optimal state exchanges (i.e., those that produce the most mutually satisfying outcomes) occur between symmetric parties has been abandoned by the latter.

The idea that if symmetry produces the best results, asymmetry in relations such as between great powers and smaller states should correspondingly debilitate outcomes has been contested.[176] However, inherent in any attempt to evaluate great power-small state relations in terms of best results is one key difficulty: outcome evaluations between great powers and small states are complicated by the fact that they either subscribe to different definitions of success or must be seen in a ratio to empirically defined capacity.

Thus, despite numerous examples of success in small state foreign policy, success in international relations, as pointed out, remains a prejudiced concept. Specifically, large states are successful in their foreign policies if they pursue national interests beyond their borders; whereas smaller states, owing to their vulnerability, are deemed foreign policy successes primarily if they can resist external pressure.

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the "European political map at the beginning of the nineties": *The Diplomacies of New Small States,* 41. In addition, although both Calvet and Jazbec address the international system, it is the domestic or structural factors that play the primary role in their work. Conversely, however, it is the system and not the internal factors that create the framework for the establishment of new states and define their age categorization.

[176] William I. Zartmann, "The Structuralist Dilemma in Negotiation," *Research on Negotiations in Organization* 6 (1997): 227.

Cecause the notion of the nation state is a divisible concept of internal and external authority that promises the right of "independence from foreign powers,"[177] whether a state can achieve such independence is often seen as an index of its capacity.[178] On the other hand, because of the inherent security issues tied to small states, their success is often viewed as the maintenance of their sovereignty. These observations raise the questions of whether U.S. capacity can be used to claim that the U.S. had an advantage or was more successful in these relations. Hence, to avoid a normative appraisal of foreign policy success, which is problematic for the same reasons as using economic factors as a gauge for exchange, discussion of small state success should be exercised with caution, if at all.

2.3 APPLICABILITY TO U.S. RELATIONS WITH LATVIA

What has been shown in this chapter is that application of the common assumptions from the study of small states, to examine the specific great power-small state relations chosen for this work, can only be applied with difficulty. The three points addressed above, geography, newness, and the more general problem of subjectiveness in determining small state success, show that a one-sided focus on small states with optimal capacity exists. These states naturally support the popular ideas in small state studies, but these ideas are not transposable to the certain small states, which lack the capacity sources indicated, greatly limiting their capability in foreign relations.

Therefore, when such a "limited" small state is place across the table from a great power, the small state finds itself in a reactive or marginal position, a status which supports concepts in IR that are often criticized

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[177] Laurent Goetschel, "Small States and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the EU: A Comparative Analysis" (Berlin; Institute for Politikwissenschaft, 2002), 11.
[178] Baker-Fox, *The Power of Small States*, 3.

by small state scholars. Yet, the margins of this relationship actually create a greater clarity in identifying the United States' behavior, and as the case study will show, aiding in recognizing the great power behavioral patterns or mechanisms that are sought in this inquiry.

By looking at U.S. relations with the Republic of Latvia, a state that lacked small state capacity sources in the twentieth century, the following case study will show that just as specific factors influence the behavior of the small, other factors specifically influence the behavior of United States, the two evident in this study are: the utility of Latvia for the United States, counterbalanced with the U.S. maintenance of the systemic status quo.

These factors lead to how the U.S. addresses Latvia as briefly mentioned in the introduction in Chapter I: the use of international law to serve its national interests, use of friendship in place of alliances to ensure a positive exchange with Latvia without creating any obligation and the bureaucratically effective approach of dealing with the Baltic as a whole (bundling).

LATVIAN UTILITY AND U.S. SYSTEMIC RESPONSIBILITY

Nearly ignored in small states literature but very relevant to small state-great power relations is the *utility* of a small state to a great power. This idea, likely discarded in small state studies because a small state's utility, or relevance to a great power, can be seen not only as a much too broad and exploitive concept, but also because it places a value on the small state in a manner which the small state can not directly influence, a locked capacity, with no capability resulting from it.

The achievement of national interest can be considered a motivation for state behavior, and the means that aids this is the advantage that economists call utility, which provides an index for satisfaction, or want-fulfillment, at a particular point in time. Although there can be little congruence in assigning utilities – because national interests of states

vary – it is possible to compare the utility of various foreign policy options and decide that *if* a choice is necessary, one option is superior to others.

Such a process results in what is known as preference orderings.[179] Once such orderings have been formulated, sound preliminary conclusions about the strategy of a state can be based on the utility sought. Hence, as already stipulated, the intended outcome makes it possible to gauge a state's foreign policy behavior. Superior options create utility that is either material or ideological, the former measured by the "distribution cost of labor, investment capital, and land," the latter reflecting the need to establish and expand power and prestige. Other options that place the achievement or maintenance of national interests in jeopardy represent irrational choices in foreign policy.

Ideas of utility affected U.S. behavior towards Latvia during the case studies timeframe, both in terms of general U.S. foreign *and* domestic policy. As regards the American–Latvian relations, as the boundaries of American interests shifted, its relationship with Latvia shifted accordingly.

And while leading American politicians have claimed that the goals of U.S. foreign policy "have not changed in more than 200 years," scholars have long accepted that national interests do change.[180] Most particularly, whereas the traditional concepts of national interest are constant, the ranges of these interests are susceptible to change because no fixed margin is defined between the domestic and international spheres for great powers. Hence, although the priorities may be seen as constant, *the means to meet the goals of national interest are continually being*

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[179] Roger Scruton, *The Dictionary of Political Thought* (London: Macmillan Press, 1982), 481.

[180] Madeleine Albright, "The Testing of American Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 77, no. 6 (1998) 50-64, cited in Alan P. Dobson and Steve Marsh, *U.S. Foreign Policy since 1945* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 1.

modified. Such elements of national interest provided by Stiblar include the following:

> Preservation of state and its physical survival,
> Independence and autonomy of state,
> Geographic integrity of state,
> Welfare of citizens, and
> Collective self-esteem of citizens. [181]

Thus, the U.S., in its international relations, has concentrated on the more self-actualized needs of an established, large state, including economic development, regional and transregional dominance, and the promotion of state ideology.[182] In contrast, Latvia has focused on a much lower but continuous issue in the hierarchy of foreign policy – its immediate national security. These priorities are significant to international politics in two ways: first, they provide a primary concept for decision-makers to follow in foreign policy creation, thereby forming the "basis for state action," and second, the resulting national interest serves as a rhetorical device for creating the "legitimacy of – and political support for – state action."[183] Moreover, whereas this latter idea is fundamental to international politics theories because it can explain state action,[184] the former implies that a party's intended outcome offers an opportunity to gauge its strategy.

Hence, when U.S. policy is examined from the viewpoint of how it addressed Latvia and Latvia's corresponding relevance for the

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[181] Whereas the first three elements clearly reflect realist criteria, Stiblar sees the last two as Structuralist (because structuralists, in contrast to realists, prioritize the idea of citizen welfare over power in international relations). Franjo Stiblar, "Preservation of National Identity and Interests in the Enlarged EU," (discussion paper C146, Center for European Integration Studies, 2005).

[182] Gabriel A Almond and G. Bingham Powell (eds.), *Comparative Politics Today: A World View* (Glenview, Il: Scott, Foresmann, and Company, 1988), 16.

[183] Jutta Weldes, *Constructing National Interests: The United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 4.

[184] Ibid., 3.

achievement of U.S. national interests, it becomes even clearer that the transitions in Latvian-American relations, changes in U.S. behavior, had little to do with Latvian capacity. Latvia's relevance to U.S. national interests changed according to U.S. foreign and domestic policy and the international environment, succinctly illustrating the over whelming dominance of the United States in these relations and the influencing role of the international system.

SYSTEMIC RESPONSIBILITY

A stronger catalyst than the utility that a small state can bring a great power in affecting behavior is the international system. Just as systemic conditions are relevant to a small states options in foreign policy, a great power is focused on maintaining the status quo, it dominate position in the international system.

Bilateral agreements represent the strongest indications of interstate relations, as illustrated by the stark contrast between U.S. relations with Iceland (using the same basis of exchange) and those with Latvia.[185] The risks, which stem from the inherent instability of great power-small state relations, arise out of the influence of systemic factors.[186] It is clear that small states seek alliances out of necessity: unable to achieve their overriding national interest of state security.

Hence, a small state will naturally gravitate toward a great power in search of security, protection, partnerships, and resources rather than face the instability of a large coalition of similar states. At the same time a great power "bears a disproportionate share of the burden of providing the

[185] U.S. national interests facilitated bilateral relations with Iceland, with the U.S. being the first government to recognize Iceland in 1944, followed by a bilateral defense agreement in 1951. Just as in U.S.-Latvian relations, Iceland's geographic location and level of military technology factored into these interactions.

[186] Olav Knudsen, "Of Lambs and Lions: Relations between Great Powers and their Smaller Neighbors," *Cooperation and Conflict* 23 (1988): 112.

collective good."[187] Therefore, the U.S. can place one of its key national interests, maintaining the status quo, ahead of those of Latvia. This action is one of the bases of international relations, as is the fact, which will be repeatedly shown in the case study that the U.S. considered it relations with Latvia to be in a far second place to those with Moscow or overall system stability.

Many authors that specialize in small states place the role of the system second to domestic factors.[188] Hence, the extent to which systemic factors affect the general creation of small state foreign policy behavior is widely debated among academics. Here, both small state utility and the importance of the international system in the Latvian-American constellation indenture the case study to a systemic level examination, that is, a focus on international politics. This methodological choice supports the assumption that the system itself is relevant for understanding the action of the United States in its relations with Latvia, while capacity limitations of Lativa are used to address this small states inaction. Therefore, the divisions of the case study, together with the systemic shifts of the twentieth century, are not coincidental. Rather, underscoring Jeanne Hey's observation that in small state foreign policy, the systemic factors "trump" the domestic conditions,[189] systemic transitions also represent the greatest transformations in Latvian-American relations.

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[187] Mancur Olson, quoted in Johan Jorgen Hoist, "Lilliputs and Gulliver: Small States in a Great Power Alliance," in The National Security Politics of Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Norway, ed. Gregory Flynn (Totowa, NJ: Roman & Allanheld 1985), 264, and in Barry and Bratt, "Defense against Help."

[188] Ibid. See also Alan K. Henrikson, "Small States in World Politics: The International Political Position and Diplomatic Influence of the World's Growing Number of Small Countries," Conference on Diplomacy in Small States (17-19 February, 1999); M. Sieber, "Dimensions of Small States Dependence: The Case of Switzerland," in *Small States in Europe and Dependence,* ed. Otmar Höll (Vienna: Austrian Institute for International Affairs, 1983).

[189] Jeanne A. K. Hey, *Small States in World Politics: Explaining Foreign Policy Behavior* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2003), 187.

This methodological choice is not an attempt to challenge small state scholars that choose to focus on domestic factors but rather an attempt to find the best means for researching Latvian-American relations. Most particularly, it aims to highlight a categorical, and perhaps methodological, deficit in small states studies; namely, that even though a small state's foreign policy can be examined at the domestic level, in the case of Latvian-American bilateralism, it is the *systemic level* that is more relevant to understanding causal relationships.

Admittedly, Elman claims that in certain cases the system plays a less important role than domestic factors in determining small state foreign policy; however, her research approach was a vertical one-state examination. Most horizontal approaches, in contrast, confirm findings that not only that the system is relevant but that the historical period and the structure of the international system in which a small state is examined are also very important.[190] This work embraces that position.

In other words, Latvian-American relations show that the global distribution of power and a state's placement within that distribution are key issues in international relations. While it is contestable that great powers are the only states that can impact global developments, in great power-small state relations, the case study will show that international politics *can* be reduced to the large states' capabilities, national interests, and the maximization of its global influence, leaving the weak and small bilateral partner no alternative but to react to the great power's policy.

Therefore, although this (neo) realist theoretical foundation is indeed focused on capacity, its concept of power is often criticized for reducing international relations to an outflow of large states' power capabilities, national interests, and selfish tendencies. However, this should not be misinterpreted as only emphasizing U.S. dominance; rather, it stresses not

[190] Handel, *Weak States in the International System*, 5.

just American supremacy but the *marked weakness* of Latvia that resulted from its newness and geographic relevance.

This chapter has shown that when studying the general concept of the small state, the assumptions from this field can be best applied only to states that have the classically recognized capacity sources available to them.

In an examination of a great power and a small state with very limited capacity, the margins of maneuver for the small are more limited, creating an uncontaminated view of the great power's behavior. This behavior is influenced by both the utility of the small state and the great powers motivation to maintain the status quo. Therefore a systemic level of examination generates a cognitive field of appreciation for the influence of the international system on the behavior of the U.S. with Latvia. That is, this level of analysis is a comfortable means of describing *what* happened, whereas the national interests of the United States are relied upon to answer the question *why* did it happen. Together these factors combined with elements from the study of small states, will guide the case study's analysis in Chapter IV.

3 LATVIAN–AMERICAN RELATIONS IN THE 20TH CENTURY

3.1 1918 TO 1940

Between 1918 and 1940 the Republic of Latvia and the United States followed vastly different avenues in foreign policy, making the gap between U.S. interwar isolationism and Latvian dependence on the instable European status quo unbridgeable. This following section deals with the creation of the Latvian state, its attempts to achieve diplomatic recognition and the issues facing new small states, the non-official, and later inconsequential official diplomatic relations with the U.S.

For the U.S., establishing contacts with Latvia was at first subordinate to the wartime strategy it maintained after World War I's unexpected armistice in November 1918, dealing with the Baltic providences as a whole. Hence, the U.S. reacted to Latvian petitions for diplomatic recognition with reserve and maintained a conservative distance from developments in the Baltic using strict U.S. diplomatic precedence as a guide. However, once the U.S. diplomatically recognized Latvia in 1922, an official – albeit limited – exchange began between the two states.

3.1.1 AMERICA'S POLICY FOR THE BALTIC PROVINCES

That Latvia eventually emerged from World War I and its own war of independence as a member of the international community was not a result of external support or internal strategic aptitude but rather a byproduct of the post-World War I power dispersion that allowed various factions to work with and against each at this time. Prior to this, from the turn of the thirteenth century to the end of World War I, Prussia (later Germany), Poland, Russia, and Sweden controlled the area. Aside from intellectual movements comparable to trends elsewhere in Europe

between 1850 and 1880 only at the beginning of twentieth century with the 1905 Revolution, was there indication of Latvian discontent.

Immediately following the end of World War I, on 18 November 1918, Latvia drew on popular European political models to proclaim a provisional government with Karlis Ulmanis as the first prime minister. Hence, in the actual creation of Latvian policy from 1918 to 1922 under a provisional constitution, consensus on the urgency of international recognition produced very little debate about a foreign policy agenda. However, the fragmentation of the Latvian political left, a growing sense of nationalism among the population, and the shift of goals from autonomy from Russia to total state independence led to the Latvian War of Independence.[191] In a series of complicated alliances, shifting loyalties, and negligible assistance from the West, this conflict lasted until 1920.

During this time, the three possible prospects for control of Latvia – ranging from a far-left Bolshevik government to a nationalist German Baltic Duchy – caused international skepticism about the steadfastness of the Latvian state.[192] Moreover, the Allied interpretations of post-World War I Baltic stability differed greatly from the threats identified by the Latvians, who viewed the absence of a Latvian military apparatus as the greatest hazard. Latvia could not defend itself from Bolshevik forces, a fact recognized by the Allies; however White Russian and remaining

[191] The Latvian War of Independence is often referred to as the Latvian War of Liberation, literally translated from Latvian as *Latvia's struggles for freedom* (1918-1920).

[192] For a more complete description of these events, see Section 3.2, "The War of Independence and International Recognition," in Daina Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia; The Twentieth Century* (Riga: Jumava, 2006), 128-42; Andrejs Plakans, *The Latvians: A Short History,* Studies of Nationalities, (Washington, DC: Hoover Institution Press, 1995), 118.

German military in the region presented an equal threat to Latvian independence.[193]

The possibility of an alliance between Russia and Germany (the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, 3 March, 1918) had led to the wartime French plan of a *barrière de l'est*, which eventually developed into a stringent blockade, the *cordon sanitaire*.[194] The maintenance of this blockade remained the foremost Allied policy for the Baltic region from early 1918 until after war's end.

The unexpected cessation of the war resulted in continuation of the Allied regional policy for the Baltic developed during it, even though the parameters of enforcement had changed. Thus, in 1918, the Allied Supreme War Council, agreeing that Bolshevik forces and ideology would unquestionably fill the gap left by German troop withdrawal,[195] mandated that German troops remain in the area to prevent the Bolsheviks from crossing the *cordon sanitaire*. In doing so, they ignored the risks of a former aggressor shifting roles to that of protector of Latvia.

Despite this, a portion of the German troops withdrew from Latvia immediately, defeating the strategy's purpose, and in early December 1918, Bolshevik forces crossed the Latvian frontier, entering Riga a month later to launch the Soviet-Latvian government. The Ulmanis government fled with a 300-man military unit.[196] Appeals to the U.S.

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[193] K.V. Ozols, "The Letts: Unwilling Subjects of German," *New York Times* editorial (21 July, 1918), New York Times Archive: http://query.nytimes.com/search

[194] Harry J. Carman, "Russia and the Reversal of Allied Policy," *Journal of International Relations* 10, no. 4 (1920): 472.

[195] The Armistice stipulated that German forces in the Baltic provinces remain to ensure that the region had a form of military security until the provinces could create their own national armies. See the "Treaty of Versailles," Section II, Article 433.

[196] Led by the first Latvian commander-in-chief, Oskars Kalpaks, the expedient establishment of a Latvian army had proven difficult, and Ulmanis signed an agreement entitling all Germans who had fought in Latvia for at least four weeks against the Bolsheviks to Latvian citizenship. This action further complicated the loyalties in the regional conflict: Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia,* 130.

from Ulmanis in 1919, marking one of the earliest exchanges between the State Department and representatives from Latvia, that the Lats be allowed to recruit troops in America from the ranks of its diaspora were rejected.[197] By mid-summer of 1919, however, the Ulmanis government returned to Riga and eventually the Latvian-Russian Armistice was signed on August 11, 1920, marking the end of the Latvian War of Liberation and granting Latvia *de jure* recognition from Russia.

This recognition marked Latvia's entry onto the international stage; its uppermost priority was to gain additional international diplomatic recognition, an effort that reflects its initial – and most proactive – policy priority during the interwar period. Latvia also focused on gaining membership to the League of Nations, intrinsically tying the league to the Latvian idea of self-preservation.[198] After the initial rejection of its membership application in 1920 and nearly two years of negotiations with France, Great Britain, and other league member states, Latvia was admitted in 1921.[199] League membership provided a much-needed platform on which to settle certain international disputes that with the creation of the Latvian state had become domestic issues.[200]

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[197] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Russia, 1919* (1919), 666-68.

[198] Specifically, admission to the league was of eminent importance for Latvia because the articles of the league's covenant provided for both the territorial integrity and political independence of its members (Article 10) and the mutual responsibility of members to aid each other in the event of aggression (Article 16).

[199] "New States on the Baltic," *New York Times* (28 January, 1921).

[200] To petition the organization, the German and Russian minorities within Latvian borders used the concluding text of a Latvian minority treaty signed by all league members. During the 1925-27 period, Baltic German organizations submitted several petitions against Estonia and Latvia. Former German landowners also demanded compensation for the land confiscated from them as a result of the 1920 land reforms.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S ALL RUSSIA POLICY

The first interactions between Latvia and the United States remained indirect, indicating the rank to which the U.S. had relegated Latvian aspirations to independence. Thus, between 1918 and 1922, doubting the sustainability of Latvia, the U.S. adhered to a policy of strategic objectification for the Baltic region known as the All Russia Policy. This policy supported preservation of the territory of the Russian Empire and indentured Latvian independence to the ramifications of the ongoing Russian revolution.

Lacking diplomatic recognition from the U.S. and other great powers, Latvia attempted to build confidence through informal diplomacy through non-official representatives, often coming from the diaspora with the ultimate goal of *de jure* diplomatic recognition. Such confidence building was pertinent as the post war great powers saw the region as exploitable, with minor economic potential, and associated it with the internal and external problems that plagued it (i.e., the Vilna Conflict, the Memel territory, minority issues, and war debts). As the refusal of direct Allied military support during the war of liberation had already shown, Latvia's own self-perception of its value to the international community was gravely inaccurate. In reality, the international community's view, compounded by the political depiction of its past victimization through external forces and its self-portrayal of unjust non-acceptance into the international community, was that of an immature state creating juvenile policies.[201]

The public diplomacy originally initiated by the Latvian independence movement in October 1917 had become the foundation for the Latvian

[201]Helga Dauchert, *Die erste Republik Lettlands als historisches Vorbild und Konzept für den Wiederaufbau der zweiten Republik* [The First Latvian Republic as a Historical Example and Concept for the Recreation of the Second Republic] (Berlin: BIAB, 2004), 43.

Foreign Ministry.[202] As Zigfrids Meierovics was named foreign minister (in 1918) a recognizable supporting structure for diplomacy developed to facilitate Latvia's foreign policy goals. Subsequently, in July 1919, a Latvian delegation was selected to begin missions to Allied countries.[203] Part of this effort was the Latvian delegation to Paris Peace Conference of 1919.[204] However, the security requirements of a Latvian state with debatable long-term self-sustainability led to reluctance for other states to make the needed security commitments. Thus, even though the noncommittal response to Latvian security requests served to encourage the Letts to a westward and democratic orientation, a guideline of nonrecognition left open the possibility of a territorially intact new Russian state.

In addition, such assessments of the situation in what the Allies already referred to as Latvia (Letvia), Est[h]onia, and Lithuania were based on late-1918 reports from British and French military missions in Reval (Tallinn), Estonia, to the Allied Military Command. Thus, even though a Baltic Commission formed within the framework of the Paris conference initially made an optimistic impression on the Latvian delegation, any

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[202] The creation in St. Petersburg of a Latvian Information Office in 1917 to distribute information about the Latvian independence movement and make contacts with neutral and entente states marks the first politically organized attempt to participate in an international diplomatic discourse. Earlier, in 1915, 700,000 Letts or two-thirds of the population of Kurland, had fled from the German advances into Russia; therefore, in that same year, a Latvian Refugee Commission was established in St. Petersburg where a sizable community of exile Letts had formed. This office was placed under the supervision of Janis Goldmanis, who as part of the provisional Latvian National Council, was accountable for international contacts: Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik," 31, 46.

[203] McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country*, 45.

[204] The efforts of the Ulmanis government, which later became the internationally recognized government of Latvia, are well documented by historians [see among others, Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia;* Arnolds Spekke, *History of Latvia: An Outline* (Riga: Jumava, 2006)]. However, the attempts by the Stűck and Niedra governments are not extensively documented: the reference to unofficial national and religious delegations at the Paris conference simply mentions Letts: U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919, the Paris Peace Conference, II* (1919), 75.

hope faded after the commission's head informed Meierovics that the "Latvian government would have to be content with the provisional recognition it had already received from Great Britain."[205]

Moreover, when dealing with Baltic topics, the nonrecognizing states ignored the Latvian delegations and their assessments of the situation in Latvia. Only the formal Allied reporting structures were took into account during the conference – even though the Latvian delegation submitted over 30 different petitions to the Allied governments over the course of the peace talks (January to December 1919), they did not received one single response.[206] As result, in summer 1919, Meierovics left the peace talks and returned to Latvia.

3.1.2 DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION & BILATERAL EXCHANGE (I)

The disinclination of the United States to diplomatically recognize Latvia was demonstrated twice during the Paris peace talks when America defeated petitions for the collective *de facto* recognition of the Baltic States.[207] At the same time, the U.S. administration was following the course of events in Russia, and after the success of the October Revolution, American politicians and strategists were divided.

Secretary of State Robert Lansing saw the Bolsheviks as a threat to Russia and the global community, whereas Woodrow Wilson's presidential advisor, Edward House appealed for leniency toward the

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[205] After the *de facto* recognition of the Latvian and Estonian national councils by the British in the fall of 1918, both the Latvians and Estonians opted to communicate with the British. Once the French became aware of the independent actions of the British in the Baltic, their diplomats became openly critical of the British policy, and the French government refused to aid British actions in the region: Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia*, 133.

[206] Alexander Dallin, "America's Search for a Policy toward the Former Soviet Union," *Current History* 91, no. 567 (1992): 133.

[207] Samuel Eliot Morison, "The Baltic States: In Favor of the Recognition of their Independence," *New York Times* (2 December, 1919).

Bolshevik government in Russia.[208] In the wake of the November 1918 Armistice and the shift of senate control in the U.S., America had abruptly returned to its prewar policy of isolationism,[209] Wilson's popularity waned, and Lansing's attitude toward the League of Nations and the policy of a territorially intact Russia determined the U.S. policy toward the Baltic region.

Lansing's stance against the possible sovereignty of the Baltic provinces was based on his conviction that the Soviet regime would be over-thrown. Guided by his legal education, Lansing saw domestic issues of historical precedence (e.g., the succession attempts of the Confederate States during the U.S. civil war) as guideposts for U.S. policy in this matter.[210] Therefore, even though the U.S. refused to recognize the Soviet government, it claimed to be protecting the territorial integrity of Russia for a future regime.[211] Lansing's position is what ultimately led to the State Department's All Russia Policy,[212] part of which benefited the

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[208] John Lewis Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union and the United States: An Interpretive History* (New York: Wiley, 1978), 66.

[209] Also part of this policy was the congressional vote against U.S. participation in the League of Nations. A further factor in shaping the American policy for Russia at this time were the first reports of American fatalities following the arrival of American troops in Europe in late summer 1918, arguably affecting the outcome of the November 1918 senate election.

[210] In a communication to Lansing on January 2, 1918, Wilson wrote, "If the Bolsheviks intend to suggest that every community can… become independent, the present political organization of the world would be shattered and the same disorder would generally prevail as now exists in Russia. It would be international anarchy. The right of communities within a constituted federal union to determine their allegiance was denied by the government of the United States in 1861 and the denial was enforced by military power…we… are therefore committed to the principal that a national state may by force … prevent a portion of its territory of seceding without its consent…," U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, The Lansing Paper, 1914-1920* (Washington, 1940), 317, also cited in Claude E. Fike, "The United States and Russian Territorial Problems, 1917-1920," *Historian* 24, no, 3 (1962): 334.

[211] Fike, "The United States and Russian Territorial Problems, 1917-1920," 335; Richard K Debo, "Great Britain, France and the Question of Intervention in the Baltic, 1918," *Canadian Journal of History* 12, no. 1 (1977): 81.

[212] U.S. Department of State, *The Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. III (1920), 652.

Latvian government when, devastated by World War I and with a civil war ongoing, the country was in dire need of aid. That is, even though the U.S. policy of nonrecognition prevented Latvia from qualifying for most loans from the U.S. and other sources, the All Russia Policy and its anti-Bolshevik stance resulted in attention from the Hoover-led American Relief Administration's (ARA) effort to "combat Bolshevism with bread."[213]

CONSEQUENCES OF DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION

Although the Red Cross had been in the region since 1919, in March 1920, the American delegation in Paris created an American military mission to the Baltic headed by Warwick Greene, who was replaced shortly thereafter by former U.S. Naval Attaché to Scandinavia John Alleyne Gade. In October, at Lansing's insistence, Gade was named Commissioner of the United States in the Baltic Provinces (rather than minister) to avoid the implication of any type of formal recognition of the provinces.[214]

The question of Latvian recognition involved elements for which there was no exact precedence in U.S. diplomatic practices of the time. In fact, the general diplomatic practices used to handle problems with this charter in the past were inadequate for the situation in the Baltic. Rather, U.S. Representative Walter Chandler is credited[215] with engendering initial

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[213] Eero Medijainen, "The USA, Soviet Russia and the Baltic States, From Recognition to Cold War," in the *Baltic Question during the Cold War*, ed. John Hiden et al. (New York: Routledge, 2008), 24.

[214] "Gade Going to Post in the Baltic Provinces." To underscore the U.S. policy stance of Baltic nonrecognition, Lansing wrote that the United States of America "is traditionally sympathetic with the national aspirations of dependant peoples," but he "thought [it] unwise and unfair to prejudice, in advance of the establishment of [an] orderly … government in Russia, the principal of Russian unity as a whole." Lansing's note of October 15, 1919, on the Lithuanian National Council: see U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Russia, 1919*, 723.

[215] "Chandler Appeals for Baltic States." *The New York Times* (17 May 1922).

efforts to remedy this deficit in 1921 in a much-publicized memorandum to the newly named Secretary of State, Charles Evans Hughes.[216] One year earlier, in January 1920, Chandler had already, unsuccessfully, urged the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee to recognize the new states of Europe.[217] Chandler's 1921 memorandum to Hughes specifically challenged him to create a diplomatic precedent to deal with the issue. However, in dealing with the questionable territories of the former Empire of the Czars, the State Department employed a strict interpretation of international law and diplomatic precedence that was disconnected from the practical concerns of foreign policy, so that some historians see the outcome described as a "long and tedious diplomatic undertaking to protect Russian territorial integrity."[218]

Such American interpretations of international norms, the first in Latvian-American relations, underlie America's official justifications for refusing to recognize the Latvian state and can be summarized as follows:

> General uncertainty about the developmental direction of the international system,
>
> Insufficient legal precedence, and
>
> The risk of legitimizing an unstable region and the resulting loss of prestige.

Indeed, many saw Europe's nascent small states as a temporary flux in the new international system:[219] they thought Latvia's very existence a deviation from past international norms and believed that external

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[216] Walter M Chandler, Plea for the Independence of Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania: Speech of the Hon. Walter M. Chandler of New York in the House of Representatives, April 20, 1921(Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1921).

[217] "Chandler Appeals for Baltic States."

[218] Fike, "The United States and Russian Territorial Problems, 1917-1920," 345.

[219] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1922, II* (1922), 871. Here, Young writes that "[i]t is entirely possible, or even more probable that in the indefinite future these so-called states many once again become an integral part of Russia."

recognition of the state would strengthen its claims to the right of self-determination and sovereignty.

The question then became whether the Baltic states could exist independent of recognition or whether recognition was the only way to legitimize them. That is, state legitimacy based solely on other states' recognition is founded on the constitutive theory of statehood, which was and remains a theoretical construct that deviates from the traditional understanding of sovereignty. Yet Latvia's legal right to become a sovereign member of the international community was tied to its ability to exercise sovereignty, which included maintaining territorial sovereignty (see Chapter II, section 2.2).

Doubts about Latvia's stability increased U.S. reluctance to support the Latvian claims of statehood. As, strictly speaking, diplomatic recognition is a formal legal act involving interchangeable commitments and mutual obligations; the Americans saw recognition as a commitment to aid in the maintenance of Latvian sovereignty. That is, because "the policies of recognition … are far more important and complex than the legalities…It is a political act and as such reflects the inner dynamics of international and domestic politics,"[220] before extending recognition, a state must avoid any repercussions by thoroughly examining not only the symbolism of diplomatic recognition but also its legalities. Hence, political circles questioned the validity of recognizing Latvia and her neighbors internationally when the "powers granting that recognition are in no position and have no intention to defend the existence of the recognized nations by force of arms."[221]

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[220] Joseph G. Whelan, "The U.S. and Diplomatic Recognition: The Contrasting Cases of Russia and Communist China," *China Quarterly* 5 (1961): 62. See "A short historical example of the importance of diplomatic recognition for the United States": U.S. Department of State, "Preventing Diplomatic Recognition of the Confederacy, 1861-1865," http://www.state.gov/ (accessed 23 October, 2007).

[221] "Baltic Problems from Two Angles," *New York Times* (22 May 1921).

In addition, if the U.S. recognition of the Baltic would ensure its formal footing in the international community, it would also create "an almost impregnable barrier" to the Latvian reunion with a new Russia. This barrier would make the situation into an international problem that could not be resolved without the consent of the international community, for whose intentions the U.S. was not willing to vouch.[222]

Moreover, if an officially recognized state and its government fail, it becomes an embarrassment for states that have shown the poor judgment to recognize it. For example, in 1917, in a series of miscalculations by its foreign ministry, the United States had already fallen victim to serious misjudgment about the Bolshevik sentiments among the Russian population.[223] The State Department had also installed a diplomatic mission and drew up bilateral agreements with the Democratic Republic of Georgia, which was recognized by the major powers in 1921 only to be invaded by the Red Army in that same year. Armenia, the only state that the U.S. had officially recognized, fell to the same fate, resulting in a prestige predicament for the U.S.[224] Such recognition proved to be a miscalculated move for U.S. diplomacy and the beginning of a more cautious approach to diplomatic recognition in Eastern Europe.

The irony, as Fike points out, is that "while the United States was opposing any alienation of Russian territory, refusing to recognize the new governments carved from the old Russian state, [the] Soviet Union was proclaiming the right of self-determination even onto separation and establishment of independent states."[225] However, the as the events in Georgia and Armenia illustrated, *de jure* recognition of Latvia by the

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[222] Ibid.

[223] Wilson's ambassador to Russia at the time, David R. Francis, had requested permission to recognize the new régime in mid-March, claiming that the revolution was the realization of the principals that America supports. Thus, on March 22, 1917, the U.S. was the first among the international community to recognize a new Russian government under Georgy Yevgenyevich Lvov.

[224] "Baltic Problems from Two Angles."

[225] Fike, "The United States and Russian Territorial Problems, 1917-1920," 332.

Soviet Union in August 1920 alone did not contribute to the justification for Latvian recognition.

When Evan E. Young was named U.S. Commissioner to the Baltic States in May 1920, the State Department instructed him to monitor the situation in Riga and report on matters of "economic and financial conditions," the "plane of political stability," and the "functioning of the machinery of State."[226] Young's first series of reports (May 19 to September 7, 1920) portrayed the continuing Bolshevik threat in Latvia with more moderation than the French accounts but less optimism than the British.[227] Specifically, contending that the political leaders in the Baltic were "under no illusions" that they would eventually become part of a federated Russia, he suggested an amendment to the All Russia Policy and strongly recommended, in his words, "a different route in arriving at the same goal," one that entailed the *de facto* recognition of the Baltic states in order to weaken the Bolshevik influence there,[228] recommending *de jure* recognition of Estonia and Latvia on May 9, 1921, and again on April 6, 1922.[229]

In a cable to the State Department dated April 6, 1922, Young expressed doubts about the long-term validity of Latvian sovereignty and the longevity of the government: "Whatever their future may be it is certain that their action in proclaiming their independence has resulted in the maintenance of at least this part of the former Russian Empire free from the ravages and destruction of Communism and Bolshevism."[230]

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[226] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1922, II*, 870-72.
[227] Idem, *The Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. III (1920), 650-53.
[228] This recommendation came despite a request from Gade that a U.S. naval vessel be prepared to ensure safe evacuation of U.S. citizens from the Baltic provinces on August 9, 1920: U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1920, III*, 652.
[229] Ibid, 755, 869-72.
[230] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1922, II*, 870.

Young's words are characteristic of the U.S. position toward the Soviet government in Russia and of U.S. thought on Latvian recognition. That is, the U.S. was finally considering recognition not from any conviction about Latvia's ability to maintain itself but because such recognition could prevent the spread of Bolshevism to the region and the location of a U.S. embassy in Latvia would provide an observation point directed toward Moscow. Hence, although Young can be credited with revising the State Department's All Russia Policy, the U.S. government, although not prepared to completely disregard this policy, was less confident about the timeframe than when the policy was originally instituted.[231]

U.S. Recognition of Latvia

Official diplomatic relations between Latvia and the U.S. began two months after Young's April 1922 recommendation when on 28 July 1922 Young was instructed to advise the foreign offices of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, that "the *United States extends each full recognition*" (italics in the original). Hughes further instructed Young to complete his statement:

> The United States has consistently maintained that the disturbed condition of Russian affairs may not be made the occasion for alienation of Russian territory, and this principal is not deemed to be impinged by the recognition at this time of the Governments of Est[h]onia, Latvia and Lithuania which have been set up and maintained by an indigenous population.[232]

Once the U.S. had issued diplomatic recognition, the formal structures for exchange were established. Nies, however, raises doubts about the sincerity of this U.S. recognition by pointing to the distinctively rare phrasing in the written note, which fails to specify "recognition" as either

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[231] John Hiden and Patrick Salmon, *The Baltic Nations and Europe: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century* (London, New York: Longman Publishing Group, 1995), 60.

[232] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1922, II*, 873-74.

de jure or *de facto*.[233] Likewise, Laserson views the 1922 communication as a mere "conditional recognition" that was amended by the establishment of an embassy and finalized with two bilateral agreements between Latvia and the U.S.: the 1926 "Provisional Commercial Agreement" and the 1928 "Treaty of Commerce and Consular Rights." This process, however, was apparently typical for the time – the U.S. also used it for Austria and Hungary.[234] Currently, both the U.S. State Department and the Latvian foreign ministry use 28 July 1922, as the official start date of Latvian-American relations.

THREE STATES, ONE POLICY: BALTIC BUNDLING

The U.S. legation in Riga, officially established in 1922 and headquarters for U.S. representation in the Baltics during the first part of the interwar era was based on a three-for-one principal, with an American minister in Riga accredited to Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania.[235]

The simultaneous recognition of all three Baltic states, equally subjected to the All Russia Policy, further illustrates the American method of dealing with all three states as one unit, a macro diplomatic policy that, it can be convincingly argued, reflected America's interest in recognizing Latvia but also aided Estonia and Lithuania. This latter does not imply, however, that Latvian foreign policy was more effective than those of Estonia and Lithuania. On the contrary, Pacy and McHugh claim that the months between the Lithuanian and Estonian declarations of independence (February 1918) and the Latvian declaration (November

[233] Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik," 211.
[234] Max Laserson, "The Recognition of Latvia," *American Journal of International Law* 37, no. 2 (1943): 245.
[235] In 1937, the United States of America appointed a separate minister to Lithuania: ibid.,48.

1918) placed Latvia at a comparative disadvantage in making international contacts.[236]

From 1918 to 1922, the Latvian state had attempted to lobby the U.S. government, White House, and State Department on its own behalf. One of the first Latvian representatives, Karlis Ozols, who had been in America since 1915, was originally part of a czarist diplomatic commission. Before Ozols offered his expertise to the Latvian foreign ministry in 1919,[237] Janis Kalnins has served unofficially as Latvian consular agent, privately funding his duties in New York.[238]

The process of Czarist Russification lured a significant number of Latvian intellectuals out of the country, but the First World War had further drained the potential pool for members of the Latvian diplomatic corps. Consequently, the officials and authorities of the Latvian government had "not infrequently giv[en] evidence of their lack of experience in statecraft."[239] For example, in May 1920, Ozols notified the U.S. State Department of his appointment as commercial representative to Latvia, requesting a diplomatic visa for his secretary, Alfred Nagel. However, such a request turned out to be a noteworthy diplomatic blunder, as Nagel was considered *persona non grata* in the United States.[240] After Nagel's

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[236] Of the three countries, Lithuania would prove to have the most problems with international recognition because of territory issues: McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country,* 45.

[237] James T. McHugh and James S. Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country: Baltic Diplomacy, International Law and the Cold War* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001), 46.

[238] Ibid.

[239] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1922, II*, 870.

[240] When Nagel attempted to enter the United States on 20 August, 1920, "bearing credentials as Secretary of the Legation at Washington to the new Republic of Latvia" that were signed by Mieroswki [Meieroviks], he was detained. The U.S. State Department conducted a private hearing based on the allegations that Nagel had "rendered secret service to the Germans during the war." Although State Department officials clarified that their objection was to admitting Nagel to the U.S. not accepting him as a representative of the Latvian government, they declared Nagel's credentials from the Latvian *de facto* government invalid because

deportation, the U.S. tolerated Ozols' activities in New York;[241] however, even though Riga considered the Latvian office in New York City a consulate, the U.S. State Department did not classify it as such. Rather, Ozols was allowed, "to function simply as an unofficial Latvian agent."[242]

Indeed, according to American reports from Riga, the first attempts at Baltic foreign policy were marked by "petty jealousies and bickering" among the Baltic diplomats[243] and on one occasion, the U.S. State Department even described their parochial attempts as "a very silly effort." [244]

These reactions show that the transitory phase of post-World War I diplomacy was not revolutionary in that traditional social constructs retained their preeminent role.[245] Hence, given the indisputably elitist circles traditional in European diplomatic services, the proper training of diplomats – not only political, economic and linguistic, but also in terms of protocol and precedence (i.e., the acceptable etiquette of diplomacy) – remained imperative. Acknowledging this deficit, a council had been formed already in 1917 to discuss the creation of the first Latvian

there was no Latvian legation in Washington. In addition, although Latvia was sending Nagel to the U.S. to act in an unofficial capacity, he was an undesirable. According to them, the American High Commission in Riga had "informally notified" the Latvian government that "Nagel would not be allowed to enter the United States"; however, Nagel's ship had left port before this ban was communicated: "State Department Ordered Nagel Held, Latvian Secretary Accused of Secretly Aiding Germans during the War," *New York Times* (22 August, 1920); "Nagel's Deportation Regarded as Certain," *New York Times* (23 August, 1920).

[241] Vincent Joukus, "Letts and Lithuanians," *New York Times* editorial (23 February, 1919). This editorial refers to Ozols as the representative of the American Lettish League (ALL) not as a diplomat.

[242] McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country*, 46.

[243] Ibid., 871.

[244] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1920, II* (1920), 664.

[245] Keith Hamilton and Richard Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy, Its Evolution, Theory and Administration* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 71.

university, which opened in 1919 and began offering courses relevant to international relations; such has history, law, and geography.[246]

In April 1922, the Latvian foreign ministry replaced Ozols with Karlis Ludvigs Seja (often referred to as Charles Louis Seya in State Department documents), whose main task was the procurement of *de jure* recognition from the U.S.[247] Neither Ozols, nor initially Seja received diplomatic visas, yet despite protests from the State Department, the Latvian and Estonian representatives in New York, with offices in the same building, posted consular signs and began their *de facto* work as legations.[248]

During this same time, the Latvian diaspora in the United States organized interest groups to lobby for Latvian *de jure* recognition and had succeeded in scheduling a May 1921 meeting between representatives from their organization, Seja, the U.S. president and Secretary Hughes.[249] The recognition of Latvia from the US, elevated Seja to a formal role, and Latvia was used as the ideal location for monitoring events in Russia, an argument which supported by the choice of Riga, with its geographic proximity to Russia, for the single Baltic embassy. That is, unable to officially conduct exchanges with the Russian regime, as the U.S. did not diplomatically recognize it, the U.S. required a regional office from which to base informal contacts, specifically, the U.S. hoped to use Latvia as a gateway to a commercial relationship with Russia.

Following World War I and the Latvian War of Liberation, even though the Latvian economy had naturally suffered the effects of both, U.S. businesses had begun investing in the Baltic as early as 1919.[250] Indeed, even though the Allied Baltic Blockade prevented such trade throughout 1919, capitalist Latvia was seen as an "ideal spring board from which to

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[246] Spekke, *History of Latvia*, 338.
[247] Medijainen, "The USA, Soviet Russia and the Baltic States," 26.
[248] Ibid.
[249] Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik," 211.
[250] "Line for Baltic Ports," *New York Times* (7 December, 1919).

open up the post-war Russian markets," reflected later as the U.S. opened an economic office in Riga that employed up to 70 people.[251]

In addition, Latvia's proximity to Russia was not the only basis for the importance of the U.S. embassy in Riga: the embassy was also used as a subterfuge for U.S. observation of Moscow and became the State Department's central point for intelligence collection in Eastern Europe.[252] Hence, Riga was used as a training center for members of the U.S. Foreign Service, including Henderson, Kennan, and Bohlen, who would later be posted to Moscow.[253] However, having already employed a blanket policy for all three provinces, America was unable to justify singular recognition of Latvia for this purpose, so the recognition of all three Baltic states was to be anticipated.

A further motivation for U.S. recognition of the Baltic states, independent of each other, was their outstanding debts. At this time, the U.S. listed the principal of the Latvian debt at $5,132,287.14, with accrued and unpaid interested amounting to $449,009.07. Accordingly, soon after the United States recognized Latvia, the U.S. State Department began implementing the legal advantages of such formal recognition. As Leland Harrison, acting Secretary of State, wrote to Young, "[n]ow that recognition has been extended to the Governments of Est[h]onia, Latvia, and Lithuania, it is deemed advisable to inform those governments that the World War Foreign Debt Commission has been created for the purpose of negotiating with the governments indebted to the United States in regard to the refunding and settlement of their indebtedness."[254]

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[251] John Hiden and Patrick Salmon, *The Baltic Nations and Europe: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century*, 78.However, in 1924, once Lenin's policy of excluding the West from Russia's economic strategy led to the demise of free trade, the office was closed. Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik, " 213.

[252] Ibid., 208.

[253] Ibid., 212.

[254] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1922, I* (1922), 411. U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the*

In 1922, even though nearly 20 countries owed the U.S. over $10.1 billion in funds that the U.S. was eager to re-secure,[255] Harrison was "anxious to avoid giving the impression that these governments were recognized so that it would be possible to negotiate their indebtedness to the United States." Therefore, Young was asked to use his discretion in requesting debt repayment.[256] Nevertheless, in 1923, the U.S. asked Latvia for the repayment of over $4.1 million for which the Ulmanis government requested an eighty percent debt reduction.[257]

TRADE POLICY AND DIPLOMATIC PROTOCOL

After diplomatic recognition, the activity establishing official diplomatic ties and the opening of the U.S. embassy in Riga, Latvian-American relations remained nominal between 1922 and 1940 with two minor exceptions dealing with trade policy and diplomatic protocol. In fact, only one year after Latvia's recognition by the United States, a member of the Latvian parliament had suggested closing the foreign ministry's offices there and limiting the Latvian embassies in several other capitals to a total of three worldwide, a fact that was used to underscore the unimportance of Latvian-American relations in the interwar period.[258]

Foreign Relations of the United States, 1922, I, 398. The total sum of Latvian debt was $5,581,296.39, of which only $126,266.19 had been collected as of February 2, 1922.

[255] For example, the U.S. had already frozen Russian accounts in order to recover a portion of the $187,729,745.00 that it advanced the provisional government of the Russian democracy declared in 1917: U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1922, II*, 877.

[256] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1922, I*, 412.

[257] This debt reduction (to $218,919) was based on arguments that a portion of the goods had never been delivered, another portion had been damaged, and the economic situation in post-war Latvia prevented such a high repayment. Whereas the U.S. accepted the lesser payment as security and in 1925 created a 62-year payment plan for Latvia, the outstanding debt later prevented Latvia from obtaining further credit under the Johnson Debt Default Act of 1934.Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik, 213.

[258] Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik, 212.

Although Latvia was only a secondary market for U.S. goods imported to Germany or Denmark and eventually sold in Latvia, trade policy was the most noteworthy. The U.S. was adamant about maintaining its most favored nation (MFN) status with Latvia during this time. In fact, the suspicion that the U.S. was being put at an economic disadvantage brought about the April 1933 State Department requested that quarterly reports on Latvian legislation's tendency "to discriminate against American trade" be made.[259] Ironically, the brevity of these reports and their content further reflect the insignificance of Latvian-American trade relations, whose general status did not change at all between 1933 and the 1939 outbreak of World War II in Europe.[260]

The second noteworthy event in relations began as the Roosevelt administration began considering the diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union resulting in the relevance of the U.S. Embassy Riga declining drastically. As it did so, the patience of the State Department to arrange for Latvian diplomats in the U.S. also shrank, and the department voiced its discontent over how Latvians conducted their diplomatic business. In 1927, the Latvian Embassy in Washington closed for budgetary reasons, and Ambassador Seja was recalled to Riga, although the general council in New York remained active under Arthurs Lule. Claiming that the United States does not "recognize diplomatic representatives residing outside the nation's capital," the State Department informed the Latvian government that it had denied Lule's request to act as *chargé d'affaires*, adding that Lule's inclusion on the diplomatic list was only "an act of courtesy."[261] Undersecretary of State William Phillips clarified that having a consul general in New York as the principal representative of Latvia was a temporary situation and that there having been no minister

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[259] For examples of these reports, see U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1934, II* (1934), 615.
[260] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1936, II* (1936), 388.
[261] McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country*, 47.

from Latvia for over six years, the U.S. ambassador should inform the Latvians that America wanted this "anomalous situation with regard to status" regularized.[262]

Such criticism of the Latvian solution to its diplomatic representation in the U.S increased shortly before America officially announced its policy to recognize the Soviet Union, the last major power to do so. Accordingly, for a brief time, the location of the U.S. embassy in Riga lost both its relevance and a trade gateway and observation point as U.S. transferred the staff that had been focused on these tasks from Riga to Moscow.[263] By 1936, however, the embassy in Riga had regained its relevance as a training and observation point for Russian affairs.[264]

3.1.3 PRELUDE TO THE SOVIET OCCUPATION OF LATVIA

Karlis Ulmanis, who had played a major role in the formation of the Latvian government, served as the first Latvian prime minister from 1918 to 1921 and in several subsequent administrations. However, his reelection as prime minister in 1934 precipitated a shift from a constitutional democracy to a dictatorship. With the characteristic weakness of many liberal democratic constitutions of the time, over 40 political parties were elected in to the first, second, third, and fourth parliaments of Latvia.[265] This proliferation of parties and the instability of the nascent governmental process warped the creation of effective

[262] Ibid.
[263] The U.S. Embassy in Riga soon regained its importance when the U.S. became aware of the difficulties of conducting its observatory objectives in Moscow.
[264] Paul McCusker's interview with Earl Packer, 27 October, 1988, 15 August, 1996, 15 August, 1996, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/diplomacy
[265] U.S. Congress, House, Select Committee on Communist Aggression, *Baltic States: A Study of Their Origin and National Development: Their Seizure and Incorporation into the U.S.S.R.* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1954), 114.

legislation:[266] the average parliamentary coalition, and therefore government, in Latvia lasted an average of nine months.[267]

After Meierovics' death in 1925, the series of seven foreign ministers in fewer than 10 years (Hermanis Albats, 1925–26; Felikss Cielens, 1926–1928; Antons Balodis, 1928–1930; Hugo Celmins, 1930–1931; Karlis Zarnis, 1931; Voldemars Salnais, 1933–1934) reflects the splintering of Latvia's political system. During this period, Latvia made further attempts to enhance its security and avoid aggression through various international agreements and a focus on the League of Nations.

Besides the structural problems created by the Latvian constitution, economic factors in the region led to a general dissatisfaction of the population. In addition, even though the security agreements in effect in the early 1930s could have fully guaranteed the independence of Latvia and other European countries had they been observed,[268] Latvians began to doubt international adherence to them.

On May 15, 1934, Ulmanis declared a state of emergency and dissolved the Latvian parliament (the Saeima). The Farmers Union Party under Ulmanis had proposed constitutional reform but had been defeated by the splintered parliament. However, after the Saeima's dissolution, the Ulmanis government introduced economic and political reforms to stabilize both the government and the economy.

According to Latvian historians, in comparison to other twentieth-century dictatorships, Ulmanis' rule was mild.[269] In fact, he conducted the "affairs of state very successfully, and without the excess of violence which were the characteristics of totalitarian rule…."[270] However,

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[266] McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country*, 26.
[267] Ibid.
[268] Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia*, 185; Vahur Made, "In Search of Abstract Security: Estonia and the League of Nations," http://edk.edu.ee
[269] Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia,* 179-88; Plakans, *The Latvians*, 132-40.
[270] U.S. Congress, House, *Baltic States*, 116.

Ulmanis' regime was also one of the most "distinctly undemocratic government[s]" in Europe at the time.[271] That is, as executive nonparliamentary authoritarian rule was established in Latvia, acting President Alberts Kviesis was allowed to serve the rest of his term but then in April 1936, Ulmanis (unconstitutionally) merged the office of president and prime minister. After Kviesis left office, the so-called Government of National Unity became one of the few dictatorships of the time, neither retaining nor maintaining elected officials as "superficial aspects of parliamentarianism" to support its international legitimization.[272]

This wave of authoritarianism rolling across Eastern Europe in the 1930s marked similar transitions in Latvia's key foreign partners, proving little necessity to maintain the draping of democracy.[273] Yet there is no remarkable evidence that the governmental transition from 1934 to 1936 affected Latvian foreign relations; rather, there was a marked increase in Baltic cooperation. Thus, although the internal instability that the Ulmanis coup represented may have affected the western perception of Latvia, one can say with confidence that it did little to affect regional alliance building.[274]

Moreover, during the primary discussion in the U.S. media of Latvian recognition in the early 1920s, the American press showed obvious partiality for Karlis Ulmanis (or Ulman in some U.S. reports), who had been educated at and employed by the University of Nebraska and later became a dairy owner in Texas. Indeed, in 1919, the *New York Times* described him as having the looks "of a prosperous middle western

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[271] Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia*, 173.
[272] Ibid., 174.
[273] In 1928, Lithuania, unlike Latvia, adopted a new constitution in order to validate its authoritarian regime. The Estonians had a constitutional referendum in 1933 that showed 70 percent approval; however, Päts declared a state of emergency before the constitutional reforms could be instituted: McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country*, 29.
[274] Ibid., 26.

farmer,"[275] and the American public's reaction to the Ulmanis coup, if indications from leading daily newspapers are accurate, was mild.

According to Rogainis, Ulmanis' policies were influenced by his 1906–1913 stay in the United States where he developed a favorable impression of American efficiency and initiative and the "strong executive powers enjoyed by the president of the United States,"[276] as a result, with such a strong man at the helm, "it was hard for the Balts … to distinguish the U.S. New Deal from Italy's monarchy." It was therefore not seen as a contradiction for Ulmanis to employ concepts from both Mussolini and Roosevelt simultaneously while governing Latvia.[277]

The U.S. paid little official notice to the alterations in the Latvian government; instead, general U.S. foreign policy initiatives during Roosevelt's first term focused on policy toward Latin America. As a result, there is very limited mention of Ulmanis in the available declassified State Department exchanges between the U.S. Embassy in Riga and Washington during 1934 and 1935. Between 1934 and1940, Ulmanis, whether consciously or not, pursued a foreign policy that has been applied by other leaders of small states in similar political positions.[278]

That is, even though Latvian Foreign Minister at that time, Wilhelm Munters attained a notable position in the League of Nations during this time, Ulmanis sought no active role in world affairs. Under Ulmanis, Munters, shaped Latvian foreign policy from 1936 to 1940, focused

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[275] Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik, 221; "Ulmanis, Once a Nebraska Teacher, Declares Germans Are Seeking Russian Help," *New York Times* (11 October, 1919).

[276] Janis Rogainis, "The Emergence of an Authoritarian Regime in Latvia, 1932-1934," *Lituanus* 17, no. 3 (1971).

[277] Rein Taagepera, "Civic Culture and Authoritarianism in the Baltic States, 1930-1940," *East European Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (1974): 408.

[278] Frank O. Mora, "Latin American and Caribbean Foreign Policy," in *Small States in World Politics: Explaining Foreign Policy Behavior*, ed. Jeanne A. K Hey (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 13-27.

further on regional alliance building. Hence, Munters' 1936 election of to the council of the League of Nations was interpreted as the result of the Baltic alliance's cooperation and increased importance in the international community.[279]

After 1935 the U.S. interest shifted back to Europe following Adolph Hitler's rise to power and the filing of comprehensive reports about the probability of various alliances in the Baltic and their consequences,[280] the U.S. State Department saw Ulmanis as of little significance relative to the threat from Hitler and the general U.S. preoccupation with communism. Indeed, even though Nies cites U.S. efforts to support the redevelopment of democracy in Latvia after the Ulmanis coup,[281] U.S. dissatisfaction with Latvia may only be inferred from the U.S. failure to fill the vacant ambassador's post between 1936 (when Arthur Bliss Lane left) and 1938 (when John C. Wiley presented his credentials in Riga). Likewise, after 1935, although the U.S. embassy in Riga regained importance for the State Department as a foothold in Eastern Europe, no further bilateral treaties were made.[282]

Not only did Latvian-American relations remain unchanged between 1935 and 1940, but also the agreements made from 1922 to 1935 illustrate the inconsequentiality of Latvian-American relations (see Table 3.1).[283] Most such agreements, which have the identical form and similar signing dates as agreements with Estonia and Lithuania, reflect a minimal level of

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[279] Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia*, 188.

[280] For an example, see the U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1935, I* (1935), 232-39.

[281] Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik," 213n373, citing page 638 of E. Anderson's Latvian text. Other than Nies's citation, which cannot be validated because of the author's language inadequacies, there are no further mentions of attempts to officially encourage a Latvian return to democracy between 1936 and 1940.

[282] McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country*, 48.

[283] Latvian Embassy of the United States, "U.S./Latvia Relations U.S.-Latvia Bilateral Treaties," http://riga.usembassy.gov/bilateral-treaties.html (accessed 20 November 2008).

bilateral cooperation. In addition, there is little difference in the number of bilateral agreements with Latvia compared to those made with other new states in this period, particularly those created out of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire.

3.1: BILATERAL TREATIES: 1922–1935

Signed/entered	Name
16.10.1923/ 01.03.1924	Treaty of extradition
24.06.1925/ 15.12.1922	Agreement relating to the indebtedness of Latvia to the United States
1.02.1926/ 30.04.1926	Provisional commercial agreement, mutually unconditional MFN status
20.04.1928/ 25.07.1928	Treaty of friendship, commerce, and consular rights (considered a commerce treaty by the U.S.)
14.01.1930/ 10.07.1930	Treaty of arbitration
14.01.1930/ 10.07.1930	Treaty of conciliation
11.07.1932/operative 01.07.1931	Agreement modifying the debt funding agreement of September 24, 1925
10.10.1934/ 29.03.1935	Supplementary extradition treaty
27.031935/ 01.04.1935	Agreement for reciprocal waiver of passport visa fees

THE MUTUAL ASSISTANCE PACT

As early as 1922, Meierovics had predicted the likelihood of an agreement between the USSR and Germany, which would allow for the pursuance of territorial prerogatives in Eastern Europe and divided the region between the two respective powers. Seventeen years later on August 23, 1939 the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact gave the Soviet Union a right to Latvia (as well as to Finland and Estonia) and Germany had a right to Poland and Lithuania.[284]

[284] Although the actual clauses of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact dealing with Latvia were not publicly known in 1939, the Latvian government assumed that that Germany and Russia had an agreement dictating the breadth of the Russian troop movements. In fact, Germany's representative to Latvia, Ulrich von Kotze, reported that Vilhem Munters had requested information dealing with the assumed agreement and voiced his interested in the coincidental border infringements that

Subsequently, on October 5, 1939, Latvia was placed under pressure to sign a mutual assistance pact with the USSR that called for Latvia to lend the Soviet Union bases until 1949, build airfields, and grant the stationing of Soviet military garrisons. Initially, the Soviets honored their commitments to refrain from interfering in domestic affairs; however, in the spring of 1940, the Soviet legation in Riga began to orchestrate provocations.

Claiming that Latvia had failed to follow the provisions of the Mutual Assistance Pact and had shown antagonistic tendencies toward the Soviet Union, the Soviets demanded that the Latvian envoys return to Moscow where they were issued an ultimatum. Hence, the Mutual Assistance Pact simply lengthened the fulcrum of leverage for the Soviet accusations, and by June 1940, Latvia was occupied and annexed by the Soviet Union.

On June 16, 1940, Moscow demanded the formation of a new government and the stationing of additional Soviet military units. A pro-Soviet government was formed and in early August requested Latvia's admission to the Soviet Union. On August 3, 5, and 6, 1940, the Soviet Union granted the petitions of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, respectively, to join its federation. Latvia was incorporated as the Fifteenth Republic of the Soviet Union and the American Embassy in Riga closed on September 5, 1940.

Latvia would incur from this agreement. Von Kotze also reported to Berlin that he had repeatedly referred to the nonaggression pact; however, he informed Munters that because of a lack of instructions from the German foreign ministry, he could not give him more detailed answers: Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik," 261.

3.2 1940 TO 1990

1940 simultaneously marks the loss of Latvian *de facto* sovereignty and an abrupt amplification of its relevance to the United States because of Soviet ambitions in the Baltic and their implications for U.S. policy. As a result the State Department's strict interpretation of international law and diplomatic precedence is dealing with Latvia since 1922 changed abruptly in 1940. In response to the Soviet actions in the Baltic, the U.S. government issued a statement on 23 July 1940 condemning the Soviet annexation of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania and the violation of their political and territorial integrity. As a result, by December 1940 Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov claimed that unresolved issues relating to the Baltic states had become the *most important* elements in Soviet–American relations,[285] of which Latvian-American interactions now became a fixture.

This section deals with Latvian-American relations from 1940-1990 and examines the new relevance of Latvia for American foreign policy and how both U.S. relations with Moscow and the Cold War environment affected how Washington addressed Latvian diplomats.

3.2.1 CREATING PRECEDENCE: THE STIMSON DOCTRINE

During World War II and the Cold War, the defining characteristic of Latvian-American relations was the Stimson Doctrine, originally a reaction to the 1931 Japanese invasion of Manchuria. Intended to protect U.S. economic interests, this doctrine soon became a benchmark for general U.S. policy and was applied to the Italian invasion of Ethiopia (1935), the German invasion of Poland (1939), and finally to the Soviet

[285] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1940, III* (1940), 349. See also David M. Crowe, "American Foreign Policy and the Baltic States Question, 1940-1941," *East European Quarterly* 17, no. 4 (1983): 412.

invasion of the Baltics (1940).[286] Specifically, it established the precedent of United States refusal to recognize any territorial changes that would inhibit American treaty rights. The validity of its application to Latvia stemmed from the fact that Soviet nationalization, with its repudiation of existing foreign debts, would result in an American loss of over $40,000,000 from the Baltic states,[287] while the decision truly greatly influenced by the state of American–Soviet relations in 1940.

Most particularly, the doctrine challenged the precedence of international law and legal theory by allowing Baltic diplomatic representations in the United States of America to continue between 1940 and 1991. Hence, when Latvian elections were scheduled for July 15-16 1940, Latvian Ambassador Alfred Bilmanis, active in the Washington diplomatic community since 1933, took the opportunity to formally protest the occupation of Latvia. After unsuccessfully seeking appointments with the secretary and undersecretary of state, Bilmanis submitted a diplomatic note to Chief of the Division of European Affairs Ray Atherton on 13 July 1940, in which he "reserved the right not to recognize the [election] results" and requested that the United States of America safeguard and secure the assets of Latvia.[288]

As a result, in 15 July 1940, Roosevelt issued executive order (EO) number 8484, which, by freezing Baltic assets in the U.S.,[289] promised to

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[286] Reluctant to curb U.S. overseas trade with Japan, U.S. Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson created a policy that was congruent with both American isolationism and American economic interests in the Far East but still communicated intolerance for acts of aggression. Specifically, Stimson stated that the U.S. "… cannot admit the legality of any situation de facto nor does it intend to recognize any treaty or agreement entered into between those Governments, or agents thereof, which may impair the treaty rights of the United States or its citizens in China, including those which relate to the sovereignty, the independence, or the territorial and administrative integrity of the Republic of China, or to the international policy relative to China…"

[287] Crowe, "American Foreign Policy and the Baltic States Question, 1940-1941," 404.

[288] Ibid., 406.

[289] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1940, I* (1940), 390: "If no restriction on the export of these funds is laid

protect American economic interests while elevating the U.S. position in foreseeable later negotiations with the USSR. Thus, it accomplished the direct opposite of the Soviet request to the Federal Reserve of New York on 13 July 1940 to transfer Baltic funds to Soviet accounts.[290]

Immediately after the Soviet-Latvian election, Roosevelt's Secretary of State, Cordell Hull instructed Wiley, the U.S. ambassador in Latvia, to return to the United States, officially for consultation but in reality to avoid the "necessity for making any official calls upon the authorities of the new governments…" and prevent any perception that the U.S. recognized the new government in Riga.[291]

Then on July 23 1940, Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles took a position on the Soviet invasion of the Baltic and applied the U.S. policy precedent established by the Stimson Doctrine:

> The people of the United States are opposed to predatory activities no matter whether they are carried out by the use of force or the

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down, it seems almost certain that they will pass into the Soviet Treasury." As a precaution, the State Department had informally asked the treasury to investigate the holdings of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania and to inform the U.S. government before any major withdrawals were carried out. This order stemmed from the heavily amended EO 8393, which had been altered to include the assets of each European state that had fallen under Nazi occupation up to this point. Hence, EO 8484 was the first application of this order to areas under Soviet control. Jonathan L'hommedieu uses the EO as an illustration of Roosevelt's attempt to gradually shift U.S. policy toward a more proactive role in Europe despite domestic constraints and the role of neutrality and isolationism in the Democratic Party platform: "Roosevelt and the Dictators: The Origin of the U.S. Non-Recognition Policy of the Soviet Annexation of the Baltic States," in *The Baltic Question during the Cold War*, ed. John Hiden et al. (New York: Routledge, 2008), 34.

[290] Crowe, "American Foreign Policy and the Baltic States Question, 1940-1941," 404.

[291] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1940, I*, 393. This observation, however, is incongruous with Sneidere's claims that U.S. Ambassador Wiley sent Kirhenstein (the head of the Soviet Latvian Republic) congratulations on becoming prime minister in July 1940: cited in Uldis Neiburgs' "Western Allies in Latvian Public Opinion and Nazi Propaganda during the German Occupation, 1941-1945," in *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations, 1940-1991: Selected Research of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia (*Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005), 47.

> threat of force. They are likewise opposed to any form of intervention on the part of one state, however powerful, in the domestic concerns of any other sovereign state, however weak. The United States will continue to stand by these principles because of the conviction of the American people that unless the doctrine in which these principles are inherent once again governs the relations between nations, the rule of reason, justice and law – in other words, the basis of civilization itself – cannot be preserved.

Although this statement did not directly mention nonrecognition, both it and the U.S. Treasury Department's actions showed clearly that the U.S. did not see the Soviet Union as a legitimate successor in the Baltic and "at least in Washington's eyes, Lithuanian, Latvia, and Estonia maintained some vestiges of international personality."[292]

The Soviets, having used earlier U.S. actions as a guide in calculating their policy, were baffled and responded with strong protests.[293] Soviet Ambassador to the U.S. Oumansky saw the application of the doctrine as heightening the already apparent Soviet "ill-feeling against the United States."[294] Nevertheless, despite Soviet protests, the decision was considered official U.S. policy, and Welles would not discuss its application further.

In a note of protest was submitted to the U.S. embassy in Moscow, Molotov declared the freezing of the Baltic assets illegal, a violation of the principles of international law, and the dissipation of any remaining positive aspects in Soviet–American relations.[295] Hence, after August 6

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[292] Vitas, *The United States and Lithuania*, 39.

[293] Oumansky argues that the policy of the U.S. toward the Baltic was formulated based on qualifications by Charles Evans Hughes and Bainbridge Colby, among others, making the U.S. policy of nonrecognition one that "cannot logically apply in this instance of the reunion of the Baltic Republics with the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics": U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1941, I* (1941), 685.

[294] Crowe, "American Foreign Policy and the Baltic States Question, 1940-1941," 405.

[295] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1940, I* (1940), 332; *1940, III* (1940), 210, 379; Crowe, "American Foreign Policy and the Baltic States Question, 1940-1941," 405.

1940, the date that Latvian consular representations would cease to function, Latvia would "… be represented by the organs of the People Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the USSR."[296] Nevertheless, as the July 23 statement did not specifically address this aspect, the Soviet ambassador requested clarification of Washington's position on this matter. Welles responded that the position of the State Department was that the status of the Baltic ministers had not changed: they maintained their diplomatic immunity. Hence, the Latvian embassy, with its staff from before the annexation, could continue its operation in the U.S. as it had before August 6, 1940.[297]

In 1940, following the proclamation of the Stimson Doctrine, although Latvian diplomats were eager to pressure decisive action from the U.S., the prospect of needing the Soviets as western allies in the Second World War prevented any gestures in the international arena. Hence, their precarious status and the potential weakness of the precedence set by the Stimson Doctrine prevented the Latvian diplomats from making any concrete demands on the United States. Indeed, it soon became evident in the U.S. that it was not congruently possible or practical for U.S. policy to maintain an "iron clad interpretation of the non-recognition policy"; in fact, as Vitas explains, before the end of 1940, "there was already some questioning of the policy by senior officials in the context of Western war aims."[298]

By January 1941, the State Department, altogether tired of evading any discussion of Baltic and Soviet persistence on the issue, felt it was, as Welles put it, "singularly unfortunate, in view of the efforts which the

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[296] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1940, III* (1940), 409-10.

[297] Crowe, "American Foreign Policy and the Baltic States Question, 1940-1941," 407. See also U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1940, III*, 378, and McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a County,* 94.

[298] Vitas, *The United States and Lithuania*, 36.

Ambassador and he had been making to bring the two countries closer together, that this question should be brought up at [all] … [because doing so] tended to impede the progress which was being made."[299] U.S.–Soviet relations continued to cool over the Baltic issue until in May 1941, Moscow presented the State Department with a "list of forbidden points and districts of the Soviet Socialist Republics" to distribute to its diplomats and the employees of its embassies, missions, and consulates. Because this list was "virtually all inclusive" of Soviet territory, it included Latvia.[300]

Pearl Harbor and the German declaration of war, however, abruptly shifted U.S. public opinion about the Soviet Union. The "congenital subjectivity of the American perception of the outside world" was, according to Kennan, never more apparent than in December 1941.[301] The resulting idealization of the Soviet ally placed the annexation of the Baltic lower on the list of U.S. policy concerns and by the end of 1941, it was entirely ignored that Stalin was making almost the same demands to the Allied powers that he had made to Hitler in 1939,[302] the Baltic had become a source of Allied collateral guaranteeing Soviet cooperation in the war. Fundamentally, then, it was the application of the Stimson Doctrine that truly created the *Baltic Question*: despite differing views on exactly what that question entails; it undoubtedly began "when these areas began playing a certain role in world affairs" and thus became salient for American policy.[303] Nevertheless, the Soviet annexation of Latvia was interrupted by the German–Soviet War and the invasion of

[299] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1941, I*, 709.
[300] Ibid., 882.
[301] George F. Kennan, "Two Hundred Years of American Policy: The United States and the Soviet Union, 1917-1976," *Foreign Affairs*, www.foreignaffiars.org (accessed April 19, 2008).
[302] Ibid.
[303] Medijainen, "The Baltic Question in the Twentieth Century," 112.

Latvian territory by Germany, which held Latvia from 1941 to 1944 when the Red Army retook it.

3.2.2 THE BALTIC QUESTION: FROM ROOSEVELT TO REAGAN

The Allied victory in 1945 could not have been achieved without the Soviet effort on the Eastern front, and Roosevelt was convinced that the incentive of western expansion had kept Stalin in the war. Thus, it was considered advisable from a wholly strategic standpoint to acknowledge the absorption of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union.[304] Nevertheless, domestic attitudes, most particularly the perception by certain sections of the American public that the United States government had adopted a policy of "appeasement" toward the Soviet Union, made this policy shift impossible to defend. Hence, the consequences of revising the United States' position on Latvia were considered of "such fundamental importance" that only Roosevelt could decide the issue.[305]

He did so, as shown by the Bohlen Minutes of the Tehran Conference (November 28–December 1, 1943), by orally consigning the Baltic and Eastern Europe to Stalin, not only to prevent a Soviet pullout from the conflict in Europe but also to secure his position in the 1944 U.S. presidential election. Specifically, Roosevelt informed Stalin "that there were in the United States from six to seven million Americans of Polish extraction, and as a practical man, he did not wish to lose their vote… He hoped, however, that the Marshall would understand that for political reasons… he could not participate – in any decision …in Tehran or even next winter on this subject and that he could not publicly take part in any such arrangement at the present time."[306]

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[304] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1944, IV* (1944), 933-35.
[305] Ibid.
[306] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, the Conference At Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (1943), 594-95.

At the same time, as regards the Baltic, Roosevelt claimed that there was also a strong contingency of Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian Americans in the United States but "added jokingly that when the Soviet armies re-occupied these areas, he did not intend to go to war with the Soviet Union on this point".[307] Hence, Roosevelt rejected the Latvian and the Baltic states' role in long term American national interests, and it became understood and ultimately accepted that after the war ended, the USSR would establish a sphere of influence in Eastern Europe and that efforts to stop or change this outcome would lead to an American-led large-scale war in Europe.[308] This private commitment to Stalin of noninterference in the Soviet control of Eastern Europe was later codified at the 1945 Yalta Conference.

From the standpoint of traditional definitions in international relations, the bi-lateral relations between the U.S. and Latvia stopped existing after the Soviet annexation in 1940, especially because, following the Tehran and Yalta conferences, the U.S. accepted that bargaining over the territories under Soviet domination was an unrealistic strategy. However, for the sake of U.S. public opinion, the U.S. maintained its nonrecognition policy when it represented a useful political resource. Rather than being simply a moral tool, this nonrecognition policy offered practical advantages or utility for the U.S., and after 1945 a strict division appears between American polices for Latvia and the Baltic.[309] Domestically, the Stimson Doctrine remained in place in U.S. politics for the entirety of the Cold War; however, internationally it was applied with a great deal of latitude. As Goble explains, when relations between the U.S. and USSR were good, the "volume of the expression of the non-recognition policy" was lowered; inversely, however, during the several

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[307] Ibid.
[308] See: Vahur Made, "The Baltic Issue during the Cold War," in *Estonian Foreign Policy at the Cross-Roads*, ed. Eero Medijainen and Vahur Made (Helsinki: Kikimora Publications, 2002).
[309] Vitas, *The United States and Lithuania*, 4.

points in the Cold War when relations were at a low point, the U.S. "raised the decibel level" of its expression.[310]

Despite its inconsistent domestic and international application, the need to internationally justify the Stimson Doctrine illustrates the way in which diplomacy became an integral part of the greater Cold War strategy.[311] Most particularly, the post-1945 U.S. policy for Latvia provides evidence of the more obtuse avocation of American interests in international law. That is, in translating philosophical explanations of Soviet behavior into an applicable U.S. policy, U.S. diplomacy and its role in international organizations changed.[312]

First, the final weeks of the war and the immediate post-war hostilities, paired with the conduct of the Soviet forces in Eastern Europe, turned U.S. opinion against the Soviets.[313] This reevaluation eventually created the rhetoric that "all democratic countries which are in anyway menaced or endangered by the USSR" are part of the American security mission.[314] This burgeoning American interest in the boundaries and use of international law correlated with the new importance of international organizations for America. That is, having long avoided lasting international commitments, the United States found itself at the center of a coalition whose goal was to prevent the expansion of Soviet power in Eastern Europe and in other areas of western interest.

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[310] Paul Goble, "The Politics of Principle," in *The Baltic Question during the Cold War*, ed. John Hiden et al. (New York: Routledge, 2008), 48.
[311] Hamilton and Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy,* 183.
[312] Pacy and McHugh denote this shift based on examples of the U.S. interpretation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations in regards to the Baltic's exiled diplomats. Unfortunately, this argument is weakened by the fact that the U.S. created and revised its policy for these diplomats from 1940 to 1945 and maintained it thereafter, well before the creation of the Vienna convention, which was first codified in 1961.
[313] Kennan, "Two Hundred Years of American Policy."
[314] Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 450.

Hence, the United Nations (UN) would become an important platform for both the U.S. and the Soviet Union, protecting them from the necessity for unilateral action. Thus, the Kremlin, like Washington, recognized the importance of vote distribution and pursed strategies to secure bloc predominance.[315]

Based on league member status, the exiled Latvian diplomats attempted to gain access to the April 1945 meeting of the UN in California. Prior to this time, their continued membership in the League of Nations had been one of the few international validations of their diplomatic status that was fully independent of the Stimson Doctrine. The U.S., however, discouraged the diplomats' attempts to lobby the UN for membership, in what was clearly an attempt to prevent them from opening a Pandora's Box of diplomatic precedence that may have led to the inclusion of more union republics. Global gerrymandering resulted in the exclusion of Latvia from the United Nations and eventually from other international bodies during the Cold War.

The Soviets for their part had originally sought the inclusion of all the union republics in the UN; however at Yalta, Stalin, who had begun orchestrating territorial acquisitions based on precedents to gain international recognition for Soviet satellite states, amended this to Belarus and the Ukraine.[316] Therefore, not only did the termination of the League of Nations also mark the termination of Latvia's membership in any legitimizing international organization, but also neither the exiled Latvian diplomats nor their Soviet counterparts were allowed to attend either the San Francisco conference or the league's final meeting in 1946.

In fact, after 1945, Baltic membership in the United Nations was never seriously reconsidered, and because the Soviet Union's seat on the UN

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[315] James P. Nichol, *Diplomacy in the Former Soviet Republics* (Westport, Conn: Praeger Publishers, 1995), 13.
[316] Ibid.

Security Council cast a long shadow, the general Baltic question was never on any official UN agenda.[317] Rather, in the UN, the direct approach to this question having been ruled ineffective, it was replaced with an indirect approach used by both exiled Baltic diplomats and the U.S. State Department. Hence, according to Morris and Made, even though the exiled Baltic diplomats continued to address UN secretary-generals, the presidents of general assemblies, various UN commissions, and delegations of various member states, these efforts evolved into a circumlocutory approach.[318]

MAINTAINING NONRECOGNITION AND SYMBOLISM

For most of the Cold War, the United States focused most of its attention to Latvia on maintaining its nonrecognition of the region's annexation by the Soviet through cautious application of the precedence set in the Stimson Doctrine and avoiding all actions that could weaken this stance. In other words, the U.S. made the avoidance of any steps that could be construed as *de jure* recognition of the Soviet annexation of the Baltic a central and continuing part of its policy for the Baltic states.

In 1958, because the likelihood of U.S. military intervention in the East had been ruled out, the National Security Council developed a policy for the Soviet-dominated nations of Eastern Europe[319] including a section dealing specifically with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to which it attributed the status of having been absorbed into the Soviet Union.[320]

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[317] Vahur Made and Helen M. Morris, "Émigrés, Dissidents and IOs," in *The Baltic Question during the Cold War*, ed. John Hiden et al. (New York: Routledge, 2008), 146.

[318] Ibid., 145.

[319] According to State Department documents, "the United States has not been prepared to resort to force or threat of force either to eliminate Soviet domination or to support revolutionary movements [in Eastern Europe]": U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Eastern Europe Region, Soviet Union, Cypress 1958-60, X* (1960) 19, point 2.

[320] Ibid. 18-31.

The long-rang goals of this policy were stipulated as follows: "Fulfillment of the right of the peoples in the dominated nations to enjoy representative governments resting upon the consent of the governed, exercising full national independence, and participating as peaceful members of the Free World community."[321]

To influence Eastern Europe, the U.S. increased activity, both private and official, in such fields as tourist travel, cultural exchange, and economic relations, including exchanges of technical and commercial visitors. In addition, to take full advantage of the opportunities that the Soviet course of action would potentially create, the U.S. needed to "appropriately exploit [the nations'] individual historical and cultural characteristics and the significant differences."

The most relevant points for Latvia were the U.S. intention to continue the Stimson Doctrine and the U.S. refusal to accept the USSR domination of these nations as an acceptable status quo. Hence, this policy led to close examination of all proposals, including those for nonofficial exchanges, on a "case-by-case basis, in the light of their possible effect on the policy of non-recognition as well as any possible net advantage to U.S. interests."[322]

At the same time, the fact that the exiled diplomats maintained a legation in the U.S. served as an important visual symbol in that diplomatic representation in the territory of other states has always played an important role in international intercourse. Moreover, just as the visit of a head of state or the signing of a bilateral treaty is enough to imply maintained recognition; access to a head of state, which was granted the Baltic diplomats on a number of occasions, also serves as implicit maintenance of recognition. Part of this implicit recognition was the continued use of symbolism: the flags of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania

[321] Ibid., 25, point 27.
[322] Ibid., 31, point 6.

hung in the main hall of the U.S. State Department throughout the Cold War, along with those of all other states with which the U.S. had diplomatic relations.

However, independent of the exiled diplomats, this effort also included two actions coordinated by the State Department or presidential administrations: the already mentioned close examination of proposals and the marshalling of international allies to maintain a strong support for the policy of nonrecognition (discussed in detail in Chapter IV, section 4.1).

These efforts were coordinated through the officer on the Baltic states desk at the State Department, who, aside from managing the legation's budget proposals, was responsible for monitoring interpretable actions, including those of the exiled diplomats. From 1957 to 1961, Richard Johnson acted as officer on both the Polish and the Baltic states desks, later recounting that in the latter role, one of his annual tasks was authoring the White House statement on the Baltic.[323]

The State Department, having determined the importance of avoiding any interpretation of *de facto* recognition of the Soviet annexation of Latvia based on the recognition of notarized documents (i.e., the authentication of Soviet official signatures on documents emanating from Latvia) developed a policy that such authentication does not imply recognition of the sovereignty of the Soviet Union over Latvia or the right of the Soviet Union to function there. The U.S. applied this same policy to the issuance of visas, thereby preventing many direct official exchanges with

[323] The restrictions to the vernacular are implied by Johnson's recollections: "I can still remember some of those phrases about how we stood totally behind the Baltic States in their desire eventually to throw off the Soviet yoke. And how we refuse to recognize the incorporation of these states into the Soviet Union. And how we'd never abandon the flame of freedom in the Baltic States": Richard E. Johnson, in an interview with Charles Stuart Kennedy, 30 January, 1991, *The Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training*, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/diplomacy/

Latvia for which U.S. citizens required a visa from Moscow. In addition, it instituted a policy that prevented any senior U.S. governmental official, defined specifically for this purpose as someone whose position requires a senate confirmation, from traveling to the three Baltic states.[324]

As a result, no U.S. ambassador ever visited a Baltic state during the Cold War, although junior officials could and did travel to the Baltic, and it was included in the consular responsibility of the State Department's Leningrad office.[325] This situation continued until 1988 and the era of Glasnost when an official U.S. delegation visited Riga and Jurmala for the first time since the final Soviet takeover in 1944. In the interim, to maintain and enliven the discussion, various presidential administrations had redeclared the U.S. policy, proclamations that usually coincided with low points in U.S.–Soviet relations.

DOMESTIC ELEMENTS OF LATVIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS

The so-called exchanges that took place between the State Department and the Latvian diplomats could more aptly be described as narrow cooperation with a high level of dependency. That is, because the continued existence of Latvia represented hope for the Latvians and strength for the Americans, to maintain the power of the Latvian allegory, the U.S. invested more effort and attention to the *de jure* Latvian state from 1940–1991 than it had in the actual Latvian state from 1922 to 1940.

The personal interpretations of some Latvian diplomats point to two extremes among Latvian diplomats directly influenced by this constellation. As one diplomat recalls, "[t]he United States was the only country where we had our legation or where the Latvian flag was flying every day; every Fourth of July our Ambassador, so to say, was invited to the White House for the diplomatic reception. So there were practically

[324] Goble, "The Politics of Principal," 47.
[325] Ibid.

all the trappings of a diplomatic relationship as it was with pre-war Latvia."[326]

In contrast, another, when asked whether the Latvian diplomats were handled like other diplomats, answered "[n]o way. It was as I said a symbolic gesture: [we were reminded of that by the U.S. They told us that] 'we never recognized the forceful incorporation of your nation into the Soviet Union; your flag is flying in the State Department lobby, your ambassador is invited on the Fourth of July," and that was it. And of course, "… [Latvian exile diplomats] were forbidden to take an active part in any of those diaspora organizations."[327] This latter remark explains why the activities of the Baltic missions and organizations in exile were tolerated by the Soviet Union. The USSR did not see the diaspora's activities or the support shown by various White House administrations "as an issue that could significantly influence U.S.–Soviet relations."[328]

Overall, the U.S. policy toward Latvia was based on and formulated to meet American national interests, making the concept of Latvia clearly subservient to the needs of the U.S. policy. This subservience, which developed out of a failing reciprocity between the two states, is illustrated by the comparably high amount of control that the U.S. exercised over the exiled Latvian diplomats (see Chapter IV).

DOMESTIC POLITICS, DIASPORA VOTERS

As Schulte points out, the "nature of the Baltic diaspora identity – especially as it was formed in the communist period – is often quite conservative due to ongoing attempts to retain ethnic traditions and identity outside of the homeland." More specifically, what the diaspora

[326] Ojars Kalnins, personal interview with the author, 24 April, 2007.
[327] Janis Jurkans, personal interview with the author, 23 January, 2007.
[328] Made, "The Baltic Issue during the Cold War."

perceived as Roosevelt's betrayal at Yalta created an overwhelming partisan reaction in the voting trends of Latvians (especially first generation Latvians) in America,[329] who gave more support to the Republicans than to other political parties. Latvian-Americans were also drawn to Harry S. Truman's "get tough" policy toward the Soviet Union; however, this line was designed to resist Soviet expansion not reverse the status of annexed nations like Latvia.[330]

Subsequently, tension in Turkey and Greece led to the Truman Doctrine, a policy of communist containment that officially shifted the direction of U.S. foreign policy away from isolationism, based on which the Truman administration reorganized the U.S. government and instituted the Marshall Plan. However, Eisenhower's election in 1953 was preceded by a proactive campaign by both the Republican bloc and immigrant groups that criticized Roosevelt's and Truman's foreign policy and called for the liberation of Eastern Europe.

As a result, such liberation became a foreign policy plank that was central to the Republican platform adopted in 1951.[331] Specifically, Republicans claimed that Truman had abandoned the states of Eastern Europe, which not only appealed to average voters, but served specifically to attract hundreds of thousands of votes from Eastern Europeans in America.[332] Accordingly, the Republican Party created an ethnic origins division headed by Arthur Bliss Lane, former U.S. Minister to the Baltic States (1936–1937).[333]

Nevertheless, whereas the 1952 campaign served the Republican domestic goals of winning the White House; internationally,

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[329] Skulte, "Returned Diaspora," 4-5.
[330] Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 447.
[331] Bennett Kovrig, *The Myth of Liberation: East-Central Europe in U.S. Diplomacy and Politics since 1941* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 112.
[332] Ibid.
[333] Ibid., 113.

Eisenhower's campaign promise, although never directly articulated, weakened U.S. relations with Western Europe while fuelling the empty promise of Eastern Europe liberation. That is, the campaign rhetoric of the early 1950s represented what Latvians in Latvia had been waiting to hear since 1940. Therefore, even though historians have only recently begun to provide fuller accounts of resistance activities in the Baltic, the U.S. Republican campaign platform, the early Eisenhower administration, and the organization of political diasporic groups (e.g., the American Latvian Association founded on February 24, 1951) certainly played a role in the Latvian dissident activities. Indeed, these latter were fueled by such policies as the Atlantic Charter and the Truman Doctrine, paired with campaign rhetoric and legislation (e.g., Captive Nations Week). Therefore, these factors, together with informational sources like Voice of America, Radio Liberty, and Radio Free Europe, can be criticized as encouraging a form of resistance that the United States was unwilling to support.[334]

In fact, discounting the relevance of Latvia's *de facto* absorption into the Soviet Union, the likelihood of military support for the Forest Brothers, the best-known Latvian guerrilla group of the 1940s, can be approximated through a comparative examination of the U.S. position on Hungary in 1956.[335] Despite evidence that the U.S. military searched for ways to exploit the vulnerabilities of Eastern European regimes, aside from the threats specific to the Cold War, U.S. intelligence sources cite practical logistics as preventing American military or paramilitary operation in Eastern Europe.[336] In addition, during Eisenhower's second term, realistic

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[334] Kissinger writes, "Although Radio Free Europe was funded by the American government, it was run by independent board… [and] it was too much to expect … freedom fighters to understand the distinction between the United States government and the pronouncements of a radio station…": Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 557-58.

[335] "Hungary: Resistance Activities and Potentials," a study prepared for U.S. Army Intelligence, Document 1, Project No. 9570 (1956).

[336] Ibid.

estimates of the probable length of the U.S.–Soviet power standoff motivated such arrangements as the investment of Baltic gold reserves and a long-term plan for Eastern Europe.

After 1958, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson, despite differing partisan priorities, did little to create new patterns in the established policy for the Baltic. The lines of containment were drawn with each administration maintaining the U.S. sphere, Eisenhower in Lebanon, Kennedy in Vietnam, and Johnson in Dominican Republic.[337]

In 1968, however, Soviet–American relations presented new opportunities, not least because both newly elected presidents Richard Nixon and Brezhnev faced similar domestic challenges. When Gerald Ford took the oath of office on August 9, 1974, the improvements in U.S.–Soviet relations were leading to the fruition of the 1975 Helsinki Conference. The Soviets were the major proponents of a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the protosummit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The CSCE promised to finally legitimize the post war status quo while at the same time introducing the topic of human rights into East–West relations.

In retrospect, Washington's agenda was to capitalize on the Soviet enthusiasm for the territorial aspects of the accords to create a more "fluid situation" in Europe, one that would allow it to use its propaganda strengths to eventually undermine the Soviet system.[338] At that time, most states involved in the process, including the Soviets, saw the human rights issue as "a paper exercise of no consequence" but included it in the accords.[339]

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[337] Kovrig, *The Myth of Liberation*, 223-24.
[338] Thomas Niles, in an interview with Charles Stuart Kennedy, 5 June 1998 ,*The Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training*, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/diplomacy/
[339] Gates, *From the Shadows*, 86.

Although strict avoidance of the term "borders" was insisted on, Helsinki also represented the most authentic threat of shifting the *de facto* status of Latvia to a *de jure* reality. The Soviets clearly understood that the clauses on the inviolability of national borders and respect for territorial integrity included Moldova and the Baltic states, while Ford, to counter any speculation that the recognition of the Helsinki accords was also *de facto* or even *de jure* recognition of Latvia's annexation, issued an official statement reiterating American nonrecognition.[340] This 1975 act, the Declaration on Principles Guiding Relations between Participating States, enumerated 10 points, the most criticized of which was point 3 on the inviolability of frontiers.

Today, the interpretable territorial gains from Helsinki are seen as minor concessions compared to what is now understood to have stemmed from the accords. That is, point 7 of the accord, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms – including freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, and point eight, equal rights and self-determination, had longer term effects and benefited the populations of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania more than point 3 had the potential to harm them.

For the Soviet Union and the communist governments of Eastern Europe, CSCE turned out to be a rather unmanageable process. Shortly after Helsinki, reverberations of the accords could be felt in Eastern Europe; most particularly, because the accords allowed dissidents to cite an internal source legitimating rights both human and national.[341] Resistance activities appeared in Latvia for the first time since the early 1960s, and during the 1970s and 1980s, growing numbers of émigré's began to visit their homeland, a fact that the Soviets wanted to capitalize on to gain a type of *de facto* recognition from Latvians abroad.

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[340] McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country,* 111.

[341] Edward Hurwitz, in an interview with Charles Stuart Kennedy, 15 August, 1996, *The Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training*, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/diplomacy/

Specifically, Soviet efforts were directed at encouraging the diaspora's acknowledgement of Latvia's incorporation while "discouraging the influence of the émigré political organizations both on the Latvians communities abroad and on the government of their countries of residence and international organizations."[342] When visitors traveled to Latvia with a Soviet visa, however, the Soviets saw it as validation of Latvia's absorption. Nevertheless, the efforts by some Latvian Americans to establish cultural exchanges with Soviet Latvia were viewed with suspicion and criticism both from within their own ranks and by the U.S. government.

After Jimmy Carter's election in 1977, Soviet–American relations began to truly unravel. Although Carter had initially cut defense spending, the damage to the American psyche done by the 1979 Iranian hostage crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (which led to the U.S. boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow) resulted in renewed hostilities with the Soviets on representative plains.

Two factors made Carter administration policies relevant for Latvian-American relations: Carter's general position on human rights and the role of his national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski. Brzezinski, modeling Carter's 1979 doctrine on the phraseology of the Truman Doctrine, insisted on clarity of expression in relaying the U.S. position to the Soviet Union. Hence, the doctrine was intended to deter the Soviet Union from seeking hegemony in the Persian Gulf. As had occurred in the Ford administration, during the Carter presidency, the U.S. Congress declared February 16, 1983, Lithuanian Independence Day, again "turning up the volume" on the Baltic Question.

Nevertheless, for the Baltic diaspora, U.S. foreign policy after 1975, despite affirmations by Ford and Carter, could not rectify what the Helsinki Accords had done until Ronald Reagan's election in 1981 and

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[342] Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia,* 425.

the gratifying description in his "evil empire" speech which appealed Latvian to anti-communist attitudes.[343] In October 1981, Reagan extended Carter's policy with the Reagan Doctrine proclamation that the United States pledged to secure internal stability not only external protection and to reject détente, statements reminiscent of the promises of Truman's rollback and the Eisenhower campaign. Subsequently, the restructuring that began with Gorbachev created an agenda of rapid reform that forced the redirection of resources away from the classical Cold War military commitments.

3.2.3 HELSINKI AND THE RETURN TO LATVIAN POLITICS

The Latvian political demands that began to develop in the mid-1980s used cultural issues as a platform for a re-identification with nationality.[344] Hence, Baltic popular movements, or popular fronts, led to a peaceful, democratic "singing revolution" in Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania that was based on environmental, social, historical, migration, and cultural issues. Nevertheless, this revolution was largely a formal process conducted within the limits that Soviet structures had unintentionally offered for change.

Before the founding of the popular front, Latvian resistance activities in the 1940s and 1950s had been strongly connected to the idea of the imminent western liberation of the Baltic, preparation that underground Latvian newspapers began urging as early as 1941. As already mentioned, the most well-known group of these Baltic guerrillas was the Forest Brothers (alternatively Forest Brethren or Forest Brotherhood, depending on the language).[345] During the war years, as Neiburgs points

[343] President Reagan, Speech to the House of Commons, June 8, 1982.
[344] Latvians began to reject the ethnic diversity that Soviet leaders saw as one of the Soviet Union's strengths: Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," 47.
[345] Neiburgs, "Western Allies in Latvian Public Opinion," 140.

out, Nazi efforts "failed to change the affection for the West that had taken root in the Republic of Latvia during the interwar period."[346] The fact that a majority of the population was largely misinformed about the realties and developments in international relations allowed faith in western intervention to remain. Therefore, after the final capitulation of German forces in May 1945, when Latvia was absorbed into the Soviet Union, rumors circulated in Latvia that promised a Soviet withdrawal spurred by the Western Allies.[347] Latvian historians conservatively describe the overriding attitude of Latvians after the war as "expectant" in regards to their future.[348]

The return of the Soviets to Latvia resulted in an increase in the ranks of the Forest Brothers between 1945 and 1946.[349] After 1945, Soviet accounts of "persons who stood outside the new system"[350] reported up to 12,000 in Latvia in as many as 700 bands.[351] Having experienced the Soviet deportations of Latvians in 1941, many Latvians were motivated to participate in guerrilla activities by the realistic – and as it later turned out, well-founded – expectation of another wave of deportations.[352]

By 1947, U.S.–Soviet relations had moved into a phase of "undisguised hostility,"[353] and 1947 would have been the most advantageous time for the western powers to have intervened in Eastern Europe[354] because not only Latvians, but other nations across the world, understood the Truman Doctrine's promise to support free peoples resisting subjugation by armed minorities or outside pressures as globally applicable.

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[346] Ibid., 146.
[347] Romuald J. Misiunas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States, Years of Dependence, 1940-1980* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 69-70.
[348] Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia*, 331.
[349] Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, 70.
[350] Plakans, *The Latvians*, 155.
[351] Ibid.
[352] To curb resistance, the Soviets deported an estimated 60,000 Latvians between 1945 and 1946: Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic* States, 70.
[353] Kovrig, *The Myth of Liberation*, 72.
[354] Ibid.

Yet, given the much-cited existence of a reliable flow of information between Nazi- and later Soviet-occupied Latvia and the West, it could be assumed that the Latvian resistance was sufficiently informed of the true extent to which U.S. intervention could be relied on. Nevertheless, the Latvian legations' publication in 1947 of "Latvia as an Independent State" clearly indicates that not only Latvians in the Baltic but also their exiled diplomats in the West were applying the Truman Doctrine to the situation in the Baltic.[355] At the same time, although the United States never officially took measures to support resistance in the Baltic, it also refrained from directly discouraging it, which served its goals without straining any of its resources.

As former Latvian Ambassador to the U.S. Ojars Kalnins put it, "I know that the Latvian diplomats were somewhat disappointment by what America really did. They had expected the U.S. to do more; there were the Forest Brothers waiting for the U.S. to help."[356] Janis Jurkans, former Latvian Foreign Minster and influential member of the popular front, also explains that within Latvia, the understanding that the Americans were coming to liberate Latvia was thought to have come from the Americans themselves: "They were saying that they will help Latvians right after the war, and so many Latvians were just waiting in the woods, and afterward of course they were captured and destroyed and put into gulags; that was an ugly chapter in our history. America promised more than [it] delivered."[357]

Unfortunately, this situation prolonged the conflict between the Soviets and Forest Brothers for over a decade, until by the mid-1950s, Soviet forces had eradicated most of the group's resistance, and the U.S. stance on revolts in Hungary made it difficult for even the most optimistic Baltic

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[355] Alfreds Bilmanis, *Latvia as an Independent State* (Washington, D.C: Latvian Legation, 1947).
[356] Kalnins interview, 24 April, 2007.
[357] Jurkans interview, 23 January, 2007.

partisans to believe America would eventually assist them. Nevertheless, it is debatable whether the Republican claims of liberation were merely a campaign ploy: even though the meaning of liberation was never defined during the campaign, the legacy of liberation remained in Republican policy as an "expression of concern for the fate of the satellites."[358]

Over two decades later, in October 1986, the expectation of "liberation from above" shifted to a Latvian grassroots movement[359] following the publication of an article opposing the construction of a hydroelectric station on the Daugavpils River, which incited an impressive public debate that eventually tied environmentalist issues to the protection of nationally important landscapes.[360] Helsinki '86 was also formed at this time to monitor the observance of the human rights provision of the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. The Latvian group chose June 14 1987, the anniversary of the 1941 mass deportations of Latvians, to begin what would later be known as the Calendar Demonstrations, collective public events tied directly to significant days of commemoration in the Baltic, including August 23, the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

In spring 1988, at an open conference of the Latvian Writers Unions, Mavriks Vulfson refuted the ideological justification for the Soviet annexation of Latvia by contending that a socialist revolution had never taken place in 1940.[361] This writers' conference was then followed by a series of concessions from the Soviet side to the Latvian culture, including recognition of Latvian as the official state language and legalization of the former Latvian flag and national anthem. October 9, 1988, saw the formation of the Latvian *tautas fronte* (Popular Front) chaired by Daina Ivans, one of the coauthors of the 1986 hydroelectric

[358] Kovrig, *The Myth of Liberation*, 119-21.
[359] Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia*, 431.
[360] Dania Ivins and Arturs Snips, *Magazine of the Creative Union*.
[361] Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia*, 432; Sandra Kalniete, in an interview with the author, 24 April, 2007.

article. This organization represented a very broad coalition of interests, ranging from autonomy to independence.

Although Gorbachev initially courted the Popular Front, his intolerance of republican succession eventually won out. However, the momentum started by *perestroika* was too strong to be stopped, and the group quickly outdistanced him to make more radical demands. On March 26, 1989, an election of people's deputies from among multiple candidates occurred in Latvia for the first time since 1934. The Popular Front won 26 of 34 contested seats. In August 1989, the most internationally visible action of the Baltic popular movements, the human chain running north to south across the Baltic states, marked the high point of pre-independence Baltic unity.

In the United States, the Baltic independence movements were greeted with high levels of trepidation between 1989 and 1991 with the stability of Soviet Union outweighing the importance of recognizing the Latvian state. The two extremes of the interadministrative struggle that President Reagan was attempting to balance became evident as early as the summer of 1987. In Berlin on July 12, Reagan gave his "Tear Down This Wall" speech and just weeks later (on July 24, 1987), the text of a speech for the Captive Nations Week conference distributed to reporters "contained several highly critical references to the Soviet Union and its leader…But when the President delivered the speech, he eliminated many of them."[362] In addition, that winter, shortly before Gorbachev's arrival for the December 1987 summit in Washington, the Baltic flags that had been hanging in the State Department's foyer since before 1940 were removed, marking the only time that this had happened during the Cold War.[363]

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[362] Steven V. Roberts, "The Summit: Political Lot of Reagan and Gorbachev Linked," *New York Times,* 10 December (1987).

[363] The flags were quickly returned after members of the Baltic-American community noticed their absence and complained directly to the media: Goble, "The Politics of Principal," 46.

3.3 1990 TO 2000

The first 10 years of fully reciprocal post-Cold War bilateral relations between Latvia and the United States reflect how both states adjusted to the demands of their new roles in the international community, although the levels of momentum differed. Most particularly, the speed of the transition left the George H.W. Bush Administration without a strategic and conceptual vision, which was strongly criticized. From 1989 to 1991, the Bush administration chose not to support or encourage any type of national separatism, and although the Baltic states represented a special case of this policy, Bush showed no discontinuity in his position.[364] Whereas Latvia had relied on the continuation of American polices, the uncertainty of the international situation forced the U.S. to place global stability ahead of its ambiguous Cold War promises. This U.S. hesitance to re-recognize Latvia and its departure from the Stimson Doctrine demonstrates the abrupt shift in U.S. policy for Latvia engendered by the end of the Cold War.

The articulation of a U.S. foreign policy after 1989 was also noticeably hindered in the U.S. by the lack of an enemy to fill the void left by the Soviet Union and international communism, as well as the foreign policy consensus that the United States enjoyed from its Euro-Atlantic allies during the Cold War.[365] Hence, in the early 1990s political commentators turned to the pre-Cold War vernacular to reconsider the concepts of *internationalism* versus *isolationism*.[366]

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[364] Raymond Garthoff, *The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1994), 425.

[365] Madeleine Albright, "The Role of the United States in Central Europe," in *The New Europe: Revolution in East-West Relations*, ed. Nils H. Wessell (New York: Academy of Political Science, 1991), 71-84.

[366] Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How it Changed the World* (Routledge, 2002), 267.

3.3.1 THE BALTIC REVOLUTIONS AND STIMSON'S SILENCE

After 1990, Latvia focused on complete political independence, external security, and achieving its "rightful" place in the western family of nations. However, it still saw the United States as the quintessence of western democratic tradition, the preserver of the Baltic states during the Cold War, and the only state that could project its power and influence into the Baltic region. Nevertheless, between 1989 and 1991, much as in 1918–1922, Latvian-American relations were confined to questions of general diplomatic recognition.

At this time, the Popular Front's Foreign Minister Janis Jurkans, who after joining the front in 1989 had led its involuntarily discreet but broadening diplomatic offensive in the United States, became the face of Latvian independence in America. In an effort to secure foreign support before the Latvian election planned for March 1990, the Popular Front had attempted to establish relations with officials throughout Europe, Canada, and in the U.S., and with the United Nations. Jurkans' goal was to promote the front's foreign policy agenda, which resembled ideas and informal activities more than a diplomatic strategy.[367] Nonetheless, the front's goal can be reduced to three points: to reactivate international interest in the "forgotten" Baltic states and their aspirations for independence, to gain international support for these aspiration, and to build a foundation for Latvia's eventual accession to different international organizations.[368]

Much to Jurkans' consternation, however, the U.S. government maintained discretion when meeting with the front's members because

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[367] Sandra Kalniete supports this claim: "When we started we were not diplomats. We had not been recognized and our job was very political. It was our job to pave the way. We had no [Latvian] passports because we had no control of our territory; we didn't even have our own currency, and it was a difficult time to represent Latvia in any way": interview, 24 April, 2007.

[368] David J. Smith, *The Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*, Postcommunist States and Nations (New York: Routledge, 2002), 120.

official contacts with the Baltic nationalist parties were seen as fueling the fire of the hard-line communist opponents of Gorbachev.[369] Hence, U.S. officials refused to accept Jurkans' counterargument that the sure electoral victory of the Latvian Popular Front in March 1990 would make the discretion moot.

A contrast can immediately be made between the amount of attention the Baltic states received in likeness to other nations in the early nineteen nineties. On November 9, 1989 as the Berlin Wall fell in the midst of a major media display, unnoticed, only days later, the Estonian Supreme Soviet nullified its 1940 annexation and than a Latvian commission declared the Soviet occupation of Latvia illegal.

Just months later Lithuania declared independence in March 1990, when Latvian Popular Front candidates gained a two-thirds majority in the democratically held election also in March, the Supreme Council, formerly the Latvian Supreme Soviet, followed suit. On May 4, 1990, the council declared Latvia's incorporation into the USSR unlawful and announced the beginning of a transitional period. Ivars Godmanis was then elected as leader of the body, dominated by members of the Popular Front.

Latvia's focus on membership in international organizations continued to be relevant during the conversion from the Popular Front-led transitional government to the Republic of Latvia and beyond. Indeed, the first actions of the Latvian parliament give evidence of how fundamental such membership was to early Latvian policy. On the day of the Latvian independence proclamation, the acting legislative body announced Latvia's accession to over 50 international human rights instruments. The state also articulated that governmental activity would be guided by the

[369] Paul Lewis, "Officials at UN Quietly Meet Baltic Leaders," *New York Times* (10 December, 1989).

principle set by the Council of Europe and the European Parliament and declared primacy of international law.[370]

For Latvia, membership in these western organizations was strongly tied to its desire to rejoin Europe, and represented both a rejection of past Sovietization and the possibility of future Russification.[371] Conversely, as Knudsen points out, the "failure to secure membership of these organizations would have the effect, as they saw it, of relegating them to the political influence of Russia."[372] Latvians also felt that the more ties they developed with the West, the more it would bind them into the western fold, further guaranteeing that the gravitation of Russian policy could not pull Latvia back into Moscow's sphere of influence.

On September 17 1991, Latvia was finally granted membership to the United Nations;[373] however, this speedy acceptance into UN membership proved to be the exception rather than the rule: it was not until 2004 that Latvia achieved its goal of both European Union and NATO membership. Moreover, while Estonia and Lithuania were accepted as full members of the Council of Europe in early 1993, Latvia was accorded only observer status, primarily because of the unresolved domestic issue of citizenship rights. Although membership was finally granted in early 1995, the Latvians had become frustrated with the general nature of international organizations and the political thresholds for membership.[374]

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[370] Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," 62.

[371] Imants Ziedonis, "Identity of Latvian Culture, Namable or Unnamable Identity?" http://www.li.lv (accessed 31 October, 2007).

[372] Olav Knudsen, ed., *Security Strategies, Power Disparity and Identity* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2006), 41.

[373] The Latvian status as a former member of the League of Nations expedited this process (although this was not the general rule; for example, Moldova, which had also been absorbed into the Soviet Union only attained UN membership in 1992): Made, "In Search of Abstract Security," http://edk.edu.ee

[374] For more on this topic, see Christopher S. Browning and Pertti Joenniemi, "The Challenges of EU and NATO Enlargement," *Cooperation and Conflict: Journal of the Nordic International Studies Association* 39 (2004): 227-331.

THE END OF THE STIMSON DOCTRINE

The Latvian reliance on structures created by the United States during the Cold War proved to be misplaced: Jurkans' preparatory work in the U.S. and Europe did not result in a flood of states diplomatically recognizing Latvia and legitimizing its independence from the Soviet Union. Rather, in March 1990, with various shades of Baltic independence declared, the U.S. declined to activate the policy established by the Stimson Doctrine and diplomatically re-recognize the democratically elected government in Latvia controlled by the Popular Front.

In fact, White House officials and the State Department publicly admitted being "torn between the long-stated American posture favoring self-determination for the Baltic Republics and a more recent but fervent desire to see Mikhail S. Gorbachev remain in power as the Soviet President and not be undermined by domestic upheavals."[375] The U.S. chose support for wider reaching Soviet stability over the Latvian state, and the State Department turned away from mention of the Stimson-based policy.

The integrity of the Stimson Doctrine had previously been tested only once – in 1986 when at the Chautauqua Conference in Jurmala, Latvia the U.S. opted to amend its policy for the sake of American–Soviet relations. In contrast, in 1990, it refused to activate the policy for the sake of Latvian-American relations. Even though minor points of erosion were visible throughout the period of détente, 1986 was the first test of the policy that amended official practices, justifying a brief look back.[376]

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[375] Niel A. Lewis, "Upheaval in the East: Washington, Tough Choice for the U.S.: Baltic States or Gorbachev," *New York Times* (13 January, 1990).

[376] Both Goble and Mann refer to the Lithuanian seaman, Simas Ionovich Kudirka, who attempted to defect to the United States via the Coast Guard cutter Vigilant on 23 November, 1970. Even though the United States had an established policy of granting political asylum, Kudirka's request was denied, and he was forcibly

The September 1986 Chautauqua conference, held outside Riga, was organized by the Chautauqua Institution, which since the late 1800s has sponsored debates on public affairs. This conference, which brought together U.S. and Soviet representatives, was a follow-up to a meeting the previous year.[377] To highlight the immensity of this situation, Helmut Sonnenfeld emphasizes that the need for all delegation members to obtain a Soviet visa to attend the conference in Latvia implied that a Soviet visa validated travel in Latvia and questioned the U.S. policy of nonrecognition.[378]

Hence, in a move unheard of in the 1950s and 60s, a compromise was reached to facilitate the attendance of American officials,[379] including Ambassador Jack Matlock, serving as special assistant to President Reagan and senior director for European and Soviet affairs at the National Security Council, former national security advisor under Nixon, Sonnenfeld, along with Edward P. Djerejian.[380] Prominent Latvian-Americans like Ojars Kalnins were also part of the 270-member delegation.[381] By allowing the Chautauqua conference to take place in Latvia, the State Department risked weakening the Stimson Doctrine, yet four years later, in 1990, as the doctrine began to impede aspects of the Latvian independence movement, the United States refused to amend its policy. As a result, Spohr-Readman writes, "decades-long legalistic

returned to his ship: Goble, "The Politics of Principal,"; Clyde R. Mann, "Asylum Denied: The Vigilant Incident," *Lituanus* 18, no. 3 (1972).

[377] The uncensored media access demanded by Chautauqua's planners had threatened Moscow, so by proposing Latvia as the site, the Soviets anticipated a boycott of the conference: Nils Melngailis, "The Chatauqua Conference and Its Meaning for the Baltic Cause," *Lituanus* 33 no.1 (1987); Joseph A. Cincotti, "The Russians Hit Town for Talk and Ice Cream," *New York Times* (22 August 1987).

[378] Helmut Sonnenfeld, in an informal interview at the Conference in the Baltic States in Riga, 18 May, 2005.

[379] Goble, "The Politics of Principal," 50.

[380] U.S. Department of State, "U.S.-Soviet Relations: Background and Prospects - Jack F. Matlock's Address Before the Chautauqua Conference" [bulletin], http://www.findarticles.com/ (accessed 28 March, 2007).

[381] "U.S. Groups to Attend Riga 'Town Meeting'," *New York Times* (14 September, 1986).

rhetoric of Baltic support" based on the Stimson Doctrine was reduced to just that – mere rhetoric.[382]

3.3.2 DIPLOMATIC (RE)RECOGNITION AND BILATERAL EXCHANGE (II)

Whereas the representatives of the Latvian Supreme Council, filled by members of the popular front, were slowly gaining access to international organizations, most effective in pushing Baltic recognition were Soviet actions. Specifically, Moscow demanded Baltic exclusion from all international organization in which the Soviet Union held membership. Hence, the OSCE meeting in Paris in November 1990 became an arena for continued hostilities between the Baltic states and Moscow as the Soviets vehemently objected to the attendance of Latvian observers, who were ultimately ejected from the meeting. It was also Soviet actions in the Baltic that forced the most concrete position from the United States in early 1991.

On January 2, 1991, the Riga OMON, the Soviet security riot police and defense apparatus, in conjunction with the KGB, began a military crackdown in Latvia that began with the seizure of Riga's main printing plant. In response, citizens formed human barricades to protect Riga's main government and communications installations. The events reached their apex on January 20 as the OMON and other unidentified combat groups attacked the Latvian Ministry of the Interior, killing six people.[383]

The Soviet use of force swung the international pendulum, with the U.S. in favor of the Baltic cause for independence.[384] The barricades had become a powerful international symbol of Latvian willingness to defend

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[382] Kristina Spohr-Readman, "Political Rhetoric and Real Politik," in *The Baltic Question during the Cold War*, ed. John Hiden et al. (New York: Routledge, 2008).
[383] Garthoff, *The Great Transition*, 450.
[384] Spohr-Readman, "Political Rhetoric and Real Politik," 177.

what it had already gained and played an important role in emotionally charging the issue of Latvian independence. Indeed, Jurkans recalls how swiftly the international response changed after January 1991.[385]

The U.S. immediately condemned the Soviet government's use of force, and the State Department held the Soviet leadership responsible for the actions of the Soviet military. In the days directly following this dispatch, presidential advisor James Baker, in a show of support, received the Latvian deputy prime minister and one of the vice presidents of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of Lithuania, while both houses of congress passed resolutions condemning events in the Baltic.[386]

The State Department's internal structural also slowly began to change and the creation of a Baltic working group indicated the region's growing importance. In the spring of 1991, the U.S. consulate in Leningrad augmented the number of staff members traveling through the Baltic states to collect information,[387] and Washington accepted the Baltic legations as *de facto* branches of their respective foreign ministries.[388] Nevertheless, officially, the White House and the State Department continued to support a solution in the Baltics that would not weaken Gorbachev, an aim allegedly reiterated in June 1991, after Bush, Baker, and top advisors met with leaders from the three Baltic states.[389] Later, however, when the Baltic representatives made this strategy public, Baker denied it, showing an irritation about being misquoted that surfaced again in Berlin at the OSCE meeting.

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[385] Jurkans interview, 23 January, 2007. After being excluded from many opportunities to meet with world leaders, Jurkans recalls, "[w]e were given king-size receptions in the White House and Downing Street and from the French and in Bonn…." Hence, Latvian representatives were finally being recognized, but, "only after that bloodshed."

[386] Garthoff, *The Great Transition*, 446.

[387] Goble, "The Politics of Principal," 53.

[388] Ibid.

[389] William McGurn, "Bush's Slow Reaction - U.S. Policy toward Autonomy of the Baltic States," http://www.findarticles.com/ (accessed 28 March, 2007).

Yet, despite U.S. concern about Gorbachev, a personal concern for events in the Baltic among key U.S. strategy makers was also evident, and Baker used the meeting in Berlin to privately warn Baltic leaders of a probable Soviet coup.[390] Well aware what a hard-line communist coup would mean for the Baltic, Estonian Foreign Minister Lennart Meri asked Baker whether the Americans would "help us."[391] Baker replied, "yes, by all means; you can count on us." "But", Jurkans recalls, "[Baker] misunderstood and thought that we were speaking about our private security and we said 'no, that is not the issue; the issue is our counties' and he said 'no'."[392] The coup that U.S. intelligence predicted came in August 1991, but the hardliners were unsuccessful.

The Latvian legation in Washington matched its steps to United States policy for Latvia. After 1989, both the legation and the State Department expanded their cooperation with the Popular Front and later with the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs created in July 1990. After the parliament declared the end of the transitional period and claimed *de facto* independence on August 21, 1991, the Latvian legation openly recognized the government in Latvia. During the weeks after the August coup, a mass of states recognized the Republic of Latvia, and American recognition finally came on September 2, 1991. According to Goble, this delayed U.S. recognition of Latvia was the finalization of Baltic independence: "When Washington acted, it put by virtue of its position and power in the world a period or even an exclamation mark on the recovery of Baltic independence."[393]

By December 1991, the U.S. granted Latvia MFN status, and the chief of the Latvian legation, Anatol Dinsberg, was recognized through his appointment that year as Latvian Ambassador to the U.S. and United

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[390] Jurkans interview, 23 January, 2007.
[391] Ibid.
[392] Ibid.
[393] Goble, "The Politics of Principal," 54.

Nations. In the same month, an official Latvian delegation visited the U.S. state and defense departments to discuss cooperation between Latvia and the U.S.[394] Although the delegation met in the U.S. with members of the Security Assistance Working Group (SWAG) and two U.S. members of this group (both members of the Latvian-American diaspora) visited Latvia in January 1992 as consultants, no noteworthy advancements in security relations took place.[395] However, the Latvian legation was once again elevated to the status of an embassy, while U.S. diplomats became active in Riga even before the new U.S. embassy was officially opened on April 10, 1992.

Between 1990 and 1994, the U.S. sent over 300 Peace Corps volunteers to the Baltic and created academic and cultural exchanges with Latvia. Nevertheless, most authors agree that the U.S. played no major role in terms of economic exchange.[396] That is, even taking into account Latvia's size, the amount of financial support it received in relation to other nations in Eastern Europe was limited.[397] Thus, Nies places the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Baltic neighbors, the Nordic countries, and Germany far ahead of the U.S. on her list of relevant international actors for Latvia at this time.[398] The first U.S. ambassador to Latvia in the post-Cold War was not a political appointee; rather, Ints M. Silins, a member of the Latvian diaspora, was taken from the ranks of the State Department.[399] When President Bush's intention to nominate

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[394] Anita Terauda and Karl Altau, *The Campaign to Admit Latvia Into NATO* (Malden: World Federation of Free Latvians, 2004), 35.

[395] Ibid.

[396] Galina Zukova, *Legal Aspects of Trade in Goods between the EU and Its Candidate States: The Case of Latvia* (Riga: Latvijas Vestnesis, 2004), 242.

[397] Gerd Föhrenbach, *Die Westbindung der baltischen Staaten* [The Western Orientation of the Baltic States] (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2002), 152.

[398] Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik," chapter IV; Nils Muiznieks, *Latvian-Russian Relations: Domestic and International Dimensions* (Riga: Latvijas Universitate, 2006).

[399] The appointments of Bob Frazier to Tallinn, Daryl Johnson to Vilnius, and Ints Silins to Riga were largely the choice of the acting assistant secretary for European affairs at the State Department, Thomas Niles. In his interview with Kennedy, Niles recalls that "[w]e couldn't go through the regular process. Ints Silins was the

him was made public on February 10, 1992, Silins was acting *chargé d'affaires* in Riga.

This time lag between the (re)recognition of Latvia and opening of the U.S. embassy and Silins' appointment was partially related to logistical and diplomatic issues created by the presence of Russian troops in Latvia, which affected all levels of U.S. policy for Latvia. There was a shortage of suitable buildings in Riga for states to use as embassies because the Russian forces remained in their Soviet buildings, some of which were former foreign embassies. In September 1991, the Latvian parliament passed legislation aimed at the return of foreign embassies to Latvia in exchange for the establishment of Latvian embassies abroad. Nevertheless, the process of recovery and renovation of the former embassies was lengthy.

Despite the diplomatic recognition granted Latvia by many states between August and October 1991, several other countries remained hesitant to actually complete the diplomatic exchange by placing embassies and staff in Riga. Given the presence of the Russian military and their control of the airports and borders, western diplomats remained unconvinced that Latvia, under the premise of the Vienna Convention, could pledge safety as a receiving state. As vice president of Latvia Andrejs Krastins complained in 1992, "It is not normal that about sixteen or seventeen embassies are in Riga and four Russian intelligence services."[400]

Russian border control also affected the use of Latvian passports, which in 1991 had been issued to government members by the Latvian legation in Washington. Ivars and Jurkans were given passport numbers 1 and 2,

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only Latvian-American foreign service officer, as least as far as I was aware. I had worked closely with him when I was at USEC and he was consul general in Strasbourg. He was appointed ambassador to the newly liberated, reliberated Latvia. He had his swearing-in ceremony on the seventh floor with his mother there."

[400] Conference on Baltic Security Conference, Salzburg, 5 to 7 October, 1992,14.

respectively. However, these documents were not internationally recognized, and in 1992, Latvian officials were still expected to travel to the U.S. on Soviet passports.[401]

POLICY AND RUSSIANS IN LATVIA

For Latvia, independence was never a question of leaving the Soviet Union; rather, it meant that the Soviets should leave Latvia. The presence of Russian troops is often given as the underpinning of the Latvian decision against a neutral policy. That is, Latvia developed an early foreign policy agenda based on security objectives, which reflected the emerging Latvian political identity in terms of East/West opposition. Hence, the foremost issue in Latvian foreign policy was territorial defense, which was understandably tied directly to the issue of Russian troops in Latvia.[402] However, progress was made on this issue only after Latvia had successfully drawn international attention to it. Thus, between 1991 and 1993, the U.S. coordination of Latvian–Russian troop withdrawal negotiations played an influential role.[403]

To the large number of ethnic Russians attempting to integrate domestically, building western connections through the development of a political identity in terms of "we" and "they" was unacceptable. However, internationally, Latvia pursued a policy focused on *difference* or *otherness* from the Soviet Union and Russia,[404] a juxtaposition in

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[401] Kalniete interview, 24 April, 2007.

[402] Andrew A. Michta, "Central Europe and the Baltic Littoral in NATO," *ORBIS* (Summer 2004): 413; Artis Pabriks, "The Foreign Policy of Latvia," in *The Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania,* Postcommunist States and Nations, ed. David J. Smith, (Routledge, 2002), 123.

[403] Ibid., 124.

[404] The EU ambassador told Gunther Weiss that it was impossible to consider Latvian accession to the European Union without considering Latvian-Russian relations and the status of Latvian noncitizens, a fact confirmed by other sources: Helen M. Morris, "EU Enlargement and Latvian Citizenship Policy," *Journal of Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* 1 (2003): 2. See also Miniotaite, "The Baltic States," 266.

external and internal priorities that caused many Latvian policymakers to fail either on the international or domestic level. This strategy also resulted in "a noticeable mismatch between the opinions of *the* public and those of the top elite," and during the 1990s, Latvia suffered chronically from short-term governments.[405]

After the collapse of a coalition government in 1993, however, Valdis Birkavs was appointed foreign minister, a post that, uncharacteristically for the time, he retained until 1999 despite other shifts in the government. As the longest serving foreign minister in contemporary Latvia's history, Birkavs became Latvia's key policymaker and has been credited domestically "with putting Latvia on track to integration into western organizations."[406]

Prior to 1993, the first phase of the Latvian foreign policy agenda was set by Jurkans (1990–1992) and was retained through the fifth Saeima until his resignation. He was succeeded by Georgs Andrejevs (1992–1994), who, in stark contrast to the more tolerant and moderate Jurkans, won popularity by expanding on the nascent radical nationalistic anti-Russian policy.[407] Indeed, Nies uses this stark difference between Latvia's first and second foreign ministers as an allegory for the entire political atmosphere in Latvia before 1993.

After Yeltsin's August 24, 1991, recognition of Latvian independence, an estimated 30,000 Russian troops remained in Latvia, which continued to be an issue until the majority departure in 1994 and the full Russian pullout of 1999. In October 1992, Yeltsin announced the suspension of troop withdrawals from Latvia citing the "massive violation of the human

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[405] Ausra Park, "Starting from Scratch: The Role of Leadership in the Foreign Policymaking of the Baltic States, 1991-1999," *East European Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (2005): 229.
[406] Ibid.
[407] Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik," 339.

rights" of Russian troops and civilians.[408] However, by linking the troop issue to the treatment of ethnic Russians who had come to Latvia after 1940, Moscow effectively prevented these problems from being solved separately and quickly.[409]

As a result, the negotiations for Russian troop withdrawal from Latvia took far longer than in Estonia or Lithuania. However, Latvia, as headquarters for the northwest group of command of the former Soviet military, not only offered ports that were ice free all winter but was home to cost-intensive installations like the microwave listening station at Ventspils used to monitor European telephone conversations and the radar towers built between the 1960s and 1980s at the Skrunda site, 150 kilometers from Riga.

Therefore, in August 1992, Russian Foreign Minister Kozrev delivered a nine-point ultimatum before he would discuss the troop withdrawal from Latvia any further, an ultimatum that, according to Krastins, was more demanding than anything Russia had requested from Latvia in 1940.[410] In addition, statements by Russian foreign policymakers that the Baltic States were in Russia's sphere of interest – the so-called near abroad – were seen as a direct threat to Latvia.

That the gravity of Baltic-Russian relations was seriously affecting the Latvian national psyche was made obvious by Toomas Ilves' confrontational question to a panel at the 1992 Conference on Baltic Security: "When is the invasion going to take place?"[411] For Latvia, this threat of a Russian conflict was very real. Hence, in 1992, the Latvian

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[408] Steve Erlanger, "Russian Troops Still in the Baltic Tell of Harassment," *New York Times* (27 December, 1992).
[409] Goble, "The Politics of Principal," 190.
[410] The Conference on Baltic Security, 13.
[411] Ibid., 76.

government directly requested that NATO play a role in observing the Russian troop situation in Latvia.[412]

In late 1993, Latvian-American relations picked up with the White House statement that America saw troop withdrawal as the top regional priority in the Baltic. Nevertheless, the Russians continued to use their troops in Latvia as leverage. For example, Russian generals and governmental officials broached the possibility of tying their troop withdrawals from Latvian to NATO troop reductions, while others asked for large grants to build living quarters in Russia. As late as 1994, Moscow was reiterating its right to maintain troops in Latvia to prevent a security vacuum and the entry of hostile forces into Russia's sphere of influence. During this time, the Kremlin held fast to the idea that the Russian presence in the Baltic had a stabilizing effect, further implying that it was also necessary to protect Russian minorities there, although in most Latvian cities, the Russian portion of the population had made up the majority since the mid-1970s.[413]

THE LATVIAN CITIZENSHIP DEBATE

After years of Soviet dominance, many Latvians felt that the rewards of national sovereignty were meant for the indigenous people.[414] Hence, the sheer number of ethnic Russians in Latvia made the citizenship question a

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[412] Ibid., 14.

[413] By 1989, primarily because of the disproportional immigration of Russians, Byelorussians, and Ukrainians, Latvians only constituted 52 percent of the population. These immigration trends were tied to the Soviet policies that many officials brought into Latvian political life, and the Soviets facilitated the settlement of retired Soviet officers and their families with preferential access to state housing. Soviet economic policies also sponsored huge enterprises that could not be staffed locally, leading to the importation of both managers and workers. Rasma Karklins, *Breaking the Shackles: Latvia after the USSR* (Washington, D.C: Woodrow Wilson Center Press/Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 158.

[414] Graham Smith, ed., *The Baltic States: National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 181.

defining factor in how the Latvian state would develop.[415] In 1991, Latvian citizenship meant having the right to live, study, work, vote, and buy real estate in Latvia, rights defined for all Latvian citizens before June 17, 1940, and passed on to their successors. The rest of the population received so-called alien passports, described as "an exclusive, almost restitutionist [policy]… seeking to identify the Latvian state with the Latvian nation."[416]

As regards Latvian-American relations, although the citizenship issues in Latvia were treated with a degree of understanding, they also met with a degree of reserve. Hence, Baltic observers initially suspected that after the 1992 election, the Clinton administration might rely on former Carter administration staffers with a heavy focus on human rights, which could hurt Latvia.[417] After the November election, however, the new administration's attitude toward Latvia was marked with positive communication.[418] Nevertheless, except for its coordination of the Russian troop withdrawal negotiations, the U.S. held its relations with Latvia to a minimum between 1991 and 1993.

3.3.3 LATVIAN–AMERICAN RELATIONS WITHIN THE NATO CONTEXT

In June 1990, NATO invited Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and the Soviet Union to create regular diplomatic exchanges with the alliance. The North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), founded in 1991, was an additional indication of NATO's changing

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[415] It should be pointed out that a nonbinding referendum was held in Latvia on March 3, 1991, which asked "Are you for a democratic and independent Republic of Latvia?" The participation level was over 85 percent, and over 73 percent supported the idea. Indeed, Driefelds calculates that to produce this result, at least 33 percent of non-Latvians had to have voted in favor: *Latvia in Transition*, 78.

[416] Helen M. Morris, "EU Enlargement and Latvian Citizenship Policy," 1.

[417] The Conference on Baltic Security, 74.

[418] Franz Oswald, *Europe and the United States: The Emerging Security Partnership* (Westport CT: Praeger Security International Publishers, 2006), 121.

relations with former east bloc states. The 1991 Gulf War also confronted the Europeans with their lack of preparedness and revealed clearly clear need to rely on NATO structures; however, the alliance needed to be justified.

Bill Clinton, during his 1992 presidential campaign, finally created a vision for U.S. policy that shifted from the usual "aggressive multilateralism" to a "[NATO] enlargement"[419] that also meant the expansion of U.S. interests in Europe. According to Kaufmann, the argument that "expansion was necessary to stabilize and reassure the East-Central Europeans, [also] implies that the Baltic States, too, could best be stabilized and reassured by NATO membership."[420] Based on this assumption, the Clinton Administration created a U.S. national security strategy for Europe that officially aimed at the creation of prosperous, cooperative peace throughout the continent with a direct concentration on the promotion of democracy in the eastern part of Europe.[421]

Yet, Kaufman claims, the U.S. drive to expand NATO was at the same time the greatest self-produced contradiction to the U.S. strategy rhetoric.[422] Moreover, Russia's continued objections to NATO enlargement made the issue of the Baltic States one of the most difficult parts of expansion[423] from the perspective of NATO relations with Russia, although not from the perspective of Latvia and her neighbors.

Once it became clear at Travemünde that the U.S. was behind the Eastern expansion of NATO, however, joining the alliance became a more

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[419] Howard Wiarda, *U.S. Foreign and Strategic Policy in the Post-Cold War Era* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1996), 4.

[420] See Ron Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), cited in F. Stephen Larrabee, *NATO's Eastern Agenda in a New Strategic Era* (RAND Corporation, 2003), 1.

[421] Stuart J. Kaufman, "The Baltic States in Post-Cold War U.S. Strategy," in *The Baltic States in World Politics*, ed. Birthe Hansen and Bertel Heurlin (Richmond, UK: Curzon, 1998), 46.

[422] Ibid.

[423] Larrabee, *NATO's Eastern Agenda in a New Strategic Era*, 51.

concrete part of the Latvian foreign policy agenda. Nevertheless, the Latvian goal of belonging to a viable security alliance has a long history.[424] Like Latvia, many Eastern and central European states saw NATO as the only viable solution to their security problem, because, as Donnelly points out, for countries coming out of a Warsaw Pact culture effectively designed for "war fighting," the idea of shifting loyalties to NATO was not as welcome as it would have been had the two coalitions indeed been at war. Rather, it resulted in surprise and confusion.[425] Nonetheless, in 1995, Latvia adopted North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership as an official goal,[426] a goal, however, that could not be achieved without U.S. support. Hence, Latvia focused once again on Washington.

The official U.S. agreement to NATO expansion and, from the American perspective, the regeneration of NATO's relevance to post-Cold War security manifested as the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program.[427] To counteract the alienating qualities of NATO expansion, part of the PfP strategy was to allow Russia to "play a constructive role in the new European security architecture through the development of NATO–Russia relations."[428] Hence, the initiative was innovative in being open to Russia, the Ukraine, and the Baltic, as well as states that had already declared neutrality, without (theoretically) creating or strengthening any lines of demarcation.

To maintain its stock in Europe without further emasculating Russia, the U.S. acted as though NATO were simply one of many international organizations with an objective set of membership criteria that was

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[424] Alfred Bilmanis had already noted in 1944 the Latvian affinity for membership in an effective system of collective security: *The Baltic States in Post-War Europe*, 28.
[425] Conference On Baltic Security, 65.
[426] See Pabriks, "The Foreign Policy of Latvia," 124, citing *Latvijas Vestnesis* (1995).
[427] Ted Galen Carpenter and Barbara Conry, *NATO Enlargement: Illusions and Reality* (Washington, DC: Cato Institute, 1998), 144.
[428] William J. Perry, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress* (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1996), 3.

adapting its mission to the post-war world. However, the U.S. refusal to address NATO expansion in geopolitical terms, opting rather for arguments on liberal norms, while it had only short-term benefits for the U.S., provided an eventual advantage for Latvia. That is, as Kaufmann points out, by their lasting refusals to specify the membership criteria, the U.S. was indirectly admitting that NATO was not simply "another institution, but a solemn commitment to mutual defense."[429] This strategy, Kaufmann ads, was developed to avoid the risk that one day the Baltic states could say, "We have met the requirements. Now let us in."[430]

In addition, although the PfP promised Latvia the option of NATO membership, whose key benefit and main interest for Latvia was the *security* provided through Article 5, no security guarantees were attached to the agreement, making NATO members reluctant to extend an invitation to Latvia. Indeed, the Danish ambassador to the United States once said that "[i]n an alliance like NATO, all members big or small must be able to produce, not only consume, security."[431]

Once the PfP program was approved at the start of 1994, Latvia could finally engage in discussions with the U.S. at a time when the Balts were particularly encouraged by the growing pressure from Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary whose admission the U.S. supported. At the same time, Carl Bildt's widely quoted article, the "Baltic Litmus Test," redefined the Baltic security conundrum[432] using Russia's level of democracy and aptitude in the new system as a yardstick against which to measure western attitudes toward the Baltic.[433] Accordingly, NATO needed to placate Russia while reassuring the Baltic states, a task that until 1999 seemed to favor Russia.

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[429] Kaufman, "The Baltic States in Post-Cold War U.S. Strategy," 53.
[430] Ibid.
[431] Ulrik A. Federspiel, "The Power of Small Powers," Lecture: Brigham Young University, Provo UT (Feb 13, 2001).
[432] Bildt, "The Baltic Litmus Test."
[433] Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door*, 158.

This latter bias became clear when during his visit to Riga in July 1994, Clinton reiterated apprehension about the rate of Russian troop withdrawal but made no mention of NATO. Rather, the U.S. Congress linked the progress of troop withdrawal to U.S. aid to Russia, which in that year included a portion of the $50-million Baltic American Enterprise Fund, a $10-million Baltic peacekeeping force, $4 million to help dismantle Russia's Skrunda radar station, and capital to build 5,000 apartments in Russia for retired Russian officers from Latvia and Estonia.

Beginning in 1995, the Baltic states began participation in planning and reviewing processes (PARP) and submitted extensive biannual reports on their defense plans and structures.[434] In September 1995, NATO published a study on expansion that more or less paralleled the American position:[435] simply put, it gave a "not yet" rather than a "no" to Baltic membership. However, it did not define the "not yet" in terms of time.

BALTIC BUNDLING REVISITED

Adhering to the bundling approach that it has specifically employed for security issues, in May 1993, the U.S. used military liaison teams to contact representatives of the Baltic forces through U.S. embassies. On the U.S. side, these teams were made up of members of the National Guard and Coast Guard who trained in nondefensive tasks with their Baltic counterparts.[436] In 1996, U.S. military support for the region increased further with the placement of military attachés in the U.S.'s Baltic embassies. These attachés and military liaison teams, as well and bilateral workgroups instated in 1994, supported the four programs that guided U.S. bilateralism in security affairs.[437] Meanwhile, in the U.S.,

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[434] Charles Krupnick, ed., *Almost NATO* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 286.
[435] Föhrenbach, *Die Westbindung der Baltischen Staaten*, 161.
[436] Ibid., 188.
[437] For a more detailed overview of these four programs - Foreign Military Financing, International Military Education and Training, the Excess Defense Articles, and the

the Joint Contact Team, one of the four aspects of bilateral cooperation, was supported at the state level by the National Guards in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Michigan, all states with a relatively high Baltic diaspora.

The U.S.–Baltic Partnership Charter exemplifies this macro approach to Baltic security. This agreement between Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and the United States, signed in 1998, delineated the direction for what is referred to as "Latvian–U.S. and Baltic–U.S. co-operation."[438] The agreement's goal was to aid the "integration of the Baltic States into European and transatlantic political, economic, security, and defense organizations."[439] This cooperation was organized by a commission chaired by foreign ministers from the Baltic States and the U.S. deputy Secretary of state, which met annually (until 2001) and addressed issues ranging from the results of bilateral cooperation in economic, military, and other fields to progress under the charter. At the same time, U.S. support for Latvian membership in NATO was identical to the policy it followed for Estonia and Lithuania.[440]

Meanwhile, the Nordic nations had supported Baltic membership for many reasons but most particularly for fear that mishandling the issue could lead to a renewal of a Cold War constellation whose buffer would be pushed from Germany to the Baltics. Therefore, to downplay such fears of and for the Baltic, in 1996, the U.S. instituted a joint Baltic–American action that Toomas Ilves reportedly joked should have been

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Joint Contact Team, see Föhrenbach, *Die Westbindung der Baltischen Staaten*, 188-189.

[438] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, "Bilateral Relations between Latvia and the United States of America," http://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/policy/bilateral-relations/4542/USA/ (accessed 15 September, 2006).

[439] Ibid.

[440] Cooperation with the U.S. took the form of multilateral Baltic projects such as BALTBAT (Baltic Battalion), BALTRON (Baltic Naval Squadron), BALTNET (Baltic Air Surveillance Network), and BALTDEFCOL (Baltic Defense College).

dubbed the Baltic Electoral Plan, having been made public shortly before the 1996 presidential election.[441]

THE LATVIAN DIASPORA IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

Ilves' comment in 1996 reintroduces a topic not yet addressed in this section, the role of the Latvian diaspora in U.S.–Latvian and Latvian–NATO relations. As Terauda and Altau document, after Baltic independence, the organizational structures of the various Baltic diaspora groups had no problem identifying with a new post-Cold War goal, Baltic inclusion in NATO. Therefore, to efficiently and quickly compensate for its lack of experience, the Latvian government looked to members of the diaspora in the United States and in other western nations to fill its ranks. This resource provided the government with representatives that were not only fluent in the national language but also familiar with the politics of their respective homes. Hence, compared to its role in other states, the part played by the diaspora in Latvian politics can generally be described as "obvious."[442]

One prominent example of using this resource is the appointment of Ojars Kalnins as Latvian ambassador to the United States from 1992–1999. Kalnins, born in a German camp for displaced persons and naturalized as a U.S. citizen in 1968, was active in diaspora organizations, having worked for the American Latvian Association from 1985 to 1990 before beginning work in January as public liaison and communications officer for the Latvian legation.[443]

The general success of such Baltic diplomats in the U.S. – Kalnins for Latvia and Tom Ilves, a journalist from New Jersey who had worked for Radio Free Europe, for Estonia – was based on their knowledge of the

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[441] Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door,* 162.
[442] Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik," 369.
[443] Kalnins interview, 24 April, 2007.

American system. As Asmus stresses, the role of the diaspora that had returned to Latvia was to play a part in the new governmental structures; hence, "[i]t was not unusual for U.S. officials to sit down with Baltic delegations and discover that their counterparts were from Cleveland, Chicago or Los Angeles."[444] Overall, "the influence of the Latvian diaspora on the formation of the Latvian state and its foreign policy represents an external factor which, in total, augmented Latvian foreign policy. Their knowledge of the American political system and the values of their vote ensured that U.S. policy for Latvia maintained domestic relevance while their resources and abilities increased Latvia's options. The Baltic community also worked closely with other groups to build political support for NATO membership."[445]

Clinton's reelection in 1996 brought Madeleine Albright into the State Department, a diplomat who saw clearly that NATO expansion and a strategy for the Baltic states was a task for the times.[446] Consequently, that year, the State Department opened the Office for Nordic and Baltic Affairs, leading eventually to the production of a three-point Baltic action plan (BAP) to firmly embed the Baltics in European and Euro-Atlantic institutions, encourage the development of normal relations between Russia and the Baltic states, and promote the development of the political and economic infrastructures of the three states.[447] However, the Baltic states, convinced that NATO was still their only security option, embarrassed the Clinton White House by flatly rejecting this proposal, denouncing it as a weak substitute for NATO inclusion.

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[444] Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door*, 159.
[445] Ibid.
[446] Ibid., xxxi.
[447] John Leech, *Whole and Free: NATO, EU Enlargement and Transatlantic Relations* (London: Federal Trust for Education & Research, 2002), 84.

Although perhaps a poor reaction diplomatically, especially given that Latvia would have to work with the administration for another four years, the Baltic reaction stemmed from a very real threat. At this very point, Asmus points out, two Russian military analysts published a study suggesting preemptive military intervention in the Baltic states to counter NATO enlargement.[448] Moreover, in mid-1996, Anton Surikov of the Defense Research Institute of the Russian Federation was quoted in an interview as saying that "if NATO expanded to the Baltic States, Russia would position its troops in the countries; and if the West defended the Baltics, Russia would launch its nuclear weapons."[449] The following year, the Russians reiterated their opposition to Latvian NATO membership in an analysis compiled by senior Russian politicians and strategists.[450]

Between 1997 and 2000, U.S. support for the Baltic state's entry into NATO remained in question, with the breadth of U.S. domestic opposition becoming clear in the late 1997/early 1998 senate debates on the admission of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.[451] Even though the gamut of these arguments ran from general cost considerations to the immaturity of the prospective members to security liability, the final vote exceeded the two-thirds majority necessary in the senate. However, a moratorium of three years was attached to the next enlargement round, making clear that the second round would be much more difficult than the first even though the need for security in Latvia was not diminishing.

In 1997, a charter of partnership was created between the U.S. and the Baltic states, yet, despite the plethora of charters and cooperation agreements (see Table 3.2), there was still no U.S. commitment to

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[448] Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door*, 161.
[449] Terauda and Altau, *The Campaign to Admit Latvia into NATO*, 43.
[450] Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," 136.
[451] Terauda and Altau, *The Campaign to Admit Latvia into NATO*, 9.

Latvian membership in NATO nor, as Pabriks puts it, any "back door security guarantees" for Latvia.[452] In effect, because Washington would not make an autonomous commitment, the charter promised nothing: "Instead, it [was] a formal statement of common interests and common goals that future American administrations will find difficult to dilute."[453]

At the NATO meeting in Madrid on July 1997, the U.S. representatives took a concrete stance, making clear their belief that Latvia and her Baltic neighbors were ready for Article V responsibility. However, because Germany, France, and the UK remained opposed to Baltic NATO membership, the invitation to attend described the Baltics as "aspiring members."[454] The Baltic States reacted immediately and in unison to the Madrid position and issued a joint statement the following day promising to do whatever was necessary to meet NATO standards.

However, whereas Western Europe's opposition made Baltic integration into Europe a priority in U.S. policy after 1997, domestically, by allowing veterans of the Latvian voluntary SS legation to celebrate their 55th anniversary in 1998, [455] Latvia complicated Russian objections, which augmented when the 1999 round of expansion brought Russian cities within range of NATO missiles and the second round literally brought NATO within striking distance of St. Petersburg. The Washington summit in April 1999 finally confirmed that the second enlargement round would provide a membership action plan that would serve as a roadmap for Latvia's entry. The final statement from NATO was that "Romania, Slovenia and the Baltic countries would receive serious consideration in the near future… not later than 2002."[456]

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[452] Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," 140.
[453] Steven Erlanger, "U.S. to Back Baltic Membership in NATO, But Not Anytime Soon," *New York Times* (12 January, 1998).
[454] Terauda and Altau, *The Campaign to Admit Latvia into NATO*, 50.
[455] J. L. Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion: Bearing Gifts or Bearing Arms* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 215.
[456] Terauda and Altau, *The Campaign to Admit Latvia into NATO*, 57.

As late as 2000, according to Larrabee, few would have seen a Baltic invitation to the Prague summit as possible. At the time, most would have limited the 2004 expansion round to the *Slo-Slo* option of Slovenian and Slovakia. However, several factors contributed to this invitation, not least the actions of the Baltic states.[457] Specifically, the risk of antagonizing Russia by pursuing and eventually joining NATO was counterbalanced by arguments that Czech, Polish, and Hungarian relations with Russia had improved following their acceptance into NATO. Moreover, Latvian democratic consolidation and market reform, as well as improvements in their military capacity, made it hard not to draw objective comparisons between Slovenian and Slovakia and the Baltics.

In addition, the shift in U.S. politics marked by the election of George W. Bush in late 2000 and his inauguration in early 2001 presented Latvia with new options. For instance, Senator Jesse Helms came out strongly for NATO enlargement and specifically addressed the Baltics.[458] In April 2000, a conference attended by NATO aspirant countries marked the institution of the Vilnius Ten, or V–10, process, and Russia began to tone down its objections. By mid-2001, according to Larrabee, it was clear that Putin would not make a major issue out of Baltic membership; therefore, in September 2001, Latvia released it new national defense strategy, again with NATO at the forefront.

As regards the reality of Baltic bundling, Larrabee suggests that "there was a growing belief that it did not make any sense to invite only one Baltic State – that if you are going to invite one, you might as well invite them all, especially because the difference in qualifications between the states was not great."[459] Also supporting such inclusion was a belief that

[457] Larrabee, *NATO's Eastern Agenda in a New Strategic Era*, 58.
[458] Terauda and Altau, *The Campaign to Admit Latvia into NATO*, 62.
[459] Larrabee, *NATO's Eastern Agenda in a New Strategic Era*, 59.

a clean sweep in the Baltic was a better approach than allowing each accession to result in a bitter argument with Russia.[460]

Today, even though small state researchers, Latvian scholars, and politicians may claim that the West had finally made good on nearly 50 years of political rhetoric, others claim that the real logic underlying this action was geopolitical, a viewpoint supported by the resulting changes in the international system. Nevertheless, Latvia's tenacity regarding NATO secured its membership at a time when the international system was still in modification, which created an advantage for the Baltic that other states no longer enjoy.

4 MARGINS AND MECHANISIMS IN GREAT-SMALL RELATIONS

Latvian relations with the U.S. produced few benefits for Latvia, and the ambiguous commitments of support did little to enhance Latvian goals of sovereignty, international recognition, or security. However, from the case study three consistent behaviors can be identified in the United States' bilateral relations with the Republic of Latvia. The most impactful of which was the U.S. use of international law to serve its national interests, with diplomatic acts based on, or justified by, legal precedence or the creation of diplomatic practice. The other two themes were the American use of friendship in place of alliances to ensure a positive exchange with Latvia without creating any obligation and the bureaucratically effective approach of dealing with the Baltic as a whole (bundling).

The identification of specific bilateral techniques does not suffice in understanding the catalysts of U.S. behavior as a great state towards a small state, however, as this work is designed as an initial step in

[460] Ibid.

examining great power-small state relations, the following section supplies the descriptive information necessary to look at the actual mechanics and margins of how the U.S. addressed Latvia. In this chapter the three key behaviors of the U.S. will each be looked at from (1) what is meant by these concepts and their practical and theoretical underpinnings, (2) how these concepts can be applied in a great-small relationship to the advantage of the great state, and (3) specifically how they were applied by the United States in its relations with the Republic of Latvia. What becomes evident in the following discussion is that the application of these bilateral techniques, despite American capability and capacity, were affected by parameters created by the international system.

4.1 INTERNATIONAL LAW AND GREAT STATE INTERESTS

The most variance in Latvian-American relations during the twentieth century can be attributed to the ways in which the United States has interpreted international norms to define the framework for bilateral exchanges between the two states and create advantages for the U.S. Although states in the international system consider themselves equal,[461] a principle that is supposedly "not affected by differences of power"[462] the capacity of the U.S. and the capability of American diplomats enabled beneficial interpretations of international legalities. Showing that although international law is considered protective of small states, is could be implemented by the U.S. to serve its interests alone.

International law stems from two primary sources: agreements (treaties) and practice. Whereas treaties represent a codification of expectations and consequences and are comparatively simple to understand, practice is

[461] Michael Burton Akehurst and Peter Malanczuk, *Akehurst's Modern Introduction to International Law* (New York; Routledge, 1997), 3.
[462] Alfred Cobban, *The Nation State and National Self-Determination* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 303.

a combination of rules and norms also described as custom and common principals, which have a wide scope of interpretation and illustrates why traditional diplomacy is notoriously preoccupied with precedence. In the twentieth century, diplomatic precedence was used not only to guide protocol, as in the order of precedence, but also policy.[463] It has been generally accepted that although international decisions "need not be followed in other cases, in reality, such decisions have the impact of legal precedent."[464] Nevertheless, despite claims that in new areas "customs can be quickly established by state practice by virtue of the newness of the situation involved," the deficiency of rules prevents international law from regulating new situations.[465]

Hence, a single precedent is often insufficient for the creation of a customary rule, making repetition the only means of achieving practical acceptance.[466] In this same vein, if a state is against a practice becoming customary law, it needs to object to the practice from the onset; the absence of protest is considered acquiescence to a nascent practice.[467] As a result, customary laws or rules are best identified in the actual (ideally consistent) practice of states, which points to the weight of state actions in defining them. Thus, evidence of the material element of customary law can be seen in policy statements, press releases, official positions, and domestic legislation.

Moreover, to create or establish a rule in customary law, state actions must be justified by "belief that such action is rendered obligatory by a rule of law requiring it," known as *opinio juris*, this divides the actions that a state sees as legally obligatory from actions motivated by

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[463] Hamilton and Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy,* 65.
[464] Quaye, *Liberation Struggles in International Law*, 78.
[465] F.A. Engelen, *Interpretation of Tax Treaties under International Law*, IBFD Doctoral Series (2004), 10.
[466] Akehurst and Malanczuk, *International Law*, 41
[467] Ibid., 11.

"courtesy, convenience, economic, politics tradition or other motives of a non-legal nature."[468]

The interpretation of an international norm, whether based on customary law or a treaty, usually occurs only on its application. That is, each subject of international law has the ability to interpret both the meaning and capacity of its rights and obligations as an actor in the international system.[469] Such scrutiny of state interpretations is based on the amount of interest or distrust one state has toward its partners, meaning that once again the absence of protest is seen as acquiescence.[470] Historically, states have enjoyed the scope of interpretation provided by international law, but conversely, a clear determination of "rights and obligations in a given situation" could have a negative impact on a state's willingness to be bound by it.

As with treaties, problems of enforcement, among others, are based on drafting. That is, diplomatic documents, including treaties, do not by their nature allow for very strict methods of interpretation.[471] Rather, to provide a common basis for various national interests, the rules of international law must often be vague, to allow the signatories to infer their own national interests from the treaties. Moreover, the enforcement of provisions of international law often correlates directly to levels of national interests.[472]

The twentieth century witnessed many calls for the reform of international law. Most especially, after World War I, the first major military conflict in Europe for over 40 years, it was agreed that diplomacy had failed to prevent the conflict and there was a need for diplomatic

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[468] Ibid., 13.
[469] Carlos Fernandez de Casadevante Romani, *Sovereignty and Interpretation of International Norms* (Berlin: Springer, 2007), 4.
[470] Ibid.
[471] Humphrey Waldlock, ed., *The Law of Nations: An Introduction to the International Law of Peace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), 325.
[472] Hans Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, 261.

reform. The search for a reliable mechanism for implementation and enforcement of international law became even more relevant in the post-World War II era, when practical reliance on *opinio juris* was criticized for serving political means rather than legal obligations. Then, in the early stages of the Cold War, "symbol and substance" became reflexive elements, and diplomatic actions became part of or subservient to the Cold War context.[473]

As a result, between 1945 and 1961 the principals of international law were reinterpreted to accommodate broader political objectives, more lenient and opportunistic interpretations of diplomatic law that provided incentive for the ratification of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (1961 and 1963, respectively).[474] These conventions fully codified the legal basis for diplomatic conduct, partly to serve the needs of emerging colonial powers and new states that lacked the knowledge of the rules and traditions used by the established states, and partly as a "consequence of the deliberate breach of those rules which had occurred during the early Cold War."[475]

Nevertheless, even though the Vienna conventions were created based on the principal of nonretroactivity – meaning that practices in place before 1961 did not lose their validity – they still reflect the historical customs of diplomatic exchange, which, given their far-reaching history, represent an enduring form of informal consensus that acts as a balancing system. The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations was constructed from accepted diplomatic theories, including the theory of *functional necessity*

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[473] McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country*, 2.

[474] Ibid., 5. In addition, the extent to which *de facto* regulations on diplomatic practice could be employed during the Cold War is illustrated in the prevalent use of the concept of *persona non grata*. The early Cold War depicts a period in which the expulsion of diplomats from receiving states was only second to that in the historical period before the Congress of Vienna.

[475] Hamilton and Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy*, 2.

that is the basis for diplomatic privileges and immunities, and the precedents of *personal representation* and *extra territoriality.*

All such theoretical precepts assume reciprocity, which, together with mutual indemnification, fosters an environment of passive enforcement that underlies many international agreements. Yet occurrence or nonoccurrence of reciprocity must be considered within a conceptual parameter in which most interactive situations are interdependent.[476] Such cases include the recognition of states, state interaction, and the premise of diplomatic immunity, all topics relevant to twentieth-century Latvian-American relations.

RELATIONS AND TERMS OF INTERPRETATION

Post World War I is the first of two instances in which the U.S. was forced to deal with the issue of Latvian diplomatic recognition, although the U.S. reluctance to diplomatically recognize Latvia lasted longer and was more qualified in 1918 than in 1991. That is, in this latter instance, recognition came with less of a delay and more emphasis on comparatively speedy additional agreements, such as renewing Latvia's MFN status. In both cases, however, transitions in the international system demanded Latvian patience with the American choice to finalize international recognition of Latvia rather than motivate it.

In 1918, however, the European states created as a result of the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Czarist Russia were not uniformly handled under the Wilson Doctrine, the key U.S. policy of the time. At that time, the U.S. viewed the Austro-Hungarian successor states as an ideological victory but questioned the value and viability of the Russian Empire's breakaway states. Hence, the United State's All Russia Policy – an effort to sustain the territorial integrity of the former

[476] Martin Patchen and David D. Bogumil, "Comparative Reciprocity during the Cold War." *Peace and Conflict* 3, no. 1 (1997): 38.

Russian empire for a new a post-czarist democratic state – overshadowed the fight for autonomy by the nationalist movements in Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania. Moreover, the State Department's rationalizations against diplomatic recognition of Latvia in 1918 were just as pertinent in 1922, with the political development of the Latvian state still questionable and the fear of lending legitimacy to an unstable state still valid. The echo of the misplaced diplomatic recognition of the provisional Russian government in 1917 and of Georgia and Armenia in 1921 still reverberated throughout the State Department.

Hence, the diplomatic recognition of Latvia has been interpreted as a highly qualified endeavor, one that only stabilized as the USSR strengthened its position. The U.S. justified this reactive approach to diplomatic recognition based on the lack of precedence for dealing with new states and its concerns about the obligations such recognition might require.

GREAT STATE CAPABILITY AND THE STIMSON DOCTRINE

1940 marked the most abrupt shift in the relevance of Latvia for U.S. foreign policy, one reflected in an equally abrupt shift in the U.S. application of international law and diplomatic practice. Such a shift clearly illustrates the elasticity that a great power can extract from international structures. Moreover, not only do most historians agree that the Stimson Doctrine had outlived its purpose by the conclusion of World War II, but legal scholars even debate the doctrine's validity. Nevertheless, the United States maintained this policy until after 1990, and it "was clear from its inception – at least privately in government circles – that the non-recognition policy would never be allowed to harm U.S. interests."[477]

[477] Vitas, *The United States and Lithuania*, 37.

When U.S. caution in the interwar period was replaced with bold proactive polices, the consequences of the Stimson Doctrine (also known as the Policy of Non-Recognition of the Illegally Annexed Baltic States) were far reaching for international law. Once the U.S. applied the doctrine, extensive support structures were needed; particularly, the continued diplomatic recognition of representatives of a no-longer-existent national entity that underlies the theoretical and practical principals of diplomacy. Therefore, in contrast to its reluctance to diplomatically recognize the new small state of Latvia in the early 1920s based on the lack of diplomatic precedence, the U.S. decided to maintain Latvian representatives on the diplomatic list after 1940 even though there was no precedent.

In addition, the international system of 1940, like any legal system, had the means to affix relevance to the absorption of Latvia into the USSR. Unlike national legislation that attaches consequence, in international law, the "consequence is expressed in the position that a country takes in the dispute, which leads to one or the other consequence."[478] Therefore, legal consequence was the result of Welles' statement of June 23, 1940, in conjunction with other supplementary statements about the legality of elections and the occupation of Latvia.[479]

In addition, translating the philosophical explanations of Soviet behavior into an applicable U.S. response changed the United States' diplomatic role, including that in international organizations. This change led to, if not an outright American rethinking of international law, then at least a renewed prevalence of reverse monist interpretations that allowed containment of communism and transcended previous policy, making diplomacy an integral part of America's strategy.

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[478] Ineta Ziemele, "The Occupation of the Baltic States from the Aspect of International Law," in *The Baltic Way to Freedom: Non-Violent Struggle of the Baltic States in a Global Context*, ed. Janis Skapars (Riga: Zelta Grauds, 2005), 65.

[479] Ibid.

To sustain this powerful symbol of *de jure* small states, the U.S. invested more effort and attention on the maintenance of the Stimson Doctrine than it had on any of the Baltic states between 1922 and 1940. Nevertheless, even though the Stimson Doctrine was a victory for the preservation of the Latvian state, the State Department's official position that the status of the Baltic ministers in the U.S. had not changed proved incorrect.[480] That is, the leverage that this position could have granted Latvia was removed by the Soviet invasion, which forced the remaining Latvian diplomats in the U.S. to the sideline. Consequently, the continued existence of Latvia became a cold war allegory, one of hope for "captive nations," strength for America, and the subject of heavy scrutiny by the Soviets.

Watson sees this period as an "absence of normal diplomatic contacts and their subordination to an intense arms race, ideological rhetoric and mutual incomprehension."[481] Therefore, the U.S. policy toward Latvia "reflected long range western goals… [and] could be useful for the bargaining purposes at international conferences … and provided an excuse for Western interference within the Soviet sphere of influence, thus disrupting the balance of power in a small but annoying manner, nonetheless."[482] Thus, multilaterally, the U.S. could marshal its allies to strengthen its precedence while circumscribing Latvian-American relations and the diplomatic privileges of Latvian diplomats.

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[480] Crowe, "American Foreign Policy and the Baltic States Question, 1940-1941, 378.
[481] Adam Watson, *Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 1984), 63.
[482] McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country*, 66. Alternatively, as part of its transformed role in Cold War conflicts, diplomacy became "total in its objects and subject matter," making international relations a normative measure for the successes and failures of each bloc: Hamilton and Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy*, 183.

MULTILATERAL ACTIONS

If a majority of the members of the international community agree to it and have an interest in its employment, a legal norm can be adopted and employed in a remarkably brief period,[483] meaning that support of the American stance by other states in the international system strengthened a policy's legality. Accordingly, the Stimson Doctrine could only remain the cornerstone of arguments against *de jure* recognition of the Soviet annexation by maintaining sizeable support in the international system. The doctrine also needed frequent reiteration because, even though international law is based on the establishment of continuous obligations and the commitment does not change over time, "the legitimizing effect of the original consent may fade."[484]

Thus, even though Belgium, (West) Germany, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, and the Vatican all followed the U.S. in its refusal of both *de facto* and *de jure* recognition of the Soviet annexation of Latvia, the U.S. was not always successful in marshalling its allies to lend strength to the precedence it had created. Rather, the State Department's enthusiastic implementation of the Stimson Doctrine was muffled by other nations, leading to limitations for the Latvian diplomats worldwide. Specifically, even though the United Kingdom showed flexibility in its Baltic policy,[485]

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[483] Ineta Ziemele, "The Occupation of the Baltic States from the Aspect of International Law," in *The Baltic Way to Freedom, Non-Violent Struggle of the Baltic States in a Global Context*, ed. Janis Skapars (Riga: Zelta Grauds, 2005), 64.

[484] Volker Röben and Rüdiger Wolfrum, eds., *Legitimacy in International Law* (Heidelberg: Springer, 2008), 9.

[485] Despite international implications, the United Kingdom's Latvian embassy staff was struck from the diplomatic list as early as 1942, after which these diplomats were considered private individuals with diplomatic status. McHugh and Pacy suggest that in the UK, a general resentment toward the overbearing U.S. policy may have been partially responsible for London's interpretation regarding Latvian diplomats: *Diplomats without a Country*, 66.

In 1967, under the auspices of an English and Russian bilateral trade agreement the Baltic gold deposited in British banks was used to compensate British shareholders for financial losses on properties nationalized by the Soviet Union and to be used by the USSR to purchase British goods. Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia,* 457.

it, together with Australia, Canada, France, Italy, and the People's Republic of China, among others, recognized the *de facto* control of the Baltic by the Soviet Union but refused to grant it *de jure* recognition. These differences in recognition are reflected by the various forms of Baltic diplomatic representations in major world capitals in 1954, which are summarized in Table 4.1.[486] It should be noted that the embassy category is empty.

4.1: A COMPARISON OF BALTIC DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION (1954)

	Latvia	Estonia	Lithuania
Embassy	-	-	-
Legation	Washington	-	Washington
	London	London	London
	Rio de Janeiro	-	Rio de Janeiro
	Paris	-	-
	-	-	Vatican
	-	-	Montevideo
General consulate	The Hague	-	-
	-	New York	New York
	-	-	Toronto
Consulate	Toronto	-	-
		Sao Paulo	Sao Paulo
	Oslo	-	-
		Rio de Janeiro	-
Representation of interests	Madrid	Madrid	-
	Paris	Sao Paulo	-
Semi-official to unofficial	-	-	France, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland

[486] Adapted from Kristina Spohr-Readman, "West Germany and the Baltic Question during the Cold War," in *The Baltic Question during the Cold War*, ed. John Hiden et al. (New York: Routledge, 2008), 107.

Even though the continued membership of Latvian diplomats in the American diplomatic community after the annexation of their county may seem, according to McHugh and Pacy, "quaint (or perhaps even poetic) on the surface, within the context of traditional diplomacy and international law it appears remarkable or even absurd."[487] That is, the absence of a sending state results in a diplomatically counterproductive constellation in which receiving states carry unnecessary risks and sending states no longer have the leverage of reciprocity, the means for regulating what is, or is interpreted as, "fair" to and ensure the interests of other members of the international community. Indeed, this absence did result in distinct limitations for the Latvian diplomats in the United States and ultimately also for the U.S.-based diaspora. These include and unprecedented U.S. control over:

> Fiscal concerns of the Latvian Legation in the U.S.,
>
> Issues of rank and succession in the Latvian Diplomatic Corp, and
>
> Limiting the range of activities Latvian diplomats could take part in.

What is often forgotten, however, is that the Stimson Doctrine was not the sole factor in legitimizing the continuation of Latvian diplomatic representation in the U.S. Rather, the Latvian cabinet had had the foresight to lay the foundation for exiled officials on May 17, 1940, when, two months before the Soviet occupation, it extended the political responsibilities of Karlis Zarnis, the Latvian Ambassador in the UK[488]

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[487] McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country*, 2.

[488] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, "Latvia's Foreign Service Staff in Exile during the Years of Occupation June 17, 1941-August 21, 1991," *On Guard for Latvia's Statehood*, http://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/ (accessed 15 September, 2006). Whether or not the U.S. State Department was aware of the actions taken by the Latvian cabinet is not ascertainable based on currently available information. On April 30, 1940 a member of the Latvian cabinet informed Ambassador Wiley that police precautions were being made in anticipation of possible difficulties with the Soviets but made no mention of political contingency plans. After the Latvian cabinet meeting on May 17, Wiley made no reports of this

and granted him extraordinary powers to "head Latvia's diplomatic and consular missions and defend the interests of Latvia under emergency conditions." According to historians, although the cabinet did not provide Zarnis with further instructions on the scope of these powers, in 1948, the U.S. State Department interpreted the range of Zarnis powers to include the following rights: [489]

> To defend to the best of his ability Latvia's interest in all countries, and for this purpose to give binding orders to all Latvian missions;
>
> To control all funds and moveable and immoveable property at the disposal of certain missions;
>
> Temporarily (presumably until the reestablishment of an independent Latvian government), to recall envoys from their posts and to discharge and transfer all other employees of the said missions; and
>
> To liquidate missions with the exception of the legation in the United States of America.[490]

However, based on the Stimson Doctrine and the lack of reciprocity, the United States exercised extensive control over Latvian diplomats, despite the powers invested in Zarnis.

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communication in the available cables to the State Department. Admittedly, the relevance of the State Department's knowledge of Zarnis' new role as holder of extraordinary powers is minor when examined in a comparative framework: neither Estonia nor Lithuania had taken such a step, yet the United States continued to recognize them equally. Only after Latvia declared independence in 1990 was the issue again noteworthy in the context of the discussion on state continuity.

[489] Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia*, 193.

[490] Taken verbatim from the September 8, 1948, memorandum on the scope of Zarnis' ability to appoint new members to the diplomatic community: U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, IV* (1948), 431.

FINANCIAL CONTROL

The financial functioning of the Latvian legation from 1940 to 1950 was based on a solution provided by the U.S. through legislation created to deal specifically with the Baltic situation.[491] Specifically, between 1940 and 1950, the secretary of state issued appropriate certifications for the release of the "necessary funds" based on a budget submitted by the respective missions in the United States for departmental approval."[492] This approval was asked for despite the above- mentioned American recognition of Zarnis' authority "to control all funds."

At the request of and in agreement with the chief diplomatic officials of the three Baltic countries in the United States, the United States government authorized the release of "limited sums…to enable the Baltic diplomatic and consular officials to carry on their work."[493] In order to prevent the depletion of the Baltic capital and as a reflection of the U.S. view that a long-term standoff with the Soviets was unavoidable, the United States Department of the Treasury allowed a part of the Latvian deposits to be turned into bonds.[494] Revenue interest was then used to maintain the Latvian legation, whose 1949 operating budget was $73,500.

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[491]Section 25(B) of the *Federal Reserve Act,* 4. Public Law 31, April 7, 1941 (55 Stat. 131), amended the *Federal Reserve Act* "… to provide a means, whereby Friendly allied and neutral European, governments and their respective central banks" could have access to their funds on deposit in United States banks and frozen there under executive order. The amendment also provided that a depository bank be "free from liability if it paid out on instruction of a person that the Secretary of State had certified as authorized to operate the accounts of a foreign government or central bank."

[492] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, IV* (1950), 338. In December 1940, a Latvian national committee met in Geneva to discuss a strategy for the development of a Latvian liberation movement abroad. The meeting participants, members of the Latvian (republic) diplomatic corps, hoped to finance this undertaking with the Latvian gold reserves in U.S. banks but were denied access: Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik, " 325.

[493] U. S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, IV*, 338.

[494] Ibid., 337-40.

A 1950 summary by the Bureau of European Affairs shows the Latvian funds on deposit in the Federal Reserve Bank in New York and in other U.S. banks to be as depicted in Table 4.2.[495]

4.2: LATVIAN ASSETS IN THE U.S. (1950)

Account	Bank	Amount (USD)
Dollar	Federal Reserve (NY)	4,350,000.00
Dollar	Riggs (Washington)	23,000.00
Gold	Federal Reserve (NY)	3,430,000.00
Total		7,803,000.00

Of the representatives of the three Baltic states, the Latvian mission was in the best financial position ($7,803,000 to Estonia's $4,753, 826 and Lithuania's $2,910,932), so with a conservative investment program, the State Department was certain it could "earn more than enough to meet its present budgetary requirements."[496]

Nevertheless, although many historians cite a very flexible and accommodating U.S. policy on the financial needs of the Baltic diplomats, views on the actual U.S. administrative role in fund disbursement differ. For instance, according to the recollections of Richard E. Johnson, who as officer for the State Department's Baltic States Desk from 1957 to 1961 was responsible for preliminary approval of the Baltic legation budgets, the amount of control the U.S. exerted over these budgets was very high. To receive their funds, the Baltic diplomats had to go through the following rigmarole:

> They had to come to me, kind of hat in hand, with the budget. And I would go over it with them, because I knew the Treasury

[495] Ibid., 338.

[496] Ibid., 339. In 1950, the U.S. also addressed the issue of American citizens' claims against the three Baltic states based on prewar financial transactions or property seizures in those countries by the USSR. The State Department was instructed to inform all claimants that the investment of the Baltic funds did not represent a change in the U.S. government's established policy and that "the investment program is merely a means of enabling those missions to continue their operations": Ibid., 340.

> Department would go over it very carefully afterwards. And I'd say things to this...it seems ridiculous in retrospect...to this dignified old Latvian ambassador, "Arnolds [Spekke], why are you asking for six brooms? What do you do with all these brooms? Didn't you get brooms last year?" And he'd say, "Forget about it; I'll buy the brooms myself." So I'd strike brooms off. And finally this budget, as vetted by us, would go to the Treasury Department and after even closer examination of it, they would release the funds.[497]

What is apparent is that, even though Latvia had access to a portion of its funds, it was still dependent on the acceptance of a budget and could not access the monies at its own discretion. Although there are several plausible explanations for this high level of financial control, the most likely is the fact that the U.S. State Department needed to closely monitor the legations' expenditures to ensure that no funds were applied to anything that could be construed as hostile activity.

That is, as Corliss points out, even though not every action interpreted as hostile by the state of origin truly infringes on the asylum state's sovereign interests, the latter needs to ensure this fact.[498] Therefore, whereas exiled political organizations like those created in the late 1940s and early 1950s by the Baltic diaspora in the U.S. can be considered "a manifestation of the exercise of basic human rights, [international] law grants an asylum State substantial discretion to limit the political freedoms allowed to foreign nationals, but permitting their exercise gives the State of origin no legitimate cause for complaint." By the same token, providing "financial and material assistance," including the independent or co-creation of "hostile propaganda and other forms of non-violent support to subversive groups active within the State of origin, has a more complex legal character."[499] It can be safely assumed that these considerations guided the U.S. financial policy toward Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania.

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[497] Johnson interview with Kennedy, 30 January, 1991.
[498] Corliss, "Asylum State Responsibility for the Hostile Acts of Foreign Exiles." Journal of Refugee Law 2, no. 2. (1990) : 181-210.
[499] Idem.; Corliss, 189.

RANK AND SUCCESSION

Even though the U.S. was liberal in interpreting diplomatic norms and proactive in avoiding any connotations of hostile activities by Latvian diplomats, certain aspects of exile diplomacy were left for time to solve. That is, State Department policy on the diplomatic status of the Baltic diplomats was initially very rigid, only recognizing a Baltic diplomat as an individual who had been in the Baltic diplomatic services prior to the Soviet takeover in 1940. This policy did not compensate for aging diplomats who, rather than retire, chose to continue serving so as not to lose diplomatic recognition for their state. As Edward Hurwitz, a former State Department employee recalls,

> The Lithuanian chargé, I remember, on one occasion, he was well into his 80s, he struggled up to my office and eased himself into the chair beside my desk and then said he had forgotten why he had come to my office.[500]

The issue of diplomatic succession in exile was first addressed by the Latvian diplomats after the death on July 28, 1948 of Bilmanis, who had served as Latvian ambassador to Russia and finally to the United States for 13 years. Zarnis, who was in London, informally asked the American embassy in London for the State Department's "views on the problem of Latvian representation in the United States."[501]

According to an internal State Department memorandum, the U.S. interpretation of the extent of Zarnis' powers gave him insufficient authority to appoint a successor for Bilmanis out of a pool of former Latvian diplomats residing in an unofficial or semiofficial capacity in Europe.[502] Nevertheless, the State Department responded to Zarnis'

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[500] Hurwitz interview with Kennedy, 15 August, 1996.

[501] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, IV*, 431.

[502] Specifically, the memorandum states that "[a]lthough the above powers may be interpreted as giving to Mr. Zarine the authority to appoint a successor to Dr. Bilmanis, the powers do not appear to be broad enough to warrant the appointment

inquiry on October 5, 1948, by informing him that they had no objection in principle to his appointment of a successor to Dr. Bilmanis, "under the stipulation that the U.S. Embassy in London suggest to Zarnis that the official rank of the appointee be limited to that of a *Chargé d'affaires*."[503]

Hence, when Zarnis agreed to this interpretation and submitted Julijs Feldmanis as his choice for the post on November 2, 1948, Bilmanis' status as ambassador was lost to the Latvian delegation. Feldmanis arrived in the United States on May 10, 1949, and was received by the secretary of state on June 28, 1949.[504] After 1948, Zarnis appointed C*hargés d'affaires* who were heads of the successive Latvian legations in the U.S., as well as a diplomatic representative in Spain, representatives of the foreign service in several countries and international organizations in Geneva, and a delegate to Germany. Latvian diplomats were not ranked on the ambassadorial level again until 1991. In this manner, the State Department's stipulation effectively demoted the Latvian representative in the U.S. from ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to *chargé d'affaires*. Hence, although most texts dealing with Latvian exile diplomats consistently refer to the Latvian presence in Washington as a legation, this term is actually only applicable after Bilmanis' death and Feldmanis' appointment. That is, an embassy, or more correctly a chancery, is dependent on the presence of an ambassador to maintain its status, whereas a legation is basically a diplomatic mission, albeit for most practical purposes an embassy but lower in rank and overseen by a minister rather than an ambassador.

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of an envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary. In any event such an appointment would not be in accordance with Latvian law which provides that a minister be appointed by the head of the state with the advice and consent of the Latvian Senate. The lack of a Latvian government-in-exile would preclude issuance of the necessary letters of credence to a minister-appointee": Ibid.

[503] Ibid.

[504] Idem, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949, V* (1949), 279.

As a result, Zarnis' two successors, Arnolds Spekke (1887–1972) and Anatols Dinbergs (1911–1993), as heads of Latvia's diplomatic and consular service, were both heads of the legation in Washington and consul generals in the U.S., Spekke from 1963 to 1970 and Dinbergs from 1970 to August 1991. Once Spekke assumed Zarnis' role, the shift to the United States as the center for Latvian exile politics was complete.

By the late 1970s, the dwindling presence of Baltic diplomats threatened to eventually weaken the viability and visibility of this component of U.S. policy, so the U.S. explored the option of restocking the Latvian corps with younger members of the Latvian diaspora.[505] This plan was later amended to suggest that the children of Baltic diplomats within the U.S. could be the legal successors to their parents' diplomatic privileges. However, the extension of diplomatic credentials through the sole authority of a diplomatic mission and not a national government was clearly against the existing understanding of the Vienna conventions, which had codified such issues in the early 1960s, limiting the U.S. sphere of action more than in 1940.[506] Hence, according to McHugh and Pacy, the Carter administration revisited the topic of succession in the Baltic diplomatic corps, reaffirming the U.S. policy of nonrecognition.[507] Yet, because of the political and legal ramifications created by the question of succession, no conclusive international solutions were forthcoming. Nevertheless, President Carter allowed accredited mission chiefs to appoint successors, who were accepted by Australia and Canada but not Britain.

National Interests: The International Diaspora

Even though the Latvian diaspora introduces an independent dynamic into this scenario, it was also partially controlled by U.S. policy. That is, the

[505] McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country*, 81.
[506] Ibid., 81-82.
[507] Ibid., 81.

extraordinary powers granted to exiled ambassador Zarnis in 1940 and interpreted by the U.S. did *not* encompass the creation of a government in exile (rather the actors were representative of nonexistent sending states with sovereign authority vested in their diplomatic legations). This interpretation was based on the fact that, according to the 1922 Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, the annexation and resulting pro-Soviet government of 1940 had been elected illegally. The legal head of state, President Ulmanis, and his cabinet were deported to the USSR in the first wave of Latvian deportations in 1940, leaving acting diplomats who could not claim government status as the only legal representatives.[508]

Offering an exiled government shelter, however, had much more serious consequences than the continued recognition of diplomats.[509] Bilmanis, Zarnis, and Ozolins, like other exiled diplomats in Sweden, had instigated the idea of a national committee, which was swiftly discouraged by the U.S. In general, the U.S. "vetoed every activity of exile governments within its territory"[510] because such activities by exiles from foreign sanctuaries can also lead to conflict between the asylum state (in this

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[508] Bilmanis referred to this point when attempting to participate in the 1945 San Francisco conference where he would act as the legal representative of the Latvian government: U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1945, I* (1945), 142.

[509] International law dictates that governments in exile may conduct their daily affairs, including such actions as the creation of bilateral or international treaties, the amendment of their own constitutions retaining diplomatic recognition, the issuance of identity cards, and the maintenance of military forces. However, even though Estonia established a formal government in exile, this government was based in Oslo with only a consulate in New York. This configuration thereby relieved the U.S. of related policy issues that might have arisen. However, according to a 1958 secret policy document to the National Security Council, none of the Baltic states were considered to have an exile government: U.S. Department of State, 1960, FRUS, X, no. 2.

[510] Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik," 325. Kovrig claims that the U.S. reluctance to recognize the exiled or shadow governments of Eastern Europe was based on the hope that some settlement might be reached with the Russians: *The Myth of Liberation,* 95.

case, the U.S.) and the state of origin, which in referring to the Latvian exiled diplomats would have been the Soviet Union.[511]

In international relations, authors differentiate diasporic effectiveness in terms of either "mobilized" diasporas that are "well-connected and politically active" or "proletarian" diasporas that are less organized but with perhaps more direct and "immediate ties to the *old* country."[512] The Latvian diaspora was clearly a mobilized grouping in regards to its organization, activity, usefulness to the "origin country in dealing with the host country," and also in the difficulty of controlling or influencing their actions.[513]

Thus, even though the U.S. Congress was criticized in 1974 for its "irresponsible" reaction to the Greek-American lobby of imposing sanctions on Turkey after the invasion of Cyprus, or to the American-Jewish lobby traditionally portrayed as devoted to Israel, the Latvian lobby reflected a stateless ethnic group with goals congruent to U.S. national interests during the Cold War.[514]

THE END OF THE STIMSON DOCTRINE

In 1991, despite the September finalization of U.S. diplomatic recognition of the government in Riga, the United States reacted to the breakaway states more uniformly than in 1918, again creating a disadvantage for Latvia. That is, the parallels between 1921 and 1991 are observable not only in Latvia's efforts but also in the U.S. application of international

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[511] Corliss, "No."

[512] John A. Armstrong, "Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas," *American Political Science Review* 70 (June 1973), 4-5, cited by Henrikson, "Small States in World Politics," and Dimitri C. Constas and Athanassios G. Platias, *Diasporas in World Politics: The Greeks in Comparative Perspective* (London: Macmillan Press, in association with the Institute of International Relations, Panteion University, 1993).

[513] Henrikson, "Small States in World Politics," 46.

[514] Shain, "Ethnic Diasporas and U.S. Foreign Policy," 814-15.

law. In both instances, as discussed in the case study, diplomatic recognition represented Latvia's foremost goal in its exchanges with America. In both cases, representatives of the Latvian state, considered diplomats by Latvia but not recognized as such in the U.S., actively attempted to persuade the U.S. to begin diplomatic exchange through recognition.

The initial U.S. reluctance to recognize, or re-recognize, the Latvian state was based on the political situation in Russia or the Soviet Union, respectively. In 1990, U.S. reluctance to fully support Latvian aspirations to independence quietly echoed the State Department's All Russia Policy of the World War I era. Hence, George H. W. Bush's administration remained cautious in extending invitations to the newly elected Latvian representatives, thereby avoiding any interpretation of official recognition of the delegation as the rightful government of Latvia despite the diplomats' democratically elected positions.[515] Nevertheless, the reception of Baltic dissidents at the White House marked a shift in U.S.–Latvian relations from the nontraditional definition used here for the Cold War era to a more traditional definition familiar to students of international relations.

To question how U.S. actions should be evaluated vis-à-vis the Stimson Doctrine would require that U.S. national interests be weighed against the human benefits for Latvia, for whom the ends would justify the means. However, a comparison with similar U.S. actions – for example, the U.S. policy for Taiwan in the late 1970s, which represents a similar amplification of U.S. relations with another major state – gives indications that the outcome could have been very different. According to Feldman, the growing importance of China made Taiwan "of

[515] The fact that the Supreme Soviet remained the highest authority during the transitional period was problematical for both the Latvian legation and the United States. In 1990, the U.S. government established unofficial contact with what it referred to as the Latvian Transitional Government.

secondary importance to the U.S." making its future of little concern "….a rather cavalier dismissal of the fate of 18 or 19 million people."[516] Nevertheless, despite the setting of a precedent that their status should remain the same, the Latvian diplomats did not contest their treatment in America during the Cold War. Reluctance to do so was probably linked to their understanding of the precariousness of their situation: no state or state representative would freely offer part of its sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over a specific factor except as an action of self-preservation. Hence, lacking any basis for reciprocity, they were careful not to endanger their diplomatic status or test the limits of their diplomatic immunity. For example, in 1976, at a time when the range of diplomatic immunity was being questioned in the United States, only two parking tickets can be attributed to Baltic diplomats, while Finland had over 20 and the USSR 8,435.[517]

4.2 UNITIZING: MACRO-POLICIES FOR MINI STATES

Unlike the shifting trends in the U.S. application of international norms for the Baltic, the practice of Baltic bundling has been a consistent factor in Latvian-American relations. As already discussed, the United States has continually developed polices for the states of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania as a unit and applied them uniformly.

This technique has a very practical foundation; the U.S. opts to devote more capacity on its relations with non-small states. This clearly has several reasons ranging from the fact that statecraft has focused on great

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[516] Harvey Feldman, interviewed by Edward Dillery, 11 March, 1999, *The Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training*, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/diplomacy/

[517] Chuck Ashman and Pamela Trescott, *Outrage: The Abuse of Diplomatic Immunity* (London: W.H. Allen, 1986), 234-35.

powers, that larger states have shared concerns, "interests, and general areas in which they have to interact, cooperatively or conflictually."[518]

As a result, in the U.S. State Department, one desk officer has historically monitored small states with cultural and geographic similarities. For example small African state divided between Francophone and Anglophone states, while other states are grouped based on long-identified geographic clusters of countries that share certain macroeconomic characteristics, whose form can be amended to meet political situations. Thus, after 1990, Central Europe was more or less subdivided into five fairly contiguous areas: the Visegrad Four (Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia); the Balkans (the former Yugoslavia plus Albania, Romania, Bulgaria, and Moldova); Russia; the western ex-Soviet Republics (Belarus and Ukraine); and the southern ex-Republics (the remaining states of South Central Asia and the Caucasus). In 2003, Bulgaria was moved from the Balkan division to that of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, and Slovakia based on issues it shared with these states.

Not only bureaucrats, but also scholars accept the unit approach for the Baltic states, a grouping that is one of the oldest in the state department. In academia works about the Baltic region contain a seemingly obligatory preface justifying the methodical choice for dealing with the Baltics as a whole, thereby lending validation to the idea that the size and historical commonalties of the twentieth century make this grouping acceptable.

The creation of the Baltic Desk at the State Department, on the other hand, was justified as the most efficient way of dealing with this region. With what some consider to have been temporary diplomatic recognition, the U.S. legation in Riga was officially established in served as headquarters for U.S. representation in the Baltic during the first part of the interwar era. Even though the U.S. eventually established embassies

[518] Matthias Maass, "Davids and Goliath" (concept paper - unpublished, Berlin, 2008).

in Tallinn and Vilnius, this representation was based on the "three for one" principle of an American minister in Riga, accredited to Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania.[519] At this time, close contact among State Department staff and similar issues maintained continuity in relations with all three states. Only at the end of the 1930s did some differentiation appear in bilateral agreements, perhaps showing the U.S. aversion to the overt dictatorial tendencies of the Ulmanis regime.

During the Soviet occupation, especially in the 1940s, Latvian diplomats in the United States encouraged Baltic unitizing by publishing several works dealing with the Baltic states as a group. Hence, the United States of the Baltic was used as a post-World War II concept that the western powers, especially the United States of America, could follow.[520]

Another form of bundling was used by Moscow between 1944 and 1989, with Kallingrad, Carelia, and Leningrad grouped as part of the Soviet-created Baltic region. However in contrast to Baltic diplomats in the U.S., throughout this period, the people in the Baltic states consistently preferred to be differentiated from one another as a form of passive nationalism, and the legacy of the Soviet bundling may be one key reason that a stronger Baltic regionalism could not be maintained in the early 1990s.

First, in 1990, when Paul Goble, an ethnic Estonian, took over the Baltic Desk in the state department, there was a slight change in policy with Goble's insistence that his job title be desk officer for Estonia, Latvia,

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[519] In 1937, the United States of America appointed a separate minister to Lithuania: McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country*, 48.

[520] Alfreds Bilmanis, *The United States of the Baltic in Post-War Europe* (Washington, D.C.: Latvian Legation, 1943); idem, *The Baltic States and the Problem of the Freedom of the Baltic Sea* (Washington D.C.: The Press Bureau of the Latvian Legation, 1943); idem, *The Baltic States in Post-War Europe.*

and Lithuania, although the term Baltic Desk remained in place.[521] Likewise, throughout the 1990s, decisions relating to Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were part of "U.S. Baltic policy." Baltic bundling was also implemented behind the scenes as the U.S. pressured the Nordic states to take on more responsibility for the Baltic, and to convey this wish, in 1996 the U.S. State Department renamed its Nordic desk the Nordic-Baltic Desk.[522]

Nevertheless, this Baltic grouping practice, although it has historically aided all three states on various occasions, was only reluctantly accepted by Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. The most evident illustration of such grouping in the 1990s was that U.S. support for Latvian membership in NATO was identical to the policy it followed for Estonia and Lithuania. Likewise, as mentioned in Chapter III, cooperation with the U.S. took the form of multilateral Baltic projects. Hence, even though this bundling eventually led to successful accession to NATO, leaders in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have all at one time or another dismissed it. For example, in a 1999 speech, Estonian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ilves attempted to divorce Estonia from the Baltic.[523]

After 2004, the Nordic-Baltic section of the State Department's Europe and Eurasia department was restructured: the Baltic Desk was replaced by one desk for Finland and Estonia and another for Latvia and Lithuania. Once Latvia joined NATO and the EU, however, U.S. policies for the area became consistent with those developed for other NATO or EU states. Nevertheless, State Department sources working in the field

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[521] Paul Goble, "Lest Anyone Forget: Arnold Ruutel's Essential but Unheralded Contributions to Estonia and the World," www.nlib.ee/html/yritus/20a/24goble_ik.doc.

[522] Olav Knudsen, "Cooperative Security in the Baltic Sea Regions," http://aei.pitt.edu/490/01/chai33e.html

[523] Toomas Hendrik Ilves, "Estonia as a Nordic State," (paper presented at the Swedish Institute for International Affairs, Stockholm, 14 December, 1999).

confirm that there is still a tendency to assume that feedback from one of the U.S. embassies in the Baltic is representative of all three states.

Albright sees bundling or "lumping" as overused in post-Cold War Eastern Europe, thereby obscuring the important differences in the states' historical experiences and political influences.[524] Most particularly, she points out that even though the new states of central Europe's "revolutions have had the common purpose of ridding themselves of illegitimate Communist regimes, they have gone about it quite differently."[525] Today, the term Baltic remains relevant to the western world, which would have difficulty identifying the region without it. Nonetheless, using the term "Baltic states" and grouping Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania into an involuntary political unit remains problematical for these countries. Yet the differences are not so great that this practice should be rejected by these states.

4.3 BIG BANDWAGONING – FRIENDSHIP, NOT ALLIANCE

On July 20, 2007, the U.S.–Baltic Foundation celebrated 80 years of Latvian-American friendship, a friendship that remains a key assumption in Latvian-American relations and is rooted in both Latvian national history and myth. Although the concept of friendship has distinctive meanings for Latvia and the United States, it has been relied upon to serve both states' national interests. However, whereas the United States has used it to continue positive exchange without obligation, Latvia has attempted to extract meaning and consequence out of this friendship.

The use of special relations in international relations presents great powers the options of using a technique familiar in small state behavior,

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[524] Madeleine Albright, "The Role of the United States in Central Europe," in *The New Europe: Revolution in East-West Relations*, ed. Nils H. Wessell (New York: Academy of Political Science, 1991), 78.

[525] Ibid., 77.

which is widely criticized, bandwagoning. For small states bandwagoning is understood (as mentioned in Chapter II) as leaping onto the bandwagon of, or seeking ties with, the most important power of the region or system, only to disloyally jump off when the association no longer suits the small state's interests, a behavior which can cause unpredictability in tight bi-polar systems. For great powers creating a specific sort of relationship, often dubbed 'special' or 'friendly' alleviates the need to create what is seen as unfavorable official alliances with a smaller state. While these relations oftentimes exist over political generations, they are so loosely defined that a great power has no true obligations (or loyalty) to a smaller state and can amend these relations to suits their interests, a behavior which can be detrimental to a small state.

Therefore big bandwagoning here is used to describe the use of relationships in place of alliances. In international relations, special relationships and friendly relationships are rhetorical tools that describe or define interstate relations. Hence, both concepts can be used independently or to supplement or underscore a formal alliance. Independent use is based either on a state's proclaimed isolationism or neutrality, or on its national interests. In terms of this latter, an alliance must offer evidence of benefits for both sides that may still be differently interpreted by each. For instance, small states may consider economic issues but are generally focused on security concerns that larger allies may use to obtain "autonomy benefits," military base rights, or improved trade benefits.[526] To avoid the risks or obligations represented by a formal alliance, a public declaration is made of a friendship or special relationship between states.

Hence, friendships in international relations should not be confused with special relationships, which have shown a stronger foundation than friendships; generally last longer; and are based on issues of culture,

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[526] Hey, *Small States in World Politics*, 6; Krause and Sprecher, "Alliances, Armed Conflict, and Cooperation," 363.

language, and joint history. Most particularly, a special relationship can be considered stronger than a friendship because of the amount and strength of the ties that bind the states; that is, it represents an "assumption of a natural affinity" between two countries.[527] Such affinity is exemplified by the "linguistic and cultural relationship between England and the U.S.," which "set it apart from the relationship which either state had with any of its other allies."[528] U.S. relations with Great Britain, and even with Australia and New Zealand, illustrate the strong tie of a joint Anglo-American cultural heritage.

Nevertheless, the twentieth-century case of Australia shows that special relations can shift: not only was there a linguistic basis for Australian relations with the U.S., but the U.S. had power in the Pacific that the United Kingdom could not attain, making it "well-suited to the role of Australia's chief protector."[529] As McClean shows, this rhetoric began developing as early as 1908 when Australian politicians referred to Americans as "our kinsmen" and "blood relations" and continued into the 1950s and 60s with references to a "common heritage and tradition and way of life" shared by the two countries.[530] On the U.S. side, these sentiments were supported by Truman's pledge that "Canada and Australia [occupy] a special and favored position in the American mind."[531]

Even though such special relationships represent a cultural bond, however, they are not without friction, although differences of opinion

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[527] David McClean, "From British Colony to American Satellite? Australia and the USA during the Cold War," *Australian Journal of Politics* 54 (2006): 1.

[528] See B. Brogan, *American Aspects* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964); A.C. Turner, *The Unique Partnership: Britain and the United States* (New York: Pegasus, 1971); H. C. Allen, "The Anglo-American Predicament," (1960); idem, "Great Britain and the United States: A History of Anglo-American Relations," (1955).

[529] McClean, "From British Colony to American Satellite?" 1.

[530] Ibid, citing Neville Meaney, *The Search for Security in the Pacific, 1901-1914* (Sydney: 1976), 164; CPD, *House, 206* (March 1950), 635.

[531] McClean, "From British Colony to American Satellite?" 1.

are often ignored if they could undermine the political value of the relationship. For example, Reynolds and Thorne point to anomalies in the special relations between the U.S. and the UK, such as the major differences between Roosevelt and Churchill over colonialism, while Thorne underscores the differences in American and British policy on the war against Japan.[532] A special relationship ignores such differences and counteracts the imbalanced historical focus. Most particularly, rhetoric and claims of a special relationship with America afford the plausibility that assures U.S. military assistance, making an official security alliance with America superfluous.[533] Such claims also mollify the public and become a strong rhetorical tool for politicians.

Friendships too are strong rhetorical tools and can foreshadow the creation of a peaceful coexistence, special relationship, or alliance. Here, missing cultural continuity is often replaced by an emphasis on ideological issues, including social norms, and historical events are reinterpreted to meet the needs of the friendship rhetoric. As in special relationships, these expressions serve the public by making a subconscious but natural connection to interpersonal friendships; however, the assumption that friendship assures assistance is less likely than in a special friendship.

There is also a difference between proclaimed friendship and ratified friendship, even though both represent the accepted value of contributing positive adjectives to an interstate constellation. For example, the original 1882 "Treaty of the Triple Alliance," a ratified friendship, bound

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[532] David Reynolds, "Roosevelt, Churchill and the Wartime Anglo-American Alliance, 1935-1945: Towards a New Synthesis," in *The 'Special Relationship': Anglo-American Relations Since 1945*, ed. Hedley Bull and William Roger Louis (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986); Christopher Thorne, *Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain and the War against Japan* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1978), 725. According to Thorne, "[n]either militarily nor politically did there exist as regards the Far East anything like the degree of collaboration between the two States that was achieved elsewhere."

[533] McClean, "From British Colony to American Satellite? 1.

Germany, Austria, and Italy in a promise of peace and friendship that produced a constellation which led to World War I.[534] In the interwar period, ratified pledges of friendship (e.g., the Atlantic Charter) proved ineffective in creating a post-World War II trend to avoid written agreements of international friendship. Nevertheless, the creation of friendships as a signal for a foreign policy change has not lost relevance; for instance, Dawisha interprets Gorbachev's initial 1986 speech as general secretary, which promises that his "first priority" would be to strengthen friendship with the countries of the socialist community, as "a clear sign of these changing times." [535]

The proclamation of friendship or special relations has also been a common property in U.S. foreign relations, one connected to a historically justified disassociation with Europe attributed to George Washington's 1796 "valedictory caution to avoid entangling alliances."[536] According to McKercher and Pain, this policy tradition explains why between 1796 and 1930, no U.S. administration concluded an alliance with any other power or group of powers, and that President Woodrow Wilson entered World War I as an associate not an ally. This fundamental isolationism between the world wars, however, prevented American membership in the League of Nations and resulted in congressional deterrence of White House-supported efforts to join the World Court in the 1920s and 1930s.[537]

Interwar isolationism and Cold War reluctance to create a unilateral foreign policy further expanded the ideological basis for friendships and

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[534] Frederick H. Hartmann, *Basic Documents of International Relations* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951), 12.

[535] Karen Dawisha, "Gorbachev and Eastern Europe: A New Challenge for the West?" *World Policy Journal* 3 (1986), 291.

[536] B. J. C. McKercher and Tom Paine, "3- Lost Opportunities: The Diplomacy of the 1930s," in *Paths Not Taken: Speculations on American Foreign Policy and Diplomatic History, Interests, Ideals, and Power*, ed. Jonathan M. Nielson (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2000), 67.

[537] Idem, "3-Lost Opportunities," 67.

made them a standard part of U.S. foreign relations. Such friendships were used to avoid alliance obligations, especially in asymmetric state relations. However, the lack of formal structures in friendships leaves each state its own individual sphere of interpretation, which often has little overlap with the U.S. understanding.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF FRIENDLY RELATIONS

The low level of formal bilateralism that a friendship alone represents does not preclude the discussion of negotiations and outcomes. That is, whereas friendship may free states from alliance obligations, the non-ally/non-enemy status complicates interstate interactions and makes friendly relations "generally more circumscribed than interactions between allies or adversaries."[538] To throw light on such complications, Brady points to three main difficulties: First, there is normally an absence of "longstanding, continuing relationship between the parties," which results in negotiation being "approached on an *ad hoc* basis" or with a "one-shot mentality" that encourages a focus on individual interests. This absence of long-standing relationships also makes friends less likely to trust each other.[539] Second, the continuity that is often lacking in friendships "makes it extremely difficult to identify common interests," and third, the "narrowness" of friendships reduces the options for "side payments," making them fewer than in negotiations between allies or adversaries.[540]

Friendships also have implications that increase with relationship asymmetry: smaller states whose foreign policy focuses on sovereignty may need protection from their friends or may try to attach meaning to the friendship by appealing to the moral obligations of larger members in

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[538] Linda P. Brady, *America's Dealing with Allies, Adversaries and Friends* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 29.
[539] Ibid.
[540] Ibid.

the international community.[541] As a result, large–small friendships may take on alliance characteristics even though a friendship is meant to avoid such consequences.

DEFENSE AGAINST HELP

Friendship has been used as a justification for interventionism. For example, both large and small states in the American sphere of interest have experienced American friendship/intervention during the twentieth century. As Barry and Bratt put it, "American interventionism, while always present, [has had] to be justified and modified depending on the mood of the nation and the potential for alienating friends in the rest of the world," and while the United States clearly dominates the Western Hemisphere, it has gone "to great pains to justify this dominance by invoking altruistic principles."[542]

For instance, the development of America's Good Neighbor Policy, in force from 1933 to 1945, represented a means of encouraging good relations with Central and South America despite U.S. isolationist reluctance to commit to military intervention. Thus, Barry and Bratt argue that the Good Neighbor Policy's motivation and pan-Americanism "were ultimately not very different from those of, say, the overt American interventions that had been launched in the Caribbean during the 1920s,"[543] of which the 1936 "General Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation between the United States and Panama" is a prime example.[544]

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[541] Commonwealth Secretariat, *The Commonwealth at the Summit: Communiqués of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, 1944-1986* (London; Commonwealth Secretariat Staff; 1987), 246.

[542] Donald Barry and Duane Bratt, "Defense against Help: Explaining Canada-U.S. Security Relations," *American Review* 38 (2008): 64.

[543] Jussi M. Hanhimäki et al., *International History of the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 2004), 132.

[544] Article 10 states the following: "In case of an international conflagration or the existence of any threat of aggression which would endanger the security of the

In friendships within the American sphere of interest, a strategy identified by Orvik has been long apparent: the "defense against help" that friendly relations with more powerful states seem to demand. That is, according Orvik, mid- or small-sized states "maintain a sufficient level of defense unilaterally, or in cooperation, to avoid *unwanted help* that could infringe on [their] sovereignty."[545] In the case of Canada specifically, "the United States serves as a powerful deterrent to external threats to Canada's safety. But …the United States also depends on Canada – with its crucial land, air, and maritime approaches – for its own safety. In short, Canada–U.S. security is interdependent. It follows that Canada cannot ignore U.S. safety requirements, nor can Canada easily isolate itself from the consequences of American security decisions."[546]

In noncontiguous friendships with the United States, however, not only is the likelihood of U.S. intervention in a state's activities lower, but also few small states see the danger of U.S. intervention as a problem. Rather, the dangers involved in small state–large state friendships are most obvious in a small state's concessions to allow foreign troops to be stationed within its borders. According to Handel, however, this danger, although real, has become exaggerated based on the actions of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe during the early 1940s.[547]

Republic of Panama or the neutrality or security of the Panama Canal, the Governments of the United States of America and the Republic of Panama will take such measures of prevention and defense as they may consider necessary for the protection of their common interests. Any measures, in safeguarding such interests, which it shall appear essential to one Government to take, and which may affect the territory under the jurisdiction of the other Government, will be the subject of consultation between the two Governments," quoted in Ian Brownlie, *International Law and the Use of Force by States* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), 320.

[545] Barry and Bratt, "Defense against Help," citing Nils Ørvik, "Defence against Help: A Strategy for Small States?" *Survival, the IISS Quarterly* 15, no. 5 (1973): 228.

[546] Barry and Bratt, "Defense against Help."

[547] In 1933, the Latvian government shared the view that "letting foreign troops into Latvia, under a neutral guarantee pact, was one thing, but getting them out again was quite another." In December 1933, the governments of Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were informally approached by Russia and Poland with the proposal that the Russian and Polish governments should jointly guarantee the

In reality, during the Cold War, smaller states were more concerned with the reverse, that the withdrawal of foreign of troops could threaten their sovereignty more than troop presence (Taiwan, South Korea, Israel, and Western European states exemplify such concern, but their relationships represent formal alliances not friendships).[548] Moreover, although U.S. intervention is not based on general legal concepts, the United States has established general guidelines for its aid to small states (e.g., the Monroe Doctrine, the Good Neighbor Policy).[549]

ALLIANCE ATTRIBUTES OF FRIENDSHIPS

The attempts of small states to supplement their own strength with the strength of another more powerful state is "a result of necessity, not preference."[550] Hence, a small state may harness itself with concessions to *perceived demands* as part of a foreign policy to qualify for future consideration as an ally or in an effort to convey latitudes of common interests.[551] Thus, classical small state diplomacy would entail a calculation of what is a reasonable *quid pro quo* for supporting the interests of larger friendly states. According to Watson, these interactions might lead to the "longer and more important step" in which two "states find that they have a number of interests in common, … agree to support

security and independence of the Baltic states: U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1935, I, FRUS (1935), 238; Handel, *Weak States in the International System*, 122.

[548] Once a small state has persuaded a large state to station troops within its borders, it can immediately claim a basis for common interests. Foreign troops also increase the likelihood of automatic intervention from the larger partner if the smaller is attacked: Handel, *Weak States in the International System*, 122.

[549] Oded Lowenheim, *Predators and Parasites: Persistent Agents of Transnational Harm and Great Power Authority* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 25.

[550] Handel, *Weak States in the International System*, 121.

[551] Sutton and Payne, in "Lilliput under Threat," refer to voluntarily actions for anticipated rewards.

each other on a more permanent basis, and [formulate] this agreement in a contract or treaty."[552]

It has, however, been shown that in asymmetrical relations, the state with less capacity can effectively influence the facets of exchange by appealing to the "moral obligations" of the more powerful states or by clarifying the terms of commitment in a verbal unilateral manner.[553] When a small state receives an ambiguous commitment, it can attach meaning by unilaterally verbalizing its interpretation of the commitment or relationship "in such a way as to favor its own interests."[554]

As examples, Lowenheim points to the British obligation to curtail the acts of Barbary pirates based on Britain's "responsibility to civilized humanity" and its comparatively large naval capacities, or Cuba's straining of "the Soviet Union's duty to protect a fellow revolutionary country."[555] This technique is effective because if a state petitions great powers to intervene, it "signifies that they perceive the Great Powers as bearers of authority."[556] That states wish to gain from the foreign policy positions they adopt is an accepted fact in international relations, one that often leads to the exploitation of small states through demands.[557] Great powers may also make *indirect demands* of friends by requiring adherence to a specific interpretation of legal precedent or practice, by applying an identifiable common policy for reoccurring circumstances, or by allowing interpretation of alliance characteristics in a friendship.[558] However, if expectations go unchecked because they serve domestic

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[552] Watson, *Diplomacy*, 61.
[553] Joshua Spero, *Bridging the Divided Europe: Middle Power Politics and Regional Security Dilemmas* (Lanham: Roman and Littlefield, 2004); Handel, *Weak States in the International System*, 123.
[554] Handel, *Weak States in the International System*, 123.
[555] Lowenheim, *Predators and Parasites*, 24.
[556] Ibid.
[557] Rick Fawn, "Alliance Behaviour, the Absentee Liberator and the Influence of Soft Power: Post-Communist State Positions over the Iraq War in 2003," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 19, no. 3 (2003): 476.
[558] Handel, *Weak States in the International System*, 271.

political goals, some techniques used by small states in alliances become apparent, so the demands and concessions made outside of an official framework retain relevance.

Latvian-American friendship, in contrast, does not adhere to the brevity of classical friendly relations in that the United States and the Republic of Latvia have been friends in international relations since before 1922. However, whereas this friendship has won the United States a continually positive place in the constructs of Latvian foreign policy and in the public eye, the Latvian state has gained few net advantages from the relationship.

Indeed, the beginning of this friendship is an allegory for both states' vastly different interpretations of their bilateral relations. According to the Latvian foreign ministry, the Latvian-American relationship officially began on December 10, 1918, with *U.S. Senate Resolution No. 379*, whose key phrase that "[all Baltic] nations must be free and independent, since the Baltic Sea coast belongs to them and this makes their independence important for the future peace and freedom of the world." This claim was and remains understood to mean American support for the secession of the three Baltic States from Russia.

In addition, these early relations were preceded by a wave of Latvian immigrants to the U.S. after the failed 1905 revolution in the Latvian province of the Russian empire, some of which, like Karlis Ulmanis, repatriated after the post-war establishment of Latvia as an independent nation. During the war, a friendship was implied when the allies used Latvia as a staging point for aiding White Russian forces, leading

historians to later claim that in America's eyes, the Baltic governments had played a significant role in this effort.[559]

Nevertheless, this interpreted friendship was the sole element of Latvian-American relations until diplomatic relations were established in July 1922. Between 1918 and 1922, Latvian President Karlis Ulmanis appealed for U.S. support through the international press or diplomatic channels to little avail, while the U.S. effectively lobbied against Latvian membership in the League of Nations until 1921.[560]

Fredrick Coleman, the first U.S. envoy to Latvia, presented his credentials in November 1922 and received praise for the pre-1922 activities of the American Relief Organization and American nongovernmental organizations: "Latvia is happy to welcome the first official democratic representative of the great and renowned American democracy; the democracy which was the first to lend a helping hand to the unfortunate inhabitants of Latvia, victims of the World War."[561] At this time, Latvia saw itself as a vital part in the new balance of Europe, exuding the symbolic importance of its existence as a small state in a system where sovereignty was respected and not challenged based on normative weakness.[562] Hence, Latvian political leaders saw the great

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[559] McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country*, 23.
[560] Spekke, *History of Latvia*, 329.
[561] Latvian Embassy of the United States, "U.S./Latvia Relations," http://riga.usembassy.gov/ (accessed 30 November, 2006); idem, "U.S.-Latvia Bilateral Treaties," http://riga.usembassy.gov/bilateral-treaties.html (accessed 20 November, 2008).
[562] Pollard, "International Law and Protection of Small CARICOM States."
[563] On the founding of the provisional Latvian National Council in September 1917, Janis Goldmanis, later the first president of Latvia, claimed that contact with the West was vital to the independence movement, saying, "Our only hope is the Allies": Nies, "Lettland in der Internationalen Politik", 46. In December 1918, Ulmanis openly appealed to the Allies for assistance against threats to Latvia: "Letts Appeal for Aid Against Bolsheviki: Esthonia Places Herself under Protection of Allies Pending Peace Conference," *New York Times* (20 December 1918).

powers as obligated to protect the nascent small states of Europe.[563] During the interwar period, Latvia's public and political elite continued to see Washington as a friendly power, a sentiment that changed little even after the lack of intervention in June 1940.[564] There is also evidence of the cultivation of a subjective understanding in the Baltic about the possibility of American aid in the liberation of the Baltic States. This possibility was inadvertently supported by exaggerated Soviet propaganda claims in early 1940 that "imperialists were threatening socialism and preparing for World War II."[565]

The first relatively short Soviet occupation, however, accomplished little toward the dissipation of Latvian sentiments toward the West. It was the longer Nazi occupation from 1941 to 1945 that saw the eventual introduction of a concrete propaganda strategy, which proactively attempted to adjust what the Nazis also saw as Latvian pro-West leanings.[566] For this reason, pro-American sentiments, which were inconsequential to the Germans at the onset of occupation, became more critical, and the propaganda machine in Latvia accelerated.[567] In both cases, Latvia used its own concept of Latvian-American friendship to boost domestic moral.

In actuality, Latvian expectations were based on still common understandings of the role of powerful states and a belief that great powers can be called out for action beyond their national interest or bilateral obligations, action that "is understood as a special duty ensuing from their role."[568] The U.S. perception of these obligations, however, was that the dominated nations of Eastern Europe had the potential to

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[564] Neiburgs, "Western Allies in Latvian Public Opinion and Nazi Propaganda during the German Occupation, 1941-1945," 139.
[565] Bleiere et al., *History of Latvia*, 331.
[566] Neiburgs, "Western Allies in Latvian Public Opinion and Nazi Propaganda during the German Occupation, 1941-1945," 133.
[567] Ibid.
[568] Lowenheim, *Predators and Parasites*, 24.

both jeopardize and serve the respective policies of the U.S. and USSR, so commitments to system stability overrode any so-called obligation to the Latvian state. This paradox was based on international views and internal conditions that could threaten the security of the United States and Western Europe and/or weaken Soviet influence over these states.[569]

Overall, although the level of Latvian capability allowed the U.S. to optimize the Latvian-American friendship, Latvia received no net advantages. Hence, as illustrated by the liberty that the U.S. took in determining Latvia's role in the international system versus Latvian expectations that the United States would be protector and potential liberator of their *de jure* state, the alliance characteristics apparent in this relationship were one-sided. For Latvia, the concessions made were semi-voluntary, based either on limited options or on legal frameworks, and during the Cold War reflected their unique position in the U.S. diplomatic community.

From 1941 to 1943, the Latvian representatives received little certainty from the U.S. State Department, with U.S.–Soviet exchanges after January 1941 avoiding the topic of the Baltic. In the U.S., Latvian-American relations remained on the international level until in 1943 the "Bohlen Minutes of the Tehran Conference" (1943) linked Eastern European issues to U.S. domestic politics, leading to the finalization of the oral consignment of the Baltic states to Stalin.[570] In addition, despite Latvian rights based on former League of Nations membership, the U.S. openly discouraged Latvian UN membership to circumvent any admission of Soviet control over the states. Instead, between 1946 and 1948, the State Department developed guidelines for the members of the Latvian legation in America that reflected the U.S. interpretation of the powers

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[569] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Eastern Europe Region, Soviet Union, Cypress 1958–60, X* (1960), 18.

[570] U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, the Conference at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (1943), 594-95.

transferred to Latvian Ambassador Zarnis by the Latvian cabinet in May 1940.

This U.S. interpretation of the scope of Zarnis' powers and the administrative elements of control integrated as policy on the maintenance of the *de jure* Latvian state, while protecting the U.S. from international repercussions, represented the greatest possible tangible concessions. The United States ultimately controlled questions of succession within the Latvian diplomatic service, the service's finances, its ability to form a state in exile (based in the U.S.), and the shift from a Latvian embassy, which required an ambassador, to a legation.

Hence, despite all the formal diplomatic trappings, the absolute dependence of the Latvian exile diplomats on the U.S. policy set by the Stimson Doctrine made this relationship completely one-sided. This diplomatic irregularity then became an abstraction of the Cold War confrontation, hyperbolizing issues, like Latvia, that had received minor attention prior to World War I.[571] Latvian expectations of the United States, on the other hand, were influenced not only by the Stimson Doctrine but also by the Truman Doctrine and the Kertsin Committee; therefore, legislation paired with domestic rhetoric (e.g., Captive Nations Week) created the already mentioned belief that intervention from the U.S. was imminent. Nor did U.S. reluctance to expediently re-recognize the Latvian state weaken this perception, and the limitations placed on Latvian exiled diplomats during the Cold War seemingly played no role in post-Cold War relations.

[571] McHugh and Pacy, *Diplomats without a Country*, 2.

5 CONCLUSIONS

To attend to this project's primary research question – How has the United States historically addressed Latvia and how has this changed? – The consistent themes in Latvian-American relations were identified and revisited in terms of great power-small state relations allowing the primary research question to be broadly answered as follows:

In the twentieth century, the United States consistently used its relations with Latvia to serve its own national interests, extracting the maximal political utility from these bilateral exchanges.

The U.S. accomplished this by using (1) a flexible interpretation of international law, (2) regional grouping (bundling or unitizing) to address interstate issues, and (3) by offering ambiguous support, in the form of a friendship, in place of the bilateral alliances sought by Latvia.

An example used in the research was that during the interwar period (1922-1940), when the U.S. only identified marginal material utility from Latvia, the exchanges reflected the classical difficulties of a small state dealing with an indifferent larger power. First, the increased ideological utility of the *de jure* Latvian state at the onset of World War II and through the duration of the Cold War reflects the American interests of establishing and expanding prestige at this time,[572] even though the circumstances of these exchanges were outside normal bilateralism. Specifically, the value of the continued recognition of Baltic diplomats in the U.S. was high enough to justify the costs in terms of maintenance efforts and legal support.

In another example, from the early 1990s, the lack of cohesion in U.S. foreign policy was demonstrated not only by heightened U.S. activity in humanitarian intervention and NATO expansion but also in its uncertainty over what type of utility Latvia could offer in the post-Cold War era. Even though Latvian goals in relations with the United States were clear – to gain security guarantees, from the American perspective, Latvian utility was more difficult to define. A question that was gradually answered as stability in the Baltic became a priority for the U.S., marking one of the few twentieth-century instances of U.S. and Latvian overlapping of national interests.

SMALL STATE CAPACITY

While the research identifies a specific great power's behavior, the U.S. towards a specific type of small state, Latvia, these examples indicates that certain behaviors are likely part of great power-small state relations and offers a template for historical examinations of U.S. behavior with limited capacity small states. In order to create a model of analysis, this work purposely examined the mechanics and margins of Latvian-American relations in a bilateral constellation, looking at U.S. practices to avoid evaluations, which attempt to measure gains, or success in asymmetric state relations.

It does not disprove a key theme in small states studies, that in their international relations with larger states, small states can and have made disproportionate gains. Rather the conclusions bring into question the usefulness of such valuations. While all states, alone through their acceptance in an international system, have access to capacity – the term used in this work to replace concepts of 'power'- the key idea in understanding this is based on the availability of sources that enable small states to achieve foreign policy goals disproportionate to their size. How such proportions are measured and which gains represent small state success is often dependent on subjective considerations.

By using a state's national interests as the basis for measuring small state success, founded on the idea of vulnerability, their national interests can be simply seen as maintaining sovereignty, while the national interest of a great power is a much more complicated and politically self-actualized issue, dealing with issues on a higher plain than the maintenance of sovereignty.

Therefore, instead of attempting to create a success measurement, the power of the small, soft power or small state tools of leverage – a transposed confirmation of these concepts – can also be understood by arguing that these options exist, but without the sources of these concepts, a small state is likely to be instrumentalized by a great power to achieve its own national interests as shown in the case study. This questions the universalism of the concept of "small power" by illustrating that although such capability exists and can be applied, without it, a small state is left only with its right to sovereignty, whose parameters are dictated by both great powers and international system of the time.

Consequently, although no studies have taken both newness *and* geography into account, when both of these aspects are considered in terms of capacity limitations, the case study has shown that realist assumptions about interstate relations provide satisfying explanations for this small state-great power relationship. Nevertheless, simply identifying the behavior of the United States and using undefined great power national interests as justification is not sufficient. These conclusions, offered by the case study's foundation, can be built upon to address the wider reaching secondary research inquires.

5.1 CAN THE GREAT BE UNDERSTOOD THROUGH THE SMALL?

The first subsidiary issue resulting from the main findings is an examination of the current methods for studying small state behavior and their applicability to understanding small state-great power relations – an issue that simultaneously addresses the methodology of this work.

Chapter II argues that the current methods for studying small states are applicable in a small state-great power constellation based on not only the reflexive behaviors, such as the small state search for security and the great power resistance to creating alliance with the small state. But also illustrating how discussions of capacity are very valid: first in establishing the key sources of capacity, and second in understanding the fundamental differences between great powers and small states. This in mind, the examination of Latvia, a small state with limited capacity, is a warranted subject as it could be used to create an uncontaminated view of the United States' behavior – as the resulting relations could only be marginally influenced by Latvia, easing the identification of key patterns in American behavior.

5.1.1 THE PROBLEM OF STATE HETEROGENEITY

An additional offshoot inquiry focuses on whether specific great powers address all small states in a similar manner, or in terms of this project, if the U.S. had an identifiable universal policy in the twenty century for small states, which can obviously be answered with "no". The rejection of this idea is easily justified by the issue of small state heterogeneity, which does not allow for a universalized great power foreign policy towards small states.

Ironically, even though congruent themes in the study of small states are few, the drive to create a standardized small state definition remains, with scholars seemingly ignoring the option of widening the scope of possible definitions. The need to consider what *type* of small state is taking part in relations with the United States – not by focusing only on normative factors but by examining all the available sources of small state capacity – becomes evident. This is a consideration supported implicitly by Maass, who argues that small states studies has ultimately benefited from the diversity of small state conceptualizations and contends that "a flexible understanding of 'the' small state has not at all hindered the study

… Since small states exist in all kinds of forms, shapes and sizes…there is in fact more than one small state in international relations."[573]

As the case study shows, the U.S. clearly dealt with the Baltic states as a unitized group, making the academic exploration of more unitized definitions of small state necessary to study U.S. relations with these states. Based on the examination, one of the factors in influencing U.S. behavior towards a small state is the type of small state the U.S. is dealing with. This categorization is closely related to the capacity, capability, and the utility the U.S. designates such states in tandem with efficient administrative divisions based on culture and geography. Here it is suggested that for the further study of small state-great power relations, small states should be differentiated based on at least two factors: (1) their geographic/geopolitical location, and (2) on their diplomatic capability (tied closely to state age, i.e. newness, in a given system), and more specifically for studies of small state-U.S. relations, the small state categories already in use by the U.S. also need to be considered.

GEOPOLITICAL POSITIONING

In terms of geography the crucial categorization point is whether the small state (or states unit) in question is in the classical sphere of interest of a particular great power. As pointed out, the European tradition in small states studies, which dwells on assumptions based on large–small contiguous states, cannot be applied to Latvian-American relations.[574] Instead, these relations, like those between Cuba and the USSR or South Korea and India, take on a new meaning when examined in the context of the small states choice to seek relations with a more distant rather than the most immediate great power.

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[573] Maass, "The Elusive Definition of the Small State," 66.
[574] Lindell and Persson, "The Paradox of Weak State Power," 80.

Indeed, as the examples of Panama and the English-speaking Caribbean states demonstrate, geographic factors are an important variable in U.S. behavior toward small states in their sphere of interests.[575] More specifically, geography is considered a "systemic [source] or resource" of small state capacity, described as such because spheres change as technology and power balances influence their scope within a particular system. Hence, Latvia's spatial detachment from North America, from the U.S. sphere of interest, discounted all the border-related points of leverage for most of the twentieth century.

The lack of a common sphere of interest, primarily geographical but also ideological, decreases the chance of a military alliance for a small state and the use of the leverage tools of "being a domino" or borrowing power from a larger partner showing that just as systemic sources of capability can aid to small state, their absence removes capacity-building options.

DIPLOMATIC CAPABILITY AND NEWNESS

The second differentiation point in small state categorization is such states' capacity to bargain, primarily in terms of diplomatic ability correlating to its newness in an international system. The diplomatic activity of a small state represents one of the few variables that can be independently influenced by the small state itself. Hence, diplomacy remains a key component in small states studies because a state's diplomatic behavior can increase its capacity in negotiations. Most particularly, if a state has a developed diplomacy that includes well-schooled and experienced diplomats, diplomacy can be used as a counterweight to other inequalities.

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[575] Peter M. Sanchez, "Panama: A 'Hegemonized' Foreign Policy," and Braveboy-Wagner, "The English-Speaking Caribbean States," both in Hey, *Small States in World Politics*.

However, there remains a marked lack of objective examination not only of the relevance of a state's size but also a differentiation of the state's *ability* to perform in the international system.[576] Hence, in an effort to counteract what East characterizes as a "mind-boggling inequality of resources" small state diplomacy often focuses on the construction of niche roles like those of Switzerland, Denmark, and the Netherlands, whose influence is considered disproportional to their size in international relations.[577] The diplomatic capabilities of these nations are often credited for increasing their capacity in the global system, and their strategies are often used as models for general small state foreign policy.

Therefore, one of the key factors in influencing a great power's behavior towards a small state is the type of small state the great power is dealing with. Much like recent examinations that have began to differentiate not only between large and small states but also divide these latter into established versus new in order to reflect the specific role of the institutions and other factors that influence foreign relations, twentieth century Latvia can be considered a *limited small state*, an expression that could be used to create the missing differentiation.

5.1.2 BENEFITING FROM GREAT-POWER BEHAVIOR MODELS

An additional inquiry resulting from this work focuses on the value of examining small state-great power relations, looking for a practical

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[576] Pace discusses the financial aspect of small state diplomacy and its limitations on even the most basic state requirements, including the maintenance of representation and information gathering and processing. However, like others, he has neglected to look at more in-depth aspects of diplomatic insufficiencies, such as limited training and experience: "Small States and the Internal Balance of the European Union," 110. Jazbec also discusses certain challenges but rather that being concerned with their role in foreign policy-making, he concentrates on the "genesis of one of the basic state forming structures," the foreign offices of new small states: *The Diplomacies of New Small States*, 41.

[577] East, "Foreign Policy-Making in Small States," 492.

application of identified patterns – and if research like this could represent a new capacity source for small states dealing with great powers. In addressing this issue, the limitations of this work are exposed, the generalizability of this study. The advantage of examining Latvia, as addressed in Chapter I, with its globally extraordinary but regionally ordinary status, is that it can be confidently claimed that U.S. behavior toward Latvia is transferable to both Estonia and Lithuania, shown both in an independent examination of U.S. policy and in the administrative divisions in the U.S. State Department. The example of Latvian-American relations show that while patterns in U.S. behavior exists, the likelihood of small states, like Latvia, being able to gain capacity from this knowledge is highly unlikely. Simply put: there is little that can be done to counteract the lack of capacity that Latvia had in the twentieth century; what was possible, a proactive small state coalition, was rejected.

Although the methods that the U.S. employed in its relations with Latvia are not without a general counterstrategy, the fundamental fault in presenting counterstrategy options for states like twentieth century Latvia is that they remain hypothetical as new small states lack the structures of diplomacy to identify, act on, or appreciate these strategies.

This is because the newest, and as a result least experienced, members of the international community have often barely achieved the degree of internal control usually considered a minimum for statehood, and their diplomatic contacts are still necessarily limited and embryonic. Most particularly, a state must be able to recognize and prioritize its own interests, as well as its potential strengths and weakness and must maximize the tools and supporting structures of diplomacy. Thus, even though some recent studies claim that there are no "significant differences between small and large countries in terms of the quality of their institutions" and that the quality of small state diplomacy "matters

more,"[578] small states, and especially new small states with limited resources and unreliable "friends," have, according to Rothstein, "very limited time in which to correct mistakes."[579]

The argument that Latvia's newness to the international system, both in 1918 and 1991, greatly decreased its capacity is supported by more current discussions of the limitations of new Latvian institutions, including budgetary and personal factors and the preoccupation with the necessities of diplomatic re-recognition. Therefore, the claim that effective diplomacy requires the three crucial factors of power, policy, and personnel may be amended for small states to read that to effectively create power, diplomacy requires policy and personnel.[580] Besides the problems of gaining international recognition the deficit of diplomatic ability (inherently part of being new) places such states in a subordinate position not only to larger powers but also to established small states.

This was illustrated by the general Baltic resistance to counteract the downsides of the U.S. small state unitizing policy, which could have been done through more voluntary small state cooperation. Given the U.S. ability to manipulate any bilateral relationship with a small state, formalized small state cooperation as a precursor to negotiations with the U.S. would increase~~s~~ a small state's leverage/capacity.

The advantages of cooperative and proactive regionalism are twofold: (1) although small state alliances can be defined in terms of sociocultural factors, they probably have less to do with a sense of mutual identity and more to do with economic and security justifications, which in a regional constellation are sure to be relatively coherent among proximate states, (2) proactively including additional states allows the rejection of certain externally created stigmas, as, for example, in Estonia's attempt to be

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[578] Bräutigam and Woolcock, "The Role of Institution in Managing Vulnerability and Opportunity in Small and Developing Countries," 1.
[579] Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers*, 25.
[580] Haas and Whiting, *Dynamics of International Relations*, 138.

labeled a Nordic rather than a post-communist Baltic state to free it from the Baltic stigma.

Although small-state group relations with the U.S. inevitably remain asymmetric, they allow for the benefit of asymmetric negotiation and classical small-state tools of leverage. Aspects of these tools can also be amplified by the high likelihood of one small state in a group of 3 to 5 representing a form of political utility, not to mention the domestic role of a cooperating diaspora located in a great power.

Nonetheless, Latvia and other small states have shown a great resistance to voluntary small state cooperation. Reasons for this have been supplied; ranging from a small state's fear of losing control over its foreign policy, the dangers of an "all or nothing" policy in relations with a great power, and for new states the fear of paying for minimal security of a small state coalition at the cost of their newly won sovereignty. What demands more research is whether this can be explained, in the case of Latvia, by limited capability in international relations and simple unawareness, or by the early twentieth century stereotypes of small state egoism. The Baltic emphasis upon equal partnership remains one of the key markers in the formation of individual and joint foreign policy doctrines and has been well documented.[581] All three Baltic states use various constructs to emphasize their "belonging to Europe and their distinctiveness from each other."[582] With this the advantage of being grouped, proactively or reactively, remains unutilized as the Baltic States are inclined to distance themselves from the common Baltic identity, and

[581] Bergman Rosamond, "The Nordic States and Small States Solidarism" (Paper presented at the Small States Capacity Building' workshop, Birmingham, 4-5 April 2007).

[582] Miniotaite, "Convergent Geography and Divergent Identities," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 16:2): 209-222.

seek "historical and geopolitical reasons allegedly cornering these peculiarities".[583]

5.1.3 PARTICULARITIES OF GREAT AND SMALL CONDUCT

Rothstein points out, lesser states are not simply "great powers writ small" rather, they "think and act differently, and any analysis which fails to take that fact into account is bound to be simplistic and inadequate."[584] Yet, do great powers think and act differently than large states when addressing small states? The answer from this research is that the United States may engage in a specific behavior toward specific types of small states based on the utility that they represent and the capacity of the small state. But is there a difference in how the U.S., as a great power, attempts to extract utility from a state like Latvia than how a larger state would? And is there a difference in how Latvia, as a specific type of small state, reacted to the U.S. than it would to a larger state?

At first glance, the U.S. strategies presented in the case study do not differ greatly from those identified in the broader examinations of small state and large state behavior. The most obvious inference – that when dealing with the United States, a small state should secure multinational agreements and use intuitions whenever possible to prevent a national interest motivated interpretation of international law – is proposed by small state academia in general (see Chapter II). However, as the instance of Latvian-American relations indicates, the nature of a great power-small state relationship in IR may transcend the popular concepts presented in large-small studies.

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[583] Ibid.
[584] Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers*, 1.

THRESHOLDS FOR SMALL-GREAT RELATIONS

Despite the dangers of being instrumentalized for great power national interests, and casting aside ideological motivations that can be used to justify the choice of a particular great power as a desired ally, small states relations with a great power are more complex than their relations with large states.

It is clear that small states seek alliances out of necessity: unable to achieve their overriding national interest of state security, small state policymakers look for help from other nations. Hence, a small state will naturally gravitate toward a great power in search of security, protection, partnerships, and resources rather than face the instability of a large coalition of similar states or with just a large state. Furthermore, small states in the twentieth century needed the United States legitimize their existence through diplomatic recognition. In terms of Latvian-American relations the most prominent example was if not to legitimize Latvian sovereignty through diplomatic recognition, then to acquiesce to it. The importance of the U.S. for Latvia was seen in its delayed recognition of Latvia in 1991 representing what was considered the finalization of Baltic independence.[585]

This gravitation towards the United States, the 'need' for security and legitimacy creates a higher threshold of acceptance for the United States behaviors over these small states, and modifies the behavior of the small, at least in the case study's example. As a result, Latvia accepted the United States methods – for instance, grouping policies or contenting with friendship – and the extreme Latvian dependence created by the Stimson Doctrine – more readily than it may have accepted similar actions by a large state in the system. However, what remains in the foreground is that the U.S. is not *just* a great power to all small states; it is a sought after ally and a regional hegemon. Small states experiences with

[585] Goble, "The Politics of Principal," 54.

other great powers, particularly the Soviet Union, but also historically with the British and French Empires would present much different conclusions than this work.

U.S. relations with states like Latvia represent a much more polarized exchange – again, based on the overwhelming state asymmetry – these result in ambiguous constellations that potentially threaten both the small and great. As the case study has shown, the U.S. was able to extract maximal utility from its limited relations with Latvia without entering into an obligatory alliance relationship. Nevertheless, a state like Latvia may be able to construe friendly relations as a means of extracting more support from a great power. For example, small states have used friendship as a stepping-stone from collaboration to support of "another friendly state's interest, which it does not share but which does not harm it, in return for reciprocal support by the other state on an issue of importance to itself."[586]

Still, unlike in relations with larger states, when a small state remains uncertain about the depth of bilateral relations, the unilateral approach of a small state verbalizing expectations to force a larger state either to concede or object, is rarely used with the U.S. An ambiguity in the relationship can be used more positively by the small than actively clarified limits of a great state's interests.

Although political identities are not considered static in international relations in that they normally respond and adjust to external stimuli, making efforts to examine the role of friendly identification in politics "meaningless without identification of the process" this understanding is weakened by the maintenance of the attached meaning Latvians have given their friendship with America. This may be because the construction of identity is considered an ongoing process "in which domestic norms and values are formed and reformed by contact with the

[586] Watson, *Diplomacy*, 61.

external world."[587] In the case of Latvia, the Cold War separated them from "the external world" and as a small state it attempted to attach meaning to this friendship because of lacking alternatives.

To avoid this ambiguity and perhaps the most surprising observation of this analysis is the extent to which the U.S. legitimized its actions with and toward Latvia based on international norms, regardless of the capability of the U.S. to influence these norms. This is a U.S. behavior that remains relevant beyond the case study's timeframe. Despite the perception that America is profoundly unilateralist (created through the U.S. rejection of multilateral treaties e.g., the Kyoto Protocol, the International Criminal Court) U.S. interaction with small states has been guided by formal agreements, with the U.S. going to great lengths and incurring substantial costs to secure international legitimacy.

And, the United States did enter into a number of bilateral alliances with small noncontiguous states like Latvia in order to gain landing rights, access to ports, and the use of military facilities in strategically important locations. Such alliances illustrate that great powers do not reject the idea of close bilateral relations with small states as a luxury but rather out of necessity.

This necessity is based on the fact that the U.S., as a great power "bears a disproportionate share of the burden of providing the collective good."[588] Therefore, the U.S. is rarely criticized by small and large states alike for placing its national interests ahead of those of small states; doing so is one of the bases of international relations – and also the reason why the U.S. considered its relations with Latvia to be in a far second place to those with Moscow or overall system stability.

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[587] Buszynski, 2004, Asia Pacific Security: Values and Identity, 16-17.
[588] Mancur Olson, quoted in Barry and Bratt, "Defense against Help."

5.2 EXTENDED RELEVANCE AND RESEARCH SUMMARY

For the Republic of Latvia the structure of the international system and its own capacity are important factors in explaining America's foreign policy behavior with it just as with other U.S. allies, friends, and adversaries. These relations in the twentieth century were controlled by the U.S., a conclusion that is supported by the limitation of Latvian capacity sources in this time frame.

The patterns of U.S. behavior towards Latvia were established through a systemic level of examination, an approach that understandably created a field of appreciation for the influence of the international system. A methodology which is admittedly a largely realist outside-in argument, it disregards the domestic values and the norms that shape state behavior as well as representations of specific self-identities.[589] This level of analysis presented a means of describing *what* happened, whereas other factors, like the inferred national interests of the United States, were relied upon to answer the question *why* did it happen.

Therefore, that the results of this examination support the idea that domestic determinants for both great powers and small states are less significant for state behavior as "external constraints are more severe and the international situation is more compelling" is no surprise when the methodology is examined.[590] However, theoretical continuity also dictates that this approach is best when looking at not only the one-sidedness of the relationship between the U.S. and Latvia, which fits well into the realist mold, but also the undeniable asymmetry of these two states.

Supporting that the existence of some small states can be justified through traditional concepts of dominance by defining them as a byproduct of the

[589] See Rosamond, "The Nordic States and Small States Solidarism."
[590] Elman, "The Foreign Policies of Small States," 172.

relationships among the great powers this study represents an argument that the sources of such capability were unavailable to Latvia during the twentieth century preventing the "paradox of small states" from weakening the oftentimes rejected realist assumptions in the study of small states. To revisit Morgenthau, as many (neo) realist-based studies in IR have, "[a] great power is a state which is able to have its *will* against a small state… which in turn is not able to have its *will* against a great power."[591] If *will* is understood as achieving national interests, this quote not only applies to Latvian-American relations in the twentieth century, but summarizes them.

This in mind, the results of this study may appear limited by the choice of methodology; if the system's influence is considered so substantial, if not the end of the Cold War, then 9/11, marks a transformatory event in the international system, making the continuance of U.S. behavior identified in this work towards Latvia questionable. In short, as the system changes, so may the behavior of the U.S.

However, the key behaviors examined were also maintained throughout the systemic shifts in this case study's time frame. This can be explained by the admittedly wide scope of interpretation, especially by the first behavior discussed, the national interest orientated interpretation of international law. As shown, the U.S. employed either a strict view, to protect its interests in terms of diplomatic recognition of Latvia, or a liberal creation of practice and precedence such as in the application of the Stimson Doctrine, which created the most extreme and longest diplomatic abnormality of the twentieth century. What is important in both examples is the U.S. legitimization of its actions when using international law, not the extreme of interpretation.

This behavior and the unitization of small states, which continues, and implies the need for further academic exploration of similarly unitized

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[591] Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, 129.

definitions of small states, remain relevant to the current study of U.S. relations with small states. This is important given that the sheer number of small states have serious implications for the broader current context of international exchange.

These implications have been seen already in the first decade of this century with the role of the small state having been elevated by the policy paths the great powers have chosen. Latvian-American relations have already shown distinct differences to the one-sided relationship of the twentieth century, with the U.S. no longer the sole director of bilateralism, a fact that can be attributed to the increased capacity of Latvia and small states in general, based on shifting geopolitical situation and the importance of internationally legitimacy in the post-Cold War environment.

In harmony with the suggestions in this work, two issues regarding Latvia have elevated its position in relations with the U.S. First, it may no longer qualify as a *new* small state by the definition provided in Chapter II (due to the systemic changes created by 9/11), and because of this, its security risks have decreased not only through NATO but also through the fact that it is an accepted part of the international community anchored securely in a number of ways.

Second, aside from the current geopolitical relevance of Latvia, the general increased importance of international legitimacy has become a key theme in international relations, shifting small states from the role of alliance pariah to sought-after partners to legitimize policies. One side of this shift is best illustrated by the U.S. effort to secure international legitimacy for its creation of and leading role in a "coalition of the willing" to disarm Saddam Hussein in November 2002, while the other side is the 2003 Latvian refusal to grant immunity to U.S. military personnel and civilians abroad from the International Criminal Court (ICC). Despite bilateral pressure from the U.S., Latvia, a founding member of the ICC, refused to ratify the agreement.

Although international law scholars contend that legitimacy is ultimately anchored in opinion, most agree that a U.N. mandate would have certainly improved the international legitimacy of a U.S lead campaign against Iraq. The U.S. saw that both its reputation and leadership position in the post-Cold War world would be damaged internationally if it could be accused of being an illegitimate aggressor, and Saddam Hussein presented a historical allegory to many former communist small states. Specifically for Latvia, participation in the coalition was seen as a means to reciprocate what Latvians felt was a historical debt to the United States with the added interest of the U.S. support in the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Latvia, the aid with EU negotiations and their eventual NATO support.

SUMMARY

In 2004 long-established security concerns of the Republic of Latvia were finally counter-balanced by their ascension to the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance (NATO), and the consequential formal association to its lead member, the United States. By examining the history of Latvian-American relations, this study provided insight to the practices in U.S. foreign policy before this point, by seeking historical patterns, which were consistent elements of America's policy for Latvia, despite changing systemic conditions in the twentieth century.

The result was the identification of three consistent behaviors in the United States' bilateral relations with the Republic of Latvia. The theme with the most impact was the U.S. use of international law to serve its national interests. The other two behaviors, the American use of friendship in place of alliances to ensure positive exchange with Latvia without creating obligations for ensuring Latvian security, and the bureaucratically effective approach to dealing with the Baltic as a whole were also addressed.

This study was justified by the lack of attention on small state-great power relations and the void in studies of Latvian-American relations. What this process designates is that generalizing these results is difficult because not only is the U.S. not *just* a great power, the Republic of Latvia is not simply a small state. Rather the example of Latvia supports the argument presented in this work that small states, beyond general vulnerability, can lack additional sources of capacity; showing that the academic exploration of more unitized definitions of small state, are necessary to study U.S. relations with small states.

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