ARTICLES

FISSION AND FUSION OF PARTIES IN ESTONIA, 1987-1999

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ABSTRACT. We provide a schematic history of contemporary Estonian political parties, 1987-99, in which we specify dates of party origin and subsequent fissions and fusions of some fifty movements and parties, and we briefly discuss some important factors and features in party formation. Our analysis begins with the seminal 1987-94 period that marked the rebirth of Estonian democracy, with an extension to two subsequent parliamentary elections (1995 and 1999). We argue that the early phase of Estonian party competition generally exemplifies what we call "kaleidoscopic parties": parties that form around leaders rather than durable issues and lack any organizational permanency or any real voter attachment. However, the rate of formation of new groups has decreased, and the major parties may be becoming more stable than in the past. While there is some evidence of a left-right patterning now emerging in the political debate in Estonia, the parties have not aligned themselves along such a left-right continuum.

Historically, party systems in western democracies have been organized along one or more of a number of basic axes of cleavage, such as left-right, or clerical-anticlerical, or urban-rural, and/or on the basis of regional or ethnic or religious cleavage lines (Lipset and Rokkan, Lijphart). We may think of such lines of division as "foci" for party organization. When parties organize along such cleavage lines, then the structure of political competition is relatively easy to make sense of, and the predictability of the policies likely to be implemented by governing parties/coalitions is apt to be reasonably high.[1]

Alternatively, parties may largely emerge from the activities of local notables and/or those with reputations (for bureaucratic competence, perhaps, or for anti-Communist heroism) such that *individuals*, rather than ideas/ideology or shared group identity, become the principal foci of party formation (cf. Duverger). Such a basis for party formation is apt to be less stable than when parties are structured along long-standing and relatively permanent cleavage lines.

In the most extreme case of non-cleavage-based party formation, which we call a "constellation" of "kaleidoscopic parties," parties form

haphazardly around leaders rather than issues and lack any organizational permanency or any real voter attachment. Moreover, there are many sub-leaders who are fairly independent agents. These can easily break off and join other parties. Indeed, such shifts may occur in the legislature itself, because sub-leaders can often take their followers with them. Although at any given time there are party-like structures, it is as yet too early to call such an essentially momentary party constellation a party "system," because, in a kaleidoscopic constellation, party names and positions are so volatile that there is nothing systematic about them.

Where party constellations stand on the continuum, from the one pole of party systems with stable parties with well-defined positions to the other pole of what we have called a kaleidoscopic party constellation, has important implications for the functioning of democracy. As Pammett and DeBardeleben note:

> While political parties may not be a sufficient condition for the existence of democracy, many analysts consider them to be a necessary condition. Yet the formal existence of political parties does not assure that they will fulfill the conditions which are usually attributed to them in a democratic polity. To do so, they must not only exist, in a legal or organizational sense, but they should also provide a genuine mechanism for the expression of social interests and the resolution of political conflicts.

Pammett and DeBardeleben observe that "a fragmented multi-party system can reduce both the popular credibility and the efficacy of political parties in fulfilling roles of representation and governance." We would observe that kaleidoscopic party constellations can likewise weaken the role of political parties as instruments of democracy.[2]

In this study we offer a schematic discussion of the history of Estonian political parties in the seminal period of Estonia's early democratization 1987-94, with follow-up to 1999. We discuss each grouping's ideological underpinnings (insofar as there are any) and patterns of fission/fusion among parties.

Party formation in post-Soviet East-Central Europe has received considerable scholarly attention (see e.g., Berglund et al., Dawisha and Parrott, Kitschelt, Kitschelt et al., Kopecky, Lewis, Olson, Pridham and Lewis, Wightman, also Wiatr). Comparative studies of the Baltic states include those of Nørgaard, Nørgaard, Johannsen and Pedersen, Nørgaard et al., and Pettai and Kreuzer. A large body of information on Estonian parties specifically is also available (Raitviir "Eesti" and "Elections", Arter "Estonia" and "Parties", Lagerspetz and Vogt, Toomla, Berglund

et al., Daatland, also Dawisha and Parrott), as well as for parties in other individual Baltic states (e.g., Clark, and Krupavicius, both on Lithuania).

Our principal aim is to add to the discussion of Estonian party formation by updating results to the 1999 election (not yet discussed in the published literature) and by presenting results in a much condensed and tabular form to assist non-Estonian specialists to make comparisons. Good overview schemes have been previously given in English by Arter ("Parties"), Raitviir ("Elections") and Berglund et al. (70). We add detail in terms of the number of groupings, foundation and branching dates, and party strengths at various times, also going beyond 1996-97 where these previous studies stop.

However, we also see this research report as dealing with a number of theoretical issues in terms of different models of party system development. In particular, like Arter ("Parties") we argue that, on a continuum from stable party system to an unstable party constellation, the Estonian case falls much nearer to the kaleidoscopic parties end of that continuum. This is so despite the notable exception of a Russian immigrant vs. Estonian citizen split and some evidence of a left-right patterning beginning to emerge.

Of course, "kaleidoscopic" does not mean that, *in retrospect,* scholars are at a loss to explain why the formation and development of parties and coalitions took place the way it did. At this level it was not haphazard. Specific issues and external events caused disagreements between former allies. However, if one had predicted in 1989 who would be allied with whom in 1999, one would have been grossly off in all too many instances -- many more than in the case of true party *systems*. This unpredictability is what we mean by "kaleidoscopic", and our focus is on descriptive documentation of its existence. "Explanation" in the historical sense of the word is outside our scope.

Estonian Party Constellations: 1987-1999

Party Naming Practices

Table 1 provides a list of the Estonian names and English translations of about fifty parties, groupings and movements. Included are: 1) those which gained some visibility and showed some promise in the 1987-91 period; 2) fragmentation products of major groupings; and 3) those new entrants that later seriously contested one or more of the free elections (surpassing the five percent threshold).

For the larger and more important of these parties/groupings, the last column of the table also lists the names of their most prominent initiators. (Some of them later left the grouping, or lost rank, so that the

names do not necessarily reflect the present leadership.) The four candidates in the 1992 presidential elections (Lennart Meri [Fatherland and Moderates], Lagle Parek [ENIP], Arnold Rüütel [Secure Home], and Rein Taagepera [Popular Front/Center Party]) are shown as affiliated with the main party/grouping under whose banner they ran, and have their names in capitals. (Later on, no popular election of president took place.)

Table 1. Estonian Parties, Groupings and Movements (1987-1999).

Party Name (Estonian / English)	**Year of Formation**	**Prominent Initiators**
Arengupartei / Development (or Progressive) Party	1996	Andra Veidemann
Demokraatlik Partei / Democratic Party (Russian moderates)	1988	
Demokraatlik Ühendus Vaba Eesti / Democratic Assoc. Free Estonia	1990	Indrek Toome, Mikk Titma
Eesti Demokraatlik Liit / Estonian Democratic Union	1990	Miina Hint
Eesti Demokraatlik Õiglusliit / Estonian Democratic Justice Union	1991	Mai Treial, Raoul Üksvärav
Eesti Pensionäride ja Perede Erakond (EPPE) / Est. Pensioners and Families Party	1994	
Eesti Demokraatlik Tööerakond / Estonian Democratic Labour Party I	1988	Vello Saatpalu
Eesti Demokraatlik Tööpartei / Estonian Democratic Labour Party II	1992	Vaino Väljas
Eesti Ettevõtjate Erakond (EEE) / Estonian Entrepreneurs Party	1990	Tiit Made
Eesti Kodanik (EK) / Estonian Citizen	1992	Jüri Toomepuu
Eesti Konservatiivne Rahvaerakond / Estonian Conservative People's Party	1990	Enn Tarto
Eesti Koonderakond / Estonian Coalition Party	1991	Peeter Lorents, Endel Lippmaa
Eesti Kristlik-Demokraatlik Liit / Estonian Christian-Democratic Union	1988	Illar Hallaste
Eesti Kristlik-Demokraatlik erakond / Estonian Christian-Democratic Party	1988	Aivar Kala?
Eesti Liberaaldemokraatlik Partei (ELDP) / Estonian Liberal-Democratic Party	1990	Paul-Eerik Rummo, Aap Neljas
Eesti Kristlik Rahvapartei / Estonian Christian People's Party	1998	Aldo Vinkel
Eesti Maa-Keskerakond (EMKE) / Estonian Rural Center Party	1990	Ivar Raig, Liia Hänni
Eesti Maaliit / Estonian Rural Union	1989	Arvo Sirendi
Eesti Maarahva Erakond / Estonian Country People's Party	1994	Arnold Rüütel

Eesti Muinsuskaitse Selts / Estonian Heritage Society	1987	Trivimi Velliste
Eesti Parempoolsed / Estonian Rightwingers	1994	Karin Jaani, Enn Tarto, Ülo Nugis
Eesti Pensionäride Liit/Eesti Pensionäride ja Perede Erakond / Estonian Union of Pensioners/Estonian Pensioners' and Families' Party	1990	Harri Kärtner
Eesti Rahva-Keskerakond / Estonian People's Center Party Eesti Keskerakond / Estonian Center Party	1991 1993	Edgar Savisaar
Eesti Rahvusliku Sõltumatuse Partei (ERSP) / Estonian National Independence Party (ENIP)	1988	Tunne Kelam, LAGLE PAREK
Eesti Reformierakond / Estonian Reform Party	1994	Siim Kallas
Eesti Roheline Erakond / Estonian Green Party (I)	1989	
Eesti Roheline Liikumine / Estonian Green Movement	1988	Juhan Aare, Tiit Made, Kirill Teiter, Vello Pohla
Eesti Roheline Partei / Estonian Green Party (II)	1989	Mario Kivistik
Eesti Rohelised / Estonian Greens Rohelised / The Greens	1991 1992	Jüri Liim, Jüri Mart, Rein Järlik
Eesti Rojalistlik Partei / Estonian Royalist Party Sõltumatud Kuningriiklased / Independent Royalists	1989 1992	Kalle Kulbok, Kirill Teiter
Eesti Sinine Erakond / Estonian Blue Party	1995	Jaan Laas
Eesti Sotsiaaldemokraatlik Iseseisvuspartei / Estonian Socialdemocratic Independence Party	1990	Marju Lauristin, Vello Saatpalu
Eesti Sotsiaaldemokraatlik Partei (ESDP) / Estonian Social Democratic Party	1990	Marju Lauristin, Vello Saatpalu
Eesti Töökollektiivide Liit / Estonian Union of Work Collectives	1988	Ülo Nugis, Endel Lippmaa
Eesti Vabariiklaste Koonderakond / Estonian Republican Coalition Party	1990	Ülo Nugis?
Eestimaa Kommunistlik Partei/ Communist Party of Estonia	1920	(Vaino Väljas)
Eestimaa Rahvarinne (RR) / Popular Front of Estonia	1988	Edgar Savisaar, Marju Lauristin, Ignar Fjuk, Mati Hint, Rein Veidemann, REIN TAAGEPERA
Eestimaa Rahvaste Foorum / Nationalities Forum Liit / Union of Estonia	1988 1989	Hagi Šein
Eestimaa Ühendatud Rahvapartei / United People's Party of Estonia	1994	Viktor Andrejev
Eestimaa Vene Kogukond / Russian Community in Estonia	1992	Aleksei Zõbin
ENSV Töötajate Internatsionaalne Liikumine / International Movement of the Workers of the ESSR (Intermovement)	1988	Jevgeni Kogan

Isamaa / Fatherland (or Pro Patria) Isamaaliit / Fatherland Union	1992 1995	Mart Laar, Ülo Nugis, Illar Hallaste, Trivimi Velliste, LENNART MERI
Kindel Kodu / Secure Home	1992	Peeter Lorents, Endel Lippmaa, ARNOLD RÜÜTEL
Meie Kodu on Eestimaa / Our Home is Estonia	1995	Viktor Andrejev, Igor Sedašev, Nikolai Maspanov
Molotov-Ribbentropi Pakti Avalikustamise Eesti Grupp / Estonian Group for Making the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact Public	1987	Lagle Parek
Mõõdukad / Moderates	1992	Marju Lauristin, Ivar Raig
Põllumeeste Kogu / Farmers' Assembly	1992	Eldur Parder, Heldur Peterson
Rahvaerakond / People's Party	1998	Toomas Hendrik Ilves
Töökollektiivide Ühendnõukogu (TKÜN) / Joint Council of Work Collectives (JCWC)	1988	Vladimir Jarovoi, Igor Šepelevitš
Tuleviku Eesti Erakond / Future Estonia Party	1993	Jaanus Raidal
Vasakvõimalus / Leftist Alternative; Eesti Sotsiaal-Demokraatlik Tööpartei / Estonian Social Democratic Labour Party	1992	Vaino Väljas
Vene Demokraatlik Liikumine / Russian Democratic Movement (In Estonia)	1991	Aleksandr Pljustsajev
Vene Erakond Eestis / Russian Party in Estonia	1994	Nikolai Maspanov
Venekeelse Kogukonna Esindusassamblee / Representative Assembly of the Russian-Speaking Community	1992	
Vene Rahvapartei / Russian People's Party	1994	Aleksei Zõbin
Vene Rahvuslik Liit / Russian National Union	1993	Sergei Kuznetsov
Vene Sotsiaaldemokraatlik Partei (Eestis) / Russian Social Democratic Party (in Estonia)	1989	
Vene Ühtsuspartei / Russian Unitary Party	1997	Eduard Sedašev

Informal and formal starting dates often differ. Only the year of informal start is shown here. For the seminal period of 1987-91, Table 2 specifies the respective months. Up to early 1994 alone, Raitviir ("Eesti") lists over seventy groupings with some political aspirations. We omit some that remained semi-political or isolated, with extremely limited support. More than one-half of the groupings listed have faded away, most often without a clear termination date. Many others have lost relevance -- but their fates were not predictable with certainty at the time of formation. Post-1995 new entrants with no parliamentary representation have been largely omitted.

Some general points can be made about the names of the various Estonian parties in the post-independence period.

First, although the party labels of the interwar period are widely used, there was very little continuity with pre-Second World War

parties, and even less with pre-second World War politics. For example, the group that called itself Social Democrats were in 1992-1994 part of a dogmatically free-enterprise government coalition,[3] and the pre-Second World War Rural Union of wealthy private farmers found its name hijacked by former Soviet state and "collective" farm managers.

Second, the word "Estonia" occurs of course frequently, but in two different forms. *Eesti* (translated here as "Estonian") could refer to territory or ethnos, and was preferred by nationalists. In contrast, *Eestimaa* ("Estonian land", translated here as "of Estonia") is clearly territorial, and was preferred by groupings seeking to integrate non-Estonian colonists; the list offers six such cases, the most recent being *Meie Kodu on Eestimaa.* In either form, these labels stressed the centrality of the Estonian state and nation. Initially, association with Estonia in terms of party name provided parties who chose to do so with an advertisement edge. However, soon most parties started to add *Eesti* or *Eestimaa* to their name, and this labelling device lost its edge.

Third, some of the other party labels also were reasonably descriptive. In particular, we see the word *rahvuslik* ("national," with an ethnic connotation) in the name of some parties[4] -- and almost invariably, such parties would claim to be especially patriotically minded. With even more certainty, parties that had "Russian" in their title sought to represent the Russian population in Estonia. Such parties gained practically all their support from this population. In like manner, representing reasonable truth in labelling, the Center Party tried to stay in the centre of the political space until 1994 but gradually adopted relatively leftist positions.

Similarly, the Union of Pensioners, which was one of the most successful groupings in the 1993 local elections, did, in fact, orient itself to representing retired persons (who comprise about twenty-five percent of the adult population). However, because communist rule had discredited the leftist labels, the Union of Pensioners also served as a rallying ground for all those who looked for larger social programs and more state support services, such as those who had fallen into especially hard times (unemployed, disabled, single parent families, etc.). Also, in the districts where Russian parties did not run, many ethnic Russians supported the Union of Pensioners (Vetik).[5]

In like manner, rural/farmer parties did represent aspects of rural population interests and stressed protectionism for agricultural production. They also stood for quicker privatization of land and state/cooperative farms property, either to former (pre-Soviet) owners or to present workers. Indeed, the Rural Union, representing first of all the interests of former directors and administrators of state/cooperative farms, was interested primarily in a privatization that would give this

group greater control of resources. The interests of the poorer rural population diverged in many respects. Those who hoped to get back land confiscated in the 1940s (and who often now lived in the cities) were at odds with the present tillers. This helps explain the multiplicity of rural groupings.

Fourth, although some groupings saw it as advantageous to use party names akin to those in Western or Northern Europe so as to find contacts and financial support there, these names were not very descriptive of party positions. For example, the Green movement shifted away from environment protection issues as soon as political censorship eased and more political issues captured the minds of the broad public. In the process, it also splintered and lost most of its previous leaders -- Juhan Aare, Kirill Teiter, Tiit Made.[6]

Finally, some other party labels completely mis-characterized the party's issue concerns. The Entrepreneurs' Party was dominated by a single figure: Tiit Made, formerly of the Greens, was its founder and leader. That party mostly simply tried to catch popular moods, and its name was quite misleading. Similarly, the Royalist Party was hardly pro-royalist (whatever that might mean in the Estonian context). It was formed by a group of well-known artists, satirists and journalists, with only a semi-serious intent to win elections (at least in the beginning).

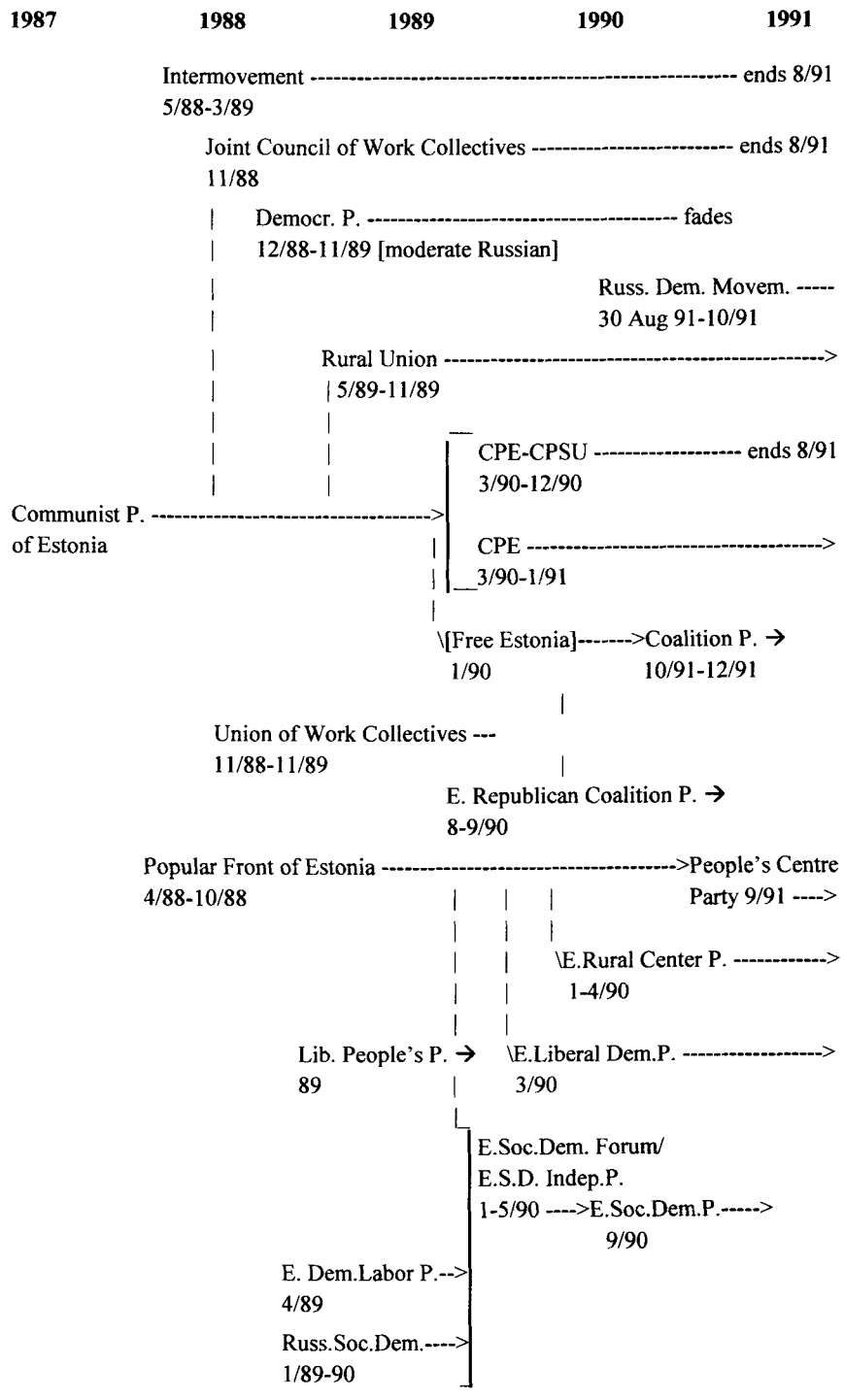
One other important party needs to be discussed. The Coalition Party was connected to Arnold Rüütel, head of state of the Estonian SSR in the period 1983-1990 and of the Republic of Estonia thereafter until the 1992 presidential elections. The party stood for lower taxes, and represented primarily those entrepreneurs and businessmen who had been Soviet-time state enterprise directors and administrators. In the opposition this party skilfully used the tactics of government criticism and offered populist themes. In government (1995-99) its urban and rural wings (the latter including Rüütel) disagreed regarding protective customs on food products, and they presented separate lists in the 1999 elections.

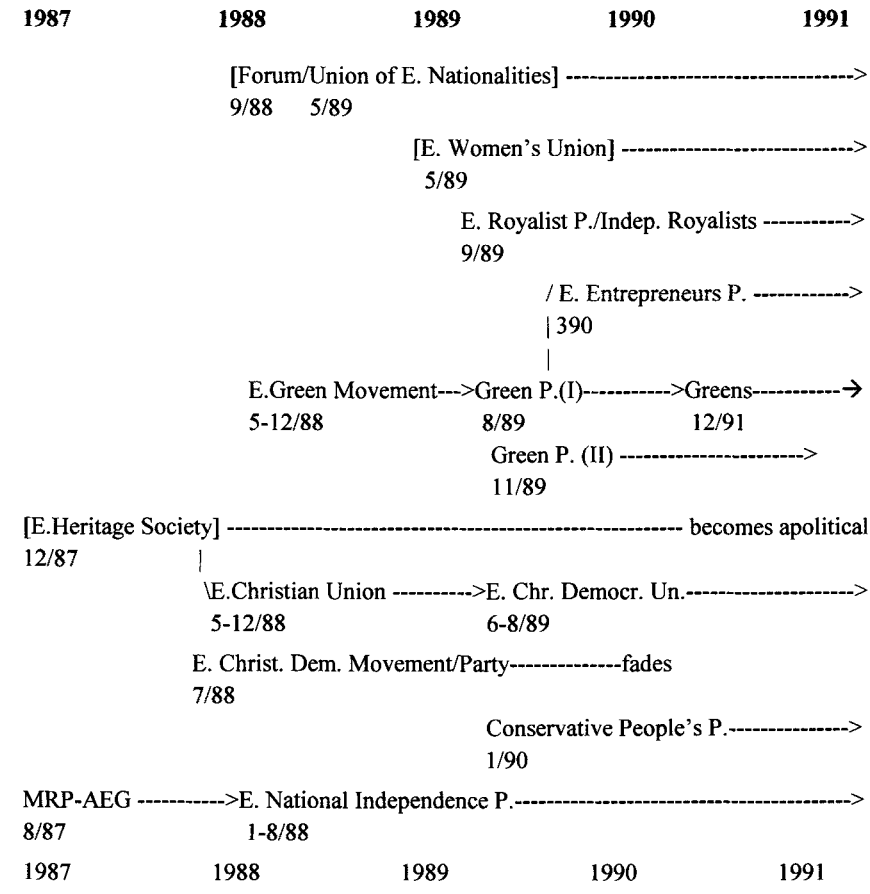
Three Periods of Proto-party and Party Development

The following stages can be distinguished in the formation and development of the multiparty constellation in Estonia in the period 1987-99.

1. Formation of popular movements and their splitting into proto-parties (1987-91) -- See Table 2;
2. Fission and fusion of parties (1992-94) -- See Table 3;
3. Slowing-down of the kaleidoscope (1995-99) -- See Table 4.

Table 2. Estonian Parties and Movements Prior to Independence (1987-91).





Double foundation dates indicate informal and formal starts.

Our periodization is quite similar to that offered in the major previous overview of Estonian parties (Arter "Parties"). While Arter does not offer an explicit periodization, implicitly, however, its chapter headings suggest the following: Estonian SSR up to 1987; movement in society with Communist Party contribution, 1988-91; continuing party formation 1992-94; and possibly a new phase starting with the March 1995 elections.

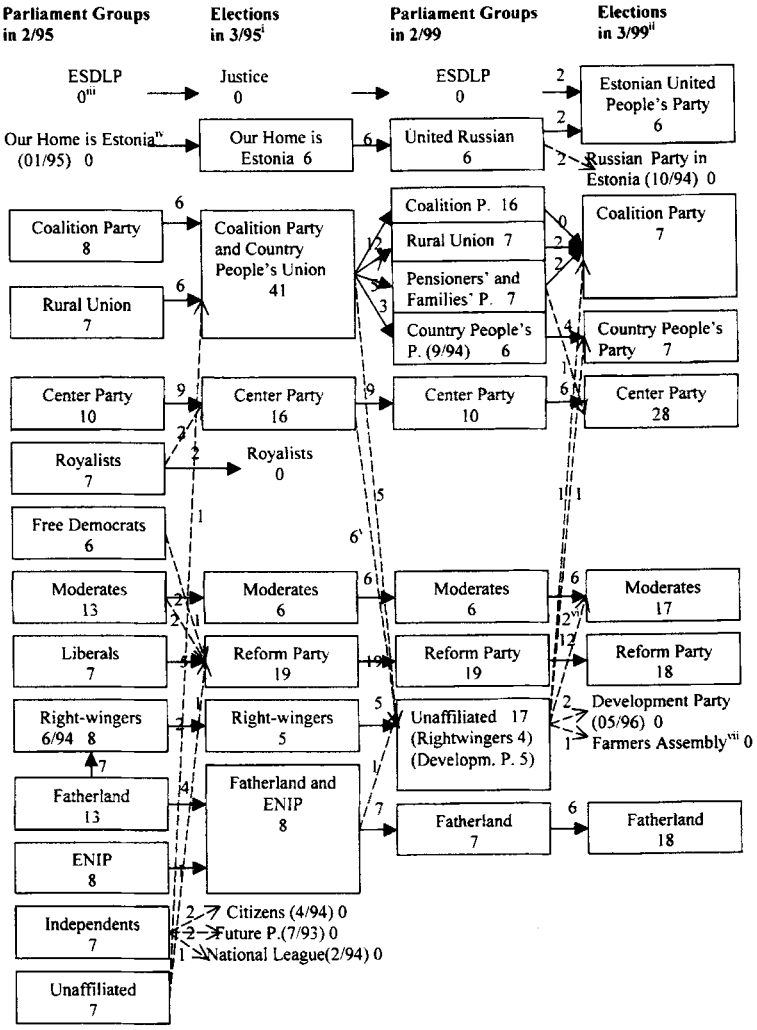
Phase I: Popular movements organizing around or in reaction to the push for Estonian independence arose in the late 1980s. These first movements and quasi-parties originated from groups concerned with environmental issues or Estonian heritage protection issues.

Table 3.[i] Estonian Parties from 1992 to 1994.

EARLY 1992		9/92 ELECTIONS[ii]		PARLIAMENT GROUPS[iii] IN 11/92		PARLIAMENT GROUPS[iv] IN 4/94
Communist Party	--->	Leftist Alternative 0	---->	0	--->	Dem. Labor Party 0
Coalition Party	--->	Secure Home 17	---->	Coalition Party 9	--->	Coalition Party 8
Rural Union	--->		---->	Rural Union 8	--->	Rural Union 8
[E. Women's Union]	--->					
Popular Front = People's Center Party	--->	Popular Front	---->	Center Party	--->	4/93 ---> Center Party 10
[Union of E. Nationalities]	--->	15		15	--->	Free Dem. 4/94 6[v]
E. Royalist Party	--->	Independent Royalists 8	---->	Royalists 8	--->	Royalists 8
E. Entrepreneurs Party	--->	EEP 1	---->	Unaffiliated	--->	Unaffiliated
E. Green Party. (I)	--->	Greens 1	---->	Centrists 2	--->	Centrists 3[vi]
E. Social Dem. Party	--->	Moderates 12	---->	MODERATES[vii] 12	--->	MODERATES 12
E. Rural Center Party	--->					
E. Lib. Dem. Party	--->					LIB. DEM 11/93 6
Cons. People's Party						
Republ. Coal. Party	--->	Fatherland 29	---->	FATHERLAND 30[viii]	--->	FATHERLAND 22
E. Christ. Dem. Union						
E. Christ. Dem. Party	--->					
E. National Independence P.	--->	ENIP 10	---->	E. NAT IND. 11[ix]	--->	E. NAT. IND. 8
		E. Citizen 8/92 8	---->	E. Citizen 6 End 12/93		Independents 12/93 6[x]
						Unaffiliated Nationalists 4[xi]

Main source for elections: Estonian Electoral Commission, *Vabartigi presidendi ja Riigikogu valimised 1992: Dokumente ja materjale*, Tallinn, 1992; for parliamentary groups: *Postimees*, 16 March 1994.

Table 4. Estonian Parties and Groups in Riigikogu: 1995-99.



Sources:

- Vahur Kalmre, ed. *Postimehe Valimisteatmik 1995.* Tartu: Postimehe Kirjastus, 1995.
- *Riigikogu valimine: 5. Märts 1995.* Tallinn: Vabariigi Valimiskomisjon, 1995.
- *Valimised 1999. 03.02. Postimehe lisaleht*, 1999.
- *Eesti Vabariigi Valimiskomisjon.* http://www.vvk.ee/r99/yld_start.stm 1999.
- *BNS Valimised.* http://valimised.bns.ee/ 1999.
- *Riigikogu.* http://www.riigikogu.ee/rk_fraktsioonid.html *1999.*

Subsequently, they organized themselves around demands for greater economic and political autonomy for Estonia. The nature of their demands was strongly influenced by what was allowed within the

existing Soviet framework. Therefore it took some time for most groups before the situation was ripe for even mentioning the crucial dream: the independence of Estonia.

Beginning in 1989-90 genuine party competition started to emerge. The first new organization explicitly calling itself a "party" was the National Independence Party (August 1988). The new parties were relatively small, established usually by some well-known political leader(s) or influential members of the previous "movements" period. (Everyone wanted to establish their "own" party.)

Differences between parties were mostly in terms of the tactics favoured to achieve independence, but to some extent each party had its share of former communists and dissenters. Each party also had its moderates and radicals (with some former communists shifting to radical positions). As for "left" and "right", these are confusing terms when radical popular forces target a conservative establishment calling itself leftist and revolutionary. With the partial exceptions of rural parties, and the issue of support from the minority community of Russian immigrants to Estonia, all the parties tried to represent and get support from the entire nation rather than focusing on support from a specific social class.

Phase II: The party constellation that arose in the 1990-91 period underwent further change. By 1992, Estonia had achieved independence, and adopted a new constitution. By 1994 Estonia had also undergone very rapid social change. There was now somewhat greater differentiation in party support in regional, ethnic, and urban-rural terms. However, nothing close to a stable party system emerged. Rather we see a pattern of fission and fusion among party groupings.

We should note that there were institutional features that contributed to this flux. Perhaps the most important of these was the electoral system, which we have described in a separate study (Grofman, Mikkel and Taagepera). Nationwide proportional representation contributed to fragmentation, but only to a limited extent, given the five percent threshold, which in Germany is credited for holding the number of parties quite low.

In Estonia legislative organizational rules also mattered. Because each official party/group was entitled to a chair and vice-chair (with extra pay) as well as office facilities, and the minimum size of such groupings was only six members, there were material inducements for factionalism in the Estonian parliament.[7] For example, the *Riigikogu* (the Estonian national parliament) started in October 1992 with seven official groupings but by April 1994 it had nine. However, more important in our view is the lack of stability in public attitudes toward the various parties and their leaders. In particular, successive governing parties, inevitably associated with unpopular socio-economic developments and outcomes,

evidenced dramatic loss in popular support, even though the policies leading to these outcomes initially enjoyed wide support.

Phase III: While the pace of party fission and fusion slowed down after 1995 compared to earlier periods, the flux is still high compared to long-established party systems, with more parties changing names and splitting off and recombining. Still, there was more continuity of elected officials in this period, even if some of them were no longer being elected from the same parties under whose banner they first ran. In particular, a new major party, the Reform party, drew its leaders from existing parties.

Another important development was an attempt to limit the profusion of parties. In late 1998 the parliament prohibited electoral alliances among parties, so as to force them to fuse or be eliminated from representation by the five-percent threshold. Some parties found a loophole: Instead of alliances, they presented "joint lists" for the March 1999 elections. Two weeks before the elections the outgoing parliament essentially plugged this loophole too: Those who ran together must stay together in the parliament or continue as independents, without the perks that go to recognized groupings.

Some General Observations about Fissions and Fusions of Estonian Parties

As noted earlier, Table 2 traces the births, deaths and transfigurations of Estonian movements and earliest political parties during the pre-independence gestation period of 1987-91. Table 3 provides the same information for the short but central period of rapid fission and fusion of parties in 1992-94, and Table 4 provides this information for the relatively stable period of 1994-99. The formats of these tables differ because different features need to be brought out.

There are a number of observations to be made about the information contained in these tables.

First, as is the modal pattern throughout post-communist Europe (Olson, Jasiewicz), the major popularly supported group which emerged in opposition to communist monopoly rule (in Estonia, the Popular Front) included different groupings and quasi-parties who joined forces only for the overthrow of the communist monopoly and restoration of independence. Beyond that goal, they had various ideological and political orientations. In Estonia the Popular Front started to split after the apparent defeat of the communists, and splintered irreparably once the transition from communist rule had been achieved.

Second, even after parties are in the legislature, both fissions and fusions may occur. In Estonia, fissions were predominant. The speed of

fission after the 1992 elections is illustrated in detail in Table 3. But the pattern of change we see in Tables 2 and 3 reflects, more generally, a party constellation in disequilibrium rather than a "system" with some self-maintenance ability.

Third, it may be thought useful to distinguish between those parties whose leadership came heavily (if not entirely) from the former *nomenklatura* and those where it did not. No party was absolutely clean or tainted. Vocally anti-Communist groupings accepted former communists, if the latter genuinely made a clear breast of things (and expressing adherence to the group's platform often was sufficient proof of a changed heart!). And some prominent people who had refused to join the Community Party or had suffered under the Soviet regime joined the Secure Home, heavily dominated by former *nomenklatura*. Thus this distinction was fuzzy. As time passed, the division between old (Soviet period) and new (initial transition period) elite networks overshadowed it.

Developments in Estonian Party Politics from 1995 to 1999

As noted earlier, in time for the 1995 parliamentary elections, the reshuffling of the kaleidoscope in late 1994 produced another major party, the Reform Party. This party drew its leaders from a number of existing parties and also from new economic elite circles. It ended second largest in 1995 in terms of votes (16.2 percent) and seats (18.8 percent), largely thanks to the popularity of its leader, former head of the National Bank, Siim Kallas.

A Rightwing Party split off from Fatherland in 1994, surpassed the five-percent legal threshold by a cliffhanger of some twenty votes, but ended up on the Moderate list in 1999. A rump ENIP (that had lost its more radical members) fused with rump Fatherland. Royalists ingested the rump Greens and went down to oblivion. The Citizens Party also faded. A coalition of ethnic Russian parties formed and won seats in 1995 and (in a new combination) in 1999.

Several continuing parties changed names. In particular, Secure Home transmuted into the "Alliance of Coalition Party and Country People's Union," which broke into several parliamentary groupings the moment the 1995 elections were over. In 1999 the Coalition Party and the Country People's Party presented separate lists.

Yet politicians were more durable than parties. In 1995 at least forty-four of the 101 incumbents were re-elected, but sixteen of them had switched parties (Taagepera "Estonian Parliamentary"). The pieces in the kaleidoscope were thus preserved. This in itself was a step toward

stability, compared to 1992-1994, when many pre-liberation actors left the political scene and many new ones joined.

In the years following the 1995 elections a Development Party split off from the Center Party, lost most of its initial leaders, and crashed in the 1999 elections (0.4 percent of the votes). The Russian MPs splintered, thus forfeiting their official parliamentary fraction with its material benefits. One of the rural-oriented parties with no representation in the parliament expanded into another catchall party, the People's Party, led by the formerly neutral and very popular minister of foreign affairs, Toomas Hendrik Ilves. It enjoyed a brief spell of popularity in opinion polls and took in the Right-wingers but could not get organized and ended up on the Moderate list in 1999.

The most mobile piece in the kaleidoscope may have been Tiit Made. A Communist Party member who served at the Soviet Embassy in Stockholm, he became a Green leader (1988), then the leader of the Entrepreneurs' Party (1990), then a disruptive player in the Center Party (1994), contributing to the split-off of the Development Party (1996), which forced him to leave in 1998. In 1999 he finally seemed to run out of new options, and did not run for parliament.

In 1999, the Russian parties failed to renew a joint electoral list. Personal frictions among the leaders and diverging interests within the Russian population forced the more nationalistic "Russian Party in Estonia" to go its separate way. Two more moderate Russian parties, the United People's Party of Estonia and the Russian Unitary Party joined forces with the Estonian-dominated Social Democratic Labour Party (former Left Alternative, the residue of the Communist Party), under the label of the United People's Party.

The fledgling People's Party (not to be confused with the United People's Party!) merged into the Moderates' electoral list and after elections the parties merged in November 1999 as "People's Party Moderates." A brand new Estonian Christian People's Party (formed in December 1998) attracted some public attention and decided to run on its own. With no well-known leaders, and a confusing mix of traditional Christian positions and very vague slogans, it netted only 2.4 percent of the votes -- far short of the five-percent legal threshold.

Fluidity of Candidate Affiliations

A comparison of candidate lists of 1992 and 1999 (bypassing 1995) shows extreme fluidity. A total of 628 candidates appeared on the 1992 ballot (seventeen lists plus twenty-five independents). In 1999 it was 1,866 (twelve lists plus a few independents), with the Moderates showing the least moderation: for the 101 seats at stake, they put up 303

candidates. However, only 177 candidates ran both in 1992 and 1999. And out of these, only sixty-six maintained their party allegiance -- or eighty-one, if we include ENIP members who joined Fatherland and Left Alternative (Social Democratic Labour) whose candidates ran in 1999 with the United People's Party.

The most stable group was the Moderates, in that they kept seventeen out of their twenty "re-runs." However, they were unstable in that they also picked up nineteen more former candidates -- eight from Fatherland and eleven from five other groupings plus independents. The Coalition Party was also relatively stable, keeping seventeen out of the twenty-seven former Secure Home candidates who ran again, and picking up seven others from five different groupings plus independents.

In contrast, the Center Party kept only fifteen of the previous twenty-seven Popular Front candidates who ran again; it picked up twelve former candidates from five other lists (including four Royalists and four Entrepreneurs). Fatherland kept an even smaller share of its 1992 candidates who ran again: only thirteen out of thirty-one; the remainder shifted mainly to Moderates (eight) and Reform (six). The now-defunct ENIP supplied not only twelve re-run candidates to Fatherland but also eleven re-runs to five other lists. The instability prize goes to the Farmers' Assembly. It kept only two out of ten former candidates who ran again, the remaining eight being spread out among seven lists; at the same time, it picked up seven re-runs from five different groupings plus independents.

The picture is only slightly more stable among those 101 candidates who succeeded in winning seats in 1992. Of these, forty-four ran again in 1999, but nineteen changed labels (including five ENIP deputies now in Fatherland). Among the fifteen Popular Front deputies of 1992 only seven ran in 1999, and only three of these ran under the Center banner. Practically the only constant is the personality of the Center Party's founder, Edgar Savisaar. Fatherland was almost as fluid, though lacking an absolute central figure. Out of its twenty-nine deputies of 1992, Fatherland kept on its 1999 list only ten, while seven others ran as Reform or Moderates. Instead, four former ENIP deputies ran with Fatherland. Term limits were not yet visibly an issue in Estonia.

As frequently seen in the post-communist countries, the Estonian 1999 elections brought a clear switch in electoral support from the government coalition to the former opposition. The main opposition parties: Fatherland, Moderates, and Reform Party won a total of 47.2 percent of the votes and 52.5 percent of the seats, compared to their 35.1 percent of the votes and 37.6 percent of the seats in 1995.[8] The major successor lists of the government coalition, the Coalition Party and the Country People's Party, tumbled from a total of 32.2 percent of the votes

and 40.6 percent of the seats in 1995 to 14.9 percent of the votes and 13.9 percent of the seats in 1999.[9]

Estonian party and electoral politics continue to focus on top leaders and their personalities. Despite changing party labels, however, there is continuity at the leadership level. Since 1992, most main parties have stuck to their original leaders. Despite dramatic electoral defeats and scandals, political figures such as Edgar Savisaar (Center Party) and Mart Laar (Fatherland) have returned to the top of their respective party hierarchies. The main exceptions are the successor parties of the Communist Party, where leadership changes were necessary for the party's survival during the initial stage of transition, and hence leadership continuity broke down. However, the withdrawal of Tiit Vähi, former head of the Coalition Party, may well be only temporary, considering the developments in and around the party.

In contrast to the party leaderships, the composition of the parliament has changed considerably from election to election. Only twenty-eight parliamentarians have participated in all three parliaments (1992, 1995 and 1999) and only 52.5 percent of the current members have any previous parliamentary experience.

Changes in Voter Volatility and the Number of Parties

The rapidly changing socio-economic environment on the one hand and the rather minor differences between parties on the other continue to provide for extremely weak linkages between electorate and parties. Hence high vote volatility and decreasing voter turnouts characterize Estonian elections.

Operationally, volatility of votes is commonly defined as the degree of shift of votes from one list (party or alliance) to another. The most usual measure of volatility is the Pedersen index: Volatility = $\frac{1}{2}$ SUM$|v_i(t_1)-v_i(t_2)|$, where v_i is the vote share of the i-th list and t_1 and t_2 indicate two different elections.

Volatility of votes in Estonia was fifty-four percent from 1992-95, and forty-one percent from 1995-99. However, it was mostly due to volatility of candidates and parties rather than of voters. When candidates switch parties or parties make and break electoral alliances, then votes faithful to a given candidate or grouping might appear as "volatile" in the formal bookkeeping. Indeed, if we join the 1995 votes of Moderates and Right-wingers (who ran together in 1999) and the 1999 votes of Coalition and Country (who ran together in 1995), the 1995/99 volatility decreases to twenty-eight percent. Even the latter figure is quite high compared to most elections in mature democracies.

Of course, the unadjusted figures above came down (from fifty-four to forty-one percent), but it is too early to predict a trend.[10]

The change in the number of parties is also of interest. Given that some parties are larger than others (in terms of votes and seats), a weighted measure is needed, and the Laakso-Taagepera "effective number of parties" is the most widely used one. For electoral parties $N = 100\%/SUM(v_i^2)$, where v_i is the vote share of the i-th list (party or alliance). For legislative parties, replace vote shares by seat shares. For instance, for votes distribution 40-30-20-10, N is 3.3.

In Estonia, the effective number of electoral parties dropped from 9.0 in 1992 to 5.9 in 1995, then increased to 6.7 in 1999. The effective number of legislative parties (using seats allocated to electoral alliances) went from 5.9 to 4.1 and then to 5.5.

The sharp drop in 1995 was rather artificial, however, caused by the tenuous Coalition-Country marriage of convenience. Nonetheless, the overall trend has been a clear reduction of the number of parties in terms of votes (reflecting elimination of minor parties), but no such trend in terms of seats.[11] The gradual discouragement of minor parties at the electoral level is reflected in a clearly improved degree of proportionality of seats to votes. The traditional measure of deviation from proportionality has been the Loosemore-Hanby index: $D' = \frac{1}{2}\ SUM|v_i-s_i|$. This index is analogous in form to the aforementioned Pedersen volatility index. While the latter compares vote shares at different elections, D' compares vote and seat shares (v_i and s_i) of the i-th party at the same election. A newly popular version is Gallagher's index: $D'' = [\frac{1}{2}\ SUM(v_i-s_i)^2]^{0.5}$.

From 1992-99, the Loosemore-Hanby index dropped in Estonia from eighteen to thirteen and then to nine percent. The Gallagher index went from 7.1 to 7.4 and then to 4.5 percent.

The 1999 figures have already reached the levels characteristic of stable proportional representation systems.

Is the Kaleidoscope Slowing Down?

If one counts the number of new groups formed per two-year periods, in Table 1, a slowdown is visible:

1987-88	12 new groups
1989-90	16
1991-92	14
1993-94	8
1995-96	3
1997-98	3

Of course, several other parties obtained a handful of votes in 1995 or 1999, but they could be discounted from the very beginning. (In contrast, during the utterly new conditions of 1987-92, the future of all groups was equally unpredictable.) The only major player formed after 1992 is the Reform Party (1994). In this respect, the slowdown of the kaleidoscope seems real. In further consolidation, Country People's Party and Rural Union (both with seven Riigikogu members) merged in October 1999 as Eestimaa Rahvaliit (People's Union of Estonia).

Discussion

The single most salient feature of party development in Estonia during the first decade of freedom was its kaleidoscopic and unfinished nature. Why didn't the Estonian parties emerge "naturally" from social organizations such as trade unions or religious groups, or from class cleavages? For unions, the answer is that their association with communism had discredited them and their organizational structure and style of operation hardly fitted the new circumstances. As for religious groups, they barely could exist under Soviet rule, and the bulk of the population had lost familiarity even with the outer trappings of Christianity.

For the relative unimportance of class, one might look to the absence of any ongoing struggle (like the long-lasting battle for suffrage extension in Great Britain) that sharpened a class-related cleavage. The main reason, however, might be that democratization and marketization caused economic hardships and role reversals, so that the basic identifiers of socio-economic "class" became fuzzy. Many manual skills and academic degrees became obsolete. One college professor might live like a pauper, while another made a fortune in "business" enterprises; "class" would refer only to their former status, not their present interests. More generally, the disadvantaged could not join under a leftist banner, because such a banner had been discredited by the Soviets.[12]

In sum, Estonian politics faced a defining vacuum once communism had collapsed. The Popular Front splintered, and thereafter parties became primarily factions organized around particular leaders whose policies were relatively ill defined and opportunistic.

Arter ("Estonia" and "Parties") has stressed the anti-party attitudes of Estonian voters to the point of calling the entire constellation an "anti-party system." A week after the 1992 election, one in four voters polled was not able to remember the political coalition their candidate belonged to. One in ten could remember only the coalition and not the name of the candidate. Two in five said they had made up their minds at the last minute, and nearly one in ten voters polled admitted having voted

without thought (Kivirähk et al.). Voter loyalty to party labels hardly could develop any further during the rest of the decade, as long as politicians kept party-hopping and changing the labels.

Is the party constellation in Estonia finally reaching such a degree of stability that one can talk reasonably of there being a party *system*? As of 1999 this still was hardly the case. Many parties showed internal tensions. Some factions had better relations with factions in other parties than with their party mates. Thus, while the spinning of the kaleidoscope has slowed down, it would seem premature to predict that it would soon be ending.

On the other hand, an argument for the potential stability of the existing parties can also be made. Of the seven seat-winning parties of 1999, six arguably have distinct core constituencies. As an admitted simplification, these can be said to be the newly wealthy for the Reform Party, the *nomenklatura* wealthy for the Coalition Party, Estonian nationalists for Fatherland, Russian nationalists for the United People's Party, poorer people for the Center Party, and the rural population for the Country People's Party. These interest foci are not likely to fuse or fade away soon. Only the Moderates risk being torn apart by various pulls -- when the general political atmosphere becomes so moderate that "moderation" stops being a distinctive label.

Is there a likelihood of strong cleavage lines emerging in Estonia to structure political competition? In particular, could the Russian-non-Russian cleavage become of major importance, given the potential for naturalization of large numbers of ethnic Russian residents of Estonia? We are not so sure. Certainly, the ethnic dimension has potential to develop into a permanent cleavage, but so far the socio-economic, political and institutional developments have provided for the different patterns.

Ethnic differences are diminishing in importance, as compared to the appreciable polarization evident in the 1991 independence referendum. While seventy-eight percent of the voters in Estonia supported independence in 1991, the support differed drastically for the ethnic Estonians and the Russians. Estimates of such support ranged from ninety-five percent upwards among the Estonians but only up to forty percent among the ethnic Russians. However, only a few years later both groups began to view ethnic relations as much improved, and evidence grew that Russians living in Estonia were becoming more reconciled to the existence of an independent Estonia (Kirch, Kirch, and Tuisk; Kirch 37).

Far more Russians in Estonia rated the Estonian system positively than they did regarding the system in Russia. Ethnic relations were assessed as "good/very good" by fifty to sixty percent of the ethnic

Estonians and by seventy-four to eight-three percent of the Russians living in Estonia (Rose and Maley 56, Maley).[13] These attitudes have been maintained since then.

Perhaps the most striking evidence for the Russian-non-Russian cleavage as a "non-starter" comes from voting data. Ethnic Russians formed close to fifteen percent of the electorate in 1995, yet the joint Russian list "Our Home Is Estonia" obtained only 5.9 percent of the votes. In 1999 the Russian Party in Estonia tried to stress the ethnic issue -- and failed. With an electorate close to twenty percent Russian in 1999, the "Russian Party in Estonia" obtained 2.0 percent and the Russian-Estonian United People's Party 6.1 percent. Increasingly, Russians voted for non-ethnic parties, especially the Center Party. Relatedly, in 1995 a couple of Estonian parties tried to feed on strong nationalistic feelings but failed, leaving the 1999 elections almost without radical pro-Estonian actors.

What about the emergence of a more traditional left-right divide in Estonian political competition now that the Soviet era is fading into the past?

During Phase 1 (1987-91), left-right terminology was used in Estonia, but not in the sense used in most European countries. Being pro-Soviet was considered "leftist" and pro-independence "rightist." Thus, at first all parties claimed to be rightist. During the second stage (1992-94), moderate or gradual reformers were viewed as "left" and radical reformers as "right." Only the rise of the Reform Party during the third stage produced the first real signs of a classical left-right dimension being used to structure political debate.[14]

If there is a left-right continuum emerging in Estonia, as in the United States, it is likely that the range of viable party positions along this continuum will be limited. Most major Estonian parties, to the extent that they are classifiable at all,[15] are currently located very much at the center of the left-right scale.[16] In the late 1990s there was a veritable stampede toward "centrism," with leftism remaining a curse word that other parties applied (note the irony) to describe the politics of the self-labelled Center Party.[17] Moreover, because socio-economic status is still in flux -- parents may be poor and children well off -- it is hard to see class conflict becoming a major factor.[18]

Finally, we should note that one key index of a clear left-right cleavage structure is missing, a scalable pattern of transfers of support among the various parties that corresponds to ideological location. We have previously noted that candidates from one party may subsequently run in another party's lists. Such "exchanges," presumably between proximate parties, faintly suggest the following proximity linkage among the present main parties: Coalition -- Country People -- Center -- Reform

-- Moderates -- Fatherland. To repeat, this pattern emerges in the previous section, when comparing individual candidates' affiliations in 1992 and 1999. It is weakened by three candidates shifting from Secure Home (later Coalition) to Moderates.

This loyalty transfer pattern does not fit the presumed left-right tendencies, where Reform is supposed to be on the right and Center on the center-left. Instead, it appears to reflect the diverse processes of elite network formation and the relations between the different elite social networks. The degree of incidence of former *nomenklatura* in the leaderships of the various parties has an effect on attitudes toward residual Soviet patterns, urgency of reforms and openness to Western patterns.

In sum, changes in party control in Estonia seem far more driven by the apparent successes or failures of the ruling coalition's economic policies in terms of economic growth -- i.e., what we might call plain "bread-and-butter" politics -- than by the politics of either ideology or group conflict.[19]

Notes

*The listing of authors is alphabetical. This research was begun while the second author was a Fulbright Fellow in the Centre for the Study of Democracy at the University of California, Irvine. We are indebted to the UCI Center for the Study of Democracy for partial research support for this project. We are indebted to Clover Behrend for library assistance.

1. Of course, even ideologically structured parties will usually contain a range of views among their members, activists and legislative representatives. Thus, parties may seek to shift their presumed positions by varying their spokespersons and, even more importantly, by the way in which party leaders are assigned to cabinet positions (Laver and Shepsle, "Events" and "How Political").
2. We must be careful, however, not to over-attribute virtue to mere stability (cf. Yanai). In well-developed political systems the party system may come to be unduly rigid, such that "cartelized parties" (Katz and Mair), though competitive with one another, cooperate in excluding new contestants from power.
3. The Estonian Social Democratic Party (ESDP) initially tried to stay in the center of the political scale, by supporting moderate social programs and taxes. Along with the Center Party, the ESDP tried to represent the impoverished middle class.
4. The Estonian term *rahvuslik* means "national" with a definite ethnic (rather than territorial) connotation.

5. In Estonian local elections all long-term residents are permitted to vote, regardless of citizenship.
6. The Greens played an important role during the first stages of the Estonian independence drive and were equally popular among both Russians and Estonians (Taagepera, "Estonia" 150). By 1994, they had very little influence on Estonian politics.
7. At the extreme, the Riigikogu could have sixteen groupings of six. If it did, then one-third of the MPs would earn extra incomes as group chairs or vice chairs. At the same time the electoral law gave a bonus to large alliances. Hence there were strong incentives both for joining forces in the elections and for forming separate groupings in the parliament.
8. The Reform Party actually emerged prior to the 1995 elections as an alternative to the previous radically reformist government. Hence, although close in many of their views to Fatherland and Moderates, Reformers tried to distance themselves from the previous reformist forces and even briefly participated in a cabinet led by the Coalition Party and Rural Union. With the Reform Party excluded, the former reformist grouping of Fatherland, Moderates and Right-wingers achieved only 18.9 percent of the votes and 20.8 percent of the seats in 1995. Later on, Fatherland, Moderates, and Reformers formed a clear opposition in the parliament, while Center Party and the Russian played both sides in the parliamentary coalition-opposition games.
9. After the 1995 elections the Coalition Party and Rural Union made up the cabinet, first in coalition with the Center Party, then with the Reform Party, and finally as a minority government. After the 1999 elections, Fatherland, Reform Party and the Moderates formed the cabinet.
10. Separate from volatility of votes, one can also calculate volatility of seats. From 1992 to 1995, volatility was fifty-five percent for seats, as compared to fifty-four per cent for votes (Taagepera, "Estonian Parliamentary"). From 1995 to 1999, it was forty for seats, as compared to forty-one percent for votes. As for turnout, it dropped significantly from 68.3 percent in 1995 to 57.4 percent in 1999. All calculations of indices in this section are based on official election returns, by list.
11. Party competition in Estonia, with its proliferation of parties and its absence of a limited number of reasonably clear-cut issue/policy dimensions of political competition, appears similar in nature to what was happening in other countries formerly associated with the Soviet Union. In particular, the pattern in Estonia fits in reasonably well with its two Baltic neighbours.
12. Age became a major substitute for class, because older people found it harder to adjust. Accordingly, the Union of Pensioners could bring many votes to whatever alliance they joined but its leaders were at a loss about how to cash in after elections.

13. Indeed, Rose and Maley (iv) express surprise at the extent of similarity between ethnic Balts and Baltic-Russians in their replies to many questions.
14. Also, the tiny Communist ESDLP wing of the United People's Party list could be regarded as being "on the left."
15. The Coalition Party may be seen as leftist because their ex-communist leaders have given lip service to their rural and pensioner allies, but they actually serve the interests of those Soviet managers who did well during privatization.
16. Fatherland Alliance may be rightist, if all nationalists are considered rightists, but its socio-economic platform has shifted to the centre.
17. The latter's success in the 1999 election might change the picture.
18. Harmel and Janda (28) distinguish four major disagreements between leftist and rightist positions: (1) Governmental vs. private ownership. Here, all parties agree on the need for privatization. (2) Strong vs. weak governmental role in economic planning? Here, all parties agree on more private initiative. In the early period of democracy, some emphasized going slow in market reforms in order to maintain a strong security blanket, while others seemed to believe in the market as a cure-all for economic doldrums. But, in our view, the debate about marketization, *per se*, has lost saliency now that market reforms are largely complete. (3) Support vs. opposition to redistribution. Here, all parties except the Center Party support the present twenty-six percent flat income tax, and even the Center proposals are mild compared to the US practice, not to mention the Scandinavian! (4) Expansion vs. resistance to governmental social welfare programs. Here, no party has defended all-inclusive Soviet welfare practices. Indeed, because the baseline of perceptions is a Soviet-style state monopoly, all parties in Estonia wish to move away from that model, at least to some extent.
19. As noted earlier, personal ties also remain important. Party competition and coalitions are still rooted mainly in the different elite networks.

Table 3. Estonian Parties from 1992-94

i. The various organizations oriented toward non-citizens are not listed. Some won seats in the 10/93 elections. So did the (Social) Democratic Party.
ii. Seventeen lists plus twenty-five individual candidates ran for the 101 seats, and nine lists won seats; the number of parliament members is shown.
iii. Official parliamentary groups must have at least six members.
iv. Shaded names: quasi-parties and social organizations.
v. One member from the Coalition Party.
vi. One member from Fatherland.
vii. Names of cabinet coalition members are in CAPITAL LETTERS. The coalition had fifty-three members in 11/92 and forty-eight in 4/94.
viii. One member from Estonian Citizen.

ix. One member from Estonian Citizen.
x. Three members from ENIP, two from E. Citizen, one from Fatherland. Several independents and unaffiliated nationalists belonged in 5/94 to a variety of recently formed parties and coalitions.
xi. Four members from E. Citizen. Several independents and unaffiliated nationalists belonged in 5/94 to a variety of recently formed parties and coalitions.

Table 4. Estonian Parties and Groups in Riigikogu: 1995-99

i. Sixteen lists plus thirteen individual candidates ran for the 101 seats, and seven lists won seats.
ii. Twelve parties plus nineteen individual candidates ran for the 101 seats, and seven lists won seats.
iii. The number of parliament members is shown.
iv. Based on the United People's Party of Estonia (10/94) and the Russian Party in Estonia (10/94); later on it emerged as Russian Unitary Party (10/97).
v. A splinter group formed a separate Development Party (05/96).
vi. Right-wingers joined with the minor Farmers' Party, forming the People's Party (05/98). Further fusion of the People's Party and the Moderates began after the 1999 elections.
vii. The Farmers' Assembly (04/92) participated in the 1995 national elections jointly with the Coalition Party and the Country People's Union.

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