1. Introduction: Collective Identities in Baltic and East Central Europe

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After a preoccupation with collective identities culminated in the mass destruction of the Second World War and the Holocaust, and after the post-war remapping and resettlement was enforced, ethnic identity was ‘out’ for many decades as a political vehicle or a proper topic of research. 1 The ideas of the behaviour of the individual and his or her gentle civilisation in the spirit of enlightenment took its place. Personal affiliation with a group was regarded as a functional piece in a greater puzzle of general progress; stronger types of identification that did not harmonise with the rationality of light bonds were believed to be doomed to vanish. Such modernism existed in a capitalist and a communist variety, with greater emphasis on the individual and the universal dimension respectively (in its communist version the universalism was a class-based projection). The suggestion that Sweden represents a ‘third way’, with a political culture that has been lauded as ‘statist individualism’ (Trägårdh 1997; see also Berggren and Trägårdh 2006), highlights the country’s peculiar status at the time of the Cold War (see Bjereld, Johansson, and Molin 2008). The lack of independent societal forces has given rise to a conformist, single norm-oriented Nordic *Sonderweg* (Stenius 2013).

During the Cold War, both historical materialism and modernisation theory gave meaning to a bipolar world with its two competing universalisms aiming at humankind at large. 2 There was an intellectual distance,

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1 As a research concept, ‘identity’ was not in use until after the Second World War. Earlier, however, there was a widespread scholarly discourse that would now be associated with identity issues such as national character, race, profession and class status, or women’s rights.

2 On the affinity of modernisation theory and capitalism, see Thompson (1991: 267, 272).
even isolation, of scholarly communities. There was also a clash of ideas, the ‘sacred drama’ of a deliberative confrontation of different strands of thought at the United Nations (O’Brien and Topolski 1968; Götz 2011), and a number of proxy wars on the periphery. However, there was no actual clash of identities among the dominant cultures. The Baltic Sea, divided by the Iron Curtain with military forces stationed on either side, could appear as a ‘Sea of Peace’ in Soviet propaganda. Moreover, a convergence of the two types of political economy was anticipated not only in Marxist eschatology, but also by the champions of Western modernisation theory (e.g., Rostow 1960). Under the circumstances of prevailing universal ideologies and the nuclear-conditioned need for peaceful coexistence identity remained a non-issue.

Things changed in November 1989 after the fall of the Berlin Wall, an event I first witnessed in the neighbourhoods of Wedding and Prentzlauer Berg (see Götz 2012), and later when I became involved with its repercussions on the geographical imagination of the 1990s. It prompted the remaking of Scandinavian studies at Berlin universities from a philology dealing with Scandinavian languages and literatures to a broadly defined field of Northern European studies that reached out to the current affairs of the wider Baltic Sea area, including a dose of ‘future studies’ (see Götz, Hecker-Stampehl, and Schröder 2010). However, by 1989 Gorbachev’s Perestroika had already stimulated independence movements in the Baltic Soviet Republics and political initiatives for an intensified cooperation across the Baltic Sea (Gerner and Hedlund 1993; Lieven 1993; Williams 2007). In Poland, which had exemplified the potential transformation of Eastern Europe throughout the 1980s, the independent trade union Solidarność (Solidarity) had been re-legalised in April 1989 (see the contribution by Misgeld and Molin in this volume; also Eriksson 2013). In the early 1990s forces that had been set in motion led to the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, creating a radically new geopolitical situation.

In Sweden, with its history of a Baltic empire, long coastline, and central position at the Baltic Sea, but also its supposed neutrality and its own version of a blurred ‘socialist’ capitalism during the Cold War, the turbulence in the region was closely watched (Lundén and Nilsson 2008; Nilsson and Lundén 2010). In the field of academia the inception of the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies (Östersjöstiftelsen) in 1994 and the creation of Södertörn University in 1996 were perhaps the most conspicuous developments (Konnander 1998; Gerdin and Johansson 2005).
In this environment, the Swedish Institute of Contemporary History (Samtidshistoriska Institutet), established in 1999, was formed with a thoroughly international research profile. In addition it was committed to fulfilling its mission as a monitor of recent Swedish developments (Gerdin and Östberg 2004). In this the Institute differed from its sister institutions in other countries, which, by what appears to be a contemporary history paradox, often retain a stricter focus on their own nation than what other branches of history do. The current volume documents some of the international studies conducted by the Institute’s researchers, with an emphasis on issues related to national identities, labour orientations, and gender perspectives.

The issue of identity reappeared as a driving force in the processes accompanying the end of the Cold War. Devout Catholicism and a political culture of romantic patriotism made Poland a natural starting point for questioning the matrix of Yalta (Davies 2001 [1984]). The native populations of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania opposed not only the political Sovietisation of their republics, but also the demographic Russification and environmental degradation to which they were exposed. They expressed their discontent in a ‘singing revolution’, mobilising cultural assets to reinvigorate national identity and ultimately independence (Vesilind, Tusty, and Tusty 2008; Škapars 2005). The East Germans went from shouting to their rulers Wir sind das Volk (We are the people) to being courted by the phrase Wir sind ein Volk (We are one people). The latter phrase was invented in Leipzig to persuade those in power not to resort to violence against demonstrators. Eventually the expression was reframed as a pan-German slogan suggesting the reunion with West Germany (Winkler 2000: 520, 558). In all these cases identity became an instrument for solving issues connected to the definition and the empowerment of a sovereign.

Not only did the Baltic Sea region become a space for the reconfiguration of national identities: it became much more of a contact zone than in previous decades, and was sometimes conceived of as a laboratory for the post-national forging of identities (Olesen 2012). There arose the question of what the lifting of the Iron Curtain meant for Nordic cooperation and whether the latter arena was to include countries like Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania (Joenniemi 1997; Lehti and Smith 2003). An epistemic community of intellectuals working in think tanks and academia imagined the Baltic Sea region as an identity project in analogy to the nation building of the nineteenth century, although one to be achieved in a multi-layered ‘neo-medievalist’ fashion (Neumann 1994: 67; see Wæver 1991). Hence, an early
attempt to draw on traditional layers of identity for Baltic Sea cooperation was its political promotion by the slogan *Neue Hanse* (New Hansa). One of the problems of this “neo-liberal double” (Stråth 2000: 204) of the notion of the ‘Sea of Peace’ was that in many places it was conceived of as referring to an epoch of German dominance. After all, the past of the area is perhaps most concisely encapsulated in the observation that “throughout history, the Baltic has been a sea of conflicts and dividing lines” (ibid. 199).

Although the claim is sometimes made that the cultural substrate for a common Baltic Sea identity exists as, for example, in its brick architecture (Henningsen 2008: 34), the question has frequently been answered in the negative with regard to whether such an identity was actually in place or whether it emerged after the Cold War (Wulff and Kerner 1994: 17; Reuter 2004; Engelen 2006: 89; Henningsen 2011). Nonetheless, the ‘Balticness’ project of the Latvian presidency in the Council of the Baltic Sea States (2007/08) and the journal published under the same name between 2008 and 2010 show that a Baltic Sea identity continues to be a current political issue. In accordance with the motto ‘If it did not exist, it would have to be invented’, there is interest in “BSR [Baltic Sea region] branding and identity building efforts” from a commercial, regional development point of view (*State of the Region Report™* 2013: 76).

The discursive or at times nominalistic approach of the region builders is evinced in the perplexing assertion by a political scientist that the three Baltic republics were “very much the apex of identity” of the Baltic Sea region-at-large (Wæver 1992: 39). Ironically, as was stated by a local researcher a decade later, “the ‘Baltic’ identity of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania is arguably the best known and the most politically significant, but also the least appreciated among the Baltic states themselves” (Paulauskas 2005: 52). The term ‘Baltic’ is mainly associated in these countries with a common history of subordination by Russia and the Soviet Union. The three republics were also similar as neighbouring small states with the shared aim of NATO and EU membership (Miniotaite 2003: 211–12; see also Brügge- mann 2003). Another difficulty with the term ‘Baltic’ is its aura of “oligarchic ‘regionalism’” due to its roots in the former German ruling class of what today are Estonia and Latvia (Rebas 1990: 415). The formal cooperation of the three Baltic republics – such as in the inter-parliamentary Baltic Assembly – was the outcome of incentives to copy Nordic cooperation and with the prospect of occasional collaboration in the ‘5 + 3’ and, later, ‘NB 8’ framework; but this has only been a surrogate for full
membership in Nordic bodies that has been the actual goal of the Balts. In this connection Estonians, both politicians and scholars, tend to dissociate themselves from their peers in Latvia and Lithuania as they regard themselves as having the strongest claim to membership in the ‘Nordic club’ for cultural and historical reasons (Piirimäe 2011; cf. Lagerspetz 2003).

The model for such a reframing comes from Finland. During the inter-war years it was regarded together with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania as one of four Baltic states. Despite the attempt of Finnish politicians to distance their country from its southern neighbours and, in the second half of the 1930s, adopt a Nordic profile, Finland was still addressed as Baltic in the secret protocol to the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact. Finland’s continued independence, its admission to the Nordic Council in 1955, and its de facto role as part of a ‘Nordic balance’ of Cold War security policy contributed to the Nordic profile Finland sought after the Second World War.

More promising than searching for a joint identity in the Baltic Sea area or among the three Baltic states is the prospect of acknowledging a plurality of identities within the larger regional perimeter, including hybrid and transmigrant identities. The same applies to an envisioned East European identity, a term so associated with backwardness that those to whom it is applied tend to reject it (Lemberg 1985; Wolff 1994). Thus, only upon accession to the European Union and NATO was the Estonian government willing to join the UN East European electoral group to which it belonged according to the current regional definition (Götz 2008: 360). Apart from Estonia and Latvia with their Northern European orientation, terms preferred by those living in large parts of the former Soviet hemisphere are ‘Central Europe’ and ‘East Central Europe’ (Kundera 1984; Szücs 1988 [1981]; Halecki 1952). These concepts are markers of distance from Eastern Europe, as well as umbrella identities in their own right. In Russia the concepts of Europe and Eurasia are also preferred over Eastern Europe (see Steiner 2010). The volatility of regional labels with far-reaching implications for understanding heritage and destiny illustrates that identity is a matter of choice, and that self-conceptions and images held by others may diverge. Evidently, any identity claim has to anticipate its assessment of plausibility.

3 In the 1990s, the operative formula for Nordic–Baltic cooperation was ‘5 + 3’, meaning a collaboration of the collective of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden on the one hand, and the group of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on the other. Since 2000, the corresponding term is ‘NB 8’, the Nordic–Baltic 8. This terminological change suggests greater homogeneity and equality of partners. At the same time, the Balts continue to be kept at a distance, as the combination of Nordic and Baltic confirms the existing spatial division.
The geopolitical shift of 1989 was preceded by the cultural shift of 1968, a turning point symbolising the emergence of a post-materialist lifestyle with an emphasis on individual self-expression and its repertoire of autonomous contextual identities (Gassert and Klimke 2009; Inglehart 1977). Thus, the relatively coherent collective identities of the industrial age, such as the one provided by the labour movement, was displaced by more voluntaristic forms of identification and joint action (Beck 1983). Hippie-culture, ‘new social movements’, and environmentalism emerged, and the idea of assimilating minorities and immigrants was replaced by the vision of a multi-cultural society. For the first time, the gendered division of labour and its biased power relations was seriously called into question by the women’s movement. Human rights issues came to the fore, were codified on the eastern side of the Iron Curtain through the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, and contributed to undermining the legitimacy of communist regimes among their citizens (Eckel and Moyn 2013; Saal 2014). Eastern European dissidents began to rediscover and cultivate the idea of civil society as an autonomous public sphere beyond the authority of the state (Keane 1988; Hackmann 2003).

By 1989, these identity-related developments together with processes of individualisation had been going on for two decades, undermining the bipolar world paradigm, and contributing to its ultimate demise. When the spell of the Cold War ended, it not only unleashed the issue of national and regional identities; rather, the patchwork of individual lifestyle preferences, identity choices, and ‘othering’ distinctions also gained significance. These processes were subject to such intersectional and socio-economic overlapping as that of gender, as well as Western versus post-communist backgrounds (Lindelöf 2010). In addition, civilisational and religious identities increasingly functioned as sources of meaning in a world that had recently been freed of its axiomatic conflict (Huntington 1996). The Baltic Sea region is today a meeting place or fracture site between the three main Christian denominations. There is potential for cooperation and conflict in the attempt to assume a joint Baltic Sea identity stemming from the mutual engagement of the Lutheran and Catholic worlds, with the exclusion of the Orthodox component (Kreslins 2003).

The belief that humanity would rise above particularistic identities in the spirit of modernity and tolerance was shown to be an illusion after the end of the Cold War. Neither had capitalism and communism converged to any considerable extent, nor did the ‘homo oeconomicus’ become the blueprint of human behaviour. Primordial identities were not phased out and volun-
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taristic identities did not become unalienable assets of the individual that were taken for granted. On the contrary, a new age of identity had begun in which traditional categories like distinctive nations, sex, and religion once again clashed with one another and with postmodern orientations including transnationalism, a variety of gender roles, and lifestyles. Collective and individual identities remained more relevant than ever for policy makers.

This book concentrates on national, labour, and gender identities. Each topic is represented by three to four chapters, and the volume concludes with a chapter on the development of environmental awareness. Identity and ‘awareness’ or ‘consciousness’ are related concepts (see Giesen 1991; Berding 1994; Bråkenhielm 2009), the former expressing conformity with an ideal type, and the latter referring to the acknowledgement of a problem. Hence, it is awareness that gives identity direction and turns it into a political force that merits attention. All contributions to this volume discuss identities correlated with different states of awareness and as factors in problem-solving processes. The period addressed is contemporary history since the 1930s, with a few excursions into earlier years and particular attention to the era since 1945. The span of years chosen shows that the Institute of Contemporary History stands for a wider approach than its own programmatic definition of the field as the era since 1945. Contemporary history is a moving target about which living historical witnesses may be consulted (for an international overview of the many attempts to delimitate contemporary history, see Metzler 2012).

While the Institute of Contemporary History was begun with a grant from the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation (Riksbankens Jubileumsfond) and is indebted to a number of funding institutions for its activities over the years, most contributions to this volume have resulted from projects supported by its present main sponsor, the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies. This book is an expression of our gratitude for the generous on-going support they have given us. Unless stated otherwise, the contributions to this book and the projects mentioned in this introductory chapter are based on grants by the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies.

The present chapter contains preliminary reflection on “Spaces of Expectation: Mental Mapping and Historical Imagination in the Baltic Sea and Mediterranean Region”, a recently launched multi-disciplinary, bilateral project with our long-term cooperation partner Ca’ Foscari University in Venice. It is scheduled to run from 2014 to 2018. The larger project analyses in six historical and political science case studies the
meaning attached to the Baltic and the Mediterranean, investigates the mental maps correlated to historical representations, compares the imaginations of the two regions, and studies their involvement with each other. Our aim is an improved understanding of how historical trajectories have been attached to two maritime areas that are critical to European integration. Other researchers at Södertörn University engaged in the project are Janne Holmén, Jussi Kurunmäki, and Vasileios Petrogiannis; and Deborah Paci and Rolf Petri at Ca’ Foscari University.

Chapter Two, Janne Holmén’s “Fluctuating Dynastic and National Affiliation: The Impact of War and Unrest on Bornholm, Åland, and Saaremaa”, shows that national identity is far from self-evident, as commonly believed. A counter-factual potential for national identification (or even independence) exists for all three Baltic islands that he examines. Holmén summarises aspects of the larger project “Islands of Identity: Identity Building on Bornholm, Gotland, Åland, Saaremaa and Hiiumaa, 1800–2000”, which explored the connection between regional history writing and identity. It was conducted from 2010 to 2013 with the participation of Erik Axelsson and Samuel Edquist.

In the third chapter, entitled “The Nordic Threat: Soviet Ethnic Cleansing on the Kola Peninsula”, Andrej Kotjarchuk discusses preliminary findings of his ongoing project “Soviet Nordic Minorities and Ethnic Cleansing on the Kola Peninsula”. He analyses the politics of identity as a collective attribution by state agencies, including mapping the ambiguity of some early measures with emancipatory intentions and repressive potential. Drawing on genocide studies, Kotjarchuk reconstructs the process of violence from the registration of minorities through deportation and state-sanctioned killings to the politics of amnesia. Kotjarchuk’s research, which will undoubtedly arouse interest beyond academic circles, began in 2013 and will run for three years.

Chapter Four, Steffen Werther’s “An Unimaginable Community: The SS Idea of a ‘Greater Germanic Reich’ and the German Minority in Denmark”, summarises some of the findings of his dissertation on the impact of Nazi ideology on the German-speakers of Southern Denmark during the Second World War (Werther 2012). It shows how national and racial policies diverged, disarraying the relation of the Reich with a German minority abroad. At the same time the article illustrates another way in which the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies facilitates research at Södertörn University by financing the Baltic and East European Graduate School (BEEGS). The Foundation is one of the few Swedish research
underwriters that continues to provide full funding for doctoral candidates, something gratefully acknowledged by all those interested in Södertörn University as an exciting site for ‘young research’. This offers a window of opportunity for promising academic talent from the wider Baltic Sea region and elsewhere, and for the Swedish scientific community to become more actively engaged with perspectives from abroad.

Sofia Norling’s chapter “The Ambiguity of the West: Objectives of Polish Research Policy in the 1990s” also draws on a doctoral dissertation, one that was based at the Institute of Contemporary History (see Norling 2014). It examines how science policy was remade from an instrument of societal progress under the communist regime to one recognising the autonomy of academia, and later reconfigured as a tool serving the development of the market economy and Poland’s accession to the European Union. Her study was a part of Teresa Kulawik’s project “Knowledge, Politics and the Public Sphere in the Baltic Sea Region”.

The sixth chapter, “Lost Worlds of Labour: Paul Olberg, the Jewish Labour Bund, and Menshevik Socialism” by Håkan Blomqvist, explores the rich biography of a Swedish social democratic publicist with a background in Tsarist Latvia, revolutionary Russia, Weimar Germany, and the Jewish labour movement. This mosaic of formative experiences, identity anchors, and contemporary responses to world events from the Bolshevik revolution up to 1960 goes beyond the scope of Blomqvist’s ‘larger’ project “Bund in Sweden 1946–1954: A Jewish Labour Movement at the Crossroads”, which has been underway since 2013 and will conclude in 2015.

The seventh chapter, “From Fordism to High-Tech Capitalism: A Political Economy of the Labour Movement in the Baltic Sea Region” by Werner Schmidt, shows how working-class awareness eroded, giving way to a strategic paralysation and competitive corporatism in the 1970s. It explains the macro-economic shift behind this development – which led also to the breakdown of the Soviet system – in the light of regulation theory and a neo-Gramscian perspective. The article is the initial outcome of the third part of “The Labour Movement in the Baltic Sea Region”, the longest running research endeavour at the Institute of Contemporary History. The project was started in 1997, making it older than its host institution. The third and concluding part of this project is subtitled “A New World of Crises and Insecurity (1970–2010)”. Other scholars exploring this topic between 2013 and 2015 are Kjell Östberg, Lars Ekdahl, and Håkan Blomqvist.

Klaus Misgeld and Karl Molin are co-authors of the article “Solidarity and Diplomacy: Sweden and the Democratisation of Poland, 1980–1989”.

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They show how working class solidarity led to the engagement of Swedish civil society and officials in the Polish struggle for democracy in the 1980s. This development was at odds with the Swedish Cold War profile of acting, on the one hand, as a ‘world conscience’, and, on the other, of pussyfooting on issues involving nearby dictatorships. Paradoxically, this profile and the formal policy of neutrality enabled Sweden to get more actively involved than might otherwise have been the case. Thus, Misgeld and Molin’s study illustrates at various levels, including those of unintended consequences, the formative power that particular identities may have for political action. The article describes the outcomes of the project “Sweden and the Polish Democratic Movement, 1980–1989” that was financed from 2007 to 2010 and also involved Paweł Jaworski and Stefan Ekecrantz, the latter being the Institute of Contemporary History’s first PhD (see Ekecrantz 2003).

Chapter Nine by Eva Blomberg, Ylva Waldemarson, and Alina Žvinklienė, “Gender Equality Policies: Swedish and Lithuanian Experiences of Nordic Ideas”, analyses how the linkage of human rights and gender equality has altered the normative parameters of policy making, and how international organisations such as the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers use the ’Nordic gender equality model’ for branding purposes. Moreover, the article deals with the institutionalisation of the equal opportunities ombudsman in Sweden and Lithuania. It results from the project “Mourning Becomes Electra: Gender Discrimination and Human Rights”, which has been conducted since 2010 with grants from the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) and the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies.4

Another outcome of the Mourning Becomes Electra project (its Swedish Research Council-branch) is Yulia Gradskova’s chapter “Group-Work on Gender Equality in Transnational Cooperation: Raising Feminist Consciousness or Diminishing Social Risks?” In analysing a trilateral cooperation between Finnish, Lithuanian, and Russian organisations from 2006 to 2012 that aimed at improving gender equality education through group

4 Technically speaking, these are two independent projects, both entitled “Mourning Becomes Electra: Gender Discrimination and Human Rights”. They have a slight variation in their English second subtitle “Altered Relations among International Organs, States, Collectives and Individuals from a Nordic and Eastern European Perspective 1980–2009”. The italicised word is not part of the subtitle of the project supported by the Swedish Research Council. Whereas the work of Eva Blomberg (in addition to that of Yulia Gradskova) has been funded by the Swedish Research Council, Ylva Waldemarson and Alina Žvinklienė have been grantees of the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies.
work, the article provides insights into the dynamics of transnational networks. While gender equality was the common denominator of the three collaborators and the funding institution, each organisation combined its engagement with different side-issues that were at variance with the overarching goal.

Kristina Abiala’s chapter “Young Moldovan Women at the Crossroads: Between Patriarchy and Transnational Labour Markets” is an interview-based sociological study of attitudes and experiences toward gender inequality, and of personal dreams about the future among school and university students. The article explores the ways in which various determinants have an effect on the negotiation of a gendered identity in a society with traditional values. It identifies openings for change, especially with regard to women’s participation in higher education, and in migration as an option with repercussions on the Moldovan home country. Abiala’s study is the result of a research project entitled “Global Capitalism and Everyday Resistance at the Intersection of East and West”, which she conducted from 2007 to 2013 in collaboration with ethnologists Mats Lindqvist and Beatriz Lindqvist.

The book concludes with a chapter on “Waves of Laws and Institutions: The Emergence of National Awareness of Water Pollution and Protection in the Baltic Sea Region” by Simo Laakonen, a chapter the completion of which was also supported by the Helsinki University Centre for Environment (HENVI). Showing how urban-industrial water pollution has been discussed and handled in Sweden, Finland, the Soviet Union, and Poland from the late nineteenth century to the end of the Cold War, the study challenges the prevailing assumption that environmental awareness only emerged in the 1960s. The article is an outcome of “Driving Forces for Environmental Policy-Making and Capacity Building in the Baltic Sea Region”, a project that began in 2011 and will continue until 2015, and also involved Åsa Casula Vifell.

The projects represented in this book are not the only ones at the Institute of Contemporary History relevant to its topic. Members of the project “The Sea of Peace in the Shadow of Threats” were preoccupied with finalising major monographs and were therefore unable to contribute to the present volume. Project members Fredrik L. Eriksson, Piotr Wawrzeniuk, and Johan Eellend have worked together from 2009 to the present, studying the security situation in the Baltic Sea region in the interwar period, particularly the self-image and threat perceptions among the Swedish, Polish, and Estonian armed forces.
The recent projects, “The Roma Genocide in Ukraine 1941–44: History, Memories and Representations” and “The Moral Economy of Global Civil Society: A History of Voluntary Food Aid”, were still in their early stages and not ready to present their findings when this book was made. The Genocide Project with researchers Piotr Wawrzeniuk, Andrej Kotljarchuk, and David Gaunt studies Nazi policies towards the Roma in the Ukraine during the Second World War, and examines the memory work of the Roma, on the one hand, and official commemoration policies, on the other. The Food Aid Project is funded by the Swedish Research Council and includes Norbert Götz, Steffen Werther, Katarina Friberg, and Georgina Brewis. Werther’s study on relief to the Ukraine in the famine of 1921/22 focuses on Eastern Europe, although the scope of the project as a whole is wider. The project is also interested in identities and seeks to develop the concept ‘moral economy’ as a tool in their analysis.

‘Internationalisation’ has become a buzzword in Swedish academia over the past decade. At Södertörn University and at the Institute of Contemporary History we practice an internalised form of ‘internationality’ on a daily basis. It arises from a genuine academic interest, a way of looking at things, and as a matter of multinational social and scholarly backgrounds. This may be seen in the topics addressed and the researchers involved in the present volume. About half of the staff of the Institute of Contemporary History have Swedish roots; the other half represents a smorgasbord of German, Finnish, Belorussian, and Polish-Ukrainian backgrounds. In addition, the institute’s projects employ British, Italian, Lithuanian, Russian, and US scholars. What collaborative work on the basis of such different experiences means for the identity of the Institute may be summarised by the term ‘Swedish-Baltic cosmopolitanism’.

In 2014 the Institute of Contemporary History celebrates its fifteenth anniversary. The present anthology combines the task of presenting current Baltic and East European studies conducted in Södertörn University’s strong research environment with the scholarly ambition of using case studies to explore how identities and the awareness of a spectrum of problems have influenced political choices. The political history of the Baltic Sea region and Eastern Europe is congenial with the twentieth century as an ‘age of extremes’, making it a fruitful region in which to study identities and their impact on political solutions.
Above: The Berlin Wall at Zimmerstraße, 25 June 1984 (Bundesarchiv, Bild 210-0506 / Photographer: Philipp J. Bösel and Burkhard Maus)

Left: Police from West- and East-Berlin at the Berlin Wall, improvised border crossing point at Potsdamer Platz, 15 Nov. 1989 (Bundesarchiv, B 145 Bild-00008581 / Photographer: Klaus Lehnartz)
References


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