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MULTICULTURALISM AS SUCH AND IN ESTONIA

Panel discussion with John W. Berry, Michael H. Bond, and Mati Heidmets, chaired by Wolfgang Drechsler

Wolfgang Drechsler[2]: Ladies and gentlemen, the panel discussion which I have been asked to chair will have two parts: First, a conversation between the panelists and myself, in order to wrap up the conference along certain questions that pose themselves. Second, we shall open the floor to the audience, and all those who want to ask or state something are more than welcome to do so.

As they always accuse academics of German origin of talking for two-thirds of the time about what they are going to do and only then, perhaps, doing it, let me use a quote from a Stockholm professor, a friend of Els Oksaar's[3], who is reported to have stated, "Before I start to talk, let me say a few words." We have a special audience here today, including professionals, diplomats, policy makers as well as academics – this is something that will be reflected in the discussion. We will try to tie in the Estonian experience, as well as ask some genuinely methodological questions of psychology. We could of course argue about the entire multiculturalist paradigm, but I think this would not be particularly exciting, as none of us here on the panel wants a totalitarian state that is worth more than the happiness of any possible individual. Such an approach would be, theoretically speaking, an option, but we do not have to put that into our discussion. We will thus discuss within the framework that we have, and I assume as a working hypothesis that the three papers that were delivered are fundamentally 'correct'; we will then try to elucidate from another perspective a few aspects. As you might

[1] This discussion took place as the final academic event of the "Multiculturalism: Diversity in Action" conference on 6 May 1998 in the White Hall of the Museum of the History of the University of Tartu. It was recorded and transcribed by Ahto Külvet, edited by Wolfgang Drechsler, and revised by the contributors.

[2] Wolfgang Drechsler, Professor of Public Administration at the University of Tartu, Director of the Estonian Cognitive Social Sciences Center, Founding Editor of *Trames*.

[3] Els Oksaar, well-known linguist of Estonian origin, Professor emerita at the University of Hamburg, DLitt (Tartu) 1996.

have noticed if you read the bio-sketches, I am almost the opposite of a trained psychologist, and I have been asked to chair this panel out of this very reason. What I will also do is to tie in some questions of policy and of administration. In that way, if we heuristically assume a Hartmannian model of levels of science, then the latter is the level below psychology and the purely theoretical one the one above. Some of my questions will in this context sound a bit illegitimate – I hope not too much illegitimate –, but while it is easy to challenge research programs from the outside, I think it is both fruitful and necessary for those programs that claim to have, and do have, an impact on policy.

One of the problems if we have a conference called "Multiculturalism: Diversity in Action" is that of the concepts and their definitions. One thing that struck me was that in the three papers, the same words did not always mean the same things, nor did some mean what they mean in the public discourse. To some degree, this is of course inevitable, and a classic scholarly way to deal with this problem is that one always defines what one is talking about – "This is what I mean with integration" –, but one can never get out of the hermeneutical fact that words just mean certain things in the general discourse and that one has to be sensitive to this. One of the things that all three of you said in your respective paper was, for instance, "Multiculturalism just exists, it's a fact." But what does "multiculturalism" really mean? How do I define that? And I have two question-like points relating to this word, just so that we are clear what we are talking about.

The first is that I would like to suggest that there is a problem with the term 'multiculturalism' no matter how we contents-wise define it, in that it denotes two different things: a state of affairs and the view that depends on it. A similar mix-up takes place, for instance, regarding a once-fashionable theory that some of you, the older ones, might remember: postmodernism. Here you also have a state and a theory, and in line with what words and their endings signify in English, the suggestion has sensibly been made that you refer to 'postmodernity' as a certain state of discourse or period, and that 'postmodernism' connotates a more or less French theory which argues in favor of certain things. Transferred to our subject at hand, we could refer to 'multiculturalism' and 'multiculturality'.

John W. Berry[4]: In my own paper, I did make the distinction between multiculturalism as a fact and multiculturalism as reaction to that fact. I think that, although the same term is used on both levels, the qualifier makes clear how it is being used. Whether we need to create new terms or whether we just add the qualifier is not an important point, as long as we make the distinction. I think that all societies are multicultural in the sense that they are culturally plural. But I

[4] John W. Berry, Professor of Psychology at Queen's University in Ontario, Canada; former President of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology (IACCP); former Visiting Professor, i.a., at Bergen, Buenos Aires, Geneva, Helsinki, Münster, Nice, Oxford, and Stockholm.

reserve the term 'multicultural' for societies and citizens that like it that way. In other words, there is a positive evaluation of the state of affairs, and I think that possibly we could create new terms to refer to all these distinctions. But for the time being, I make the distinctions by adding qualifiers to the general term, and I think it is a matter or future discourse to decide whether we create some new terms to deal with the different meaning.

Drechsler: My main point was indeed to see whether we use one word for at least two phenomena; how we make clear that we do this is of course another question.

Mati Heidmets[5]: In that context, I started to think whether the Soviet Union was a multicultural country. As an example of the differences of the meaning of the word, I think one can say that as an everyday fact, it was, but as a political or intellectual response, it was anti-multicultural, or mono-cultural. Which actually means that a society may include different layers – on the everyday level, it might be quite multicultural or pluralist, but on the level of political response, the conceptual one, it might be monocultural.

Drechsler: Let me suggest another word to which one can juxtapose 'multicultural' and that results in a combination which is quite important, especially in what I perceive to be the German and the United States discourse. I think that in both these countries, 'multiculturalism' means something slightly different – in everyday discourse, journalism if you will – than what you have been suggesting.

Berry: It's closer to separation than to integration?

Drechsler: Yes, in a certain sense. The word I want to suggest is 'culturally plural' and what you three have called 'multicultural' in a normative way is what, I think, in the discourses I mentioned would be called 'culturally plural'. I am not suggesting that we adopt this distinction, but let me suggest that 'multicultural' refers in some countries to a certain extent to truly separated communities without any umbrella, without any roof to which they agree. 'Cultural pluralism', if you will, is a milder term, one down on the scale, that does postulate that some form of umbrella, some form of shared ideas; some form of a very final document, a very final idea is necessary. I do assume from your papers that, without asking you to adopt the term 'cultural pluralism', the kind of multiculturalism all three of you refer to is what in the context I have been mentioning is called 'cultural pluralism'.

Berry: I would be very reluctant to give definitional priority to those societies that do not value or practice multiculturalism. That is to say, the United States and Germany, which are indeed latecomers to this debate. Societies such as Sweden, the Netherlands, Australia and Canada, that have explicit multicultural policies

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[5] Mati Heidmets, Professor of Psychology and Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Tallinn Pedagogical University; Chairman of the Board of the Open Estonia Foundation.

and attempt to practice it, do not take the definition to be more separationist. They indeed talk about mutual accommodation, accommodating national institutions to incorporate the views of all so that no one is threatened or left out while sharing some common fundamental values. So, I would give definitional priority to those societies that are actually in there first and doing it, rather than to those who want to give it a more negative twist later on.

Drechsler: All right, this is the definitional and, if you will, a somewhat cultural-imperialist point. But if you recall, my main question behind this is: do you agree that the multiculturalism question does require some form of 'umbrella' for the peaceful living together of different groups, some form of community or purpose?

Berry: I certainly do.

Michael H. Bond[6]: Can you say more about the umbrella? Do you mean the legal reflection for that state of affairs; do you mean shared activities which require coordination across the groups, so that in fact we create something more than just separate communities living in the same geographical area?

Drechsler: I would be very reluctant to define it more closely; I am just wondering about the concept. Whether one needs, for instance, that we all agree to a final constitution, or whether it is a more cultural-social thing, is not so much the issue but whether if people live together, one needs some form of community, something that is shared. That is the question, and there seems to be agreement on this panel that this is needed.

Allow me, then, to ask a question about the methodology you three are using and about the execution of the psychological theory that is behind it. All three of you have been more or less saying that what you are doing is not a self-referential game – "we just assume this and that and then we write a pretty paper, and that's it." Your papers have, or are supposed to have, a certain element of policy relevance. ('Relevance', I hasten to say, is not a dirty word in this framework but a positive one.) And they do, especially in times such as ours that privilege the scientific discourse, i.e. when something can be 'scientifically proven', it is often assumed to be true in public discourse as well. This leads to the questions of responsible scholarship. The corruption issue and the corruption problems go either way; the classic thing is to say that the politicians just abuse whatever is delivered to them, but there is also the problem of scholars being too ready to come up with solutions that politicians can use and the supply of scientific, or more or less scientific, results to justify political ends. Thus, my question is the following: I do understand that in psychology, the theory, the methodology used in your papers would be accepted. But if I look at these models, I would assume – but you can correct me if I am wrong – that you are not trying to accurately

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[6] Michael H. Bond, Professor of Social Psychology at the Chinese University of Hong Kong; President of the IACCP.

describe reality, but that you are rather somehow trying to get a handle on it, to somehow display something that has some relationship to the truth (if we for the moment define truth as a congruence with reality). I would assume that you are saying, "I am not really saying something about 'the real world', but I am trying to get an inroad." Is this really so?

Second, how confident are you that your models make statements that can be truly practically used. As scientists, how much would you say that what you do is not self-referential gaming where I throw in a few variables and a couple of arrows and it looks pretty, but that this is seriously making statements that I, as a responsible scholar, can say *should* influence policy, that they have a relationship to the truth that is so close that I can put my power, my prestige behind that. For example, if you ask some people on the basis of some scaled model what they believe and then proclaim that the result more or less faithfully points at the genuine attitude of these people, rather than it being merely an indication of how they answered the questions and that's it. The classical problem that other social scientists frequently have with the psychologists – and to a lesser degree with the sociologists – is this 'world formula' idea that you can capture reality in a model. What would be an answer to soften these concerns?

Berry: First of all, an answer on the epistemological level. Different disciplines have different realities. And as I understood, your question would be about *your* reality, which was what is really out there. For psychologists, our reality is what is in the head of people. And the question you raised is, do we get our hands on reality. Well, we think we get our hands on our reality and that is the perceptions, beliefs, orientations, attitudes, emotional responses and so on that people have to the world that they are living in. For most psychologists of the cognitive persuasion it is the appraisal, the understanding that people have about that outside reality that is perhaps in many respect more important than some other way of understanding that outside world. So whether that understanding corresponds to the reality of the physicists, chemists or historians is a further level.

Drechsler: Yes, but I do not mean the physicists' reality at all, which for me is certainly a myth as well, let's stick to your definition: the psychological idea, the reality in the head, self-perception and so on, stratification of reality through perception. If we assume that as the definition of reality, are you comfortable with the models that you use? In other words, can the results of interview questions about attitudes really say anything about the actual attitudes people do have?

Berry: To address the methodological aspect of your question – do I have confidence in the data? Let me say first of all that unlike a lot of opinion level work where you have one, perhaps two questions dealing with a particular topic, in the large-scale research projects in Canada I am involved in, we use scales that have anywhere between ten to fourteen items. We use the standard approach of looking at inter-item relationships, internal consistency, reliability, factor analysis

and so on. And we get at what we think is a statistical inference at a consistent core or more general orientation towards these issues. That is very much in contrast to what you see in newspapers – "37% think this and 29% that." In other words, we use the developed psychological assessment technologies together. The other reason why we are confident in our results is that we do the questioning over time and across groups and situations, and if we repeatedly come up with similarities, or differences that are consistent in a sense of moving in one direction, this is a good indication. The same is true if we do it in the police or the military and our expectation is that things will be less open and tolerant than in general, and that expectation is met. If we were to just use a few questions and get sort of random spot answers every time we use it, we would be in trouble. But I think we have a coherent pattern of information about our reality as psychologists which is from our point of view not the only reality but one very important way to understand what is going on in society.

Heidmets: I actually agree with Professor Drechsler's implication that theory construction is to some degree always reality construction. And we actually had sort of a problem when we used the assimilation / integration / marginalization model, and we asked ourselves what it actually was: reality or some kind of intellectual game we produced ourselves? But I think we became more confident when we tested this scheme with politicians. We presented our ideas to the people who know nothing about psychology. And they found some features in real life which correspond to this model. So I think it is possible to test what is a game and what has some relevance to everyday life.

Berry: I have the same experience. I talk about our results to the cultural communities in Canada, and I get responses all the way from people cheering to fights breaking out in the back of the hall between two fractions of the organization, one wanting to go one way, the second the other. This is the first-person real impact form of validity that you get from the politicians or the people who are living these issues on a day-to-day basis.

Bond: Related to that, John, is the question whether your theory, as we may call it, or the constructs you use, have in fact developed over time as you have been working back and forth with the testing procedures. Have you changed in any way since 1966, when you began to develop these ideas? Has your notion been informed by the reaction of the people to whom these theories are supposed to apply?

Berry: Certainly. I went from a square to a circle! The model in my paper[7] is a circle which essentially defines a space within which individuals move over time. The different concepts do not define 'boxed-in' points of view but essentially poles. This degree of flexibility has been the result of continuing research. And I

[7] See Figure 2 in Berry above, p. 215.

think it is, to go back to Wolfgang's question, a far better representation of what people do over the course from childhood to adulthood: they shift around. The Estonian policy statement Professor Heidmets cited,[8] for instance, is not necessarily in the integration box or in the assimilation corner. Rather, I would characterize what I understand to be the case as somewhere between integration and assimilation, perhaps a little bit more towards integration; but with respect to continued dominance of Estonian culture and identity within the state, it is a little bit on the assimilation side of integration. By having it in the space, it allows you to locate individual preferences, national policies, group roles without necessarily going into one corner or another. There is a greater subtlety or flexibility in the current geometric representation of the framework.

Drechsler: In sum, I see a very high level of confidence of all three of you in what you are doing within your own sphere. And I don't even have to ask the question about what the empirical requirements are, because you entered that very well already in the sense that both questions are actually related: the method and how you actually do your work, that means what you ask, whom and how, are very important in order to be responsible, or relevant. And here the standards are high: sending 20 students out asking innocent people, "What do you think about the Russians: love, hate, don't know, both" and then extrapolating a claim from the result is not viable. I would assume that in this context, the sophisticated research that only can guarantee responsibility and relevance have to be very expensive and very long-term.

Berry: Half a million dollars each, for national samples of 3,500, representative of cultural origin, region and official language. These are very large samples and they are pretty well representative. And they are done professionally by interviewers who do not have any axe to grind– they are trained, and approximately every 10th interview is monitored by their supervisor. We even take into account if the interviewer has an accent, and we correlate that with any responses to any questions that might have to do with cultural influences.

Heidmets: We do the same with 10,000 dollars.

Drechsler: Well, whether it's really the same...

Bond: As long as the 10,000 dollars mean that there is some consistency in the process. I think there is a certain advantage in the consistencies that the Canadians have adopted because it makes the data much less dismissible. Of course, there are many scientific reasons why you could dismiss a survey, particularly if they tend to be what I call 'fried rice surveys', where at one point of time somebody measures something, and at another point somebody measures something else. Then you get into all kinds of technical debates and you dismiss the data. But I

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8 Government of the Republic of Estonia 1998, February 10.

think one of the advantages in the Canadian work is the courage to be consistent. Once you adopt that consistency, people have to take it much more seriously. They may resist a consistent procedure in the first place because they are afraid of the consequences of what might happen with the data revealed by that consistency. In other words, there is a certain political advantage in chaos. People do not have to take seriously and follow the consequences – it is a way of undercutting, if you like, the use of the scientific approach to inform policy.

Drechsler: So, again, we have a large degree of professional certainty and the sense in you that you can give very responsible advice to policy makers of something that in this area is important.

The problem to which we must go from here if we think in terms of political science, political theory, is that any form of expert advice carries within itself the problem of a democracy deficit, because democracy can be said to be at least partially a conscious decision against expertise. As I have said elsewhere for the Estonian political context,[9] Democracy means that we have to live with the fact that, although we know we are right, other people say, "yeah, but we still do it another way." The state and its employees that always 'know best' do not have an awfully good track record, even if they *do* know best. Out of your papers, especially your paper, Michael, comes a very strong role for the state. The entire society is put under the paradigm of multiculturalism, which is professionally and responsibly identified as being necessary on a very deep level, on the personal as well as on the societal level. In extreme cases – Wilkinson's, for instance, which you mention, Michael –,[10] the interchange of scarce goods, the taxation system, educational administration, are brought under the perspective of whether any given policy contributes to multicultural adjustment. However, I think it is fair to say that one of the lessons of this century is that, while of course the state has a creative and an important role in such matters, if it is becoming too powerful and too big, we very quickly have a serious problem. And this is especially true in those cases (and this is democracy-expert problem) where people know scientifically and morally that they are right, because of the privileging of the scientific discourse I mentioned earlier. So, according to your outlines, we would need a large state apparatus that would control peoples' lives according to the experts' perceived opinion. I am very certain that you three who sit here do not want an intrusive, total state like that, but what would be a counter-model, how to soften the problem that your model seems to require a perhaps too strong role of the state?

Berry: I would answer that by saying that in my concept, there are three centers of information and influence: first, government, including elected politicians as well as civil servants; secondly the citizenry, including individuals and organized

[9] Drechsler 1997:20-21.

[10] Wilkinson 1996. See also Bond above, pp. 251–252.

ethnocultural communities; and third, the social science research community that is interested in policy-making. I see these three as ideally having a very close, but not intimate, working relationships, both critical and supportive. The message we very often get from politicians is that social science research data are important in the decision-making and policy-formulation activity. But this is not the only, to use your word, "reality" they have to deal with. They have to deal with the political demands and pressures and claims of the citizenry. We can have, as a research community, relationships with policy formulators and leaders, and they necessarily live on their relationship with the voters, the citizens. What is missing here is the important relationship between the social science researchers and the citizenry. What we do as often as we can is to try to communicate our understanding of the events that people, citizens come up against every day. We do newspapers, we do television shows, we do all whole variety of things to complete that triangle. What this does is to increase the likelihood that there is going to be a consensus or a match in the understanding between politics proper, the citizenry, and the social science community. Indeed, in December we in Canada just adopted an entire specialized framework to further that idea. We have something called the Policy Research Secretariat into which 19 different ministries and agencies have pooled some of their research budgets, and the secretariat has set up an advisory committee (I happen to be on it) to guide the evolution of social policy and communication of these agencies before they actually leave from there to the citizenry. And you have critics as well as supporters of almost every possible view on this panel, so that it is not easily co-opted or manipulated. I think it is a very healthy triangle to live in, as long as not one of the groups gains excessive dominance over the others.

Bond: That is the sense of domination that you are concerned about, Wolfgang: the control of process by a limited group of persons, perhaps defined ethnically or culturally. But we are inevitably controlled in some way or another. An absence of policy is a kind of policy when you have an opportunity to structure things. I think we need structure and we need to put structures in place and to use the wisdom of the chaos from the past. This was the intention of Ervin Staub when he wrote the book *The Roots of Evil*,[11] in which he examined what the social conditions were that enabled genocide to occur in Cambodia, in the Nazi state and so forth. What we need to do is to use those lessons to structure. How you structure is partly a matter of procedural justice. John is talking about a system that gives voice in a variety of ways to a variety of constituencies. In some sense, this will still be domination – there will be laws, and people who execute those laws, and people who make the laws. That I have no problem with; I think the problem we all share is when that control becomes confined to a certain, limited group of persons.

[11] Staub 1992.

Heidmets: I think that state should have some role in defining the multicultural issue. If we take the state of Estonia, its role has been quite peculiar. From one side, the state has acted; a set of laws has been adopted. But from the other side, the state has not set goals and defined tasks. This creates a kind of confusion in society. To give an example, I had a talk with a schoolteacher, who asked me, "I have accepted several Russian children to my Estonian class. But actually I do not know whether this is permitted or not." I think the role of the state is to create some kind of environment or context which people can use while they are running their own affairs.

Drechsler: I think, John, your answer was especially pertinent to the concern I voiced: you say that the problem is to have experts who tell the state what to do, which in turn enforces on society. What one rather needs is interplay, and that means that communication between the research community and the societal one is particularly crucial, because it is often the weakest. That means, however, and you mentioned it all in your papers, that if there is no true support among society for multiculturalism, there is a serious problem. Although some form of state coordination, infrastructure, assurance and so on in policy making is necessary, the process towards multiculturalization can not happen properly without general societal support, which again requires educational support from science.

Berry: Yes – education or propaganda, depending on what you want to call it.

Drechsler: On our road to the Estonian case, let me proceed by putting the following question to John and Michael, the two non-Estonians: would you accept a legitimate (although this is a very loaded word) distinction between immigrant societies and non-immigrant societies? Do you see the right of the political community to impose conditions, including a certain guest status, or the demand to buy into already preset rules, on those who want to come? Or would you say that anyone who legally enters, or has entered, the physical space of any such community at any point in time has then a right to shape these ideas as a group and/or as an individual as much as anyone who has been there for 800 or 5,000 years?

Berry: There are a couple of ways one could approach that question. One could take a purely legalistic approach and say that those who are legally present in this country all have equal rights to shape the future course of the country and to decide who is legally and who is not legally in the country. In countries that have explicit immigration policies, we invite people to come, but we also have people who are not legally there. In Canada, for example, there are Iranians who have come from Iran to Denmark, then to Greenland, then took a boat to Baffin Island. There are laws how to deal with these people, and one has the right to send them away. That right exists anywhere, and it certainly exists here in Estonia, except that the magnitude of the application of that right is so horrendous it may cause you to think twice about using it. I would prefer not to go the legal route, I would prefer to go the realistic route:

migration has always been with us, migration will always be with us, people will always be moving across borders, and the reality is that we constantly have to adjust and adapt and accommodate to this reality. The issue is how to do it in the most equitable and democratic way for all parties involved.

The framework that I use is clearly rooted in societies that are such as Canada, Australia, perhaps the United States and others, where we have a notion of the normalization of the flow of people. We know our countries were built on immigration to begin with, and that they would not exist if we would not have continued immigration. Our natural rate of increase is below the rate of decrease, of death. Thus, the flow of people into the society and ways of accommodating to these new people to constantly reshape our society is accepted as normal and natural.

My guess is that the normalization of the incoming flow of people, and the necessity to constantly change and accommodate those people, is not present (yet) in Estonia, and I am not sure whether one can make very strong or radical decisions until that point is reached. You clearly have very unique circumstances, and as I said already, I certainly do not think that just because something works in one society, it will necessarily work in another. But I do think that the reality is that there should be mutual accommodation, even with priority given to Estonian language and culture. After all, if Estonian language and culture do not survive here, they are not going to survive anywhere else in the world, so there is a kind of obligation to sustain, support and develop them here. But that does not mean that this mode is fixed in stone, forever unable to evolve in a way that accommodates the other peoples who are knocking on your door, or who have already knocked on your door and perhaps were not allowed in but came in anyway, but that is the legal issue. I do think mutual accommodation in the long run is the only realistic way to proceed.

Bond: I am reminded of some work you did, John, about the perception that immigration leads to economic collapse. And I think this is a very widely shared belief that legitimizes the imposition of a rather strong set of demands on immigrants – "If you want to enjoy the sunshine of our culture, you are going to have to play by its rules." I can see that in some political environments, that may be a very attractive option, particularly where people are rebounding from the imposition of control by other powers. Communities like Australia and Canada and the United States are quite distinctive in that they are immigrant communities. They have invented themselves; they did not have to accommodate themselves to powerful large native cultures when they arrived. But you have opened the door by saying that it may be important for people in these receiving cultures to look at their culture as an evolving institution, which evolves in part from the contributions made by difference. And how you envisage difference, how you imagine difference is an extremely important issue. I think we have made a virtue out of difference in democratic cultures, and I am not sure that difference is enshrined in that way in other cultural systems.

Drechsler: Fine and good, but what if an overwhelming majority of people in a given country insist on defining themselves historically, via their own – perhaps imagined – past and ethnic homogeneity? What if they say, "This is the world we want, this is the world we want to recreate. If some other people happen to be here in our area, we do not know why they are here, we do not actually want to know why. This is our way, we do have the majority, this is how we are doing it, and that's it." What can, especially in a democracy, be the response to that?

Berry: The right is there, but the potential cost is perilous.

Bond: It is particularly perilous if those people have the vote. Partly it is a question of whether as the minority community, you have the capacity to influence policy. If that exists in the background even as a potential, then of course politicians will have to pay attention when they design policy, merely because people have that potential right. The whole issue of political control and control of policy is a fundamental background consideration.

Berry: Imagine a third of your population never having a vote, never having rights of access to government, to higher education and to higher levels of the economy. The psychological and social residue that will be created by that situation would require you to bar your windows and lock up your children. We see signs of this in other societies that have produced a large proportion of their population as marginal to the mainstream. I think the potential cost of permanently degrading a portion of your society is far greater than the cost of letting them in, opening up, accommodating them in return for some accommodation on their part, mutual accommodation.

Bond: And is that price not increasing, given the way in which the 21st century is moving?

Berry: The risk is certainly higher when the hypothetical group we are talking about happens to have a strong attachment to an even bigger group next door.

Drechsler: What I particularly appreciate in professor Heidmets's paper is the strong focus on the multicultural implications of politics and on the state, because this is where push comes to shove. If we look at the concept of the Nation State, discussed excellently by Rein Ruutsoo[12] for Estonia (Ruutsoo 1995a and 1995b), I think the – really classically Hegelian – division between state and society, often claimed to be obsolete by now, would actually have considerable virtue, if I read your three papers correctly. The idea is to have some framework of the state, and I think this lies at the genesis of the European nation states, that is above and beyond other matters, something that gives as much autonomy as possible in other spheres to the people, so that we have the state as a form of umbrella, as a way to accommodate different backgrounds, different faiths, different cultures, and so on.

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[12] Rein Ruutsoo, Professor of General Political Science at the University of Tartu.

Such a state would have, not a neutral, but a positive attitude towards the different groups, who can be autonomous on the non-state level. Professor Heidmets said that it is dangerous to have two societies in one state in the long run because it is detrimental to rapid development and a security issue. But if you consider it along the lines I suggested, two societal groups are actually neither necessarily dangerous nor necessarily holding back development.

Berry: What is striking to me as an outsider is that just as with multiculturalism in your opening comment, Estonia has one word to refer to three realities: 'Estonian' to refer to the state, 'Estonian' to refer to an ethnocultural community, and 'Estonian' to refer to the language. If I listen carefully, I am usually able to decide which reference it is whenever the word 'Estonian' is used, but sometimes it is not so clear, and sometimes people move back and forth without being clear. In Canada, we do not have that problem because we have a Canadian state but we do not have 'the' Canadian people. It was only in the last census that people were allowed to say they were Canadians. And only 6% said so. All others chose some cultural heritage that is rooted elsewhere.

Drechsler: I was struck by the title of the bill which is being passed today: "Integration of non-Estonians into the Estonian society." In Canada, "Integration of non-Canadians into the Canadian society" would just be bizarre if you would phrase it this way, and this shows the difference very clearly. Exactly this is my point: I am somehow trying to sell the Estonian ethno-cultural community as a societal matter and the Estonian state as a state matter that is not linked so closely to the former.

Bond: In Singapore, on ID cards people are designated as Singaporean-Chinese, Singaporean-Indian, -Malay or -other. So there is a clear distinction made between the state and your ethnic origin, and you are defined in terms of your ethnic origin as well as in terms of being a member of the Singaporean state.

Berry: Was that not true also of the Soviet passport? You were designated as a Soviet citizen but of particular nationality, correct?

Heidmets: Yes.

Berry: So it is not an uncommon.

Bond: But the interesting thing about Singapore is that it became a nation in 1968, I believe, against the background of a very large neighbor, Malaysia, where the Malays were very strongly a dominant group. And the Malays in Singapore are small group, about 15% of the population. So if one is looking for models that may be closer to the political reality, that would be a very interesting model to explore, as well as how Singapore has managed to deal with the potential divisiveness of ethnic and racial issues. I think we do need models and we can use experience, we can stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before by looking at the ways in which they may be similar.

Berry: There is also the phenomenon of minorities that act like majorities. Whites in South-Africa, the English in Quebec and in Ireland during the colonial period are examples. Do the Russians in Estonia act like a majority? Do they carry with them the psychological orientations of a majority? Examples are feeling that they are in some sense superior, that they are part of a grander culture, that they should be given rights and privileges based upon this majoritarian sense of self. Has that been studied, do you know that or do you just feel it?

Heidmets: I think we know and feel it. The situation was as you suggest in the early 1990s, but now things have changed. But regarding Professor Drechsler's question, it is really important to look at how the Estonians (I mean ethno-cultural Estonians) feel about the Estonian state: the typical attitude is that we own our state, it is ours.

Bond: "We suffered for it."

Heidmets: But the psychological dilemma for many Estonians is – do we let the Russians also own this same state? This is a barrier to overcome, to allow others also to own our toy, our lovely baby.

Drechsler: I agree with the statement in your paper that, no matter what we say about the re-foundation of the Estonian Republic in 1991 and whether it could have been done differently, this is how it was bound to happen , there was really no alternative. You can write essay after essay about the Aristotelian idea that if the constitution goes down and a government does not exist, then you do not have a state anymore, no matter whether you say it still continues, and if you try to recreate it, it's a new state entirely. So, in 1991 a state is created, and it has a mythical, ethnic foundation. (I take this idea from my friend and colleague Marju Lauristin,[13] both from discussions and her treatment in her recent book, *Return to the Western World* (Lauristin et al. 1997), although she certainly won't endorse most of my ideas on this subject.) But if the current one is not a rational constitution, where do we go from there? The constitution is the final framework in which one lives. Changes in the language policy and integration of non-Estonians, if you really would want that, would that in your opinion require a substantive revision or recasting of the constitution that currently exists?

Heidmets: You mean the citizenship role?

Drechsler: The entire framework of the Estonian Republic created by the constitution.

Heidmets: The whole legal paradigm?

[13] Marju Lauristin, Professor of Social Policy at the University of Tartu; former Minister of Social Affairs; founder of the Estonian Social Democratic Party; a leading politician of the transition period.

Drechsler: Yes; is the whole legal paradigm potentially inclusionary enough to accommodate the shift you are talking about towards multiculturalism?

Heidmets: I do not think so, but I also don't think that it would be possible to change the whole scheme. What would be reasonable is to try to step by step open the doors more, such as the new law that some groups of children in Estonia will automatically receive citizenship. These steps are possible without any radical change of the whole framework.

Drechsler: So if we use the 'illegal' terms of 'First Republic' and 'Second Republic', you would argue, not for a 'Third Republic' with a new constitution, but for a kind of 'Republic 2 b'?[14]

Heidmets: Actually, I fully agree with Professor Berry that on each stage we have to calculate costs and benefits. Today, the doors are too closed and the costs are too high, so we have to change the situation. Yet, this does not mean changing the whole framework or paradigm, which would not be possible either socially or politically.

Berry: I am going to give you a quote from a recent speech by one of Canada's political leaders: "Canada is not a real country. It has two peoples, two languages and two societies, and this one is ours." This was said by the Prime Minister of Quebec, Bouchard, who emphatically advocates that Canada is not multicultural, it is just two peoples. The issue of "this one is ours" of course betrays the idea that the only real country is the uniethnic or unicultural country. But would anybody get up in public here and say: "Estonia is not a real country, there are two peoples, two languages and two societies and this one is ours"?

Heidmets: Not today.

Drechsler: The last field I wanted us to talk about was the issue of tolerance. This is an interesting matter for Estonia in this context: if indifference, rather than intolerance, is the opposite of tolerance, and it is, then indeed tolerance is a sign of strength. And if this is so, then the scheduled integration of Estonia into the European Union could result, not only in greater outside pressure for multi-culturalism, but also in greater Estonian self-assurance that would make tolerance easier. But – our time is limited, and thus, let me right away open the floor for questions and comments from the audience.

Michael Miess[15]: I very much liked Professor Heidmets' paper, especially its two last chapters, the visions and practical steps. You developed the vision that in Estonia there are people having predominantly the Estonian citizenship and also every citizen speaking the Estonian language. The next chapter, practical steps,

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[14] There is a word-play here that is not transcribable: "2b" is pronounced "to be".

[15] HE Dr. Michael Miess, the Austrian Ambassador to Estonia.

you have set out how the situation is now. That there are still the two barriers - mainly the citizenship and language problems. The first, the citizenship, we not only have maybe 130,000 non-Estonians that have the Russian citizenship but we also have about 200,000 stateless people. And as you said, it will take perhaps a hundred years to naturalize them. The second barrier is the language. I guess that the success of language training in Estonia until now has been sufficient. I especially refer to the most Eastern province, Ida-Virumaa, with a predominantly Russian population and in any case no sufficient success in teaching Estonian. You can hardly blame the Russians for that, because they say, "why should we learn Estonian, as everyone is speaking Russian here?" So I would like to ask you: is this problem unsolvable? Because there may be the danger that Russians become an economic underclass which might then lead to some potential of unrest. In my short period of one year, I have noticed that there are nearly no Russians in the public service and in certain key sectors of the economy, for example in the banks. So once again, how to solve this problem? How to speed up naturalization as also the EU asks Estonia, how to train Russians in Estonia, especially in Ida-Virumaa?

Heidmets: I will try to be brief. The question is really unsolvable if we do not discuss it and try to do something. Since up to now, the problem has been that the Estonian state has not had any program, any constructive idea how to deal with the Russian minority problem. As I mentioned, the government has adopted a set of political principles for integration, and the hope is now that things will start to change. Second, language-training should be focused on the growing-up generation. Fortunately, the readiness of Russian families today to send their children to Estonian kindergartens and schools is quite high. The question is how to help Estonian schools and kindergartens to accept them. It will certainly take a long time to achieve some results in integration, but I am overall not pessimistic. I think that things have started to move – at least verbally – in the right direction.

Drechsler: To make a small remark regarding economic privileging and the problem of missing Russians in the Estonian civil service and certain segments of the economy, let me refer to a nowadays very unpopular German journalist who was born in Trier and mainly lived in London and who wrote a book called *Das Kapital*. He identified all ethnic and race-related questions as hidden class and economic questions. I am not saying this is true, I am just saying that this is an insight that one perhaps should not throw out with one's collected volumes when talking about the Estonian situation.

Toomas Niit[16]: May I just offer a comment to make things clear to our distinguished guests. Estonia happens to be one of the few countries of the world where aborigines are in the majority. This makes the situation a little bit different,

[16] Toomas Niit, Professor extraordinary of Psychology and Head of the Psychology Department at Tallinn Pedagogical University.

and I think that Estonian cultural policy is severely influenced by that fact. As I listened to today's papers, I think what Mati Heidmets is speaking about is more assimilation in John Berry's terms rather than integration. If I am looking at the question from the perspective of Estonian policy, it seems that at the moment the idea is to turn the Russians living here, or the Russian-speaking population, into Estonians, maybe into bad Estonians, but they will become better and better Estonians with every generation. So the idea is still to have a mononational state, which is perhaps not a popular notion in North America, but which is very popular here. And therefore, I really understand why the Lithuanians can afford to offer this zero-citizenship: they just have about 12% of a Russian-speaking population. We have at the moment 45%, and what we are trying to do is to reduce this percentage. But at the same time, there are areas in Estonia which have 95% Russian population, and these are difficult areas for many Estonians; they are something like spoilt land.

Heidmets: I do not agree that what I was talking about was assimilation. I will explain later to you what the difference is.

Marju Lauristin: Professor Berry, you spoke about the development of groups inside a society. As we all have as a background our own experiences with our groups, it struck me that you did not make any distinction between what type of groups they are, what kind of identity we have. Because I suppose there are some differences. If we speak about groups inside society which develop their group identity and develop group culture, and then apply this concept to Estonian-Russians, then surely we think that they should develop their identity as so-called Estonian-Russians. I.e., they should not develop the identity of a Russian diaspora with the center in Moscow. And that is the key question. If we speak about the integration of Russians in Estonia, they should turn their eyes to Tallinn and away from Moscow. Then they can develop their identity, and then we can have some balanced dialog. The present situation is very frequently that we have a dialogue with what seems to be our Russian community in Moscow. They are going to Moscow, they develop some ideas there, they come back, and then we discuss them here.

If we look at the real situation, a very good indicator for this type of integration is the type of media consumption. A majority of the Russians still in Estonia are almost monopolized by Moscow-based channels. Almost all the information channels are TV broadcasts from Moscow, or in somewhat better cases, from St. Petersburg, which is a bit closer. So, Professor Heidmets' plans to create some common educational background for Russians and Estonians is only one step towards education. The other one should also be to correct this information background, this information environment where Russians in Estonia will be mentally located in Estonia as well, not in Moscow. And then we can go on. This is a big difference to, say, Canada, where I think the French community in Canada is not a diaspora with its center in Paris. Or your English-speaking community a diaspora with its center in London.

Berry: It is a bit different, but not as different as you portray. There are still strong links between the French in Quebec and France, and indeed they have been increasing during the last twenty years. As there are links between those with British origin and London: they still sometimes talk about "going home." But the biggest problem is the links to Washington, DC, because just like Russians in Eastern Estonia are oriented towards Moscow, many groups, and in particular the Americans who live in Canada – we have many thousands –, remain oriented towards Washington. The citizenship statistics show this very clearly. Less than 10% of Americans that come to and live in Canada take out Canadian citizenship, whereas for other groups it is more than 90%.

The critical question is exactly as you phrased it: how do you get people to pay attention to your national society? I have some possible answers. Are there Russian-language broadcasts on television and radio run by the Estonian national telecommunications authority, whatever it might be? Are there such broadcasts that might compete for the hearts and minds of your Russian residents? Are there elements in the Estonian schools that allow Russians to understand the Estonian point of view? This is what I mean by institutional change and accommodation. You cannot expect them to love you overnight unless you attempt to accommodate them. You have to ask yourself: why would they be attracted to Estonia, what is being done to attract their hearts and minds?

Bond: The issue that Professor Lauristin is raising is the Estonian people's question about the loyalty of the Russians at the Estonian border. Are they with us or are they against us? And you got John Berry's answers. But what is the advantage from the Russians in Estonia's point of view for being a part of Estonia? That is, why do they stay? Would they not go back to Russia?

Drechsler: The advantage to be in Estonia, bluntly speaking, may be not to starve. Economics is not all, but Estonia is simply faring much better in this respect – one might even say, existentially better.

Rein Ruutsoo: According to a poll, about 90% of Russians in Russia rank Estonia as the most dangerous enemy-state, and this reflects very heavily how local Russians perceive Estonians as well. I could not imagine that someone in Paris would produce propaganda like that for the Quebecois. But the question I would put to Professors Berry and Heidmets is: you said that if some group is more effective, or over-represented, it always means that some heat or some hatred is produced. You used the examples of Jews and of the Chinese. How to manage this problem, what to do? You do not accept the term 'civilizational differences', but this term is used by many scholars. It is a key term in Sztompka (Sztompka 1993), for instance. After all, there *is* a difference in this regard between the two communities we are talking about which has played a significant role in our history. How to conceptualize this?

Berry: If I understood what you said correctly, then this is not exactly my position. I mentioned that development and advance in society by a particular group are one

possible source of a problem; that is to say, there will be envy and backlash, but this is not inevitable and necessary. But it does happen and is, I think, often considered to be one source of anti-Semitism. I think that to a large extent these issues are self-balancing. We have seen it particularly with the Chinese community in Canada, which is extraordinarily successful. They lie low and live quietly because, as my Chinese colleagues tell me, they know that the potential for being targeted is there. We are often asked why we do these studies of attitudes towards specific groups and studies of prejudice and tolerance. "And if you do these studies," we are asked, "why do you talk about them in public? It is just going to make things more difficult." Our response is that the more we know about a potential social problem, the more we share that information in public, the more likely it is that groups of people will be guided according to that information. Thus, a kind of equilibrium that moves towards greater harmony instead of away from harmony will be established. But what can you do about it, or what can government do about it? Probably nothing. I think it is a self-correcting issue as groups relate to each other over time.

Heidmets: I will respond by using an example. After some 20 years, when there will be the first ten or twenty thousand Moslems in Estonia, we will feel that there is a difference between local people and Moslems. And I am sure that we will find that the cultural differences between Estonians and Russians are really unimportant, compared to those between the local people and the new immigrants. In other words, if we call the current differences civilizational ones, how will we call those between the Estonians and the inevitably-coming Moslem community? I think it is a question of scale. For me, this term refers to something very large and deep, larger and deeper than that between Estonians and Russians in contemporary Estonia.

Miess: I would like to add to what Professor Lauristin said about Russians developing, or not developing, an Estonian consciousness. In my personal experience, they already do. Recently, I went on a trip to Sillamäe[17] and talked with Russians there, and they told me that it is "*Наша Эстония*", our Estonia, and that they want to be loyal to that state because it leads them to the future, mainly because the standard of living is much higher than in Russia – as Professor Drechsler pointed out. I know the Russians quite well because I served for some years in Moscow; they are a very pragmatic people. So, one may be optimistic at this point. But if you are an optimist, the questions is: how to speed up the naturalization process? The problem in this respect seems twofold to me: on the one hand, the authorities are slow at best; on the other, there seems to be a psychological barrier in the Russians to go for the language test or prepare for it.

Heidmets: I do not think that the citizenship issue is the only or even central barrier. What seems to be most important for the Russians today is to get some

[17] An industrial town in North-Eastern Estonia with an almost exclusive Russian population.

message from the Estonian side, from the side of the Estonian government and people, that they are wanted, that they are accepted, that they are *our* people. If they would receive some certainty that at least their children would become Estonian citizens, I think this would reduce many of their fears and problems. But altogether, I share your optimism.

Drechsler: I think this is the perfect final word. So if I am not deprivileging or putting down anybody by now bringing this discussion to a close, then I will do that by saying that here we have almost a metaphor of the European Union: let's begin with economic advantages, the spiritual ones will follow.

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