The East and the Idea of Europe

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Edited by

Katalin Miklóssy and Pekka Korhonen

**CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS**

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INTRODUCTION

KATALIN MIKLÓSSY AND PEKKA KORHONEN

The East is a dramatic direction. It is the most special direction as seen from Europe—which we equate here with the Atlantic end of the Eurasian continent. From the West emanates the leadership of the world system, as the West is dominated by the United States. The West is an object of constant attention, and the direction of occasional economic and political quarrels, but in systemic terms the relation is not a problematic one. West is also a widely used euphemism for an underlying unity of culturally rooted values, institutions and a way of life. The North is a stable dimension; nothing very dramatic happens in the Arctic Ocean or in Scandinavia. The North is an adjunct to the West, representing an interlinked notion. The South is a more colourful direction; instability, wars, political diversity, recently very hopeful signs of economic and political development—many things happen in Africa, but again in systemic terms the European Union's relationship with Africa has remained the same for decades, burdened with the historical shadows of a certain patronising attitude. Although, in the post-Cold War era, the old political dichotomy of East-West was supposed to give way to a new accentuated, welfare related rich North and poor South collision, this prophesy has not replaced the old one.

The East is different. It is a place of rapid changes, where large geopolitical areas are born and disappear within a human lifetime. Once upon a time there was a Soviet Union, but it no longer exists. It lasted a couple of days less than 71 years. A new region has been born in the East, namely Central Asia, of which nobody heard of 20 years ago. Once upon a time the East was synonymous with communism, but even state-socialism has largely disappeared, and capitalism, either private or state-capitalism, is the driving force in the East now. Once upon a time there also was an Eastern Europe, but by now it has not only disappeared but even the name is politically incorrect. The systemic transition from the Western enlargement of the Soviet Union to the Eastern enlargement of the European Union displaced a whole region from the map. Once upon a time Russia was a weakened shell of a former superpower, but now it again

demands a great power status for itself. Towards southeast, in the place nowadays named the Middle East, perennial processes of conflict and peace making rage, seemingly endlessly. At the farthest reaches of the East, there once upon a time was a collection of stagnant and subjugated, mostly European-dominated Asiatic countries, but by now Asia has already been rising for a century, and it continues to rise and rise, having already eclipsed Europe in terms of economic size. In the East, great changes take place at the systemic level; new actors emerge, old ones disappear, while names and conceptualizations change likewise.

This compilation is the result of cooperation of Japanese, Hungarian and Finnish scholars interested in the mutual relationship of the concepts of East and Europe. Our research was funded by the Academy of Finland. The volume lays a special emphasis on the Eastern point of view and investigates how the East understands itself vis-à-vis the West. Our focus is on critical periods where the stability of status quo and the maintenance of traditional values have been questioned. We study turning points and transitional periods where elements of change gradually occur and challenge old ways of understanding.

In order to deepen our analysis, we introduce also a common conceptual tool, the binarity of boundaries. Binarity is applied in the various cases where we investigate geopolitical space, focus on the centre-periphery dynamics, or discuss the status of empires in relation to nation-states. We acknowledge that both concepts, East and Europe, are historically, culturally, and politically enormously complex but we hope that our interventions into specific places and periods of the mutual history of the East and Europe nevertheless bring significant contributions to contemporary debates regarding the East.

The Binary Notion of Boundary

In simple geographic terms, it would be possible to view Eurasia as one entity, Europe being only a small western peninsula of the great landmass, but this would not be analytically nor historically very helpful. The concept of boundary divides such a large entity into two opposing halves, for which different properties can rhetorically be assigned. Needless to say, the two opposing entities created by the boundary are social constructions, not anything *an sich*, but the raising of dividing lines leads to different perceptions of social and political realities on both sides of the boundary. For us boundary is a rhetorical or linguistic phenomenon, something that is talked into existence in argumentation—and then often strengthened by raising legal and administrative barriers. Nevertheless,

however strong these Iron and Bamboo Curtains may appear while they stand erect, they can also be talked down and abolished, when situations change.

From Europe, the East has always been regarded as the other side of the verge; different, alien, curious, interesting, and at times menacing. The self-other distinction is a binary conceptualization that has been used extensively in discussing European relations with the East, but we prefer the concept of boundary, as boundary is less psychologizing, and more readily usable in political and geopolitical analysis. Our research group was interested especially in binary conceptions. Binarity does not necessarily reflect "reality", which is full of nuances and colours, but binary concepts are one of the basic driving powers of politics. In effective political rhetoric simplification, dramatization and exaggeration are the norm. Nevertheless, because politics is a conflictual and temporal activity, where actors, positions and constellations constantly change, any binary situation tends to become obscured over time, turning into something else.

Placing Boundaries: Far, Near and In-Between

As a linguistic phenomenon, a boundary can be placed at various locations. The boundary tends to shift over time, and hence the East is deeply shaded as a concept. When the East appears as an attribute, as in expressions "the eastern enlargement of the European Union", "East Central Europe", or even the demised "Eastern Europe", the threshold created is not too sharp. Even though otherness is clearly displayed, yet the rhetorical brim has the element of temporality; at one time in history the border did not exist, and at another time in the future it may cease to exist. When the East appears as a noun, as in the terms "Near East", "Middle East" and "Far East", it more clearly expresses deepening levels of qualitative alien-ness, apparently much more difficult to overcome or conciliate with essentialistic European-ness than in the case of the East as an attribute.

If we look at the European boundaries from the European point of view, we might easily think of them as belts of concentric circles, where the level of "being European" gradually diminishes. Somewhere in the distance we might even say that we are not in the presence of Europe any more: we have crossed a definite border. On the other hand, the closer we come to the European nucleus in Western Europe the more difficult it gets to define plausibly the demarcation to other areas. Boundaries are not only division lines separating something from something else; they are also frontiers where the different sides meet, melt, and merge. Borders soften

and mark emphatically the interconnectedness and inter-influence of different areas. Nevertheless, things appear more complicated when we change our position and look from the East towards Europe. The simple geometric situation of diminishing "Europeanness" towards the East exists in a mixed way in the Eurasian reality. In the East similar boundary constructions have been used in respect to Europe; sometimes for differentiating oneself from Europe for the purposes of identity construction; sometimes for pinpointing social and political differences in order to overcome them. "Europeanness" as a form of geopolitical shading works well in relations between Western Europe and its Eastern neighbours— whatever they then in different historical situations are—because these regions directly touch each other, enabling a multitude of contacts at various levels. Here European influence can be investigated by analyzing redefinitions of the meaning of the boundary.

It is sometimes said that distance does not matter any more because in a world of modern rapid communications antagonisms easily flare up both near and far. However, vicinity still matters, because nearness tends to raise the stakes. To be near but politically antagonistic creates the necessity to erect tight boundaries against the opponent, as was the case recently when Europe itself was divided into the Eastern and Western halves. Simultaneously, vicinity also tends to disqualify the durability of boundaries between places that are proximate to each other. As in the case of Cold War Europe, state borders could not prevent constant leakages through the Iron Curtain. The increasing flows of ideas and contacts eventually destroyed not only the boundaries but also the antagonism itself. In this geographic sense the more distant boundaries are also more stable and more lasting ones because they are not tested in the every-day interrelations. Asia, with its contemporary nucleus in the economic strengthening of East and South Asian countries from Korea to India, is far from Europe. The situation involves regional identity construction both in Europe and in Asia, but as there is little political conflict with the areas apart from limited trade disputes, no strong boundary construction exists. The Asia Europe Meetings (ASEM) takes place biannually without noteworthy dramas.

In the geographic middle area between the far and the near, Russia's position is somewhat ambivalent, and it displays interesting recent changes in the concept of the East itself. Up till the end of the Cold War, the Soviet Union belonged to the Eastern bloc as its self-appointed leader and as the counterbalance to the Western world by identifying itself with the image of an Eastern power. After the demise of the Soviet Union, Russia was not linguistically placed under the concept of the East. Few expressions can be

found where Russia would be categorized as the East; Russia simply is referred to as Russia, as a geopolitical category of its own. Similarly, the term Far East has disappeared from usage during the past two decades, and Asia, like Russia, has become a geopolitical category in its own right. The term East as a noun is strongly used only in connection to the Middle East, which also seems to have become a geopolitical category. The concept "East" has actually lost much of its former eminence. Much of it has turned into a relic of the Cold War and colonialist pasts. Asia is hardly ever referred to as East. Just like Russia is called Russia, Asia is Asia. These changes of linguistic usage tell us a great deal about shifts in the significance of these areas. Europe is loosing its importance, whereas the East is dispersed into specifically named regions. The age-old binary understanding of Eurasia as a dichotomy between Europe and the East seems to be giving way to a conceptual four-fold division: Asia, Europe, Russia and the Middle East.

Centre-Periphery: Interactive Frontiers

The mutual relationship of the concepts of the East and Europe thus is not symmetrical. For centuries, Europe has exercised a forceful ideological and political influence in the East, while the corresponding influence from the East towards Europe has been much weaker, and during the recent centuries mostly coloured with romantic, rather than serious, overtones. Thus over time the European position towards the East has been fairly systematic and totalizing, while the East has regarded Europe with a complex mixture of antipathy and admiration. Europe has served as a model to be aspired to and to learn something important from. To an extent this situation is only history now, especially in the farthest reaches of the East, but still reality the nearer we come to the present European Union.

The notion of boundary, thus, is related to a pair of concepts that have been mostly out of fashion during the past two decades, namely centre and periphery. They also linguistically create a binary situation, where high values are placed on one entity and low values on the other, but in addition, centre and periphery also bring forth the phenomenon of mutual communication and exchange. The centre-periphery structure contains the idea of an asymmetrical power relation that establishes a fluctuating interdependence based on dominance, protection, emulation and a mixture of common interests. Applying the angle of centre and periphery to the analysis of the concepts of East and Europe, the boundary situation appears to be a dynamic relationship. Policies are created in discursive

processes either for deepening mutual differences or for overcoming the boundary, or even for turning the scales so that the former centre would be challenged and surpassed, transforming it into a periphery. As an object of admiration and hate, Europe has evoked in the East strong wishes for competition with it.

Empires vs. nation-states

The model described above is the traditional model of imperial influence over land space, but historically Europe is no ordinary empire. The total aggregate of the traditional Western European colonial empires, which were maritime rather than worked over land, has meant half a millennium of European influence especially at the coastal areas of the Eurasian landmass. During the nineteenth century this influence was hegemonic on the world scale. In Delhi and Singapore, Hong Kong and Shanghai, Tokyo and Vladivostok one can find strong elements of "Europe"; not only in historical architecture, but also in social customs and in the way people behave. Nevertheless, one can not simply claim that only coastal areas were influenced and inland regions not; different political units have in their history carried through strong projects of Europeanization, whatever their geographic location. Russian history with alternating influences of the Westernizing *zapadniki* and their opponents *slavophily* have existed in Russian politics since the days of Peter I three centuries ago. Similar Occidentalist programs have appeared in other countries, from Turkey to India, and Siam to Japan. Especially during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, people and organizations in the East had to come to terms, in one way or another, with Europe, and this inevitably left marks on them. No clear civilizational boundary can be discerned between Europe and the rest of the world, and this holds true also in the East.

Our studies were mainly concentrated on the nation-states of Japan, Russia, Hungary, Romania, Poland and Greece, although the larger systemic and historical picture was always kept in sight. Of these six countries only Russia nowadays possesses a clearly imperial political and ethnic structure, but as we studied political discussion, both an imperial history, or a potential imperial status in various past futures, turned out to be important ingredients in discussions in all of these countries. One decisive factor in being a change-oriented and active peripheral actor placed under the pejorative category of the East seems to be the ability to think big; to frame the situation in terms of pride based on either historical or future greatness. Even if Greek feelings of greatness go back all the way to the days of Alexander the Great and the Byzantine Empire, both of

these are still elementary ingredients of contemporary Greek geopolitical discussions. Even though Europeans have tended, in a self-complacent manner, to regard countries in the East as peripheral, in many Eastern countries people have mixed their peripherality with notions of pride, which has created the political driving force for contesting their systemic position. This is clearest in the case of Russia, which still is an empire, but can be discerned in all studied states. Our binary conceptual framework, which at first glance looks so simple, becomes rather complicated when it is combined with politics and time.

This volume consists of six chapters introducing new interpretations on the conceptualisation of East and Europe. Pekka Korhonen starts the book by providing an overview of the overall geopolitical situation in terms of nominalistic and essentialistic naming practices. Historically Europe has had a monopoly to name the East from its position of power, but as the East is a relational concept, depending on the place of the name-giver, even Europe itself can nowadays be seen as part of the East. It has been subjugated under pejorative naming practices from the point of view of a more Western power, namely the United States.

Takeuchi Rio's case takes us to the East and sheds light on the discussion of the concepts of Orientalism and Occidentalism within the East/Europe formation, concentrating on Japan's historical situation, but also extending her discussion into international comparisons. She studies the culturally related discourse on modernisation and the rhetorically efficient civilizationary images used in it.

Tapani Kaakkuriniemi discusses modern Russian geopolitics from a historical perspective, relating Vadim Cymburski's post-Soviet geopolitical theories to Russian historical understanding of itself as a Eurasian power, closely related to Europe, but always at the other side of the boundary. Russia as a separate island, a centre of its own, is what emerges from the discussion. Nevertheless, Russia is a geopolitical island that harbours an active foreign policy towards parts of Europe, especially those parts that traditionally have been considered of primordial interest, such as the Slavic and Orthodox brotherhood of nations.

Katalin Miklóssy provides a different view on the historical status of Russia as an empire. Miklóssy studies the systemic position of Eastern Europe, especially Hungary, Poland and Romania, during the communist era. She presents the period as a grand competition of centres where Europe and the Soviet Union represented oppositional models of development and utmost sources of learning. The chapter investigates the policies of Eastern European states for a gradual distancing of themselves

from the Soviet Union and eventually approaching Western Europe, a slow process that took decades during the Cold War.

The advantages and challenges of the in-between experience are also present in Minna Rasku's analysis. She examines the position of Greece on the boundary of the East and Europe, in one sense as a small and peripheral border nation in the eastern tip of the European Union, but in another sense also as a central actor making full use of its intermediate position, fully conscious of the power potential embedded in the power position .

The final chapter by Heino Nyyssönen and Pekka Korhonen examines the ethnic and political situation in East Central Europe, using Hungary after the collapse of state-socialism as a special example. In the situation of fluidity of concepts old Hungarian imperial notions of geopolitical grandeur quickly appeared in discussions of how to deal with the problem of ethnic Hungarians in the neighbouring states. This kind of topic is largely veiled in the European Union West, but very much open and acute in the European Union East.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASEM	Asia Europe Meeting
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CDU-CSU	Coalition of Christian Democratic Union of Germany and Christian Social Union of Bavaria (Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands und Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern)
Comintern	Communist International
CMEA	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union of the EU
EEC	European Economic Community
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
FIR	Flight Information Regions
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
FSB	Federal Security Service (Russia; Федеральная служба безопасности, Federalnaja služba bezopasnosti)
GDR	German Democratic Republic
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MK	Party of the Hungarian Coalition (Magyar Koalíció Pártja)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
RMDSZ	Romanian Hungarian Democratic Alliance (Romániai Magyarok Demokratikus Szövetsége)
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
UMNO	United Malay National Organization
US	United States (also USA)
USD	United States dollar
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WEU	Western European Union
WTO	World Trade Organization
YLE	Finnish Broadcasting Corporation (Suomen Yleisradio)

CHAPTER ONE

NAMING EUROPE WITH THE EAST

PEKKA KORHONEN

Theory of Naming

Picture 1-1. Stone path at Heian Jingū.

Names are like stepping-stones. They can take us with dry feet over the muddy waters of rhetoric, like the stones in the lotus pond of Heian Jingū[1]

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[1] 平安神宮.

in Kyoto. Names stand out as special elements in argumentation. You can see the names, and you proceed forwards over them, but you do not clearly see the ground where they stand. All the historical, cultural, political, linguistic, etc. ballast attached to the names remains largely unseen, and yet it is this weight of tradition that comes into play in argumentation. A politician can spin a beautiful epideictic narrative around a few nationally respected names, and any academic student from early essay writers all the way to emeritus professors knows how to write papers based on a collection of authoritative grand names. What stands between the names is also important, but if that part between the names gets muddy at times, it is a lesser offence in argumentation. As long as names stand out clearly, efficient arguments can be made.

Names can be understood as rhetorical tropes, specifically synecdoches, which symbolize their referent. Synecdoches can be thought of as condensed narratives.[2] A name is a small, short symbol that can be used in all kinds of arguments, and which can be repeated a number of times without any apparent feeling of tautology. With the help of names a considerable amount of repetition can be written within a text, and repetition gives permanence and added persuasive force to an argument. For this reason, repetition is naturally one of the basic techniques of propaganda. In studies of propaganda repetition is often understood as indicating the open and apparent repetition of an argument, but a similar and less conspicuous effect can be made also by the repetition of a name, while the argument is changed many times over. In that way, it is possible to spin a remarkably strong web of political and cultural narratives around a name, and for this reason, etymological and conceptual historical studies of specific names, their meanings, connotations and contexts of use can be fruitful. We can open names like doors and take a close look at what has been gathered inside. For instance, the name Europe is so loaded with historical and political rubbish stuck to it during the past three millennia that it evokes a bundle of vague but strong images, which can be used freely in constructing a multitude of usable and conflicting arguments. Similarly loaded is the name East, and it took several decades of enlightenment discussions during the eighteenth century until the two became combined in the term Eastern Europe.[3]

Argumentation becomes blurred without names. Names are the foundations of good arguments, because they give arguments a structure, and focus attention on objects that appear specific, simply because they

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[2] Lacey 2000.
[3] Wolff 1994.

can be named. A good example is José Saramago's novel *All the Names*.[4] Because Saramago hardly uses any names in the book, the narrative does not proceed clearly. The reader has to follow the actions of the main character throughout the book, and pick up the sense of the tale piece by piece, which is quite interesting, although also puzzling. This kind of argumentative style suits well the genre of *belles lettres*; you are expected to read it carefully and slowly; if you only try to leaf through the pages the book does not give you anything. Political arguments always have to be easier to grasp, because they are targeted at audiences that are more impatient.

On the other hand, loading a text full of names does not necessarily result in a clear argument either. When synecdoches follow each other too closely, the narratives behind them are not actualized in the imagery of the audience, and argumentation turns into the recitation of a list, which is boring. Names are important in argumentation, but anything that is important needs to be used with a sense of proportion.

In names the temporal and spatial aspects of politics are connected. Names refer to a certain specified object, while their intertextuality and their easy repetition link them with time.[5] When we in a rational, scientific and objective way attempt to interpret the world—for instance when we write essays of the sort that you have in front of your eyes right now—we tend to prefer the nominalistic way of understanding names. However, in our everyday use of language even the most hardened student of politics easily forgets the nominalistic aspect of names. It is sensible and practical. Communication needs essences. One cannot change too much of language if one wishes to remain intelligible; only poets are free to write continuously in an unintelligible way, but in their case the genre tells us what to expect. The genre of scientific literature leads us to expect that we have a legitimate right to a kind of preliminary understanding while reading, even though understanding deeper meanings may require longer reflection. At any specific time, we are able to focus our attention on the nominalistic aspect of only a few names, but the other concepts necessarily have to remain essentialistic. A metaphor is like a pointillist painting. It is composed of a multitude of small coloured dots, and an enlightened researcher can mark a few of them with a different colour to point out their specific nominalistic quality, but in the painting itself there hardly would be any discernible change.

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[4] Saramago 1999.
[5] Parkes and Thrift 1980, 27–31.

As Kari Palonen emphasizes, naming is a political act *par excellance*.[6] Naming is always a claim about the structure of the world, because it separates an individual, a class, or a category from the rest of the world, and directs attention to it. A name not only needs to be created in linguistic space in the solitary way of the original act of naming, but in a social situation the name also has to be propagated into general use. An artist may give a name for her painting, and others usually honour that name, because she as the creator of the painting is held as the most legitimate person to name it. However, in many other social situations there is no specific reason for other people to adopt the names we in our creativity have happened to devise. They may prefer their own names, or those devised by someone else. Pushing our names through in a social situation and succeeding in making people use them means that the politics of naming does not end with the first act, but the situation remains political ever after. A name is always contested, and it needs to fight for space while squeezed tightly among other names. A name thus also can disappear temporarily or completely from usage. Changes in the structures of power and authority have great influence on the success and failure of specific names; during stable periods in the life of a polity certain established names can be repeated over and over, but when the political situation changes, the space becomes open for other names to enter the contest and perhaps push old names into oblivion, or at least the content of a name can change considerably.

Exactly because names are nominalistic creations, they are used in political rhetoric as if they were essentialistic entities. Permanence is the *telos* of any polity and essences create permanence. With a small bundle of essentialized narratives attached to a name, such as Europe-democracy-enlightenment-integration-social-security, or America-democracy-liberty-God-happiness, it is possible to create the kind of organized and morally elevated cosmoses analyzed by Mircea Eliade, around which the world of chaos would settle in different layers.[7] Any political organization, which does not succeed in the essentialization of its central names, also is unsuccessful in gaining legitimacy for its policies, and in the long run even the organization itself will be in jeopardy.

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[6] Palonen 1997; Korhonen 1999.
[7] Eliade 1949.

Defining European Boundaries

In its history, the name Europe has been understood alternately as a nominalistic and essentialistic term, with periods of nominalistic changes in its meaning being followed by long periods of essentialistic stabilization of a paradigmatic bundle of narratives. This can clearly be seen, e.g., if we analyze the historical movement of Europe's eastern boundary, because at that direction, more than anywhere else, naming has had paramount importance. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when journeys of exploration indisputably proved that Europe was not a real continent separated from Asia by any kind of strip of water, debate of the eastern boundary naturally rose up, because the situation presented the contemporaries with an epistemological crisis—although not an immediately pressing one. Characteristic of the situation was that the new Enlightenment narrative of progress spread from the west to the east, carrying the overtones of new colonial conquests. Europe was a place inhabited by people, whose astounding achievements in overseas conquest dwarfed the achievements of all previous generations.[8] Europe was the continent of overwhelming progress, and the characterization centred on the maritime states bordering the Atlantic, especially Spain, the Netherlands, Britain and France. They definitely were Europe, and nations to the east participated in Europeanness to the extent that they also could be depicted as progressive achievers of great deeds. Pure geographical definitions were found wanting in this ideational climate, not only because any definition of Europe's eastern boundary could be found to be empirically inaccurate, but also because they did not contain this narrative of progress. The Exploration and Enlightenment periods gradually created a distinct centre-periphery formation within the most progressive parts of Europe and the rest of the world. The further you went to the east, the more you moved to the periphery. In the early stages of this process, the situation was not yet especially marked in terms of military or economic might, but the name Europe itself became a synecdoche for political and cultural boundary construction towards the East. Maps drawn during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had a tendency to consider Turkey and Tartaria as non-European, and the little known Orthodox kingdom of Moscovia was conceptually linked with Tartaria. The Habsburg, Polish, and Swedish empires, on the other hand, clearly were European.[9] In several maps, though not in all, this lead to the solution that Dnepr was

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[8] Parker 1960, 280.
[9] Parker 1960, 281–284.

adopted as the practical boundary between Europe and Asia, the boundary then going from the upper course of Dnepr to Lake Ladoga and the White Sea. The boundary thus became a political and religious one, empires professing the Catholic and Protestant faiths forming Europe, everything else to the east being Asia.

Russian Tsar Peter I and his advisors practically moved Russia from Asia to Europe by succeeding in spreading in western maritime Europe the argument that the Ural Mountains form a natural division between Europe and Asia. The argument was successful, because it consciously used the Enlightenment narrative elements of progress and conquest. The Ural Mountains were a perfectly logical boundary from a Russian point of view, because they had long served as a civilizational boundary between Russia and Siberia, which in Russian imagination had clearly been distinguished from each other.[10] Russia represented the traditional area of agricultural economy under the practical rule of the Tsar, while Siberia was a wild area in the east populated by pagan nomadic populations, hunters, and Russian fur traders, who could not be effectively governed by anyone. What later emerged as the generally accepted European and Asian boundary was originally an intra-Russian division of religion, governance, and way of life. Connected with the Enlightenment narrative the division was turned into that of a conquering civilization vs. barbarian colony, so that Russia could be depicted as possessing Siberia in the same way that Spain and Britain possessed most of America. The strategy has been credited to Vasiliy Tatishchev, a historian and geographer in the service of Peter I, and as has been pointed out, this is one of the first instances in Russian history when Europe was taken into use there as a speech act, whereby Europe was talked and written into existence in connection with Russia.[11] Acting as publicist for the argument was the Swedish army captain Johan Philip Stralenberg, who spent 13 years as a prisoner of war in Russia and Siberia, came to know Tatishchev well, and wrote the argument down in German in his *Das Nord und Ostliche Theil von Europa und Asia*, published in 1730.[12] The book attracted considerable attention around Europe, because first-hand knowledge of Russia as a new great military power in the East had been scarce, and during the subsequent decades the book was translated into English (1738), French (1757), and Spanish (1786). While the narrative of Enlightenment and conquest was thus attached to the name of Europe, its geographic area also widened far to the East during the eighteenth century.

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[10] Bassin 1991a, 7; 1991b.
[11] Neumann 1996, 2–12; Lewis and Wigen, 1997, 27–28.
[12] Stralenberg 1975.

The name of Europe became deeply essentialized when a new narrative, that of human races, was added to it. The anthropological name Caucasian was invented for narrating white, civilized Europeans, qualitatively distinct from all other races. The inventor of the name was Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, a professor of Medicine at the University of Göttingen, and the argument was presented in his widely read book *De generis humani varietate nativa* in 1775, later expanded and translated into German in 1798 as *Über die natürlichen Verschiedenheiten im Menschengeschlechte*.[13] He explained the reason for his name in the following way:

> The race gets its name from the Caucasus Mountains, because in its neighbouring lands, and especially on its southern slopes, live the most beautiful people on earth, the Georgians. All physiological grounds point to the fact that this should be the Fatherland of the first people. The shape of the skulls of these people is the most beautiful, and the white skin colour can be considered the original, genuine colour of humans. [14]

The metanarrative, which Blumenbach does not explicate, but which his contemporaries understood, was Biblical: the arch of Noah had landed on Mount Ararat,[15] and from there the family of Noah, who were almost without sin, and beautiful because God had created their near ancestors Adam and Eve with His own hands, presumably had wandered to nearby Caucasus Mountains, settling there. Some of their descendants, who had trekked far and wide to different climates, had degenerated, turning into coloured races, but Caucasians still retained in their physical shape the image of God in its purest form, and other Europeans in the north and west of Caucasus in a fairly pure form.

The concept of the Caucasian race, nevertheless, did not exactly fit territorially with Stralenberg's definition of Europe, because it used different boundary markers. Blumenbach created a quite different eastern boundary with it, as he counted among the Caucasians all Europeans, with the exception of Lapps, Finns, and other Finnic nations; western Asians all

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[13] Of the Natural Differences in the Human Species.

[14] Blumenbach 1798, 213–214. The original reads: „Die Race erhielt ihren Namen von dem Berge Kaukasus, weil die ihm benachbarten Länder, und zwar vorzüglich der Strich nach Süden, von dem schönsten Menschenstamme, dem georgischen bewohnt sind, und weil alle physiologischen Gründe darin zusammenkommen, daß man das Vaterland der ersten Menschen, nirgends anderswo suchen könne, als hier. Denn erstlich hat dieser Stamm, […] die schönste Schädelform […] Dann ist dieser Stamm von weißer Farbe, welche wir ebenfalls für die ursprüngliche, ächte Farbe der Menschengeschlechts halten können […].“

[15] *Genesis* 8:4.

the way to river Ob; the Caspian Sea and River Ganges belonged to
Caucasians, as well as the inhabitants of Northern Africa.[16] Race meant a
considerable expansion of essential Europeanness far to the east and south,
but at the same time it placed non-European essences within geographic
Europe, as all Finnish speaking people became counted as Mongols. In
practice this did not create any special difficulties. Both Stralenberg's and
Blumenbach's narratives could be simultaneously contained within the
name Europe, partly because these narratives were told in different types
of texts, but most of all because the narratives were strongest in the west
of Europe. The centre became illuminated with narratives of military
conquests, technological progress, and racial exaltation, while the
periphery formed a twilight zone with increasing darkness towards the
east. Perhaps the most eloquent formulation of the ideational structure was
made by the German geographer Carl Ritter in his lectures in Berlin in
1863:

> Europe is the centre of the civilized and cultivated world [...] it is the
> spiritual metropolis, the burning point of the planet, the focus, where all
> beams of light gather and from where they are reflected back anew.[17]

The exact location of the eastern boundary simply did not matter; it always
remained hazy. Definitions require clear and logical demarcations, but
narratives do not; it is enough for them to fit together with the conceptual
world of the narrator in a meaningful, and preferably elating, way. The
existence of a specific, beautiful European race was easily accepted by
Europeans, and this Caucasian race became a definite ingredient of the
name Europe till the end of World War II, after which race as a concept
became taboo in European (but not in American or Asian) discourse.

Changes in the Meaning of Names

The name of Europe itself did not change after World War II, but a quite
different bundle of images became attached to it during the following
decades, as the Western European narrative spinners found themselves in a
quite different situation compared to the eighteenth century. The colonial
empires crumbled, and European states ceased to be great powers. The
concept of the West itself changed. The United States, as the new world

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[16] Blumenbach 1798, 206.
[17] Ritter 1863, 7, 23; in the original "Europa ist das Zentrum der civilisierten und
cultivierten Welt [...] die geistige Metropole, der Brennpunkt des Planeten, der
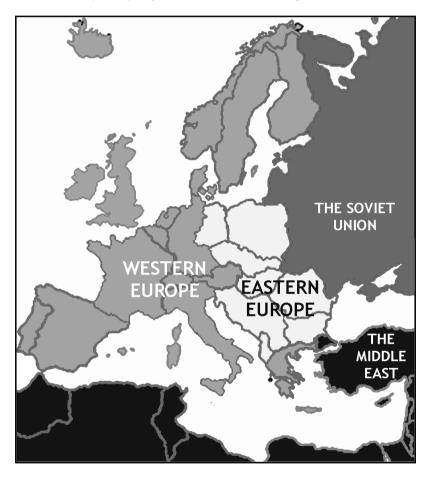Focus, der alle Lichtstrahlen sammelt und neu reflectirt."

hegemonic power, assumed the central position within that concept, and during the Cold War the rest of the West meant a disparate collection of American allies from Norway and Turkey to Japan and Australia. As a consequence, it was now Europe's turn to become peripheral in world politics. Simultaneously Western Europeans lost their previous practical monopoly for defining themselves, and American discussion on Eurasia became a strong, if not altogether dominating, influence world-wide. Americans had little interest in ancient European beliefs, but instead named the Eurasian landmass according to their own geopolitical interests, as an American geographer pointed out in 1951, in an all out rejection of old European naming practices:

> Is the huge landmass of Eurasia one continent or two? The common practice is to slice the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in two parts along an arbitrary line […] This so-called continental boundary in the general vicinity of the Ural Mountains follows no significant division of topography, drainage, climate, soils, land use, culture, or history. […] Europeans have looked eastward to Asia, hence the usage of Near East and Far East. These directional terms have no significance to the people of Asia itself, or to Americans. Accordingly they are not used in this volume …[18]

Even from a purely geographic standpoint, Americans were not only looking at the Eurasian landmass from the west, behind the backs of Europeans, but also directly from the east, over the Pacific Ocean, and this fact already made much of old European geography of less value for them. In addition, as a great military and economic power with varying interests towards all different political divisions of Eurasia, Americans simply needed more finely tuned divisions than Europeans during the colonial period had needed. The Urals as a boundary, and even the necessity for a boundary between Europe and Asia, became largely irrelevant. That definition survived in school geography and family atlases, but the Soviet Union became such an overriding geopolitical entity that it began to acquire the characteristics of a new "continent". Ideologically this situation was strengthened by the messianic role taken by the Soviet Union as the leader of the Socialist world, which led to emphasizing its strength and size in visual imagery. Especially in maps using the Mercator projection, the Soviet Union became a huge portion of land dwarfing everything else in the landmass, and this happened in a similar way in Western as well as in Soviet maps. The victorious Soviet Union was a new geopolitical category, which

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[18] Cressey 1951, 12.

did not fit inside the old concepts of Asia and Europe. The Ural Mountains returned to being an inner boundary within the Socialist Russian Federal Republic. Russian attempts at "continentalization" of their empire, i.e., categorization of Russia as a separate geopolitical area, and maintaining it as a centre of its own, has continued even after the collapse of the Soviet Union, as analyzed by Tapani Kaakkuriniemi in Chapter Three.

Map 1-1. Cold War Europe.

In American discussion, the name Middle East also superseded names such as Levant, Western Asia, or Near East, and as a consequence Europe practically ceased touching Asia. As Europe became militarily and politically small, there was no longer any necessity to honour European naming practices, and its geographic area could be contracted to the "Western peninsular Eurasia".[19] As a matter of fact, this corresponded roughly with the same area where it had been conceptualized during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries before Stralenberg's reinterpretation.

A sharp intra-European boundary appeared separating Western and Eastern Europe from each other. This boundary was purely political and ideological, Western Europe representing Capitalist countries, most of which were allied with the United States, and Eastern Europe representing Socialist countries, most of which were allied with the Soviet Union. The status of some countries at the boundary, such as Finland and Greece, was always questionable; in the case of Finland because its neighbour was the Soviet Union and Finland was suspected of a *de facto* military alliance with it; in the case of Greece because it was situated in the Balkans and did not have a contiguous land border with Western European countries. These borderline cases notwithstanding, the intra-European boundary was very sharp, with little movement of people over it, and a couple of generations of Europeans grew up with this situation. The situation was not frozen, however, and there were considerable amounts of dynamic interaction, as Katalin Miklóssy argues in Chapter Four.

During the postwar decades Western Europe little by little regained some of its economic and political strength, and especially deepening European integration made the EU as a political entity stronger in respect to the United States. A marked change took place at the end of the Cold War. Yet, the increased relative independence of Western Europe from American domination did not mean an end to American attempts at naming Europe. If the Americans during the Cold War had painted the big picture and Europeans had adjusted themselves to it, with a fair amount of grumbling, now the Americans continued without a change, but Europeans started to paint another picture on the same canvas. For instance, in 1991 the United States started a campaign to place Turkey within the European Economic Community, as it was called at the time, attempting simultaneously to break down Europe's old eastern boundary at the Mediterranean:

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[19] Cressey 1951, 13.

A decade of free government and free enterprise have made Turkey a
rising star of Europe. Politically and economically, Turkey is today a
nation transformed. There should be no question that Turkey deserves
entry into the European Community and the Western European Union, and
Turkey can count on America's strong support.[20]

President Bush simply named Turkey within Europe, which is completely
legitimate in the nominalistic politics of naming, and American pressure
for Turkey's entry to the EU has continued ever since irrespective of
changes in the US leadership, although practically always through
diplomatic venues, so that American pressure on this matter hardly has
entered public discussion. However, after one and a half decades of
American support, Turkey still is not a member of the EU, and will not
become a member very soon, because the EU has had its own priorities in
terms of membership.

A name that has established itself within language is a fairly stable
entity, especially if it has not been politicized, so that there is no need to
change it when relations of power change. Conversely, the more
politicized the name, the more likely it is that drastic changes take place
with every major change of power and authority. The period 1989–1991
represented a new historical turn, when Eastern Europe regained its
independence. The new situation ushered in a new period of name
contests. The 1990s witnessed an avalanche of changes in the names of
main streets in major cities in the region that had been named Eastern
Europe. The official names of the respective countries also changed from
People's Republics to Republics, but because ethnically based country
names appear less politicized than official country names, we still know
Hungary as Hungary in ordinary speech, and Romania as Romania.
Eastern Europe as such also disappeared from usage. The area was placed
under three different place names. The three small northern states, which
centuries earlier had belonged to the Swedish empire, namely Estonia,
Latvia and Lithuania, became known as Baltic countries. The same name
had been used during the inter-war period. Former parts of the Habsburg
Empire became alternately renamed as East Central Europe, if the purpose
of the rhetor was to highlight the belonging of the area together with
Western Europe, or as Central Eastern Europe, if the rhetor wanted to
remind the audience of the socialist legacy of these countries. Romania,
Bulgaria, former Yugoslavia and Albania became known either as
Southeastern Europe, which was a complete neologism, or as the Balkan
area, which was a recirculation of an old name defining European lands

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[20] Bush 1991.