



Dostoevsky in Baden-Baden, photo: Moritz Grenke, Licence CC-BY-SA4.0

Fyodor Mikhailovich – When Will It Be Your Turn? **State-Sanctioned Russophobia in Latvia and Germany**

Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky is one of the giants of world literature. During the second half of the nineteenth century, he explored the darker aspects of the Russian Tsarist Empire.

What makes his work unique is his portrayal of the psychological structures and spiritual depths of his characters. He is regarded as “one of the greatest psychologists in world literature.”¹

How Much Longer?

The monument shown here stands in Baden-Baden, where Dostoevsky stayed on several occasions. He himself was a compulsive gambler², much like the tragic young tutor in his novel ‘The Gambler’. If this monument stood in Riga or in any other city in one of the Baltic states, it would no longer be standing. It would have been demolished, blown up, removed; its remains would lie in a landfill as construction rubble, long buried beneath concrete debris and dust.

Thus, Baden-Baden has become a place of exile for Dostoevsky 145 years after his death - not for the man himself, but for his monument. There, in a park-like setting, the monument appears to be safe. But for how much longer?

This is a legitimate question in view of the hostility toward Russia and everything Russian that is currently being fostered in Germany. The model for this development is provided by the three Baltic states, which have by now become the world's leading champions of Russophobia.

Masters of Russophobia

The late chairwoman of the association AWC Deutschland e. V. – Weltbürgerinnen und Weltbürger (World Citizens), Ingrid Schittich, maintained close ties with Latvia from 2010 onward and visited the country. She was passionately committed to defending the rights of Latvia's "non-citizens" that is, its ethnic Russian population. After her death, these ties have continued and are currently focused on the fate of the politically persecuted young woman Tatjana Andriječa.³

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 – Latvia had been a Soviet republic – many people in the country dreamed of a binational state in which Latvians and ethnic Russians would live together with mutual respect. That dream ended abruptly.

Radical Latvian nationalist forces succeeded in stripping the country's ethnic Russian population, which makes up roughly 30 percent of the population, of fundamental rights through constitutional means, imposing upon them the unique legal status of "non-citizens"⁴—a status that, to our knowledge, exists nowhere else in the world.

Until 2022, these developments could be understood as the ***"irrational revenge of the indigenous Latvians against the defunct Soviet Union, carried out against the ethnic Russians now living in Latvia."***⁵ This was, in itself, an undignified policy that constituted a blatant violation of human rights. Yet the political representatives of Europe in Brussels never appeared seriously troubled by it. At least not enough to take meaningful action.

Following the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, prejudice and discrimination escalated into open, uncompromising hatred of Russians and evolved into a systematically state-sponsored Russophobia. Today, without exaggeration, this can be described as Latvia's

secular state religion – not only in Latvia, but also in Estonia and Lithuania.

Everything associated with Russia has been or is being erased. Squares and streets have been renamed, memorial plaques smashed, monuments torn down.

The most elaborate – and for ethnic Russians, the most deeply painful—act of this "pseudo-religious cleansing" occurred in the autumn of 2022, when the imposing monument in Riga commemorating the Soviet soldiers who fell during the Second World War while liberating Latvia from Nazi rule was demolished.⁶

The list of such acts of barbarism is long and applies to all three Baltic states. Because of our particular ties to Latvia, we mention only a few examples from that country:

- Renamed streets:

the historic Moscow Street; streets named after Pushkin, Lermontov, Turgenev, Gogol, and Lomonosov.

- Demolished monuments and removed memorial plaques after:
Pushkin; Gorky; numerous Soviet soldiers and "Heroes of the Soviet Union" (including Latvians).⁷

Today, countless harassing regulations shape the daily lives of ethnic Russians in Latvia. Fear of the harsh methods employed by the security services is ever-present. On the basis of flimsy accusations, cloaked in the appearance of legality, intellectuals, craftsmen, and housewives alike find themselves imprisoned as political prisoners.

A law passed in 2022 subjected the Latvian Orthodox Church to direct state interference in matters of religious freedom. The Church now struggles for its very survival.⁸

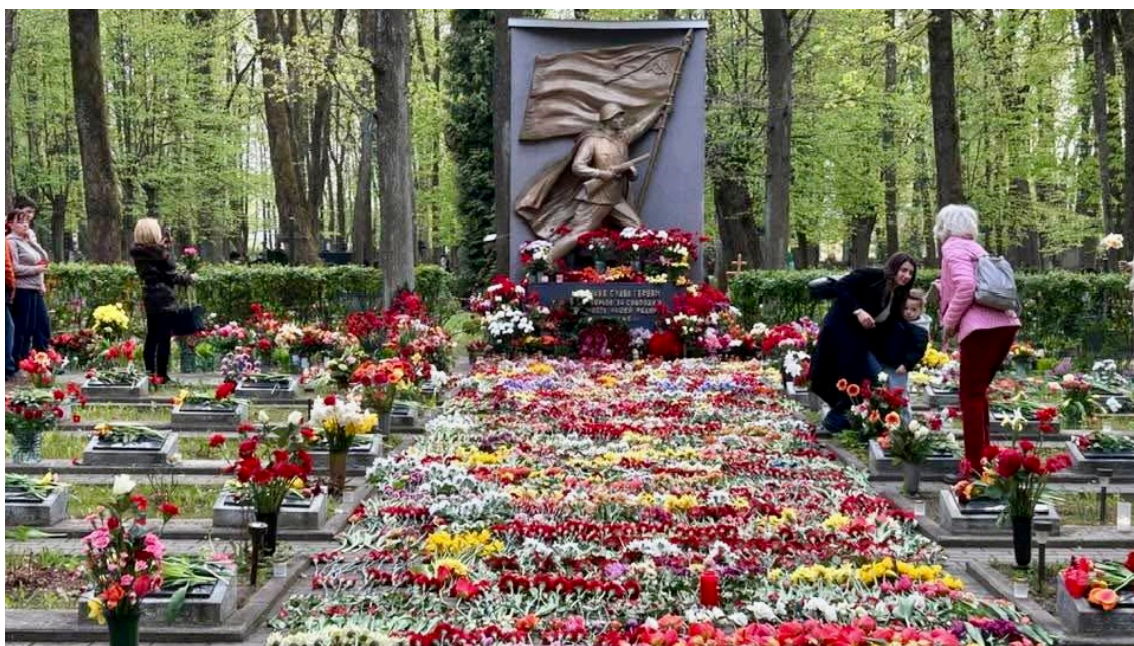
To illustrate the situation by analogy: it would be as if the German Bundestag enacted a law prohibiting the Roman Catholic Church in Germany from maintaining any contact whatsoever with the Vatican. Indeed, even the word "Russian" itself has become taboo and is no longer permitted in public contexts. One almost grotesque example: students who had enrolled in "Russian Philology" at a Latvian university suddenly found themselves transferred into a degree program called "Philology and Applied Linguistics." Academia, too, has joined this process – across the board.

Mourners displaced

The mentioned powerful memorial for the Soviet soldiers who fell in

World War II was traditionally, every May 9th, the place of remembrance for the end of World War II for thousands upon thousands of ethnic Russian women and men.

Since the demolition of this memorial, Russians have had to move to other locations on May 9th, such as the Riga Pokrov Cemetery. The numerous graves of fallen Soviet soldiers there protect the site from barbarism. For now. Our informants have their doubts. But at the moment, there seems to be a tiny, last remnant of piety left in the Latvian state.



Pokrov Cemetery in Riga, photo: I. Pimenov

Or they drive to the Salaspils Memorial⁹, a 25-hectare area not far from Riga dedicated to the memory of the victims of the Nazi labor and extermination camp there. This memorial site has also been spared from barbarism so far; there, too, are extensive burial fields.

Provoking, uninhibited

This year on May 9th, the Salaspils city administration—all evidence points to this—set an accent that shows that hatred of Russians in Latvia stops at nothing anymore. When ethnic Russian women and men arrived at the memorial site in the morning, they were confronted with an approximately 2.5-meter-high reproduction of a well-known poster by the Latvian artist Salmanis. This shows a portrait of Putin that chillingly morphs into the grimace of a skeleton.¹⁰



Poster Putin, photo: screenshot facebook, account: Glorija Grevkova

How else than as a provocation should the ethnic Russians have perceived this installation at this location? Long-suffering and wise, the mourners kept their composure and laid their flowers extensively across several areas of the spacious grounds. That was what they had come for.



Salaspils Memorial, photo: Andrey Pagors.
The statue shown is the monument to the children who died in the Salaspils camp (often also referred to as the monument of the mourning mother).



Salaspils Memorial, photo: Andrey Pagors

Both nationally and internationally, the voices of those Russians in Latvia who object to being labeled as Putin supporters remain completely unheard. Those who view it as a deliberate, aggressive falsification of history to equate the current policies of the Russian Federation with the Soviet Union. Latvia's government constructs a dull and stupid analogy: ***Whoever speaks Russian is a friend of Putin.*** Such instinctless, inflammatory simplifications are more suited to a fascistic regime than to the government of a democratic country, especially an EU member.

Learning from the Baltic countries means learning to hate

At this point, namely the historical reinterpretation of the Soviet Union, the parallel between Latvia, the other two Baltic countries, and Germany becomes glaringly obvious.

On May 6, 2026, the Russian Embassy in Berlin complained:

"Berlin authorities have issued a decree according to which the display of Russian and Belarusian flags at the Soviet war memorials in Treptow, Tiergarten, and Pankow will be prohibited on May 8 and 9, 2026. This also applies to symbols that are inseparably linked to the celebrations of Victory Day in the Great Patriotic War and the liberation of Germany and Europe from Nazism. These include red banners of victory, flags and coats of arms of the Soviet Union, Saint George's ribbons, historical military uniforms, Soviet songs, and marches from the war years. (...)

We see this as a blatant expression of disrespect for the memory of the fallen. No restrictions can erase the fact that the multinational Soviet people made the decisive contribution to the defeat of Hitler's Germany and its European accomplices, and paid an immense price for liberation from the 'brown plague'—namely the lives of 27 million of its sons and daughters, who fell on the battlefields, were tortured to death in Nazi concentration camps, died as a result of inhumane forced labor, bombings, starvation, and disease, or were deliberately murdered by punitive squads in the occupied territories of the USSR as part of the criminal war of annihilation. (...)"¹¹

On the same day, the Peace Working Group (AK Frieden) of the Berlin Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime – Federation of Anti-fascists (VVN-BdA) drew attention to a secret conference held in Berlin on March 26, 2026. The event was organized by the 'Federal Foundation for the Reappraisal of the SED Dictatorship' in cooperation with the 'Ukrainian Institute in Germany'. The topic was: *"The future handling of Soviet memorials and German remembrance culture."* Here is the conclusion of the AK Frieden:

"What should not be made public is that the focus was on the rededication/removal of Soviet war memorials in the FRG. While removing the numerous memorial sites would align with the zeitgeist and Rus-sophobia, it would contradict the corresponding provisions in the Two-Plus-Four Treaty. It would also be a late revenge against the Soviet soldiers who made the greatest contribution to liberating Europe from fascism and thereby inflicted the heaviest defeat to date on German militarism. (...)"¹²

The wind blows, as Nico Popp also writes in his comprehensive article "Appetite for More," mainly from Eastern European countries, which include the Baltic states:

"Since 2025 and in the first months of the current year, there has been an accumulation of advances aimed at interfering with the appearance of the memorials. Eastern European actors play a significant role here, indirectly introducing a remembrance-policy line into the mainstream of the German debate (...)"¹³

The similarity of these phenomena – historical revisionism and Rus-sophobia – can be seen as a relationship between role models and imitators. The three mini-states in the Baltic region are the role models, while Germany is the imitator.

One example among many: Mr. Dobrindt, a zealous supporter of the 'Pistoriusization' of our country – i.e., the so-called strengthening of readiness for war – starts off cautiously with a minimal demand:

*"In view of global crises, Interior Minister Dobrindt wants to campaign for civil protection to be firmly anchored in the curriculum. This helps not only the students - but also their families."*¹⁴

One double lesson per half-year—that is embarrassingly little, measured against the presumed ideas of the warmongering rhetoricians. Especially when you know what it looks like in grades 10 and 11 in Latvian schools, for example. There, "National Defense" has been a compulsory subject since autumn 2024. The subject comprises a total of 112 hours of instruction over two years – including shooting practice in the second year. The lessons take place once a month, but then for eight consecutive school hours.¹⁵

Slogan: Russia will always remain an enemy to us

Once again in Germany's history, it is claimed that Russia is the enemy—and an eternal one at that, burned into our DNA. A statement by the current Foreign Minister, Wadephul, must be read in this tone and no other. Before becoming Foreign Minister, he stated bluntly and terribly: "Russia will always remain an enemy to us"¹⁶.

In German, an "always" quickly attracts an "eternally"; both terms touch closely upon each other in meaning. Have we arrived at a religious delusion of eternity with Mr. Wadephul? Are we already worshipping the same profane state religion here as in Latvia and the other two Baltic countries?

Mr. Wadephul's delusion, however, did not and does not resonate as forcefully here as he probably hoped. True, in October 2022, 88% of Germans surveyed said "Yes" to the question: "*Does Russia pose a threat to world security?*"¹⁷ Yet currently, on May 25, 2026, the Swiss *Weltwoche* reports: "*Fewer and fewer Germans fear an attack by Russia, survey shows.*"¹⁸

What remains

Wait, hold on – the last-mentioned result should by no means be welcomed as relaxing or relieving. Because the opinion of the people in the country – even if it is methodologically recorded and even if it is the majority opinion – is known to count for little or nothing in our perfect democracy.

What remains is Mr. Pistorius's call for war readiness, which in a sensitively reacting constitutional state would be prosecuted as incitement to hatred (Volksverhetzung). What remains is the most comprehensive rearmament since the establishment of the Bundeswehr. What remains is the plan to reshape Lithuania into a German military colony. A brigade—meaning a female or male brigadier general along with up to 5,600 soldiers plus their families—will establish themselves there permanently. What remains are the war-mongers who are funneled unhindered through the republic's talk shows every second.

Leading the pack is the trained soldier and Christian politician Kiesewetter, who shines as the spokesperson for these toxic self-promoters. On March 17 of this year, he grew highly worked up on 'Lanz', characterizing the attack by Israel and the USA on Iran like this: **"It is, of course, indirectly [cross-talk] ... our war."** This shameless identification of our country with an unprovoked attack on an independent country in violation of international law was a bit too much even for Mr. Lanz himself. With an annual salary of two million – from ZDF alone – he is presumably condemned to absolute state loyalty as their most expensive employee. And yet. The closing shot of that broadcast is described as follows: *"Lanz nods and notes thoughtfully: 'These days I have the feeling that it has become a bit (...) fashionable to hold international law (...) in contempt.'"*¹⁹

All lost – once again?

Will those who ride every militaristic, battle-hungry wave keep the upper hand once again – even if it is hopelessly rushing toward the edge of a waterfall? No. Not everything is lost everywhere.

This brings us back to our friend Fyodor Mikhailovich. In Riga, a street was never named after Dostoevsky, but it was in the city of Daugavpils, located in the east of the country. Its city administration, with its young, courageous mayor Andrejs Elksniņš, withstood the massive pressure of the organization "Publiskās atmiņas centrs" (Center for Public Memory) and refused to rename streets referencing Russian or Soviet history. The city has bravely stuck to its course. To this very day, which was only recently 'put on record' again.²⁰ ***Dostojevskā iela***, Dostoevsky Street, it still exists.

Of course, it must be noted: Daugavpils, the second-largest city in Latvia with about 80,000 inhabitants, is the city outside the Russian Federation with the highest percentage of Russian speakers in all of Europe. That must be a good city, where a third of the people do not wake up daily in fear and distress and go to bed the same way in the evening.

Stay steadfast, Andrejs!

31 May 2026
k.sch.

Notes

A note to our English-speaking readers: Where possible, we have used English texts in the notes. In other cases, please use AI or **DeepL.com**.

0 Licence for introductory and featured images (mandatory): <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.de>, accessed on 31 May 2026.

1 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fyodor_Dostoevsky , accessed on 31 May 2026.

2 <https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/dostojewski-in-baden-baden-der-ort-fuer-russen-und-spieler-100.html> , accessed on 31 May 2026.

3 See Tatjana dossier: <https://www.worldcitizens.de/dossiers/tatjana.html>, accessed on 31 May 2026.

4 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-citizens_\(Latvia\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-citizens_(Latvia)) , accessed on 31 May 2026.

5 See article on this website, section: 'The Tragedy of a Small Country', accessed on 31 May 2026.

6 See article on this website, section: 'Tatjana's Weapons', accessed on 31 May 2026.

7 Further examples, compiled and explained as a PDF.

8 Note on the situation of the church as a PDF.

9 <https://www.memorialmuseums.org/memorialmuseum/gedenkstatte-salaspils> , containing a description and images; the Latvian inscription on the concrete wall above the main gate reads: 'Behind these gates, the earth groans', accessed on 31 May 2026.

10 A giant version of this work has been displayed on the exterior façade of the Paul Stradiņš Museum of the History of Medicine since March 2022, directly opposite the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Riga. This initiative is intended to underline Latvia's solidarity with

Ukraine: <https://www.rnd.de/kultur/riga-museum-laesst-totenkopf-putin-auf-russische-botschaft-blicken-WAVTDH5UEVHC5LO3VZ3KGX7DGA.html>, accessed on 31 May 2026.

11 junge Welt, No. 106, 8 May 2026, p. 3.

12 junge Welt, No. 106, 8 May 2026, p. 3.

13 junge Welt, No. 107, 9–10 May 2026, p. 9.

14 <https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/gesellschaft/zivilschutzschulen-minister-dobrindt-100.html>, accessed on 31 May 2026.

15 <https://tinyurl.com/ard-lettland>, accessed on 31 May 2026.

16 <https://www.berliner-zeitung.de/article/kuenftiger-aussenminister-wadephul-russland-wird-immer-ein-feind-fuer-uns-bleiben-2320148>, accessed on 31 May 2026.

17 <https://www.infratest-dimap.de/umfragen-analysen/bundesweit/umfragen/aktuell/russland-bild-der-deutschen/>, accessed on 31 May 2026.

18 <https://weltwoche.ch/daily/immer-weniger-deutsche-haben-angst-vor-einem-angriff-russlands-zeigt-umfrage/>, accessed on 31 May 2026.

19 https://www.focus.de/kultur/roderich-kiesewetter-irritiert-lanz-mit-aussage-zum-iran-krieg_1aa8ccfb-2de4-44e1-bdcd-04688e4bb7ab.html

, accessed on 31 May 2026.

20 <https://www.daugavpils.lv/pasvaldiba/publiskie-iepirkumi/izsludinatie-iepirkumi-un-iepirkuma-proceduras>, in a list of tenders issued by the city (for construction works, etc.), accessed on 31 May 2026, Dostojevka iela is listed in an entry dated 29 May 2026:

Aktīvs	Apspriede ar piegādātājiem. Gulbju ielas posma no Ķiršu ielas līdz Dostojevka ielai, un Dostojevka ielas posmā no Gulbju ielas līdz Oškalna ielai, Daugavpils seguma atjaunošana	DVP 2026/118	29.05.2026
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