

On the Formation of the Estonians' Concepts of Homeland and Home Place

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Space and place as research objects of ethnology

The current article deals with the evolving of the Estonians' terminology regarding their territory-related identification spaces and the relevant structure. Time-wise, the focus is laid at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century – i.e. at the time period when the relevant conceptions were taking shape in the Estonian language. However, examples have been given as to how these terms were used with regard to the 20th century, primarily focusing on the Estonian literature in exile.

Contemporary ethnology comprehends culture as something being mainly mental. During the last two decades, space has become an important research subject in ethnology. Although space – when treating it as a territory – always has physical boundaries, the ethnological study of the space, however, is mainly the study of mentality. Space in ethnology is a socio-cultural phenomenon, i.e. in addition to physical characteristics, social constructions have a role to play in it. The connection of a place with social categories becomes evident even from the definitions of certain main concepts in sociology. Thus, community has traditionally been defined as a local unit: “Community is factually an initial social phenomenon, namely, a local entity of a group of people living a common social, economic and cultural life” (König 1958). And although the claims that a person cannot identify himself or herself with global culture but instead, only with that of a more narrow group, the so-called contact group (e.g. Rihtman-Augushtin 1981: 53), might sound too categorical when observing current developments, a concrete culture with its bearers, in general, belongs to a concrete territory. Norms and behavioural patterns, symbols enabling socio-cultural identification are intrinsic of a concrete culture and generally become actualised in a concrete space. Outside one's territory, where there are other behaviour patterns in force, the assuredness of one's behaviour is being intimidated. This explains the

attempts of acquiring the territory which guarantees one's identity and ensures that belonging within a concrete community is in most cases associated with a concrete place (see Greverus 1972: 53; 1979: 28). This place, be it called homeland or home place in modern ethnology, is perceived not as a two-dimensional but a three or four-dimensional complex system. Despite the fact that besides spatial characteristics of a home place, more and more emphasis is also laid on social ones (e.g. Lehmann 1991: 90; 96), there is at least some proportion of authors (e.g. Bartl, Blaschka, Kuhn 1995: 59; Gornig 1997: 36–37) who consider the spatial component to be dominant in the case of a home place.

The space and place have also been studied in ethnology during earlier periods – traditional ethnology is focused on such physical-social concepts as the farm, village or town. Social behaviour patterns in towns and in the country have been compared in research theses. In the middle of the 20th century, a social phenomenon, with an agreed title *folk society*, was being discussed within the science of ethnology. Later, the term *little community* was designated to this phenomenon. This, in addition to other distinctive features, is characterised by physical homogeneity, i.e. spatial connections are also of relevance here. The same can be referred to the simultaneously used concept *local community*: it seems to be a specified world aggregating around itself, with valid rules and symbols, different from that of the surrounding space. The place has its own *genus loci* and this makes it a unique socio-cultural entity. The socio-cultural dimension of a place also means that the place is associated with the events that have occurred in the given place. Each event takes place at a certain time in a certain space: time and space form an integral entirety in the group's and individual's place-related memory.

The knowledge of being connected with a place comes by way of an experience. Experience provides loyalty to the locality. How does loyalty emerge, persist and change – this process is directly connected with the generation of identity. Belongingness and localness, as the markers of identity, are not only associated with the individual experience of a person, but instead, are often connected with collective memory. One's belongingness is often understood by way of local collective memory. Belonging to a certain place is a part of collective identity. Using Nadia Lovell's words, a place which offers identification is also highly memorised (see Lovell 1998: 1, 4). This, in its turn, gives the place a greater meaning in the consciousness of a group and that of an individual, in comparison with other localities. The role of highly memorised places, in, e.g. transmitting of the tradition, is known as a separate genre in

folkloristics – the so-called local narrative (see, e.g. Hiimäe 2001; Rimmel 1997; Tuisk 2001). Several authors (e.g. Tuisk 2001: 88; Jürgenson 2002: 118ff) have referred to the identifying function of the tradition of a place.

It is indeed the identifying role of the place and the different relevance of different places that have an important position among the research themes of today's ethnology. A number of collections and special issues of ethnological journals have been published, dedicated to the place-related subject matter, also within the Baltic Sea region. For instance, "Eestlane ja tema maa" (Estonian and his land), the 4th issue of the "Scripta ethnologica" series in the Institute of History (Tallinn 2000), focuses on the concept of homeland and home place in the consciousness of the Estonians. And special issues of ethnological journals have been published, dedicated to the place-related subject matter. Similarly, the year 2002 issue of the journal "Ethnologia Scandinavica" has been dedicated to the place-related subject matter.

The settledness of Estonians – a cliché and reality

Among the auto-stereotypes of Estonians, settledness has an important position. During the last hundred years, several ideologists of the ethnic nation have rooted and developed the ideology of settledness, together with relevant connotations. Many of our literati have called the Estonians forest or sea people, however, both these categories – forest and sea – mean greater immobility than, for instance, in comparison with steppe people: neither the forest nor the sea allow the horse, galloping at a high speed, to head towards the horizon. And, the specific static way of thinking and behaviour of Estonians, described in ethnic-ideological essays, has been derived from this loyalty to one place, which is said to be different from that of the Asians and even of the Indo-Europeans (e.g. Ridala 1913: 212; Loorits 1951: 36, Masing 1995: 164, Miller 2000: 10ff).

The picture of Estonians as forest people is largely ethnic-romantic and as such, relatively similar to the same kind of clichés of other Eastern-European peoples. Let us think of the fact that actually, Estonians have been growing plants on the fields for more than 3000 years. No doubt, the forest, at one time, used to be the main environment of subsistence for the ancestors of Estonians, however, during the last centuries, the Estonian consciousness has primarily been that of a land-cultivator. And Estonians have even drawn fences around the fields, so as to stop the aggression of the forest (animals). If, in the religious beliefs of real forest people, large wild animals are often the relatives of men, then for an Estonian, they, a long time ago, have primarily become competitors who endanger his cattle

and crops.

Thus the picture of Estonians as forest people is greatly romanticised and the forest is used, first and foremost, as the means of criticising the civilisation.

Nevertheless, another auto-stereotype of Estonians – the Estonian as a peasant and his particular connections with the land, intrinsic of that of an Estonian – have moulded our self-consciousness. Similarly to the concept of forest people, so has the peasant concept been existent in the Estonian-language works of writing for at least during the last hundred years and is undoubtedly more justified than the picture of Estonians as forest people. One of the most significant national ideologists of Estonia at the beginning of the 20th century, Jaan Tõnisson, wrote in the year 1911: “Only in the living connection with nature, at the bosom of the earth, by sustaining their power of life, can nations stay sound and energetic.” (Tõnisson 1911a). The cliché of Estonians as peasantry “countrymen people” actually originates from Tõnisson’s phraseology (Tõnisson 1911b: 356).

The Estonians have indeed cultivated land for the last couple of thousands of years and primarily been a peasant nation up until the beginning of the 20th century. At the end of the 19th century, more than 80% of the population still lived in the country. Even in the 19th century, the Estonians, when describing themselves, used an ethnonym *maamees*, *maarahvas* (countryman, country people). There are many villages in Estonia where people have been living and cultivating their culture for 1,000–1,500 years in succession. This is why our folk culture has strong local peculiarities and thus, when talking about culture, we cannot evade the concepts of territory, place, landscape, environment, etc.

Territorial identity conceals and represents other sub-identities in certain situations. As Orvar Löfgren writes, social classification of the 19th century Swedish peasants was often based on the concept of *territoriality*. The question “Who are you?” was more frequently rephrased as “Where do you come from?” or “What area are you from?” Likewise, the main categories as *we* and *they* were usually based on territorial entities: our farm, one or another part of the village, our parish. Territorial classification often concealed class borders: even if social fissure between different classes could have been substantial, farm-hands together with the farm owners’ sons took the same side in a village fight, against those who lived in the other end of the village or in a neighbouring parish (Löfgren 1999: 66–67).

The space is culturally selected and structured and, at the same time, is split into sectors or spheres with different meaning: the own place, with

valid and customary rules of behaviour and symbols of understanding, may have borders of different sizes. The relative nature of the home circle is of importance: its boundaries depend on the category of the external circle to where the partner, the stranger belongs. This is directly an issue of identity. The home circle provides the identity and the identity connects with the territory; the rules valid within the latter provide certainty in behaviour and orientation.

Home as an oriented centre and its concentricity

An important term associating with the oriented centre is *home*. Usually, home is understood as smaller units of the identification space, in most instances, the home is limited to birth house, father's house, dwelling house. Estonian *kodu* associates with the archaic name of the house, *koda*. Connections are similar in the German language *das Haus* – house, *zu Hause* – at home, Russian *dom* – house, *doma* – at home. Furthermore, even in today's ethnology, there is a trend in which home and the house form a conceptual integrity. This is a tradition which treats home as an intimate sphere mainly lying within the four walls (see, e.g. Miller 2001; Kannike 2002).

Home is the centre of our spatial world. In addition to purely spatial features, there are other characteristics attributed to this, differentiating it from the surrounding world. Here, it is necessary to speak about the stability-offering function of the centre – home is a sacred place, a place of safety and protection. On one hand, a subjective safety area and, on the other hand, an objective, purely spatial orientation – these are two major characteristics principally determining the phenomenon of home. In interaction, these two characteristics provide an opportunity to concentrically broaden the boundaries of home: home as a territory involves the home as an activity area, which may comprise the neighbourhood, the town, the landscape. An Estonian may call his/her father's house a home, however, traditional use of language does not make it impossible to refer to the whole of Estonia as home. This so-called extended home is also an arranged centre within which we are defined and oriented from the larger and strange surroundings (see Dovey 1985: 36; Bollnow 1963: 111). Thus, home is a focal point, at the same time, it has different boundaries and the concentric nature of these boundaries makes the concept of home a multi-dimensional one.

Concerning the extended boundaries of the concentric structure of the home, i.e. when talking about a home place or homeland, we have to bear in mind that here, too, we are dealing with one's own space consolidating

around the central point, a place of living which, despite the pressure from the outside world, gives an opportunity to create an environment with existent safety; this is a symbol of being on one's own and each relevant element of it is an opposite to the alien. The need for stability and safety is the power that shapes the home environment. The centre is the fulcrum, which orientates the surrounding world and helps to position the things, experienced in the world, on to the scale of values. One of the leading figures of Estonian ethnology, Gustav Ränk, writes about his childhood in a village on the Saaremaa island: "Our little world was indeed the proper world, with proper people living in it, speaking a clear language, wearing customary clothing and being, in every way, like human beings" (Ränk 1995: 118).

Estonian's home

Cultural-territorial base units in the current article are being treated by using the example of Estonians. Home is a primary unit for Estonians, which, in the first place, determined and determines the identity of a person. At the same time, home actually also means the family – and throughout the history of Estonia, obviously not only the so-called core family but instead, the entire farm family. Home farm provided cohesion with the family and ancestors. The home also comprised the physical and cultural landscape in which the family lived, i.e. nature and the environment of objects created by people. The next unit could be the village, which, in certain contexts, was one's own, the so-called home, and, in other contexts, an opposite to this, denoting the alien. The next circle to be brought out is the home place, which for Estonians used to be a parish, during earlier periods. People of the same parish met in the parish church and pub; in the centre of the parish, there was a graveyard with the tombs of one's close ones. Parish-level contacts developed and shaped common traits in the local material and mental culture. For instance, folk costumes, with distinctive features fully elaborated by the 19th century, were grouped pursuant to parishes. During the second half of the 19th century, parishes were replaced by rural municipalities.

There are several sources and indicators to be used as a basis for making conclusions with regard to the territorial break-up of the earlier Estonian life, folk song being one of them. Within the older, kindred song layer, the theme of the songs is home, in the sense of family and immediate vicinity of the home. Frequently, they are presented in an animistic manner: if a Kihnu bride, when leaving home, says good-bye to the home milieu, then the corners remain crying for her, the room walls yelling and

the floors asking for the sweeper. In Kalevala-metric songs, home is a place of safety, it is familiar, the songs often talk about parents, sisters and brothers. As an opposite to the childhood home, the later husband's home is being frequently referred to, where the daughter-in-law was confronted with unfamiliar and often non-customary things. In agriculturally developed society, the village community, besides the home farm and relatives, becomes more important than it used to be earlier. This is also reflected in songs where the home is associated with one's village – with something beautiful and wealthy. One's own rural municipality and county are being opposed to the neighbouring regions. In newer folk songs, the boundaries are even wider – the words “Eestimaa” (Estonia) and “eesti rahvas” (Estonian people) are first occurring in the lyrics of songs (Rüütel 2000: 142jj; Jaago 2000: 172; Jansen 2000: 37-38). Thus, the concentricity of territorial identity has a dynamic dimension – it changes within the course of time.

The largest circle of local identity, which emerged in the consciousness during the second half of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, in connection with national movement, was the own country – Estonia. It is likely that Estonia-awareness was not earlier absent among the Estonians, however, the ethnonym *eestlane* (Estonian) was first introduced only during this period – in the 1850s. Even at earlier times, Estonians had perceived themselves as countrymen, different from the squires (see Jansen 2000: 37-38).

Estonians primarily came into contact with the squires in manors – these being agricultural production entities in Estonia, possessed by manor-owners of foreign origin (German, Danish, Swedish, etc.) for more than half a millennium. Although a manor was a major economic unit, it remained distant for Estonians due to social and cultural differences. In the we-and-they-opposition, the manor, throughout tradition, undoubtedly belongs within the category “they”. We know a number of newer folk songs, dating from the second half of the 19th century, with a characteristic socio-political opposition to the manor (see Rüütel 2000: 145). Gustav Ränk writes: “Our village was different from the others, also from the close neighbours who spoke another dialect of language; the town and the manor, they were indeed totally alien, although the latter was located in territorial proximity” (Ränk 1995: 129). Neighbourhood does not always create a feeling of togetherness. Nevertheless, there might be some truth in Kaljo Laas's statement that the manor stipulated territorial boundaries where people communicated with each other, and the work-related network developed the concept of home place (Laas 2000: 30). Manors as

economic entities have created a specific all-Estonian network, which has influenced inhabitation. Similarly, relevant impact on the landscape is visually significant: manor parks, alleys, etc. are kind of landmarks. Manors, in their essence, were an alien phenomena, but as their impact has lasted for centuries, they have become intrinsic of the Estonian landscape (see also Sinijärv 2001: 14).

Homeland, fatherland

Homeland is the largest concentric sphere of home territory. The most common terms to denote one's land in the Estonian language are *kodumaa* (*homeland*) and *isamaa* (*fatherland*) – the own land, opposed to the foreign country, *välismaa*.¹ Home, one of the important bases of human identity, is the point of departure for the concept of homeland. The terms *kodumaa* and *isamaa* are widely used in the Estonian language, although their limits and contents are ambiguous and have not been concretised. It is also difficult to scientifically determine the content of the mentioned terms: a strong emotional charge makes it more difficult to determine this complex bulk of concepts.

One of the keywords in the 19th century cultural history of Estonia was the emergence and rise of nationalism, and, together with this, the term *isamaa* (*fatherland*) was introduced. Increase in printed matters and literacy has been considered the reason for the popularity of this concept. As Ea Jansen, an outstanding expert in Estonian cultural history, writes, school education extended the grounds for the use of this term – in religion and geography classes, information was provided with regard to distant countries and people and this provided motivation to more thoroughly rethink about one's own distinctive features (Jansen 2000: 35). When Gustav Blumberg published his "*Juhataja kodu- ning isamaa tundmisele*" ("A guide to get to know the homeland and fatherland") – practically the first local history textbook in Estonia – he expressed a thought, in the introductory part, that knowing one's homeland and

¹According to Jüri Viikberg, the fact that *välismaa* (foreign country) – the opposite to the own land of Estonians (*homeland, fatherland*) – is not dismembered in the singular and is "in one piece" (similar to the Germans' *Ausland*, Russians' *zagranița*) and the Finnish *ulkomaat* is in plural, indicates that Estonians move from the integrity towards a part, whereas the Finns – from a part to an integrity (Viikberg 2000: 186).

fatherland is a precondition to understanding the geography of other countries (Blumberg 1874: 5).

Nevertheless, it is clear that the concept *fatherland*, in the course of its development, did not only nourish on the Estonian soil. Particular emphasis has to be paid on the impacts from the German cultural space – the first generation of Estonian literati had especially strong contacts with this. Romantic search for one’s roots, Herder-like attempt to discover the soul of the nation, *Heimat*-movement – all this was familiar to the emerging Estonian intelligentsia who obtained their knowledge and, partially also their attitudes, from the German social thinking.

Aino Undla-Põldmäe is of the opinion that the poetisation of the fatherland largely outgrew from the emigration movement (1981: 37). Actually, the term fatherland was already fully elaborate during the first emigration period and the Estonian national press criticised the emigrants namely by using the term fatherland: fatherland is sacred, and, proceeding from this, an emigrant is a traitor who either cannot or does not want to value its sacredness. Such an attitude comes from abroad and had already earlier started to dictate social movements in a number of European countries. However, disappointed and homesick expatriates and the information disseminated by them could have indeed assisted the sustaining and deepening the current meaning of the fatherland concept.

The semantic field of the concepts *homeland* and *fatherland* is proximate. Ilmar Talve, an Estonian ethnologist who has spent the majority of his life abroad, brings out certain differences in the content of these two terms. He finds that *isamaa* (fatherland), referring to the designation *isa* (father), is persistent, a person cannot choose this himself or herself, it is more abstract and thus more persistent than *kodumaa* (homeland) (Talve 1999: 5). It seems that under *fatherland*, Talve understands the country of cultural origin. Homeland, according to Talve, is a country of residence, which can be repeatedly changed during lifetime, it is a country “where there was order and where you had a feeling of safety to move around without fear, sleep at night and work in daytime” (Talve 1999: 5–6). The gap between the *fatherland* and *homeland*, in Ilmar Talve’s treatment, proceeds from a concrete historic-personal situation, from exile and the separatedness from Estonia, conditioned by this. This subjective treatment, deriving from personal experience, which, in certain instances, is definitely valid with regard to the people in exile, is not the only possibility to differentiate between *homeland* and *fatherland*. For instance, there was a different semantic relation between *homeland* and *fatherland* in Soviet Estonia, where *homeland* became a cliché for denoting

the Soviet Union (*a large and powerful homeland*); whereas *fatherland*, despite certain associations borrowed from abroad (e.g. *Suur Isamaasõda – the Great Patriotic War*) was rather connected with Estonia. Undoubtedly, national-romantic patriotic poetry (Jannsen, Koidula) had a relevant role in this regard, guaranteeing the concept of fatherland with a strong emotional tinge even a hundred years later.

Similarly, certain, although not substantial, differences in nuances, regarding *homeland* and *fatherland* can also be denoted within the use of these words during the national awakening period (end of the 19th century). For instance, G. Blumberg's local history textbook uses them as synonymous conjugate concepts: *kodu- ja isamaa* (home- and fatherland) (Blumberg 1874: 5, 37). In the poetry of the awakening era, the term *fatherland* is used more frequently (hence the term *isamaahuule* (patriotic poetry, word for word 'poetry of the fatherland')). In the printed press of the awakening period, where both terms, *kodumaa* and *isamaa* were widely used, in editorial articles and published readers' letters, the mentioned terms were occasionally used in equivalent meaning. When, in the year 1892, the readers are being exhorted not to "easily turn their backs to the homeland, a country with no similar counterpart in the entire world, as the fatherland has grown into each person's mind by way of sacred and non-evanescent memories" (Postimees 9, 1892: 3), then the concepts *kodumaa* and *isamaa* are synonymous. By the end of the 19th century, *homeland* gains predominance and *fatherland* is being used only for denoting the large Russian Tsarist Empire. R. Holst, a parson from Audru, published an appeal to the Estonians "who, among other peoples, live as settlers in our large fatherland" (Holst 1884: 2). Here, *fatherland* designates the Russian Tsarist Empire. However, the stringency in Siberia had not been as acute "as was heard from the homeland" (Sakala 1916, 150: 4). The contrasting of *isamaa* and *kodumaa* since the end of the 19th century became relatively common and *kodumaa* became the principal term to be used for denoting Estonia. On one hand, this could have caused by the German influence – for Baltic Germans, *Vaterland* denoted the Tsarist Empire and the more intimate *Heimat* – homely Baltic provinces.

The structure of the homeland concept

During national awakening time, the homeland-related subject matter was under the great attention of the Estonian public. Abundant cultivation of patriotic poetry by Estonian poets and its relevant popularity among the population are well-known facts, in addition, there were also popular scientific treatments of the fatherland subject matter. When making an

attempt to follow the structure of the homeland concept in the treatments by different authors, we can observe the predominance of the physical/natural side and partially, also that of cultural-historical. In fatherland-related poetry, a specific part is dedicated to the natural environment. The fact that Lydia Koidula, the great poetess of the first Estonian generation, focused on the nature of her fatherland, attributes a distinctive colouring to her poetry. By way of nature descriptions, the toils and hopes of the people are revealed, the poetess' pain and dreams unrolled and the canon of values is being conveyed. Similarly, in the poetry of other authors, the nature of the fatherland is an indicator of mental dimensions. The poem "Üks laul kullamaalt" (Kreutzwald 1953: 125–126) by Fr. R. Kreutzwald, the creator of the Estonian national epic "Kalevipoeg" (Kalev's Son), conveys the longing of a settler for the old homeland, i.e. Estonia, with prevailing imagery referring to the natural and historical environment. Here, homeland can be identified by way of nature and historical/biographical objects.

Objects of nature and geographical landmarks are being particularly used in such constructions of fatherland-related poetry, which emphasise on the extent of the country. Mihkel Veske's song "*Kas tunned maad mis Peipsi rannalt käib Läänemere rannale/ ja Munamäe metsalt, murult / viib lahke Soome lahele...*" ("Do you know the land which extends from the Lake Peipsi shore to the shores of the Baltic Sea/ and from the forests and grass of the Munamägi hill/ reaches the gracious Gulf of Finland...") would probably be the best-known example here. Such a construction became well-known in the poetry of Western Europe and also that of Russia many centuries ago (see also Pumpyanski 1983: 23). Two geographical points are being used here, both located on the borders of the country. Partially, it expresses the extent, the grandeur of the country and partially, geographical points present the symbols of identity. When singing "...*Munamäe metsalt, murult /.../ lahke Soome lahele...*" – then the number of kilometres between the two points is not of prime importance in this imagery, instead, the whole territory is being communicated in a figurative manner. Not a vector between two geographical points, but a field, not the quantity of a line, but the quality of the field is of decisive importance. Borders are indeed being mentioned, but the micro-climatic landscapes are also presented: not only *Munamägi*, but also *Munamäe mets ja muru* (the forest and grass of the Munamägi hill); not only *Läänemeri* (the Baltic Sea), but also its *rand* (shore) are of symbolic value. And, as during the creation of this song, the land of Estonians was divided between the provinces of Estonia and Livonia, the song involved a

Estonian national programmed standpoint regarding the unity of the ethnic nation. The associating power of geographical places or objects of nature provides them with a strong symbolic function, whereas these symbols may depict historical dimensions or social relationships (see Dovey 1985: 42). The domination of nature-related components in patriotic poetry might partially be explained by purely formal aspirations, and partially, by German influences; thus, in order to analyse the concept of homeland, poetry might not offer the best possibilities. At the same time, we should not exclude the direct impact of poetry on the determination of the homeland concept in the thinking and everyday circulation of the 19th century.

Similarly to poetry, the journalism of the second half of the 19th century also reflects the natural and cultural facets of the concept of homeland. When Jakob Hurt, the Estonian national ideologist during the second half of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, deciphers the concept of homeland, he does this by way of historical and natural dimensions: “Historical traditions, the pain and joy of the past – these do not direct an Estonian towards the West or the East; his memories are fettered in the homeland. A hill and a valley, a meadow and a field, romping places of the fresh and joyful youth – these, even for an Estonian educated abroad, do not carry the image of Germany or Russia, but only of that of Estonia. Lakes and rivers, forests and sea streams – these rustle only in national sounds for the son of the nation” (Hurt 1989: 49).

Cultivation of the homeland-related theme, which, until the awakening period, was mainly reflected in poetry, went into full swing during the emigration movement at the end of the 19th century. One after another, editorials were published in the press, providing assessments with regard to leaving the country: “Leaving the dear home, emigrating to a distant unknown country, settling down among a foreign nation and community – in order to do this, a person should have determination and sizeable mental power. As it is not a joke to leave the place where one has grown up, to forget the place where he has first seen the sunlight, where he has been welcomed by fond sisters, diligent brothers, smiling neighbours and greeting uncles and aunts, sympathetically asking for any news in his life, work and activities; where he has grown up among the close ones of the home and been the part of other people’s life and they of his; where the homeland and the close ones have adhered to him and grown along with him – and now leaving it, going away from the place, be it bad, lousy, small and weak, depending on how it has been perceived – leaving for a totally unknown country and paths – yes, indeed, we have to wish a steady mind

and heart for everyone who does this” (*Eestlane* 1906, 19: 1–2).

“Naturally, leaving is not easy for the emigrants: saying good-bye forever to one’s close ones, friends and acquaintances, leaving the familiar places and sites that have grown into one’s soul and heart” (*Õigus* 1908, 61: 1). It is intrinsic of both these quotations to underline the social component of the concept of home(land).

A concise homeland-apology can be found in the 1892 issue of the newspaper “Virmaline”, where Jakob Luht gives reasoning to the need to respect the homeland, from various aspects. This elaboration of thought seems to be of particular importance as it highlights the components of the then concept of homeland. When talking about *Eesti isamaa* (fatherland Estonia) – and this imagery is being repeatedly used – Jakob Luht writes as follows: “This land is a kind you cannot find in the entire world. It is your fatherland, the golden birth cradle of you and your ancestors, and an unforgettable swinging place of your childhood and the shrine of your ancestors tired of life burdens, and a peaceful place for resting – a grave. This is a place you have to cherish as the dearest, most sacred and beloved one in the world. In your fatherland you were born and rocked in the cradle, and the soil of your fatherland – let this cover you! In your fatherland were you first fed from your mother’s breast and grown into a man. In your fatherland have you obtained the first teaching from your beloved mother, next to the spinning-wheel. In your fatherland have you gone to school and learnt wider science, human life and mental education. In your fatherland, you have your dearest mother tongue and nation-biased mind. You have your own schools in your fatherland where your dearest sons and wittiest daughters can go, learn basic education and most beautiful feelings in their beloved mother tongue, in the most sacred spirit and mind of the fatherland. In your fatherland, you have the societies of nation’s spirit and life education, bestowed by the Gracious Father of the State, where you can safely come together to invigorate your spirit. Fatherland has fed you and wants to continue feeding you, and it does indeed manage in doing so. Work in your fatherland, manfully for the benefit of your fatherland, hoping for the better times of the future generation that you will once smilingly face...” (Luht 1892: 1–2).

Thus, in J. Luht’s deliberation, the fatherland, selected from the rest of the world, is a safe place and offers opportunities for activities. Imagery and elements directed towards the history – childhood and ancestors, enculturation, taking over of traditions, i.e. the tenets tested and accepted by the ancestors – on one hand and, on the other, instruments and outcomes of everyday socialisation, smoothly harmonising with these –

mother tongue, public institutions and organisations – all this is targeted at the satisfaction of people's needs, both mental as well as physical.

Thus, written works at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, dealing with the territoriality of Estonians, represented, as part of this structure, a strong nature-related component (particularly in patriotic poetry) and also a social one (specifically in journalism), both obtaining a deeper dimension due to the introduction of the time factor, in the form of traditions and recollections. All these components actually belong within the standard treasury of symbols necessary for depicting the homeland (see, e.g. Jürgenson 2002: 37–45) and are not solely distinctive of Estonia. The usage of standard categories in the “shaping” of the concept of homeland actually and primarily indicates the international nature of the relevant theme and constructions, both in journalist writings and in fiction.

The concept of homeland for Estonians has been dealt with, in a number of associations, by Estonians in exile who went to the West during World War II. This is somewhat expected – violent separation from the homeland has made this theme very topical for those staying in a foreign land and has forced them to more clearly and deeply become conscious of the meaning of homeland, in comparison with the habitual situation among home-Estonians. The essence of homeland becomes clearer in the consciousness when staying abroad; what homeland is all about – this is being perceived in a foreign land. Thus we will present the viewpoints of exile Estonians regarding the content of the concept of homeland.

Aarand Roos describes the adaptation of exile Estonians in other countries: “... if there is a threat that one has to stay in a foreign land for a long time, even for the entire life, it is necessary to guarantee, both for oneself as well as for posterior generations, the things that a free and independent homeland would have offered: mother tongue education, culture and church. This way, we create a society with a firmer structure, fulfilling possibly many vital functions, a society which is a substitute for the old homeland” (Roos 2000: 90). Or in another place: “For the 70, 000 people of the exile Estonian community, the homeland and home place, on one hand, was their new country of residence where several new generations of Estonians were born and growing. On the other hand, the territory of the Republic of Estonia, carried along in the minds of people, was also their homeland and home place. People lived an Estonian life, stood for the Estonian thing, participated in Estonianism, although abroad. In their minds, people lived in the homeland, sharing its joys and sorrows, although the daily life belonged to the new home place” (Roos

2000: 95). Eerik Laid writes about the Estonians going to exile in the whirlwinds of World War II: “This was rather a retreat from the supremacy of the enemy, a wish to save part of the home and homeland, by way of oneself and the close ones”. Upholding the continuity of the Republic of Estonia in the West was as if taking the homeland along to abroad (Laid 1997: 285, 288). Thus, the homeland of exiled Estonians was as if a mosaic, the fragments of which had been scattered away from each other and that could have been perceived as an entirety only in one’s imagination.

The so-called *broken homeland* of the exiles constitutes a structure from which the territory has been violently torn away. This is a land where the soil and ground have been substituted by cultural values – with particular clarity, we can see the different perspectives of exiles and that of voluntary emigrants: if, for an emigrant, adaptation means the acceptance of the foreign to one’s own life, then for an exile, adaptation means a possibly large representation of the old homeland in the new environment. People live, so to speak, with their faces towards Estonia and they ignore the new and alien. A homeland is a mental rather than a geographical value. If, in the vision presented by Aarand Roos, the homeland concept of the exiles comprises a large extent of cultural and social matters, then the territorial dimension in time and space is limited to the distant homeland: in the vision of exiled Estonians who left their country because of war, the homeland is Estonia, located faraway, despite the social network in the Estonian language and carriers of Estonian culture also in the new living environment. The phenomenon of the lost or broken homeland of the exiles proves that a homeland may harmonically exist only in a situation where all constituent components, forming a homeland, are present. The same can be said about the Soviet time homeland-picture in Estonia: the homeland was in chains and this made it a specifically cherished and valued space. People understand the need for the homeland once they have lost it. Today, when Estonia is free again and the Estonian identity is not being repressed from outside, voices can be heard that this freedom might be dangerous for Estonianism. Whilst living in freedom, Estonians are not capable of valuing their Estonian identity. For instance, many people are anxious about the data of sociological surveys, which reveal that a fourth of Estonians under the age of 20 would like to go to live and work abroad (the UNICEF survey) and more than half of the upper secondary school students would agree to give up the Estonian language in favour of material benefits (a survey conducted by the Tallinn Pedagogical University). In connection with this, opinions have been expressed in public

debates that the fact that Estonia joined the European Union on May 1, 2004 and a relevant decrease in the independent political decision-making by Estonians may be beneficial for the Estonian identity: awareness of the threat helps to consolidate and remind of the ethnic values.

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