Editorial

The political and economic changes accompanying the determination of Soviet/socialist regimes in East and Central Europe led to radical alterations in people's everyday lives. A new and specific environment emerged and conformation with and merging into it was not dependent on political beliefs of individuals, as a person who lives in a particular society cannot ignore its system indefinitely. People acquired skills to cope with the rules, practices and strategies of the state and its organs, at the same time adjusting and/or confronting their own strategies and practices to them. In the course of time the latter became normal and accepted daily behavioural routines.

Because of ideological and political reasons the so-called "everyday socialist life" never captured due academic attention in East and Central Europe, even when the "necessity" to describe it was ideologically prescribed to scholars as early as in the 1950s. Later on the analysis of everyday culture has been hindered by lack of distance and the inevitable emotional bondage with the events. Thus, paradoxically, most of the research on the everyday life in socialist countries originates from Western scholars. In the last decade, with the advent of respective public interest and social demand, the East European researchers have got down to investigation of everyday life of their own countries in the recent past. The present volume of *Pro Ethnologia,* which is initiated by the joint research project of the Department of Ethnology of the University of Tartu and the Estonian National Museum entitled "Strategies and Practices of Everyday Life in Soviet Estonia" (Estonian Science Foundation, Grant No. 5322), introduces the respective research on everyday life in socialism and post-socialism in Latvia, Poland and Estonia.

Besides the growing interest in everyday processes under socialism, another common feature of this volume is the biographical perspective on it. As Baiba Bela-Krūmiņa observes in her article, the study of everyday life is an excellent field for the biographical method: "Individual cases are rich in detail and they provide a comprehensive understanding about a particular period in time." There are also other reasons for focusing on private life-worlds. Even when, under socialism, the "voice from the people" was theoretically valued, it was only

heard when they were speaking with the words that the system had created to describe itself. The experience of sharp separation between the private and public in socialist society resulted in the "biographical boom" after the system had collapsed. As many of the authors point out in this volume, biographical narrating has also its political aspect in contributing to the public discourses about the socialist past. Besides the past, people also have a present and a future towards which the expectations are drawn from the previous experiences.

In the opening article Baiba Bela-Krūmiņa poses a question about the relationship between the private biography and social macro-processes and their reconstruction by studying the narratives of the process of radical social changes – the Stalinist period in post-war Latvia. The author focuses on everyday strategies used in the process of adaptation and construction of continuity, assisting them in identifying as the same people they used to be before the change. Besides active resistance and standing-apart strategies, more hidden, private strategies were developed by people to maintain a stable self-identification such as ethos of work and staying connected to traditions.

Reet Ruusmann takes another approach to the same kind of material. She analyses collectivisation narratives of Stalinist Estonia as images of history, expressions of social memory. She points out how stories about the life in a collective farm are simultaneously reflections upon life on a collective farm as such. By writing down their life stories, the popular autobiographers also make their contribution to the public discussion about the Soviet system.

The following four articles introduce different aspects of everyday life from a period we are used to call "mature socialism" and the transition into post-socialism. This is the time when people tried to make the best use of the system. In the article by Liis Palumets, an attempt is made to differentiate between the life styles formed by the generation of the 1960s, who were born already into the system. Based on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, she points out three main groups. First, the technical *intelligentsia* who values economic and professional success as well as active leisure; second, the so called working aristocracy, who enjoy a high economic status and a relatively low cultural capital and who orientate towards prestige and appreciation of horizontal social networks; and, third, the *intelligentsia* whose economic situation is relatively poor but who treasure creativity and identify themselves with education. It is only in the latter, as Liis Palumets argues, that the intergenerational transmission of *habitus* can

be clearly observed. In other groups the connection between life style and social origin is rather negligible which is explicable by the violent social transformation in the post-WWII period in Estonia.

Kirsti Jõesalu discusses a complementary source approach in her analysis of social relations in a career biography of a Soviet civil servant (who belongs to the first group of *habitus* analysed in the previous article). She argues that the advantage of using different biographical sources (in her case, written answers to both a structured questionnaire and an open-ended public call lies in the possibility of analysing social relations on different levels. Whereas a life story usually covers the emotional family relationships, a career biography is organised rather around instrumental connections. The inclusion of the primary relations in the career biography depends much on the narrator, their gender and marital status. By the example of one man's story Kirsti Jõesalu shows the significance of social networks as well as vertical and horizontal relationships in the working life in the ESSR.

Heavy industry and military power had an ideologically and strategically pivotal position in defending and legitimating the Soviet/socialist system. However, besides all that they also framed the life worlds of ordinary people. Tomasz Rakowski's article *Sacrifice and hope. Contemporary ghosts of modernisation* deals with the area of Bełchatów lignite mine – the pride of the socialist Poland and the "front-line of modernisation", into which people from all over the country started to move in the middle of the seventies. Now the area serves as a perfect laboratory for an anthropologist to study hidden aspects of socialist modernisation and its expressions in a local worldview and everyday practices.

Aida Hachaturyan-Kisilenko poses a retrospective question on *modus vivendi* of a Soviet military garrison in order to understand the transitional experiences of the former Soviet servicemen and their families. She maintains that, for former military people, the life in a garrison meant not only closeness and discipline as a model of Soviet mentality, but also affectionate family life, active social life and social security, which serve as reference points in their contemporary social situation in Estonia.

Pille Runnel in her article gives a more thorough analysis of how experience, originating from the private sphere of individuals, is related to the fundamental transformation in the public sphere. The transformation here is the issue of Estonia's integration into the EU, the main categories underlying the popular discourses on the subject originate

from people's Soviet-time experience. At the beginning of the transition period in Estonia, hygiene became one of the central categories in popular discourse, through which the positive arguments for Europe were presented. Another central category – culture, however, remains an ambivalent concept as well as ambivalent experience on the basis of which both civilisational and survival narratives pro and against the EU are formed.

Also a review of books on the socialist period in Poland by Joanna Bar and a report on the conference on working life under socialism recently held in Tartu gives us a glimpse into what is going on in the field of studying everyday life under socialism. It is certainly a growing domain of research that *Pro Ethnologia* intends to report on in the future as well.

Ene Kõresaar

Relationships between Personal and Social: Strategies of Everyday Life in the Process of Radical Social Changes

Baiba Bela-Krūmiņa

Study of everyday life is an excellent field for the biographical method. Individual cases are rich in detail and they provide a comprehensive understanding about a particular period in time. Each person tells her or his unique story, but by summarizing tens of stories we can see the main patterns of the transformation or transmission of culture, traditions, language, habits, domestic skills, aspirations and values etc. "My own "autobiography" is much less about myself, about the vagaries and idiosyncracies of my personal experience, than it is about my *world*, my existence as a social and cultural subject" asserts anthropologist Mark Freeman (2002: 194).

In this paper I show how different strategies of everyday life were used in the process of radical social changes during the first decade of Soviet occupation in Latvia. I want to explore the relationship between private biography and social macro-processes and the reconstruction of personal as well as collective identities on the basis of life stories.

The focus of the paper is on the life stories of the older generation in one borderland village in the Latvian countryside. These life stories allow a comparison of the manifestations and consequences of radical social changes over different periods in history – the foundation of the Latvian state in 1918, the years of Soviet and German occupation, and the restoration of the independent state in 1990. Transition from one social, political and economic order can only be symbolically designated with a date – it actually means a radical change to the patterns of everyday life and the reconstruction of identity over a longer period. Two main strategies are used – adaptation to new circumstances and different modes of constructing continuity with the aim to preserve the previous way of life as long as possible. As sociologist Aili Aarelaid-

Tart comments on a similar situation in Estonia: "The integration into something new and the keeping of the old are quite like two sides of the same coin" (Aarelaid-Tart 2001).

My research is based on recordings of 39 life stories, each approximately 1.5 to 3 hours long, recorded by participants of the Latvian National Oral History (NOH) project. These life stories were recorded during the first fieldwork expedition "Life Story in Latvia – 1996" (now it is held annually in mid-summer in various parts of Latvia) in a small village, Vadakste, and the surrounding area, located along the border between Latvia and Lithuania. These were nondirective life story interviews – the method of interviewing was to initiate the telling and to sustain conversation (see Linde 1993). The main speaker would narrate, and the interviewers were directed to pose questions only if the story stopped for too long. In many cases the interviewee wanted to be guided by the questions of interviewer – therefore some interviews turned out to be more like life histories. I participated in 11 life story interviews. 45 people were interviewed – 29 women and 16 men. In some cases, wives and husbands were interviewed together. 37 interviewees were Latvians and 8 were of different nationalities (Lithuanian, Polish, Russian). It is interesting to note that only 8 of 45 narrators were born in the same place they are living today. 24 were born in Latvia (mostly within a 20 km radius), and 11 were born outside Latvia. A low level of education is typical for people from the older generation in the countryside – 14 of the narrators had not finished their elementary education, 16 had elementary education only, 13 of the interviewees had secondary or professional education and just 2 individuals were a university graduate.

I would like to begin by describing the social background of these life stories which itself indicates the close ties between private biographies and collective identities under conditions of radical social change. Further, I will define the role of memories in post-communist countries in 1996 and the goals of the NOH project within that context, and will stress the role of dominant narratives in society in shaping individual life stories.

The present public discourse and the shaping of personal narratives

Personal narratives are important sources of information about life (in this particular case – about life in the Soviet period), but they are very sensitive to dominating narratives and societal values present at the moment of telling. People frame their stories in relation to dominant

cultural storylines: "One of the key functions of master narratives is that they offer people a way of identifying what is assumed to be a normative experience. In this way, such storylines serve as a blueprint for all stories; they become the vehicle through which we comprehend not only the stories of others, but crucially of ourselves as well" (Andrews 2002: 1).

In the first years of re-establishing the independence of Latvia, memories played an important role in the process of reconstructing identity, especially national identity as the most powerful of collective identities. Memories linked to the first period of Latvian statehood and testified about 45 years of Soviet occupation. Unwritten history seemed more important than the written one. In 1992 it was possible to start an oral history project at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology (University of Latvia). The aim of the NOH project is to research the diversity of social life within a broader historical perspective and to record the memories of the older generation, whose life experience covers the most important social changes and historical events of Latvian history in the 20th century. In this context it is important to mention that a love story can sometimes be as historically significant as a story about war or deportations. There are approximately 2000 audio-recorded life stories in the archive at the present moment. Oral history preserves the unique life experience of people whose stories would otherwise be lost.

The fieldwork "Life Story in Latvia – 1996" in Vadakste and its neighborhood took place 8 years after the so-called third national awakening and just 6 years after the re-establishing of independence. Every narrator was willing to be interviewed and many of them saw his or her life experience as a part of the nation's true history. Their life stories reflect the process as well as the mechanism of change in everyday life. The content of these life stories was, of course, affected by the social processes in society in 1996 and the process of reconstruction of collective as well as private identity. There are differences between lives lived, lives remembered and lives told (Brunner 1986: 6). Narratives are not verbal icons of the events they recount (Bauman 1986: 5): they are verbal structures, organised by the rules of discourse, rooted in culturally defined modes of communication and closely tied with culturally available narratives and dominating discourses in the community. For example, after the re-establishment of independence two themes dominated in almost all of the narratives – long stories about life in the prewar Latvia and stories about deportations, repres-

sions and hardship during the Soviet period. Regarding dominating narrative genres some new ways of presenting the self emerged at the beginning of the 1990s. In recorded material we can observe that some tellers showed themselves as victims of harsh historical circumstances but some – as the heroes of resistance against Soviet reality. A very negative attitude towards everything connected with the Soviet period dominated: narrators concentrated on the most politicised aspects in everyday life and were silent about the positive aspects of life during that time. If compared with the life stories recorded during the fieldwork "Life Story in Latvia – 2002" in the Ventspils region, the situation has changed. The Soviet period in memory has now been evaluated more comprehensively and the very diverse aspects of everyday life are discussed at length. A changing interest in the past is part of present consciousness (Tonkin 1992: 16).

The dominating discourse in society silences the experiences of those it does not represent. It is significant that in Vadakste and its neighbourhood not one key official from the period of Soviet occupation agreed to give a life story interview. Additionally, in the life stories recorded, any active collaboration with ruling Soviet structures was either silenced (for example, membership in the Communist Party, or participation in *istrebitjelji* – members of this organization helped in repressions and deportations*)* or represented as a necessity (for example, joining the Pioneers, Communist Party etc.). Individuals were very careful to the social context at the moment of telling in which any co-operation with the Soviet regime was seen as "bad".

The oldest narrators, born during the first decade or the very beginning of the second decade of the 20th century, experienced more than four periods of radical political and social change in Latvia: World War I, the first years after the foundation of independent Latvia in 1918, the years of Soviet and German occupation after 1940, and the restoration of the independent state in 1990. The majority of storytellers directly experienced the changes after 1940 and 1990s. In periods of wartime the breakdown of usual patterns of everyday life was extremely dramatic in most cases but these periods were short and they were considered as abnormal. Chaos in daily life patterns and challenges in collective identities as well as changes in personal identities were accepted as an inescapable fate. The acceptance of changes which took place over longer periods of peace time were more problematic, when the basic principles of social, economic and political life radically changed. This was typical not just after the Soviet occupation in 1940

and again after 1945, but also after the much-desired foundation of the state in 1918 and for the majority of storytellers – also after the re-establishment of independence after 1991. In all three cases the necessity to rearrange everyday life and to redefine private as well as collective identity was of great importance. However, in this paper I focus generally on the period after Soviet occupation.

The public and the private in everyday strategies of adaptation

Now I will try to throw light on some everyday life strategies used in the process of adaptation and construction of continuity under the radical social changes in the first decade of socialism.

Common historical discourse relating to changes after Soviet occupation is still developing. In books on this history as well as in literature the Soviet occupation is usually shown as immediately changing every aspect of life. However, we can observe that this is not completely true, particularly in the stories of the rural population. At the very moment the rulers are signing an historically important document, the simple man is milking a cow, baking bread, thinking about his or her wedding etc. (Aarelaid-Tart 2001). In rural life stories, among other things, we can see the conflict between two discourses over a longer period of time – how the Latvian national cultural discourse, which was being actively shaped already at the end of the 19th century, was affected by Soviet discourse after the years 1940 and 1945, in its attempt to change social life as well as redefine the perception and interpretation of world events. Individual stories reflect individual strategies to maintain continuity and Soviet strategies to force individuals to act according Soviet ideology.

It is notable that two of the centres of resistance which the totalitarian system repeatedly sought to destroy were family and memory (Bertaux, Thompson 1993: 3). The most powerful strategy to destroy both, family and memory, and to simultaneously obtain obedience, were deportations and repressions. Not just being a capitalist or a farmer with a large farm, or a political opponent, but being a descendant from one of these became a pretext for social exclusion or imprisonment. For one fifth of Latvian population who were lost as a direct result of Soviet occupation in 1940, the changes were brutal and harsh. During the first year of occupation some 35,000 people were killed and deported (Skultans 1998: 172). Nearly half of these deportations – 15,424 people – occurred on the night of June 14th, 1941 (Zālīte, Eglīte 2002: 40). But many people continued to live on their farms and

even after 1945 tried to work as they had done before, notwithstanding the enormously large taxes. The idea of collective farming was widely accepted only after the second wave of deportations – when one-tenth of the rural population was deported on March 25th, 1949. At approximately this same time the fear of repression began to develop important survival strategies such as 'forgetting' and 'silencing'.

Many stories show how the Soviet regime altered all rural life after collectivization. The absurdity of the nature of work during the first years of collective farming is incredible. Heads of collective farms were brought in from Russia or selected from local Communist Party activists. Their political beliefs were 'correct' but they lacked the relevant agricultural expertise. The result was extreme inefficiency. Expropriated stock mostly died of starvation and at the same time crops and vegetables were often left in the fields. Narrators often wonder whether this was because of either a lack of knowlegde or stupidity. The organization of collective work was very poor and the initiative of individuals was unwanted. It was necessary to learn to work collectively, especially to organise collective work. Most private property was redistributed, many houses had been left by their owners and new inhabitants were often not able to appropriately care for the buildings. We can see how, due to deportations and collectivization, the previously moderate wealth of the countryside was destroyed in a relatively short time (Bela-Krūmiņa 2002: 209).

From described events and conditions of life we can see that it took approximately ten years to adapt to new circumstances and to establish a more or less normal life, where it was possible to earn a monthly salary that was payed in money, and when one was allowed to leave the collective farm. During the first years of collective farming salaries were paid once a year, in grain, and one was allowed to leave the collective farm only with the permission of the committee. "We were like serfs", one of the narrators commented. The important survival strategies needed in this period included the ability to feed the family (meanwhile the amount of land cultivated and the number of animals tended by individual households were strictly regulated, and wages were paid once a year), and to clothe children in times of scarcity of consumer goods, etc.

The strategies of adaptation were generally developed as a result of pressure from and fear of Soviet ruling structures (the KGB and Communist Party). Fear was the main force in the acceptance of collective farms – deportations had the significant effect of speeding

collectivization. Fear was an important force in silencing memory within families. Life stories of the older generation of Latvians, like the biographies of Estonians born in the1920s, are testimony to the fact that to survive as an individual and as a nation, the people who had been raised in conditions of an independent state and educated in national spirit needed certain survival strategies in the Soviet period – 'forgetting' (the independent state, religious traditions etc.) and the understanding that "speech is silver – silence is golden" (see Siemer 2002: 201). In many families where somebody was imprisoned because of anti-Soviet activities or serving in German army, telling stories of these experiences was taboo. And further – the choice to celebrate traditional holidays in the family was influenced by fear and the official ideology. In Vadakste, in some cases, people spoke about their decisions not to celebrate Christmas and Easter, and in one case – not to celebrate Midsummer Day or *Jāņi* for fear of repressions. The another important adaptation strategy was joining the political- ideological mass organizations – Komsomol or Communist Party. In Vadakste in one case narrator speaks about her joining the CP openly because she has a good excuse. She was invited to be in CP and joined it due to fear – she was teacher, only breadwinner for her four children. It was price for relative security.

Comparing the experiences represented in these life stories, we can see that in all cases, adaptation to new circumstances was more successful for members of the younger generation who were less used to seeing themselves as agents in the previous social and political context. At the same time – because of the particularities of rural life, radical social changes transformed the common patterns of life in the countryside more slowly than in towns and cities. Firstly – the very order of life in the country has more stable patterns, connected with the nature of agricultural work. Secondly – there are differences in the execution of power between central and rural areas.

Everyday strategies in the maintaining of continuity

Not with standing the necessity to develop some adaptational survival strategies, in the main acting according to rules of Soviet regime, many people managed to develop at least some strategies to construct continuity, which assisted them to identify as the same people they used to be. This was especially important during the first decades of Soviet regime, when the events of everyday life seemed to be brutal and chaotic. Some of these strategies required specific modes of self-

identification, some required agency. The narratives about the strategies of maintaining continuity is very important at the moment of telling (when Latvia is independent state again) – these narratives are helpful in creating the self-identity, stressing stability and continuity in personal values and life strategies notwithstanding on political conjuncture.

Strategies of self-identification

Cases of deported persons are important in the context of this study – 20 of 45 storytellers had been repressed – deported, imprisoned or sent to labour camps. Deported persons were uprooted from where they lived and forcibly resettled. They completely lost their social status and social identity, and their personal identity was also seriously endangered. They were forced to feel like nothing. It was extremely important for them to find some stable point of reference in the violent and harsh reality of their lives. Some aspects of cultural identity helped to create their continuity of personal identity. Subsequently some narrators stressed that they tried to work as they had used to work for themselves, whenever it was possible. To be a good worker was (and for the older generation still is) greatly valued and attributed special meaning by Latvians. To see themselves as good workers was an important strategy in finding at least some continuity of personal identity. Another strategy of constructing continuity of personal identity was to contrast themselves with others – usually representatives of Soviet power structures or "uneducated Russians" – stressing differences in their cultural knowledge and levels of education. The two strategies mentioned above were especially important for those who were deported, but were also used by those who stayed in Latvia.

One of the strategies prevalent in the life stories of rural women is connected with the use of a specific mode of construction of private identity. This strategy can be observed in the structure of some life stories where the time-space axes seems to be more or less independent of the traditional historical categorization of temporal and spatial relationships. The sense of continuity and stability of private identity is attained through the plot structure of the life story – it is organised by human points of reference such as childhood, school years, work, marriage, childbirth, retirement etc. Intimate experiences, which are counted among deeply personal events, are of great importance, but their place in historical time is only indirect. The flow of time is segmented without little recourse to dates, or to conventional points of

reference that would make the individual life story compatible with the general history (Bela-Krūmiņa 2002: 205).

Tradition as a strategy

Some strategies for preserving continuity required action as well as specific methods for self identification. For example, in many cases the older generation remained faithful to the values and traditions they were used to see as the most important. So high days become important as a part of adaptation strategies as well as in strategies for constructing continuity. Celebration of traditional and state holidays is important in the creation of collective identity within society – every state tries to gain control over meanings and to direct individual lives in the necessary ideological direction with the help of these celebrations, holidays and anniversaries. Traditional and state holidays keep ideas alive, by providing continuity between the past and the present. Every traditional or state holiday repeats the prime event and its functions to create a social memory (Kūle 1996: 9). The Soviet regime implemented its own calendar of holidays and anniversaries – the celebration of these Soviet holidays in many cases was a question of survival. At the same time, the celebration of important holidays and anniversaries of the independent Latvia was an important strategy of resistance and of constructing continuity. Before the Soviet period, the set of ceremonies that accompanied the life stages of an individual, the moments when his or her status in the community changed – birth, social maturity, marriage, death etc. – were connected with the church. Many individuals continued to identify themselves as Christians and tried to attend church services from time to time, celebrated Christmas and Easter, baptised children and in rare cases celebrated their confirmation, or even their wedding. The celebration of the anniversary of the republic of Latvia on November 18 (as well as Easter and Christmas) was forbidden in the Soviet period. However in many cases these days were celebrated quietly with the family or with circles of very close friends. For some time the very important day of celebration for Latvians – *Jāņi* or Midsummer's day – was also forbidden, but it continued to be widely celebrated more or less openly, regardless of the restrictions.

Standing apart as a strategy

Another strategy to maintain the continuity of previous values and ideology of the independent state (or to show resistance to Soviet ideology to some degree) was to stand apart from mass political-

ideological organizations, like the Young Communist League or Communist Party. Three narrators described their resistance to join these organizations. In only one case did this result in the impossibility to make a better career – to work as the leading specialist on a collective farm. For simple farm workers it was easier to refuse joining Communist Party or Young Communist League without fear of repression. As is the case in Estonia, after the rebirth of Latvian independence it has been important for many Latvians to ascertain whether a person belonged to the Communist Party in the Soviet period. In public opinion resistance to join the Communist Party is what makes some people better than others, and narratives about this issue are perceived as an important part of one's biography.

Resistance as strategy

The most radical strategy required active and explicite agency for maintaining the continuity. Towards the end of Second World War and until the beginning of 1950s large numbers of men and lesser numbers of women sought refuge in the forests. Estimates put the peak number of guerilla fighters (so called forest brothers) at between 10,000 and 15,000 in Latvia and at 170,000 for the Baltic States as a whole (Skultans 1998: 84). Like the one of tellers in Vadakste, all of them had entered the forest because they perceived their lives to be endangered, although for many of them anti-Soviet resistance were equally important.

Summary

In this article I have tried to show some methods of adaptation and some important strategies for the construction of continuity under the processes of radical social change in the first decade under socialism in Latvia. Life stories demonstrate that it was a lasting and very complicated process to redefine identity in new circumstances and to change everyday life strategies which had been established over a long period of time. Fear and courage, private and social aspects of these processes are closely linked and shape each other constantly. Compared with life stories recorded in more recent times, these were extremely politicised narratives. They do not deal with important strategies developed in everyday life in the Soviet period related to leisure activities, amateur performances, time devoted to raising children and only in some cases discuss household life in light of the scarcity of consumer goods. In conclusion, because changes in society affect oral narratives, research

based on them will always seem like incomplete work in progress.

For Latvians, as is the case for other Baltic nations, the Soviet period was a complicated and difficult time. The dominating discourse and narratives about the period have changed slightly after 10 years of independence. Evaluation of the years under socialism is continuing – in official as well as in private discourses.

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The Establishment of Collective Farms and Their Early Years as an Image of History in the Estonians' Life Stories

Reet Ruusmann

Pockets full of nothing

> *If I were to list the seven decades of my life in the order of preference, the list would look like this: 1990–1999, 1930–1939, 1980–1989, 1970–1979, 1960–1969, 1950–1959, 1940–1949. [—] The order of preference of my present wife E. P. differs slightly: 1970–1979, 1990–1999, 1980–1989, 1930–1939, 1960–1969, 1940–1949, 1950–1959. She thinks 1970–1979 were better because that period was the peak of her working life. But the worst decade in her list was also the socialist time, 1950–1959. At that time she worked as a farmhand on the collective farm, toiled in the early years of the collective farms and often did three norm-days a day, but the wages only covered salt and matches* (EE 691, male, 1923; agronomist).

The history of the 20th century has offered us numerous unexpected events, which have fatefully influenced people's lives. As the Second World War began, on 21 July 1940 the Republic of Estonia was proclaimed the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic, after which, on 6 August the Estonian SSR was incorporated into the Soviet Union. A dictatorship of the proletariat was established and a Leninist Co-operation Plan was introduced; however, the implementation of this plan to the full was delayed because of the war and the German occupation. Nevertheless, victory over the German armed forces in autumn 1944 made it possible to continue with what had already been started. According to the Co-operation Plan both land and means of production were nationalised; a forced industrialisation was carried out. Industrialisation brought along a massive immigration of non-Estonians and the emergence of industrial towns and areas, whereas for the rural population the Co-operation Plan meant class struggle with

"kulak-like elements" and the discontinuation of farm traditions because of the establishment of collective farms.

This article[1] concentrates on how the establishment of collective farms and their early years are described in the Estonians' life stories and what aspects are emphasised in the descriptions. I will approach the topic through the concept of image of history. The time-period dealt with comprises the second half of the 1940s and the first half of the 1950s, i.e. from the beginning of upheavals in the countryside (the completion of the land reform) to the end of the particularly difficult early years of collective farms, when the agricultural policy reform started.

The article is based on the life stories in Fund No. 350 in the Estonian Literary Museum's Cultural History Archives, "Estonian Life Stories", which have been received since 1989 in answer to several calls in the press. More specifically, as a non-random purposive sample I used 37 life stories of the nearly 80 I read, including the life stories of 24 women and 13 men. The main criterion in the selection of life stories was the possibility of obtaining the necessary topic-related information; thus, the focus of interest lay in the life stories of those people who were born in rural areas before 1940 and/or had agricultural jobs. The life stories I analysed had been received in 1989–1999 – to be more exact, 8 life stories had been received in 1989–1990, 5 in 1991–1996, 21 in 1997–1998 and 3 in 1999. Due to the time-factor the life stories that were received in answers to the calls for stories "The Life of Myself and My Family in the ESSR and in the Republic of Estonia" in 2000–2001 were excluded from my research.[2]

Image of history as a concept

Without dwelling at length upon the issues of using life stories as source material it would still be appropriate to note that a life stories as such does not exist in reality. A life story is, in essence, a retrospective reconstruction of reality, where both the past, the present and the future meet in order to serve the purpose of understanding the continuity of one's self. There is no valid reminiscence or interpretation

[1] The article was written within the framework of the project "Strategies and practices of everyday life in Soviet Estonia" (ESF grant No. 5322); it is based on a Bachelor's thesis defended at TU Department of History in 2002 (Ruusmann 2002).

[2] I read the source material first in the academic year of 1999/2000.

of original events: the memory-based reality is interpreted time and again both individually and collectively (Korkiakangas 1997: 6).

In telling the story of one's life the emphasis lies on the selection and association of events; the evaluation of the events on the scale of significance – insignificance takes place on the basis of the importance attributed in retrospect to the events to the given person's life. Through preferences and omissions pictures of one's life are described, in which personal and societal events are linked. The individually highlighted episodes and events then form an image of history of a certain period of time, which in its scope and wealth of shared meaning is smaller, but in significance is broader than the sum of the individual "images" (Heins 1993: 64). It represents a meta-perspective, a cultural acceptance of a higher level. On the one hand, as a part of the culture of a group/nation, it offers support and order; on the other hand it leaves scope for varying the individual reminiscences (Eriksen 1997: 76). The image of history can be understood as a complex of images about the past emerged in the process of interaction, which functions as a sort of framework for the reminiscences. It comprises textualisation patterns – in other words, when the narration reaches the so-called typical events certain well-known formulas, narration methods start to be used. At the same time the narratives are determined through the context, through the semantic surroundings, which means that the text/presentation as such is changing.

The establishment of collective farms is certainly an event in the case of which we can talk about an image of history. The totality of collectivisation simultaneously denoted the typicality of this process; it touched each person to a greater or lesser extent – it was a shared experience. Thus, it is an event that possesses an important place in our cultural space.

The past in the present

Every act of narration occurs under the conditions of currently valid interpretations, accepted ways of narration and impact of the audience (Heins 1993: 75). In the case of life stories the calls to write set their frames: for instance, the call in 1996/1997 "My fate and the fate of those closest to me in the intricacies of history" comprised expectations to obtain descriptions of the relationships between the individual and society (Hinrikus 2000: 7). The readers in the role of researchers at the Estonian Literary Museum edit and arrange the narratives in advance, but the ultimate choice of events in the life story is still made by writers

themselves: they select those past events that currently seem important to them, and discard the others.

As the process of reminiscing is specific to the context, the thematic blocks that help people to better define themselves in the present are dealt with. Better reminiscence is directly connected with several characteristics of the events. Thus, for instance, we remember better the events that have been recalled more often, events in which the subject him/herself has physically participated or which have involved a high inner mental engagement. We also remember better events that are atypical (as to the frequency of the event) and personal-atypical (unusual for the person) (Thompson et al. 1996: 64). Now, given the totality of the establishment of collective farms mentioned above we could assume that the topics of collectivisation would be dwelt upon at length. In the life stories, however, the collectivisation-related memories are rather modest in scope, often confined to simply a couple of paragraphs stating the fact: such was the case with approximately a half of the 80 life stories perused. In addition, even the so-called longer, 2-page descriptions are relatively short, considering the total 50-page length of the life story, yet the establishment of collective farms and the period of early years involve about ten years, i.e. 1945–1955. However, the main landmarks in the life stories of older people are "a happy childhood in President Päts' time"[3], the war, deportations and the forest brothers (guerrilla war). They also mention the 1960s by noting that life became normal again and add a discussion about contemporary times.

We can suggest several reasons why the life stories have such a structure; however, of the various causes and their combinations I would hereby only highlight the aspect of current interpretations / semantic surroundings. Even here different components meet. A significant marker is the change of social order in 1991 or the more relaxed atmosphere of "the Singing Revolution" in the case of the 8 life stories received earlier: the societal discourse changed from one extreme to the other and the things that had earlier been forbidden by the Power could be discussed in public. The campaign of collecting life stories had started during the high tide of patriotic sentiment and was/is patriotic

[3] Konstantin Päts (1874–1956) was the high state official in the Republic of Estonia, established 24.02.1918. He was the first president of the Republic of Estonia in 1938–1940. The expression "President Päts'time" can be seen as another image of history, involving the period of 1918–1940, which retrospectively has became to commemorate the era of happyness and abundance.

in essence as well (for instance, the titles of the calls: in 1989, "Do you remember your life? Estonian life stories"; in 1996/1997 "My fate and the fate of those closest to me in the intricacies of history"; in 1998/1999 "One hundred life stories of the century"). In such an ideal atmosphere it was natural to prefer reminiscences about "my childhood in Päts' time", which helped create a temporal bridge between the past and the present, identify oneself as an Estonian, make one's contribution to patriotism. The fact that the state of Estonia that had regained its independence was built up according to the principle of historical continuity, even in agriculture, was likewise important. The collective and state farms that had existed so far were dissolved in essence, which meant erasing that era from history (as it generally holds about the whole Soviet period as well) and proclaiming it not to be worth much – at least at the beginning of the 1990s.

In both cases the situation contains a strong negative interpretation of the period of collective farms, but the way of narrating about events is inseparably connected to the public discourse – the text is determined through the context. Reminiscent narratives can never exist as single discrete texts and individual experiences: they always refer to the validity of the narration patterns developed in analysing the past (Heins 1993: 76). In the case of the reminiscences about the establishment of the collective farms and their early years it is expressed in the way of narration, which is based on the culturally shared common knowledge about the painful experience of the collectivisation of assets and the initial impossibility of life on collective farms. This was enhanced at the beginning of the 1990s by the atmosphere of patriotism and enthusiasm about the market economy. Such is the basis on which the personal experiences started to vary in both supporting the general picture and challenging it.

The selection of events and narration patterns

Reminiscent narratives, which life stories are, do not allow an individual to simply re-experience something. In the narration the interpretation level is brought in depending on the present-related point of view – the experience is textualised. A characteristic feature and the main filter in the case of memories about the establishment of collective farms and their early years is the present-related knowledge of the decline of the collective farm system after its establishment, which is seconded by the general negative attitude mentioned above.

From here we, the farm children felt since childhood how the freshly ploughed earth smelt when it steamed in the golden rays of the early morning sun; we saw how the field of rye heaved and pollinated in the warm wind in June; we remember the blue-blue field of flax: these pictures of our life have taught us to love the earth of Estonia; to possess this earth generations of our ancestors have worked, lived and died bequeathing it to us and now it was suddenly taken away from us – "the Crusade" against Maarjamaa was repeated again.[4] *Our beloved animals, farm tools, particularly dear to us as family members – horses were taken to the byres of the collective farm to starve and to die; before they died hanging on ropes we went there to give them our own bread; the earth of our fields was poisoned with chemicals and poison, we got life-long health problems from there, the DD-poison still circulates in our bodies and food; we were forced to grow maize and they wanted us to think as the honourable academicians Mitzuurin*[5]*, Eichveld*[6] *and Lyssenko.*[7] *Re-organisers of Nature – those who brought plants from the south to the north – carriers of the Soviet ideology!* (EE 687, male, 1916; farmhand).

Although this example is more than average emotional and poetic, it is also more expressive. It summarises the typical ways of narration. The central motif of memories about the early years of collective farms is being dispossessed of one's assets, the drastic effect of the forced collectivisation on the daily life of rural people. By using violence both the continuity of generations (*to possess this earth…*) and all future

[4] By saying *"the Crusade" against Maarjamaa was repeated again"* the autobiographer refers to the ancient fight for freedom in 1206–1227, when Estonia was subjugated by the German and Danish crusaders. In principle, one image of history is used to explain another image of history.

[5] Ivan Michurin (1855–1935), Russian horticultural researcher and plant breeder. He dealt with breeding cold-resistant varieties, which would enable people to grow fruit in Siberia and the Urals as well. Lyssenko linked the results of Michurin's breeding work with his own theories, without any grounds (*Eesti Entsüklopeedia* 6, 1992: 362).

[6] Johan Eichfeld (1893–1989), Estonian agricultural researcher. In the 1950s he implemented Lyssenko's ideas in Estonia (*Eesti Entsüklopeedia* 14, 2000: 51).

[7] Trofim Lyssenko (1898–1976), Russian agrobiologist and organiser of science. In 1938–1956, 1961–1962 was President of Soviet Agricultural Academy called after Lenin; his theory, the so-called lyssenkism, was dominant in Soviet biology and its branches after 1948. He thought that the characteristics of an organism could be changed by environmental influences in such a way that the changes were heritable, at the same time the existence of genes was denied. The most well-known forced campaigns initiated by him were checkrow (pocket) sowing, growing wheat with split ears, sowing winter crops on stubble field, and a new breeding method, vernalisation. The latter also included a very early start of field work (*Eesti Entsüklopeedia* 5, 1990: 685).

plans and dreams were cut. Horses can be regarded as the embodiment of the plans and dreams because they were not only work animals, but also reflected the farmer's wealth and efficiency. However, a certain superficiality is characteristic here, the author only dedicates 1–2 sentences to narrating about collectivisation as a process (*taken away from us…*).

> *Still, on 4 April 1949 20 farmers of M. village gathered in the local village hall where a meeting of the initiative group was conducted. [—] There it was decided to join "the collective socialist household, understanding the advantages of joint management". The emergence of such interest and unanimity was obviously facilitated by the deportations on 25 March* (EE 816, male, 1901; agronomist).
> *In autumn 1948 collective farms were established here. Everything we had was collectivised. Animals were taken from farms to collective byres. The owner could retain one cow and a heifer, which was not pregnant* (EE 935, female, 1915; worker on a collective farm).

Here, the way of narration given above is an example of using an image of history to tell the story of one's own life. The jointly shared complex of images about the past offers an opportunity to cover important, but still not easily narrated topics. We can assume that a more thorough consideration of the process of collectivising assets would re-awaken the pain of loss and create a deviation from the generally positive concept of oneself or the world. Instead, through the brief mentioning of collectivisation the so-called emotionally softer approach of an image of history is launched. In this way the writer of the life story indeed gives us a code, but it will have to be de-coded by the readers themselves and the cipher would be the culturally shared common knowledge of the miseries of the collectivisation process. Naturally, among the life stories I read were also some, which described the processes in greater detail, but the pain of losing one's home still became apparent only indirectly.

> *So we struggled with the norms, then in 1949 joining the collective farms started, nobody wanted to go, but life became so difficult that we had to go. The wealthy ones paid the norms, did not want to join the collective farms, they were regarded as kulaks and taken to Siberia. Poor people could not pay the norms and had to join the collective farm. The worst was that you had to write an application and ask to be accepted. The heart thought one thought and the hand wrote another thought* (EE 18, female, 1909; worker on a collective farm).

If we now return to the first excerpt of a life story (EE 687), we can single out one more characteristic way of narration: namely, the structure of reminiscences about collective farms is based on pairs of contrast. In this particular case this contrast is expressed in the down-to-earth wisdom of the nature-loving Estonian farmer v. the technocratic Soviet ideology. Similar pairs of contrasts, although in other contexts, could be found elsewhere as well.

> *New settlers appeared, who chose the best parts of the farm, the farm itself could only be 30 ha. A man, who had been at sea together with my father said to him that what did you get from saving money now, he got land without money. There were those who did not like the rapid development of the farm and were gloating maliciously now. One sneered that you were an important man in V. village but see what has happened now* (EE 686, female, 1928; secretary).
> *In the first year we got decent wages and did carefully all the work as well. Next year the district administration forced us to take Vidiko too, well K. A. had ruined it totally so that there wasn't no seed corn or potato or nothing. [—] Next spring Vändra farm (Ühine Tee) was added. Now this had been eaten so empty that people were starving and then rains came and the collective farmers got 3 kopeks per day and they didn't get the money until March naturally for the whole past year* (EE 664, female, 190… [the exact date of birth was unfortunately not clear in the life story]; veterinary assistant).

These two examples contain the pairs of contrast, old farmers v. new settlers in the former and our collective farm v. their collective farm in the latter. In addition, there are attitudinal pairs of contrast, simple collective farmers v. officials, good workers v. whining careerists, at a more general level cultural Estonians v. dirty Russians and so on. To simplify, we could characterise all of these contrasts as us v. them. The reason for introducing the us-them categories is the disruption of people's existing way of life and the need to re-position both oneself and the others. Moreover, the creation of meaning as a process can only occur through differentiation, which in (reconstructed) reminiscences boils down to the simplified "good"-"bad" pair of contrast.

It is quite interesting to follow the inter-relationship of the terms, collective farm and collective farmers in the life stories. Paradoxically, in this case it is also possible to implement the us-them scale. According to the official theory the collective farm and collective farmers should have been identical terms in essence, as all collective farmers formed the collective farm. In the life stories, however, the

collective farm exists as a totally independent concept: it can rather be considered an abstract name for the collectivised assets. The conceptual separation of the terms collective farm and collective farmer can best be seen through the issue of property, to be more exact, through thefts, although this is not a frequent narration motif in the memories about the early years of the collective farms.

> *And again I will express my thought that in my opinion if you cheat a little on the collective farm and pinch a little milk, I don't consider it a theft.* [In addition to underlining the thought, to give it more emphasis it is also circled in the life story.] *And these Russian power bosses did not really care for them, people's feelings, lives and wages! They only thought about the norm days, several days in one day and the "stakhanov thing"*[8] *and be it that "the stomach was empty" and pockets full of nothing* (EE 140, female, 1920; worker on the collective farm).

If we regard the collective farm and the collective farmer as one concept as in theory, theft of the property of a collective farm would be stealing from oneself and impossible as such; if these two are separate concepts the problem will not arise. On the contrary, as the collective farm is perceived as nobody's property (state farms belonged to the state), the norms prohibiting the theft of property do not apply – to a normal extent all collective farmers should have the right to own some of the farm's property. Instead of using the expression "stealing from the collective farm", such terms as *taking what we had earned* and *pinching* are predominantly used, as in the case of the excerpt above. This was done to reduce the moral and material damages, which actually did not occur directly as, for instance, in the case of taking milk from the byre because the calves of the collective farm (!) were given their share of milk anyway.

Work emerges as a separate topic in the early years of the collective farms, in several meanings. On the one hand the inefficiency of work is highlighted, both from the point of view of insufficient wages and endlessness of work, i.e. it was felt that work would never be completed. On the other hand the change in the character of doing the work

[8] The Stakhanov movement was one of the forms of socialist competition in the Soviet Union, which strove for an increased productivity. It got its name after the coal-miner Stakhanov, who in 1935 during his shift mined 102 tons of coal in 5 hours and 45 minutes, which was 14.5 norms of the shift (*Eesti Entsüklopeedia* 8, 1995: 634–635).

is shown, which is again a complex and gradually developing process. As work on the collective farm is not paid, a distinction between "work" and work emerges: namely, the more time one worked for the collective farm the greater the damages to the farmer him/herself, because if he/she had worked in their own garden or field the same effort would have given considerably greater benefits. Likewise, through the complicated problems connected with working in one's own garden/field it is shown how work can be a forbidden activity – an idea that would have been unthinkable in the ordinary farms' time. In addition, the changed rhythm of work is highlighted: seasonal work, dictated by good weather, but the day-to-day rhytm, dictated by clock (again, a pair of contrast traditional closeness to nature versus modern rationality).

> *In the collective farms' time we could not make hay for ourselves before this work was completed on the collective farm, but it was never completed. As soon as we had made some hay, we had to take the hay norm to Märjamaa. One year we made hay in the forest in November. [—] We could not harvest our potatoes either, had to work for the collective farm. I was digging up a closed furrow in Otsa when I saw an official coming again, I ran into a thicket by the river although it was break-time between the milkings. This happened several times. Afterwards it calmed down* (EE 570, female, 1914; milkmaid).
>
> *As I went to school in town for four years I always had to work on the collective farm during summer holidays. Then I heard how former farmer wives indirectly accused new settlers and the local collective farms' staff. Later I started to understand that those women who had been used to working simply expressed their pain and disappointment at the new order. Even now I can imagine what they felt when people reached the fields only at 9 or 10, soon there was a lunch break for horses for 2 hours and in the afternoon at 5 everybody was sent home. No wonder that work was unfinished and agriculture went bankrupt* (EE 889, female, 1935; commodity expert).

If we now think about the image of history as a concept of denoting the jointly shared complex of images about the past, memories about thefts and work becoming more slovenly, likewise the almost obligatory motifs of maize-growing and planting potatoes in checkrow associate very well with the stereotypical image of the collective farm system in schoolbooks, magazines and films. (*This is the way it started, people were not used to such a life, like it was written in the ghost's guesthouse.*[9] *Lots of men had been taken to prison, some few women distilled vodka and threw parties, waited to get under a big blanket and feast at a trough.*

EE 826, female, 1914; worker on a collective farm). However, the topic of changes in the traditional division of labour, which was brought in by female autobiographers, can be considered as something above the ordinary image of history about the time of collective farms, again in two meanings. On the one hand the borders between the traditional men's and women's work were dismantled – a woman working in the field with a horse was a rule rather than an exception on a collective farm. On the other hand jobs with specific tasks were created: pig and cattle tenders, granary-keepers and stable-men, bookkeeper, foreman, etc. The changed character of work also brought along changes in the daily routines of people, especially women: they extended from one farmyard earlier to the whole collective farm now. Work and family did not partly coincide any more: they were totally separate categories. The life stories of women with young children reveal how difficult it was to connect these.

> *So I started to run around the collective farm again, doing long working days, most often 12 hours, sometimes even 16 hours. The collective farm was quite big by then, the average route I covered a day was 30 km. The wages were small but who had bigger. So I worked more than 11 years in a row. I tried to be a conscientious worker, didn't even have time for my child. [—] Often it slept when I came home and in the morning I had to go before the child went to school. The good thing was that grandmother was at home, cooked and heated the rooms. But we had to live and earn money* (EE 554, female, 1923; head of a farm).
>
> *Then* [after mother's death] *trouble only started. The three older children went to school, but what should I do with the tiny, 3-year old one, I had to go to work on the collective farm every day, there were few people. I told the foreman I could not come where shall I leave the child. He answered: children are out of the question. Jesus, what are you saying, this child will grow up, who will continue our work. I then made a sandwich for the child and sent it to school together with the others. The way to school was too long for the 3-year old to walk, 3 km but the child was willing to go with the others. This went on for a week, then it became too cold for the tiny one.* [Now follows a lengthy description of how she succeeded in leaving the

[9] "Ghost's guesthouse" was a novel by Heino Kiik, which was awarded 1st prize at the novel-writing contest in 1967. It described life in Estonian villages after collectivisation. This novel was the most critical work that ever reached the reader during the Soviet time (*Eesti kirjanike leksikon* 2000: 197). In essence, literature, especially historical novels assumed the role of history writers in the Soviet time, thereby developing the historical memory of people.

child with the village tailor, where the child had to sit on a stool the whole day until the others returned from school and took it along] (EE 18, female, 1909; worker on a collective farm).

The given examples emphasise slightly different aspects but the problems are similar. Connecting the two jobs (on the collective farm and at home) was complicated and inevitably meant neglecting some things. In the first years of the collective farms it was the family that suffered, both because of the permanently hovering threat of new deportations and the initial attempts to still make the collective farms work. It is interesting to denote that in the life stories in the descriptions of life on collective farms the role of the mother is reduced to the question – where shall I leave my child?

General descriptions of the working mechanisms of collective farms – managing principles, subordination, requirements set for the collective farms – i.e. the typical features of the planned or command economy are also characteristic of the reminiscences about the establishment of collective farms and their early years. By describing the working mechanisms a general framework is created because it was the incompatibility of the planned command economy and the real possibilities that determined the whole life, which in the early years consisted of failures of the agro-technical campaigns, non-existent wages and starving animals.

To a great extent the memories follow the so-called traditional negative image of the collective farm system, but there were also exceptions or people who challenged the general image of history. For instance, there were a couple of mechanically minded people who since childhood had been interested in rationalising farming.

Already as a young boy living on a small farm I had been disappointed at the limited possibilities to mechanise farm work. My conviction in the advantages of large-scale production was strengthened by my studies in Vaeküla and work as an agronomist in Kuramaa (EE 883, male, 1924; agronomist, later director of a state farm).

The author of the example given above also belongs to another group of people, which use different narration patterns: the management of the collective farms. In the life stories of people in a higher position more objective command mechanisms are described; in addition, the collective farms are more often analysed from the macroeconomic point of view. In some ways this can be regarded as searching one's place in

history, to counter the feeling that together with proclaiming the collective farms a mistake their conscious life and work were also proclaimed erroneous.

> *The framework was completed and now we had to develop the content. But there was no strength for that. The vehicle stations were weak and insufficiently supplied with technology. There were too few specialists. During the period of writing the production plans we obtained help from students of agronomy at Tartu State University. We organised a call for accountants locally. We could not get any, had to train them on the spot. We would probably have been able to overcome the problems but the stone that upset the whole collective-farm cart was the Party's and Government's policy in exploiting agriculture. Big norms, extremely low prices of the agricultural produce, the command economy. This was the stone. In addition, the meteorological conditions were bad and misery started creeping in* (EE 362, male, 1914; head of a collective farm, later agricultural inspector).

Likewise, there were cases when in retrospect, collective and state farms were mixed up. For instance, there was a female agronomist of a state farm who constructed the part of her life story that described collective farms as a comparison of the poor farm life and wealthy life on a collective farm. However, praising the collective farms ended with stating the sum of money that she was paid as wages on the state farm and mentioning the fact that this was sufficient to support her parents as well who also lived and worked on the state farm (EE 545).

Manner of narration

The way of narration is inseparably connected to the narration patterns: indeed, one is impossible without the other. An act of narration comprises both different temporal perspectives and levels of experience, reminiscence and interpretation, both habitual ways of narration and impact of the target audience. This also holds in the case of life stories.

Again, we must emphasise the significance of the temporal dimension. Descriptions of life on collective farms are permeated by the present-related knowledge of the initial weakness of the collective farms.

> *Father did not hold out, started to drink. That was the end, what could I do. Father had loads of lice, in the evenings he killed them with his teeth*

by biting the seams of the shirt. I had lice, my head itched, I had woollen socks on full of lice. Fleas were jumping, at night they got into my ears, oh it was disgusting, terrible torture, fear. But there was no escape, I had to live one day at a time. There were worms in the intestines, hanging out from the rear, I pulled them out with my fingers. The cracks in the wall were full of bedbugs (EE 451, female, 1943; tractor driver).
I had poor coastal land, but we still joined the collective farm in 1950s, it was called Koduranna collective farm. Such a small and miserable collective farm, some villages put together, another collective farm again. My husband watched all this and said: no, in this collective farm our family will starve, I will look for something else so that I could feed my family. So it was and my husband went to Haapsalu to work as a fisherman for the state (EE 18, female, 1909; worker on a collective farm).

In retrospect, this knowledge enables people both to describe the situation at that time in especially dark colours and to attribute to the behaviour and opinions of themselves and their family members almost prophetic qualities: in the life story cited above to the husband (he knew at once that the collective farm would experience especially difficult times). The choice of general events to be told about can also be influenced by the present-related knowledge. It sometimes seems that the life stories do not include reminiscences about people's lives during the early years of collective farms but a contest of absurd anecdotes.

The years 1952-1953-1954 gave bad yield to the farmers. There was too much precipitation, particularly during the harvest time in autumn. The centre of Viisnurga collective farm was in S. settlement. There the members of the collective farm were from the neighbouring villages. In 1952 autumn work was basically done there, but potatoes had not been harvested in some fields because there was too much rain. Then the management organised a day of potato harvesting on Viisnurga on October holidays. All members of the Executive Committee, Party Committee and Department of Agriculture were there. Well that was a sight. They started in a clayey field. Two horses pulled the potato harvester and the driver walked beside. As soon as the horses stepped on the clayey earth of the field they started to sink. The driver whipped them and the horses ran away, the driver ran with them. The potato harvester was dragged along. Some wet potatoes also emerged on the surface. The potato-pickers also had to run in their rubber boots if they did not want to get stuck in the wet clay. It was not easy to get one's feet free from there. Potatoes were in part left in the fields both in Viisnurga and some other collective farms as well. In spring the earth was drier and the fields that were not harvested in

autumn were done now. They did get something and it was given to the pigs. There was seed because potatoes had been harvested earlier as well – when the weather was drier (EE 602, female, 1924; horticultural agronomist).

In the example given above two objectives have probably been set in writing the life story: the intention to offer interesting anecdotes to the audience and highlight the fatal drawbacks of the command economy. The simultaneous linking of these two objectives is sometimes only possible through narrating entertaining episodes, through stories about planting potatoes in checkrows and growing maize and the chronic inability to complete seasonal work on time. The result is, again, a superficial approach: a humorous survey of the events is given but the deeper meaning/impact of the events on the people concerned is discarded. At the same time it also seems that the way of presenting the memories as humorous stories about the impossibility of the Soviet order to some extent helps people overcome the difficult situations of the time. The form of an entertaining story enables people to better match the past and the present, both in the eyes of themselves and the others.

However, the impersonal mode of narration can be considered even more characteristic to the reminiscences about life on collective farms.

It was the year 1952 we had just almost completed our house and planted the trees and bushes, when I was invited to the collective farm office, the security officer from Valga who was famous for implementing the new communist tomfoolery – "the organiser" to take farm houses to the collective farm centre, the owner was forced to leave the house and help put logs under the house, a big tractor should then take the house to a place allocated to it in the centre where a village street was to be made and the collective farmers together should then do the rooms in the houses, of course nothing came of it the houses crumbled while being transported some pieces of logs that did reach "the centre" were left to rot there (EE 687, male, 1916; farmhand).

In this excerpt, by using the impersonal mode the narrator positions himself as a bystander: the undertaking that is initially explained and planned personally transforms in the course of narration into a more general "tomfoolery" characteristic of Soviet power. The impersonality of describing the general way of life on collective farms undoubtedly in part depends on the puppet-like status of the members of the collective

farms. On the other hand the predominantly impersonal way of description can be caused by the temporal distance from life and realities at that time, which may seem particularly weird when seen from a modern perspective. The atmosphere of fear and emotions of hopelessness have at least partly devalued in time, lost their intensity and increasingly acquired the form of knowledge. By demonstrating him/herself as an impersonally functioning object in the hands of external forces (orders from the Party Committee) enables the narrator to eliminate his/her responsibility for the welfare of the collective farm, pre-empt the questions about the illogical behaviour of collective farmers from those that have not experienced the atmosphere of fear. All the more so because in reality there was no objective possibility of improving the situation anyway.

The third characteristic way of narration is irony, although this is also predominantly presented impersonally. Irony is a direct and expressive way of showing one's opinion and it has been practised rather often in life stories. In the excerpt given below irony has been achieved by simply skilfully linking the contemporary official standpoints and free paraphrases of these.

> *Despite the fact that already in May 1949 "a public letter" was sent "to the great Comrade Stalin" concerning the fulfilment of plans by the collective farm, socialist obligations were approved in which it was noted that "after having discarded the drawbacks of single farms to be a free and happy farmer in the great socialist agriculture", that "a red corner" was furnished, that there was a commission to celebrate the 1st anniversary of the ESSR, the superiors were still not satisfied with how things proceeded. Merging with a neighbouring collective farm was pushed for. At the same time a decision was taken "to ask for a permission to re-locate the single farmers living within the confines of the collective farm to the state land reserves". The present state of affairs would hamper the introduction of rotation of crops on the collective farm* (EE 816, male, 1901; agronomist).

In addition to demonstrating the negative attitude to the collective farms system this way of presenting also showed one's superiority to it: although people lived in the midst of all these actions, both now and then they perceived the absurdity of all this as well.

To sum up

The narration patterns and manners analysed in my article were only a few more typical ones, of which at least some can be observed in every

reminiscence about the early years of collective farms. The basic motif is the social world of people upset by collectivisation: around this a supporting structure is constructed. The events supporting the motif are also included: e.g. the collectivisation process itself, classifying people on the us-them scale, drawbacks of the command economy, etc. – and the less important ones, e.g. norm obligations and the *life-became-normal-again*-period that started in the second half of the 1950s is discarded. All in all, life on the collective farms acquires a reputation in the life stories where it is impossible to see something/somebody positive. If something surprised people about the collective farms it was the fact that life could become even worse than before. It is likewise characteristic that people do not speak about their own life on the collective farm but reflect upon life on a collective farm as such, make their contribution to the public discussion about the Soviet system.

Although there were a few so-called dissenters among the writers, the image of history about the early years of the collective farms seems to be rather set. In narration, primarily political repertoire dominate (the collectivisation process, the command economy), into which absurd anecdotes are inserted as weird examples of the so-called lost world. But what is not set is the image of history about the period of collective farms in its entirety as well as about the Soviet era in general: this life is still moving towards becoming a jointly shared complex of images about the past.

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Space of Lifestyles in Estonia in 1991. Society with Soviet Heritage, in the Light of Bourdieu's Theory

Liis Palumets

At the end of the 1980s – beginning of the 1990s, a major change in society took place in Estonia. At the macro level, it is possible to talk about the transition from a planned economy to a market economy, from totalitarianism to democracy, however, these alterations apparently had a great impact on people's disposition of thought and everyday life. If, during these years, imaginations and expectations with regard to the future changed even within months then the alterations in the arrangement of life can be considered somewhat slower. According to Pierre Bourdieu, lifestyle, in its essence, is a very persistent phenomenon as it is based on a practically unalterable structure – *habitus*. At the same time, it is still clear that in different societies and at different times, the forms of expressing lifestyle can still be very different. Interesting materials of research in this area are the transitional societies where the living conditions and opportunities of the vast majority of the population change extremely slowly whereas power relationships prevailing in the society are re-shaped relatively rapidly. The objective of the current article is to investigate, proceeding from Bourdieu's theory, as to what lifestyle types can be pointed out in Estonia at the beginning of the 1990s, what are the occupational groups that these lifestyle types are characteristic of and to what extent does social origin affect lifestyle. The basis for the analysis is the currently last phase of the longitudinal[1] study of high school graduates who finished school in 1966, carried out in 1991.

[1] Detailed data regarding the study see Titma et al. 1990: 28.

Habitus and lifestyle

According to French ethnologist and sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1984), the basis for an individual's taste preferences and lifestyle is *habitus* – the system of persistent inclinations, developed during the socialisation process, thus, primarily in early childhood. As *habitus* takes shape in these material and cultural conditions of existence where an individual's socialisation process occurs, people living in similar conditions or similar societal groups, share the same *habitus*.

Lifestyle is the material or the so-called visible result of the revelation of habitus. All the objects with which a person surrounds himself or herself, are a part of the lifestyle – abode, furniture, books, cars, cigarettes, perfume, clothes, etc., whereas important is the fact as to what kind (of brand) are these things. In addition, lifestyle is everything that an individual deals with (a selection between various fields of sport, ways of spending leisure time) and how he or she does this (attitudes, behaviour). Since lifestyle originates from one generative principle, *habitus*, it is an entirety and all its parts are in concord with each other.

The lifestyles of different social groups (classes, occupational groups[2]) are controversial, opposed to each other, as cultures are signs on the basis of which groups differentiate themselves from the others. Bourdieu's sociology is, to a large extent, a sociology of power. According to him, culturally acquired behavioural norms are an instrument by way of which the dominant relations, existent in society, are being legitimised and their actual essence is being concealed. High cultures are being defined from a power position – the one, who has power, also possesses higher (more prestigious) culture; therefore, games of distinction are particularly important and characteristic namely of the dominating class. Thus, lifestyle refers to an individual's social status in society.

Cultural and economic capital

According to Bourdieu, cultural capital is the possession of the prac-

[2] According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), an occupation is an aggregate of jobs with similar tasks and liabilities. Similar occupations form an occupational area or occupational group, with the main classifying criteria being the nature of the performed activity, training and work skills (International Labour Organization, http://www.ilo.org).

tices of legitimate culture or that of the proper cultural code (Bourdieu 1984: 43). Cultural capital exists in extremely diverse forms – first, it means long-term inclinations and habits which are being acquired during the course of the socialisation process (*habitus*). Secondly, cultural capital expresses formal education and training. Thirdly, the amount of an individual's cultural capital is evinced by the possession of valued cultural objects (e.g. pieces of art) which have a symbolic meaning. Undoubtedly, these various forms are mutually connected – *habitus* involves an inclination to aspire to a higher educational level and also to possess certain objects.

Another essential type of capital is economic capital, comprising, in addition to monetary income, also other financial resources and other types of property (Anheier et al. 1995: 862). For instance, a characteristic marker of economic capital, according to Bourdieu, is the existence of a house, luxurious car and yacht or a spending of a holiday in luxurious hotels, etc. (Bourdieu 1984: 117).

Bourdieu differentiates between three classes in society – dominating class and working class, opposed to each other, and the intermittent petty bourgeoisie. The basis for such distinction is the total amount of capitals at the disposal of these classes – this quantum is the largest regarding the dominating class and the smallest in the working class. Based on the structure of the division of capitals, Bourdieu also differentiates between the subdivisions[3] of classes, primarily among the dominating class and also, to a certain extent among the petty bourgeoisie. This way, Bourdieu points out groups, within the dominating class, which possess 1) a high level of both economic and cultural capital (the most typical representative of this group is the occupational group of that of the professionals); 2) high level of economic capital, but not as high a level of cultural capital (e.g. occupational group of large-scale entrepreneurs) and 3) high level of cultural capital but not as high a level of economic capital (e.g. occupational group of teachers). An attempt is made to oppose oneself to, to differentiate oneself particularly from the groups with low economic and cultural capital.

[3] Subdivisions of classes, in their turn, constitute of occupational groups. Such approach preconditions a presumption that individuals belonging within one occupational group, have a similar *habitus*. According to Bourdieu, this precondition is tacit, as a certain *habitus* takes to certain specific occupations.

As already mentioned, a constant struggle for position is going on in society. Reproduction of position, within generations, primarily takes place on the basis of such a capital type, which is more characteristic of the parents' social group. For instance, groups with a high cultural level, such as teachers, secure the future of their children by emphasising good education; groups with high economic capital, such as entrepreneurs, do this by bequeathing shares, enterprises, etc. to their offspring. According to Bourdieu, reproduction is stronger on the basis of economic capital than on the basis of cultural capital, for this reason, social mobility is bigger in the groups with a high level of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984: 120). Assumptions can be made that in Soviet society, where property had been forcefully taken away and the accumulation of assets was hindered, the above statement did not stand and it was indeed education that became the main source of social reproduction.

Peculiarity of Soviet society

Bourdieu's theory relies on the analysis of the clearly stratified French society, which substantially differs from the circumstances of Estonia, liberating itself from the shackles of Soviet power. Estonia has no experience in a class society, except for the relationships between Estonian peasants and German squires prior to the 20th century. The societal structure, that began to emerge during the 1920s–1930s, was broken by the Soviet occupation. Naturally, the divisions in society, based on profession, prestige and economic wellbeing, did not all disappear, however, they decreased rapidly and in many instances, lost their initial function (Gella 1989: 196).

Officially, all groups in society were equal. In essence such a statement was valid to some extent as incomes were artificially equalised; the average difference between various branches of economy was no more than twofold. At the same time, such variances did not correspond to the logic of a market economy society where specialities needing higher qualifications are also more highly remunerated. Preferably, the workers employed in the sectors of economy (e.g. heavy industry) that were prioritised, from the standpoint of the society's objectives, were in a favoured position. The structure of society was artificially distorted, which leads to a question as to what extent and how did the highly qualified societal groups who were little valued by the society try to balance the situation. Due to the difference in societies, it is interesting to observe, when applying Bourdieu's theory

in Estonian society, what are the differences in the nuances and forms of expression of lifestyle, beside the universal features of the theory. Primarily, it is of interest as to which occupational groups in Estonia fell under the main lifestyle types pointed out by Bourdieu.

Data

As mentioned in the introduction, the fifth and so far the last phase of the longitudinal study of the graduates of high school in 1966, carried out in 1991, was used in this research. The first phase of the mentioned study took place in 1966, when a group of sociologists from Tartu State University (currently Tartu University – eds.), under the leadership of Mikk Titma, used a questionnaire among the graduates of daytime general education schools with Estonian as the language of instruction. Thus, the questionnaire comprised nearly one quarter of the generation born in 1948 – those who went to general education schools. Out of these people, the sample covered approximately a half, i.e. 2,260 (Titma et al. 1990: 28). During the 1991 phase, 1,402 of the persons belonging in the initial sample were interviewed again. In addition, the sample also embraces 519 persons who had graduated from schools with Russian as the language of instruction in 1965–1966 (Titma et al. 2001: 9). Consequently, the data used in the current paper involves 1,921 individuals.

The used data somewhat limits the extent of conclusions made in the framework of the research. The first limitation – the data comprises solely a very narrow age group – those who were 42–43 years old in the year 1991. Therefore, the taste preferences and lifestyles of those older and younger than this particular group, and differences between them, cannot be reflected. On the other hand, the lack of age-wise heterogenity enables focusing more thoroughly on the reasons for differences based on other features (e.g. occupation).

Secondly, the extent of drawing conclusions is limited, as the questionnaire was carried out solely among the part of the generation who had reached the final year in high school, thus, the sample has a higher level of education in comparison with the entire population of Estonia as well with the generation born at the end of the 1940s. The sample does not include persons who had not acquired secondary education; the amount of such people in the generation was nearly one half. At the same time, the number of persons with higher education, from among the respondents, was approximately 50%. In comparison – based on the census of the year 1989, the percentage of persons with

higher education, among the age group 40–44, was 18% and solely 15% from among the entire population of working age (*Eesti rahvastik*... 1995: 209). Thus, it is presumably possible to describe the lifestyle of the individuals with higher educational level, but it is not possible to receive an overview with regard to the extent of the entire space of lifestyles.

The third limitation is the gender composition of the sample. As in the middle of the 1960s, the continuation of studies in a general education high school was primarily characteristic for girls, it is expectant that the share of females in the sample is nearly two thirds. At the same time, male graduates of high school were more likely to continue their studies in a higher educational institution, compared with girls who more frequently chose a vocational secondary education establishment.

The fourth limitation could be the fact that the studied sample is more metropolitan than the average of Estonia – in 1991, 44% of them lived in Tallinn, approximately one third lived in other towns and one fifth in rural settlements, whereas according to the data of the 1989 census, these indicators, regarding the entire population, were approximately 30, 40 and 30 per cent, correspondingly (*Eesti rahvastik*… 1995: 40).

During the 1991 phase, the study focused on the recording of the changes that had taken place during the course of life (education, work career, family events and changes in residence). In addition, the research investigated the value orientations that had been developed by the time the respondents had reached their forties and the material environment they created around themselves.

Points of departure for the analysis

Due to differences in societal conditions, Bourdieu's theory may not be transferred one-to-one to Estonian data. For instance, it is not possible to claim with full certainty that professionals would be in the top of society's taste and lifestyle hierarchy – in French society, this is the group in possession of the largest economic and cultural reserves. Therefore, a slightly different approach was utilised in the current research – first, three lifestyle scales are devised, which correspond to the various combinations regarding the distribution of economic and cultural capital and subsequently, measurements are made as to which occupational groups fall under relevant lifestyle groups, based on these scales.

According to Bourdieu, the level of economic and cultural capital and their correlation is the basis for the differentiation of lifestyles. As the data did not enable the direct measurement of cultural capital, one of the components of cultural capital was used in the distinction of groups – the level of education. In order to measure the level of economic capital, the income indicator was used.

Although in Soviet society, wages were artificially equalised and the decrease in differentiation, with regard to educational levels, was also favoured at the ideological level, presumptions can still be made that the two antithetic types of capital, pointed out by Bourdieu, still, to some extent, occurred for differentiated lifestyles also under Soviet circumstances. Therefore, I surmise that even in Soviet society, the following groups possessed different *habituses* and proceeding from this, also different lifestyles: 1) individuals with high income and high educational level (first lifestyle group); 2) with high income but not high educational level (second lifestyle group); 3) with high educational level but not high income (third lifestyle group).

Three types of lifestyle

Three groups of distinctive features were used in the study for describing lifestyle. First, **material environment** – objects in the possession of respondents which can roughly be divided into three: 1) objects having a symbolic meaning (e.g. works of art); 2) everyday utility articles (e.g. washing machine, tools) and 3) objects having both consumer value as well as symbolic value (e.g. a car, summer cottage). In the case of these features, the existence or non-existence was stated – is/is not. **Leisure time activities** formed another group of features – the activities people like to do. The grade of amenity was hereby not observed (e.g. like it a lot or rather like it) and simply a note was taken whether the activity is pleasant or not. The third group of features were **work-related orientations** – what kind of role is attributed to work in ones life or what is expected from work. Here, too, the answer was split into two divisions – important/not important.

Valued objects and activities, the symbols of status, can be different in each society. In order to make sure how the given features were valued in Estonia in the year 1991, it was determined as to what are the differences in the existence of objects, amenity of activities and work-related orientations, with regard to the level of education and income. For this purpose, observations were made whether the income of these individuals and/or the number of years they had spent at school who

possessed a certain object, who liked a certain activity or who considered the given work orientation important, differed from the income of these individuals and/or the number of years spent at school or who did not have the given object, who did not like the activity or who did not render importance to work-related orientation. It is necessary to note that in some cases, the connection between the income and/or educational level and lifestyle feature was not positive. For instance, individuals with higher income valued the fact that work should bring profit to other people, less than the individuals with lower income. In this case, the characteristic feature, regarding the lifestyle of the group with higher income, is rendering no importance to being beneficial for other people (variant "is not important"). As a result of the analysis it was possible to split the features into three types, thus being characteristic to the first, second and third types of lifestyle (see Table 1).

High economic and educational capital (Type I)	High economic capital (Type II)	High educational capital (Type III)
	Home environment	
+ VCR	+ car	+ musical instruments
+ stereo	+ work bench, tools	- motor bike
+ food processor	+ precious metals, stones	- washing machine
+ works of art, art collection		- domestic animals, poultry
+ library		
+ summer cottage		
+ sport and hiking equipment		
+ photo technology		
	Pleasant activities	
+ sporting	+ political activity	+ intellectual self-development (reading, learning of languages)
+ work	+ social meetings, visiting restaurants and cafés	- listening to the radio, watching TV, reading newspapers
	- going to concerts, to the theatre, exhibitions	- taking care of the family and home

Work-related orientation – work should enable		
+ to manage people	+ to achieve position and prestige in society	+ constant self-development and widening the horizon
+ climb in the career	- be useful to other people	+ to create and be original
+ to use ones capabilities		- to earn well
- to do clean and physically easy work		
- to ensure peaceful and stable future		
- to be useful to national economy[4]		

Table 1. List of features characteristic to types of lifestyles*

* Sign "+" denotes the occurrence of the feature, sign "–" the non-occurrence of the feature. The current list of features serves as a basis for the construction of indicator scales expressing lifestyles (see the next chapter).

1. Features characteristic to individuals with high income and high educational level, i.e. the first type of lifestyle. This group encompasses features that were differentiated both on the basis of educational level and the income. The things belonging to this type referred to the spending of leisure time (sport and hiking equipment, photo technology) and high consumption of culture (works of art, art collection, library). In addition, things that were relatively innovative in the year 1991 and referred to connections with commercial spheres or foreign countries (e.g. VCR, food processor) are also characteristic of this type. Regarding pleasant activities, this type was represented by work and sporting which indicates to an active and intensive attitude towards life. Concerning work, it was regarded important that it would enable movement to higher and more responsible positions in occupations, by utilising one's skills; profitability for national economy was seen as less essential. Similarly, it was regarded relatively less important that work should be clean and physically easy and enable stable future.

[4] "To be useful for national economy" is a typical feature in the Soviet-time studies on work orientations. In researches of today, the best equivalent to this could probably be "to be useful to society".

2. Characteristic features of individuals with high income, i.e. the second type of lifestyle. This group encompasses the features that were distinct solely on the basis of income. Regarding things, the second type of lifestyle is characterised by a car and presumably, in connection with this, the existence of tools. Supposedly, in the case of this particular lifestyle, a car is not only an everyday commodity but also an object expressing prestige. A car and similarly, precious stones and metal, can be considered the so-called simple symbols of status – i.e. these are most visible and straightforward indicators of status as they do not require the existence of high cultural capital. Considering activities, individuals with larger income like relatively more the ones which refer to an opportunity for active communication, have contacts and be at the centre of attention (political action and social meetings, visits to restaurants, cafés); at the same time, going to concerts, theatres and exhibitions is relatively less pleasant for them as these are activities that do not bring in direct profit. The fact that in the case of this lifestyle, importance is given to being at the centre of attention and in power, is also confirmed by the wish that work should enable the achievement of position and prestige in society. In connection with emphasising personal objectives, less importance is rendered to the fact that work should enable to be profitable for other people, compared with individuals with lower income.

3. Characteristic features of individuals with high educational level, i.e. the third type of lifestyle. This group encompasses the features that became distinct solely on the basis of educational level. Regarding the environment of things, the given type was primarily characterised by the lack of objects – individuals with higher education, in comparison with the sample, possess a washing machine and a motor bike relatively less frequently. Similarly, they have domestic animals and poultry relatively more seldom. On one hand, this refers to urban lifestyle; on the other hand, to the fact that home and household work is not assessed as very important. The only feature of the environment of objects, positively differentiating the given lifestyle, is the existence of musical instruments, which refers to rendering importance to creativity. It is indeed characteristic of the third type of lifestyle that importance is primarily given to intellectual values – regarding activities, preference is given to self-development, professional self-development and also mental self-development (e.g. reading and learning of languages). Likewise, regarding work, this group also considered it important that work would enable the constant widening of the

horizon, to create and be original; the fact that this type expects a good salary from work relatively less frequently than on average, refers to their distancing from the material world. Independent lifestyle (or standing away from everyday life) among the more highly educated group is revealed by the fact that the mass media (listening to the radio, watching TV, reading newspapers) is given small importance. Similarly, taking care of home and family is also considered a relatively less pleasant activity.

Lifestyle and occupational group

Using the three educed groups of features, I constructed three indicators, denoting lifestyle types, which would enable to observe as to how characteristic is the given type of lifestyle to various occupational groups, i.e. to measure the position of occupational groups on three different lifestyle scales. The indicator comprises the features intrinsic of a lifestyle, whereas in certain cases, the occurrence of the features has been taken into account, and in other instances, their non-occurrence. Thus, the indicator of the high level of economic and educational capital involves 16 different features. The indicator measuring high economic capital comprises 8 features and the one expressing the features of high educational capital, 11 (see Table 1).

The goal for the construction of lifestyle scales was to the measure the occurrence of lifestyles in segments of occupational groups and thus to investigate as to what are the occupational groups in Estonia whose principle designing their lifestyle is comparable with the principle moulding the lifestyle, respectively, of professionals, entrepreneurs or teachers in French society. It should be borne in mind that the lifestyles constructed above are still, first and foremost, bare constructions as the combination of all considered features is extremely infrequent. Thus, the constructed lifestyles are actually the so-called ideal types, practically non-existent in reality, in their pure form. At the same time, it is possible to differentiate individuals and groups on the basis of the fact as to how high a position they achieve in one or another scale and then to assess which one of the constructed types is closest to their actual lifestyle.

Table 2. Lifestyle groups

Managerial intelligentsia	Labour aristocracy	Academic elite
Managers of enterprises and organisations	Consultants, methodologists	Professors, docents, teachers of higher educational institutions
Journalists, writers and other creative employees	Managers of agricultural enterprises	Scientific researchers
Managers of publishing houses, editors	Drivers of public transport	Specialists in culture and education, heads of cultural establishments
Chief engineers, managerial technical specialists	Heads of personnel departments	Lawyers
Engineers in agriculture	Technical workers in transport and communication	Leaders and specialists of governmental institutions and parties
Heads of technical departments, offices	Heads of the sub-units in enterprises and organisations	Teachers of technical schools and high schools
Heads of educational institutions	Other people dealing with non-mental work	Computer specialists
	Construction workers	
	Managers of production works	
	Managerial agricultural specialists	

Subsequently, the placement of occupational groups, on the three devised lifestyle scales, was observed and the occupational groups with highest scores on each scale were highlighted. When drawing the distinction line, it was not possible to proceed from objective bases – due to the smallness of the groups, a statistically steadfast decision could not be made. Instead, 10–15% of occupational groups was separated on each scale, based on the number of individuals belonging there. The distinction point was selected in the place where the difference between the scores of successive groups would be the largest. Thus, three lifestyle groups were obtained, consisting of occupational groups to whom the relevant lifestyle was most characteristic (see Table 2).

Managerial intelligentsia

On the first type of lifestyle scale – i.e. the scale, which aggregated the features, differentiated both on the basis of the income and length of educational track, high scores were prevailingly received by the heads of companies and top specialists. Interesting as it may seem, these are the representatives of occupational groups belonging to several various fields and branches of economy: this groups comprises both journalists, writers and other creative employees as well as technical intelligentsia – engineers. Undoubtedly, represented occupational groups have a high status in society, both in towns (heads of enterprises and organisations, managers of publishing houses) as well as in the country (engineers in agriculture, a large share of school principals). The high position of journalists, writers and other creative employees deserves interest. The managers of publishing houses and editors have nearly just as high a position, this could indicate to the fact that these groups, being relevant actors during the so-called singing revolution, were among the first winners in the liberating circumstances. This is particularly valid with regard to journalists who, having been ideological workers of editorial offices, became the informants of crucial events and opinion leaders (Härm 1998: 18). Creative employees were just as important shapers of opinion, therefore, at that time, they were seen as a group leading the society. Besides journalists and creative employees, other occupational groups in this grouping also represent leaders and top specialists, the name of this group will conditionally be the managerial intelligentsia.

As the given group is characterised by features, which are intrinsic rather to the individuals with higher educational level than to the persons with a lower one, it is expectant that the number of people with completed or uncompleted higher education in this group is approximately nine out of ten which is remarkably more that in the entire sample. However, the place for the acquisition of higher education deserves interest. Namely, the managerial intelligentsia substantially differs from the average, regarding the number of people who graduated from higher educational institutions with technical tendency – such individuals form nearly one half of the size of the group whereas the percentage of people in the sample who graduated from a technical higher educational establishment, is 26%.

Nearly one fifth of the members of the given group has been to a university[5], nearly ten per cent have studied in a higher educational institution with a pedagogical tendency and in other educational institution. Managerial intelligentsia substantially differs from the

sample for the place of birth – the ones born in Tallinn, are represented in larger numbers, comprising one third of the group. However, in 1991, already two thirds of them lived in Tallinn. Thus, managerial intelligentsia largely has an urban (metropolitan) lifestyle.

Regarding social origin, very substantial differences cannot be pointed out between the various lifestyle groups. When observing the main activity area of fathers, during their lifetime, it turns out that the fathers of the persons belonging within the managerial intelligentsia, have been engineers or managers somewhat more frequently than the average and relatively more seldom, agricultural workers. Regarding mothers, a similar connection can be brought out – the amount of agricultural workers among the mothers of managerial intelligentsia is somewhat smaller than the average, whereas there are somewhat more of those mothers who dealt with intellectual work and were leaders. Thus, it is possible to confirm that originating from a family of managers or specialists has a favourable impact on being the member of managerial intelligentsia; at the same time, such a link is still relatively weak.

Connection between the educational level of a father and the successor being the member of managerial intelligentsia is revealed to some extent more conspicuously. More than average, the group comprises the children of fathers with secondary vocational and higher education. The impact of the mother's educational level to belonging within the managerial intelligentsia is somewhat smaller, but with the same tendency. Consequently, it is possible to ensure that the educational level of parents does have a certain influence on the occupation of children, however, presumably by way of the connection between the educational level of parents and children.

When looking back in time by one generation, it turns out that in the case of managerial intelligentsia, there is a certain connection with the societal layer of the father's side grandfather in the so-called first Republic of Estonia. The grandfathers of those belonging within the managerial intelligentsia, have been larger-scale farmers and entrepreneurs relatively more often than average, and relatively more seldom,

[5] Hereby, the word "university" means a classical university or *universitas*. Despite the fact that in Estonia, there is only one of a kind, similarly to higher education institutions with technical, agricultural pedagogical tendency, the names of particular schools were not highlighted and only the generic names were used.

inferior employees – workers and farm hands. At this point, presumptions can be made that there exists a certain entrepreneurial attitude or *habitus* which has to be checked in further studies.

Thus, on the basis of some indicators, it is possible to confirm there is a similarity with the group of professionals, educed by Bourdieu, as value is rendered to things with high symbolic merit and work and active lifestyle. It is also similar that the group has a large share of top specialists. At the same time, a large number of managers fall within the first lifestyle group in Estonia, who, according to Bourdieu, would have been categorised rather in the second group, the one of the lifestyle of entrepreneurs. Whether this phenomenon again presupposes a fact that in Soviet Estonia, education was the main channel of social mobility, is a separate research matter.

Labour aristocracy

Such occupational groups, which are already encompassed in the first lifestyle group, can be found in the first positions on the scale denoting high level of economic capital. These occupational groups have been excepted from the second group, considering the fact that the first scale is in supremacy with regard to the second one (i.e. considering cultural and particularly economic capital, it is higher of the next scales which solely denote one type of capital).

Mainly the highly paid skilled workers and several sub-unit managers were classified under this group, whose area of work involves dealing with workers; in addition, heads of agricultural enterprises and agricultural specialists also belong in this group. Proceeding from this, this group has hereafter been conditionally titled as "labour aristocracy".

The occupational groups belonging to labour aristocracy prevailingly represent the so-called men's occupations. Proceeding from this, gender distribution in the group is not proportional – nearly two thirds of the group are men, as with the managerial intelligentsia, which means that here, in comparison with the sample, the predominance of men is particularly noteworthy.

Relatively low educational level is intrinsic of the given group – two fifths of them have remained within the limits of general secondary or vocational education. A similarly large share of people have yet reached higher or uncompleted higher education, which is somewhat less than in the educational cohort and even twice as small as in the first and third group of lifestyle. When observing educational progress after high

school, it becomes apparent that those belonging within labour aristocracy, when continuing their studies after secondary education, have most frequently entered a higher educational establishment with technical inclination. Nevertheless, in comparison with managerial intelligentsia, the number of graduates from technological higher educational institutions is remarkably lower. More than average, the members of the given group have studied in schools with an agricultural inclination; in conclusion, it is a relatively heterogeneous group with regard to education.

Concerning place of birth and residence, labour aristocracy does not substantially differ from the average of the sample. Current place of living is, to some extent more frequently than the average, in rural settlements, and somewhat more seldom in Tallinn. Accordingly, compared with managerial intelligentsia, this is a relatively less urban lifestyle and more of the people living in the country.

If, in the case of managerial intelligentsia, certain connections became apparent between belonging within the group and the main activity area of the father, then, regarding the given group, it is not possible to confirm such a difference from the average of the sample. Thus, the connection between being the member of the relatively more wealthy group and social origin cannot be assured. However, taking a closer look at the societal layer of the father's side grandfather, it is conspicuous that the grandfathers of those determined as labour aristocracy have, somewhat more frequently than average, been the owners of a small or medium-size farms – i.e. people who were spiritually most of all attached to land and its cultivation.

Regarding the educational level of parents, certain peculiarities occur in comparison with the entire sample – the parents of nearly half of those belonging within the "labour aristocracy" have had elementary or a lower degree of education. The low educational level of the parents is even more striking compared with the managerial intelligentsia and academic elite who, relatively more frequently, originate from a family with highly educated parents.

According to Bourdieu, it is primarily the entrepreneurs who belong within the appreciators of material values. As entrepreneurship was prohibited in Estonia, during the Soviet period, the group, empirically obtained in the current work, is not comparable with that of the Bourdieu's, regarding occupation. At the same time, labour aristocracy implies entrepreneurial people as being with a relatively low education level, they have achieved higher income than average. However, Soviet

ideology has a major role in the size of income, as workers were overestimated. Nevertheless, the lifestyle of this group reveals similar features as that of the entrepreneurs given by Bourdieu – importance is rendered to a car, precious stones, restaurant-going, etc.

Academic elite

The third group mainly consolidated the literati – teachers of higher educational institutions and researchers, specialists on culture and education. The teachers of technological and that of the general education schools form nearly one third of the third group. In addition to the mentioned occupations, this group also comprises specialists dealing with intellectual work, such as lawyers and computer specialists and also leaders of governmental institutions and parties and other specialists. Proceeding from the composition of the groups, it will hereafter be called the academic elite. This group is distinct from the first one, i.e. the managerial intelligentsia, primarily by the fact that upon the arrival of new circumstances, they were not the best adapters and therefore, did not become the most prestigious group. This group, when identifying itself, relied, as before, on education-scholarliness or, in other words, cultural capital.

As in Soviet society, women were strongly over-represented in the sphere of culture and education, the membership of the particular group is also largely feminine – nearly three quarters of the group are women. The predominance of women is most pronounced among specialists of culture and education, where they comprise more than 80%; the gender-wise proportion is roughly equal among the teachers of higher educational institutions. Thus, in the case of this type, it is possible to speak about the lifestyle intrinsic of that of the women (particularly of women with higher education).

Similarly to managerial intelligentsia, nearly 90% of the members of this group have higher education, however, prevailingly obtained either at universities (42%) or at higher educational institutions with a pedagogical disposition (22%). As far as computer specialists are concerned, nearly four fifth of them have graduated from a university or a technical higher education establishment.

Academic elite, compared with the previous groups, is remarkably less oriented towards family. This is revealed by the smaller size of their households (average of 3.4 members) as well as in the fact that only about three quarters of the members of this group are married or have a live-in partner. 86% of those belonging within the academic elite

have children which is also a remarkably lower indicator than average. Consequently, in the case of the academic elite, we can primarily talk about the lifestyle of women dedicated to work.

Distribution of the members of the academic elite, with regard to their place of birth, is comparable with the relevant distribution in the entire sample, there are no major differences from the average of the sample. Similarly, the academic elite does not remarkably differ from the average, concerning their place of residence, but here, relevance is attributed to the fact that teachers, who comprise nearly half of the group, are being distributed uniformly between Tallinn, other towns and rural settlements – approximately one third of the teachers live in each different category of settlement types. Apart from the teachers and also lawyers who relatively more frequently live in other towns (42%), the prevailing part of the representatives of the rest of the occupational groups still live in Tallinn. Thus, in the case of these occupational groups, it is possible to talk about metropolitan lifestyle, comparable with that of the managerial intelligentsia, whereas teachers and lawyers should be treated as of slightly different nature.

Regarding social origin, the academic elite does not remarkably differ from the average; there is a weak tendency showing that less than average, the academic elite comes from a family where the father was a worker; similarly, the mothers of those belonging within the academic elite, have somewhat more seldom been proletarian. It can be said that among the mothers, the number of intellectual employees and leaders has been larger than the average. Regarding the educational level of that of the parents, similar trends can be observed as with the members of the managerial intelligentsia – relatively more frequently than the average, the parents have higher education, uncompleted higher education or secondary vocational education and, more seldom than average – elementary or lower level of education.

When observing the societal layer of grandfathers, an interesting peculiarity can be pointed out in the academic elite – the number of those who could not identify the societal stratum of their grandfathers (i.e. individuals who had probably lost their grandfather or did not have connections with him, due to certain reasons) was smaller than average in the entire sample. Thus, presumptions can be made that in the families of this group, family traditions and information with regard to family members is more cherished.

According to Bourdieu, it is primarily the secondary school teachers who belong within the group with higher education and relatively

lower income. Similarly, in the current work, teachers, scientists, cultural and educational employees were first and foremost classified under this group, hence, at least in the case of this particular group, we can talk about the concurrence with Bourdieu's categories. Likewise, it is also possible to draw parallels concerning lifestyles – in order to differentiate itself, it is intrinsic of this group to primarily use intellectual values, not material ones. Thus, a prerequisite for a job and spending leisure time is that they would provide an opportunity for self-development.

In conclusion

The current article was a treatment on various lifestyles in an Estonia separating itself from Soviet society. Relying on the theory of Pierre Bourdieu, descriptions were given regarding lifestyles intrinsic of individuals with high cultural and economic capital, high economic but low cultural capital and high cultural but low economic capital.

It was observed as to which occupational groups were the educed lifestyle types most characteristic of and the background of these occupational groups was investigated (incl. social origin, education and place of residence).

Findings revealed that it is characteristic of the individuals with high economic and cultural capital to have a lifestyle which appertains a relatively wealthier material environment with the involvement of status symbols, orientation to work-related success and, beside this, to active ways of spending leisure time. Such a lifestyle was most intrinsic of occupational groups who could be united under a compound name – managerial intelligentsia. The most characteristic feature of the managerial intelligentsia could be seen in the fact that in vast majority, they have graduated from a higher educational institution with technical inclination. In addition, it is of relevance that more frequently than average, they originate from the capital and a family with educated parents. Ambitiousness is in their "genes" as even their grandfathers have been large-scale farmers or entrepreneurs, somewhat more often than average. Managerial intelligentsia differentiates from the bearers of the most prestigious lifestyle by Bourdieu by the fact that more often they are managers, not independent specialists. Apparently, this result evidences the circumstances of Soviet society where professionals were low-valued.

It is characteristic of individuals with high economic capital but with relatively lower cultural capital to have a lifestyle where a very

important component is a car and dealing with it. This is a lifestyle based on prestige, acknowledgement by society and friends. This lifestyle is most intrinsic of occupational groups that could conditionally be denoted as labour aristocracy. Labour aristocrats come from families where parents had a relatively lower level of education. If, according to Bourdieu, this group encompasses entrepreneurs, then despite the fact that entrepreneurship was prohibited during the Soviet period, this group still represents entrepreneurial people who, at their relatively lower educational level, have achieved higher income than the average. It is possible to note a weak but interesting consistency with regard to labour aristocracy – the number of small and medium-size farmers, i.e. people connected with land, among the grandfathers' generation of labour aristocrats was larger than average and similarly, a large share of labour aristocrats themselves work in agriculture, having finished an educational institution with an agricultural tendency.

It is characteristic of the lifestyle with high cultural capital but relatively lower economic capital to be orientated towards intellectual, not so much material values. The lifestyle scales of this type consolidated features that express orientation towards self-development and creativity and, relatively less, towards good gaining and rendering importance to the material environment. This type of lifestyle is most intrinsic of occupational groups that could conditionally be called the academic elite. These are mainly the so-called feminine occupations, as teachers and cultural employees, and in this regard, it is possible to confirm relevant concurrence with Bourdieu's categories. Strong educational consistency between generations is characteristic of this group – the members of the academic elite have had educated mothers who have passed their thrive for education also to their daughters.

In conclusion, it is possible to claim that under Estonian circumstances, lifestyles are not being strongly related to social origin, largely due to extensive societal changes and violent reorganisations after World War II. For this reason, continuity on the basis of the position in society, between the older generation, born in the pre-war time, and that of the researched generation, born in post-war period, is relatively weak. Nevertheless, reproduction of educational capital can be noted – lifestyle with a high level of cultural capital is primarily characteristic of the children whose parents were more educated. Education and primarily, the place where higher education was obtained, occurred to be the most relevant differentiating factor with regard to lifestyle and provide a basis to suggest a hypothesis – mentalities prevailing in

higher educational institutions with various tendencies, vary from each other and, to a large extent, also shape the further lifestyle of an individual. However, the factor regarding the values passed from generation to generation, should also not be excepted. The fact that such transferable values do exist can be presumed from the connections revealed between the societal layer of the grandfather and the lifestyle group of the child.

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What People Tell about Their Working Life in the ESSR, and how Do They Do It? Source-centred Study of a Civil Servant's Career Biography

Kirsti Jõesalu

I was satisfied with my work in this institution and the fact that I did not let down my schoolmates, or else I would not have been kept in this institution for thirty years. I also wanted to lead as good a life as possible. In order to achieve it, I had to develop a serious attitude towards the work I had to do. Also at that time (KV 993).

Introduction

When studying and interpreting self-centred stories, the aim of a culture researcher is to open the narrator's social and cultural world (Lieblich 1998). In this article I have made an attempt to open for the reader a part of this social and cultural world and outline of what people tell about their working life in a particular and special era, the period of Soviet Estonia, the central issue being the social relations expressed in career biographies.

The study is mainly based on the answers to the written questionnaire "*Tööelu ja töötamine Nõukogude Eestis*" ("Work and Working Life in Soviet Estonia")[1], which have been sent to the Archive of Correspondents' Answers (KV) at the Estonian National Museum. The competition was publicly announced by the museum and the questionnaire was sent out to the correspondents of the ENM in the winter of 2001/2002, and it received over two hundred responses, which varied greatly by

[1] Q. No. 211 "Work and Working Life in Soviet Estonia". Compiled by K. Jõesalu (http://www.erm.ee/?node=282).

their content and volume. Among them there were stories only two pages long as well as monographs of 300 pages. The majority of the respondents were born before World War II; the generation born in the 1940s–1950s was represented to a smaller extent.

There are several possibilities for the analysis of biographical thematic narratives: we can observe which topics emerge in the stories told by different people and what is the significant experience to be emphasised; on the other hand, we can analyse the way people tell their story, what are the things that they omit and which "own" and "the others'" stories are considered as important. Through analysis we can convey semantic categories, eliciting the joint narrative based on several stories. The source of this article is a single thematic narrative. I have been trying to interpret the single thematic narrative through the narrator's own experience and the things he has emphasised. The analysis is also based on other career biographies. As I was a member of the competitive works jury of the Estonian National Museum, I have read and analysed most of the questionnaire answers sent to the museum. I have elicited the categories in social relations on which these narratives focus. So, taking one thematic narrative as a basis, the aim is to elicit more general categories treated in career biographies.

As the thematic narrative to be analysed, I selected the competitive work written by Ilmar, a civil servant. His story was a complete one, trying to find answers to all the topics concerned in the questionnaire, stating: *This is a story about my career in this institution, my activities and the milieu. Besides this, I am also trying to answer the things asked in the questions* (KV 993: 44). In the case of the answer it is a thematic narrative conveying experience of the Soviet-time working life in urban environment.[2] In addition to the completeness of the answer, the existence of another source – the written life story – became decisive. The life story under the heading "The Life of Myself and My Family in the ESSR and the Republic of Estonia" (ENSV: 91) casts a look at Ilmar's life in the Soviet period from an angle different from the thematic narrative, focusing more on his family life. Working life is insignificant in Ilmar's life story; here he mainly focuses on the welfare and destiny

[2] The answer analysed here was awarded the 1st prize at the competition of collecting reference material of the ENM in 2002.

of his next-of-kin.[3] On the other hand, from Ilmar's career biography we only learn that he is married and has two children. He does not make further mention of these or any other biographical data in his thematic narrative. Also, on the basis of these two sources we can prove the dependency of memories on the way the question is posed or the time the story was written down. Ilmar's life story was sent to the Estonian Literary Museum in 2001, the answer to the questionnaire arrived at the Estonian National Museum in the summer of 2002, and if we compare these two, we can detect differences in conveying the memories. A few differences can be noted in texts (in addition to differences in the formation of the sources), which can be related to the shift occurring in Estonian society regarding the Soviet period. The latter is not any more a part of Estonian history just "erased" or left out. This change becomes obvious, for example, when Ilmar gives up the anonymity used by him in his life story when speaking about the changes in the Council of Ministers of the ESSR and the language problem; yet, in his career biography anonymity has disappeared.

The advantage of using two different sources lies in the possibility of analysing social relations on different levels. In addition to the analysis of social relations, I have made an attempt to initiate a discussion concerning the source. Before starting the analysis of the thematic narrative, I would like to dwell upon the problems of treating written thematic narratives as sources.

How to analyse different sources? Attempt for discussion

When studying working life in Soviet Estonia, I have made use of three kinds of sources: biographical interviews, structured written narratives and life stories. This article is largely based on the analysis of a thematic narrative, which is the result of the answers given in a written structured questionnaire; the life story is treated in this analysis as another, comparative source. Both these sources are concerned with everyday life in the ESSR, yet the issues have been approached from different angles and due to that their analyses also vary. Below I will be dwelling upon the questions that spring up at different sources, with

[3] In the case of men's biographies it is rather an exception, usually under the topic "The Life of Myself and My Family in the ESSR and the Republic of Estonia" they tell about their career and self-realisation. See Kõresaar 2003: 168.

the main emphasis on the problems of written structured narratives.

Manuals abound in relevant advice for how to analyse life histories, auto/biographical stories, narratives in general.[4] But how to analyse answers given in a structured questionnaire? Which aspects should be paid attention to and what kind of a source are we discussing here? These issues have deserved little attention. When speaking about the analysis of written narratives, Albrecht Lehmann, a German ethnologist, states that in the case of the analysis of subjective written self-expressions the same scientific preconditions are applied than for the oral ones, only the emphases can be laid elsewhere (2001: 237). So in the analysis of a narrative obtained through a structured questionnaire we could proceed from this assumption. Lehmann himself has said the following about the narrative as the analysis of the consciousness (*Bewußtseinforschung*):

> *Menschen artikulieren ihr Bewußtsein für sich selbst und für andere in Geschichten. Für empirische Forschung bedeutet das: Erinnerungserzählungen, Erlebnisberichte, Selbstreflexionen, Kommentare werden bei empirischen Befragungen, bei der Analyse von Tonbandtranskripten oder in Alltagsbeobachtungen vom Forscher inhaltlich und formal als Geschichten bemerkt, in ihrem Umfang eingegrenzt, festgehalten und im Hinblick auf wissenschaftliche Fragestellung ausgewertet* (ibid.).

According to this utterance, the thematic narratives obtained with the help of a structured written questionnaire belong under the analysis of a narrative. However, a question here arises of the borders of a subjective narrative. Can we really treat the written answers sent to the questionnaire as subjective reminiscences? Or are they set closed answers, which do not contain a concrete story? At the same time Lehmann (2001) claims that a fixed written questionnaire cannot be used as a source of the analysis of the consciousness for subjective reminiscences. Here we have to agree with Lehmann if we regard the aims that Estonian ethnology has up to now tried to achieve with the questionnaires. The earlier questionnaires used for collecting correspondent's answers in in Estonian National Museum were not directed at getting information about people's experience, which should actually

[4] A few manuals to be mentioned here are *Narrative Research* (1998) edited by Amia Leiblich et al., Brian Roberts's *Biographical Research* (2002) , etc.

be the objective of ethnological research, but studying a concrete ethnographic phenomenon, asking for descriptive data about traditional occupations, etc. The main emphasis in these questions was laid on collecting descriptive information on material heritage (see: "Correspondent's Notebook": http://www.erm.ee/?node=256). The aim of more recent written questionnaires[5] has not been so limited any more; they are aimed at experience-centred approach; however, we are well aware of the fact that the ideal is difficult to achieve.

Questionnaires and the competitive works obtained through them should rather be treated as "a new old method" in culture research. Collecting material with the help of a written questionnaire is an old method for collecting material both in Estonia and in Nordic countries – competitions started at the ENM in 1958, the correspondents' network was established in 1931 (http://www.erm.ee/?node=57) – which has been used for studying both the material and mental culture. In present cultural studies we have to focus more on people's experience (which has successfully been done in the Nordic countries; see: Jaago 2002a: 400 ff.) and to phrase the questionnaires correspondingly. A questionnaire is just one possible approach to the issue under study and besides this we also have to employ other methods.

The problem concerning questionnaires is the way in which questions are raised. Tiiu Jaago has pointed out that Estonian researchers are afraid of asking questions related to people's opinions (Jaago 2002a: 401). Questions are directed at the subject, not the decisions made by the narrator or the group. Yet, the researcher is trying to discuss people's experience. This is difficult to achieve in the case of closed answers (Jaago 2002a: 400). So researchers should move towards more open questionnaires focusing on experience.

The formulating of the questionnaire "Work and Working Life in Soviet Estonia", which served as a basis for the career biographies dwelt upon in the article, was preceded by biographical interviews on the same subject. When drawing up the questionnaire, I proceeded from the experience gathered from conducting the interviews. With the help of the questionnaire I expected to create a source similar to interviews. In the case of biographical interviews there were general topics related

[5] Here we could include the questionnaires compiled in Estonia since the 2nd half of the 1990s, e.g., "Home and Family".

to working life, from which I proceeded. The concrete questions in the questionnaire resulted from the interviews conducted in the early spring of 2002.[6] With the help of the questions I tried to create a source treating of working life similarly to an interview, but in written form. When drawing up the questionnaire, it was people's experience that I was trying to bear in mind.[7]

The formulation of the questionnaire was a two-sided process: on the one hand, me as a researcher and, on the other, editors from the ENM as representatives the museum. In the editing process quite a few questions directed at experience "disappeared", being either left out of the questionnaire at all or assuming another form (on the ground that the correspondents might get scared of a too "direct" question). Also, one section included questions which, being together, mutually influenced one another, this way changing the original idea of the question. The editing process changed my initial idea that the questionnaire has to focus on experience, and, as a result, it became impossible for me to treat the new sources as similar to interviews. When reading the answers, it became clear that they were different from the interviews conducted so far.

However, I am of the opinion that the source obtained with the help of the questionnaire must be regarded as a thematic narrative, as a biography, based on experience. As a shortcoming for the questionnaire has been mentioned that it yields the so-called final answers. Yet, an interview can also be subjected to strong self-censorship and, on the contrary, a written "testimony" (an ego-document) can be much more spontaneous: "... the meaning is mutually constructed or negotiated by writer/teller and researcher; texts 'cross-reference' each other – there is not a 'hidden truth' ... since the spoken may also be rehearsed while the written can be relatively spontaneous, one type should not necessarily be privileged over another" (Temple 1994: 37–40, quoted in Roberts 2002: 79). So we can see that one (the interview) should not be preferred over the other (the written questionnaire), they can both be

[6] 19 interviews conducted within the framework of the FOROST project and the ESF grant No. 5322 are in the possession of the author and also at the Institut für Volkskunde/Europäische Ethnologie, at Munich.

[7] Here I would like to express my gratitude to Terje Anepaio and Ene Kõresaar, who assisted me in drawing up the questionnaire.

treated as thematic narratives based on biographical experience. Folklorists who deal with texts do not differentiate between sources obtained in different ways; they treat all of them as similar texts. In Estonia, for example, Tiiu Jaago in her studies of the home and family has used the sources inherent in ethnology, approaching them as similar texts, making use of life stories, family chronicles and written thematic narratives (Jaago 2002a; 2002b). In this article I am treating the material obtained with the help of a structured questionnaire as a biographical narrative based on human experience.

In the case of written thematic narratives their openness remains questionable. Biographical interviews and life stories are more open narratives than the written thematic narratives created on the basis of a questionnaire. The other source for this article is a life story. Although the aim of a life story is to tell the story of one's life, proceeding from one's own life experience, which anticipates a free narrative the openness of a life story can vary, depending on the topics and guidelines provided by the collectors of the biographies. In Estonia life stories are collected by the Estonian Biography-Researchers' Society *Estonian Life Stories*[8], which organises competitions for collecting biographies similar to the ones arranged by the ENM. The life story used here was obtained within the framework of the competition "The Life of Myself and My Family in the ESSR and the Republic of Estonia". The instructions of the competition asked the respondents to compare their own and their relatives everyday life in Soviet Estonia and the Republic of Estonia (http://www.kirmus.ee/Asutus/elulood.html). This also set frames for Ilmar's story, where he focuses on a comparative description of his family during these two eras.

In order to study working life in Soviet Estonia, I have also used biographical interviews. The latter can be considered as the most open kind of source. What are the differences between a structured narrative obtained with the help of a written questionnaire and biographical interview? Here I can rely on both my own experience and an article by Raija Warkentin, a Finnish-origin Canadian ethnologist, *Writing Competitions as a New Research Method* (Warkentin 2002). One of the advantages of collecting material through a questionnaire is certainly

[8] The collected life stories are preserved at the Estonian Cultural History Archives (EKLA), Fund No. 350.

its simplicity and quickness. A researcher can, at least in Estonia, make use of a ready-made structure – namely the correspondents' network of the ENM, through which questionnaires can be spread; the materials are also collected by the ENM, which diminishes the researchers' work load in collecting material and enables them to start the analysis immediately.

Yet, questionnaires structure a narrative more than biographical interviews. In comparison to interviews, written answers are narrower: in interviews I learned more about people themselves; usually they gave me a short version of their life stories, touching upon their origin, family, experience of their next-to-kin. Written thematic narratives, however, focus rather on a given subject (see also Warkentin 2002: 11). While building up the narrative, people do not proceed from their own sequence of events, but rather follow the guidelines provided by the researcher. Here forward-backward references occur inside the text. In a biographical narrative the story progresses proceeding from the narrator's person and the dialogue taking place between the interviewee and the interviewer. For example, in the thematic narrative analysed here, Ilmar describes the building and using of a shooting range in the attic of Toompea Palace[9]; however, he does not explain why they had to give up using the place, giving only a reference: *About the connection of these two events with our shooting range you can learn below* (p. 39, p. 74) (KV 993: 49).

Warkentin claims that a writing competition yielded more black-and-white utterances than did oral interviews (2002: 12). From my own experience I can rather say that, while giving answers to the questionnaire, people tend to polemicise more, try to find answers also to any assumed questions the reader could have. Proceeding from the respondent's position in the ESSR, people try to find answers fitting to the present, sometimes also searching for justification. As a comparison, we can mention Ilmar's answer about fringe benefits and compensations.

> *While working for the Council of Ministers, I also enjoyed some fringe benefits. I have to admit here that quite a few other establishments and institutions, not to mention collective and state farms, offered their staff this kind of perks. So the perks granted to the staff of the Council of Ministers did not differ much from those provided by the other establish-*

[9] Toompea Palace in Tallinn housed the administrative machinery of the Council of Ministers of the ESSR, where Ilmar used to work.

ments, institutions and farms of that time, which were better off (KV 993: 76).

Biographical interviews pay more attention to personal relations, communicating with primary groups, emotional relations. Social network stands more in focus than in the case of written thematic narratives. Also, in interviews the speaker is placed in the central position, in written answers we often have to presume whether the respondents participated in the described events themselves or not. As a positive characteristic of the questionnaire we can mention that, while writing down their stories, the respondents have the possibility to recall their everyday life in more detail, using, for example, diaries, notes, house registers, and so on. The questionnaire includes, for example, several questions about the living conditions of that time, "the usual things" of everyday life, and then, differently from the interview situation, the respondents can collect data and relate them to their subjective recollections. We cannot claim that social relations have completely been left out of written thematic narratives; they rather touch upon other levels in social communication. This is also expressed in the analysis of social relations in this article.

A definite group of respondents sets certain limits to written thematic narratives. According to Warkentin writing competitions have been criticised in Finland as they comprise only special people or only those who crave for attention (Warkentin 2002: 11). In the case of the correspondents' network of the ENM, we can speak about "experienced" respondents, who are willing to answer all questions, being sometimes too confined to the borders set. In places, the respondents tend to be too "harassed" by the questions, they try to follow and describe exactly the issues provided by the questionnaire. When they tell about their experience not directly asked about in the questionnaire, they feel as if they had broken a rule: *All this* [supporting the church in the Soviet time] *was not included in your questionnaire, but it shouldn't be unnecessary* (KV 997: 136). The "Correspondent's Notebook"[10] compiled by the ENM provides exact guidelines for answering

[10] The establishment of the correspondents' network and its operating in the years 1931–1981 has been treated in more detail by Jüri Linnus. The extracts from the correspondents' rules of procedure dating from 1935 referred to in the article are very similar to the present guidelines of the "Correspondent's Notebook" (see Linnus 1988: 26).

questionnaires. Several of them eliminate passing on experience, they are focused on obtaining cultural-historical information rather than experience. For example, the guidelines read, "Answers should be **to the point and credible**. In order to achieve this, it is **indispensable** that the correspondents in the case of the issues they are **not so familiar with or have doubts about**, should ask for data from several local people" (http://www.erm.ee/?node=256; my emphasis, KJ).

Here it is also relevant to give a critical estimation of the written questionnaire which serves as a basis for this article. As a compiler, my goal was to focus on people's autobiographical experience and, within the framework of the aforementioned institutional guidelines, I also managed it. However, in the case of a few questions, the wording still appeared to be inaccurate. For example, I asked questions about moonlighting and hackwork during the Soviet time. The first failure was the usage of the word "hackwork", which is a notion of present society. The question about moonlighting was inconvenient. The question could be understood as penetration into the forbidden territory, as in Soviet ideology hackwork was one of the objects of ridicule and it was a socially condemned and illegal activity. In response to the questions "How extensively did hackwork spread? What were the possibilities for moonlighting? Describe your experience" (http://www.erm.ee/?node =282), Ilmar's career biography states: *Cannot answer the questions because of lack of experience* (KV 993: 46), while in response to the question about if and how much the manpower of the institution was used for private purposes, Ilmar describes how he had had the electric system installed in his summer cottage by the electrician of the institution. *Of course I paid for the work directly to him, not through the finance department. As it happened outside his working hours. This way it was convenient for both sides* (KV 993: 70).

In conclusion we can say that, while analysing the sources obtained with the help of different methods, we also have to bear in mind the way in which they have been created. This article focuses on two written narratives – a thematic narrative created with the help of a questionnaire and a life story, with the main emphasis on the former. Taking into account the aforementioned discussion, I am analysing the thematic narrative created with the help of a questionnaire as a story created on the basis of a person's own experience. In spite of several frames operating in the case of a written thematic narrative, the decision about what to say when conveying his experience is still made by the narrator.

From a peasant boy to a civil servant through military career

The analysis of social relations in this article is based on the experience of one person, therefore I consider it necessary to give a survey of his career and development, and to elicit the fact that can be learned about Ilmar on the basis of two different sources. Ilmar's life story covers his adolescent years in the Republic of Estonia, his and his family's life in the ESSR and in the Republic of Estonia with regained independence. (ENSV 91). His career biography is concerned with the working years in the ESSR (KV 993: 41–144). The topic under discussion in this article is social relations in working life. As the questionnaire was focused on working life, it contained more material on the subject. In the further analysis of social relations I concentrate my attention on his career biography, his life story serves as a supportive source.

Ilmar, a civil servant qualified as a lawyer, was born into a farmer's family in 1918, finished a *gymnasium* in the second half of the 1930s, which was followed by military service and work in the Defence Army of the Estonian Republic. The year 1940 can be regarded as a breaking-point in his life – he continued his military service in the Red Army[11], then joined the fatigue party in Russia, participated in World War II in the ranks of the Estonian Corps and worked as an officer in the Soviet Army until 1956. Ilmar gives a rhetorical description of his work on his home farm: *Was it the field of my home farm where I used to walk behind the harrow or the land roller, tie up sheaves and pick potatoes?* (KV 993: 42). Here Ilmar bears in mind the question about his first workplace. Typically of the childhood of a peasant child of the 1920s–1930s, it was the home farm, although it was not a paid job but a natural part of upbringing (the same in several other thematic narratives, e.g., also in KV 995: 53–236). So we get only a figurative description of his first workplace.

Ilmar mentions his military career neither in his life story nor in his career biography. Yet what is meaningful for him is the social network related to his military career and wartime and the participation in which has been important for him until the present time (ENSV 91: 20–21).

His life story explains why he became a career soldier. His peasant

[11] On August 29, the reorganisation of the Estonian People's Army into the 22nd Territorial Rifle Squad of the Red Army started.

origin is glowing through his life story; although he starts it with a statement: *I am a country-boy* (ENSV 91: 1), he will never become a farmer. As a justification for his choice, he mentions his wish to help the farm.

> *I was the only child in the family, so my destiny was predetermined. I was to become the heir of the farm and its developer. Whether I wanted it or not, whether I was cut out for it or not. It was predetermined this way. [—] When I browsed the law on officers' service career, I had an idea. I realised that it would be the quickest way for me to improve the situation at home (to pay the debt and activate tilling) if I became an officer* (ENSV 91: 1–2).

The debt was meant to cover Ilmar's school expenses. However, he cannot see any other possibility for doing something for the farm: *If I had returned home after military service, it would have meant living in want together with my father and mother until going under the hammer. I could not think of any other jobs for earning money – also in my home neighbourhood…* (ibid.) The first correction in his farming plans was made by military service and the possibility to earn money in order to save the farm; the other – and more final for Ilmar – the kolkhoz order. *Collective farms started to be established in my home neighbourhood and I had nothing to do there any more. Father and Mother had also moved from our home in the woods to the settlement, where electricity, shops, chemist's shop, doctor and church were all at hand* (ibid.: 5). So, after returning into civil life (in 1956) he becomes a city dweller and a civil servant. In his career biography he describes his thirty years of service as an official at the Council of Ministers. *Here I also take into account the fact that part of my earlier jobs were in the time when there was no Soviet Estonia yet and part of them occurred outside Soviet Estonia* (KV 993: 41).

After World War II the veterans of the Great Patriotic War were offered positions of responsibility, which were of crucial importance regarding the new society. At least they were all provided jobs (see also KV 990: 176). So, when analysing the story, we have to bear in mind the fact that Ilmar belongs in the so-called privileged bureaucracy in Soviet society, who were considered as the bearers of typical middle-class values in Soviet time (Ledeneva 1998: 78 ff., quoted in Kõresaar 2003: 170).

Why and how are social relations emphasised?

Below I will make an attempt to interpret what kind of social relations are expressed in the career biography and how they are emphasised. I will also try to understand why it is namely these particular social relations that have been stressed.

The two sources under analysis – the life story and the career biography – give different descriptions of social relations: the life story is more focused on the relations inside the family, the thematic narrative – on working relations. As my aim was to study working life and relations, the analysis below is concentrated on social relations in working environment.

Social relations can be divided into those operating on the primary group level and those operating on the secondary group level, or, generally, into the so-called strong and weak relations. The strong, first-level relations are based on emotional connections and here the general assisting principle is applied. The so-called weak relations proceed rather from instrumental connections and are not so many-sided, yet they perform an important function (Diewald 1995: 229). Social relations in career biographies usually cover the relations of the so-called secondary group level. The including of the primary relations in the career biography depends much on the narrator, their gender and marital status. The written thematic narratives dealt with here tell about the narrators' families and occupations, yet it is not a rule. Single people certainly mention their marital status[12], and women do it more often than men. In Ilmar's thematic narrative family relations are exposed in connection with some fringe benefits he got due to his position: *I was able to exchange this flat for two two-room ones. Either daughter got her own flat. Me and my wife also got a two-room flat. [—]* [about getting a car] *Well, I didn't actually want it any more, although I had a driving license. But the family was interested* (KV 993: 77); or as a "sufferer" in strenuous studies and working life: *I also had a family – wife and two daughters. I was supposed to have time for them as well. To be honest, the family and family relations suffered. During the years of studying I was not able to pay too much attention to them and take good*

[12] Speaking about being alone at the moment of writing the story or a single person's life and their additional duties in the Soviet time (KV 990: 69–92); it often occurs, for example, in teachers' career biographies, e.g., KV 994: 159–191, KV 990: 11–25, KV 999: 242–317.

care of them (KV 993: 41).

Generally his career biography also leaves out emotional relations on the horizontal level; while describing social relations, it is the social relations on the vertical level, i.e., with superiors – which are meaningful for him.

Social relations appear with different intention in different stories, and the relations that are paid attention to and emphasised, vary by sources. From Ilmar's life story and career biography we can elicit as an example an event occurring in both sources – the acquisition of a landed property for building a summer cottage. In his life story this happens as if against his will; Ilmar is like a bystander, he does not play any role in the acquisition, neither does he explain the background or social relations related to it.

> *The lot for building a summer cottage was offered to me in 1970. I was not really interested in it; I said to the offer that if I retired some day, maybe I would like to have it then. I was told that when I retired, I would get a lot in Haapsalu district.*[13] *After reconsidering, I accepted the offer* (ENSV 91: 6).

His career biography reveals that the acquisition of the lot was directly connected with his position, the network operating inside the privileged bureaucracy. Ilmar places this case in the rubric *with the elements of the system "scratch my back and I'll scratch yours"*. First, resources between institutions are exchanged and then the remaining lot, due to friendly relations, goes into Ilmar's possession. *One day a good pal of mine from our agricultural department called me and asked if I was interested in a lot for building a summer cottage* (KV 993: 118).

Horizontal relationship

In Ilmar's career biography horizontal relationships mostly emerge in the instrumental meaning. However, emotional relations and contacts with former mates from military service, school, and sports training also play a significant role.

In the mid-1950s Ilmar starts looking for another job after about 20

[13] Haapsalu district is situated in West Estonia (the present Lääne County). A lot for a summer cottage was appreciated by its nearness to one's home (here, the city of Tallinn) and its location in a naturally beautiful place, usually near a water body. To have a lot in Haapsalu district was not by far as prestigious as to have it in Harjumaa, near Tallinn.

years of military service; as a party member, he finally reaches the secretary of the party organisation, who helps him find a job.

> *After demobilisation from the armed forces (in 1956), after I had taken a short break, I started looking for my first job in the civil service. All my efforts were in vain,*[14] *as I was not qualified for civil service. At last I went with my problem to the secretary of the local Party Committee, who was responsible for personnel issues. [—] Finally he sent me as a personnel clerk to a small lace and ribbon-weaving factory. [—] My next and main job was at the Chancellery of State at the Council of Ministers of the ESSR* (KV 993: 42–44).

Social network is also needed for fulfilling one's tasks at work. When a problem at work needed a quick solution, emotional friendly relations had to be used for instrumental purposes. As an example, we can present the following problem-solution here: Bruno Saul, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, quickly needed data on Pärnu district (Saul himself was already halfway there). The necessary data could be procured from the Planning Committee.

> *I did not know anybody among the management of the Planning Committee. I called a good pal of mine, the chairman of the board of athletics there (I myself was the vice-chairman of the board of athletics in my institution) and told him about the problem and its urgency. [—] After half an hour he called me back and started dictating …*(ibid.: 65).

Before he started to solve the problem – to obtain the necessary data – Ilmar gave a quick estimate of his chances and found that the quickest (and easiest) way to do it was on the basis of friendly relation, expecting that, due to emotional relationship, the other side would help him solve the problem. This was the only time when he had deserved his superior's gratitude (emphasis in the text laid by the source).

> *The next morning the head of department came TO MY TABLE, shook hands with me and said, "Thank you, comrade! You saved our department's reputation!" This was the only time he had thanked me* (ibid.).

[14] As a comment, it can be said here that several interviewees have told me about their difficulties in finding work especially in the 1950s.

Recognition in the case of social relations and especially working relations is a significant category. Personal recognition outweighed those on paper and it was something the respondent was willing to share with the reader. Mutual recognition also deserves mentioning in the career biography.

The existing strong emotional relations could also be used for instrumental purposes. It was easier to work with a superior with whom you were in friendly relations than the one with whom you had only official working relationship. [—] *the last vice-chancellor was my wartime regiment pal.* [—] *Thanks to him, also some of my rather complicated problems found a more favourable solution* (KV 993: 111).

In attending to matters not directly connected with work, multi-level relations also counted. As a comparison, we could mention here the story about establishing a shooting range for practising shooting in the attic of Toompea Palace. It had to be sanctioned by several departments. *I co-ordinated this matter with the Board of Architecture, national heritage protection, militia and fire departments. I have to admit that acquaintances counted here as well (without scratching anybody's back)* (ibid.: 48). Both the source under study here and several other career biographies reveal the essential role of those people who had served in the Estonian Corps: they held significant positions and a loose, yet strong network operated between them. The same kind of scheme can also be noticed in the case of other social networks in Soviet Estonia (studying together, beginning from the year 1964 student brigades, etc.).

Ilmar himself gives the best summary of the instrumental usage of horizontal social relations, answering the question about how he was employed by the top institution of Soviet bureaucracy, which the Council of Ministers with its administrative apparatus undoubtedly was.

> *When later on some of my friends asked me how I got a job at this institution of higher administration, I answered, "Small wonder! It has been written about in "Kalevipoeg!"" And if they still wondered, I quoted, "Dearer than a load of gold, superior than silver treasures, acquaintance must be declared"*[15] (KV 993: 45).

[15] The actual quotation from the epic "Kalevipoeg" reads as follows, "*Dearer than a load of gold, superior than silver treasures, wisdom must be declared* ". The quotation (as well as the epic itself) was over-exploited in the Soviet time. It could be found in textbooks, as slogans at schools, etc., and

However, this acquaintance has an emotional shade of meaning: it is the schoolmates, a network that has been transferred from one system – the Republic of Estonia – into another, and, at the same time, it is the "brothers-in-arms" from the Estonian Corps, who help their schoolmate get a better-paid job.

> *During the break* [at the town's active[16]] *I caught a glimpse of my former schoolmates from Rakvere Comprehensive Gymnasium. We had also met quite frequently in the Estonian Corps. After the war they had been demobilised immediately as specialist required in national economy, and granted positions of quite high responsibility. [—] When I was asked about my salary and I told them what it was, they exchanged glances... Their salaries were quite different from mine. They knew me through and through (one of them had been my desk-mate at the gymnasium for three years) [—]* (ibid.: 44).

In his career biography Ilmar does not give a thorough description of the networks used in managing his personal affairs.

> *In fulfilling one's working tasks, everyone tried to manage on their own. [—] It was different outside working hours. Quite frequently you needed a helping hand from your colleague, but, as I understand, these cases do not belong under this question* (ibid.: 118).[17]

Owing to his position in the Soviet privileged bureaucracy, he did not have to resort to horizontal relations each time he needed help in solving some problems, but he was able to make use of the opportunities that resulted from his position. In order to improve his living conditions (several generations lived together under one roof), he took advantage of the possibility to get new flats from his workplace. The relations resulting from his position (or rather, the institution) are also revealed in fulfilling his personal needs.

> *Sometimes I had to use the institution's staff for fulfilling my personal needs. I was building my summer cottage. [—] Using strangers in this field*

finally started to live a life of its own, characterising the operating system and the new maxim, which was more useful to proceed from than the original proverb.

[16] Active – meeting of more active party members.

[17] The compilers of the questionnaire were actually interested in helping colleagues also in the case of problems not related to work.

(electricity, drainage) would have been inconvenient for me. Our working times would have coincided. [—] … gave our electrician [—] keys to my cottage and he installed the electric system as designed. [—] Water pipes and drainage were installed the same way. [—] Certain implements had to be used for personal purposes. It was mainly cars. [—] In this case I knew the people involved (director of the motor pool and the driver) and they assumed an understanding attitude towards the matter (KV 993: 69–70).

It is typical of not only bureaucracy to take advantage of this kind of opportunities; similar practice also occurs in other occupations and the above situation where the means related to one's post are used for personal matters, can rather be regarded as a typical solution.

Ilmar almost never touches upon emotional, friendly relations between colleagues. The latter are nameless persons or just pals. However, they do things together at work: play caroms, billiards, participate in company parties and setting-up exercises (there was a period when obligatory exercises were organised at work at a definite time (11.45–12.00) every day, under the supervision of a hired expert).

In Ilmar's life story relations on the primary level become meaningful; he describes in great detail what he did together with his family in the Soviet time and what kind of festivities he celebrated. *Together with Helvi we went to the cinema, theatre, concerts, sports competitions, café, sometimes also restaurant* (ENSV 91: 9). An important level of communication for Ilmar is military veterans – both from the Estonian Corps and the ones from the navy from the period of the Estonian Republic. It is this level that plays the most significant role in his life story while describing his present life.

Vertical relations

Although in his career biography Ilmar emphasises the horizontal-level relations through different situations and under various circumstances, the main stress in his story has undoubtedly been laid on social relations on vertical level. Ilmar gives emotional and verbose descriptions of his superiors and his relations with them.

The proportion of the descriptions of vertical relations might result from his choice not to speak about his colleagues' help in matters outside work or mingling after working hours, as well as the fact how Ilmar defines relationships at work.

Relationships are essential both in everyday life and at work. Leaving

aside all the other people with whom relationships might develop, we will view part of them, namely those with superiors, both direct and in higher positions, which developed in the course of intermingling (KV 993: 94).

Yet, we could proceed from the fact that people recall the things that are meaningful for them and the questions posed are interpreted from that basis. The reason why the topic of superiors rises in Ilmar's career biography, might be the strain imposed by their personalities, which is the only source of conflict that he has recalled from his working life. While giving a general estimation of the Soviet period in his life story, Ilmar mentions his family's well-being and feeling of security, and as the only disturbing factor, he points at difficult superiors.

By the 1980s I was satisfied with my living and working conditions. We and our children had our own home – a flat. All of us had jobs. I was satisfied with my job and position. My salary was decent. I had a desk job, with definite working hours. A few days' business trips a month served as a pleasant change, making it possible for me to get acquainted with different people and places all over Estonia. The only infrequent inconveniences in my position resulted from my direct superior, the head of department. Fortunately this was a temporary, passing phenomenon, as were the superiors themselves. [—] These examples seem to be far-fetched as regards family life, yet, they have left an imprint on my (as a family member's) health and nerves (ENSV 91: 11–12).

The great attention paid to the relations with superiors might also result from the special position of Ilmar's working place – the Council of Ministers – in the ESSR; it was the institution which directed local life on the basis of the ECP and CPSU guidelines. In comparison, career biographies, the authors of which have worked in the country or in small towns, focus on friendly, emotional horizontal relationships (KV 998: 11–97; KV 999: 318–371). Vertical relations are described by Ilmar on tens of pages, outlining the superiors' profiles; yet, the relations are also elicited in other contexts, when answering other questions concerning working life. In his career biography Ilmar describes relations with his superiors on three levels: heads of departments or direct superiors, chancellors or directors, and chairmen and vice-chairmen of the Council of Ministers or high superiors. Here I mainly dwell upon relations with direct superiors.

A superior could have been "an obstacle" in arranging personal affairs. For example, Ilmar as a military pensioner had to go after his

retirement pay during working hours – each month on a certain day at a certain time. By superiors' silent consent, he usually had no problems with that, he was able to do it during his working hours – as the superiors also had some personal matters which had to be taken care of the same way. *During the "rule" of one of the heads of department, this procedure brought about a fuss. I have to admit that in this respect he was extremely orderly and scrupulous also about himself. [—] "Do you have to go namely today?" I was asked.* And then follows a whole range of questions and explanations. Ilmar shows his pension booklet where the date and time are marked, the superior checks them by his calendar and watch, and then they start discussing the working plan.

> *It really would not be worth mentioning, but the same thing happened each month according to one and the same scenario. I could not understand why he needed this kind of fuss. [—] But this was the way I had to manage my personal affairs during working hours. For all the fifteen years that he was the head of department* (KV 993: 61–62).

In biographical narratives describing the Soviet time, it is a widespread practice to depict an event in connection with someone's "rule" (e.g., *during the rule of the head of department*), though not the rule of a party or government leader, but the direct superior. The Soviet-time superior's figure in biographical narratives is very colourful and important, characterised as a patriarchal *batyushka* ("patriarch"), an autocrat. A superior assumes a patronising, guarding role towards their subordinates, who in some narratives also solves their personal problems, especially in smaller urban settlements (KV 986: 147–227). Autocrats-superiors, who let their subordinates decide upon matters at work at their own will as well as minded their personal matters during working hours, were regarded as good ones. In his narrative, Ilmar also appreciates highly this kind of superiors.

> *He had normal, good relations with the staff of his department. He did not interfere in his subordinates' work very much. He was often superficial in working matters. Usually there was an open newspaper or a magazine – "Pravda", "Izvestiya" or "Ogonyok" – on his desk. One of the cases of his superficiality might also have cost me dear* (KV 993: 94).[18]

[18] Superiors as superficial workers are mentioned also in other career biographies (e.g., KV 993: 31–32).

Due to their superiors' superficiality or inaptitude, the subordinates might have got into critical situations. In reminiscences relations with superiors are intertwined with problems at work. Ilmar also recalls a conflict like that. One of the issues that belonged in the competence of Ilmar's department and was his direct task, was renaming small country towns into towns. Due to the indifference of superiors – the direct decision-makers – a problem arose with the renaming of Maardu. Educational and cultural workers in small country towns were granted some fringe benefits, which were not meant for those living in towns.

> *Their* [the educational and cultural workers'] *discontent would have been an unexpectedly strong blow at the threshold of the coming elections – they would not have participated in the elections, or voted against the candidate, or written down their opinion on the ballot paper, and so on. These things were of great political importance at that time. The situation was explosive* (KV 993: 99–100).

The problem is discovered by Ilmar, who also tries to solve it, but, to his great disappointment, he is the one who gets scolded about it. He thinks that this is unfair, yet it was the way the system worked – it was the lower-level officials on whom the blame fell.

Superiors' profiles in Ilmar's career biography are mostly caricature. They are much more emotional and colourful than those of his colleagues', especially in the cases when he intermingles with them outside working hours. For example, he had a former classmate for a superior, who before the war had been travelling around the world, wanted to become a dancer and, having participated in the war in the ranks of the Estonian Corps, naturally worked in the Soviet bureaucracy system.

> *It was quite logical that after the war we found him in the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the ESSR. But quite soon his restless blood started to boil again and he spent two years in Moscow, in a school whose name was not mentioned publicly* (ibid.: 97).

After a failed career as a spy, the classmate was "grounded" in a convenient position in the Council of Ministers. In spite of the fact that he is a failure as a superior, Ilmar expresses his friendly attitude towards him, as he is a former brother-in-arms.

> *Good relations with the head of department continued also later on (still a*

classmate!), despite the mentioned and unmentioned strains that sometimes occurred between us (KV 993: 101).

Yet, it is the school-time contacts that are essential for working relationships later on, even if the classmate's different life style had found disapproval already during school-years: *During school vacations, when the other country-children helped their parents in the fields and pastures, he as a deck-boy sailed on board his uncle's ships from one European port to another* (ibid.: 97). Personal relationships are rendered greater meaning, they are valued more than working relations. Strains at work are rather not mentioned, people would not remember them (or would not like to speak about them).

Another superior might have brought about a new managerial style, new decisions, which also adjusted relations at work. As a comparison, I present an example of Ilmar's career biography, which demonstrates how a new head of department exchanged the districts subordinated to different officials.

When I was trying to find out the reasons for that, I was told that it was better this way from the point of view of work, as local people in these districts knew me too well already. He [the head of department] *had explained it to us already during his first weeks in office. Right? While until now, when I had been told that a certain person in the district was, for example, an excessive drinker, I had simply told him, "Kaljo, hold it back! You might get into trouble!" Now, in a situation like that, I had to tell him, "Comrade Mölder. The Council of Ministers has been informed that you are an excessive drinker, which is not compatible with the requirements of the Soviet moral code. Please take into account that corresponding conclusions will be drawn"* (ibid.: 102).

At the formal working level it was a superior who created a mess in work arrangement, yet he was a nice person. While describing vertical relations, Ilmar draws a line between a superior as a superior and as a human being. A superior as a pal in the "caroms corner" or at a company party was a nice companion; the superior described above is characterised by Ilmar as follows:

By the way, outside working hours he was polite, keen on sports, a good mixer, a pleasant interlocutor, a real society man (ibid.: 104).

Ilmar himself, when communicating with his subordinates (as a higher

official from Tallinn), preferred to use a more emotional, non-official way of interaction. It was easier to talk business on the level of a "pal" than proceed from official ways of communication and moral. In practice it was a more efficient way than "knocking" at the Soviet conscience. At the Council of Ministers, on the contrary, the relations between superiors and subordinates were strictly hierarchical, a different kind of behaviour was surprising.[19]

> *His* [the chancellor's] *behaviour was peculiar when he wanted to see one of his subordinates in his office, to talk to them. In these cases we were used to his secretary calling the person needed, saying, "Come to comrade Udras (Pertels), please!" At the time when G. Martin was in this position, I was told over the phone, "It's Martin speaking. Drop by, if you have time! When it is convenient for you!" Of course I went at once* (KV 993: 109).

Emphasising the importance of upbringing and respectful attitude, which he had been taught at home, his respect for a superior depends on the latter's personality. He values the same personal qualities in them as in himself: good behaviour, competence, as well as the ability to adapt themselves to the system.

One of the topics emerging in Ilmar's career biography is the issue of superiors' competence. How did the subordinates behave if the superior's rearrangements and orders seemed to be foolish? The following story from Ilmar's career biography is a survey of how the training of the staff for local soviets was reorganised.

> *The work of Soviet organs was a bit strange for him* [the new head of department]*, [—] he quickly learned the differences from party and Komsomol work, as well as the elementary elements of this work. He wanted to share his knowledge with the others and teach them right away. [—] The new head of department became actively involved in the work of these courses. He switched into the curriculum topics he had recently discovered for himself. Many of them dealt with the elements of the work of soviets* [local executive committees]. *In many a cases we were trying to*

[19] References to the Council of Ministers as a hierarchical institution can be found in Ilmar's career biography also in the descriptions of space division and service sector. It is especially colourful in the case of the latter, where the institution had several canteens and they were meant for different staff members. *This canteen was used by the so-called rank-and-file workers whose only wish was to satisfy their appetites as easily and quickly as possible* (KV 993: 86).

> *hold him back and persuade him that one or another topic could be excluded, as (for example) the secretaries of the urban and district executive committees for whom the course was meant, were mostly qualified as lawyers and new these things inside out. "They have forgotten these things," the superior was sure. [—] It was difficult again* (KV 993: 103).

Ilmar reduces the absurdities inside the system to the superior's personality. He is quite modest in criticising the system, the existing order, and if he does it, it is namely through his superiors. If the system itself cannot be criticised, it can be done through his superior's personality. This can be regarded as a peculiarity of the socialist system, where decisions are not based on rational electoral system, but everything boils down to singularity, which also gives greater power to officials (Srubar 1991: 418–419). Criticism of a superior can reveal how the Soviet power worked too well as a system, and agreeable personalities who were well adapted to the system were preferred as superiors. This approach also shows us the reason why Ilmar in his career biography differentiates between a superior as a representative of the system and a superior as a human being and a pal.

Why and how are social relations emphasised in the sources like a life story and a structured thematic narrative created with the help of a questionnaire? First it has to be pointed out that different sources reflect social relations differently. Here we presented a survey of a single career biography and a life story. Ilmar's life story gives a meaning to social relations with primary groups. He concentrates on his own and his family's life and relations with the so-called non-formal groups. In his career biography Ilmar emphasises social relations on two different levels – horizontal and vertical ones. On horizontal level relations at work are presented rather on instrumental level, although they also have an emotional meaning. Ilmar stresses the importance of social relations both when solving problems at work and outside working hours. What is important here is the network of former mates from military service from the days of the Estonian Corps. His career biography pays more attention to relations with superiors than horizontal relations. Through vertical social relations Ilmar presents to the reader small details of his working life and describes the events that he has remembered from the years in the subordinate unit of the Council of Ministers. His descriptions of superiors are emotional and often also critical. In the case of vertical relations the differentiation between the opposing us/them is also meaningful, where "them" represents the

system and superiors working for it. In Ilmar's career biography the network outside the institution often constitutes a more important social relationship. Ilmar's access to various benefits results from his position and therefore the "deficit networks"[20] are not emphasised here.

Summary

In the story about working life in the ESSR, it is undoubtedly the events related to the narrator's life that occupy the central place, whereas he distances himself from social developments. One part of working life is constituted by social relations, and more attention is paid to them while writing a career biography. In addition to describing social relations, through which we can learn about a number of concrete events as well as their present interpretation, the career biography also gives a good survey of the Soviet-time living conditions and the diversity of society.

Although in many places in his career biography Ilmar makes us understand that the institution where he worked was not a special, privileged one, the central topic in the descriptions is its peculiarity. Here rules different from those established in ordinary institutions are applied. On his first working day the new staff-member is introduced to the first vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers, and Ilmar recalls how the latter emphasised the singularity of the Council of Ministers: *You are going to work for the Council of Ministers… but you are employed with a test period… And if you do not justify our trust with your work… Then we have to sack you…* (KV 993: 44).

He considers himself as an ordinary civil servant, however, he admits that their work was paid more attention to than in any other institution.

> *There was a certain attitude towards the personnel department and its staff, not because they were appreciated, but more because people were afraid to make a wrong move under their eyes (at parties, excursions, etc.). This kind of attitude was based on the fact that they also watched the other people's behaviour and actions. Almost the same kind of attitude prevailed concerning the special, military and communications departments, whose functions were recommended to be kept unknown* (ibid.: 91).

[20] "Deficit networks" – social relationships based on informal contacts and personal networks which was used to obtain goods and services under the rationing which characterised Soviet Estonia (editors).

When using career biographies as sources for everyday life, their significance for the researcher is in the extent they reflect personal experience and worldview. In the analysed career biography Ilmar conveys his experience of the Soviet-time working life. Social relations are just a part of the narrator's social and cultural world, through which it is possible to pass on perceptions, categories that are essential for the narrator.

Ilmar's life story helps us understand his career biography. In the latter he does not voice his opinion, does not give any reasons, and avoids any evaluations. When reading it, we fail to understand his attitude towards the Soviet power and himself as part of the state machinery. Yet, in his life story he sounds more concrete when defining his point of view:

> *Life was not stagnant at that time, either. People worked, brought up their children and threw parties. Somebody has said once that if you live together with wolves, you also have to howl together with them. And this is exactly what people did at that time – some of them less, some of them more, and louder* (ENSV 91: 13).

Ilmar expresses his attitudes, giving a general evaluation of his work, trying to interpret the things essential for him.

> *Did I like the work I was doing in that institution for thirty-two years? Somebody once said that if you wanted to find satisfaction in your work, you had to make it pleasant for yourself. I could not do anything else but this, although my work there was not very pleasant. [—] I tried to get myself into the spirit. The first thing I experienced was that I was not allowed to make mistakes in my work. [—] While I was working during these years in the Chancellery of State at the Council of Ministers, I could not work differently there, either. Besides, somebody (again someone else's words!) has said, "In order to live, you have to work, in order to live well, you have to work hard." I also wanted to lead as good a life as possible. In order to achieve it, I had to develop a serious attitude towards the work I had to do. Also at that time* (KV 993: 130, 136).

When analysing the source, one of the factors that became essential was the non-fulfilment of the expectations that I as a researcher had towards my source. It became clear that it is not possible to create a situation similar to an interview with the help of written questionnaires, as relatively little attention is paid to the wider context – people's

understandings and origin. It was difficult to elicit all the important categories through a career biography. A person's working world is just a part of his whole life and directly depends on them. Here it was a lucky chance that the analysis of the career biography was greatly assisted by the existence of another source – the life story. In career biographies, when answering written questionnaires in a more general way, the approach becomes narrower. In life stories people tell the stories of their lives and try to relate it to the general story of time (it also results from different aims of collection work as mentioned above). A written narrative obtained with the help of a questionnaire undoubtedly opens up other aspects in the Soviet-time everyday life than an interview or a life story, focusing on common, everyday communication in working life during the Soviet period.

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ENSV = Life stories under the topic "The Life of Myself and My Family in the ESSR and in the Republic of Estonia".
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Sacrifice and Hope. Contemporary Ghosts of Modernisation

Tomasz Rakowski

New poverty in Poland became noticeable after the transformation of the nineties and was usually connected with the collapse of great rural enterprises and industrial centres. Nevertheless, the settlements of scarcity situated near the greatest lignite mine in Poland, which are the subject of my research, seem to be something strange. First of all, they remain hidden, even if they have recently become more noticeable in the landscape. It is a particular kind of poverty. It refers to distinct spheres of life as, for instance, access to means of transport or access to distinct material goods. Moreover, the district is known as one of the richest and best-organised in the country. The people to whom I was talking experience the transformation and development of their district in a peculiar way. Remaining outside the public investment and decision-making, the settlements which my research concerns illustrate to some extent the process of marginalisation and social exclusion of the poor in a rich world (Washington, Paylor, Harris 2000). A modern bicycle path goes on for kilometres across the villages where bicycles serve to gather scrap metal and gum waste.

In the seventies the rural area in Central Poland located around the town of Bełchatów was a poor region with no industry. There was no perspective of any development or progress promoted by the communist government. The inhabitants were looking for jobs in other industrial centres, e.g., Łódź and Śląsk. In the middle of seventies, after the discovery of coal fields, a great industrial enterprise was established in the region. The Bełchatów lignite mine became the pride of the state. Layers and layers of soil disappeared, being eaten by gigantic machines. People from all over the country started to move to this region. Blocks of flats and great chimneys rose around. The expansion of industry seriously changed the countryside. Also the greatest conventional power station in Central Europe was built near the lignite mine in a very short time. The biggest social advancement in the People's Republic took place in the region while the rest of the country

immersed in deep stagnation.

The inhabitants' memories and comments collected during my fieldwork in the neighbourhood represent a peculiar case of the historical process of that time. It is a kind of anthropological laboratory; the subject of research is the process of modernisation. There are comments, complaints and new mythologies: a never-ending testimony. Modernisation understood in social as well as philosophical sense, particularly in the writings of the scholars from Frankfurt school, is the main and widely interpreted process of contemporary world (Adorno, Horkheimer 1994; Habermas 2000).

The organism of the lignite mine

The socio-cultural reality that remained after this rapid industrialisation seems to be full of ambiguities. The building and running of the lignite mine, a great social enterprise, was strongly influenced by the idea of progress within the communist state – now we can rather say about the idea of sustainable gaining of the earth's power, the idea of "sustainable development". In a book promoting the enterprise, published by the mine management on its 25th anniversary, the area is presented as an efficiently functioning organism with its digestion and secretions. One of its features is a perfect metabolism, something which seems to be very similar to the concept of *archeus,* i.e., the concept of the mystical metamorphoses of substances and humours formulated by Paracelsus in the era of Renaissance. In the book entitled "The Bełchatów Lignite Mine" (2000) one can find numerous tables presenting the metamorphoses: the coal as digestion and water, soil and mounds of ash as secretions. The return of secretions to the circulation of substances is based on the rule of the maximum usage of material. The water taken from the lignite mine is used by the factories making soft drinks, the mounds of ash after being cultivated become an exclusive terrain for hunters and the soil is transported to the garden markets. A quite similar image of a perfect organism we can also find on the pages of an magazine promoting the region and local society. The following parts of the organism are revealed: civil services, local government, ecological activities, educational development, new system of canalisation. In this perspective the transformation brings an idea of something that I would call a perfect state. The lignite mine, the environment and society seem to be an autonomous and harmonious entity. In the pictures published in "The Bełchatów Mine" book one can see blooming flowers over the pipeline system and green avenues near

the mounds of ash. The latest stage of the process seems to be the best one in this place. The well-known ancient idea is revealed, the idea of the State, which can be found in Aristotle's writings. The harmony between humans and elements, between society and individuals is described there as the "state of nature". Within the image of the enterprise as well as in Aristotle's vision of the State the latest form of social order is the first and perfect form of the order of nature.

Sacrifice and power

In the course of the research this perfect organism often happened to change into a form reminding rather of a gloomy Leviathan. The lignite mine and the district seem to be at that point just like in Thomas Hobbes's image (Hobbes 1968) – an organisation gathering the individuals' fates, eliminating any *status naturalis* and crushing them with its inertia, *if they like, they can do with us whatever they want, this is the way business is done here, they are not afraid of anything…*[1] This primal, fundamental violence, which erupted along with the lignite mine, took its toll on the land. Hobbes's social violence as well as the violence against the land leave their mark on my successive informants' comments. Since the mine was built *everything* – my informants say – *has turned into nothing*. Catastrophic images and dirty stories were often emerging throughout this interviews, *we had so much work at that time, days and nights were full of work, everything was running all the time… we were so exhausted, we had to work with the utmost effort 'cause they had certain deadlines…we lost our health then…we had many accidents…it wasn't well secured work, 'cause we were in a hurry…people were doing their best and they became invalids…some of them died…but nobody takes care… everything is built, everything is done…why bother about those times? nobody even remembers…* There appeared memories about the first shock of the ground, rising mounds, dusty winds they were made to live with, *our children… when they slept we had to hide them in our homes but…there was a kind of an earth quake a few times…they couldn't sleep well…it was really hard to breathe at that time…there were six strong impacts.…* The beginning of

[1] The comments that I have used in the text were gathered during the fieldwork by Joanna Wierzbicka, Aleksandra Dudzińska, Karolina Zawisza and the author.

the lignite mine activities seems to have horrible consequences. A kind of sacrifice is still present in the inhabitants' memory. A few of them evoke fragments of local stories and local myths, *one who had come in at that time was said not to have worked for a long time…they all have gone to grave…all of them died…when smoke started to come out of those chimneys, all the men in the village had to die…* The presence of death in their stories may also be treated as a particular way of expressing the current reality: economical stagnation, danger of unemployment. *It is hard to live on that money… we can't afford to buy goods… the death had to appear… only when a young man died… they had to increase salaries…just a bit…they needed the death to change their minds….* Nevertheless, all the comments seem to be comprised within the main schema. The death and disability are the *leitmotivs in* of many interviews. The mine as a huge construction seems to need the rites of the beginning, the rites of creation. Such symbols as the blood which sank into the walls of chimneys and the inhuman struggle appear throughout the comments. The above testimonies of the rapid progress simultaneously refer to the mythical ransom which had to be paid.

The world of powerlessness – the social world of Czyżów village abandoned on the edge of the lignite mine unveiled itself step by step. The invisible forces of the rich and best-organised district create a hidden wall between the dominating and excluded ones, between the challenging and the redundant ones. Two corresponding discourses of these two worlds appear in this system and interweave in many ways. There are recurring statements of lurking powers of evil – there is a contamination hidden in the soil and the anxious activities of the authorities of a definitely devilish character, as for instance the renovation of the local hunting house, *there on the mounds…in the place I know as my own…something bad is going on…the lamps are turned on, but there is no electricity there!…keys do not fit…and how much money they put in it…what do they do?…what for?*

The enterprise and the catastrophe

The recurrent motif of catastrophe and the primeval but still present sacrifice could be seen in the perspective of René Girard's theory of the crisis of imitation (Girard 1991: 111–127). Imitation, Girard shows, makes the subject comprising external objects, i.e., the external world is identified as a desire of those particular objects. Imitation, one could

say, reveals rather inconceivable modes of the worldview. The consequence of the crisis is an act of primeval repression caused by increasing tension, desire of possessing. From that moment on, the perceived world loses its main categories and sinks into a deep epistemic chaos. Throughout such a state of reality any differences, names, notions or social roles are suspended. Therefore such a world depends on any context, any situation or any change. There is no structure or rule at all. Moreover, in that case, the crisis seems to be a figure, which is set not only on the line between the dominant and the subordinate ones, but also between the human and the human's world. This lack of difference seems to concern the beginnings of every great social or material structure, the Tower of Babel as well as the lignite mine enterprise. It is usually founded on the main categories of the worldview such as ground/air, earth/sky, dry/wet, hot/cold, contamination/pureness. Within such a state of mind there is always a sense of instability. The state can be camouflaged by propaganda or by the art of advertisement, as we can read in the writing by Adorno and Horkheimer (1994), but it is initiated by the very modernisation. This is a world where a sense of omnipotent power comes across the sense of threat. Such phenomena were described in depth by Freud and his successors both from the psychical and socio-cultural perspective. The very experiences unveiled by the succeeding schools of psychoanalysis are particularly present in offering rites, myths of the nations, even in fairy-tales and legends. Those repeated in community texts refer to the very bottom of the existence.

Forcing this unstable world into any clearness or stability requires great efforts – all the freed forces of imitation have to be fixed in the moment. This process goes through the ritual sacrifice/offering. The offered animal takes over the entire guilt and makes it possible to rebuild a new order. Therefore the guilt, regarding psychoanalysis, is understood as a residuum of the sense of a former omnipotent power. Such a mechanism named anamorphosis was brilliantly described by Slavoj Žižek from a post-psychoanalytical perspective (Žižek 1989: 21–44; 2001: 94–109). Anamorphosis, Žižek claims, concerns the very moment in our day-to-day life, which becomes to be perceived as strange and cruel (as for instance during an epidemic). From that moment on the world can be transformed into a regular and clear stream. All the historical riddles, suspicious strategic and political games acquire their explicit reason. In history, such reason was usually set among a group of strangers, e.g. Jews, Muslims and so on, but also

among the dominating group. The group is perceived then as a hidden and fearful association. Similarly, the great enterprise is perceived as a universe of death. The view of the lignite mine and its authorities present in the interviews seem to be based on such a schema. All the symptoms of the very beginning such as drops of blood, memories of inhuman struggle and all the testimonies of contamination are bound with the images of the authorities – of their devilish power: *those men have gone to hell because they had particular apparatuses on their machines … it contained too much cobalt … this is the reason of those deaths …I took down one of the last with my brother-in-law this autumn…those men from the management, they know everything about it, they have got their secret archives…but you won't get any information…they won't let you know anything…* The offering which appears with regard to the interference in the earth's powers is permanently present in the social reality divided into the subordinate and the dominant ones; into those who have lost their chance and those who rule, "against whom you always lose" as Richard Hoggart put it once (Hoggart 1976: 100). Here, they are the officials who are responsible for the entire catastrophe.

It is important that the recurrent story concerns the comments which remain within a particular circulation. Such flow of comments was named a hidden transcript by sociologist James Scott (Scott 1990: 1–16). The main feature of a hidden transcript is the very fact that it remains at a spatial and temporal distance from public comments, i.e., remains behind the circulation of the official views. This kind of transcript does exist only if there is a contrast of the other side, the official one. The whole provides a space for various social games. As in Scott's illustration how it works – a black female slave utters a threatening prophecy to the white master, when he is not able to hear her voice. She makes the threat in the presence of the victim who is her relative, using the symbols and the elements of folklore characteristic of the African slaves in America. The transcript therefore presents a common outlook based on repeated mythology. Thus, the hidden transcript is something that everybody knows, though it is presented in individual acts; a threatening gesture is perfectly readable among the subordinate ones. But here comes the main feature of my fieldwork. There is a distinct crack, a kind of permanent disproportion in the view of the inhabitants. In the Bełchatów area this hidden, underground circulation still maintaining its vitality disintegrates into several different versions and various worldviews, into the worlds of local knowl-

edge, reminding the notion coined by Clifford Geertz (1983).

The game. The shrewdness and the debility

The local worldview is also revealed through a peculiar, local practice. There is a kind of game played between the enterprise and the villagers. The company pays much for the farmers' land if the mine needs new areas. Many families look forward to that moment. In order to get more money from the company they try to upgrade their households by planting new trees or pretending that they improve the heating system. Some of them have no luck – the company does not need their land and they stay in their dilapidated households. They become excluded from the official circulation of investments – such settlements of poverty surround the industrial zone. Those interlocutors begin to take up activities which are illegal to some extent, i.e., they collect the company secretions such as used ropes, gum waste, hundreds of kilos of scrap and they play with and cheat the company guards. The comments that I heard contain characteristic ambiguities: the powerlessness and resignation are mixed with a sense of peculiar power as, for instance, knowledge about secret entrances to the zone or acquaintance with the security service. The region surrounding their houses is described by them as a clean and carefully designed terrain or as a field of deep pollution. They observe yellow rains, pyramids of clouds staying behind the borderline of the mine and other apocalyptic symptoms. Those descriptions, dispersed with the view of the perfect organism, multiply in many ways. On the one hand, the yellow rains are explained as sulphur dust coming from the chimneys: *we've got this yellow dusts here but it has stopped now… the Swedish put modern filters on the chimneys…it must be that those clouds of sulphur were blown to them, to Sweden and sat on their grounds…so they put those filters on….* On the other hand, people explain the phenomenon as an effect of blowing pine pollen. Similarly, these meteorological phenomena inscribe themselves in the image of a catastrophe comprised in myth *clouds, if they even came here they would be cirrus and cumulus …they would cause the flood…we are just waiting for the moment when those mounds come and flood us and our houses…I have survived such a flood here…* as well as they remain a version of official, scientific meteorology. The discontent connected with the activities taken by the official authorities sometimes seems not to exist at all. Sometimes, the discontent is a kind of socially agreed pose, but it is also a real dissatisfaction

as well as a practice of resistance. The headlines of a local, resistant newspaper are composed of expressions such as "poverty", "sickness", "the way to nowhere". I often heard in consecutive households people contradicting each other's opinions. There were attitudes opposing the district politics, as well as supporting it, and many comments regarding completely different facts. What is particularly interesting is that the division into those who support the official view and those who resist is not entirely agreeable to the division into the well off and the poor ones.

The strong mythical structure founding the basis for knowledge and convictions within the local worlds seems to lose any cohesion here. We can just wonder, of course, if this cohesion has ever really existed. Anyway, the stories that I found are connected with the present situation of the people and the families that I was talking to. The pride of the waste dumping exploitation as well as the peasants' resignation and prostration are the examples of a surviving strategy presented by the informants. The time of their former sense of power and hope for the new beginning has almost gone. Nevertheless, the texts that exist today permanently refer to the former great thriving and economic rise: *at that time if I had found a craftsman I would have been given a tip every man who had his two arms could find a job…and if you had had a horse at that time, you would have been a king here…* The hope that the mine will buy the land is still present in their minds – everybody waits for the moment to become rich. The stories differ in each consecutive interview. Every time the mine evokes contradictory opinions – about water which is contaminated as well as quite pure, about heavy air full of sulphur and the pine pollen, about those clouds staying behind the land depression. The modern district unveils its threatening as well as protective images, alternately. Each text has at least two polarised versions – sacrifice or even offering is presented in a different way every time. I would like to quote a historical or genetic explanation here: the very fact that people moved into the region from each corner of Poland could be the explanation of those mixed and contradictory views. But the problem lies in the very fact that those differences in the worldview still belong to and even expand in every complaint, every comment, in the inhabitants' day-to-day praxis as well as in local publications.

The indelible difference of the images and an unlimited creativity presented by my informants is the particular feature of the ethnographic data. We can observe the permanent multiplication of a common, repeated worldview. Here the texts of experience belong to

the modern world. Each experience is divided into several and momentary narrations. Such a transformation can be recognised as the phenomenon which was defined by Walter Benjamin as a decadence of experience (Benjamin 1970; 1997). The process is based on various narrations still beginning, a narration with an absence of any hope, of any bad or happy end. Walter Benjamin describes such a change as one of the greatest turning points of modernity. He claims that the human condition during the industrial era is founded on a peculiar sense of time and work. Time has been fragmented into even moments, into very distinct movements of a worker's hand as well as movements of a machine. Work as a monotonous movement turns the former experience into a dispersed sense. This hypothetical former myth entity starts to crack. Any beginning of the narration as well as any end do not exist any more in the stories. A modern worker, one could say, comes from nowhere, and heads towards nowhere, a worker – as Benjamin has pictured – in association with the machines learns how to harmonise his movements with the continuous movement of an automat (Benjamin 1970: 83).

In this permanently dispersing worldview the texts that I found – the weak voices – multiply and renew their stories. The official idea of a perfect state and the devilish features of the new investments appear even together. The environment is contaminated as well as pure, depending on the context of a particular story. There is sacrifice and there is hope. The texts comprising the experience of the local world remain strange. It is a kind of independent creativity, a shelter for the incoherent understandings of the worldview. Anthropological fieldwork in this place thus remains an enclave of radical otherness. Those settlements of poverty spread around one of the biggest centres of modernisation, around the thirty-years-old Leviathan, seem to force a researcher to resign successively from such notions as work, weakness, power, contamination or progress. It seems that there is no such a vital power within the anthropological fieldwork as the permanent negotiation of these constantly multiplying worldviews, this kind of silent quarrel.

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An Attempt to Describe Life, in a Soviet Military Garrison, through Biographical Material

Aida Hachaturyan-Kisilenko

Set-up of the problem

The subject matter of the current article is the memory of the people having lived in the Soviet military garrisons, regarding their life inside the so-called wire fence. The Russian community in Estonia comprises a relatively large number of people who could be determined summarily as the former military and their families of that of the Soviet Union. During the Soviet period, these people were rotated to military service in Estonia where they often stayed to live, following the demobilisation, due to several objective reasons. The regaining of independence in Estonia was, as a rule, a great social trauma for this group. During the particular study, we were interested in the peculiarities regarding the earlier lifestyle of the families of the Soviet serviceman, family and social rituals and patterns of thought formed in the "zone". The research was participated in not solely by the former military themselves but also by their wives, widows and children who have grown up by now. There is one tendency noticeable with regard to the research – the interpretation of one and the same closed lifestyle, by the children and the adults, constitutes two extremely different pictures.

The specific feature of the *modus vivendi* of that of the military is indeed the military garrison. The garrison period is clearly distinct, in the course of life of the interviewee, as a specific era. Garrison life is concurrent with the family of nearly each of the military. This article mainly investigates the various narratives with regard to a military garrison. The question as to how one and the same object, the same reality crumbles in the consciousness of different people, becomes topical. The life story of a human being is not solely an individual construction, it is also the reflection regarding the experience of

interpersonal coexistence (Liimets 2002: 190). Analysis of oral narratives provides an opportunity to understand the social context of the microcosm in the garrison remarkably more widely than it has been accustomed to, up until now, at least from the point of view of Estonian culture. It is necessary to note that we would call this current article the first phase in investigating the context of life stories of the former military in Estonia, as the material from the interviews allows us to continue working in the same direction and analyse, in the future, the life of the respondents in the newly independent Republic of Estonia, their attitude towards the new situation, the perception of the new situation, reality, etc. The above-mentioned aspects exceed the framework of this article but will become the next phase of research.

Research methodology and data

It is common knowledge that biographical data are the main source for detailed and motivated descriptions of an individual case history. The widely used term "biographical method" or "individual case history" highlights the selective character of biographical description. The meaningful social relationships and motives for action find a description here from the subjective viewpoint of the character himself. The main instrument of our research was a semi-structured narrative biographical interview, one of the ways of approach, mentioned by Robert L. Miller, for the study of life history (Miller 2000: 12) – the presentation of life events in historical, time-logical sequence, based on the alteration of the respondent's viewpoint during the telling of one's life or family history. Recollections of the past are being mediated through the mirror of the present. The narrative approach preconditions the existence of two meaningful contexts – both social environment as well as social time having their role. Despite the fact that prior to interviewing, we had compiled questions and pointers for ourselves, which is a standard norm in the case of the neo-positivist method (Miller 2000; Aarelaid-Tart 2002b), we could not literally follow them. The core of narrative approach is the reciprocal impact of the parties involved in an interview – the interviewer and the interviewee – on each other ("interplay between interviewee and interviewer as a 'microcosm' of a 'macrocosm'" (Miller 2000: 13).

The author of the current article has carried out interviews with the families of the servicemen, during the period from April to early August, 2002. Potential interviewees covered a relatively large share of the acquaintance circle of the author as she herself is a child of a

military serviceman. It should be mentioned that a clear negative tendency became apparent during the research – a large number of people refused an interview (out of 20 potential interviewees, prevailingly the inhabitants of Tallinn, only 10 agreed to participate in the research). There can be several reasons for this. Some of them did not want to browse through and recollect the events of the past, particularly in the case when the past had been dramatic. Evidently, the habit of a Soviet person not to share information, taking shape during the course of many years, has also left its trace. Many were afraid that the author works as a spy in a kind of institution: "Why did she become interested in our past?" A negative result is also a result. Although the author is an acquaintance of the ten persons who refused the interview, they still not agree to relate details regarding the garrison life of the military. Also, all the ten persons who did agree with nterview were close acquaintances of the author. Only due to this fact the respondents agreed to give an interview and allowed the use of a dictaphone during our conversation. One important thesis of narrative theory was proved – life story is born in co-operation of two people where mutual trust and the suitable moment of time have an eminent role. On an average, an interview lasted for 2.5–3 hours. Nearly all interviewees felt uneasy in the beginning of the interview, when the dictaphone was switched on, but gradually, the recollections began to prevail and our conversation became more free and trusting. We agreed with the respondents not to mention their names neither on tape nor on paper. An interview comprised several thematic parts, concerning various aspects regarding the life of the family of a military person. These included career, life in the so-called restricted area (or closed zone), traditions, transitional rituals, values, mutual relationships within the micro-community of the servicemen, adaptation to other cultural spaces (inevitable conditions of rotation) and the later readiness for "civilian life".

Biographical method aims at presenting the subjective experience of the character by way of his or her personal categories and definitions. This necessitates the reviewing of the criteria with regard to the objectivity of research. Firstly, it is important to determine the subject's "personal story", the extent of individual interpretation. One of the most essential aspects is the fact as to **how** the informant talks about life in the military garrison. Juxtaposing the viewpoints of various narrators and various data enables the restoration, to some extent, not solely of the more objective external picture of the events of the past but also their subjective meaning for the interviewees. In order to maintain the

respondents' narrative style and way of thinking, the texts of the interviews have been amended to a minimal extent.

Brief overview regarding the history of a military garrison

The genesis of Russian military garrisons goes back to the events of the first half of the 19th century. The original form of Soviet military garrisons were the so-called military settlements, the creator of which is considered to be Count Arakcheyev. However, in his book, "The History of Russian Freemasonry" ("Istoriya russkogo masonstva") (1950), Boris Bashilov (1907–1970), a historian and publicist, recounts some facts regarding Arakcheyev's opposition towards the establishment of military settlements (Bashilov 2000). Bashilov also refers to a German scientist Johann Gottfried Kiesewetter (1766–1819), who has written that Arakcheyev did not approve of this idea and remonstrated against it. He only took the command of military settlements upon the request of the Tsar Alexander I. During further investigation, it turns out that the concept of military settlements does indeed belong to Tsar Alexander, whereas such a format was borrowed from the work of a freemason, Prince Mikhail Shtsherbatov, "Путешествие в Землю Офирскую" ("Journey to the Land of Ofirskaya") (1789). This volume presents the plan for the organisation of military settlements in the following manner: each soldier is given land which he is obliged to cultivate; one third of the soldiers in the company (rotating once a year) has to fulfil their military assignment. In addition, each year, all the men have to convene for a military exercise lasting three weeks. Soldiers are recruited to military service only from these settlements. Evidently, the life of the military was subject to strict rules: how to live, what clothes to wear, what kind of house and how many servants to possess, etc. "Journey to the Land of Ofirskaya" turned out to be the first project of a Russian military settlement, planned for the reduction of army expenses and also for not separating the military from their families. The life of a military settler and his family was regulated in detail, a relatively strict punishment was administered for any minor expression of personal initiative or any violation of military regulations. It is apparent that the government attempted to strictly control the life of the military and, as a first priority, harshly restrict the arrangement of life and separate the military from the external world. Our research also evidences the topicality of this factor during the Soviet period when the isolation of a traditional Russian military garrison was maintained. At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century,

a military garrison already comprised several different areas, with the erection of two and three storey stone houses, barracks for soldiers and a hospital. Following the year 1918, when the Red Army was founded, the Russian military settlement became a "Soviet" one. Life in military garrisons has also been depicted in Russian fiction (A. Kuprin's "A Duel" at the end of the 19th century, V. Karpov's "Marshal's Baton", Berezin's "Witness" in 1970s – 1990s and others).

Micro-environment of the Soviet military garrison in the memories of the former servicemen and their families

Narrative interviews covered the typical military garrisons of the Soviet era of the 1950s – 1980s. What was a garrison? It was a settlement with strict borders, including a military base, residential buildings, children's establishments (school, kindergarten), military commerce association and an out-patient clinic. A military garrison constituted a specific urban mode of lifestyle, the task of which was to guarantee the military and their families with safe and satisfactory conditions of life. The fragments of interviews indicate as to what extent did this occur and whether it also satisfied the actual needs of the people. Semiotically, it is also essential that the military garrison of the above-mentioned period became somewhat of an analogue of the total Soviet statehood space. According to the narratives of the respondents, military garrisons were usually located in the vicinity of an inhabited area, but always slightly away from the houses of local population. Military garrisons were usually placed in various regions of the country, thus making the life of the military person's family into a constant journey from one garrison to another. Let us have an insight to the descriptions of military garrisons given during the interviews.

> *Not every military garrison was a "restricted zone". There were also garrisons of a semi-closed type. Some families of the military also lived in a closed one… Usually it was somewhere near the state border. But I wouldn't like to talk about this right now* (wife of a former serviceman, 48).

Answers to the question as to what was the difference in living in a closed and in a so-called open military garrison, were as follows:

> *A closed garrison had its own privileges. First, one year of military service was the equal of two. The supply system there was the so-called "Moscow" one – high quality goods in shops, many deficit goods were available. This was a secluded world: own dwelling houses, own school, kindergarten,*

officers' house, hospital. Parents did not have to worry about the safety of their children, as the entrance to the garrison was prohibited for strangers. The military base itself was located separately from the residential houses, even the family members of the military were forbidden to enter this. We never went there. But there were also harsh restrictions – minimal contacts with local inhabitants. Control over contacts was strict in the military base. Once there were serious violations (according to the opinion of the controllers), then, in the best case, a military serviceman could have been warned "by the party" or a reprimand without an entry in their personal file, with a one-year expiry – this was the softest punishment. In the worst case – a severe reprimand with a relevant entry in the personal file – and this was a blot for the rest of their life and also the end of their career. This way, the faults of the family have influenced the career of an officer.

Question:
What kind of contacts could have been the basis for a reprimand?
Reply:
Various… For example, when being in Germany in the seventies, I often communicated with the German neighbours living in the military garrison – well, we just exchanged polite phrases. My husband was warned for this. In shops, the German shop assistants, by the request of the so-called special department, asked us, the wives of the officers, our first and family names, watched what we bought and particularly the sums of money we spent. I can remember that one of my acquaintances bought a nice dinner set using hire purchase, because the price was too high in order to pay the entire sum. But still her husband had to answer a question about where did so much money come from. This was indeed unpleasant but we got used to this. We still wanted more free communication between ourselves (wife of a former serviceman, 48).

It is clear that each respondent tries to somehow justify his or her closed mode of life. Various communities were in contact with this "confinement" to a various extent, however, a commonly known invisible border existed, which was not trespassed. The micro-environment of the military garrison existed separately:

We lived side by side with the local inhabitants. There were small houses there. We often went to farms, we got on well with the locals. We bought milk and other foodstuffs from them… Sometimes, women jointly went to farms for food (former serviceman, also a son of a serviceman, 46).
I have to say that the military helped the local people – soldiers were often sent to agricultural work. There were definitely no communication problems (former serviceman, 64).

When we lived in Germany, the so-called Freundschaftabend's were organised – friendly evenings where the representatives of both countries met each other. These were semi-official parties for friend making. And still, the "special department" watched as to how and who did the officers communicate with (wife of a former serviceman, 48).
We lived as if secluded from the local people… Local inhabitants were indeed living there… There were some kind of one-storey buildings but I don't even remember us going there at all (daughter of a former serviceman, 29).

The children of the former military describe military garrison life with ardour. Everyday life and reality of the garrison existed in the child's mind solely in a positive light. Considering the fact that biographical narrative is a reconstructed story of a person at a certain moment of his or her life, it is possible to presume that shifts and errors may occur in recalling the earlier period. A person tries to rationally motivate each experienced matter from the point of view of today's world perception, he or she cannot go back to childhood in reality. Moreover, at the moment of telling the life story, each individual presents a "certain integrative variant of oneself" and while doing this, "self-protection" is being revealed – an interviewee never presents a bad imagination of him/herself (Aarelaid 2002a: 186–187). I would like to draw attention to the following five narrative fragments by the children who had, at some time, grown up in a garrison. The question, as to what was the atmosphere prevailing in the military garrison, was answered as follows:

The garrison was already like our own home. We loved this small town a lot. Well, it was really very beautiful there! Forests all around! Beautiful lake! We knew this forest extremely well, we went through all the places there (son of a former serviceman, 30).
I have very warm memories about the military garrison, although our family used to consider this period a very bad one [—] We had a normal joyful and naughty childhood, we were away from the problems of the grown-ups. Everything was organised for us at the highest possible level (son of a former serviceman, 29).
Military garrison? This was amazing! All our childhood passed in the garrison… The atmosphere of the military garrison was parade-like. Patriotic (daughter of a former serviceman, 55).
Well, in general, childhood was superb as we lived in a military garrison [—] Sure it was good – in the bosom of nature [—] And there was no fear, dread at all, such freedom it was! Our parents knew that look, here's the

officers' house – we were seen from the window – and we all came together there. We played until we could no longer be bothered. There was no fear that it was late and the location of the children was unknown… (daughter of a former serviceman, 29).

One of the peculiarities of garrison life was the fact that private life went on under everybody's eyes. People, torn apart from their relatives, quickly became close to each other and spent a lot of time together. All these people were in a similar situation, as at some moment, there could be a new appointment to another town or country. The arrangement of people's life was subjected to the principal concept of Soviet ideology – the so-called public. The pronoun "we" had consistently deepened in people's consciousness and no-one even had a thought that one can have a party only in the family circle. People were seldom alone. The researched phenomenon is being revealed according to the interpretation of the respondents. This enables to become familiar and rethink various versions of this phenomenon. Let us again turn to the narratives:

You could not keep anything secret in the military garrison. Always, everybody knew everything. Everybody seemed to be close but there were always some kinds of conspiracies and rumours were widely spread. Therefore, it was somehow inconvenient… We had sincere friends but there were also enough enemies. Besides this, mankind has not yet got rid of such phenomenon as envy. And this has caused many problems. Such people would do anything in order to ruin the career of another. Yes, at the same time, we were friendly, communicated well with each other. But it often happened that today, this person sat at your table but tomorrow, he/she would rummage in your "dirty laundry"… (wife of a former serviceman, 48).

In a military garrison, families were always friendly with each other. And this friendship has remained for the whole life (son of a former serviceman, 30).

I can't at all remember such family things… It seems to me that everything was public. The doors of each home and house were always open. We had been visiting each other all the time. There was no kind of seclusion (daughter of a former serviceman, 29).

There were enough intrigues in garrisons [—] Plenty of disappointments in relationships between people… (wife of a former serviceman, 48).

We lived on our floor as if in one big family. And the friendship has lasted for many years (son of a former serviceman, 29).

Of course we lived in concord. We did not have such a thing as non-comrade-like attitude. What was a military garrison different for? It

somehow joined, made people relatives. Everybody arrived from the various regions of the state and met there. This was a perfect international society and there was not any kind of difference and even no thought about ethnic nationality (former serviceman, 64).
It seems that not only a military garrison but maybe even every small regional centre brings people together. Everybody knows each other, everything is collective (daughter of a former serviceman, 55).

The fragments of the above interviews also reveal the inter-personal relations in the micro-environment of a military garrison and their relatively different facets. As a rule, supplying was good in military garrisons. Our respondents note this as one of the most important privileges of "military life". Availability of material values in the military garrisons of the 1960s – 1980s, when the word "deficit" was in use elsewhere in the USSR, has been such a strong and weighty fact that even today, after many years, people talk about this with a special feeling, in detail:

Materially, we lived very well and were not short of anything. We received food parcels. Besides this, there was the shop of the military commerce association in the garrison. We lived in plenty. And my father was a "wholesale purchaser". When he goes there, he would buy such that if you need a refrigerator, he would buy two, if a carpet, then five carpets. I remembered that once he came back from his work trip, he brought my mother Chinese cardigans of very good quality. And he brought ten cardigans at a time. All were of different colour (daughter of a former serviceman, 55).

Interviewees even recall gastronomic details:

All those things that we ate in the north where there was actually no summer! Winter lasted for nine months, it was dark. But we ate strawberries… We lived as king's kittens! Everyone in the garrison lived like that… (former serviceman, 85).
To my mind, life was very well organised there. Maybe even better than now [—] There were about six different types of red fish. Smoked fish, red caviar, meat and other things (former serviceman, 64).

All spheres of social life – health care, leisure time, education, supplying, culture – were active to a maximum, naturally, with a large extent of ideologisation and militarisation. This is demonstrated by the following fragments:

At school, we had diaries of work education. Every day, you took an obligation to note down in this diary all the things you did at home (for example, wiped the floor, peeled potatoes, took rubbish out) – absolutely everything you did at home. You could not just write it down there, parents had to prove it with their signatures that you had really done this (daughter of a former serviceman, 55).

My sister and I have been the "timur children", leaders of a pioneer group, we were also the members of the young communist league for a short time… [—] At this time, it was compulsory for all. We weren't even asked whether we want to be October children or pioneers. For example, I remember my classmate was deprived of this "title" because he poked one of his classmates with a flag and this way, offended the portrait of Lenin. But the fact that we became pioneers-October children went without saying, at that time, an eight-year-old child could not even have a question about something being wrong (son of a former serviceman, 29).

...Pioneers, young communist league… of course, we were squeezed…No-one asked what we wanted. Another point is that we tried to struggle free from all those "societal duties" [—] There were meetings taking place at school all the time, you had to report, etc. (son of a former serviceman, 30).

Military games, similar to present-day computer games, were organised in garrisons. But this was not virtual, everything existed in reality, except the weapons, naturally. The game involved simulations of military activity and emergency situations. Children were assigned tasks and tried to fulfil them. Such a game is remembered by the respondents as follows:

...We like to play "Sheet lightning". This was organised by the administration of the school and the military base… A slightly military sport game with double-time marching and searching for secret assignments. Most of all, we were looking forward to the "field kitchen". This waited for us at the end of the game when the winners had been announced. Then the so-called "soldier kitchen" with hulled grain porridge came to us [—] Such a game was organised every year at the end of May and it lasted for a whole day. Sure we had good impressions from this for the rest of the year (daughter of a former serviceman, 31).

We were always busy, activities were somehow organised for us. All the time, we had some kind of tasks, some ideas. "Sheet lightning" games were taking place. Everything was military, military… (daughter of a former serviceman, 29).

The most conspicuous cultural details in military garrisons, stated in the interviews, were parties (holidays of Soviet calendar and the

exchange of the year festivities). Respondents describe the events of their past life within the framework of everyday cultural traditions of their social micro-system:

> *We had the same traditions as everybody else. We celebrated all of the Soviet holidays. New Year's Eve was loved very much. We always celebrated these parties together with the families of our friends. I know that everybody else also partied like this. New Year… I can remember that grown-ups were always sitting at their table and we at another one. Children were separately…* (son of a former serviceman, 30).
> *Some of the adults collected all the children and entertained them, at the same time, the grown-ups celebrated the party on their own* (son of a former serviceman, 29).
> *New Year holidays were always well prepared… Santa Claus together with Snow-white were always travelling around… parents gathered with their company…* (daughter of a former serviceman, 29).
> *We celebrated parties together with the families we were friendly with. We celebrated the holidays of Soviet calendar as everybody else* (daughter of a former serviceman, 55).
> *…An entire concert programme was prepared in the officers' house. It started with the so-called festive meeting. It was mainly the officers together with their wives who were invited there. Formal congratulation speeches were delivered and later, there was a concert* (daughter of a former serviceman, 31).

Holidays and relevant festive milieu provided the families of servicemen with a possibility to free themselves from the tensions of everyday life. Among their friends, people could tell jokes and political anecdotes as was customary at that time. And due to fully understandable reasons, children were not let in to the life of the adults. They were not allowed to overhear the conversations of the grown-ups.

According to the descriptions of the respondents, there were parade squares in military garrisons, venues for organising parades. Considering the life stories of the interviewees, this was one of the most memorable recollections of the garrison inhabitants:

> *The Soviet holidays were naturally more memorable – 7th of November, 9th of May, 1st of May. There were always parades. Although the garrison was relatively small, but it couldn't be without a parade* (daughter of a former serviceman, 55).
> *On Sundays, we went to the parade square. It was very nice there, festive. And each child tried to see his or her father who marched in a beautiful*

dress uniform (daughter of a former serviceman, 31).

Military garrisons were of great significance for the career of officers. Everyday living conditions influenced people's destinies. And people (it is necessary to note that they were relatively young) had a different attitude towards this problem, some of them simply did not endure:

First, we lived in a wooden house but later, stone houses were built. There were two-storey buildings there… But we were young, lived somehow… (daughter of a former serviceman, 55).
…Difficult conditions… This rather orientates to work with oneself (son of a former military, 29).
Well, living conditions were of course not chic! We had stoves… Often it was very cold at home… I can remember that in severe frost, we were very cold (daughter of a former serviceman, 29).
Definitely, there were things that we, children, will never know, we even can't understand this. Because children had their own life and the adults had theirs. Naturally, there was some fuss in the family of a serviceman and toils due to lousy living conditions, etc. but for children, life was totally different… Although at the same time, the parent were solving some problems (son of a former serviceman, 30).

It is evident from the texts of the interviews that respondents were well informed with regard to the problems of their community. By re-thinking and analysing their past, they do not solely demonstrate their ardour about the "military life", but also understanding that they depended on the standing order of garrison life.

We lived in a dark house, built before the war, there was no light…three families lived in a three-room flat. Toilet and the kitchen were in common use. Constant noise… Gas cooker with two flames. No hot water… I have to say that attitude towards this was tolerant. But people always tried to improve their living conditions, when possible. Unfortunately, it sometime happened that the wives of officers who had come, for example, from the capital, separated from their families namely because of such bad living conditions. In addition, there were no jobs. Life was boring. People did indeed want to do something. But a broken family was a real disaster for an officer… They started to drink a lot… But the main thing was that they did not rise in the hierarchy (wife of a former serviceman, 48).
…Life in a military garrison could develop differently. Some could "get tangled" in one place and service there until they retired. Of course, this was an awful thing – no kind of prospect and any rise in the hierarchy (son of a former serviceman, 30).

Presumptions can be made that constant rotation between garrisons developed a surmountable capacity in people to adapt to any situation and any conditions.

Conclusions

As shown by the collected interviews, the imaginations of the participants in the research, regarding the micro-environment of a garrison, are relatively typical. Garrison is a micro-environment with its vested internal processes, uniting the people with similar destinies (or biographical factors). Seemingly, this fact makes the research participants identify themselves (opposing to the representatives of "civil" occupations) as the partakers in a union of people holding the same views, doers in a psychological fraternity. The creation of identities at personal levels is connected as to how borders are being created between various social groupings, on the basis of similar and different features (Masso 2002). Aili Aarelaid-Tart, in her article, highlights the aspect of "we"-identity: "Every collective body of humans has its own unique sense of the selfness or "we"-identity that is different from those of other's (be they tribal, ethnic, minority, and national identities). At the same time this corresponding "we"-identity is the core of any individual who is a member of some kind of socio-cultural community" (Aarelaid-Tart 2002b).

> Question:
> *Did you feel differences between military and "civil" arrangement of life?*
> Responses:
> *I think, yes. First, materially, we lived better. Secondly, we were probably educated more patriotically. Yes, it was like this. Not because we were tried to be educated this way but because we grew up in such a society. This was extremely important for us. This has become rooted in us simply itself. There are many things that people get from the environment, situation* (daughter of a former serviceman, 55).
> *To my mind, we obtained more useful information. We saw a lot, we were everywhere with our parents. I had an imagination of many things that could have been inaccessible to my "civil peers"* (son of a former serviceman, 30).
> *Our life was more interesting… Military garrison – this is nature and you… There were more opportunities to organise children, more things to do* (daughter of a former serviceman, 29).

The interviews also showed that despite the fact that the research was participated in by the representatives of various ethnic nationalities –

Russians, Tartars, Ukrainians, Armenians, Jews – the majority of them still consider themselves to be Russians.

The viewpoints of the respondents were relatively uniform, although with some variations. However, for more general conclusions, the military garrison model has to be compared with some other ones (ordinary family, ordinary town models). What is most essential – this has to be juxtaposed with the model for life of a Soviet person and Soviet mentality, as it is this particular model that has become rooted in people's consciousness so strongly that even now, the interviewees narrate about their earlier life with visible enthusiasm. It is clear that military garrison remains to be important solely for those people who have lived there. Respondents as a whole do not attribute meaning to the "closed nature" of the life arrangement in military garrisons. It seems as if the memories of the past, regarding military garrison, become, to a certain extent, an ideal of youth for the interviewees, something they cannot reach any more. It is not only the mind of the child that beautifies the past a little, this also happens with adults. The above-mentioned comment of one respondent *But we were young, lived somehow…* could have been motivated by the fact that people do not only recollect the life in a military garrison but also their youth.

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Europe as a Measure of Change: Soviet-Time Values and the Construction of Estonia's Post-Communist Turn to Europe

Pille Runnel

Europe is a measure, a purpose, a dream (Jedlicki 1990: 6).

Introduction

The integration of Eastern-European societies into the common political, legal and economic institutional framework of the European Union is not the same as creating a common cultural environment with Western Europe. Cultural processes take significantly more time. The paper, focusing on the latter, is based on the ethnographical study (2000–2002) of Euro-communication[1], which, among other issues, dealt with the post-communist turn on the level of individuals.

In Eastern Europe, 'Europe' has been synonymous both on formal and everyday life level with expectations for quality and positive difference, especially at the beginning of the period, even in total contrast to status quo, but at the same time it has nourished fears and doubts. Europe functions in everyday life also as a quality-sign and is through this closely connected to private sphere. Opinions and evaluations of the political superstructure, the European Union, stem more or

[1] The article constitutes a part of the study "Pragmatics of Euro-Communication in Estonia", conducted in the years 2001–2002, grant of the ESF No. 4884. The study was conducted by the European College of Tartu University under the supervision of Michael Gallagher. It was mainly concerned with the town of Haapsalu and Läänemaa County, and concentrated largely on a special part of the population in one region of Estonia: businessmen, top administration of some public institutions, lawyers, people with higher education. They were generally those people whose actions and decisions also influence the well-being of several others living in the region.

less from people's personal experience. The article describes and discusses one of the central research issues of the project – how experience, originating form the private sphere of individuals, is connected to the fundamental transformation in the public sphere, – and focuses on some of the dominating categories in the collected interviews, for example the contexts and reasons for the use of concepts like 'hygiene' and 'culture'.

Theoretical background, methodology and research issues

Culture as a factor in decision-making

The symbolic axis for the process of integrating Estonia into the European Union at the level of society as a whole has been the Euro-referendum – a decision through the participation in which Estonian citizens can express their opinion about the issue. The questions about if and how many people are going to give a positive or negative answer at the referendum and what are the decisive factors influencing their decisions, were in the focus of the majority of European studies conducted in Estonia in the 1990s. These studies ranged from different public opinion polls to qualitative and sociological studies based on depth interviews.

When speaking about Euro-integration, social and economic scientists have, above all, preferred the theories which focus on finding the factors influencing people's support to it. For example, according to the views of the supporters of economic and rational choice theories, an individual's support to Euro-integration is determined by their expectations related to the economic profit gained from the integration into the European Union. Another approach is the one according to which integration into the European Union is mainly related to the domestic policy of the joining country, which is a significant factor in determining public attitudes towards the European Union. The third prevailing approach centres on cultural influences, first and foremost, the influence of individuals' systems of values and beliefs (Inglehart) (Ehin 2001). The project "Pragmatics of Euro-Communication in Estonia" was mainly based on the third approach, which viewed Estonia's movement towards the structures of the European Union, and a positive or negative attitude towards this choice at the level of the individual as a cultural phenomenon. The aim of the study was to find a theoretical model and methodology for the analysis of Euro-communication.

In order to analyse the movement of information and the formation

of knowledge, the analytical framework for the study was the theory of social systems, which is a part of the general system theory. In the case of social systems the movement of information is interpreted, treating communication as a fundamental process through which social systems are created. So, communication here is not a process of mediating events but a phenomenon through which reality is organised and events are directly created. The functioning of the communication process depends on three aspects: information, sending the message and understanding it. So, the participants in the social communication process do not have access to one another's "worlds", they make use of unlimitedly varying, partly inestimable filters, which have been treated as cultural. So, besides other filters, cultural factors also support decision-making in society.

Piotr Sztompka (see Sztompka 1996), a Polish sociologist, who has studied the great social changes in East European transition societies, synthesises different theories studying the success of Euro-integration, relating trust in governmental institutions to cultural factors, saying that on the level of the individual the integration process can be viewed as a cultural phenomenon. While discussing integration in Europe, Sztompka claims that the integration of East European societies into the framework of common political, legal and economic institutions of the European Union is not the same as the creation of shared cultural environment with Western Europe. Cultural adaptation takes much longer than the institutional one. This is also an important influencing factor of communication barriers and adaptation problems.

Information as a factor in decision-making

More than once, social scientists have referred to the fact that the public tends to be relatively poorly informed about the European Union, and that this has been one of the decisive factors in the formation of people's attitudes towards the European Union. For example, according to Piret Ehin, the fact that quite a few respondents in Eurobarometer studies, which focused on East Europe (in some countries, even a third of the respondents), failed to answer the question about the integration into the European Union, indicates that a great number of the citizens of these states are not aware of the fact what kind of effect integration into the European Union could have on the economy and political system of their countries as well as their own everyday life (Ehin 2001).

If we view the integration into the European Union proceeding from the prism of decision-making, we can see that the role of information

and knowledge in decision-making is still treated as a contradictory one. The opinions on the basis of which decisions are made, are often not supported by knowledge. Intuition, trust and other factors are also essential in decision-making. The interviews conducted in the framework of this study rather supported the viewpoint that being for or against integration into the European Union is strongly related also to other factors than the general information level. More often than not, the interviewees had only vague ideas of what this incorporation meant for Estonian society. In several cases the respondents were not able to specify what kind of influence this process could exert on their lives. Nevertheless, the majority of these people considered themselves as supporters of the European Union, looking forward to casting their votes for the European Union at the Euro-referendum. So, one of the central hypotheses of the study was that in shaping the attitudes towards the European Union, it is not, first and foremost, the amount of information that people possess, but knowledge and personal experience are more important than the former.

Research issues and methodology

Being based on the two aforementioned concepts – culture and information – the aim of the study was to give a detailed description of what kind of core topics (or discourses) are outlined in Estonian citizens' opinions about the relations between their country and the European Union, as well as a description of if and to what extent individuals feel as participants and decision-makers in this process and what are the criteria proceeding from which they interpret the integration process for themselves. In order to understand this, Euro-communication was observed on micro-level.

Therefore different methods were applied in the study: text analysis, semi-structured interviews, observation. Here narratives can be regarded as the best possible points of contact between the researcher and the respondent, as in narratives the speakers render evaluations and meanings to their surroundings. Narratives may be understood as stories that people tell about themselves and their worlds. The medium of narrational telling may vary (from words to images to gestures to routine behaviour), but what is invariant is the characteristic of narratives to propagate the meaningful sequence across time and space. To quote Rapport, "narratives are inherently sequential"(Rapport 2000: 74). They articulate events, experiences, sensations and interpretations into a series, plotting, relating and contextualising them, so that a story,

a history, an evolution takes shape – and progresses as new happenings are added. Hence, narratives posit an ongoing order and meaningfulness, between distinct moments or sites of experience (Rapport 2000: 76).[2]

What generated interest here was which stories, which cases (either heard from the media or from other people) or examples were the ones through which people discussed the topic of Europe. Yet, the subject matter here was not, above all, an impersonal communication without the participation of the researcher, but open interviews (this article does not dwell upon media texts, which constituted the other central research topic).

The article does not search for the factors directly supporting integration, neither does it determine their influence on the individuals' decisions. Some of the norms, values and conceptions, which in recent years have influenced the discussion about the topics of Estonia and the European Union at everyday communication level, are dwelt upon. It was of more interest what people talked about in connection with Europe and the European Union, which norms and values they elicited and emphasised in communication; yet, it was not the aim of the study to evaluate the validity of the views expressed or their representativeness in the context of a wider public opinion. Through these narratives it was possible, first and foremost, to get a survey of identity issues.

Nodes of Euro-communication

Euro-communication is a process where both the old and new concepts acquire specific meaning and content. The transition period of Estonian society has created a new vocabulary especially in the areas of economy and politics. Yet, on the level of private life of the individuals one has also had to get used to new meanings, while using both the old and new concepts, integrating them into everyday life and, in the course of it, structuring one's surrounding world. Most fundamental changes have probably occurred on a rather invisible level, which is easy to identify

[2] Rapport uses, when talking about his informants, also the concepts of narrative themes or conversation themes (con-themes). One might identify "nodes of communication" – words and phrases of greater and lesser length and complexity, – around which conversational strips are built up, developed and maintained by partners for the interaction (Rapport 2000).

or recognise neither by the participants of the Euro-communication nor by the researcher. These changes can become visible as longer narratives, certain episodes, but also as brief sayings, even stereotypic formulas, which are parts of conversation topics. In general, two levels can be distinguished here: conversation topics reflecting the level of personal experience and those based on general, common ways of knowledge, values and ways of structuring one's surroundings.

It can be said that one of the "emptiest" new notions, which has been taken into use in the last decade, is the European Union itself. Initially, it was meaningless or without any context even for the media. Step by step, the media started to "fill" it, treating it through certain umbrella topics (such as, for example, negotiations, security issues, regulation and standards, agricultural issues, etc.). A whole range of agendas have been developed which are discussed in certain ways. At the same time, when shaping discourses, difficulties were faced namely in outlining the personal, everyday dimension, as positive model stories, for example, about improving the quality of life, can easily be regarded as propaganda and have an effect quite opposite to what was expected. So, in the course of time, the media developed cliché methods and understandings of how and in what ways the issues of the European Union – topics of extensive meta-level systems already by nature – should be adapted to the level of people's everyday lives. Journalists working for local newspapers, who highlight the life in the area under study, confirmed in their interviews given in the framework of the study that they had developed certain methods and typical angles in treating of the Euro-subject. The main principle was to write about things so that "any local inhabitant would understand it". Writing for the imaginary local inhabitant meant, for example, that journalists considered it of primary importance to inform their readers about subjects such as the possibility of getting money from the funds of the European Union, the possibilities for different co-operation projects, as well as the ways for carrying them out. During the period under study, newspapers published several stories about co-operation with friendship regions in the European Union, about local specialists (e.g., cooks), who had taken a training course abroad, and young people's varied foreign contacts. However, it seems that the media of this period failed to offer people enough meanings, as it managed to emphasise the importance of the topic of the European Union through consistent treatment, rather than through the interpretation of one or another topic or relevant issue, or competent filtration of information concerning the

topic. As a generalisation, it can be said that examples from the media in the interviews conducted during the study occurred more infrequently than those of personal experience. The majority of the topics was related to the media only indirectly, on the level of a common agenda; yet, the direct origin of these topics cannot be identified any more.

Borders of 'self' and 'the other'

In identifying oneself with Europe and the European Union, attention has been focused on the issues of "self" and "the other". "Self" and "the other" are determined, both on a larger and smaller scale, proceeding from the local community. Especially "in their definitions of collective selves people position themselves in space and time, evolving topographies of space and sociality that generate topographies of what is home and foreign, "us" and "them" (Caglar 1997: 174). The study largely centred on the elite of the region's population: local entrepreneurs, managerial staff of state institutions and intellectuals, whose activities and decisions directly influence the activities and well-being of many other people in the town and its neighbourhood. So they were closely integrated into local life. Nearly all of them were supporters of the European Union.

The actual contacts of several informants with their neighbourhood were very diverse and the social space was extensive. A number of them often went abroad, both for business and leisure purposes. Their cultural experience could be regarded as varied: it covered the so-called ethnically mono-cultural, multi-ethnical as well as ethnically accultural or trans-national regions, e.g., international resorts or transport junctions as airports and ports. In spite of their more than average mobility, these people's activities still centred around one concrete point – their home neighbourhood – and were organised proceeding from the latter. In their existence these people were, to a greater or lesser extent, connected with the local community, either through the means of subsistence obtained from there or through collective consumption; also integration into the local community could proceed from class, status or power relations.

The town under study – Haapsalu – is not mono-cultural, either, as throughout the year it abounds in foreign tourists, mostly retired convalescents, who make use of a number of services provided by the town. In former decades it was the families of the Russian military who "set the fashion" in the town – they were also, to a greater or slighter

degree, regarded as strangers. Therefore local people are used to the presence of strangers and in this respect their contacts can be regarded as rich, in comparison to some other regions of Estonia, which were closed for decades.

The prevailing idea in the interviews was that, although the contacts between "us" and "them" have become daily and diverse, it was still the very first contacts with "the other" outside their communities that had been preserved in people's memories especially vividly, as they had drawn people out of their natural everyday environment and put the whole former life arrangement into a totally different light:

> *I remember well, how it started that I was able to go. Among others there was a real emotional trip to Finland on Midsummer Eve. It was year… the year number was eighty-six. As it was the time of strict dry law. We were a group of the district committee*, but we had an interpreter who had expatriated from here, who took us to a convalescent home for Finnish Winter War veterans, where – it was by a beautiful lake, – and by that beautiful lake, they had those, they sometimes have these flags. The blue-and-white flags had been hoisted. And well, then it was the year eighty-six, when I felt that never, never can we hoist the same kind of flags. [—] I was thinking these could have been our farms then. I am a country-child myself. That it could have been so that holiday comes, you have your own tractor and you could have done everything with your own family, you wouldn't have needed all those big kolkhozes and things like that, and then I suddenly thought: Jesus! That why I have never thought that one could live elsewhere than in Estonia, where flags are fluttering this way and where people are absolutely different and everything is so joyous. And I took … it was the night when I never fell asleep, and I was thinking of – it is the only time in my life I have ever thought that I could be somewhere else. I looked at those people, everyone was so nice. Well, it was a party, wasn't it? Why shouldn't they have been nice? And then I thought of how I could get there and what I would do then [—]* (interv. no. 1).
> (*District committee of the communist party.)

In both the public and private sphere, there are several things that can be expressed by using 'Euro-' as an adjective. For example, in words like Euro-strawberries, Euro-repairs or Eurocrats. The concept of Europe and the compound words starting with 'Euro' are filled with both positive and negative connotations. Europe as a quality sign was often connected to personal matters, things close or familiar to those interviewed. Largely, Europe and the European Union were not distinguished by the informants in the interviews.

Hygiene, us and them

In the last decade, the word 'Europe' in Eastern Europe has been largely synonymous with an expectation for a positive difference and quality. One of the important levels through which positive difference was expressed in the interviews was the example of the condition of the public toilets. This example was made famous by Lennart Meri, the former president of Estonia, who took the journalists approaching him in Tallinn Airport after his successful visit abroad, to the local toilets, which at that time were in very poor condition, in order to point to them as a kind of embarrassing gate to Estonia. Later on the airport building was completely renovated, and its new toilets also deserved attention in the media.

It is important to try to understand how people use the existing cultural patterns to express their own meanings and to formulate their own dreams. In the phenomenological approach in sociology the crucial thing is to examine how the actors themselves establish cultural categories and how they understand and experience their own cultural identity (Kapstad 1997: 66). Although in consumer societies hygiene and cleanness have became first of all part of the consumer society itself (hygiene as a pleasure), at the beginning of the transition period in Eastern Europe hygiene became one of the central categories in popular discourse, through which the change was both discussed and experienced.

Clean toilets became a certain kind of central sign in the 1990s, which were connected to Europeanness, as it enabled to express the idea of hygiene as an important category, through which the difference between old and new, Eastern Europe and Western Europe could be expressed. The topics of hygiene and quality were also intertwining in the stories about the quality of Estonian industrial production, the cleanness of the school canteens or the village shops. The categories of cleanness and hygiene were connected to controversial deportments – on the one hand they are seen as the bureaucratic offence by the European Union, on the other hand, especially on the level of personal experience, it is used as a value or quality-sign for describing the difference between us and the EU.

Through the experience of cleanness one of the informants described the experience of the European way of life, not experienced before by the people:

When we are talking about an Euro-toilet, it is obvious that it is not the

one from the Russian army, which stank, and where chlorine was used... but that it is really clean, in good order, usually also with the double water-system, both economic and non-economic ones, toilets with their own showers and means for washing, all these things (interv. no. 6).

As a discipline, ethnology has primarily studied the private sphere, and, to a lesser extent, dealt with the public sphere. It has shown too little concern for tackling the encounter between the public and private spheres,although their borders are central to the ways we conceptualise the society.

The topics of hygiene and the condition of the public toilets are central to this discussion: toilets have been part of the most intimate private sphere in the 20th century, but paradoxically in this particular case their meaning has been converged to represent also the mingling or integration of two big regions, and therefore also the fundamental transformation in the public sphere.

Knowledge of the difference of qualities in public spaces originated from personal and private experience. This experience might have even occurred as a kind of cultural shock, which could have been analysed only later on by the individuals themselves.

The first time I really felt this, it was yes, really a feeling. I was driving in 1994, when there was already an established chain of Neste filling stations, I was driving from Tallinn probably to Latvia, they were not by the road on our way, but they were in Riga. … and then, after Riga, we took the road to Vilnius. And when we reached Vilnius, there was by the road, at least after every 150–100 km a gas station corresponding to the EU requirements.

Because, if you, girls, remember a Soviet-time gas-station, you can not imagine, what it could have looked like. It was a big dirty place, with a 10x10 trap-door, from where you were supposed to tuck in your gasoline coupons, and behind the grated trap-door there was, there were these dirty windows, and although it was not supposed to be so, everything was still dirty, oozy, literally speaking, covered with shit. No toilets, no cleaning possibilities, nothing. And now you experienced suddenly, when leaving Pärnu, – there was a checkpoint on the border. After the checkpoint came the toilets, they were really clean. If you wanted to take a break for 15 minutes, have a cup of coffee, there was a proper coffee-machine and these toilets. [—]

Unfortunately a human being needs to go to the toilet, to wash oneself, and at that time I felt for the first time like a human being. The same European Union, therefore, in some sense brings about a kind of more

human feeling, these Euro-norms give you this feeling (interv. no. 6).

The informant was, in spite of his experience, still against the EU, saying that the Neste filling stations had come here also without the European Union. At the same time, in several interviews these experiences of a positive difference are the keys through which the general positive attitude towards the issues of joining the EU also becomes visible. These experiences could even have served as key factors, which have not been particularly changed, for example, by later debates and information provided by the media.

Culture, us and them

Social scientists today emphasise more and more the importance of culture in interpreting social processes as part of the analytical notion apparatus of social sciences themselves, thus recognising the importance of culture in society as a whole. Below the author will give a survey of the usage of the notion of culture in Euro-communication on the level of an individual: how people used the word "culture" in the argumentation for or against certain issues or when describing their viewpoints. Culture was one of the main, but at the same time also one of the most ambivalent notions, which was used in interviews while talking about the contacts between Estonia and Europe. The question of whether to join the European Union was, for example, connected with considerations about the common or different cultural features in Estonia and Europe. Thereby the notion of culture was in many ways identified with the notion of national culture.

A popular discourse about Estonian culture is related to central civilisational narratives, according to which the border of Estonia is also the border of western values. In both the speeches given by politicians and the interviews in focus here, Estonian culture was referred to as something representing European values and identity.

The Russian threat is one of the central postulates of the civilisational narrative in Estonia. According to Merje Feldman, the latter can be seen as a simple mathematical equation: through claims of impending threat, Estonia's foreign and domestic policy options are moulded into a binary framework in which Estonia either rapidly integrates into the EU and NATO or falls back into the Russian sphere of influence (Feldman, online). In many aspects the approach Feldman has elicited in her analyses of public texts describes popular understandings of Europe, including the European Union.

People were trying to find and express their understanding about both the similarities and differences between Europe and Estonia. As an example of the latter, approaching culture as being simply a kind of cultural product could be distinguished. In this sense, people were talking about culture as an amount of different events or objects (according to this, culture can be understood as consisting of pieces like a play at the theatre, a concert, a piece of art, folk dance training, etc). Characteristic of this way of understanding is also the pointing at the material objects as a proof for the differences. A distinction drawn with the help of physical evidence (material objects), helps to express a wider distinction between 'them' and 'us':

> *We can, in a certain way, compare ourselves in the case of folk culture or some knitting-work or cardigans, for example, but that is all* (interv. no. 6).

According to Danish anthropologist Bente Wolff, material objects play an important role in maintaining this differentiation, since we tend to identify various cultural traits with certain objects. Material objects are generally understood by humans as evidential (see Wolff 1995).

In addition to understanding culture as a set of cultural products, quite expectedly also a similar way of understanding culture as something on the basis of which various groups can be differentiated from each other, draw borders or break them, appeared in the interviews. Culture in this sense is used for defining a quality or a typical feature of a group. At the same time, when used for expressing this meaning, 'culture' still quite often remained an abstract entity without particular explanations in the interviews. It was used as a word for expressing the value of something (expressions like 'cultural', 'cultureless', 'old culture'):

> Q: *Estonians as Europeans and Estonians in Europe, what makes us similar and through what can one differentiate between us?*
> A: *I think that we are culturally very similar, we should not have that many differences, after all.*
> *[—]*
> Q: *What shows that we do belong to Europe?*
> *A: Oh, we belong there both by our culture, and, I might say, our geographical position, and I might say, well, basically in every sense* (interv. no. 2).

According to popular understanding, Estonia belongs to Europe be-

cause of its geographical position and also because of particular features; things like the generally rather high level of education or European-like attitudes were pointed out as characteristics.

In this sense, the concept of culture is closely related to a place. Lisa Malkki has called this popular understanding of culture "the metaphysics of sedentarism" through which a culture is equated with a people and that people with a particular place or territory. She claims that this "racialised and territorialised model of culture continues to have enormous influence in popular consciousness" (see Malkki 1997: 42, 62). This sedentarism can have various degrees, some of which might not consciously be controversial to other understandings of cultures and cultural identities, especially to those connected with global flows, the connections of which with national and territory-centred identities are not discussed.

In several cases a strong national consciousness was visible in the interviews. In special cases they might even be called cultural-fundamentalist. An example of the latter might be, for example, cases, when the informants referred to Estonian cultural heritage as a very unique one, at the same time connecting it with the understanding that the contact between different cultures or cultural identities as such is dangerous for one side, or that it would lead to an inevitable cultural conflict.

When talking about culture and Estonia's integration with the rest of Europe, the informants used expressions like 'to protect culture', 'to lose culture', 'to destroy culture', 'to fight for culture'. In these cases 'culture' was related to or equated with the nation:

> A: *There is no power which could destroy a culture. You can destroy culture only if you exterminate the entire nation.*
> *[—]*
> Q: *And are there any other cultures which might come...*
> A: *They will come, for sure, but I don't know, I simply can't believe that it could influence us in this way that we will suddenly become cultureless. I really don't want to believe it, because various cultures have been coming and going here during centuries, but we have still somehow survived, I simply don't want to believe it* (interv. no. 3).
> *[—]*
> A: *I'm afraid that it will become much more homogenous here, but as we are still fighting for the survival of Estonian culture, it has to be everywhere, every country must have its own culture. It can't be like Russification was in the older days. I would very much like to hope that*

everybody will not become Europeans only (interv. no. 10).

When culture is seen as something that can be destroyed or protected, it refers to the possibility that any cultural contact is seen *a priori* rather as something dangerous for culture.

Using expressions like 'to fight for culture' is to a certain extent certainly connected to the informant's personal experiences dating back to previous decades, or also to their general knowledge about the situations where cultures, in contact with each other, were in some kind of power relation.

Estonia existed under the continuous pressure of the central government and it meant *a priori* a continuous threat to acculturation. The response to this threat had to be active. People used to recollect events like the song festival tradition as an example of that, trying to apply the same situation also to the contemporary situation.

The feeling of threat and pressure to the national culture is the experienced reality for the middle-aged informants, as in the last decades, before breaking up from the empire, the so-called Russification became even stronger. "At that time one could feel that we were moving closer to the existential question: whether we will survive as a nation, as carriers of one culture, one history and specific values, or we will die before the Soviet dinosaur clashes", Lennart Meri, the former president of Estonia, has described the pressure of those days (Oplatka 2000: 208).

Although in the interviews also some examples of positive contacts between cultures were given, the majority of the lines in the interviews still refer to negative cases or even straight to personal experiences.

A typical positive case would be experiencing one's own culture as superior, better, or simply of higher quality:

> *A: It is very hard to talk about the others, but I think we have much more culture around here than in this European Union. Let us trace our cultural traditions from a distance and check them this way. I think that they can boast of neither comparable school traditions nor folk culture, folk heritage, and so on... they don't have it. Well, I'll give you an example. Denmark belongs to the European Union, right. When they had a training session there a few years ago, one school had, I don't know, about 15 rock groups. This is an example. But when they were asked how many children's choirs they had at school, the answer was 'none', right* (interv. no. 6).

While looking for the sources of such experiences, we can refer to David Morley, who in his book *Home Territories* polemicises with anthropologist Terence Turner, and his ideas about the reasons for strong cultural fundamentalism. Turner poses the question of why cultural fundamentalism and the agressive assertion of cultural identity has emerged as the idiom of choice for expressing of social discontent by marginalised or downwardly mobile elements of national populations.

Although Turner talks about specific, strong and aggressive subcultures, the marginal groups in society, he also refers to the context and reasons for similar ideas among 'common people'. Turner's argument is that what needs to be accounted for is the populist character of the various cultural nationalist movements which have to be understood as "the social and political protests of subordinate social strata against the dominant political-economic and cultural order that excludes them from full participation in national life (Turner, quoted in Morley 2000: 249).

Therefore, protest actions against ethnic cleaning pointed out by Morley and Turner, or the rhetorics found in the interview texts about fighting against demolishing the culture of a group, refer both to the need of integrating the groups using such rhetorics wholly and on an equal basis into the social and political life of society. In the interviews these people expressed the feeling that joining the EU would not affect them in any way and it was seen as somebody else's project, usually the project of state officials, the bureaucrats. It was said that the only possibility for the ordinary people was to agree, as the decision to join the EU had been made a long time ago. Therefore, among other conclusions, it could be presumed here that both the cultural fundamentalism and its very 'soft versions', with the expressions about the 'danger' or 'threat' to national culture refer among other things to the alienation of these groups from the political life of the state.

In the interviews we could find no examples of the ideas of possible developments of culture, for example, the ideas of the so-called innovative traditionalism, according to which cultural tradition or also national culture as a whole can be treated as a complex mixture of similarities and differences, continuity and change, retaining understandings and beliefs. The concept of culture rather signified something solid and unchangeable, as this also refers to the understanding of a nation.

As Handler has shown (see Handler 1988), culture so conceived is a

thing to be possessed, a thing to defend. One "has" culture, an entity that can be lost, enriched, or stolen – in other words – a commodity, subject to all the processes to which any commodity is subject. Culture is not seen as something dynamic which is born when 'us' and 'them' are communicating, it exists already before that. This is also related to the fear or the possibility of losing one's own culture and the rhetorics concerning the demolition of culture might originate from that. Anthropologist Jean Jackson has pointed out when studying the cultural change among a particular group of Indians that part of the difficulty that we may have in describing such situations stems from the conventional concept of culture based on a quasibiological analogy in which a group of people are seen as "having" or "possessing" a culture somewhat in the same way as an animal species has fur or claws. In addition, people are thought to acquire culture slowly, during their childhood, as part of their development. The culture they acquire existed before them and will be their legacy; they neither create nor invent it. Although culture is understood to be changing over time, this is a gradual process: a rapid change is described as acculturation, with one group losing some of its culture. Similarity can thus be found with genetic makeup: culture is inherited, as genes are inherited, though, culture is considered superorganic (Jackson 1995: 18).

When looking for the ways to describe the possibility for a positive contact between cultures, it was actually not totally missing in the interviews. The way how positive contacts between cultures might take place according to the popular imagination, might be described through the notion of 'exchange'. Exchange is a fundamental way in anthropology to understand the ways people relate socially – through the mediation of things (see Hirsch 1994). Exchange does not change the involved persons themselves, but changes (or creates) the relationships between them. When culture is seen as an entity which can be possessed by somebody (in the given case the "owner" is a nation), it can also be exchanged. The notion of exchange seems to guarantee the preservation of culture at the same time – the item itself is not changed during the exchange process, the change takes place in the symbolic sphere and concerns values.

One of the most typical and preferred forms of contemporary 'exchange situations' concerning culture is probably tourism. Here exchange and the value of the changeables is also expressed in a 'real value' - money (tickets, fees for the guides, etc). In the next example, the informant expresses a similar attitude. He realises that cultural differ-

ences in themselves do not function as a communication barrier. He sees himself as an observer in the situation of a cultural contact, not as an active participant.

> *Well, everywhere, wherever you go, there are own traditions and everything. First of all, if you go somewhere, you have to collect some information before that, in order not to come into conflict with them. Cultural differences are everywhere. You can go anywhere, if you go, for example, to the Netherlands, you can't say that the people over there are like Italians. Everywhere you have this culture, this old culture, you can see everything and admire it. You walk around, but you can't say they have the same culture, it is different everywhere. But I don't think it excludes communication with them* (interv. no. 14).

A tourist can come home and close a door behind them. The inhabitant of the rapidly changing Estonia still seems to need it – while being confronted with open spaces, one needs something real, own, unchangeable, to where one could withdraw.

When trying to sum up how Estonian culture looks like in the interviews, it seemed to be a phenomenon or something, characterised by or consisting of the components existing right now. Therefore, every change in it may be labelled as acculturation and interpreted negatively. At the same time, as a part of the bigger branding strategy for promoting Estonia abroad, the country has adopted a slogan "Estonia. Positively transforming".[3] Therefore one can see how a positive meaning has been given to the economic and socio-political changes. A positive difference from the past, changes and contacts are normal on this level. At the same time, when discussing the ways how culture is perceived, we can see that it is regarded as something that one has to protect. Culture is seen as something that has to carry continuity, in order to help retain one's (individual's or group's) identity in the general social change. Although the idea of losing one's culture was

[3] "Brand Estonia communications strategy and visual identity have been developed to promote the Republic of Estonia abroad, enabling Estonia to achieve greater success in expanding its tourist base, to attract direct foreign investment, and to broaden the markets for Estonian exports. Brand Estonia describes Estonia as a positively transforming country, deploying strategic messages communicated through verbal and visual components," the initiator of the branding campaign says about the campaign in the introduction on the web-page of Enterprise Estonia (www.eas.ee).

denied by those interviewed, the ambivalence of the real processes still seemed to have confused people.

Therefore we face a paradox that, although on the one hand changes are promoted, there is no difference, whether at the same time it is communicated that it need not entail cultural changes or losing culture, as a change as such is controversial to the popular understanding of the idea of culture.

Summary and discussion

In conclusion, when discussing the occurrence and usage of the categories like "hygiene" and "culture" that sprang up in the interviews while interpreting the meanings of Europe and the European Union, we can say that the principles that guide both the European and national identities are related to difference and comparison. For identity, difference is of central importance. Therefore people, while speaking, use the categories that help to express it. They develop into certain cultural categories, and on the level of a conversation or a narrative they form like nodal points around which the story or message is built up. This kind of nodes, however, do not represent ideas on one level only; more often than not, they are multi-level and possess a number of hidden meanings.

Let us take the example of 'culture' as a category. Here we were interested in the ways and contexts in which this category was used. We can see that, when trying to follow two levels – how similarities and differences have been described and defined with the help of this category, – we will face a question of how to explain that at the same time when a person is talking about integration into the structures of the European Union and Estonia's belonging to Europe especially because of definite cultural features, informants still stress that one should not lose culture or cultural differences during this integration process.

It seems that in order to explain why these two ideas exist simultaneously, at least two kinds of differences have to be explained. The claims that Estonian culture and the local way of life are naturally European, represent a deeper feeling of similarity than the statements that are concerned with preserving cultural differences or specific cultural traits (for example, those visible in material culture).

While on the surface level, for example in the case of comparing different things, the proofs about differences are generally welcome and needed (the difference between Norwegian and Estonian folk cos-

tumes), then, paradoxically, on a somewhat deeper level the idea of difference is still not acknowledged. When discussing the issue of joining the EU, the popular thought wants us to be similar enough to the Europeans to be acknowledged by them.

According to the British anthropologist Penelope Harvey "the egalitarian principle distinguishes between kinds of difference" (Harvey 1996: 79–80). While tracking the various representation strategies of the countries participating in the EXPO, she realised that there were differences which were used as examples of the European community and that there were also differences which were repressed and which are rendered invisible for the damage they would cause to the integrated product, the nation state" (Harvey 1996: 80). Harvey also refers to another researcher, who has tried to identify the ways of feeling difference inside the European community, by talking, on the one hand, about the internal multi-culturalness of Europe and confronting it with extra-community differences evoked by refugees, migrant workers, etc. (ibid.). Therefore we realise that the European community may also be the one who may suffer a loss because of differences.

Behind the ambivalent attitude visible in Estonia, one can find both the political need and the need of people (popular thought) to show to Europe and Europeans that Estonia's integration into European structures belongs to the sphere of natural multi-culturalness and that it does not bring about any extra-community differences, which usually come along with immigrant workers (*Gastarbeiter*). From time to time, this kind of view is clearly expressed in politicians' speeches. For example, in our former president Lennart Meri's speeches we can often find sentiments about small nations:

"The survival and development of small nations is the key issue in the future of Europe. Europe needs small nations as much as we need Europe. Because Europe's strength does not lie in its size – Europe's strength is guaranteed by its diversity. Our task here, on the coast of the Baltic Sea, is to produce and preserve this diversity" (Meri 2001: 187). The quotation describes small nations, including the ones who have not been incorporated into the European Union yet, as an integrated part of Europe, whereas the foundation for integration is namely variability.

In popular discourse one can also find the threat that Estonians and other Eastern Europeans are still treated as outsiders of the European community. This can be evoked even by minor differences – for example in the opinions that Europeans are more civilised (the direct translation for the word used in the interviews would be 'cultured') or

more educated:

> I' *think that they still largely regard us as those coming from the East. How do we suit into their big family and so, maybe they are afraid that we are coming, that when the borders are open, they don't want us before the borders are opened. They have their own habits. I think that they might not accept us very openly, very kindly. I think that it is like a big family, and we are, well, a bit more coloured/dirtier* people. I think that it is a thing everybody has to get used to, and year by year we become more similar to them and they finally forget where we come from, I hope* (interv. no. 2).
>
> (*the word in Estonian can mean both 'black' and 'dirty' – PR)

We might presume that, in order to give explanations for Europe and the European Union, popular thought lacks any ready-made interpretation schemes or nodal points around which we could build up conversation which would give an adequate description to participants of the current processes in society. It could also be noted above in the analyses of both meaningful conceptions – culture and hygiene. In the case of the notion of culture, even on the level of one individual, contradictory understandings, impulses and personal experience, things heard from other people and offered by the media are intertwined. On the level of individuals, the content of Euro-communication can be viewed as a cultural phenomenon and this is in many ways based on everyday life and personal experience. In the case of middle-aged people, as the informants of the study were, interpretation still proceeded from experienced changes. Thus the above analyses is valid for the generation under study. It can be presumed that in the case of the younger generation values, interpretations and criteria for or against integration would be different to a greater or slighter degree.

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To Understand Poland
Joanna Bar

Leszek Dzięgiel: *Paradise in a Concrete Cage. Daily Life in Communist Poland. An Ethnologist's View*, Kraków: ARCANA, 1998.
Janine R. Wedel: *The Private Poland*: *An Anthropologist Look at Everyday Life.* New York: Facts on File, 1986.

Over the past few decades, many autobiographies, diaries and memoirs have been written in Poland. Their authors are usually respected intellectuals, writers and publicists from the second half of the 20th century, among whom we could mention Jerzy Andrzejewski, Marian Brandys, Kazimierz Brandys, Stefan Kisielewski, Tadeusz Konwicki, Leszek Prorok, Marek Skwarnicki, Jan Józef Szczepański, Leopold Tyrmand, Jerzy Zawieyski. These are the people owing to whose work these important decades have become part of literary chronicles.

During the same period Poland also appeared in many scientific works concerned with sociological, ethnographical and, above all, historical issues. They were written by renowned Polish scientists as well as journalists, politicians (Jacek Kuroń), and a priest (Mieczysław Maliński).

Among these numerous scientific ethnographic works, which treat of everyday Polish life under socialism, two books, above all, should be recommended to people studying abroad. Their authors concentrate on the problems facing the everyday life of "ordinary Polish people", especially the everyday life of the average working intellectuals in Polish cities. Their "heroes" are scientists, teachers, clerks, engineers and students in Warsaw and Cracow, where the standard of living is far below their aspirations. The intelligentsia was the social group whose incomes and standard of living were most different from the level of the pre-war period.

The American anthropologist Janine Wedel and the Polish ethnologist Leszek Dzięgiel present an interesting picture seen through their own eyes as well as provide their own commentaries on this period. Both books were published in English. This is another important reason

why these books could be recommended for reading abroad.

The Private Poland: *An Anthropologist Look at Everyday Life* is a particularly interesting monograph written by an American anthropologist Janine Wedel, which concentrates on one of the most important historical moments of Poland. The author's fate was bound with Poland for many years, – during 1977, 1979, 1982–83, and 1985–86. In 1980 her stay in Warsaw was connected with research work conducted in co-operation with the Institute of Sociology of Warsaw University. During the period of nine years of relations with Poland, the author established contacts with hundreds of Poles, both on a social and professional basis. She lived under the same conditions sharing a common roof and table with Polish families, as well as their joy and sadness. Her guides through this harsh reality were people with different educational level and from various professions, young and old, communists as well as members of the opposition.

The author's aim was to carry out an anthropological research mainly supported by her own observations and opinions. She was not interested in the people's private lives but tried to analyse the decisions and activities of Polish citizens under the political and economic confusion. By acknowledging the division between the public and private spheres in all aspects of life, she tried to trace the image of Polish society, concentrating above all on the daily interactions of citizens. Her aim was to demonstrate the mutually linked public and private components of Polish life in the political, economic and private spheres.

The decision about arriving to Warsaw directly after the establishing of the state of war was particularly dramatic. The Poles in the USA had anticipated a civil war, a Soviet invasion or both. Because of her former research plans, she was given consent to arrive in Poland as early as in January. She arrived in Poland with coffee, soap, tooth-paste and provided with information to the families of Poles whose members were staying in the USA. In the Polish travel agency in Chicago she had learned that all the letters taken over the border were confiscated – therefore she had to learn all the information about the addresses by heart. Her vision of Poland during the state of war was created by the Western press as well as by the uneasiness of her Polish friends – their image of a campaign of systematic terror or declarations of loyalty, signed to the communistic party by their former friends. She landed in Warsaw into the situation of chaos and fear, concerning the condition

of public services and shortage of food supplies. Her first impressions were filled with caution regarding the curfew and bugged telephones.

Politics was the basic topic of almost all conversations in Poland. The Poles were, in general, amazed by the alarm expressed by their relatives from abroad. The situation appeared to be serious but not dangerous. The author's first weeks in Poland were spent running around, distributing information from friends from the USA. She spent her time by accustoming herself to the labyrinths of dark housing developments, without shops, which lacked electricity in the staircases and lifts. The next weeks revealed two moral codes to her – one related to private life and the other – to public life. Later she learned to lie in order to save hundreds of dollars because of irrational regulations regarding foreigners staying in Poland.

One of the most interesting topics of her research appeared through the observation of an informal barter system, which had helped people live through the recession, whilst the legal market could not secure the essential necessities for the citizens. The "informal economy" created, in her opinion, an exchange, supported by a complex network of social relations, which required an acquaintance of a detailed etiquette – from the example of buying a battery to the release of a person from prison.

Despite her own opinion about the shortage of goods, she observed that anybody could quickly supply something in exchange for other goods; for example a package from the West or a stolen desk from a person's own place of employment. The commodities of exchange were things, services and information. The author noticed new phrases previously unknown to her, such as: "na lewo" (on the left), "dojście" (connections), "dostać mieszkanie" (to receive a flat) or "załatwic sprawę" (to handle certain matters); understandably only used among the Poles. The presentation of these activities as well as their rules and the etiquette today seem like an imaginary one of an exotic culture known only from ethnographic monographs in Evans-Pritchard style, dating back to the turn of the century.

There is no place for a detailed presentation of these observations, exemplifications and thoughts, which were included in this work. The range of topics is extremely large. Those discussed include, among others, the cooperative circles of family and friends, the degree of confidence both in social and in private environment, the problems of the role of the Church, that of an independent underground culture, as well as the question of the role of culture and history in the lives of the Poles.

The author did not plan to create a critique of Polish political problems from this period. However, she stated that it was impossible to separate social and political life. She dwelt upon moral problems related to the issue of honesty in the private sphere and the circumvention of law in the public sphere. She also stated that this division was imposed on foreigners who were forced to abide by Polish rules as well. The book concludes with a vision of Poland's future.

The second book, *Paradise in a Concrete Cage. Daily Life in Communist Poland. An Ethnologist's View* is not the first and only work by Leszek Dzięgiel, which takes up the topic of the everyday life of the Poles in the period of 1945–1989. This monograph is not only a recollection of these times, but also a perfect example of the way in which the events of modern Polish history and the everyday lives of Poles have become a new subject worth of ethnological consideration. Particularly accurate is the author's reflection that ethnologists today are looking for new topics for research, which are related to modern history and the everyday life of people in contemporary societies. Although many of them "ignore the cultural environment in which they were raised and which has exerted a considerable influence on their intellectual outlook" (Dzięgiel 1998: 7).

The author's intention was to draw attention to the existence of certain cultural phenomena in our everyday life during the last decades "...city life, culture of the intelligentsia, broadly conceived academic life, and phenomena related to the quest for knowledge, job-hunting and professional pursuits, forms of entertainment, our world view in the broad sense of this term, disputes and conflicts, political differences, tension and frustration... (Dzięgiel 1998: 8). And it continues: „There is no reason whatsoever to overlook even the most elementary situations arising from daily life, matters of housing, shopping, diet, ecological problems in the big city, forms of recreation, and issues of snobbery and fashion" (Dzięgiel 1998: 8).

One of the aims of this work is to recollect a situation of a permanent shortage of basic goods and fundamental personal rights, including lack of freedom in choosing one's given area at university or field of employment.

The basic part of *Paradise in a Concrete Cage* is a collection of ten essays which takes a look at some important topics concerning many aspects of Polish everyday life at that time (including the citizens' living standards, the indoctrination and propaganda at school and at univer-

sity, fashion, sports and tourism, transport, communication and official communist stereotypes about Poland's closest neighbours). The author has concentrated on the problems facing the generation which was raised during the time of the consolidation of communism. He presented a type of a "cultural duel" between the authorities and the citizens. The book is based on the author's personal memories and observations as well as a great collection of publications, including his own.

The book is an analysis of the numerous life spheres present in that time, but, of course, not all of them. The main idea of this book is to provide ethnologists and social anthropologists with some interesting new fields for research and open up the possibility of original comparative international studies.

The author also suggests analysing some chosen cultural spheres outside Poland. The comparative studies pursued jointly by ethnologists and anthropologists from various countries in post-communist Europe may offer a better understanding of Eastern and Central Europe societies.

Conference in Tartu, Regarding Everyday Life during Socialist Times

Ene Kõresaar

From June 12 to 15, 2003, the network of researchers studying the everyday life during the socialist period gathered in Tartu for a conference *Work Life and Life-World during Socialism and Post-Socialism*. The network has concentrated on the research project *Wandel und Kontinuität in den Transformationsländer Ost- und Südosteuropas* (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich of the Bayerischer Forschungsverbund FOROST) and the assembly in Tartu was the second one within this co-operation. The Estonian organiser of the conference was the Chair of Ethnology of Tartu University, with the research project *Strategies and Practices of Everyday Life in Soviet Estonia* (together with the Estonian National Museum; Estonian Science Foundations' grant No. 5322).[1]

The subject matter of the conference conceptualised the tensions between the terms 'life world' and 'work-life'. As Klaus Roth (Munich) strikingly mentioned in his introductory presentation, the relationship between these concepts is not at all uniformly understandable. On a wider scale, there are two different concepts competing in the clarification of this relationship, of which one understands work-life and the life world as polarising areas and the other, as coincidental and intertwining ones. Communism as an ideology used the older model as an example, which presented work-life and life world as extreme poles; the aim to overcome this opposition, to gain the total coincidence of individual and collective/societal interests, substantially influenced people's life during the socialist period. At the same time, the relationship between the work-life and life world was also not unequivocal: on one hand, the distinction between the publicly controlled work-life and the private life was ever deepening, on the other hand, the needs of

[1] Other supporters of the conference comprised the Cultural Endowment of Estonia, Estonian National Museum, Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Tartu and the City Government of Tartu.

private life intruded into work-life.

One of the possibilities is to observe work-life within the socialist system as a separate institutional space between the public/official and private. Ene Kõresaar (Tartu) proceeded from this tripartite model and treated the relations of work-life and life world from a biographical perspective – how the Estonians of the World War II generation thematised their work-life within the categories of public and that of the private. In her presentation, work-life was a part of an individual's life world and narration about this follows the main biographical process structures in the life stories of older Estonians. If in recollections of the Stalinist era, the conflict between the work-life and the official sphere is thematised by way of an abrupt intervention of the latter, then in narratives about life from the 1960s, work-life is, as a rule, interpreted in private categories (how a job facilitates the enhancement of domestic life).

Presentations delivered during the conference prevailingly focused on the relations of work sphere with the official ideological sphere on one hand and, on the other hand, with that of the private sphere. When generalising, this left an impression that from different perspectives, life world and work sphere relations were treated differently. Being observed from the system level, these were two separate worlds (i.e. life world was equated with the private sphere), whereas from the biographical perspective, part of the work sphere belonged within the life world of an individual (i.e. life world = private + social); how large was this part and what was its nature, depended on the person's position in society. The presentations mainly dealt with workers and the intelligentsia.

Milena Benovska-Sabkova (Sofia) examined the issue as to why the policy of scientific-technological revolution failed in socialist Bulgaria and found that answers to this matter have to be looked for at the level of everyday life strategies. On one hand, technological development colliding with everyday culture played a major role; on the other hand, the contradiction of engineers with the workers who did not want to subordinate to technological discipline. Actual class structures (i.e. giving preference to workers and their self-consciousness) did not match with the necessary structure that would have provided the engineers with more preference and authority. The development of scientific-technological work stopped behind over-administration, incompetence of managers and experts, unrealistic plans or simply due to the forgery of results or lack of documentation. In addition, people lived

in an environment, the problems of which (abode; in the case of women, combining the roles of e.g. mother and engineer) did not facilitate actual technological development.

The problem of combining work life and domestic life in the everyday life of (urban) women was also addressed in Magdaléna Paríková's (Bratislava) presentation. One of the main raised issues was the problem regarding the defining of work (load), later also revealed during the questions. On one hand, the so-called symbolic work, e.g. meetings at work place, often not treated as work, had a remarkable impact on domestic life, as they took time and influenced social relationships within the family. On the other hand, doing handicrafts at home, for instance, is not often specified, by the women themselves, as work, which alleviated the difficulties conditioned by a deficit economy and was thus an essential contribution to the family budget; but instead, it was rather seen as a voluntary personal hobby.

Family relationships from the aspect of work-life and occupation were also observed in the presentation by L'ubica Herzánová (Bratislava). Within the inter-generation relationship framework of one family, she demonstrated how the separateness of work from other fields of life in socialist Slovakia led to the alteration of values in the family sphere.

Three presentations focused on the life world of intellectuals. If Joanna Bar (Kraków) drew attention to the relations regarding the choice of profession and personal life plans among the "working intelligentsia" and to the issues concerning satisfaction with work, then the other two reports observed niche activities from different angles. Marketa Spiritova (Munich) treated Samizdat as a niche in the life of Czech intellectuals after the year 1968. In connection with this, she, on her side, problematised the public-private dichotomy in a totalitarian society. The so-called free publicity, in the sense of Habermas, was not existent in socialist Czechoslovakia; people withdrew into the private sphere, individual niches. At the same time, as evinced by the Samizdat case, this absent publicity was created in the sense of free opinion and right of manifestation, the possibility of criticism and communication within the same private space which thus was not private any more in the personal sense.

Kirsti Jõesalu (Tartu) observed social relations and (semi-institutionalised) leisure-time activities, which she interpreted as niche activities. When talking about their work-life, people focus on their participation in niche activities (e.g. hiking, taking part in handicraft groups)

and multi-level (horizontal, vertical) social relations. She reckoned that when asked as to what extent people do identify themselves with work in experience narratives, the answer would be that the primary sources of identification are rather the hobby activities enabled by the work-place. The reason for this could be the possibility for self-realisation within the framework of alienation from the state and the social sphere of society. However, the fact that niche activities in such a form also possess value in the current society should also not be discarded.

The formation of informal social networks was one of the main issues in Vyacheslav Popkov's (Kaluga) presentation, focusing on the comparison of work relations of different levels in the so-called "open" and "closed" factories in Russia during the stagnation period. He highlighted that in all of the socialist (factory) collectives, an attempt was made to introduce "socialist work culture", based on party structures, which was manifested "in our own traditions". In the "closed" (military) industry, such traditions were particularly distinct and the impact of the party organisation especially intense. Therefore (and also due to the nature of the industry), the creation basis for informal networks was substantially weaker in closed factories.

Petar Petrov (Sofia/Munich), in his presentation on the reception of the workers of socialist Bulgaria with regard to the conditions of life in the 1970s–80s, touched upon the issues concerning the legitimacy of socialism in everyday life, raised during the conference. The argumentative impact of today's problems in the memories of the past was clearly revealed in his presentment. In retrospective, socialism obtains the image of a humane system of society, guaranteeing equality and social safety whereas 15–20 years ago, living conditions were pondered over in an extremely critical manner.

Pille Runnel (Tartu), in turn, dealt with a contrary problem: the Soviet time experience is being used as an efficacious argument in today's social discussions. For instance, the officially cultivated ethnic folk culture in Soviet Estonia, which also simultaneously developed in parallel as a "contra-culture", and, similarly, the Soviet-time experience regarding insufficient hygiene are today used at grass-root level, as arguments for or against the European Union.

Predrag Markovic (Belgrade) and Guntis Pakalns (Rīga) introduced their commencing research projects regarding the impact of Serbian Gastarbeiters on Serbian everyday life and the genre specifics of the folklore reflecting the experience of the Soviet time, correspondingly.

A field trip to the centre of the former "Estonia" collective farm in

Central Estonia took place on June 15. Indrek Jääts (Tartu) who has been researching the work-life of the "Estonia" collective farm during its first decades of operation, made an excursion to the history of the kolkhoz and introduced the photographic exhibition on collective farm life in the 1950s, earlier displayed in the Estonian National Museum. The participants were welcomed by former members of the collective farm thus we obtained first-hand information on work and life in the Oisu area during socialist and post-socialist times.