

Egge Kulbok-Lattik

The Historical Formation and  
Development of Estonian Cultural Policy

Tracing the Development of  
Estonian Community Houses (Rahvamaja)



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# The Historical Formation and Development of Estonian Cultural Policy

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UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

JYVÄSKYLÄ 2015

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## ABSTRACT

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Diss.

This dissertation is based on peer-reviewed articles and belongs to the fields of historical sociology and cultural policy research. The aim of the research is to discover the roots of cultural policy of the Estonian state and its developments during the first period of the Estonian Republic (1918–40), as well as during the Soviet occupation period (1940–91). This approach implies an historical-sociological examination of Estonian cultural and societal transformations, including the general overview of the political system that affects and activates mutual influences between the capitalist market, civil society and nation state – which all, as central phenomena and institutional spheres are incarnations, as well as driving forces, of modernization. In order to exemplify interactions between civil society and the modern state during different political eras of Estonian history, a case study on the historical emergence and development of Estonian community houses (*rahvamaja*) has been chosen. With the example of community houses, the historical roots, formation, aims, and development of Estonian cultural policy can be observed. While in the first article of the historical periodization an overview is provided on the different political systems and their practices in culture, in the second and third article the connections between cultural practices, nation-building and cultural policy of the state have been revealed. As a whole, the roots and historical development of Estonian cultural policy under the different political systems has been framed and theorized with the concept of different modernities: the development of the nation-state with the rise of liberal democracy and industrial capitalism within ‘Western’ modernity (1918-30s), and Soviet socialist state practices within the Communist project of Modernity (1940-1991).

Keywords: cultural emancipation and political self-determination, community houses, civil society and state, Soviet cultural policy, multiple modernities

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## PREFACE

*'The past is never dead. It's not even past.'*

*William Faulkner*

When Tom Stoppard visited the HeadRead Tallinn literary festival in May 2013, during one of the public discussions, he asked: How might it be explained that during Soviet times everybody had access to high culture? His partner in this discussion, Estonian president Toomas Hendrik Ilves, as a representative of that part of Estonian nation who had to leave their homes in order to escape from the totalitarian regime, could not really answer the question. Neither could anybody from the audience offer a good explanation to this, the cultural aspect of Soviet welfare. It is because until recent times there has not been a proper discussion on the issue of what the cultural program of civilizing the masses of Soviet state was. Was the culture just a propaganda tool, as it has been frequently seen? What did it take from us, and what did it gave to us – to those generations who were born and became adults as 'cultured Soviet persons' in the 'cultural welfare' of a closed society? Where did the cultural power come from during the days of perestroika and the Singing Revolution? This work discusses these matters and aims to reflect on the historical experience of Estonian politics of culture.

In order to elaborate on the motivation that led me to write the current doctoral thesis, I have to go back to my childhood, which was spent at the end of 1960s and in the 1970s in the "Soviet welfare' of the Estonian Soviet Republic. Like many of my contemporaries, I took part in the widely accessible cultural practice: for many years I studied classical ballet (since kindergarten) with a prima ballerina; I also did folk dancing, sang in a choir and did sports. A large part of my hobbies took place in a house of culture. I also took part in many song and dance festivals, regularly visited theatres and concerts, read literature of Estonian, Russian and foreign classics as many children, youths and adults in Soviet Estonia also did. I can say from my own experience that the state financed and Soviet-time cultural practices made available-for-all provided me and my contemporaries (i.e., many generations) with important additional value and base the for being a creative and healthy person. In a way, Soviet cultural policy created a society in which everybody belonged to some level of "middle class" by having access to wide scope of culture. In addition, song and dance festivals have been an important factor in the creation and reinforcement of national identity for me and most of my compatriots.

I, of course, also remember icon-like pictures of Lenin and other Soviet Union leaders in kindergarten and on school walls, posters in the cultural house; I also remember the 'compulsory repertoire' in school lessons as well as in the general cultural sphere. Back then, however, I did not regard my activities in



the cultural sphere and my hobbies as political representations, although, in hindsight, it also was partly that.



*This picture I know from the kindergarten and school, as one of the widely used icon-portraits of Lenin.<sup>1</sup>*

I remember how in time I learned to discern one-track propaganda from 'proper' information, and, like other people, tolerate it, as some sort of noise, which is unavoidable, which comes with the system, a semblance, which simply had to be tolerated, without paying too much attention to it. Political zeal was not a common phenomenon in my circles; it was not considered appropriate and caused estrangement. This bizarre and ambiguous cognition, *double-coding* and wide-spread double standards in the public sphere and formal life has been called *double-mindedness* by Aili Aarelaid (2006).

I was most attracted to theatre, and I went to study Soviet-era cultural education, where, besides library work, dance choreography, orchestra and choir management, highly educated directors were being prepared for amateur theatres. I was to work in one of many community houses, cultural houses, or for a local government. Actors and directors of amateur theatres were taught to high standards in the Soviet cultural education system: for four years we studied the theory and practice of psychological realism after the methods created by the classics of Russian theatrical art: Stanislavski and Nemirovich-Danchenko, worked with dramaturgy and texts, and in addition, the history of theatre, music, and art, and practical body work, i.e., all kinds of dance styles and stage movement. We had a lot of stage practice and individual lessons as actors and directors; as a student, you could also attend all the theatres in Estonia for free. Obviously, this education was not cheap. In sum, dramatic art became my method for understanding the world for many a year.

I am speaking about Soviet cultural education in such detail not because I am lost in memories, but because I want to convey the fact that during the Soviet period, the people who later worked with cultural hobbies of citizens, amongst them also conductors, choirmasters, choreographers, dance masters, received a professional cultural education. Soviet cultural education together with the Soviet cultural policy model created the specific conditions for the creation of homogeneous national culture in Estonia. Of course, in addition to spe-

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<sup>1</sup> Picture of Lenin from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/478875/propaganda/23837/Measurement-of-the-effects-of-propaganda>

cial subjects, atheism, Marxist socialism, and the basic course in political philosophy were mandatory, which, during my studies at the end of the 1980s were taught in quite a liberal atmosphere, accompanied by discussions arising from the critical mood of the students. As a part of the state financial system, bookkeeping for clubs and their general organisation, elaborating on management of cultural institutions and how and according to which rules money could be spent (since finances came from the budget of the central government of the republic, fixed in Moscow) were also taught. We were to become top specialists and managers of cultural houses and clubs, historically known as society and community houses.

After we finished school in 1988, everything changed in society: the economy, politics, identity of that society, and during the Singing Revolution, the Estonian republic was re-established (1991). The state-funded ideological tool of a cultural management system of the Soviet Estonia for which I was educated and trained began to crumble and was gradually replaced within the liberal economic model by a shaken cultural sphere searching for its new cultural management model. There was confusion in society as a whole: the traumatic experience of the transformation process, where many, including cultural managers, accustomed to following the guidelines issued from Moscow, were no longer able to orientate themselves. The totalitarian polity of the previous 50 years had demanded obedience from the citizens; critical and independent thinking was dangerous and to be condemned.

After graduation, I began working in the cultural department of Tartu city government, where I started to realise my own creative vision, a cultural project, which emanated from theatre and which became my work. Soon I started to organize (as independent manager of an NGO) an international festival of theatre and visual arts, called Dionysia in Tartu in 1992-99. Newly-opened borders and an invitation from Tampere Teatterikesä enabled me to go and meet my new professional identity, which I discovered thanks to my European colleagues, who had created an international network as alternative to the state-funded art institutions, called IETM (Informal European Theatre Meeting), the plenary assembly of which happened to convene that very summer at the Tamperekesä theatre festival. This is from where my cooperation with Western colleagues took off, enabling me to see modern and borderline performance art: theatre, dance, visual-arts performances. With the rest of society emerging from behind the Iron Curtain, I consumed the new and unknown; suddenly there were no taboos in art and culture, the flood of information was sensational and eye opening.

But choosing theatre-groups and organizing the festivals, I also had to manage a new kind of an economic model, for which I had no preparation; there was also no state support (The Cultural Endowment of Estonia, though, was reopened quite soon, in 1993). For me this meant constant learning, because there was no set framework or guidelines, therefore I had to learn everything on the go: creating a cultural vision, which would speak to people internationally, and also organizational competencies such as budget preparation and

bookkeeping, legislation, fundraising, and working with sponsors, marketing and communication. I learned to work with people, to form a team, to lead and motivate. I learned how to be a manager and a producer. The era of *managerialism in culture*, which was not well known in the first decade of the independent Estonia, had arrived, and *at the beginning, it even provided some competition to confused state structures*. I organized festivals for almost ten years, and ended up being very exhausted at the end, because each time I had had to start the whole process from scratch; to work with no social guarantees and no stable state support was draining. Afterwards, as a Unesco grantee, I went to France to study what I had done during these 8 years: to study cultural management.<sup>2</sup>

Being distanced from the work I had been doing and being given lectures on cultural policy made it possible to put my experiences and activities into the context of the Estonian cultural field. I understood that in state-owned cultural and art institutions, it was possible to bring artistic visions into life and make one's visions real with less risk and toil than I could as a freelance producer, who had felt the direct influence of cultural politics on her own skin. This brought about a deeper interest in cultural policy and I started to look for answers to questions that I formulated years ago in my first plan that I presented to my supervisor: Who makes and who influences (pulls strings) the decisions of Estonian cultural policy? Can we speak about a certain model of cultural policy during different periods? Which model?

I may state that from the perspective of social sciences, the first impulse for studying cultural policy springs from my interest in the interaction between the individual (person) and societal structures (institutions), i.e., the agency-structure dilemma. Based on my practical experience, I have wanted to know *who* shapes politics, how does cultural policy form, and what role people and institutions play. Why are state-run cultural institutions so important, often more important than private cultural projects and from where do fixed rows in the state budget come, who shapes values and preferences?

I began with compiling a historically-periodised account, because I wanted to understand why Estonian cultural policy is what it is today. In order to understand the interactions between structures and the individual, the historical chain of events had to be unearthed; the best way for organizing such a substantial process is a historical periodization as a method of history writing, which I will describe in more detail in the following section on methods. Examining the history of Estonian cultural policy reveals the choice of political instruments of different regimes and with these, the ideological discourse and influence of those policies on the individual level, community, and society. With the help of methods and theories of social sciences, political studies and historical research, interactions between the individuals, civil society and state structures can be explained. Studying the Soviet-era cultural policy from the

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<sup>2</sup> As a UNESCO grantee, I signed a contract which included an obligation to bring into Estonia the particular know-how and work out a cultural management study plan for Estonian universities, because the Soviet-era cultural work model did not meet the requirements of the time.

perspective of present-day social sciences, I could see something that, on the one hand, reminded me of the cultural activities of my childhood and youth, but on the other, was different from how I perceived culture and social life as a person who had grown up in a closed society.

The case study on community houses (second article in dissertation) offered a prism of a historical institution through which to focus on the roots of Estonian cultural policy in the era of national awakening and give meaning to cultural practices in the context of nation building. This enabled me to assess the power of individuals and personal initiatives, the potential of the nation's cultural and political emancipation and its way to self-determination. The case study on community houses (third article in dissertation) has shown how bottom-up initiative-based organizations became state institutions, tools of state politics. Examination of Soviet cultural policy opened 'the door behind the curtains' of the Soviet rhetoric, and helped me to see and understand the hidden.

To sum up, this study has enabled me to understand the story of myself, my generation, but also the generations of my parents, grandparents, and as being quite widespread, then even the story of the whole nation.

Jyväskylä, March 2015

Egge Kulbok-Lattik

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However, the Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy at the University of Jyväskylä has become my real *alma mater* since the start of my doctoral studies in 2011, where I acquired the identity of social scientist and researcher. For that opportunity and for her constant dedication and support, I am deeply grateful to my main supervisor Professor Anita Kangas. She has encouraged me and always contributed to my work, helping me to overcome various academic issues and problems. Also, I am deeply thankful to my other supervisors – Professor Marja Järvelä, Dr Tobias Harding, and Dr Aet Annist – whose expertise and critical analysis have helped me to overcome the shortcomings and gaps in the theoretical part of the dissertation.

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March 2015,

Egge Kulbok-Lattik

## ARTICLES

- I Eesti Kultuuripoliitika ajaloolisest periodiseerimisest, [On the Historical Periodization of Estonian Cultural Policy] (2008/12) published in: Acta Historica Tallinnensia, Estonian Academy of Sciences, ISSN 1406-2925 (print) pp. 120-144. Article is translated in English.  
[http://www.kirj.ee/public/Acta\\_hist/2008/issue\\_1/acta-2008-1-7.pdf](http://www.kirj.ee/public/Acta_hist/2008/issue_1/acta-2008-1-7.pdf)
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## CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

PREFACE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ARTICLES

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION .....	15
1.1	Research questions .....	16
1.2	Methods and Data .....	20
2	CENTRAL CONCEPTS AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS.....	27
2.1	Culture and Cultural Policy .....	28
2.2	Concept of Cultural Policy as Public Policy .....	32
2.2.1	Changing Concept of Culture in the Context of Cultural Policy .....	34
2.2.2	Changing Practices of Cultural Policy after the World War II Europe .....	37
2.3	Man as a Social and Political Animal.....	42
2.4	State, Polity, Politics, Policy .....	45
2.5	The Concepts of Civil Society, Public Sphere and Public Square.....	48
2.5.1	The Modern Nation-State, Nation and Nation Building.....	53
2.5.2	Identity of Nations and Cultural Policy.....	59
2.5.3	The Authoritarian and Totalitarian State, Propaganda .....	61
2.6	Concept of Modernity and Multiple Modernities.....	68
3	ESTONIAN CULTURAL POLICY .....	74
3.1	Historical roots of Estonian Cultural Policy in Civil Society with the Example of Community houses.....	74
3.2	Formation and development of state cultural policy in Estonia 1918-1940 .....	79
3.3	Soviet modernity: principles and instruments in the cultural policy of totalitarian state .....	90
3.3.1	Implementation of bureaucratic control and censorship in culture - the example of the sovietization of Estonian community houses .....	90
3.3.2	Ideological principles of the Soviet cultural policy and system of cultural education.....	96
3.4	Discussion.....	106
3.4.1	Was the goal of the Sovietization achieved? .....	106
3.4.2	Interactions between civil society and state in the politics of culture during the different political eras of Estonian history .....	110

4	ARTICLE SUMMARIES.....	116
5	CONCLUSION .....	125
	5.1 The specific features of the historical development of Estonian cultural policy.....	126
	5.2 Soviet cultural policy in Estonia 1940-91.....	128
	5.3 The roles of community houses during different political systems .....	129
	FINNISH SUMMARY .....	133
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	134
	APPENDICES.....	154
	ARTICLES	



# 1 INTRODUCTION

The dissertation, *The Historical Formation and Development of Estonian Cultural Policy: Tracing the Development of Estonian Community Houses (Rahvamaja)* is based on peer-reviewed articles and belongs to the fields of historical sociology (Tilly 1980, 2001) and cultural policy research. It combines a study of historical and archival sources, representing earlier research on Estonian history and cultural policy. The methods used in the dissertation are historical periodization as a method of history writing, and case study analyses with the focus on cultural policy research. The general structure of the dissertation is deductive: from the general framework of historical periodization of Estonian cultural policy towards more a detailed exploratory study on Estonian community houses as local tools of cultural policy.

Cultural policy can be conceptualized *broadly*, as it deals with the class of interests, history of ideas, institutional<sup>3</sup> struggles and power relations and the circulation of symbolic meaning in society, as McGuigan (1996, 1) has noted. It can also be conceptualised *in a more limited manner* as cultural policies are seen as tools for the administration of arts, cultural practices of the population and researched as one of the public policies of the modern state. In the articles of this dissertation, the concept of cultural policy has been used in both ways: examining the historical formation of Estonian cultural policy, the expanded concept of cultural policy research as an 'epistemic and interpretative approach between cultural analysis and cultural policy, including historical reflection', as Eräsaari (2009, 64) says, has been used. In order to examine how, for instance, community houses developed as an instrument of cultural policy during different cultural policy periods in Estonia, the more specific approach to cultural policy – as a tool for the administration of arts and cultural practices have been used by state in different political systems – is also employed. Thus, in this dis-

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<sup>3</sup> Theorist of Economics Johnson (1992, 26) offers the general and broad definition about what the institutions are: institutions are sets of habits, routines, rules, norms and laws, which regulate the relations between people and shape human interaction by reducing uncertainty. Thus, institutions collect, contain and share the amount of information needed for individual and collective action, institutions are fundamental building blocks in all societies.

sertation on the historical development of Estonian cultural policy, both limited, as well as broad, perspectives of cultural policy research are involved.

Estonian cultural policy in this dissertation is defined in the following way: cultural policy is an agreed conglomeration of decisions and regulations, with the help of which – on the basis of historically formed and nationally legitimised values – generally preferred cultural practices are selected and are implemented administratively and institutionally, including receiving funding from the state budget. (Kulbok-Lattik 2008; see also Volkerling 1996, McGuigan 2004, Kangas 2004)

## 1.1 Research questions

As a whole, I have been interested in discovering the roots of cultural policy of the Estonian state and its developments during the first period of Estonian Republic (1918–40), as well as during the Soviet occupation period (1940–91). This approach implies an historical-sociological examination of Estonian cultural and societal transformations, including the general overview of the political system that affects and activates mutual influences between the capitalist market, civil society and nation state – which all, as central phenomena and institutional spheres are incarnations, as well as driving forces, of modernization.

To understand the connections and interactions between civil society and modern state during different political eras of Estonian history, I have chosen as a case study the historical emergence and development of Estonian community<sup>4</sup> houses (*rahvamaja*). With the example of community houses, the historical roots, formation, aims, and development of Estonian cultural policy can be observed. Thus, I have been looking for answers to the following research questions:

- 1) What are the specific features of the historical development of Estonian cultural policy?
- 2) How was the Soviet cultural policy implemented in Estonia in the years 1940-91?

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<sup>4</sup> Community normally means when people have something in common, sharing a geographical area (typically a neighbourhood), or people being brought together by common interests, identities or some combination of these factors. Communities operate by distinguishing those who belong ('insiders') from those who do not ('outsiders'). Community is an important dimension of *social divisions* as well as *togetherness* because inclusion in community relationships promises benefits (material resources or raised social status) that set members apart from others. People's sense of belonging to communities varies greatly, see Putnam (2000) *Bowling Alone*. The ordinariness of community relationships in people's everyday lives needs to be reinforced periodically by extraordinary gatherings such as festivities to celebrate the purpose, achievements, and memory of the community and thereby strengthen members' attachments to the collectivity. (Crow 2007, 617-620)

- 3) What was the role of community houses in the development of Estonian national culture and public sphere during the different political systems<sup>5</sup> between 1880 and 1991?

Estonian community houses hosted cultural and leisure activities of the local population and were built in towns and the countryside by people who joined societies since the second half of the nineteenth century. This process of bottom-up initiatives and shared cultural practices illustrates the constitution of Estonian civil society. (Kulbok-Lattik 2012; Karu, 1985, 1989, 1990, 1993; Jansen, 2004, 2007; Uljas 1990) The notion of *civil society* as a concept in academic discourse as well as in practical phenomena depends on the political system in the relevant society. It refers to different activities contrasted or juxtaposed with the state but not reducible to the market, being located somewhere in between. Civil society acts as a social sphere which helps redistribute power in society, providing people with opportunities to take part in the political decision-making process, with decisions being made on different levels, being divided between smaller processes (participatory practices, subpolices), instead of in one power centre (see chapter 2.5.).

Estonian community houses became pre-state cultural institutions, which supported the development of Estonian cultural identity, the process of nation building and the public sphere in the specific conditions: in the circumstances of being under the rule of the Baltic German landlords and the restrictive tsarist state. The construction of community houses can be seen as the act of collective will to create a room/space for the development of Estonian culture, and as such, it has a political dimension in Arendtian sense. During the years of the independent Estonian Republic (1918-34), new perspectives were opened in the area of civil culture, civil traditions, and popular citizenship. The network of community houses was set up by the state as a local tool of cultural policy of a modern state, which meant the onset of 'dialogue' between civil and public structures. Essential processes related to nation-state building and community or civil society building could develop simultaneously and contribute to each others' progress.

From 1934-40, in Estonia, as in several countries around Europe, rigidly nationalist and conservative ideas began to gain hold, which brought about an autocratic regime and the critical public sphere was silenced. The 'silent era of Päts' brought an essentially pro-totalitarian ideology developed by the national propaganda office, which was implemented with the support of a nationalist

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<sup>5</sup> A political system is defined as the set of formal legal institutions that constitute a 'government' or a 'state'. This is the definition adopted by many studies of the legal or constitutional arrangements of advanced political orders. More broadly defined, the term encompasses existing as well as prescribed forms of political behaviour, not only the legal organization of the state but also the reality of how the state functions. Still more broadly defined, the political system is seen as a set of 'processes of interaction' or as a subsystem of the social system interacting with other non-political subsystems, such as the economic system. This points to the importance of informal sociopolitical processes and emphasizes the study of political development. (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/467746/political-system>)

cultural policy, which was expressed through powerful nationwide national propaganda events: the Estonianisation of names (including place-names), the propaganda of national costumes in connection with the eleventh national song festival (1938), home decoration, and the study of ancient Estonian culture. The regime tried to control initiative of citizens, especially as it concerned political organisations and trade unions. Still, state interference and censorship in culture remained comparatively mild and the rule of law was maintained during the Päts era. (Karjahärm and Sirk, 2001; Köll, 1994, 1998; Vaan, 2004; Uljas, 1990, 2005)

After two decades of independence and 'Western' modern state practices, between 1940 and 1991, another oppressive state-based interference took place within the process of *Sovietization*: the extensive restructuring of the Estonian public administration, and economy. Community houses were turned into centres of political education and used as propaganda tools by the Soviet state. Cultural centres that had operated on the basis of free initiative and civil society were taken over by the state, becoming state-operated and censored cultural institutions of the Soviet era. As community houses hosted the leisure activities and amateur cultural practices of local communities, I have also been interested in the ideological transformations of the concept of folk culture: folkloric art, amateur cultural practices and the establishment of a cultural canon as the basis for the implementation of state cultural policy.

In this dissertation, *state interference* in culture, and interactions between state and civil initiatives, have been theorized in different ways: the first article, 'On the Historical Periodization of Estonian Cultural Policy' Kulbok (2008), offers one possible conceptual frame of the historical eras of Estonian cultural policy between 1918-2007 *by mapping the prevailing political discourse* of the state and methods used to implement the cultural policy. The titles given to cultural policy periods have been derived from a central feature which characterizes the dominating attitude or principle, or how cultural policy was put into practice during the political system of the respective historical era.

In the following articles on the development of Estonian cultural policy, I have expanded and deepened the examination of state intervention using the theoretical framework of Hillmann-Chartrand and McCaughey's (1989, 6-9) concept of cultural policy models, which help to identify the organizational and economic layout of the state's interference in culture. Cultural economists Hillmann-Chartrand and McCaughey have described four basic ideal models in relation to the role of the state in the politics of culture ('*the Patron model*', '*the Architect model*', '*the Engineer model*' and the '*Facilitator model*'). Acting as '*Patron*', the state takes on the role of patron, historically the role of the aristocracy. Cultural excellence is supported in this model and distribution of funds is organized indirectly, largely by experts through arm's length mechanisms. In the '*Architect model*' the government usually supports arts and culture, regarded as part of social and welfare policy, through a centralised ministry or cultural department. It enables direct government funding, stable subsidies, but less support to cultural production outside state institutions. The '*Engineer model*' state

acts as the owner of all means of artistic production and supports only the art that meets its political standards of excellence. Funding decisions are taken by political commissars. The cultural policy of the *Engineer state* tends to be revisionary; artistic decisions must be revised to reflect the changing official party line. Artistic activity (both professional and amateur) is organized into 'creative unions' (or methodically-guiding administrative bodies) so as to monitor new works and ensure conformity with the aesthetic principles of the authorities. Examples of this model include the former Soviet Union. In comparison, the '*Facilitator model*' allows the government to get involved directly, but only creating the conditions to favour cultural production.

In the second article 'Estonian Community Houses as Local Tools for the Development of Estonian Cultural Policy', I was interested in discovering the roots of cultural policy, examining how for centuries a suppressed native population finds its way into the historical arena by creating a space (community houses) for their cultural emancipation and how these cultural practices start to constitute the national cultural identity and *public sphere* (in a Habermasian sense), thus becoming one of the first cultural institutions of an evolving Estonian civil society during the pre-state era. In order to conceptualize this process, I have used Bakhtin's concepts of *public square* and folk art, as they help to explain the explicitly non-political essence of cultural practices in community houses as an important part of nation-building. Kulbok-Lattik (2012)

In the third article chapter, 'The Sovietization of Estonian Community Houses: Soviet Guidelines', I examined the *sovietization*<sup>6</sup> process of Estonian community houses, i.e., how they were turned into ideological tools of Soviet totalitarian propaganda. To analyse the *sovietization* of community houses, I examined the Soviet cultural canon to identify its targets, and also the model of Soviet cultural policy. The aim was to reveal the process of how the civil activism, amateur art and educational activities in community houses was restructured into subordinate state cultural institutions. I analyzed the methodical guidelines provided by state bodies as tools of coercion, control and censorship in making Estonian community houses function as centres of political education (Kulbok-Lattik 2014).

While in the first article of the historical periodization an overview was provided on the different political systems and their practices in culture, in the second and third chapters the connections between cultural practices, nation-building and cultural policy of the state have been revealed. As a whole, the roots and historical development of Estonian cultural policy under the different political systems has been framed and theorized with the concept of different modernities: the development of the nation-state with the rise of liberal democracy and industrial capitalism within 'Western' modernity (1918-30s), and Soviet socialist state practices during (1940-1991) within the Communist project of Modernity.

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<sup>6</sup> *Sovietization* means the implementation of Soviet state practices in the restructuring process of society.

## 1.2 Methods and Data

As explained above, it was my personal background that prompted me to research cultural policy. A desire to understand and explain the historical processes as well as the connections between economy, culture and politics, has led me to examine the Estonian history of cultural policy with methods from historical sociology. This examination involved systematic empirical investigation, the analysis of data and the assessment of theories in the light of evidence and logical argument, all that Giddens (2009) considers as a part of scientific endeavour.

This dissertation belongs to the field of historical sociology with the aim to identify historical patterns and developmental processes of Estonian cultural policy as modern state practice, to analyze relations between civil society and state during various socio-economic and political systems. Thus, various research methods from both disciplines – sociology and history – have been used. *Historical sociology* is a branch of sociology focusing on how societies develop through history. It looks at how social structures are shaped by complex social processes. (Tilly 1980, 55-59) The structures in turn shape institutions and organizations, and they affect the society and individuals. For example Karl Marx, Max Weber, Hannah Arendt, Emile Durkheim, Norbert Elias, Jürgen Habermas and Immanuel Wallerstein are some of the authors of grand syntheses that do not belong to a single discipline and represent a common heritage shared by history and the social sciences. Contemporary historical sociology is primarily concerned with how the state has developed, analyzing relations between classes, economic and political systems. In his overview of the developments of historical sociology, Charles Tilly (2001, 6753) pointing out the unified beginning of both disciplines, notes:

In 1844, Auguste Comte in his lecture, *Lecture on the Positivist Outlook (Discours sur l'esprit positif)*, proposed the name 'sociology' for general science of humanity. [...] In Comte's conception of sociology, included history, in fact consisted largely of analysing the development of humanity through historical stages. From that point onward, however, professional history and professional sociology moved in very different directions.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> 'As the historical discipline organized later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, professional historians came to be specialized in particular times and places. This specialization built up clusters of expertise in the sources, languages, institutions [...] which in turn promoted collective research programs, debates among experts, and exclusion of nonprofessionals from the historical guild. It also made syntheses of all human history in a Comtean style less attractive to ordinary historians. Meanwhile, sociologists divided up their own specialities mostly by structures and processes [...] and drew their evidence chiefly from observation of the countries they currently lived in. Sociologists 'historical essays divided among broad evolutionary and stage schemes, scattered examples illustrating general arguments, and sketchy prologues to studies of contemporary social phenomena'. Tilly (2001, 6753)

Since Comte's lecture, this specialization has grown in both of disciplines of humanity – history and sociology – and Tilly (2001, 6753) describes it as follows:

From the contrasting bases of intellectual organization sprang a number of mutual understandings between historians and sociologists, including the sociologists' common presumption that sociology is an explanatory, generalizing science and history is descriptive, particularising science fated to provide raw material for sociologists' generalizations. Historians returned the compliment by complaining that the present studied by sociologists was itself a narrow historical moment with no claim to universal significance, and that to pluck examples from history without thorough knowledge of the relevant sources, languages and institutions courted intellectual disaster.

The idea of a distinct research field called *historical sociology* formed only during the twentieth century, as sociologists themselves began to distinguish sharply between evidence coming from direct observation of the present from the indirect observation of the past. Tilly (2001, 6753-6757) has differentiated four directions of historical sociological analysis, which differ substantially, in aims, procedures and results: *social criticism*, *pattern identification*, *scope extension* and *process analysis*.

According to that distinction, *historical social criticism* reconstructs the past on the way to informing human choices in the present and future. For example, the works of Hannah Arendt, Jürgen Habermas, Göran Therborg, Theda Skocpol contribute to current social criticism by reworking history, Tilly (ibid.) explains. Historical *pattern identifiers* in sociology usually seek to discover the preconditions for social transformations to establish comparable cases to the proposed patterns (for example, impact of central bureaucracies, secularization, industrialization, democratization, used by authors of textbooks and authors of grand narratives who incorporate other historians' detailed studies into large syntheses). Optimally, *historical pattern identification* facilitates recognition of recurrent social processes with sufficient accuracy to permit intervention or anticipatory action, Tilly (2001, 6754) argues. *Scope extension* applies techniques, models or generalizations that sociologists have developed in studies of contemporary social life to historical situations. This variety of research can potentially correct historical misconceptions as it broadens the domain of social scientific knowledge. It is often used by historical demographers or sociologists with ethnographic orientations within historical local community studies, Tilly (2001, 6754) notes. *Process analysis* examines how social interactions impinge on each other in space and time. Instead of considering space and time as additional variables, it presumes that space-time connections define social processes, and that social processes operate differently as a function of their placement in space and time. Within process analysis, causal mechanisms of broad scope as well as conditions that affect activation, interaction, and outcomes of those mechanisms can be identified, Tilly (2001) claims.

In this dissertation I have mostly used *pattern identification* and *process analysis* as the directions of historical sociology, pointed out by Tilly (ibid.). Speaking about community houses, I have analyzed the space-time connections in order to define the socio-historical processes of Estonian history. Discussing

the formation and development of Estonian cultural policy, I have identified the wider patterns of societal transformations theorized with the concept of different modernities. Speaking about the periodization of Estonian cultural policy (in the first article), a characteristic dominant feature of political ideological discourse in each period has been identified. Also, the organisational and economic layout of cultural production during different political systems (in the summary text and in the second and the third articles) has been identified in the dissertation.

Explaining the formation of historical process, I rely on the ideas of Yuri Lotman (1999, 125-137), who places the historical process in his model of cultural dynamics, according to which the formation of historical process is shaped in the tensions and interactions by long and continuous general processes (that might remain invisible to individuals), and by the efforts - spiritual or based on the will - of individuals.

In order to identify the connections between historical processes, I have used *historical analysis* and *historical periodization* as methods with a focus on the development of Estonian cultural policy. The modern concept of *historical analysis* stems from the move to a scientific approach to history advocated by Ranke and the German school of historians in the mid-nineteenth century. The focus was moved to the rigorous analysis of documents as the material for the recreation of the past, towards the perceived historical patterns and an explanation of them. In addition, the emphasis was placed on understanding the context of the past, and there have been myriad scholarly discussions during more than 170 years of development.

An important aspect to point out in the context of this work is the discussion on collective memory and identity politics in history writing. Referring to several scholars, Marek Tamm (2008, 448-516) points out that the birth of the historical discipline in nineteenth-century Europe took place just as nationhood was becoming a fundamental creed of political sovereignty, thus, group identity, nation building and history writing became closely intertwined. Furthermore, Estonian historians have largely researched and viewed nineteenth and twentieth-century cultural history through the lens of a national narrative and class fight against the Baltic-German nobility until the end of the Soviet era in 1991. Since then, various concepts of history writing for instance Hayden White (2003 [1988]) and philosophical schools, for instance authors of School of Annales, Paul Ricoeur (2002), Roland Barthes (2002), Carlo Ginzburg (2003 [1999]) and micro-history, P. Burke (2004) and New Cultural History, works of Jan and Aleida Assmann, (2009) and the study of mnemohistory, to mention but a few, have been introduced into Estonian historical research. Tamm, (2008, 448-516) argues that history is first and foremost a highly specialized form of collective memory. History does not simply reproduce facts; rather, it constructs their meaning by framing them within cultural memory, and in this process of memory work the narrative plays crucial role, Tamm (*ibid.*) claims.<sup>8</sup> However, I

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<sup>8</sup> 'Every community, including the nation, is based on 'stories we live by' on narrative templates which give coherence to a community's past. In this way, the nation is de-



would also add the organizational set of memory work as a crucial aspect, pointed out in Jan Assman's (1995, 129-133) theory on memory work, which features 'the organisation'. Organization of memory work means '(a) institutional buttressing of communication, e.g., through formulization of the communicative situation in ceremony and (b) the specialization of the bearers of cultural memory,' he (1995, 129-133) claims. For Assman (1995, 132) the concept of cultural memory comprises that body of reusable texts, images, and rituals specific to each society in each epoch, whose 'cultivation'<sup>9</sup> serves to stabilize and convey that society's self-image. Assman's concept links the institutional set which shapes the narratives of collective memory with the politics of culture and enables the viewing of the memory work as part of state cultural policy. Thus, this work on the history of Estonian cultural policy represents memory work and offers several narratives, but also offers critical reflection on the narratives of state cultural policy in the different eras.<sup>10</sup>

In the first chapter I have used *historical periodization* as method. A periodization of historical processes is one way of reconstructing the past. Epistemologically, periodization is justified by the natural human need for clarity: we need to find clear boundaries in the collection of facts and events that history deals with, as Tarvel (1999, 105) posits. This enables us to humanly comprehend the course of history and interpret the complicated relationships and links that have guided this course. Jaak Valge (2004), in a discussion of historical periodization, notes that periodization can lead to both a dangerous oversimplification and a modern perspective of history. Further, any kind of periodization may also contain the creation of cultural identity, as it conceals within itself a power mechanism. Vladimir Biti (1999) explains that as cultural identity cannot be homogeneous and subjected to a common embodiment of 'cultural memory' in any society – but is heterogenic and multi-faceted due to national, ethnic, racial, religious, social, gender and professional difference –, then we must always identify for what purpose and in whose interests common cultural memory has been periodized (Biti 1999). Historical periodization is always a subjective and conditional method. Despite this, I suggest that it allows a broader generalisation and an overview when discussing, for instance, such a complex topic as the history of Estonian cultural policy.

*Sociological analysis* here is used as classical puzzle-solving research with the focus on agent-structure binary relations and a case study of community

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picted as an outgrowth of earlier periods of the community's history, establishing itself as its lineal descendant through different times (Papadakis 2003, p. 254; Smith 1997, p. 50). The nation is indeed, as Homi Bhabha has pointedly put it, 'a narrative-strategy' (Bhabha 1990, p. 292). The Estonian nation has remembered itself very much as a product of historical and literary imagination.' Tamm (2008)

<sup>9</sup> Assmann (1995, 131) distinguishes three dimensions the cultivation of text, i.e., the observation of word by word transmission; the cultivation of meaning, i.e., the culture of explication, exegesis, hermeneutics, and commentary; and mediation, i.e., the retranslation of text into life through the institutions of education, upbringing, and initiation.

<sup>10</sup> Theoretical links of memory work and cultural policy research provide a new focus for critical reflection. However, in the articles of the dissertation, Assman's concept has been not used systematically as a method.

houses. Due to my earlier practical and artistic experience in the Estonian cultural field, I gained direct experience and understanding of the effects, the state (as the structure), with its' cultural policy, has on the agents acting in the field (on the community houses as institutional agents, but also on the individual agents). *Defining the research problem and making the problem precise* by reviewing the available evidence in the field, I recognized and defined the problems after living through them. Thus, my practical experience is certainly an important part in defining my research field and research questions, which could be treated as participant observation-based experiences, or fieldwork, which forms the cognitive basis for reading the research done on Estonian cultural policy as well as theoretical concepts.

Another method used in this dissertation is the sociological *case study* on Estonian community houses as institutional agent *but also* an instrument of cultural policy. A *case study* as an organizing principle is widely and variously used across a broad range of social science disciplines. As Stephen Ball (1996, 76) explains, 'case study' describes any form of single unit analysis. It is based upon depth – more specifically, it is holistic and exhaustive, and what Geertz, (1973) using Gilbert Ryle's concept of 'thick description', develops toward a theory of interpretive analysis of culture which is essential in order to understand context and situation. The method of the case study contains an eclectic variety of data which are collected and set against one another in the process of analysis and in the representation of 'the case' in writing. The design and conduct of case study research is responsive and creative: 'any case study is a construction itself, a product of the interaction between site and researcher', as Lincoln and Guba (1990, 59) have noted. The case study is a suitable method to reveal the intricate complexities of specific sites or processes and their origins, interrelations and dynamics, as Ball (1996, 76) points out. Therefore it is a valuable method in exploring community houses as socio-cultural and political phenomenon during the several political systems in Estonian history. The case study on Estonian community houses is presented in two articles in the dissertation: in the first chapter the historical preconditions and socio-political reasons for the emergence of society and community houses, are examined. Further, the roots and development of cultural policy of the Estonian nation state (1918-1940) is reflected.

Considering the data and empirical sources which have been used in this thesis, then *historical analysis* is a method which is particularly applicable to evidence contained in documents, although it can be applied to all ideas and artefacts. I have examined secondary sources – previous research in related disciplines, as well as primary sources and empirical data – archival documents, methodical guidelines (published from 1940 onwards), and also posters, figures and photos as illustrative documents for historical analysis in this dissertation.

The data used in the first and second chapters is mostly based on secondary sources on the socio-political, cultural and economic preconditions of the historical development of Estonian and European cultural policy. The data in the third chapter has been gathered from archival documents of the Folk Art

House (1940-1959), the People's Commissariat for Education of the ESSR (1940-1941), and archival documents of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education (1945-1953). The data was contained in reports, analyses and overviews by inspectors of cultural administrative institutions, written approval decisions by censors, and also guidelines and directives by the officials from the N. Krupskaya All-Union House of Folk Art in Moscow, the Estonian Ministry of Culture, and its subsidiary, the Central Methodical Cabinet for Cultural Education, later the Folk Art House of the Estonian SSR. I examined and analysed more than 100 archival documents, printed texts and brochures as primary sources: reports, official documents, decrees, regulations, printed orders, laws, methodical guidelines, thematic brochures and recommended repertoires and all kinds of different educational booklets provided by these institutions during the different eras from 1940 to 1973.<sup>11</sup> In both articles on community houses, I also explored visual material from the Estonian History Museum, collections of photos and posters in order to follow the impact of political change on the cultural practices in the community houses, visually.

In sum, the following thesis is an interdisciplinary analysis of the history of Estonian politics of culture and belongs to the field of *historical sociology*. Deep description and process analysis enables an understanding of the context of cultural policy and the Estonian-specific historical experience of the state practices in culture during different political systems. The focus on cultural policy gives additional analytical perspective on the past and present in the critical reflection of Estonian society. Further, the concepts and theories of contemporary cultural policy studies and social sciences, which have been used in this dissertation, underpin further participation in international academic discussions, and help reflect on Estonian historical experience in cultural policy comparatively with other European societies.

The structure of this publication will be as follows: the second part is devoted to the presentation of the theoretical framework. In order to understand what the specific features of the historical development of Estonian cultural policy from 1860 to 1991 are, I have used concepts and theories which help to explain the prerequisites and development of socio-economic and political changes, the emergence of nations and modern nation states as well as interactions between civil society and state bureaucracy which both are the outcome, as well as driving forces, of modernization. The second part also discusses theories of the public sphere, and other related theories of political and social science have been discussed.

Chapter three presents the analysis with which to propose answers to the stated research questions concerning the roots and historical development of Estonian cultural policy. Firstly, I present the background of the processes of how Estonian cultural identity formed as national identity (*kultuurirahvuslus*) and as the basis for political mobilization. Secondly, as national identity build-

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<sup>11</sup> While using these sources, which all are deeply imbued with Soviet ideology, I have been conscious of the critical approach and discussions among historians e.g. Tarvel 1999, Kuuli 2002, 2007, Veskimägi 1996, Kreegipuu 2011, Tannberg 2006, Annuk 2003.

ing appears to be one of the historical cornerstones, as well as one of the basic aims for the cultural policy of the Estonian state, the inherent connections between nation building and cultural emancipation will be examined. Thirdly, the analysis of the changed concept of cultural policy in the Soviet era will be presented. Fourthly, discussion will be provided on the politics of culture as a modern state practice. Interactions between civil society and state interference during different political eras of Estonian history will be analysed. In chapter four, the summaries of the chapters are presented. Lastly, in chapter five the conclusions from the summary are drawn.

After the bibliography, the original articles are included. Appendix 1 contains the timeline and statistics concerning community houses with a summarised outline of the general socio-economic changes and politics of culture in the Estonian experience of different modernities. Appendix 2 presents an organogram of top-down and institutionalized government of leisure time, amateur art, and folk-culture between 1945 and 1991 in Estonia. Lastly, appendix 3 provides some examples of amateur arts and other activities in community houses during the different eras.

## 2 CENTRAL CONCEPTS AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

In this chapter I will introduce the theoretical framework and key concepts which have been used in order to contextualise the empirical material studied in this dissertation.

First of all, the concepts of culture and cultural policy will be opened up for consideration. In order to create the historical sociological context of similarities and differences between Eastern and Western European modern state practices in culture, the transformation of the notion of culture in cultural policy and changes in the practices of cultural policy after the World War II Europe will be discussed.

In order to examine the historical formation of Estonian cultural policy (analysis in chapter 3), following complex phenomena as basic institutional dimensions of modernity and their mutual interrelation -: e.g. capitalist market, state and nation-state, civil society - have to be reviewed. Further, related theoretical concepts - e.g. nation, nation-building, national identity public sphere and public square, politics, public policy and propaganda - within the discussions on the administrative power, as the control of *the means of legitimate violence* in the nation-states, will be discussed. In order to contextualise the results of empirical research on Estonian historical experience and to compare the disparity of the administrative practices in cultural policy during different political systems, the concepts of authoritarianism, totalitarianism and sovietization, will be considered.

Finally, in order to explain above mentioned complex phenomena of the historical process and to bring related concepts to a common denominator, the theoretical framework of modernity will be reviewed. However, as interactions between modern institutional settings vary in the different political systems, a broad theoretical framework of multiple modernities will be discussed in this chapter.

## 2.1 Culture and Cultural Policy

In a general, anthropological sense, 'culture' is explained as a people's way of life, including their attitudes, values, beliefs, arts, knowledge, ways of perception and habits of thinking. The cultural traits of forms of life are learned, but often permeate so deeply that they are difficult to notice from within. (Blackburn 2002) This broad concept differs from an earlier, classical interpretation of culture which Peter Burke (2004, 102-117, 2012) has characterized as the reflection of an élite that was cultivated by educated people for educated people starting from Ancient Greek civilisation and continuing through Western civilisation in the twentieth century. 'This is canonised and 'opera-theatre like' and oriented at high culture, leaving aside or paying very little attention to other spheres of human activity. Such a cultural interpretation is not appropriate any more in a world which speaks of contemporary cultural democracy', suggests Burke (2004).

The changes in interpretations of the concept of culture in Western societies are connected to the critical reflection and research on social sciences, history, philosophy and politics. Michel Foucault's analysis on the historical development of disciplinary, administrative and juridical model of powers of modernity has played an especially important role in this change. Cohen and Arato (1999, 256-259)<sup>12</sup> point out that, just as Marx discovered power relations in the economic sphere, Foucault uncovers asymmetric relations of power in other key institutions of modern society: modern state apparatus, hospitals, schools, prisons, asylums, armies, family, and so on, which all within their 'disciplinary technologies and the juridical model of power' create, mediate and represent the 'rituals of truth' and thus, affect the social order and culture. Also, the development of cultural studies has given us an understanding of culture which means the 'demystification of culture and also the demystification of those social relations that produce both culture and academic understanding of culture', as Angela McRobbie (1993, 269) claims.

The social-scientific turn in British cultural studies has been exemplified in the transition in Williams' works from a predominantly literary and Marxist orientation (from the 1950s) towards a much broader analysis of capitalist society, as Jim McGuigan (2014, XVII) points out. He suggests that Williams's analysis of culture, is a *holistic*, that is, looking for 'the relation between elements in a whole way of life' (2014, 27), which is understood largely, though not entirely, as the way of life of a nation.

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<sup>12</sup> 'If Marx was the peerless nineteenth-century critic of modern civil society, surely Michel Foucault deserves to inherit that title for the twentieth.' [...] Foucault abandons Marxist discourse; 'the dialectic economic determinism, historical materialism, the base /superstructure model, the concern with ideology, the strategy of immanent critique, and the focus on class struggle are all absent from his work,' Cohen and Arato (1999, 256-257) explain. It is because, 'the Marxian focus on the economy yields an inadequate account of power relations—neither the forms, the strategies, nor the actual functioning of power can be located in the economy or placed in a subordinate position relative to it,' Foucault (1972, 89) argues. Cohen and Arato (1999, 257)

McGuigan's (1996) analysis of the links between culture, cultural research and cultural policy in 'post-modernist'<sup>13</sup> conditions' concludes that the term culture is proliferating to the point where the term becomes meaningless as everything is culture and we live in 'the culture society'. The liberal theorist of political philosophy Will Kymlicka (2009, 255) defines culture of the contemporary world as *societal culture*: a culture which provides its members with valuable ways of life across the full range of human activities, including social, educational, religious, economic and recreational life. According to Kymlicka, societal cultures are relevant to freedom. Freedom involves making choices from amongst various options, and societal culture not only provides these options, but also makes them valuable to the people belonging to this culture, which tends to be territorially concentrated and based on a shared language. The concept of *societal cultures* is closely connected with the modernization process and Kymlicka (2009, 255), referring to Gellner (1994 [1983]), argues that the modern nation state is the only agent with its institutions, standardized education, media, economy etc, which is able to create common socio-economic, political and public space which is meaningful for the whole population and can guarantee the sustainability of societal culture.

In Estonia, historically, culture has been conceptualized by means of the *notion of national culture* derived from Herder's *Volksgeist*. As the concept of culture has been ideologically captured by different political regimes in Estonia, the traditional interpretation of culture is criticised in post-modern theory as an imaginary identity, performing a mostly political function as a nationalist ideology. Recently, a vivid discussion on how to define the concept of Estonian culture has taken place in Estonian academic circles. Several scholars – philosophers and cultural researchers – have attempted to define Estonian culture from the position of constructivist criticism. For example, Hennoste (2003, 2000) discusses Estonian culture as a *self-colonizing project* within the societal modernization process; Veidemann (2011, 2013) writes about Estonian culture as a *set of core texts* (*kultuur kui tüvitekstide kogum*), and Krull (1996) describes Estonian culture figuratively as a certain *adaptive tissue of (mental) interruptions*, with these interruptions forming an endless cycle or a specific pattern with a jagged design, inherited from ancient Estonian craft. Viik (1997, 2009, 2012) argues that Estonian culture should be seen as a 'stage' for meaning-formation processes, rather than a particular result of such process.<sup>14</sup> In addition, further scholars, e.g. Aarelaid (1990), Annuk (2003), Pilv (2011) and Torop (2011), Piirimäe (1998, 2009), Väljataga (2011), Mikita (2013), and Tamm (2008, 2012) et al, have been

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<sup>13</sup> According to Williams' conceptualization of postmodernism as 'cultural logic of late capitalism', it has been explained 'not merely as a set of ideas but, instead, a framing of emotionality and practice that is dialectically related to transnational, high-tech capitalism, whereby the human subject is disoriented'. McGuigan (2014, XX)

<sup>14</sup> 'Estonian culture should not be seen as a set of (retroactively created) meanings that define a 'common life', a common worldview, a common model of self-description, or a common 'basic vocabulary', but as a horizontal structure that allows the formation of any type of meaning without giving its products any unifying characteristics.' Viik, T. (2012)

involved in the discussion searching for alternative views on how Estonian culture should be defined.

Defining the notion of culture, I rely on Williams (1958, 13) who describes culture as a signifying practice through which (among other means) a social order<sup>15</sup> is communicated, reproduced, experienced, and explored. Williams' (2014, 27-30 [1961]), alternative to the 'social order' or idealist notion of *Zeitgeist* (the spirit of the time) is a concept of 'structure of feelings', which is 'as firm and definite as "structure" suggests, yet it operates in the most delicate and less tangible parts of our activity' (2014, 27). This understanding is also quite close to a notion by Geertz (1973, 89) who defines 'the concept of culture as a historically-transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols: a system of inherited concepts expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life'.

In his article 'Structure of feeling and selective tradition', Williams (2014, 27-50 [1961]) also introduces the concept of 'selective tradition', which refers to how the canon of culture is constructed over time, with the selective inclusions and exclusions from cultures past and present. As such, the concept helps to link and critically reflect on concepts of culture, cultural research, cultural policy and wider societal context.

The roots of cultural policy as modern state practice lie in the emergence of Herderian romantic nationalism and post-Enlightenment nation-states, when culture interpreted as arts became linked to the administrative apparatus of state. Within these connections also lies another historical aim of the politics of culture: education, refinement and civilization (*nation building* and *Bildung*), which are imposed by inclusion and exclusion mechanisms of state support and financial aid to different cultural practices. In respect of different cultural practices, fields of aesthetics and forms of arts, decisions of exclusion or inclusion are determined by a specific historical outline of systemic values and selective tradition, the orientation of which is a specific to each country. Thus, the differences in the specific historical conditions and values are keys when considering the differences in the historical development of cultural policies as state policies. Behind that understanding of the roots and essence of cultural policy as modern state practice, the whole tradition of cultural policy research stands, which is represented by several scholars, e.g., Harding (2007), Kangas (1992, 1998, 2003, 2004), Mulcahy (1998), Lagerspetz (2003, 2004), Bennett (1998), McGuigan (1996, 2004), Williams (2014, [1961]), Isar (2009) et al.

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<sup>15</sup> In this dissertation social order is understood as a culturally-constituted overall structure, or shared identity of a society which is formed by shared narratives, shaped by those who participate in it. (Hall 1994, 200); Greenfeld 1993, 18-21). As the particular image of social order provided by a culture forms the constitutive element of any given society, then a change in the generalized identity (for example, from religious or estate to national) presupposes a transformation of the image of the social order, Greenfeld (ibid.) claims. This understanding also correlates with Foucault's concept of power which connects the social order of a society as well and the historical set of people's differing cultural practices. Foucault (1991, 194) states that with the help of discipline - through supervision, control, distinguishing, hierarchisation, homogenisation, elimination, in short through standardisation - an individual is created and that understanding links social order and state cultural policy.



Cultural policy research is interdisciplinary research on society, comprising cultural history, sociology and cultural theory, ethnology, political science, economy and public administration, just to mention some of its different angles. As a research discipline, cultural policy emerged within the discursive changes of social and cultural studies which covered an expanded concept of culture as well as socio-political and -economic developments in Western societies. Sociologists and cultural researchers in Europe started to discuss and reflect on the cultural policies of their states and analyze cultural policy from an historical perspective, assessing the influence of different instruments and implementations of cultural policy in society. The historical assessment of cultural policy – has been the largest area of research of cultural policy. For example, in the Nordic countries remarkable historical research, in Sweden, by Harding (2007), by Larsson (2003), in Denmark by Duelund (2003, 2004), in Norway by Bakke (2003), Mangset (2005), in Finland, research by Heiskanen (1994), Ahponen (1994), Alasuutari (1997), Kangas (1992, 1998, 2003) and Sokka (2012) – could be mentioned.

In addition, international comparisons<sup>16</sup> on typologies or statistics of state cultural policies by Bakke (1990), by Duelund (2003), Mulcahy (1998), Wiesand (2002), or Schuster (2002), could be mentioned as examples of this kind of cultural policy research. Wiesand (2002, 369-378)<sup>17</sup> notes that similar histories experienced in European countries and nearby should make cultural policy researchers question the desirability of strategies which try to put cultural processes, and particularly the arts, on national political agendas ‘in every possible way’. Wiesand (2002, 370) suggests that cultural policy researchers ‘should try to offer alternatives to the dictates of day to day politics, bureaucracies, and corporate ‘global players’.

Pirkkoliisa Ahponen (2004, 223-248) has discussed the dilemma of cultivation in cultural politics and also, she, as well as Tony Bennett (1998), Jim McGuigan (2004) et al, have discussed the position of cultural policy research as discipline with critical viewpoint on pragmatics of cultural politics, explaining also the economic connections between liberal state and cultural policy. Kangas (2004, 22-39) has analyzed conceptual changes in the twentieth century tradition of cultural policy studies, and concludes that linguistic turn in humanities (Barthes 1993), social transition to postmodern; impact of new technologies of

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<sup>16</sup> The earliest records of comparative cultural policy research date back to 1970s, when governments began looking beyond their borders for answers to policy problems at home and the first intergovernmental conferences on the general aims and administrative or financial aspects of cultural policy in Europe took place in Venice (1970) and Helsinki (1972). Europe then started to develop into a more level playing field, where political actors became increasingly curious about what their neighbours were up to and how they fared in comparison with them. Wiesand (2002, 370)

<sup>17</sup> Wiesand (2002, 369-378) points out that cultural policy research concerning the economic or legal condition for cultural production in particular have both undergone decisive changes in the past 25–30 years. See also Schuster, M. J. (2002) ‘Informing Cultural Policy: Data, Statistics, and Meaning’. In: *Statistics in the Wake of Challenges Posed by Cultural Diversity in a Globalization Context. International Symposium on Cultural Statistics UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Montreal, Canada. 2002*

communication (Castells 2000) and commodification of culture (Bauman 1990), are the most influential concepts the cultural policy research deals with.

In Estonia, cultural policy research started to develop from the reestablishment of the independent nation-state in 1991, as the critical reflection on culture and state policies was not tolerated during the Soviet rule. I have relied on the previous research by Mikko Lagerspetz and Rein Raud (1995) who drafted the National report of Estonian cultural policy for Council of Europe in 1995 and several articles by Lagerspetz (1996, 2003), who also, as well as Rikmann (2003) and Ruutsoo (2002), have examined Estonian civil society during the past 24 years of regained independence. Also, I have used the works by Aili Aarelaid-Tart (1996, 2006, 1999, 2012), who has documented the influence of the occupation period on the different generations of the Estonian population through the prism of cultural trauma and biographies and has also given a historical overview of cultural, social movements and the development of Estonian societies and civil society. Starting with the research about Estonian 19<sup>th</sup> century social movements by Hans Kruus (1939), I have found illuminating the monograph and books about social development of Estonians by Ea Jansen (2004, 2007), Mart Laar (2006) and Toomas Karjahärm and Vello Sirk (1997, 2001), as well as the work of ethnologist Ellen Karu (1985, 1989, 1990, 1993) as the specialist on society (later community) houses and also, those by Jüri Uljas (2005, 1990) who has written about the history of the Cultural Endowment and community houses. I have used the works on Soviet arts' policy -: examined by Jaak Kangilaski (1999), Sirje Helme (2013) and Mari Nõmmela (2013), and on cultural policy by Olaf Kuuli (2002, 2007), Toomas Karjahärm and Marju Luts (2005), also issues related to the use of Soviet propaganda and censorship in the Estonian press researched by Kalju-Olev Veskimägi (1906), Tiiu Kreegipuu (2009, 2011), Epp Lauk (1999), Marek Miil (2014), et al. Also, I have relied on the previous research by several Estonian historians, e.g. Enn Tarvel (1999); Toivo-Ylo Raun (2001, 2003, 2009); Laura Vaan (2005), Indrek Paavle (2009), Anu Raudsepp (2009), Tõnu Tannberg (2007), Olaf Mertelsmann (2012), et al.

## 2.2 Concept of Cultural Policy as Public Policy

The concept of public policy is rooted in the modernizing political-administrative culture and institutions of the 'Western' *Rechtsstaat*,<sup>18</sup> but further, it appeals to both: a general quest for control (Van Gunsteren, 1976) and a psychological desire for a rational order of things'. Thus, the cultural policy as public policy for the arts was seen as a tool to handle the 'anarchy' of unregulated developments in culture, and politics was the major stimulus to 'enlightened' state intervention, as McGuigan (2004, 35) notes. He explains this with

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<sup>18</sup> 'The opposite of the *Rechtsstaat* is the *Polizeistaat* or *Machtstaat*, where the arbitrary will of the persons in power prevails and the rulers do not have to observe legal norms'. Van Caenegem, R. C., (2003, 16-18).

'the idea that the modern nation-state should command the whole of society, regulate the economy and cultivate appropriate selves'. (ibid.) This desire was the characteristic and prevailing idea in all European countries with the process of Western (and also Eastern, Soviet) modernization.

The concept of public policy has two general notions: first, that governmental actions (or inaction) constitute value choices, that these choices are policies, and that the policies are politically determined; second, that the decisions of *public administration* (governmental apparatus, legislation, funding, bureaucracy) are implemented by the production of goods and services that produce discernable societal outcomes, or rather that those activities have influence on the lives of citizens. However, cultural policy as public policy differs substantially from other public policies, as Mulcahy (2006, 320) and Bennet (2004) have pointed out, and its' outcome as well as societal impact is difficult to assess. Jeremy Ahearne (2009) has developed a distinction between *explicit* (or nominal) cultural and *implicit* (or effective) cultural policies. Explicit, or nominal cultural policy can be seen as what government proclaims to do for culture, defined functionally (as the arts) or in a constituent sense (as traditions, values and ways of living together), through its official cultural administration. On the other hand, implicit cultural policy indicates policies that are not labelled manifestly as 'cultural', but that function to prescribe or shape cultural attitudes and habits over given territories. Implicit or effective cultural is any political strategy that looks to work on the culture of the territory over which it precedes (or on that of its adversary). (Ahearne 2009, 141, 143)<sup>19</sup>

Thus, the influence of cultural policy is wide-ranging and Foucault's (1991 [1978]) concept of discipline and governmentality helps to explain the implicit and explicit interaction of cultural policy as public policy, and social order in society, as well as the historical set of people's differing cultural practices.

Foucault's concept of governmentality refers in a very general way to the administrative powers of modernity – concentrating on the disciplinary-regulatory apparatus of the state, but also on the economy and civil society – 'each of which has its power relations, disciplinary technologies, and modes of functioning', as McGuigan (2004, 132-133), Cohen and Arato (1999, 284-287), et al have discussed (see chapter 2.6). Analyzing the various disciplinary institutions, like the police, clinics and prisons, Foucault shows that administrative control enables a modern state to become a coordinating centre of the disciplinary power which intervenes in a societal domain, structures the social regulation and thus, affects the social order.

However, according to Foucault, power based on *social order* is a much broader term than power stemming from the disciplinary technologies, including explicit cultural policy of a modern state, this first and foremost because 'culture' is restricted to practices that *social order* has provided with different meanings. Foucault (1991, 194) handles power as a mechanism, a network,

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<sup>19</sup> Theoretical links of explicit and implicit cultural policy provide a new focus for critical reflection. However, in the articles of the dissertation, Ahearne's concept has been not used systematically as a method.

which interacts not only from top to bottom but also vice versa. Although the pyramidal structure of power has its clearly defined 'head', the institutional apparatus as a whole produces power. This enables the disciplinary power to be both direct and indirect: direct, as it is everywhere at the same time; indirect because this power interacts constantly and mostly silently and inconspicuously. According to Foucault's power theory, in order to be able to dominate, power has to create reality through 'the rituals of truth'. In this process, the individual obeys power not because of threats but because of discipline. Foucault (ibid., 2005, [1971]) states that with the help of discipline – through supervision, control, distinguishing, hierarchisation, homogenisation, elimination, in short through standardisation – an individual is created. Thus, Foucault's ideas indicate national cultural policy as one of the central instruments of power of the ruling ideology as well as a powerful instrument of cultural identity building in society.

McGuigan (2004, 132-133) notes critically that Foucault's perspective provides no account of the balance between nation-states and economic forces beyond their control, and it is trapped within a nation-state framework. Cohen and Arato (1999, 258) explain, that 'Foucault does not use the term "civil society," but he does presuppose the differentiation between state and society that, according to Marx was the hallmark of modernity.' They (ibid.) point out that, according to Foucault, 'the locus of modern power relations is society, independent of and distinct from the sovereign state, and Foucault looks behind the juridical relations of liberal democratic regimes, revealing the omnipresent juridical model of power that dominates our thinking. However, Cohen and Arato (1999, 284-286, 297) in their critical analysis suggest, that Foucault sees state and society only from the point of view of strategic power relations and that this approach lacks the normative and empowering dimensions of law and rights in these relations, because he rejects it.

Nevertheless, Foucault's idea aids in understanding the concealed relations and disciplinary power mechanisms between state cultural policy as public policy, the notion of culture as well as the interaction of cultural policy and social order. The cultural life, controlled by the state with its institutions, supports and reproduces certain social order in society, providing a different meaning and status to the cultural practices, and thus the hierarchies on which the cultural field is shaped. Using the terms offered by Williams, it could be said that the cultural policy of the state acts strongly on the selective tradition in shaping the cultural canon and structural feeling of the society.

### 2.2.1 Changing Concept of Culture in the Context of Cultural Policy

In general, the cultural policy of the twentieth century was defined by a *narrow interpretation of culture*: states began to interfere in cultural life, supporting 'arts' and 'culture' for different purposes such as national, propaganda and redistributive purposes, and for generally regulating the production and circulation of symbolic cultural forms, as McGuigan (2004, 125) points out.

After the Second World War, nationalist ideologies in the 'Western' world started to lose popularity and legitimacy and cultural rights became important keywords in Western nation-states. These tendencies were connected to the egalitarian ideas of the Marshall Plan for Europe, which were to cover the distresses of ill health, unemployment and old age, in order to eliminate poverty and include everyone in an egalitarian contract and specifically to reduce class inequality, as McGuigan (2004, 33) describes. In that agenda, with the 'aim to diminish gender discrimination, racial discrimination, not only in terms of social policy but also of cultural policy, for instance concerning access to the arts, multiculturalism and recognition of differences became central. The new emphasis of cultural policy derived from these ideas was based on the *concept of democratization of culture*, giving people access to a pre-determined set of cultural goods and services and has been characterised as 'top-down approach' or 'center-periphery policy-making' by Isar (2009). The concept of cultural policy called *cultural democratization* was mainly aimed to cultivate the masses and bring high culture (usually understood as Fine Arts) physically closer to them in order to make them more 'civilised', 'aesthetically enlightened' and '(culturally) cultivated', as has been pointed out by several cultural policy researchers (Isar [2009], Kangas [2004], Ahponen [2004], Bakke [1990], Mulcahy [2006] et al). High culture is usually delivered via institutions.

The following development of a new cultural policy (from the 1980s onwards) derived from academic discussions spreading critical theory, building up connections between practice and theory, and so strengthening the political consciousness of Western welfare societies; but also because of the changing political discourse in Europe and the world, which brought liberalist ideas into economy and culture. Thus the shift towards the expanded notion of culture as it was expressed in *the concept of the cultural democracy* in the Western cultural policies took place. Ideas were spread that policies should not be formulated in relation to extraneous aesthetic standards, but rather in relation to the cultural needs of the population in their everyday lives: arts according to the people's own conception, as Kangas (2004, 24) notes. Mulcahy (2006, 324) has elucidated this shift involved in the change in the interpretation of the notion of 'cultural activities' by broadening the meaning from the Fine Arts to popular entertainment, folk culture, amateur sports, choral societies etc. He has described the shift as the 'movement from the top-down to a bottom-up policy; that is the government's responsibility is to provide equal opportunities for citizens to be culturally active on their own terms'. (ibid.)

For Estonia, twentieth century developments in the concept of culture in the context of cultural policy were quite similar to northern European nation states on the first period of Estonian Republic (1918-40). However, since the Soviet occupation (1940-1990) the developments have differed compared to 'Western' countries. Historically, the Estonian state-building process has been inherently connected to the cultural emancipation and formation of national cultural identity, which has been the basis for political mobilisation. As cultural identity has been the backbone of Estonian statehood (1918-40), the main emphasis of

the state cultural policy has been to support and develop the concept of national culture. However, during the Republic of in Estonia (1918-40), the official concept of culture, involved within the *professional arts* also *folk art* (amateur cultural practices) and further the national cultures of minorities.<sup>20</sup> The emphasis on folk culture was supported by the general economic development strategy of the state, which was based on agriculture and state support for the regions in 1930s. From 1934, during the era of authoritarian ideology, the official canon of a nationalist/popular state cultural policy was developed by the official propaganda office and implemented in Estonia (Kulbok-Lattik 2008).

Paradoxically, the emphasis on supporting a canonized national culture (in the notion of high art and folk art) of state cultural policy, was also relevant during the Soviet occupation (1940-91) when the focus on high art and national folk art was mixed with tendencies towards Russification and socialist ideology, which was mandatory content of the cultural policy of the totalitarian regime. This dialectical mix of the different concepts of culture was expressed by the slogan 'Soviet Culture is Nationalist in Form and Socialist in Content.' Access and participation in culture was guaranteed to the broad groups within the population. Therefore, one theoretical possibility to conceptualize the Soviet cultural policy (at least during the post-Stalinist era), is, using the concept of *democratization of culture* within 'Western' discourse of the politics of culture. Wide access to culture was guaranteed not only because culture was used as propaganda tool, aiming to create a homogeneous Soviet mass culture and enlightened and cultivated Soviet person in the socialist society, but also because the authorities aimed a yet more advanced social condition in terms of the state looking after the need of all citizens, and was thus part of *Soviet cultural welfare*.

However, one might say that during the time when Western democracies were building up welfare states and when the shift from *cultural democratization* towards *cultural democracy* was driven by critical reflections of social scientists and by the public discussions of intellectuals, in Estonia (and other Baltic countries), within in the frame of Soviet welfare, neither open discussions and critical reflection on the notion of culture nor on cultural policy, were tolerated by regime. Since the reestablishment of independence in 1991, public discussions about the notion of culture in the context of cultural policy, as well as decentralisation of cultural processes and the introduction of new legislation, became part of new cultural policy in Estonia.

The twenty-first century concept of culture, within the context of cultural policy emphases in 'Western' EU states, has been strongly influenced by global and European networks shaping and harmonizing the conceptual understanding of culture. According to the final reports of the expert group of the Council of Europe, under the name of 'In From the Margins' (1997), and the final report called 'Our Creative Diversity' (1995) launched by and Unesco and United Nations, 'culture includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs'. The authors of 'In From the Margins' agree with this definition, but as Kangas

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<sup>20</sup> The Law on Cultural Autonomy for minority nations was adopted in 1925.

points out (2004, 40), they give culture a political aspect: 'Culture is not simply the expression of ideas about the world, but also the will to maintain or change it - or even dominate it'. This political notion of culture makes cultural policy a truly central phenomenon of the modern era.

### 2.2.2 Changing Practices of Cultural Policy after the World War II Europe

Discussing the changing scope and practices of cultural policy after the World War II Europe, I found helpful the holistic approach of Jim McGuigan (2004), who distinguishes three general discourses of cultural policy: *state, market and civil/communicative*. These 'sovereignly functioning and separate 'the real worlds' of culture, with agents and subjects, producers, consumers, citizens and mediators within the discursive space of the cultural field, have shaped the scope and practices of cultural policy in modern era' as McGuigan (2004, 35) explains.

The Modern era, as it took shape in Europe, was premised not merely on a 'package of technological and organizational developments', but rather, it was 'the constitution of a set of institutional projects of specific nature,' as Wittrock (2000, 39-45) explains. Three separate worlds or modes of societal organization, *civil society, the capitalist market and the nation-state*, are the '*incarnations of modernity*', as scholars e.g. Berglund, et al (2004, 14) have noted. These phenomena interact and influence each other, being not just new institutional settings, but also acting 'as vehicles for the enhancement of a continuous process of innovation in modernizing societies', as Wittrock (2000, 39-45) explains, e.g. the affect on the changing scope and practices of cultural policy in twentieth century Europe (see chapter 2.6).

Firstly, the *changing role of the state (stating)* in cultural policy could be identified after World War II in Europe when states started to operate discursively, and nationalist ideologies started to lose popularity and legitimacy being practically forgotten in the bipolar world of the Cold War (1945-1989). In Marshall's [1947] classic social-democratic agenda, the aim was that the economic rights of trade and the political rights of democracy had to be supplemented by the material entitlements of social security. Thus, cultural rights became important key-words in different policies of the Western nation-states, as pointed out by MacGuigan (2004, 35) and Heiskanen (1995, 29). Equal cultural rights meant wide access to culture and education, this kind of cultural policy was theorized with the concept of *cultural democratisation* with the aim to cultivate the masses and to bringing high culture physically closer to people. It was implemented through state-funded cultural institutions. Thus, general social-democratic political discourse also meant a relatively strong state interference in cultural politics in Western Europe. It appears that the enlightening intentions to cultivate masses by giving people access to the pre-determined set of cultural goods and services, usually understood as high culture or *Fine Arts*, did not differ so much from each in East and West regardless of how their state practices differed.

Thus, it is interesting to note that similar ideas of social security and *stat-ing* or *institutionalization of culture* prevailed in state practices on the both sides of a polarized Europe – West and East, state practices differed – and institutionalization took place in a much more radical form in the Soviet Union, where all public cultural organizations were state owned and operated in the framework of Soviet welfare as well as with its tools for ideological control of the totalitarian state. An important difference to mention here was the nationalist discourse with its’ dialectics and ambivalent aspect in Soviet cultural policy and cultural welfare: within a broader access to culture, this created the specific conditions for a homogeneous identity and promoted national resistance which became the precipitating power behind the Singing Revolution in Estonia (and other Baltic states). (Kulbok-Lattik 2014)

Müllerson (2010) describes different social-democratic policies and ‘building up Western welfare states [...] to be cornerstones of anti-communist or anti-totalitarian measures in post-World War II Europe, when cold-war-time industrial world was ideologically and politically polarised and socialism along with communism of eastern bloc yet offered considerable alternative to the capitalistic economies’. He continues:

The welfare state and the development of economic and social rights was a response of western European capitalism to the specter of communism haunting Europe, while fate of Russia was sealed by the communist response, claims Müllerson (2010), pointing out John Maynard Keynes, who ‘wanted to save capitalism from itself’ and Anthony Giddens, who wrote that ‘The British welfare state, was created partly to dispel/avoid the socialist menace’. (ibid.)

However, the Western welfare state as known in Europe, and aimed to be an alternative to the communist regimes or to the state-socialist paternalistic version of welfare, did not manage to become a proper answer to these modern challenges, and in many cases the welfare state had turned into what is sometimes called a ‘*nanny state*’ in need of substantial reforms, as Lagerspetz (2010) claims. Neither was sustainable Soviet welfare state. Left-wing politics in West started to fall back from its previous position simultaneously with the fall of socialism, until socialistic eastern-bloc of bi-polar world was ruined in 1980-90s, as Lagerspetz (2010) has pointed out. Thus, the collapse of communism happened when the West was in one of its libertarian phases and state interference in cultural policies started to change in all over the Europe in accordance the spreading ideas of liberal market-economy.

Ilkka Heiskanen (1995, 29) explains changes (*construction and deconstruction*) in the modern state’s cultural policies as resulting from these radical changes in Europe at the end of the 1980s: while in the Eastern block after the collapse of Soviet Union the discussion has mostly centred around the topics of nationalism and nation states, debates related to the cultural policy of Western Europe echoed ethnic and racial tensions that stemmed from the massive influx of workers. Also, Heiskanen (1995, 29) points out that the rapid development of new information technologies and the accompanying massive proliferation of a



universal audio-visual Anglo-American mass-culture and music industry made European countries ask questions about the future of national culture.

However, 'the *nation-state* stubbornly persists, as a major constitutive power of politics, economy and culture in the late-modern world', as McGuigan, (2004, 34) notes. Even under conditions of accelerated globalization, it is still the key focus for the defence and extension of social citizenship. To summarize, ever since the achievement of establishing the welfare society, cultural policies of modern European states 'have tried to overcome the social, class and geographical barriers typical of an industrial society', as noted by Heiskanen (1995). Also, in these attempts could be seen modernist 'civilizing' (*Bildung*) and nation-building aims of nation-states, which both require the standardisation and homogenisation of societies.

The main change of the paradigm of the post-modern era was connected to the rise of market reasoning in the public sector during recent times and the appearance of liberal marketising discourse as the 'voice of an accountant' engaged in cultural policy. Discussing 'the colonization of the public sector by market reasoning', McGuigan (2004, 44) gives illustrative examples of the new discourse<sup>21</sup> for the justification of public expenditure on the arts, given as making money, and brings out three ideal subjects of such discourse: 'the taxpayer', 'the shareholder', and 'the customer'<sup>22</sup> and 'new arguments for cultural policy speaking about the public subsidies in culture as an investment'.

It is also important to note that a new rhetoric of liberal market economy was spread hand-in-hand with the critical discourse of *cultural democracy*, which aimed to expand the notion of culture outside of the frames of 'high culture' and arts of the state cultural institutions, thus also revitalizing civil society. *Cultural democracy* as a policy goal achieved its peak in different Western countries in the 1980s. As mentioned before, the concept was based on decentralised decision-making and control which emphasises a bottom-up view and thus cultural initiatives that originate from the grass-roots level. The role of the state would be then to facilitate and not intervene directly and high culture not taken to the masses through domination or cultural hegemony; rather, all (mostly local level) cultural activities are recognised as part of the wider cultural field, as Isar (2009) explains. Moreover, governments would have a responsibility to provide equal opportunities for citizens to be culturally active on their own terms. State cultural policies attempted to find the balance between decentralised and centralised decision-making and regulations as well as traditional cultural initiatives

<sup>21</sup> McGuigan (2004, 43-44) analysed the speeches of some right-wing British politicians and outlines the new rhetoric, which gradually changed from the dispute over the *cultural value* to increasingly powerful language of money and efficiency whereby all value would be reduced to exchange value, the discourse of the market in cultural policy, as everything else. To be noted is former chair of the English Arts Council, William Rees-Mogg's, speech on the economic utility of 'investing' in the arts, delivered in his 1985 lecture, 'The Political Economy of Art' at IBM's British headquarters on London's South Bank.

<sup>22</sup> The taxpayer does not want their money wasted by government. The shareholder wants a return on investment. The customer wants choice and to be served well. His or Her Majesty the Customer, the mythical sovereign consumer, must be obeyed in market discourse, McGuigan (2004, 44) notes.

on the local level, as several scholars e.g. Duelund (2003, 509-511), Mulcahy (2006), Kangas (2004), Ahponen (2004) have pointed out.

Another linguistic, ideological and economic aspect, which was rapidly spread within the flow of liberal ideas of economy, was the *managerialisation* of public sector<sup>23</sup>, arts and media. McGuigan (2004, 31-34) explains that the rhetoric of the managerial principles more generally derived from the structural transformations that were brought by the transition to a post-industrial society: 'Under tight budgetary constraints and faced with radically changed economic circumstances, governments have had to become much more 'enterprising than they were during bureaucratic-industrial era' as McGuigan (2004, 46-47) puts it.

Thus, as it was in the context of nineteenth century European modernization, liberal ideas in political economy influenced ideas in culture (or vice-versa). The conceptual changes of notion of culture and state practices in culture in twentieth century Europe were the basis for the revived civil society and also for the emergence of cultural management (as well as cultural management studies as a new phenomenon). In the condition of lacking state subsidies for each artistic initiative, the need to develop cultural projects became essential. Various non-governmental artistic performances and cultural initiatives (modern dance, performances, black-box theatres, network-based and cross-border non-profit cultural phenomena, etc) appeared in Western Europe.<sup>24</sup> The slogan 'adapt or die' was spread in the cultural field, and cultural management and cultural managers started to play a central role in new forms of arts and culture.

The overall spread of liberalism brought massively new forms of artistic initiatives and cultural activities also into the cultural field alongside the state cultural organisations in *Eastern Europe* after the collapse of the Soviet Union (1991). Europe became united again: an intensive exchange of ideas, contacts between East and West, and free cooperation across borders was possible at all different levels, within the general liberalization of politics and economy. For example, project theatres, modern dance and circus groups, artist and performance associations, international networks (IETM<sup>25</sup>, ENCATC<sup>26</sup> etc) appeared to act as non-profit organizations in the cultural field, becoming very clear evidence of a revived civil society.

However, despite the new art phenomena and liberalisation trends in cultural policy during the transitional decade (c. 1991-2004), it could not present a reliable alternative to the institutionalised model of the previous era. It was a common feature of the cultural policies in the Baltic and other Eastern European states that the institutional structure of theatres, libraries, and museums remained more or less intact. Partly, it was because of the weak cultural market

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<sup>23</sup> McGuigan (2004, 46) refers to 'the new public management', described by Gamble (1994a [1988]135) as 'set of ideas for managing all institutions in the public sector and involving devices such as internal markets, contracting out, tendering and financial incentives'.

<sup>24</sup> The first of these appeared already in the 1960s as projects of alternative arts; here I am not thinking of showbusiness or the developing music industry.

<sup>25</sup> Informal European Theatre Meeting

<sup>26</sup> European Network of Cultural Administration Training Centres

with underdeveloped support schemes and a weak third sector, but also because of the institutions' historical function: originating from nineteenth century *nation building*, they also played an ambivalent role during the hidden resistance against the Soviet regime. (Kulbok-Lattik and Čopič (2015) As cultural policy in Estonia (and more generally in the Baltic states) has been strongly connected to the politics of the identity, the deeper involvement by the state has been accepted by policymakers and the people even while surrounded by strong liberalisation tendencies, as has been claimed by Lagerspetz (1998, 55-59), who also pointed out the paradox becoming clearly evident, as a democratic and independent social system supported national identity less than covert resistance to a repressive regime.<sup>27</sup>

Nevertheless, liberalization in economy and politics again brought about the vital rebirth of *civil society* and liberalization of culture in all over the Europe. But at the same time, the spread of liberal capitalist ideas and an expanded concept of culture fostered an instrumental use of culture in the policies of states. Kangas (2004, 31-34) explains the new pursuits and practices of cultural policy with the concept of *commodification of culture*, as relation-based while its contents differ in various contexts. The term 'cultural' – narrowly art with new art forms and heritage – denotes the promoter of economic or social development, and saviour of values in the cities and regions. Culture plays a role in the vitality of regions, as creative people and innovative ideas attract resources and empower the economy, which is why cultural policy has been linked also to the concepts of sustainable development and the cultural industry, creative economy, creative tourism etc, as Kangas (2004, 31-34) points out.

It appears that the liberalization of the economic thought has been accompanied by the liberalization of cultural practices, civil society and the public sphere – until the market-oriented world view has begun to draw the lines itself – conquering and muting critical thoughts and phenomena. The problem has been well described by Habermas (2001, 220)<sup>28</sup> who pointed out the problematic

<sup>27</sup> Transitional changes in cultural policies of Eastern European countries have been traced by several scholars, e.g.: Mikko Lagerspetz, (1998). Estonian identity entering the post-modern world: The role of national culture. In: *Management of Change: Cultural Aspects of European Enlargement and the Enlargement of the EU*. Graz: KulturKontakt, pp., 55-59; by Baiba Tjarve (2013). *Institutional Transformations in Latvian Culture in the Post-Communist Transition, 1991-2010*, PhD thesis, Latvian Academy of Culture, Riga; by Alina Allaste (Ed) (2013). *Back in the West. Changing Lifestyles in Transforming Societies*, Peter Lang Edition, Frankfurt am Main; by Janis Daugavietis (2015), *Amateur Arts in Latvia: Community Development and Cultural Policy*, PhD thesis, University of Latvia, Riga. Also in forthcoming article by Egge Kulbok-Lattik and Vesna Čopič (2015), "Cultural Policies in the Baltic States and Slovenia between 1991-2009" in: *Contemporary Art Worlds and the Challenge of Markets. How Have Art Worlds Reacted to the Market-Based Turn in Society?* 2015, (Eds) Erkki Sevänen and Simo Häyrynen, University of Joensuu, Finland. Changes have been constantly traced in Compendium CoE-ERICarts <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/index.php>

<sup>28</sup> Habermas (2001) ends the discussion with hope, and McGuigan (2004, 53) agrees with him, in they see the perspective on contemporary culture and politics, the public sphere, in one form or another, remaining as an current theme, albeit distorted in many respects by increasingly manipulative communications, heavily commercialized media entertainment and news, advertising and public relations - and may still

impacts on the public sphere, civil society or to life worlds by the powers of the nation-state or the capitalist market of contemporary societies. Habermas (2001, 221) stresses the paradoxical aspect – that the civilizing force of rational-critical debate what the *public sphere* concerns – has contributed historically to a liberalization of the economy, that may eventually threaten *civil society* itself [...] as it was ‘the market’ which became the main attacker of the ‘life world of civil society’, as Habermas, (2001, 221) claims.

However, Habermas (2001, 223) still finds that *the public sphere*, despite it having been commercialized and selling us advertisements, politics, ideologies and politicians, is still the only mechanism which makes it possible to see the hidden or implicit effect of state policies or market strategies. Therefore, critical forum is crucial for the development of critical thought.

To sum up, the changing practices in European cultural policies have been determined by the shift of prevailing political discourse which has affected the discourses of state and market, in effect treating culture instrumentally, to make it, for example a means of simply embellishing the nation-state. Instrumentalization of culture is relevant in discussion in cultural policy research as it also indicates why many scholars interested specifically in ‘culture’ prefer not to talk of cultural policy, as McGuigan (2004, 53) notes, pointing as an example to the statement from Williams (1984): ‘To talk about *cultural policy* is to run the risk of potentially instrumentalizing culture, of reducing it to something other than what it is.’

However, this could be considered to be one of the basic aims of cultural policy research: to talk about cultural policy in order to develop critical thought and to contribute within the critical forum. Scholars involved in cultural policy research reveal aspects of the instrumentalized use of culture as they increasingly discuss the history of class interests, institutional struggles and power relations as well as the circulation of symbolic meaning in society. But also, research on cultural policy conceptualised in a more limited manner, dealing with tools for the administration of arts as one of the public policies, reveals ambivalent relations between *civil society, market and state*, as each of them have consequences for politics and policies in contemporary societies. In this dissertation on the history of Estonian cultural policy, the concepts of civil society, politics and state, are the focal points, so these key-concepts of modern societies need to be opened up.

### 2.3 Man as a Social and Political Animal

Firstly, I want to explain the use of the word ‘*political*’ in the context of this dissertation. It is based on Hannah Arendt’s depiction of the word, in her work *The*

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function as a normative guide to and refreshment of democracy in the future. Habermas, J., *Avalikkuse struktuurimuutus [The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere]*, (2001).

*Human Condition* (1958). *Political* in the Arendtian sense enables us to characterize the cultural and national emancipation of Estonians as an aspiration towards political self-assertion as universal human aspirations in a deeply philosophical level. As in the sense noted by Arendt (1958, 12) on being *political*, it is the right of every free person and citizen to have a say in matters regarding the social organization of their lives. Being political is the basis for the human being in constituting oneself and identity. Arendt explains this special relationship between *action* and *being together* of Aristotle's *zoon politikon* through *animal socialis*, (already found in Seneca) which then became the standard translation via Thomas Aquinas: '*homo est naturaliter politicus, id est, socialis*', 'man is by nature political, that is social'<sup>29</sup>.

Secondly, I want to point out the social and political role of community houses as public space for the Estonian population using the concepts of Arendt, who describes the roots of terms *political* and *social* starting from the beginning of Western civilization and tradition of political thought from the Greek *polis*. Arendt discusses the concept of *polis* and its original, pre-philosophic Greek foundation, meaning and functions as space for '*sharing of words and deeds*' (Aristotle) which makes it worthwhile for men to live together, constitute themselves and create immortality in remembrance. Arendt (1958, 198-199) explains that *polis* is not the city-state in its physical location; it is the organization of the people as it arises out of acting and speaking together, and its true *space* lies between people living together for this purpose, no matter where they happen to be. However, the organization of the polis has to be physically secured by its laws. Arendt (1958, 199) referring to Nicomachean ethics, describes it as the

*space of appearance* in the widest sense of the word, namely, the space where I appear to others as others appear to me, where men exist not merely like other living inanimate things but make their appearance explicitly. Nor man, moreover, can live in it all the time. To be deprived of it means to be deprived of reality, which, humanly and politically speaking is the same as appearance. To men the reality of the world is guaranteed by the presence of others, by its appearing to all; '*for what appears to all, this we call BEING*'. This space does not exist, and although all men are capable of deed and word, most of them – like the slave, the foreigner, and the barbarian in antiquity, like the laborer or craftsman or craftsman prior to the modern age, the jobholder or businessman in our world – do not live in it.

For Arendt, Ancient Greek life was divided into two realms: first, the public realm, in which political activity was performed, and, second, the private realm, site of property and family life. To Arendt the political realm rises directly out of acting together, the '*sharing of words and deeds*'. Thus, 'action not only has the most intimate relationship to the public part of the world common to us all, but is the one activity which constitutes it', explains Arendt (1958):

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<sup>29</sup> The word 'social' is Roman in origin and has no equivalent in the Greek language or thought. Yet the Latin usage of the word *societas* also originally had a clear, though limited, political meaning: it indicated an alliance between people for a specific purpose (business or other) as when men organize in order to rule others or to commit a crime. Arendt 1958, 198-199.

It was in the public realm alone where, as first expressed by Aristotle, true freedom could be gained through 'great words and great deeds' as personal glory could be attained in the battlefield. Through powerful words and deeds, man could leave his mark on the world and as this world was thought to be immortal, the man who would leave his mark in it would also pertain in its immortality.<sup>30</sup>

The private realm, on the contrary, is the realm for necessity. It is located in the 'shadowy interior of the household' (ibid.) which consisted of women, children and slaves. All the activities concerning the sustenance of human lives are operated here, (in the household management or private realm for necessity) including production, reproduction, economy, etc. Slaves, in this respect, were people whose lives were entirely ruled by necessity, and therefore, slaves being people without private property in the Arendtian sense, can not create the *public and political realm*.

In the context of this work, I found the collective action by popular Estonian people, who decided to build community houses despite obstruction and hindrance by Tsarist Russian and Baltic-German authorities, deeply political in the Arendtian sense. By building *houses* for cultural activities and voluntary meetings, *public rooms/space* were created by farm dwellers – both in Arendt's *philosophical sense* (the sense of *space of appearance and polis*), and literally, in the physical sense of the word. In this room, people of local communities shared *words and deeds* and felt togetherness. Thus, the feeling of togetherness<sup>31</sup> as an ethnic group could appear, and the *public realm* in Arendtian sense could take shape and develop. This was an important step by Estonians, who had thus far been under the yoke of other ethnic groups. By building community houses, room for their culture, they created their *political and public realm and space of appearance for their selves*. As Arendt notes, *the space of appearance* comes into being wherever 'men' are together in the manner of speech and action, and therefore 'predates and precedes all formal constitution of public realm and various forms of government', that is, the various forms *in which* the public realm can be organized<sup>32</sup>. With that we can explain why pre-state development of Estonian culture and public sphere as part of nation-building process was not openly political and as such became possible in the repressive environment in Tsarist Russia, while being, in its real essence, still deeply political. I would also call it cultural political. Being political is the basis for the human being in constituting

<sup>30</sup> Men are 'the mortals', and the mortality of men lies in the fact that individual life, with recognizable life-story from birth to death, rises out of biological life. The task and potential greatness of mortals lie in their ability to produce things – works and deeds and words – which would deserve to be and, at least to a degree, are at home in everlastingness, so that through them mortals could find their place in a cosmos where everything is immortal except themselves. (Arendt 1958)

<sup>31</sup> Until the second half of the nineteenth century, Estonians identified themselves as country dwellers or farm folk.

<sup>32</sup> According to Arendt (1958), a *political way of life* or *polis* life in Greek, was a special *freely chosen* and not by means just any form of action necessary to keep men together in an *orderly fashion*. Not that the Greeks or Aristotle were ignorant of the fact that human life always demands some form of political organization and that ruling over subjects might constitute a distinct way of life, but the *despot's way of life*, because it was 'merely' a necessity, could not be considered free and had no relationship with the *bios politikos*.

oneself and identity. Creating space for their cultural practices, Estonians created the basis and conditions for the development of national culture which was the important prerequisite for their *openly political mobilization* and the emergence of the nation state.

## 2.4 State, Polity, Politics, Policy

The concept of the *state* refers to the situation in which one human association successfully claims the monopoly on the legitimate delegation of sanctions over the other social groups, Dubreuil (2010, 188-190) notes, who discusses the human evolution and the origins of hierarchies, and suggests that the emergence of the state follows from the ensuing competitions among social groups claiming a right to delegate sanction (ibid.).

As commonly understood, the state is defined as a form of human association distinguished from other social groups by its purpose, the establishment of order and security; its methods, the laws and their enforcement; its territory, the area of jurisdiction or geographic boundaries; and finally by its sovereignty. The state consists, most broadly, of the agreement of the individuals on the means whereby disputes are settled in the form of laws. A state is a political organization of society, or the body politic, or, more narrowly, the institutions of government.

Statehood, as an organization of communal life, has developed over thousands of years into a complex assemblage of meanings, institutions, and practices. Those practices have changed in time and political science has described these as historical basic types of state development. e.g. city-states in Mesopotamia and Greece, feudal systems in medieval Europe, estates-based states, empires and modern nation-states since the nineteenth century. In addition to the development of governing techniques and state apparatus, a further major development – the emergence of nation states (*nineteenth-twentieth centuries*) could follow (Kalev 2011, 65-69).

The contemporary state is seen as the organization of power formed in the cooperation of state apparatus and citizenry, characterized by separate public authority, sovereignty, and legitimacy. Statehood today (in Western societies) has reached the phase of *postmodernism*, which is characterized by the weakening of nationhood and a transformation of centralized state authority into a sparse multilevel network, tight relations between the state apparatus and citizens, and optimized administration. (Vetik 2011, 337)

However, within the context of the historical development of Estonian cultural policy, it is more appropriate to talk about the practices of a *modern state*, the central characteristics of which according to Weber (2010, 41, 42) is '*monopoly on legitimate violence*', which is achieved by enforcing order upon certain a territory and its inhabitants. As Gellner (1994) puts it, the state is a specialised, clearly-determined, strictly-centralised and socially-disciplined active power or complex of powers that alone may use force as an extreme measure in order to

preserve the order of varying sanctions. This monopoly of violence develops into a modern state, which organizes public authority mainly with the help of a universal legal order and institutions of authority or state apparatus.

According to Kalev (2011, 67-68) *state-making as modern state development*, is described in political science in four stages: (1) building of the state or *penetration of the everyday*, which brings about the establishment of institutions, the demand to obey certain rules, and political, economic, and cultural harmonization of the state elite; (2) *standardization* or the designing of the activities and meaningful space of the society as a whole. General military service, compulsory education, and a public sphere are created, creating a state structure covering all of the population and territory with relevant relations in the society; (3) *political citizenship* is created, i.e., general freedom of thought and speech and the right to take part in politics is applied, which turns the population into active participants in the governing of the state. (4) *Social citizenship* develops, which means providing the population with social benefits, welfare services, and collection of taxes for a public political domain. The *penetration* of the modern state into the everyday lives of people is carried out by means of *governing techniques* or *policies/politics*. Governing techniques, or policies as actions and processes, which make up *politics*, are omnidirectional and ambiguous.

Since ancient Greece, philosophers and thinkers of Western civilization have discussed the social organization of communal living, and how to organize it in the best way, as well as the essence of power and tools of politics as an art of governance. In a widest sense *politics* (from the Greek '*politikos*' meaning of, or relating to citizens) is the practice and theory of influencing other people on a civic or individual level. *Politics* more narrowly, refers to achieving and exercising positions of governance: organized control over a human community, particularly a state, as Toots, (2011, 21) explains. In the textbook of political theory *politics* has been described as the process of intermediating and pushing through interests, regulating conflicts and making political decisions. *Polity* points to a formal structure: institutions, procedure and norms. *Policy* determines *action*, a state activity aimed at values and objectives and covers specific policies like economic policy, education policy, healthcare policy, cultural policy etc. Kari Palonen<sup>33</sup> (2003, 171) has theorized the word *politics* in the context of modern political philosophy. He discusses on politics as activity in a Weberian perspective - politics as power (*Macht*) and struggle (*Politik als Kampf*). Weber (2010 [1919]) insists that striving for power is a necessary condition for acting politically. Power is a medium of politics, through which one can act politically, that politics-as-activity is the only possibility, an occasion, or an opportunity, to do something. He who does not strive for power is doomed to powerlessness (*Ohnmacht*) and inactivity, as Palonen (2003, 172), explains. 'Power', in Weber's

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<sup>33</sup> Palonen, (2003, 171-186) who theorized the word *politics*, in the frame of political philosophy, has been pointing out that there are two different concepts of politics, used commonly since the 19<sup>th</sup> century - namely, politics-as-sphere and politics-as-activity, the first indicating a spatial and the second temporal mode of conceptualizing.



nominalistic view of politics, consists only of the 'shares' and their 'distribution', and this is the essence of political activity.

There is just one noun corresponding to the adjective 'political' in French, German, Swedish, Finnish and Estonian, while the English language has three: policy, polity, and politics, as Palonen (2003, 175) pointed out. He reformulates the four aspects of politics in Weberian terms: *politicization* means opening a specified horizon of chances to share power, while *politicking* means performative operations in the struggle for power with the already existing shares and their distribution. *Polity* refers to those power shares that have already been politicized, while *policy* means a regulation and coordination of performative operations by specific ends and means. A *policy* refers to a direction of activities, to a line, project, plan program or doctrine and also has a normative character, as the construction of a policy signifies the inclusion and exclusion of activities, types and degrees of coordination.

Systematic descriptions of Western contemporary politics were offered by David Easton in the 1960s, as well as the concepts of '*input policy*' (which reflects the citizens' demands and expectations), and the '*output policy*', (the result of the work of politicians, and which will be officially implemented). Easton describes *policy* as a *division of values*, but the number of values is limited and some groups in society gain more from a particular policy than do others (Toots, 2011). According to Hupe and Hill (2002), the concept of '*public policy*' as an ideal-typical form, can be seen *as action*, within the *trias politica*<sup>34</sup> (the *executive power* executes what the *legislative power* has formulated and decided upon).

In the context of this dissertation describing the modern state's activities in culture, I use the words *policy*, *polity* and *politics* in the above-described context of contemporary political science. However, in general, in its widest, philosophical notion I use the word *political* in Arendt's (1958) depiction of the word as suggested above: being political, it is the right of every free person and citizen to have a say in matters regarding the social organization of their lives. Being political is the basis for the human being, constituting itself and identity.

The Arendtian concept of being political helps to explain the political nature of the civil activism of Estonian societies and individuals (agents), which predates and precedes all formal constitution of the public realm and various forms of government (*state*) that is, the various political system<sup>35</sup> in which the public realm can be organized. The Estonian twentieth century historical experience of civil activism by people confirms at least on two bases how the cultural activities of civil society become the grounds for political mobilization and

<sup>34</sup> The *trias politica* principle refers specifically to the separation of powers into three branches of government: legislative, executive and judicial. Van Caenegem, (2003, 16-18)

<sup>35</sup> According to Arendt (1958), a *political way of life* or *polis* life in Greek, was a special *freely-chosen* and not by means just any arbitrary form of action necessary to keep men together in an *orderly fashion*. Not that the Greeks or Aristotle were ignorant of the fact that human life always demands some form of political organization and that ruling over subjects might constitute a distinct way of life, but the *despot's way of life*, because it was 'merely' a necessity, could not be considered free and had no relationship with the *bios politikos*.

the emergence of a nation-state. This is why the concept of civil society is so central and will be examined below.

## 2.5 The Concepts of Civil Society, Public Sphere and Public Square

The notion of *civil society* – as the social space of freedom, solidarity – and *public sphere*, as the political space for rational-critical debate, are inherently connected with each other. In the context of this dissertation, they are also closely connected to the notion of *public square*. They are all *ideal types*, the *public sphere* referring to the conditions of argumentation and representation; *civil society*, referring to the different activities contrasted or juxtaposed with the state but no reducible to the market. *Public square* is uncontrollable, pluralistic and polyphonic, referring to the conflictual situation of interactions, as Bakhtin (1987) describes it. All three have consequences for politics and policies.

However, the political role of civil society is not ‘directly related to the control or conquest of power but to the generation of influence through the life of democratic associations and unconstrained discussion in the cultural public sphere’, as Cohen and Arato (1999, X) explain. They stress that it is from that mediating role of public sphere where political society is rooted, which in the process of institutionalization forms the basis for political public and state. And ‘similar considerations pertain to the relationship between civil and economic society’, as they (*ibid.*) explain. They (1999, ix [1994]) define civil society ‘as a sphere of social interaction between economy and state, composed above all of the intimate sphere (especially voluntary associations), social movements, and forms of public communication’. This definition covers all types of civil activism (public square, public sphere, market, political sphere) which have been separately treated in this dissertation in order to distinguish their specific features, functions and impact on the society in the different political frameworks and variety of modernities.

The *concept of civil society* belongs to the realm of politics and has circled in the context of the Western political philosophy and critical social thought as an unattainable ideal for centuries. In the traditional sense, as Ray (2007, 512) explains, the *concept of civil society* originates from the Roman concept of jurisprudence (*ius civile*), but its contemporary use to describe contractual relations, the rise of public opinion, representative government, civic freedoms, plurality and ‘civility’ first appeared in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century political philosophy, via the philosophers of the Enlightenment.

While Rousseau, with his concept of ‘civilized state’ (*l'état civil*) had in mind a society (state) similar to the Greek *polis*, which included and incorporated the *whole sphere of policy and decision-making*, Thomas Hobbes’s theory of

the sovereign state (Leviathan)<sup>36</sup> was premised on the existence of two branches of society – political and civil – tied up by a ‘*social contract*’ between *subjects* and *state*. This represented a surrender of sovereignty to the state which protected society from the *war of all against all*, as Ray (2007, 512) explains. Disputing Hobbes’s negative views of human nature, John Locke spoke about ‘*civil government*’ and *civil society based on free citizen initiative and citizen ethics*, separate from the state. (ibid.)

Since Hegel, thinking on the social organization of life is divided between the state and civil society. Hegel interpreted *civil society* (*die bürgerliche Gesellschaft*) as a *free citizen initiative*, which tends to the private needs of citizens; *the state* (*der Staat*) sees to *collective interests of the whole society*, as Aarelaid (1996, 9-27), Rikmann (2003, 11-31) and Ray (2007, 513)<sup>37</sup> explain. Marx dismissed civil society simply as the equivalent of bourgeois society, and arena for class conflict. According to Marx, the proletarian victory would substitute a classless association for the old civil society in which there will be none of the antagonisms of civil society.

In the twentieth century, the concept of civil society was revived by the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1957), who considered it to be a sphere of cultural struggle against bourgeois hegemony. Gramsci believed that by using schools, the church, trade union, and other organizations that represent civil society (as parts of a propaganda machine), the ruling classes recreate the concept of power as suitable for them. According to Ray (2007, 513), to the Marxist interpretation of a ‘*state as a violent apparatus*’, Gramsci added a notion of civil society as a mechanism for making a compromise between the citizen and the state, and developed a doctrine on the structures of the ruling groups’ striving for hegemony.

However, in the final decades of the twentieth century, the subject saw a powerful reawakening, causing Anthony Giddens (1990) to state that the concept of civil society has become one of the most important concepts in the social sciences in studying modern society. According to Giddens’ (1990) idea of ‘*reflexive modernism*’, new types of participatory practices of civil society are *a new type of society rather than a part of society*. Also several other theorists, e.g. Cohen and Arato (1999 [1994]), Habermas (1990 [1962]), Gellner (1994), Bauman (1991), Eisenstadt (2002), Wittrock (2000), Arnason (2000), et al, claim that *mar-*

<sup>36</sup> Although the political system was the dominant part, the civil and political were mutually sustaining systems, in which private activity, while governed by sovereign laws, was otherwise bound only by conscience and the rules of civic association. <http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/texts/hobbes/leviathan-c.html#THESECONDPART>

<sup>37</sup> Ray (2007, 513) points to an implicit tension between conflicts in commercial society and the demands of social peace, which was highlighted by Hegel, for whom civil society was divided between ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*) and egotistical self-interest. The Objective Spirit achieves self-knowledge through differentiation into discrete spheres, which form a totality of the family (socialization towards moral autonomy), civil society (production, distribution, and consumption), and the state. Hegel’s view of civil society anticipated Marx’s critique of class polarization ‘*as the conflict between vast wealth and vast poverty [...] turns into the utmost dismemberment of will, inner rebellion and hatred.*’ Hegel (1967, 151), cited in Ray (2007, 513)

ket economy, civil society as well as modern state bureaucracy are modern phenomena which interact and influence each other and all of them *have political power*.<sup>38</sup>

Cohen and Arato (1999, viii [1994]) stress, that the concept of civil society indicates 'a terrain in the West that is endangered by the logic of administrative and economic mechanisms,' and they see it as a target of struggles for democratization in contemporary societies. The task of civil society is to 'guarantee the autonomy of the modern state and economy while simultaneously protecting civil society from destructing penetration and functionalization by the imperatives of these two spheres,' as Cohen and Arato (1999, 25) claim.

However, civil society, both as a concept in academic discussion as well as practical phenomenon, is not static. Rather, it develops and changes continuously, depending on changes in society as a whole, as noted by Rikmann (2003). Civil society manifests itself differently in each society,<sup>39</sup> depending on the history of the particular society, form, material base, and prevailing ideological perspective of the society. However, most of it depends on the level on democratic development, maturity of the society: in other words, on the political system of the state. The possibilities for civil society depend on *how dominating or sensitive a partner the state is*, or how clearly citizens of the state have acknowledged their role and that of the state in the functioning of society. In the case of a repressive state, we cannot talk about free citizens' initiatives or developed civil society. Thus, the absence of civil society *is both an explanation and reinforcement of authoritarianism*. Regardless, *civil society in such a case is still possible in some form* and Estonia's experience during the Tsarist Empire (1860-198) and (1940-91) is proof of this, as can be seen from the following chapters.

The concept of *public sphere* also has a long and complex genealogy: Max Weber sees cultural change revolve around different parts of social life (Schroeder 1992, 23); many theorists and thinkers (like Arendt [1958], Gramsci [1957], Bourdieu [1993], Foucault [1984] et al.) have conceptualised the public sphere in different ways.

Jürgen Habermas (1990 [1962]) theorized an elaborate concept of an ideal type of public sphere and outlined the historical sociological formation of a bourgeois public sphere with its' various institutional developments in his analysis 'The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere'. He described

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<sup>38</sup> This idea is also strongly expressed in a *classical tradition of civil society theory* formulated, a concept *closely associated with state, liberal market values and community involvement*, as Ray (2007, 512-513) explains: Adam Ferguson uses the concept to draw a line between Western civilization and the more 'despotic' non-Western social and political organization of the East, thus the concept of civil society also carries a strong connotation of a 'civilized society', which values abiding by the law, instead of being subjected to emotions as a citizen or despotic whims as a ruler. This idea links the Scottish moralists (e.g. Ferguson), de Tocqueville, Durkheim, and contemporary writers such as Robert Putnam (1993), who claim that active, voluntary, and informal groups and networks make for more a stable democracy while strengthening the (liberal democratic) state and the same time protect against *incursion by the state*. Ray (2007, 513)

<sup>39</sup> Civil society and its many expressions are also designated differently in different societies: e.g. non-profit sector (USA), independent sector (USA, UK), charitable sector (UK), voluntary sector (Sweden, Norway, UK), third sector (most countries). See Rikmann, (2003, 23); Ruusuvirta (2013).

how the forming 'publicness' started to mediate between private individuals (having private property), the political public sphere and state from the second half of the eighteenth century and nineteenth century in England, France and Germany. Habermas (1990 [1962]) defines public sphere as *new mode of communication* inherited from the civil activism of voluntary associations, reading clubs (nineteenth-century Germany and England), and details its' structural transformation from the self-cultivation (*Bildung*) project of the bourgeoisie towards the political public sphere (in the context of French Revolution, while originally literary public circles standing for freedom of expression fought against censorship). His analysis proceeds showing the common self-organizing base of the historically-differentiated spheres of liberal modern society (state, market, public sphere) as well the as institutionalized interaction and impact between them.

The work of Habermas has been criticized by historians because of a perceived lack of empirical data, by social scientists and in particular in the works by feminist scholars criticising a one-sided approach towards the public sphere which excludes the perspective and representation of less-secured and privileged groups in society like women or the working-class (see Crossley and Roberts [2004, 2], Cohen and Arato [1999] et al., Crossley and Roberts [2004, 2] who, in their critical reflection, have summarized that 'Habermas describes public sphere as a bourgeois public in which 'large number of middle class men, *qua* private individuals, came together to engage in reasoned argument over key issues of mutual interest and concern, creating a space in which both new ideas and practices and discipline of rational public debate were cultivated in the late 18-nineteenth centuries in Germany, France and Britain''.

Habermas (1999), responding to the critical reception in the revised edition of his work, fully admits that in his original approach on the structural transformation of public sphere he underestimated the dialectics of public sphere and its' pluralistic dynamics based on the exclusion of other social groups by a bourgeois public. Also, Habermas (2001, 17 [1999]), referring to the work of Mikhail Bakhtin [1987], points out the internal dynamics and oppositional role of popular culture, which he describes as a periodically-recurring rebellion against hegemonic disciplinary practices, among other oppositional dynamics in society.

Bakhtin's concept of *public square* is connected to the ancient and medieval European popular culture of the masses: garish, diverse, and playful, which flourished on public squares and marketplaces, during the festivities of ordinary people, and by nature ambivalent, strongly democratic and rebellious. (See Lotman 1987, 5-14, Bakhtin 1987, 185-192)<sup>40</sup> Lotman (*ibid.*) explains that in

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<sup>40</sup> Yuri Mikhailovich Lotman (1922 - 1993) was a Russian literary scholar, semiotician, and cultural historian in Estonia. He was the founder of the Moscow-Tartu school of cultural semiotics and is considered to be the first Soviet structuralist because of his early essay *On the Delimitation of Linguistic and Philological Concepts of Structure* (1963) and works on structural poetics. Lotman analysed Bakhtin's cultural concept in the introductory article '*Kutse dialoogile*' published in Estonian in 1987 as collection of Bakhtin's (1987) works.

Bakhtin's concept of *public square*, the 'carnavalesque' laughter-based culture of the people, with its ambivalent and creative coexistence of opposite dispositions of culture, reveals the following: where high and low, sinner and sacred, terrific and funny, dirty and clean exchange places and balance each other out. Its quintessence for Bakhtin appears in the tradition of medieval carnival, where the popular culture of the masses opposes and 'cancels the dominant cultural mindset of rational dogmatic antitheses of binary constraints' (Lotman 1987, 5-14). A similar idea was expressed by Michael Gardiner (2004, 28-48), who analysed the Habermasian concept of 'public sphere' and Bakhtin's ideas about 'public square', noting that 'for Bakhtin the *public sphere* in European history never confirmed the realm of sober and virtuous debate of the sort that Habermas claims to have identified in 'The Structural Transformation''. Gardiner (2004, 38) claims that Bakhtin's *marketplace* and *public square* in early modern times 'were witness to a tumultuous intermingling of diverse social groups and widely divergent styles and idioms of language, ranging from the serious to the ironic and the playful'. In Bakhtin's view, the dialogic tradition provides a vital counterweight to an abstract Enlightenment version of truth, which 'knows only a single mode of a cognitive interaction among consciousnesses', and that the real public sphere was always marked by pluralistic and polyphonic, conflictual situation of interactions. (Gardiner 2004, 36 and Bakhtin, 1984a, 81 cited in Gardiner 2004)

In the context of discussion of cultural emancipation and the emergence of community houses in the local communities as part of a developing Estonian public sphere, it is fruitful to theorize the process in two different ways: in order to understand the developing *public sphere* in Estonian newspapers and discussions held by the circles of a new Estonian national elite among their personal friends and acquaintances and social salons (see Laar 2006, 343-354), the use of *Habermasian concept of public sphere* is clearly relevant. As Habermas clearly explains the connection between the private property, public sphere and political mobilisation, it is possible to examine the role of the forming Estonian public sphere as a bridge between the emerging cultural and national self-determination, economic interests and the political demands for equal rights in society. However, with Bakhtin's concept of *public square* it is good to explain the uncontrollable and democratic essence of society and community houses, which were to be a public places for festivities and popular art cultural practices of the people, *representing* Estonian popular or folk culture.<sup>41</sup>

I also found that using the ideal model of the Ancient Greek *polis*, Arendt explains the primary impetus of civil activism which is a basic trigger in every

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<sup>41</sup> The concept of folk (popular) culture which gained more attention by historians and cultural researchers after Bakhtin's work was published in English in the 1960s, for more see: (e.g Tamm, M. 2007. Kuidas kirjutatakse ajalugu. (*How to Write History.*, p. 24; Burke, P. 1981. The 'Discovery' of Popular Culture. In: *People's History and Socialist Theory*, p. 216-221; Burke, P. 1988. What is History of Popular Culture? p.121-123; Shay, A. 2002. Choreographic Politics: State Folk Dance Companies, Representation and Power, p. 224-225; Kuutma, K. 2010. From the Construction of Concepts to Knowledge Production: the Interdisciplinarity of Folkloristics, p. 687-702; Hoffmann, D., 2003, etc.

sphere of contemporary society. I think that based on ancient Aristotelean assertion '*Homo est naturaliter politicus, id est, socialis*' Arendt (1958, 198-199) reveals the common origin of the constitutive mechanism of the human being's *words and deeds* in the market, civil society and state. These all have an influence on politics, but which, as differentiated life actualities and theoretical concepts, have gained complexities and peculiar institutional logics in the historical and reflexive process of modernization. Cohen and Arato (1999 [1994]) in their comprehensive overview 'Civil Society and Political Theory' discuss these developments, tracing the most influential concepts in this political theory.

After this discussion on the important institutional settings of human society, the concepts of the modern nation-states, which political scientists see as the most important political actors of the last several hundred years, as well as the brief overview on the theories of the nation, as most influential concepts and historical phenomena regarding the cultural policy, should be clear.

### 2.5.1 The Modern Nation-State, Nation and Nation Building

As many authors claim in the literature of political science, the nation-state is the most important type of political system in the modern world, yet it is relatively new phenomenon in human history, replacing kingdoms and empires. The reason for the emergence of nation-states in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is considered to be the breakdown of the power of status-based estates and a new, egalitarian view among the citizenry, which facilitates more effective governance. As Vetik (2011, 332-354) explains, the rise of the modern political system of countries is connected with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 which laid the foundation for the emergence in Europe of sovereign states with centralized power.

As it was discussed in previous chapter *the rise of nation-states* is attributed to the development of capitalism and modernisation of society. Ernest Gellner (1994 [1983]) argues that a broader, national identity supplanted society's former agrarian and local identity due to the development of a new division of labour, social mobility and the *emergence of a new, broader polity*. The development of such a polity was predicated on a universal education system, as it unifies the population, creating a common standardized culture and homogeneous cultural practices. According to Gellner (1994, 2223) formal education is the main means of creating and perpetuating a nation-state, because an education is no longer just available to elites as was the case in a class-dominated society; it is also the *sine qua non* for realizing one's civic rights and taking part in the affairs of society. Gellner (1994) demonstrates persuasively the connections between culture, the nation-state and nationalism, arguing that the state is the only body that can guarantee the effective production of an educated and unified culture, so that the results of education would no longer be poor and below standard.

Likewise, Benedict Anderson (1983, 4) says that the nation-state is a cultural artefact of modernism that has been *created by the elite* in order to achieve broader political and economic goals. Anderson stresses that the nation state is

culturally constructed in the course of the inception of the mass media (*public sphere*), which historically took place thanks to the invention of the printing press and the resistance of local written languages to the official language of Latin. In this manner, Anderson (1983, 16-18) says that the '*nation as an imagined political community*' replaced the '*religious community*', the previous political system that transcended nations and peoples. For Anderson (1983, 5-6), a nation-state is an imagined community, because due to its size, a nation-state cannot function based on direct person-to-person interaction. Most members of a nation-state do not know each other or meet face to face; people have instead a *mental picture of national unity*.

As a concept, nation-state integrates the *state as political unit and nation as cultural unit into one whole*. Since Meinecke (1907), scholars of history and political sciences (see Piirimäe, 2009, Vetik, 2011) distinguish between two main forms in the historical rise of nation-states: (1) *the political emancipation*<sup>42</sup> of the population, which culminated in political or *civic nationalism* (e.g. the French state in the course of the French Revolution) and (2) a nation-state conceived as a result of the cultural, national and political emancipation of colonized peoples and ethnic groups, abetted by the collapse of empires (e.g. most Central and Eastern European countries, including Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania). Nationalism initially appeared in these nation-states as cultural emancipation, and only later became a political movement, ultimately giving rise to the creation of nation-states via the application of the principle of the self-determination of peoples. As Vetik (2011) stresses, at the Paris Peace Conference that followed the First World War, the new boundaries were laid down in Europe at the behest of US President Woodrow Wilson, and the principle of self-determination became a legal basis for the new European order. The nation-state, which is seen in political science as the primary form of statehood, continues to be influential, for in spite of the frequent charges that it is obsolete and the world has entered a post-nation-state era, key policy fields for European countries such as national defence, security, migration and education policy all stem from the concept of the nation-state, as mentioned by McGuigan (2004) and Vetik (2011).

The term *nation* comes from the Latin *natio*.<sup>43</sup> The political sense has gradually come to be predominant, but the earliest English examples inclined to-

<sup>42</sup> Emancipation is any of various efforts to procuring political rights or equality often for a specifically disenfranchised group, or more generally in discussion of such matters. Emancipation stems from Latin 'ex manus capere' ('take out the hand'). Among others Karl Marx discussed political emancipation in his 1844 essay 'On the Jewish Question', although often in addition to (or in contrast with) the term *human emancipation*. Marx's views of political emancipation in this work were summarized by one writer as entailing "equal status of individual citizens in relation to the state, equality before the law, regardless of religion, property, or other 'private' characteristics of individual people."

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.philosophicum.de/emanc.htm>  
c.1300, from Old French *nacion* "birth, rank; descendants, relatives; country, homeland" (12c.) and directly from Latin *nationem* (nominative *natio*) "birth, origin; breed, stock, kind, species; race of people, tribe," literally "that which has been born," from *natus*, past participle of *nasci* "be born" (Old Latin *gnasci*; see *genus*). Older sense preserved in application to North American Indian peoples (1640s) implied in *nation-builder*). <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=nation>



ward the racial meaning of a 'large group of people with a common ancestry'. There has been a whole path of theories discussing nations and nation-building since the spreading of the ideas of Herder,<sup>44</sup> who claimed that all peoples have their own culture and popular spirit (*Volkgeist*), and culture as a common identity as mental amalgamation of folk and nation. Many philosophers and scholars whose positions are classified as primordialist, ethno-symbolists have thought and debated whether nations are constructed by the elite or are naturally-existing phenomena. The primordial school of thinkers (Herder, Bauer 1908, Geertz 1973, also Kohn 1965) claim that nations are conceived as genetic and natural communities that always have and always will exist independently from states, constitutions, legal systems and cultural policies. As Duelund (2009, 136) has pointed out, in the primordial position, human and social identity may be influenced in various ways, but, fundamentally, nations are conceived of as natural-born phenomena, implying a universal distinction between 'us' and 'them', which will always exist.

Modernists (Anderson [1983], Gellner [1983], Breuilly [1996], Kedourie [1960], Hobsbawm [1990]), as mentioned above, claim that nations and national identities are ideologically and politically constructed, invented and narrated by the elite who are fighting for positions and status in the framework of socio-economic changes and the process of modernization in society. Thus, modernists define a national movement as a political independence movement and claim that before the nineteenth century, nations did not exist. Miroslav Hroch (1996, 61), opposes the claims of modernists by saying that the nation-building was '*never a mere project of ambitious or narcissistic intellectuals and intellectuals can 'invent' national communities only if certain objective preconditions for the formation of a nation already exist*'.

In the context of the research on Estonian nation-statehood and cultural policy, the views of modernists is partly relevant in the describing of the Estonian nation-building process in the general context of cultural emancipation and modernization. The guidance in the public sphere and the political demands of the elite led Estonians to independent statehood in 1918. However, the modernist view does not explain the first phase of the nation-building process where bottom-up cultural practices and a shared feeling of togetherness among Estonian people led to wider involvement in public life or '*social mobilisation*', including the founding of community houses.

Ethno-symbolists<sup>45</sup> (a concept introduced by British sociologist Anthony D. Smith [1996], also Armstrong [1982]) define nation and national identity as a complex construct composed by a number of interrelated components: ethnic, cultural, historical, territorial, economic and legal-political components. They

<sup>44</sup> Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) especially emphasised the multitude and diversity of cultures, and thus he greatly encouraged cultural nationality, as evinced by the numerous suppressed people of the Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Turkish Empire including Estonians, Latvians etc.

<sup>45</sup> In some writings ethno-symbolists are treated as a *synthesizing school*, close to the ideas of Max Weber, who saw a nation as an ethnic community with common values, which can, but also may not, become a nation with a political programme and state. (see Laar 2005, 62)

signify connections between the members of communities united by shared memories, myths and traditions that may, or may not, find expression in statehood of their own, but are entirely different from the purely legal and bureaucratic ties of the state (Smith 1993, 16). Smith admits that nations can emerge either as a result of top-down action of the elite or as a result of self-mobilisation and bottom-up initiatives of a nation, but ethnic identity can survive and last within history without political ideology or statehood. Walter O'Connor has claimed that nations can exist for centuries but that this has no major significance if they themselves remain unaware of it; the *nation* only comes about when an 'idea' accompanies ethnic-cultural existence, and lays the foundation for *national actions*. An ethnic group can be defined by others but a nation must be defined – realized – by the nation itself; there is no such thing as an *unawakened*, non-self-aware nation, as Mart Laar<sup>46</sup> (2005, 65) referring to O'Connor, points out.

In discussing the ideas of O'Connor, Hroch (1985, 1996) and many other researchers of nationalism, Laar (2005) in his doctoral dissertation identifies the figures that awakened the idea of nationalism in Estonia: these included both intellectuals and ideologues who set the tone in Estonia's budding public sphere and the salons of the elite on one hand; and, on the other, notable common men and women who were inspired by the idea of nationalism and spread the movement to the masses. Kuutma (1996, 41) has written about the Estonians' *awakening* as a nation and nation-building as a cultural practice in which the runo-style folklore verse was intertwined with the new Liedertafel choir tradition borrowed from the Baltic Germans. Kuutma, who has studied the interrelations between Estonian nationalism and the song festival tradition, called this '*singing nationalism*', and quotes Clifford Geertz (1973, 237):

But once aroused, the desire to become a people rather than a population, a recognized and respected somebody in the world who counts and is attended to, is, short of its satisfaction, apparently unappeasable. At least it has nowhere yet been appeased.

The Estonian national awakening, nation-building process, as well as that of other small nations in Eastern Europe (Slovaks, Slovenians, Latvians, Finns etc), who lacked a previous political statehood and whose national identity is based on ethnic traditions, shared memories and culture, is comparatively analysed by the prominent theorist of nations Miroslav Hroch (1985, 1996). Hroch develops and demonstrates empirically the concept of a three-stage process of nationalist mobilization: (1) heightened cultural awareness of national distinctiveness among intellectuals and the literati, (2) a concept of nationalism as a political programme, and (3) mass mobilization in keeping with this theory.

In this thesis, relying on the research of many scholars, I define 'nation' as a complex construct composed by number of interrelated components: ethnic, cultural, historical, territorial, economic and legal-political components. For the

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<sup>46</sup> Mart Laar (1960) Estonian politician and historian. Laar was the Estonian prime minister during the years 1992–1994, 1999–2002.

purposes of this thesis, 'nation' is taken to be *an awakened people's self-perception of its ethnic-cultural existence or cultural emancipation*, which is connected with philosophical, moral and political aspects of the human right for self-determination. A national awakening or emancipation is inherently linked with civil activism and the public sphere, as the self-perception can appear only in a democratic public (*public sphere or public square*) where it is reflected, mediated and constructed in cultural and social practices of the people. National emancipation depends on specific intentions and suitable preconditions.

On a philosophical level, the preconditions of nation-statehood have frequently been rationalized using the ideas of philosophers Rousseau, Kant and Herder. Rousseau argued that the source of state power does not have to be the monarch but rather the people. His view of government is based on the concept of the social contract, which is one of the cornerstones of liberal social theory, as Piirimäe (1998, 2008)<sup>47</sup> explains. Yet Rousseau did not see the nature of the social contract as concerning the needs or interests of the individual as later liberalism did, but rather as a case of social morals and general interests taking precedence over special interests, as Piirimäe, (1998; 2008) and Vetik (2011, 334-335) note. Rousseau's egalitarian ideas are supported by Arendt's above-mentioned view of man's political fundamental right to participate in discussions on issues concerning the affairs of society, which I see as extending to the collective right to decide on one's own affairs as a nation. It also relates to Kant's moral teaching on the right of people to self-determination. In Arendt's idea of the fundamental political right of man to participate in the political realm which rises out of acting together and the '*sharing of words and deeds*' Arendt (1958, 198-199), man could leave his mark on the world and thus retain *immortality in this world* (which is possible only in a political not in the private realm). This idea can be extended to a nation due to the fact that people never exist alone but rather as a collective entity. Thus, if a nation has been *awakened or emancipated*, if an ethnic group has become aware that it exists (in a political sense), then it has the right to constitute itself in the political realm and *leave his mark on the world* and retain in *its immortality* in Arendtian terms.

This idea of emancipation is supported by the Kantian (1998 [1784]) view of morality and the right (and even duty) of and towards self-determination.<sup>48</sup> The political conclusions of Kant's moral vision are far-reaching, as self-determination is the central concept in the way the affairs of society are organized, as Eva Piirimäe (1998, 560) makes clear. The term 'self-determination' has a fundamental role in later attempts to explain the rise of nation-states, because *the opposite of self-determination is subjugation to an outside authority*. Furthermore,

<sup>47</sup> He was a major architect of the republican tradition in political philosophy, declaring the Classical period to be the ideal for his own era. The virtues of classical civilization were considered to be its dedication to the 'innate' values, and Rousseau warned that thanks to the prevalent role of trade in contemporary society, this virtue had become dangerously weak. (Piirimäe, 1998; 2008)

<sup>48</sup> Kant (1998 [1784]) considered the basis of morality not to be the will of God or nature, for in such a case, human freedom and morality would lose its meaning. According to Kant, the precondition for people's liberty is the autonomy of their will, and the existence of God also depends on people's need for liberty.

in the opinion of Kant (1998, 527-546, [1784]) individuals (also nations as groups of individuals) have not merely the right to self-determination but also a *duty to take responsibility*. He explains that people *have a moral and ethical duty* to shoulder responsibility, to free themselves of '*self-imposed immaturity*' and not have other peoples as their representatives.

In this regard, the natural affinities between nationhood and statehood emerge. Kant himself was not talking about the right of nations to self-determination, yet followers like Fichte and Herder did do so, as Vetik, (2011, 334-335) notes. The central term in Herder's social theory is 'nation', which does not merely describe the population of a given country but also an intangible unit that creates a language, culture and traditions for itself. According to Herder, throughout the course of history, people have always lived in groups, having their language, customs etc, which in sum determine the national character of the relevant group. Each individual operates above all in the context of his or her people. Therefore, the division of the world into different nations and languages is inevitable and does not pose a problem that should be eliminated as liberals thought Piirimäe (1998; 2008) explains. Rather, it is an asset! In this regard, Herder opposed the individualistic ideas of the Enlightenment philosophers, but took Kant's theory of morality further: if a free person is one who acts according to their inner convictions, Herder believed, the range of such inner subjects was not confined to an individual but it could also include a nation. Thus, Kant's intuited form, and the social substance added by Herder, make up the philosophical basis for nation-statehood as Vetik (2011) has noted. However, to this philosophical basis, I find it important to add Arendt's view about being political, acting/participating in the *political realm* as the universal right for the human being in constituting oneself and identity, as well as for the nation in constituting its political space.

All the above-mentioned political, philosophical and socio-economic concepts explain why *nations* and *nation states* emerged in a modernizing Europe before and after World War I, and why the *concept of nation-state* and the *ideology of nationalism* is still so vital in the globalizing contemporary world. It also explains why a *state* is important to a *nation* and why a *nation* is important to a *state*. A state is important to a people because a nation-state's legitimacy is based on the ideas of national sovereignty and self-determination. A state creates, in the context of a modern society, a *political space* that gives members of the nation the *best possible security and possibilities for self-realization*, as is pointed out by many scholars in the political sciences, e.g. (Vetik 2011), Kymlicka (2009), Gellner (1994, [1983]), Anderson (1983) et al. Through policies aimed at fostering a common economic space, written language, culture, symbols etc., states have shaped many social, ethnic, religious and other groups of diverse status into a unified peoples, and in so doing also laid the groundwork for their own legitimacy. *Nationalism* is important foremost to the state as an *institution of governance, as the source of legitimacy*. In a contemporary context, nationhood ties the state and society into one whole, keeping both of them functioning, as Vetik (2011) and Piirimäe (2008) have noted.

The policies or activities in the process of shaping a common economic, cultural, political space and public sphere, is called the *nation-building process*. Nation-building is closely related to the concept of *Bildung* (German for 'education' and 'formation'), which refers to the German tradition of self-cultivation, wherein philosophy and education are linked in a manner that refers to a process of both personal and cultural maturation.

## 2.5.2 Identity of Nations and Cultural Policy

In political sciences, the concept of *nation-building* (first attested in 1907) refers to the process of constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the state. This process aims at the unification of the people within the state so that it remains politically stable and viable in the long term. *Nation-building* can involve the use of propaganda or major infrastructural development to foster social harmony and economic growth. The nation-building process and formation of cultural policy are inherently linked with the *concept of national identity*. It represents socially constructed phenomena. British scholar Stuart Hall claims that the construction of identity<sup>49</sup> is a process which works through marking down differences and symbolic limits, and that identity construction requires the existence of the other. (Hall 1996, 3–4)

Many scholars, e.g. Hall (1996) and also Greenfeld (1993, 18-20), emphasise the role culture plays in the construction of nations and national identities, describing nations not only as political constructs, but also as '*systems of cultural representations*' (Hall 1997), or shaped by '*social order*', which is culturally constituted. According to Greenfeld (1993, 18), social reality is intrinsically cultural; it is necessarily symbolic, created by the subjective meanings and perceptions of social actors. As the particular image of social order provided by a culture forms the constitutive element of any given society, then a change in the generalized identity (for example, from religious or estate to national) presupposes a transformation of the image of the social order, claims Greenfeld (1993, 18-21). He explains that every social order (that is, the overall structure of a society) represents a materialisation, or objectivisation, of its image shared by those who participate in it. Greenfeld (ibid.) refers to Durkheim who said that 'men are the only active elements of society'. He explains that social action is determined chiefly by the motivations of the relevant actors. According to Greenfeld, social

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<sup>49</sup> In contemporary research on *identity*, perceptions of identity ('identity' and 'sameness') are seen as relative phenomena that may be abandoned, changed or constructed by different levels (personal, professional, community, national, constitutional, etc) in a dialogic process. <http://plato.stanford.edu/fundraising/> (see also Hall, S. and Du Gay, P. (1996). *Questions of Cultural Identity*. Sage, UK.; Kotov, K. (2002). *Polylogical Estonia: National Identity and Languages of Culture*. [http://www.sotsioloogia.ee/vana/esso3/15/kaie\\_kotov.htm](http://www.sotsioloogia.ee/vana/esso3/15/kaie_kotov.htm); De Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak (1999). *The Discursive Construction of National Identities*. *Discourse Society* 1999 10: 149, Sage. [http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/40470\\_13b.pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/40470_13b.pdf))

action which is determined by motivations of men – the creators and carriers of ideas and the relevant actors of social action – also creates structures.<sup>50</sup>

Hall (1996), in a similar way, claims that a nation is a symbolic community, constructed discursively: a national culture is a discourse, a way to construct meanings which influence and organise both our actions and our perceptions of ourselves. People are not only citizens by law. Rather, they also participate in forming the idea of the nation as it is represented in their national culture: 'National cultures construct identities by creating meanings of 'the nation', with which we can identify; these are contained in stories that are told about the nation, in memories which link its present to its past and in the perceptions of it that are constructed' (Hall 1994, 201). Nationality is explained as a narrative (Geertz 1975), a *story* which people tell about themselves in order to lend meaning to their social world. National narratives do not emerge out of nowhere and do not operate in a vacuum. They are instead produced, reproduced and spread by actors in concrete (*institutionalised*) contexts (De Cillia, Reisigl, Wodak 1999).

Here the historical role of the cultural policy of the nation-state appears with a primary goal to form and develop an institutionalised context for cultural practices. From statehood onwards, national identity is a subject of cultural production, reinterpretation and circulation of symbolic meanings of culture, and it is shaped by the tools of cultural policy. As Gellner puts it, 'the role of the state as the 'organism' is to ensure that this literate and unified culture is effectively produced, that the educational product is not shoddy and sub-standard' (1994). According to Tilly, wars have also played a significant role in the formation of national identities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Wars force rulers to deal with certain organizational imperatives, reinforcing the need for centralization and bureaucracy. Tilly claims that the role of bureaucracy and the military is important for the development of nationhood, as well as society as a whole (Vetik 2011).

Montserrat Guibernau (2007) points out the importance of the role 'elite culture' plays in construction of the narratives of national culture, as 'elite culture', by definition, is 'a high culture with an established language and a substantial body of literature and knowledge'. Guibernay explains that the control of the learning process lies in the hands of scholars and institutions ready to preserve, develop and inculcate the culture upon a diverse population: 'Their mission is to achieve a linguistically and culturally homogeneous population able to communicate with each other and to work and live within that culture' (2007, 16-19). At the same time Guibernau argues that '*culture-based unity*' between the elite and the masses stands at the heart of the conception of a shared national identity: 'A common culture legitimizes the existence of the nation and is employed as an argument in favour of social cohesion and unity among all sectors of an otherwise diverse national population' (*ibid.*). Guibernau claims

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<sup>50</sup> The Weberian idea of the social provides a rationale for this view. Men, the creators and carriers of ideas, and ascertain the situational constraints which have a bearing on their interests and motivations. Motivations are formed by their beliefs and values, at the same time shaped by the structural constraints of the actors, which also affect the beliefs and values. Greenfeld (1993, 18-21)

that top-down dissemination of a common culture has to be compensated for by some bottom-up contributions, because through common traditions, symbolism and ritual, elites and masses unite as members of a single nation. This is then placed above and beyond social differences. I agree and share the ideas of Guibernau (2007, 16-19):

By sharing common culture, history, attachment to a particular territory and project for the future, elites and masses come to regard themselves as a community of fate.

Examining the foundation of the Estonian society movement, people's cultural practices and bottom-up initiatives (including the building of community houses) provides a wonderful example of the strength and potential of free-initiative activities and contributions to the efforts of the elite in building up national identity with a shared common culture.

In sum, *nation-building* can be conceptualized as a *modernist project*, which refers to the process of constructing of national identity both in the activities of civil society, as well as using the power and apparatus of the state. This refers to in education and cultural policy, and also involving the use of propaganda within different political systems.

### 2.5.3 The Authoritarian and Totalitarian State, Propaganda

The recent history of Estonia offers experience of all the main types of modern political systems: the young, unstable democracy of the Estonian Republic (1918-34), the authoritarian era (1934-40) and experience of various (pro-) totalitarian systems (1940-91).<sup>51</sup> According to the results of the historical periodization of Estonian cultural policy (presented in the first article), the top-down, authoritarian and (pro-)totalitarian politics and state practices have been the most enduring (1934-91) in the Estonian cultural field. Thus, it is necessary to discuss the nature and main characteristics of these political systems in order to reveal the context of the Estonian historical experience of state practices in cultural policy during these different systems.

According to Linz, (2000, 58-60) the 'political system is *democratic* when it allows the free formulation of political preferences, through the use of basic freedoms of association, information, and communication, for the free competition between leaders to validate at regular intervals by non-violent means their claim to rule'.<sup>52</sup> Linz, (2000, 60) stresses, that

any system in which a party is *de jure* granted a special constitutional and legal status and its offices are subject to a special party courts and granted special protection by the law, in which other parties have to recognize its leadership and are allowed to

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<sup>51</sup> There are still political systems that would not fit, by any stretching of concepts, into those three main types, particularly various forms of traditional authority (sometimes combined with more modern bureaucratic-military elements like *caudillismo*, *caciquismo*, oligarchic democracy, sultanistic etc), as Linz (2000, 143) explains.

<sup>52</sup> Liberal political rights are a requirement for that public contestation and competition for power and for the expansion of the right to participate in elections for an ever-increasing number of citizens an inevitable consequence, Linz (2000, 58-59) argues.

participate only insofar as they do not question that preeminent position or have to commit themselves to sustain a certain social-political order (beyond a constitutional framework in which free competition for power at regular intervals can take place by peaceful means), would not qualify as democratic system.

In this sense, Estonia was a democratic state during between 1918 and 1933), until the autocratic regime took power in 1934, and the analysis on developments in cultural policy presented in chapter 3 confirms this. This leads us to examine *authoritarianism*, which according to Linz (2000, 159 [1964, 255]) has been defined:

as political system with limited, not responsible, political pluralism, without elaborate and guiding ideology, but with distinctive mentalities, without extensive nor intensive political mobilization, except at some points in their development, and in which a leader or occasionally a small group exercises power within formally ill-defined limits but actually quite predictable ones.<sup>53</sup>

In the context of the Estonian historical experience between 1934 and 1940 we have to consider a special type of authoritarian regime, described as *organic statism*, 'which has been discussed as political system with some elements of corporativism, of institutionalized and regulated representation of interests (particularly economic and occupational)'. However, 'only in an *authoritarian regime*', as Linz (2000, 208-217) has claimed, 'have serious efforts been made to organize a political regime according to a corporatist ideology'.<sup>54</sup>

As the theoreticians have emphasized, people are naturally members of numerous groups based on primary social relations, at the work place, neighborhoods, parishes, farmers' cooperatives, professional associations, universities, etc., in contrast to artificially created larger groups, like political parties, which divide people in those primary contexts and lead to the emergence of professional politician, party bureaucrats remote from the life of citizens. Linz, (2000, 212-213)

In answer to the question as to why corporativism should have become identified with authoritarian regimes or became organic statism, if the need for group membership is generally natural for people, Linz (2000, 212-213) offers three reasons for interference in authoritarian of state. These are:

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<sup>53</sup> In the definition of authoritarian regimes, Linz (ibid) uses the term 'mentality' rather than 'ideology', pointing out the distinction of German sociologist Theodor Geiger (1932, 77-79), who explains that ideologies are the systems of thought more or less intellectually elaborated and organized, often in written form by intellectuals. Mentalities are ways of thinking and feeling, more emotional than rational, that provides non-codified ways of reacting to different situations. [...] Ideology is concept of sociology of culture, mentality is a concept of the study of social character. Ideologies have strong utopian element, mentalities are closer to the past, Linz (2000, 162-165) explains.

<sup>54</sup> Corporativism has been defined by Philippe Schmitter (1974, 93) as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically-ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized and licensed (if not created) by the state and which have been granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports. (cited in Linz 2000, 210).



(1) logical and practical difficulties in organizing political life exclusively as an expression of “corporate” interests; (2) the socio-political purpose pursued in the particular historical-social context in which such solutions have been implemented; (3) the nature of the political community and state as well as the intellectual and legal traditions on which the idea of the state is based.

These can also explain the Estonian historical context of the nation-state with its’ inexperienced democracy between 1918 and 1934 and its lack of resources, where pre-existing organizations which had spontaneously emerged would show the very unequal organizational mobilization of various interests. Therefore, the ‘state inevitably assume[d] the task of defining non-competitive and functionally predetermined categories by certifying them or licensing them and granting them a representational monopoly.’ Linz (ibid). (See chapter 3 and the first and second articles.) As has been explained by Anu Mai Kõll and Jaak Valge (1998, 49-94), considerable state interference had a positive impact on the Estonian economy in the inter-war period.<sup>55</sup> As a political system, *authoritarianism*, therefore, stands in basic contrast to democracy, yet it also differs from *totalitarianism*. This is because ‘authoritarian governments usually have no highly-developed guiding ideology, and they tolerate some pluralism in social organization, lack the power to mobilize the entire population in pursuit of national goals, and exercise that power within relatively predictable limits’, as Linz (2000) notes.

As a theoretical framework through which to understand autocratic regimes, the classic model of *totalitarianism* became one of the most influential paradigms within Soviet studies in the context of the Cold War in the Western world from the 1960s. The term itself was coined in the 1920s to distinguish Italian Fascism from more conventional forms of dictatorship, as explained by Linz (2000) in the analysis of *Totalitarian and authoritarian regimes*, in which he gives a comprehensive overview of the development of concepts and variety of such political systems in the world, mapping significant authors<sup>56</sup> and definitions:

The features which distinguish totalitarian regime from other and older autocracies as well as from heterocracies are six in number. They are to recall what by now is a fairly generally accepted set of facts: (1) a totalist ideology; (2) a single party committed to this ideology and usually led by one man, the dictator; (3) a fully developed secret police and three kinds of monopoly or more precisely monopolistic control; namely, that of (a) mass communications, (b) operational weapons, and (c) all organizations including economic ones, thus involving a centrally planned economy [...]. We might add that these six features could if greater simplicity is desired lie grouped into three, a totalist ideology, a party reinforced by a secret police and a monopoly of three major forms of interpersonal confrontation in industrial mass society. Such monopoly is not necessarily exercised by the party. [...] The important point is that

<sup>55</sup> Kõll, (1998, 62-64) in her study, discusses presenting quantitative data and statistics on industrial growth which was the result of economic nationalism and the active role of the state in developing industry in Estonia between 1934 and 1939).

<sup>56</sup> The Estonian experience in totalitarianism has been mapped by several historians, e.g. Kreegipuu (2011), Paavle (2009), Rahi-Tamm (2004), Tarvel, Maripuu (2010), Kangilaski (1999), Nõmmela (2013), Raudsepp (2005), Zubkova (2007), Tannberg (1999), Wieselgren (2002[1942]), Aarelaid (2006), Kuuli (2002, 2007), Karjahärm and Luts (2005), Lauk (1999), Veskimägi (1996) and others.

such monopolistic control is in the hands of whatever elite rules the particulars society and thereby constitutes its regime. (Friedrich, 1969, p.126 cited in Linz 65-66)

Together with Karl Popper's *The open society and its enemies* (1945), which traced the roots of totalitarian thought to Plato, Hegel, and Marx, the most influential theoretical account of totalitarianism remains Hannah Arendt's *The origins of totalitarianism* (1985, [1948]). According to Arendt, Nazism and Stalinism were extreme forms of the ideological movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; they used the 'idea' of their respective ideologies as instruments for dominating the contemporary mass-society of alienated individuals. For Arendt (1985, 316-317), the breakdown of class society brought about the psychology of the European *mass man* and nationalistic ideology:

the masses grew out of the fragments of a highly atomized society whose competitive structure and concomitant loneliness of the individual had been held in only through membership in a class. The chief characteristic of the *mass man* did not brutality and backwardness, but his isolation and lack of normal social relationships.

[...] Coming from the classridden society of the nation-state, whose cracks had been cemented with nationalistic sentiment, it is only natural that these masses, in the first helplessness of their new experience, have tended toward and especially violent nationalism, to which mass leaders have yielded against their own instincts for purely demagogic reasons,' Arendt 'claims (1985, 317)

Her focus is on exploring the mechanisms of loyalty and power in a party system, on terror, the role of secret police in replacing the individual by the atomised 'mass man', and then mobilizing society through propaganda.

Linz (2000, 18) keeps some distance from the mass-society perspective,<sup>57</sup> by arguing that many, if not most, of the people, who joined the Nazi movement were not individuals *per se*, but did so as members of 'civil society' groups taken over by Nazi activists, or went to Nazi rallies with friends. He (ibid.) claims that the 'success of totalitarian movements was neither the result of alienation generated by "mass society" nor the loneliness of individuals in modern industrial or capitalist societies. In fact, in some cases these successes were facilitated by the integration of individuals into close groups that rejected the larger, more complex and open society'.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup> On the term of mass-society William Kornhauser (1968) claims 'mass society' is best understood as a term denoting a model of certain kinds of relationships that may come to dominate a society or part of a society. Terms like "mass production" and "mass communication" refer to activities that are intended to affect very large numbers of people who are seen, for these purposes, as more or less undifferentiated units of an aggregate or "mass." Similarly, a "mass society" is one in which many or most of the major institutions are organized to deal with people in the aggregate and in which similarities between the attitudes and behaviour of individuals tend to be viewed as more important than differences. Societies or institutions organized in this way are said to have a "mass character," and the life of individuals in such societies is said to be governed primarily by "mass relations." see more <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3045000782.html>

<sup>58</sup> 'Some of those groups, like the Italian veterans (the *Arditi*) and the German *Freikorps*, had been formed on the basis of close emotional relations developed during World War I and the violent postwar years.' Linz (2000, 18)

However, Linz (2000, 18-19) agrees with Arendt that the mass-society perspective does help us understand the success of totalitarian rule, once consolidated. The destruction, or at least decisive weakening of all institutions, organizations, and interest groups existing before a new elite takes political power and organizes its own political structures, is one of the distinguishing characteristics of totalitarian systems compared with other non-democratic systems, as even such primary groups as family and friends were threatened, as Linz (2000) explains.

He (2000, 66) suggests, that a totalitarian system can be based on the identification of a very large part of the population's active involvement in political organizations controlled by them and at the service of their goals. There is also the use of diffused social control based on voluntary, manipulated involvement and a mixture of rewards and threats in a relatively closed society – as long as the rulers can count on the loyalty of the armed forces. Linz (2000, 70) also points out two other important characteristics of totalitarianism:

(1) a monistic centre of power, and (2) citizen participation in political and social tasks, when active participation is replaced by passive obedience and apathy, then society is losing its totalitarian nature and degrading into authoritarianism.

According to Linz, (2000, 72) the destruction of civil society – which could not function without the freedoms guaranteed by the liberal state based on the rule of law (the *Rechtsstaat*) – the penetration of society by mass organizations controlled by a single party, and the fears generated by repression and terror certainly isolated individuals and facilitated mass manipulation and mobilization.

However, scholars agree that the central element – the core of the concept of totalitarianism – is *the idea of total domination*. Arendt (1985) sees total domination not as end in itself, but as *a tool for implementing and confirming ideology*. The questions about total domination not being an end in itself, but as a tool of implementing and confirming the ideology, explains the Soviet totalitarian state practices or *sovietization* in culture and education in Estonia (1940-91). It is one of the main focal points in the current examination of Estonian politics of culture. It also, is very much connected with the question about interactions between the civil society and suppressive state – the other central aspect of this dissertation.

Arendt (1985, 341-364), explains the connections between isolated individuals and facilitated mass mobilization with the use of propaganda as a specific feature of totalitarian regimes:

Only the mob and the elite can be attracted by momentum of totalitarianism itself: the masses have to be won by propaganda. It was recognized early and has frequently been asserted that in totalitarian countries propaganda and terror present two sides of the same coin.

[...] Wherever totalitarianism possesses absolute control, it replaces propaganda with indoctrination and uses violence not so much to frighten people (this is done only in the initial stages when political opposition still exists) as to realize constantly its ideological doctrines and its practical lies. (Arendt 1985, 341)

This understanding fits perfectly with the results of the empirical examination of Soviet cultural policy and community houses in Estonia (1940-91) which were used as propaganda tools for the indoctrination of the Soviet cultural canon and ideology by totalitarian regime (see chapter 3, first and third article).

Philip M. Taylor (2011, 22-23) has defined propaganda as 'communication of ideas, aimed at convincing people to think or act in a certain way, whereas the convincing agents directly or indirectly benefit from the above-mentioned behaviour or way of thinking'. Deliberateness and a relatively heavy emphasis on manipulation distinguish propaganda from casual conversation or the free-and-easy exchange of ideas. The propagandist has a specified goal or set of goals.

In order to maximize the effect of propaganda, it also always contains censorship, which is needed for excluding any alternatives to official information. And it has been so throughout the history of mankind that powerholders have been keen on having control over the content and distribution of public information in a society, as Epp Lauk (1999, 19) notes. The authoritarian and totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century have created the most complicated and all-embracing machineries of manipulation information and public opinion by using the mass media and censorship, Lauk (*ibid.*)<sup>59</sup> explains. She (1999) uses censorship as a term with two meanings:

1) as control over the content and forms of the public information; and 2) as the system executing this control. [...] Censorship is also a means of detailed regulation and complicated network of special instructions and institutions that limit access to information on the one hand, and restrict access to the distribution channels on the other.

In the Soviet Union, the term *propaganda* had yet another connotation, associated with the term *agitation*, as Lasswell (1946) explains. The two terms were first used by the Marxist Georgy Plekhanov and later elaborated upon by Lenin in a pamphlet *What Is to Be Done?* (1902). In this, he defined 'propaganda' as the reasoned use of historical and scientific arguments to indoctrinate the educated and enlightened (the attentive and informed publics, in the language of today's social sciences). He defined 'agitation' as the use of slogans, parables and half-truths to exploit the grievances of the uneducated. Since he regarded both strategies as absolutely essential to political victory, he twinned them in the term '*agitprop*'. As Lasswell (1946) explains, each unit of a Communist party must have an *agitprop section*, and to the Communist, the use of propaganda in *Lenin's sense* is commendable and justifiable. Thus, a standard Soviet manual for teachers of social sciences was entitled *Propagandistu politekonomii (For the Propagandist of Political Economy)*, and a pocket-sized booklet issued weekly suggesting timely slogans and brief arguments to be used in speeches and conversations among the masses was called *Bloknnot agitatora (The Agitator's Notebook)* (*ibid.*).

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<sup>59</sup> Soviet censorship in Estonian has been researched by several scholars, e.g. Veskimägi (1996) Lauk (1999), Kreegipuu, (2011), Miil (2014).

In respect of cultural policy and community houses, these aspects of agitation and censorship of Soviet propaganda create a context to explain obligatory *agitprop* activities, censored play-bills, guided instructions for amateur arts and artistic repertoire in community houses discussed in the third article of this dissertation (Kulbok-Lattik 2014) and also for the syllabus of the Soviet cultural education system. In the light of the results of this dissertation, it appears that cultural policy has been used as the tool for mass mobilization of, and indoctrination by, ideological propaganda in totalitarian political system in order to create manipulated reality of closed society. Thus, the Soviet propaganda system can be looked at as a tool of the Communist Party in achieving their goals – foremost that of retaining their rule, as noted by Miil (2014, 95), who studied the functioning of propaganda in the Estonian press.

In the context of the Soviet system of cultural education, it is an interesting discussion as to what extent any teaching or ‘civilizing’ process (or any communicative act or speech act) includes indoctrination and it is not clear enough where to draw any borderline between education, indoctrination and propaganda. As Rauno Huttunen (2003) points out in his article *Habermas and the Problem of Indoctrination*, the critical theory of education takes into consideration both the aspect of freedom and the aspect of power in the process of socialisation. Huttunen (ibid.) explains, referring to Schäfer and Schaller (1975, 57), that the opposite of indoctrination is *communicative teaching*, based on ‘*The Bildung as a human teaching situation*’ where students are not treated as passive objects but as active learners. Communicative teaching is a simulation of democracy and the democratic mode of action.

Huttunen (ibid.) stresses the question of power in education, referring to Foucault (1991, 194): ‘The individual is no doubt the fictitious atom of an ideological representation of society, but he is also a reality fabricated by this specific technology of power that I have called “discipline”’. As Huttunen claims, Foucault’s concept of discipline poses a great challenge to the theory of indoctrination: ‘If the Foucauldian illustration is the whole truth about individuality then the critique on indoctrination, is impossible.’

Thus, aspects of freedom, and the aspect of power in the process of socialization are inherently dependent on the general political system, values and ideology, as Smith, Lasswell and Casey (1946) have suggested. In non-democratic political systems, culture and education have been used as the tools of propaganda and shaped in accordance with the ideological purposes of a coercive state.

In order to contextualise the above-presented various complex phenomena related to the historical development of Estonian cultural policy and to bring all the theoretical concepts to a common denominator, the theoretical framework of modernity and multiple modernities has been used.

## 2.6 Concept of Modernity and Multiple Modernities

As mentioned above, modernity, as it took shape in Europe, was premised not only on a 'package of technological and organizational developments', but rather, it was 'the constitution of a set of institutional projects of specific nature,' which interact and influence each other as Wittrock (2000, 39-45) explains. Anthony Giddens (1990, 58) proposes four basic institutional dimensions of modernity and their interrelations: the rise of capitalism and the nation-state, which have been historically intertwined in their mutual development. If capitalism was one of the great institutional elements promoting the acceleration and expansion of modern institutions, the other was the nation-state, which concentrated administrative power far more efficiently than traditional states were able to do (1990, 62). That is why surveillance, as a third dimension of modernity, appears as control of information and social supervision of the nation-state, and it is connected with the fourth dimension; military power, as the control of the means of violence in the context of industrialization<sup>60</sup> or war are concentrated towards the administrative power of the nation-states. In the political systems of liberal democracy, the power and force of market and nation-state has been balanced by civil society.<sup>61</sup>

However, interactions between these modern institutional settings vary in the different political systems. In this dissertation I have theorized these different experiences within a broad theoretical framework of multiple modernities, discussed by several scholars (Eisenstadt 2002, 1-3, Hoffmann 2011, 1-3, Bauman 1991, Giddens, 1990, Wittrock 2000, Arnason 2000, 66-67 et al.).

As typically presented, modernization refers to a set of socioeconomic (e.g., industrialisation, urbanisation), political (e.g., democratization and mass participation), and intellectual (e.g., secularization, rise of mass literacy) transformations that begun in Western Europe by the late eighteenth century. However, their roots include the cumulative impact of key elements in earlier centuries such as the Renaissance, the Reformation and the Scientific Revolution, as Martinelli (2005, 19) has pointed out. Raun (2009, 39) notes that modernity also implies a new cultural code, that is, a transformed set of values, thus summarised by Antonio Martinelli:

Rationalism, individualism/subjectivity, utilitarianism, the incessant quest for knowledge, innovation and discovery, the constitution of the self as an autonomous

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<sup>60</sup> Industrialism becomes the main axis of the interaction of human beings with nature in the conditions of modernity. When pre-modern cultures humans saw themselves as continuous with nature, then in the industrialized sectors, human beings live on a created environment, and environment of action is physical but no longer just natural. Giddens (1990, 60)

<sup>61</sup> According to Giddens' (1990) idea of 'reflexive modernism', new types of participatory practices of civil society are a new type of society rather than a part of society. This is the reason why Giddens (1990) has stated that the concept of civil society has become one of the most important concepts in social sciences in studying modern society.

subject, the refusal of limits, the principles of liberty and equality of rights and opportunities.<sup>62</sup>

The principles of liberty and equality, mass literacy and increasing involvement of people within public life, nationalism in theory and practice, helped to break the mentality of a strict order of class and status, and thus became the main developments in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European societies. A growing striving towards the liberalisation of society was an also important precondition to the development of market economies in countries throughout Europe. Several theorists, e.g Greenfeld<sup>63</sup> (1993, 18) and Wittrock (2000, 47),<sup>64</sup> point out the deep cultural shift (or change of social order by Greenfeld) at the turn of the eighteenth century, when a distinctively new set of institutional projects<sup>65</sup> emerged and became emblematic of the modern world at large. Wittrock (2000, 48-49), emphasising the modern public sphere and political order, explains that centuries-old ideas of representation in the form of estates and parliaments, were complemented by the demands for participation and even popular sovereignty. In political terms, this gradual shift ended with the eventual replacement of constitutional monarchical regimes by some form of parliamentary democracy:

In the political sphere, the new institutions involved a conception of political order as constituted and legitimated in terms of not only silent tolerance but also some form of active acquiescence and participation. [...] New public spheres also emerged outside of courts, academies, and salons, outside of the control and purview of royal sanction and control. Whether in scholarly, political, or artistic life, for a are created

<sup>62</sup> Martinelli, A., *Global Moderization: Rethinking the Project of Modernity*. London: Sage, 2005. pp.19, cited in Raun 2009, 39.

<sup>63</sup> Greenfeld (1993, 18) believes that the constitutive element of modernity is formed by the idea of 'nation'. Greenfeld reverses the order of precedence, and therefore of conventionally-assumed causality, that nationalism is a product or reflection of major components of modernization, but he sees *modernity as defined by nationalism*. Greenfeld does not deny the relevant structural factors in the modernization process. Rather, according to him, social action is based on social order which is a culture-forming phenomenon. Every social order (that is, the overall *structure* of a society) represents a materialization, or objectivization, of its image shared by those who participate in it. The Weberian idea of the *social* provides a rationale for this view. As the particular image of social order provided by a culture forms the constitutive element of any given society, then a change in the generalized identity (*for example, from religious or estate to national*) presupposes a transformation of the image of the social order. Greenfeld, L. *Nationalism. Five Roads to Modernity*. Harvard University Press, London, 1993, 18-21

<sup>64</sup> Wittrock discusses modernity as a global phenomenon with specific historical, cultural, social, economic and political preconditions which form constitutively the process of modernization which differs geographically and in time. Wittrock, B., *Modernity: One, None, or Many? European Origins and Modernity as a Global Condition*. In: *Daedalus*; Winter 2000; 129, 1; ProQuest Library, p.31.

<sup>65</sup> The notion of institutional projects here refers to economic organization in the form of liberal market economy and changes in the political order, conceptualized as a modern nation-state of compatriots or as a conceptualized constitutional republic of fellow citizens rather than in the form of an absolute monarchy with its distinction between ruler and subjects. In the realm of private interactions, new demands arose for a legally protected sphere where the state was only allowed to make interventions and undertake sanctions that were clearly specified and foreseeable. (Wittrock 2000, 48,49)

that are based on the idea that public discourse should not be subject to persecution or censorship but should rather enable the expression of opinion on all aspects of political and public life. (Wittrock 2000, 48-49)

Thus, the modernist ethos of an established favourable basis for socio-economic, cultural and national emancipation went hand in hand with political emancipation (*Bildung and nation-building*). This also applied among small oppressed European nations (Estonians, Latvians and others) that lacked previous nation-state experience in the second half of nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century. For these nations, the end of World War I and the final disintegration of continental empires was an opportunity to realize their aspirations for national self-determination and to establish modern nation-states in 1918.

Many scholars have stressed *modern state interventionism* as the central defining feature of modernity. Zygmunt Bauman (1991), for example, sees the impulse to manage society through the application of bureaucratic procedures and categories as a fundamental characteristic of modernity. Giddens (1990, 88-102) identifies a key aspect of modernity as a *trust in expert systems*, institutional dimensions of modernity, which established rational procedures and norms to replace traditional ways of doing things. Also Hoffmann (2003, 2011) defines modernity in terms of two features common to all *modern political systems: social interventionism*<sup>66</sup> and the *mass politics of state*. The modern ethos of social interventionism arose from a variety of streams in early modern and modern Europe intellectual development, most particularly cameralist thought and Enlightenment rationalism:

By the nineteenth century the Enlightenment idea of social science has spawned new professional disciplines (demography, epidemiology, social hygiene, psychology) and new technologies of social intervention (censuses, medical visits, housing inspections, mass psychological testing). [...] These technologies in turn greatly heightened the ambitions of social reformers and political leaders to eliminate social problems and refashion society. Societies were increasingly conceived of as entities that could be mapped statistically, reordered and cultivated, and administered scientifically by experts who stood above the rights of individuals or the interests of specific social groups. (Hoffman 2003, 8)

Social transformation, however, required not only a scientific understanding of society but a means to change people's thinking and behaviour. It necessitated the *inculcation* of new cultural norms and values that could make everyday life ordered and productive. As Hoffmann (2003, 2011) explains, by the nineteenth century, there arose in countries throughout Europe a new ethos of social intervention by which the leaders of these movements – government officials (but also nongovernment professionals) – sought to reshape their societies in ac-

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<sup>66</sup> Social interventionism is an action which involves the intervention of a government or an organization in social affairs. Such policies can include provision of charity or social welfare as a means to alleviate social and economic problems of people facing financial difficulties. Further aspects include provision of health care, provision of education, provision of safety regulations for employment and products, delivery of food aid or recovery missions to regions or countries negatively affected by an event, adoption programs; (McClelland 1996, 481 [1]).



cordance with scientific and aesthetic norms. They sought to 'civilize' the masses through productivity campaigns, housing inspections, temperance movements and primary education:

Norms of efficiency, hygiene, sobriety, and literacy therefore received the utmost attention from government officials and non-state professionals alike as they sought to inculcate these values in the lower classes. (Hoffmann 2003:8, 2011)

In short, it can be said that for a changing society, interaction between the forces and processes unleashed by modernization were like a force field with several different institutional poles: on one hand, *new types of public and civic initiatives – civil society* – arose in the course of social liberalization, while on the other, the influence of the state – *an apparatus comprised of experts* – on the population increased and state intervention in various fields *increased in scope*. As Wittrock (2000, 39-47) explains, modernity, as it took shape in Europe, was premised not just on a 'package of technological and organizational developments', but rather, it was 'the constitution of a set of institutional projects of specific nature. The institutions were not just new, but they were to serve as vehicles for the enhancement of a continuous process of innovation'. And critical reflexivity has played important role of that continuous process of innovation, as Wittrock (2000, 47) says it:

Across confrontations and divergences there existed a fundamental acknowledgement of the idea that agency, reflexivity, and historical consciousness might help construct of a new set of institutions. [...] For the first time the idea of ethical life was premised on a radical and irreversible stance about the the principled equal rights of all human beings to participate in the macro-institutions of the public sphere and of the state.

Giddens (1990, 38) explains the specific *character of reflexivity of modern society*, which is inherently linked to the wide access to education and literacy, and technological intervention in human lives.<sup>67</sup>

However, modernization as global phenomenon has taken very different forms, not only in Europe but also in other continents. Scholars have introduced the concept of '*multiple modernities*', an approach that acknowledges divergent trajectories of development of the modern era, as Eisenstadt (2002, 1-3) explains. This gives a global overview of the *variability of modernities*. Hoffmann (2003, 2011) discusses the *specific coercive version of modernity* of the Soviet Union and other illiberal states, which include national socialist Germany, Italy, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania etc, and which shared numerous cultural forms and values with other modern states *in the interwar period*, common to modern Europe-

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<sup>67</sup> Giddens (1990, 38, 39) claims that social practices are constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information, as all forms of social life are partly constituted by actors' knowledge of them. Knowing 'how to go on' in Wittgenstein's sense, is intrinsic to the conventions which are drawn upon and reproduced by human activity. In all cultures, social practices are routinely altered in the light of ongoing discoveries which feed into them. Characteristic of modernity is the presumption of wholesale reflexivity. This, of course, includes reflection upon the nature of reflection itself.

an culture more generally. Hoffmann (2011,3) claims that many features of Stalinist state interventions in culture reflected the ambitions of nineteenth- and twentieth-century political leaders and social reformers to manage and mobilize their populations in ways unique to the modern era. In the comparison of modern state practices of the Soviet Union and Western states, Soviet state intervention is best understood as one particular (coercive) *version of modern aspirations to fashion a rational order*, aspirations that emanated from the Enlightenment idea that the social world was neither preordained nor fixed but was instead of humankind's own making (ibid.).

Bauman (1991) and Giddens (1999) have tried to explain the darker sides for the creation of totalitarian power using the administrative resources of modern nation-state. Giddens (1999, 172) claims that the intensifying of surveillance provides many avenues for democratic involvement, but also makes possible the sectional control of political power, bolstered by monopolistic access to the means of violence, as an instrument of terror. Totalitarianism and modernity are inherently connected as Zygmunt Bauman (1991) has made clear by offering a sociological analysis of Holocaust. He has proposed that the Holocaust was characteristically modern phenomenon that cannot be understood outside the context of cultural tendencies and the technical achievements of modernity:

The Holocaust was an outcome of a unique encounter between factors by themselves quite ordinary and common; and that the possibility of such an encounter could be blamed to very large extent on the emancipation of the political state, with its monopoly of means of violence and its audacious engineering ambitions, from social control – following the step-by step dismantling of all non-political power resources and institutions of social self-management. (Bauman 1991, xiii)

Arnason (2000, 66-67) discusses another totalitarian political system: communism in the context of the *modernizing dynamic of Communist regimes*, bringing out their achievements and inhibitions. Arnason (2000, 67) claims that key modernizing processes were continued or initiated in totalitarian political systems, but they were *structured in a way that obstructed or defeated their long-term developmental logic*.<sup>68</sup>

I share the idea that in respect of comparing the differences in the socio-economic and historical development patterns of Western European states, Nordic states, and the Baltic states as part of Soviet Union (1940-1991), the *concept of different (multiple) modernities*, should be considered as one of the key is-

<sup>68</sup> Rapid industrialization was one of the most important strategic goals of Communist regimes (and seemed at first to be one of the most easily achievable). However, critical analysts have also singled the dependence on obsolete industrial models as one of the most conspicuous causes of decline and crisis. This was not simply a matter of historical inertia or passive traditionalisation of early stages of industrial growth. Rather, the industrializing strategy was embedded in an ideological projection of past developmental patterns (the Bolshevik appropriation of Taylorism exemplifies a more general attitude). A streamlined image of past developments became an obstacle to innovation, as Arnason (2000, 67) explains referring to W.W. Rostow, 'Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union: A Technological Timewarp', In: *The Crisis of Leninism and the Decline of the Left: The Revolutions of 1989*, ed Danile Chirot, (1991), 63, describes the Soviet model of industrialization as '*one that could manage and even expand output using incrementally improved pre-1917 heavy industry technologies*'.

sues. The recent history of Estonia (and the Baltic states in general) offers an example of *different experiences of modern state practices*: the development of the nation-state with the rise of liberal democracy and industrial capitalism within Western modernity (1918-1930s), and Soviet socialist state practices from 1940 to 1991 within the Communist project of Modernity.

Summing up, as it was shown above, the changing scope and practices of cultural policy in twentieth century Europe have been shaped by the main modes of societal organization of modern era – *civil society, capitalist market and the nation-state* – which all interact with and influence each other. In this chapter these complex phenomena, e.g. politics, nation, state and nation-state and their interrelations, have been discussed. Further related theoretical concepts, e.g. nation-building and propaganda, civil society, public sphere and public square which explain interactions between individuals as agents and administrative power as structure and state practices, as the control of the means of violence varying in different political systems, have been presented.

In order to contextualise the results of empirical research on the historical development of Estonian cultural policy with above presented various discussions, the theoretical framework of multiple modernities has been used. This examination of the historical periods of Estonian cultural policy and the emergence of Estonian community houses explicitly reveals the interactions between civil society, political mobilization and varying state practices in culture during the different political systems. We can follow the rise of the the public sphere and civil society, cultural emancipation, modern nation-building and the political mobilization of Estonians from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards. We can follow the formation of the modern Western liberal nation-state and its practices, including the shift in politics towards the authoritarian state and its practices. Also, we can also follow the Soviet project of modernity within the attempt to re-educate and civilize the masses, to achieve total control and create the homogeneous culture and identity of the *homo Sovieticus*, the manipulation of civil society and imperial modern state building.

### 3 ESTONIAN CULTURAL POLICY

In this chapter, analysis will be carried out on the roots, specific features and historical development of Estonian cultural policy. The aim is to synthesize empirical material presented in the articles and the theoretical conceptions from previous chapter.

First, the historical roots of Estonian cultural policy in the activities of civil society and its' constitutive phenomenas – public square and public sphere – using the example of community houses will be detailed. Second, the connections between Estonian cultural practices, national identity and cultural nationalism (*kultuurrahvuslus*) as the basis for political mobilization, and one of the basic aims of Estonian state cultural policy will be discussed (explored in the second article, the case study on community houses). Third, an analysis of the specific features of Soviet state practices in cultural policy and on ideology behind the Soviet cultural canon will be carried out (explored in the third article of the dissertation). Fourthly, discussion on whether sovietization succeeded, and on the interactions between civil society and state interference during different political eras of Estonian history, will be provided as one of the focal points of the dissertation. Finally, summarising the chapter as a whole, I will look at the developments in cultural policy as a public policy which emanates from the development of modern state practices in Estonia with the concept of *multiple modernities*.

#### 3.1 Historical roots of Estonian Cultural Policy in Civil Society with the Example of Community houses

There is a remarkable variety of cultural policies and cultural institutions within countries and this depends considerably on their specific historical socio-economic background: politics, the historically-formed social order, system of values, and dominant ideologies.

In the Estonian case, the roots of Estonian cultural policy lay in the activities of civil activism and the society movement of the Estonian population in the Tsarist Empire. From the second half of the nineteenth century, the development of Estonia could be characterised by general Western modernisation starting with the reorganising of the static agrarian society<sup>69</sup> into a modern European one. Important preconditions for these developments were widespread literacy among Estonians, and agrarian reforms of the nineteenth century which had a direct impact on the majority of the population on Estonian territory as the native population became landowners and the capitalist economy developed. According to Laur and Pirsko (1998, 180), by the end of the nineteenth century, the peasants in Southern Estonia (Livonian province) possessed over 80%, and in Northern Estonia (Estonian province) 50%, of the available farmland.<sup>70</sup>

By that time, Estonians had developed a new oral and written communication network and a tradition of social activism, expressed in a wide range of activities of the society movement. These were the indications that an Estonian *civil society* had begun to take shape, as Jansen (2007, 504) notes. The provision of education in Estonian and the broad circulation of Estonian newspapers (15 Estonian newspaper existed by the end of the nineteenth century) stimulated people's political awareness, as well as debates on ethnicity and nationalism that appeared often in the press. Jansen (*ibid.*)<sup>71</sup> claims that newspapers were seen as guarantors of Estonian customs and manners, and of continued progress: in keeping with liberal ideology, newspapers encouraged the accumulation of wealth and resources and called for increases in education. We can speak about a developing Estonian *public sphere*.

Estonian community houses (like other public cultural institutions) emerged out of civic initiatives (society and temperance movement) of the nineteenth century modernization process. Ordinary people in the countryside (as well as in towns) who joined cultural, agricultural, temperance or other societies, started to build houses: cultural centres for public use in towns and villages.<sup>72</sup> The houses were built with main task of providing space and possibilities

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<sup>69</sup> Alexander II (1855–81) and the emancipation of the peasants of the Russian Empire gave new impetus to the reforms carried out in the Baltic provinces. The 1866 peasant township law freed the peasants' local government councils from the landlords' authority and granted them extensive rights to decide their own economic and social affairs (Laur & Pirsko 1998, 173–92).

<sup>70</sup> Some of the farms were rented and farm owners comprised the major economic power in Estonian society at the time. Farm owners were also the most active group of people at the time (Laur, Pirsko 1998, 180).

<sup>71</sup> With their correspondent networks in rural and urban areas, the groundwork for an Estonian public sphere took shape in both town and countryside, with schoolteachers, the more vigorous and younger peasant household heads, minor functionaries, and rural artisans, in the leading roles. (Jansen, 2007)

<sup>72</sup> Similar movements flourished in many European countries (starting to develop already from the eighteenth century – especially in Germany, reading and music societies, enlightening cultural houses in Tsarist Russia, Finland and Sweden as heralds of the flourishing development of citizenship, settlement houses in England and America which were based on the ideas of Mathew Arnold and Jane Addams (see Bilton 2006, Kulbok-Lattik 2012).

for new cultural practices, such as singing in polyphonic choirs, playing music in brass bands, acting in plays, lending books from libraries and taking part in lectures, as well as having local public festivities. As pointed out by Estonian ethnologist Karu (1985, 281), despite the high rate of literacy among rural Estonian people, (96.2 per cent literacy already by 1881) the opportunities for them to take up intellectual pursuits had been extremely limited for centuries. There was no public room or space for their cultural activities and that is why Estonian community houses were built by local communities.<sup>73</sup> By building these houses, people themselves created the conditions necessary for the development of their culture. The first society house was built in Kanepi in 1887 by a local choral society.

From previous research (ethnographic literature, archive, memories, photos) on Estonian community houses, the presence of all of the four factors seen as necessary prerequisites for a successful nationalist movements appears, underlined by Hroch (1996): (1) Cultural activities in the community houses involved a large number of rural people from all social strata, from the rural intelligentsia, to craftsmen and hired farm labours, who obviously shared a strong sense of identity and common historical past within the group. (2) Hence the society and community houses provided a certain level of vertical mobility and (3) also served an increasing level of social communication and literacy. (4) Finally, the establishment of society and community houses was linked to nation-based conflict between Estonians and Baltic Germans, and Russian officials of Tsarist state, with the basic intention to improve the status and suppressed rights of Estonians.

However, the society and community houses contributed to the Estonian nation-building and political mobilization without *being openly political fora*. That is the reason why community houses have been theorized using Bakhtin's concept of *public square* in this dissertation. As a concept, Bakhtin's *public square* helps to explain the democratic and uncontrollable essence of community houses as public space for festivities within the polyphony of complex interactions and voices, including the hidden intentions and resistance of Estonians towards the suppressive regime. Estonians could diligently sing songs to praise the Tsar during the reactionary politics of culture from the 1880s (and later in the same pragmatic way, to praise the great leaders of the Communist Empire), whilst continuing to express their feelings towards their home and country. They had the principal task of being a location for public festivities, meetings and cultural

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<sup>73</sup> Before the emergence of community houses, inns and pubs were popular meeting places in Estonia already by the eighteenth century. The traditional celebrations mostly took place in farmsteads or in the open-air meeting places of the villages (youth dancing, swinging) during summertime. However people (mainly men, but also women) gathered in inns, traditionally on Thursdays or Sundays after going to church. Pubs were important places for the developing Estonian *publik* in rural areas where peasants exchanged news and discussed important social matters (for instance wrote letters to the Tsar complaining about the arbitrariness of Baltic-German landlords). In 1900, the vodka monopoly was established by the Russian state in Estonia and most pubs (2400) were closed. Only a small number of pubs continued working as alcohol shops owned by the state or as buffets (Kulbok-Lattik, 2012).

practices where people shared feelings of togetherness as the basis for shared local, cultural and national identity (Kulbok-Lattik 2012).

Thus, economic, social and political changes within this general modernization formed the preconditions for the development of civil society and *cultural emancipation*. As a result of the Russian-centred power, and the socio-economic situation dominated by the Baltic German nobility, the elite of the 'awakened peasantry' was highly motivated to build up their own cultural and public sphere with the intention of improving the status of Estonians in society. As scholars of Estonian nation-building (e. g. Jansen 2004, 2007, Karjahärm and Sirk 1997, Aarelaid 1996, Laar 2006) explain, Estonian society and the national movement were developing in two parallel directions: at its height, in 1860-80, the society movement was governed by a politically moderate trend in their specific ethnic-linguistic aims and stressed the need to develop national culture and education in Estonian. The other direction in the Estonian national movement concentrated on the open political struggle against the Baltic German nobility.

Estonian national aspirations were mainly connected with cultural goals (according to the ideology and programme offered by Jakob Hurt and his contemporaries, later the Young Estonians etc). However, with time, the national movement became more political, demanding 'equal rights' with the ruling Baltic-German nobility with regard to participation in running local affairs (as was proposed by C. R. Jakobson and his companions). Pastor and linguist Jakob Hurt (1839-1906),<sup>74</sup> founder of the Estonian national ideology, was convinced that the mission of a small nation can only be of a cultural and not of a political nature; what counts is national identity, not statehood as such.

The movement's radical wing was headed by Carl Robert Jakobson (1841-82),<sup>75</sup> a pedagogue, writer and journalist, and founder of *Sakala*, the first political newspaper in Estonian (published 1878-82). Jakobson formulated the economic and political programme of the Estonian national movement, demanding equal political rights for Germans and Estonians.<sup>76</sup> These two parallel directions in the historical development of cultural and national emancipation intertwined with each other and so contributed to the formation of a successful Estonian nation-building movement. The movement started with cultural practices and a shared feeling of togetherness, so reinforcing the basis of national identity and ended with mass mobilization and political self-determination (1860-1918).<sup>77</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Jakob Hurt (1839-1906), pastor, scholar and linguist [www.estonica.org/en/](http://www.estonica.org/en/)

<sup>75</sup> Carl Robert Jakobson (1841-1882), pedagogue, writer and journalist

<sup>76</sup> Equal political rights consisted of representation of peasants and urban dwellers at diets, abolishment of the Baltic *Landesstaat* and the privileges of the Baltic German nobility. Jakobson regarded the Russian central government as main anti-German ally. <http://www.estonica.org/en/>

<sup>77</sup> This kind of explanation is consistent with the findings of the prominent theorist of nations, Hroch (1996), who empirically develops and demonstrates the concept of a three-stage process of nationalistic mobilisation: heightened *cultural* awareness of national distinctiveness among intellectuals and literati, a concept of nationalism as a political programme, mass mobilisation on behalf of this programme. Hroch (1996) also shows these phases in relation to other social transformations, especially economic changes.

Open discussions in newspapers, political debates and activities among the Estonian elite who guided the political and social movements driven by the political program of Jakobson, can be theorised with the Habermasian *public sphere*. Society and community houses as fora of civil society with their cultural practices, theorised within the framework of Bakhtin's *public square*, supported the process of state-building by bringing the ideas of the Estonian elite to the grass-roots level.

I found the collective action by popular Estonian people who decided to build community houses – despite the obstruction and hindrance of tsarist Russian and Baltic-German authorities they faced – deeply political. Building community houses, they created *space of appearance* for their selves in the Arendtian sense as basis for their political and public realm, they created cultural institutions. National awakening or emancipation is inherently linked with civil activism and public sphere, as self-perception can appear only in the public (public sphere) where it is reflected, mediated and constructed in people's cultural and social practices. National emancipation depends on the specific intentions and suitable preconditions as pointed out by Greenfeld (1993, 28), referring to Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Earl of Shaftesbury:

A multitude held together by force, though under one and the same head, is not properly united: nor does such a body make a people. It is the social league, confederacy, and mutual consent, founded in some common good or interest, which joins the members of a community, and makes People one. When Absolute Power annuls the public; and where there is no public or constitution, there is in reality no mother-Country, or Nation.

Thus, national consciousness, as the basis for a feeling of belonging and constitutive part of people's selves, can appear in the democratic public. As Arendt (1958) notes, the space of appearance comes into being wherever men (sic) are together in the manner of speech and action, and therefore predates and precedes all formal constitution of public realm and various forms of government –, that is, the various forms in which the public realm can be organized.

In the contemporary social sciences, *public sphere* – as the political space for rational-critical public and *public square* as uncontrollable fora are inherently connected and are constitutive phenomena of civil society – is the social space of freedom and solidarity. By building houses for cultural activities and voluntary meetings, room / space was created by farm folk – both in Arendt's philosophical sense (the sense of space of appearance and polis), and literally, in the physical sense of the word. In this room, the identity of the ethnic group became the identity of the nation and the public realm in the Arendtian sense could appear, take shape, and develop. This was an important step by Estonians, who, thus far, had been in the custody of other ethnic groups in society, towards self-determination (*being*) as a nation as well as *immortality*, in the Arendtian sense, leaving their mark on the future. Creating space for their cultural practices, Estonian people created the basis and conditions for a physical and symbolic room – in other words, institutions for themselves as a sovereign entity with which to improve their political representation. This was the important



prerequisite for their openly political mobilization and the emergence of the nation-state and modern society. Photographs which exemplify the gradual cultural emancipation can be seen in appendix 3 (photos 1-13).

To summarize, the roots and origin of Estonian cultural institutions lie in the bottom-up initiatives of civil society with the aim of cultural and national emancipation which formed the basis for political mobilization and national self-determination. Political mobilization was inherently connected with cultural emancipation and thus was not only of suppressed Estonians, but follows the specific historical path of the many nations with a colonial past in Europe, as Hroch (1996) has shown. Therefore, this kind of developmental path – an awakening civil society actively involved in nation- and state-building – has been a quite typical process of modernization in Europe.

### 3.2 Formation and development of state cultural policy in Estonia 1918-1940

Cultural emancipation as shown in the example of Estonian community houses, as described above, is a good example of the Estonian path of engagement with modernity and reveals the connections between developing civil society, nation-building and nation state. This modernist (and inherent) connection is one of the constitutive features of the formation and development of Estonian society and its politics of culture.

Raun (2009) has described other basic signifiers of Estonian modernization at the beginning of the twentieth century as follows:

Estonian society was greatly enlivened by the emergence of a new generation of Estonian politicians,<sup>78</sup> the growth of urbanisation among Estonians was especially noteworthy,<sup>79</sup> the general educational and cultural level of the population steadily increased, prosperity increased, and the standard of living rose. Within two decades, by 1916-17, ethnic Estonians accounted for about 7000 of the secondary school students in the Northern Baltic region, or a little more than half the total number (13,000). Explosive growth was also evident at university level, rising from about 200 students in 1900 to about 1000 in 1915, although in this case more than half were enrolled at institutions of higher learning outside Estland and Northern Livonia governates. Raun (2009, 41)

He (*ibid.*) explains that new generations of Estonian students gained confidence from their larger numbers and felt a growing sense of intellectual community. Most famously, the movement of young Estonian intellectuals called 'Young Estonia' and its principal ideologist Gustav Suits developed a fundamental aim for cultural nation-building in 1905:

<sup>78</sup> In 1904, Estonians achieved their first major political breakthrough at the Tallinn municipal elections. The Estonian-Russian bloc gained a majority, defeating the Germans who had so far remained in power.

<sup>79</sup> In 1913, the percentage of ethnic Estonians had increased in Tallinn to 71.6% and in Tartu to 73.3%, the two largest towns in Estland and Northern Livland. (Reiman 1936, 191, Pullat 197, 60 cited in Raun 2009, 41)

'More culture! This is the first condition for the emancipation of ideals and goals. More European culture! Let's be Estonians, but let's also become Europeans!' (Raun 2009, 41).

The cultural programme of Young Estonia could be considered a natural development of the Estonian national ideology founded by Jakob Hurt (1839-1906), and shared by Villem Reiman (1861-1917), and others leaders of national movement.

Estonian civil society and *public sphere* developed during this period: newspapers played an essential part in the Estonians' social and political awareness. Also other kind of initiatives based on civil activism conceptualized as *public square* advanced and grew: in 1905 there were more than 500 societies and associations in Estonia which were very important in involving the masses in public life and in the social mobilisation of society<sup>80</sup>. The extensive building of society houses from the end of the nineteenth century continued in the twentieth, being most intense from 1905-14. There were 55 society (community) houses in 1914 (Kulbok-Lattik 2012, Uljas 1990, 9, Karu 1990, 624).

Estonia declared independence on 24 February 1918. Independence was conceived, on the one hand, as a result of the collapse of European empires, when new boundaries were laid down in Europe and the principle of self-determination became a legal basis for the new European order, as declared by US President Woodrow Wilson at the Paris Peace Conference following WW I.<sup>81</sup> On the other, independence was possible due to the cultural, national and political emancipation of colonized ethnic populations which allowed the establishment of nation-states as the new socio-economic and political system by the end of the war.

On 11 November 1918, the first government of the Republic of Estonia took office and Western democratic modern nation-state-like practices could be observed from then on during first 16 years (1918-1934) of this independent Estonian nation-state. Within the Ministry of Education, issues of art and cultural policy were the province of the department of art and heritage protection, which from June 1919 was divided into working groups for literature, figurative art, music and drama, and a heritage board. The department was set two tasks: 1) to create favourable pre-requisites for the development of art, first and foremost by providing artists with better living, studying, working and development condition, and (2) to create the conditions for improving the artistic and cultural level of the whole of the country and society. A third task was added later, this being responsibility for artistic and cultural representation both within and outside the country (Uljas, 2005, Kulbok-Lattik 2008).

As culture has been identified as a fundamental aim for *nation-building*, and as it had played a constitutive part for political mobilization, the creative intelligentsia and cultural societies have always played an important role in

<sup>80</sup> See Karjahärm 1973, 628; Jansen 2004; Laar 2006; Raun 2009; Zetterberg 2009.

<sup>81</sup> WWI (1914-18) resulted in a cataclysmic shift in the power structure on the European continent. The German, Habsburg, Russian and Ottoman Empires came out of the war fatally weakened) Berglund, S., Ekman, J., and Aarebrot, F., 2004, 13-55.

Estonian society. One of the most vigorous fighters for the creative intelligentsia's position was the writer and poet Friedebert Tuglas (1886-1971). Already in January 1919 he had written an article, 'The National Development of the Arts', in which he sketched out a plan for subsidising culture. At practically the same time (1919), the question of the financial problems of theatres was raised. In principle, it was decided that the state would cover 30 per cent of the actors' salaries, a point which concerned the two largest theatres, called Estonia and Vanemuine. Other theatres (for example, the Drama Theatre Society) also turned to the Ministry of Education for help (Uljas, 2005, Kulbok-Lattik 2008).

The years between (1921-24) saw quite a liberal economic policy, and the idea prevailed that the state should promote the freedom of financial activity and of capital, and so no specific acts to subsidise culture were passed. Thus, at the beginning of the 1920s, society was not yet ready to support the creative intelligentsia, and there were also no clear ideas for regulatory mechanisms from the state because of the lack of previous state-based experience. Further, cultural activities were initiated on the basis of bottom-up activities of the civil society. However, it was a time when the Estonian creative intelligentsia became conscious of, and started to express, its interests and to form professional associations to defend their special interests: in 1921 the Estonian Singers' Union was formed, in 1922 the Estonian Writers' Union and the Estonian Sports Association, in 1923 the Estonian Artists' Union, and in 1924 the Estonian Academic Society of Musicians. The writers also initiated one of the most important innovations of the liberal democratic cultural policy in the Estonian nation-state in the 1920s, the birth of the Cultural Endowment. The law was completed and passed in 1925.<sup>82</sup> From the establishment of the Cultural Endowment in 1925, the arm's length principle in cultural policy research, the cultural policy model of *the Patron State* could be seen in Estonia. Hillmann-Chartrand and McCaughey (1989, 6) describe *the Patron State* funding of fine arts through the arm's length arts councils to be based on 'blind trust' of the grant-giving commissions which authors consider the main strength - and also principle weakness - of this model.<sup>83</sup>

Modern state practices with a more purposeful cultural policy could be seen from 1925-34 when state interference in culture became more targeted (see Kulbok-Lattik 2012). Cultural policy, of course, changed in the frame of a gen-

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<sup>82</sup> This was one of the most democratic cultural policies during both the first period of the Republic of Estonia and the second. The establishment of the Cultural Endowment was accompanied by frantic wars of words and debates between different opinion and interest groups. The principal issues of debate were whether to subsidise culture at all, to what extent to do so, and how to decide on the subsidies and who allocates the grants, (Kulbok-Lattik, 2008; Uljas, 2005; Laak 1996).

<sup>83</sup> In the case of *Patron model* certain always questions remain: who are the decision-makers of funding? Either the art professionals, politicians, state officials? What are the standards for the arts and cultural projects to be supported? The policy dynamics of *the Patron state* tend to be evolutionary, responding to changing forms and styles of arts expressed by the artistic community. The economic status of the artist and artistic enterprise depends on a combination of box office appeal, the taste and preferences of grants received from arms' length arts councils and private donors (Hillmann-Chartrand and McCaughey, 1989, 6).

eral shift in state politics towards the strengthening of the economic functions of the state. This desire began to dominate from 1924. The new approach, drawn up by Otto Strandman (1875-1941),<sup>84</sup> played an important role in setting economic policy, which took the course of *determining general* economic policy. During this period the principles for financing the cultural institutions of the state were established. Acts were passed, or government regulations adopted, which set the terms and amount of state subsidies, and the sources of financing were set, as were the rights and obligations of the participating parties. Examples of this include the Public Libraries Act of 1924, the University of Tartu Act 1925, the National Minorities Cultural Autonomy Act 1925, the Societies and their Associations Act of 1926 (which affected the activities of cultural and educational societies), and the State Applied Art School (*Riigi Kunsttööstuskool*) Act of 1929.

In 1927, the new Cultural Endowment Act was passed, the most important change in which concerned the strengthening of the government's power over the Cultural Endowment through a change in the staff on its supervisory board, of which endowment panel members were no longer members. In 1928, within the supervisory board of the Cultural Endowment, a committee on cultural policy was formed, of which Konstantin Päts (1874-1956),<sup>85</sup> among others, was a member. Largely thanks to the work of this committee, the most prolific years of the Cultural Endowment began, during which many initiatives in cultural policy were launched. These included for example, the creation of the network of community houses, the reorganisation of theatres, and the organisation of the work of museums and art schools.<sup>86</sup> In February 1929, the committee passed the regulations of the Cultural Endowment *cultural propaganda foundation*, while Päts was appointed to develop the collection of statutes of the art museum foundation. Later, the statute collections of the Estonian National Museum and the Estonian Culture Film foundations were developed. Thus, the work of the committee involved a very wide spectrum of cultural policy.

The central figure of the committee was Konstantin Päts, who had modernist ideas about constructing Estonian statehood with strong institutions and a homogeneous national identity. Päts was on the opinion that '*balanced and stable statehood respecting the rights of citizens*', is based on secure organised institutions, which together support the social government.<sup>87</sup> According to Karjahärm (2002, 75), Päts saw an ideal society as a balanced integral whole, the individual

<sup>84</sup> Otto August Strandman (1875-1941) was an Estonian politician, key figure in composing the radical land reform law and the 1920 Constitution, and Minister of Finance (1924).

<sup>85</sup> Konstantin Päts (1874-1956) was one of the most important Estonian statesmen of the first half of the twentieth century, one of the founders of the Republic of Estonia, and from 1934-40 authoritarian State Elder Päts. He graduated from the law department of the University of Tartu in 1898.

<sup>86</sup> This committee also oversaw the establishment of the three cultural temples of Tallinn: *the conservatoire, the art museum and the art hall*.

<sup>87</sup> Karjahärm, (2002,75) has explored Päts' socio-political ideas, claims that Päts was influenced by social liberalism, solidarity, communal and neo-rural social reformism, agrarian socialism, and was impressed by the way the 'Anglo-Saxons' have been able to create a balanced and stable statehood respecting the rights of citizens.

parts of which were to function in absolute harmony, just like the organs of a living being. The basis of Pääts' *organic or institutional statehood* was the thesis that only those organs that have grown out of the life and needs of the nation, and blended in with the state, have a right to live. It can be said that the Estonian state in the 1930s was largely built up based on the ideas of Konstantin Pääts, the most important being his conviction that social life is maintained and carried forward by institutions, the bigger and stronger the institutions the stronger and more stable the nation, as referring to Pääts, Aru (2002, 41) claims:

The history of nations is in fact the history of institutions created by a nation. [...] The life of the institutions links together generations and bequeaths the future through the fruit of labours and losses of the past. People come and go, but institutions survive generations. (ibid.)

In summary, cultural policy before 1925 was rather chaotic. Culture was mostly influenced by civil society initiatives rather than through the coordinated interference of state. However, the state had fixed priorities in culture. Then, in the years 1925-34, we can identify the period of establishment of cultural institutions, and the creation of tools for state interference – with the help of legislation, the framework for the support of the principal fields of culture was created. Referring to Foucault's concept of governmentality, the development of the administrative apparatus of the modern state, also could be viewed as the formation of new *social order*. However, the state cultural policy was the subject of intensive debate among the intelligentsia and the political elite. It was a democratic era and forming state administrative structures and institutions was done in close dialogue and cooperation with civil society. A continuously active civil society and initiatives of individuals within the society movement developed even further, taking in the activities of educational, youth, womens', singing and acting, farmers', writers', fire-fighters' and other societies and institutions. Several networks of organisations were created e.g. the network of community houses. Civil society initiatives seized the entire nation, in 1929, 1385 cultural societies were active and their role was dominated within the cultural sphere (for example, the extensive setting up of War of Independence memorials which could be explained as a general need for physically-evident and semantically-marked national sovereignty and self-determination). According to Ruutsoo (2002, 63), during the years of the independent Estonian Republic (1918-34), new perspectives were opened in civil culture, civil traditions, and popular citizenship. He points out that for the first time in the history of Estonians (and other Baltic nations), essential processes related to nation-building, community building, civil society building, and state building could develop simultaneously and contribute to each others' progress. This meant the onset of 'dialogue' between civil and public structures, administrative and self-governmental institutions, which is one of the main requirements for the progress of 'civic culture', as Ruutsoo (ibid.) explains. In addition to the cultural societies, other specific national joint activities in the economy (banks, agriculture etc.) took place. Ideas

about joint activities as a strategy for the general development of Estonia were spread and developed by Jaan Tõnisson.<sup>88</sup>

During this period of 'dialogue' and cooperation between civil society and state structures, the public network of community houses as important pre-state local actors was also set up by the state. The coordinated establishment and development of a network of community houses is linked to Aleksander Kurvits<sup>89</sup>, a state official, whose letter to the Minister of Education (18 May 1928) included the idea of setting up the network<sup>90</sup> of community houses and presented arguments and principles on how to organise state subsidies for supporting their construction. Kurvits's ideas became the basis for the strategic planning of the network; the Law of Community Houses was passed in 1931, together with the Regulation of the Construction of Community Houses.

When drawing up the network, the aim of the Ministry of Education was that community houses should be located in the central point of a region, that they should be accessible for the people, and that their activities would reach as far as at least seven kilometres. It became possible to get support from the state to cover the construction and maintenance costs of the houses belonging to the network. A low percentage of state-guaranteed loans were also given by the Cultural Endowment, Regional Endowment or by the head of state. To get support, societies had to plan more precisely the location, costs, and architectural design of the community houses. State interference increased cooperation between societies and harmonized the architecture of community houses. With these laws and regulations, which officialised the free initiative of people in the local communities, one of the characteristic tools of Estonian cultural policy for many decades or, more specifically, the tool for regional cultural policy, was established.

In the middle of the 1930s, when in Estonia, as in many places in Europe, nationalistic and conservative ideas began to gain ground, this led the state to a authoritarian regime of governance. From 1934-38, during the so-called 'Silent

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<sup>88</sup> Jaan Tõnisson (1868-1941) was one of the most popular and long-serving Estonian politicians in the first half of the twentieth century. From the early 1890s he encouraged the activities of many societies in Tartu and the southern part of Estonia. In 1892 he graduated from the University of Tartu as a lawyer with a Candidate's degree. From 1896 to 1930 he owned one of the major Estonian-language dailies, *Postimees*, and until 1935 was also editor-in-chief. He was one of the leaders of the democratic opposition during the 'silent era'. [http://www.estonica.org/en/T%C3%B5nisson,\\_Jaan/#](http://www.estonica.org/en/T%C3%B5nisson,_Jaan/#); Mallene 2014.

<sup>89</sup> Aleksander Kurvits (1896-1958), state official of the Ministry of Education (1921-40), contributed to the development of Estonian free education and establishment of the network of community houses. Estonian research also credits Aleksander Kurvits with the systematic overview of laws and regulations concerning culture and education, which he collected and reproduced in the Ministry of Education from 1929, thus making it easier to focus on the development of the cultural and educational policy of the time.

<sup>90</sup> Kurvits wrote, 'It appears that contact and united coordination between local associations is lacking which may have caused parallelism in actions and perhaps not the best use of resources. [...] The strategic plan for the network of community houses would solve a lot of problems with funding and the coordination of the establishment of the houses' (Uljas 1990, 9-15). (Authors's translation)

Era',<sup>91</sup> Estonia lost its democracy. The ideological basis of the new political power consisted of nationalism, love for one's country, and solidarity, while the basis of political life was to establish professional organisations and mass organisations led by the state. The basis of the economy was to be private property with a strong government sector (Kõll and Valge 1998, 49-60); Elango, Ruusmann, Siilivask 1997, 283). Political parties were marginalised, ridiculed and blamed for the country's problems. Demonstrations and meetings were prohibited. Newspapers that were critical of the government were shut down. Follow-up censorship was set up in the media, literature and theatre. The Silent Era of Päts brought an essentially authoritarian ideology developed by the National Propaganda Office (Riigi Propagandatalitus, established in 1934) which was implemented with the support of a nationalist/popular cultural policy. The public sphere was muted and silenced (Kulbok-Lattik 2008, 2012).

The role of the arts (literature, theatre and fine arts) was to implement and propagate national ideals. In architecture, national dignity and strength were to be expressed. Additionally, in the field of the arts, the agreement between the state as employer and artists supported by the Cultural Endowment was put into practice. For example, writers were told what and how to write, as Laak (1996) explains, referring to Eduard Hubel, the head of the Cultural Endowment Literature Foundation Board.<sup>92</sup> In 1935, the head of the Government Propaganda Office, Hugo Kukke, made a radio speech on the subject of 'the opportunities for the development of figurative arts from the starting point of national culture; an appeal to society and artists'. He stressed that the further trend in the development of art must be guided by 'those tasks that have greater importance from the state, national and cultural, and socio-ethnic point of view' (Uljas 2005, 40). The regime tried to control a large part of free initiative, especially as it concerned political organisations and trade unions, as Karjahärm (2001, 306) points out. According to Päts' political ideas, the nation was to be organised not into political parties based on their political ideas but a corporate state. He was of the opinion that 'the insurance of states lies in strong institutions'. The following quote is a characteristic example of Päts' view of the corporatist organisation of society during the silent era:

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<sup>91</sup> The work of parliament was halted, and while it was not officially dissolved, it was never summoned. The country was practically governed by three men: Konstantin Päts, Johan Laidoner (1884-1953 --military man and statesman, commander of the Estonian army in the War of Independence 1918-20), and Kaarel Eenpalu (1888- 1942 – Estonian statesman, one of the essential people in establishing and developing the authoritarian regime of Konstantin Päts in the second half of the 1930s, Minister of the Interior).

<sup>92</sup> In the article 'Literary Marginalia', Hubel writes: 'Our literature gains its justification for existence an original mind, an original style. As long as we are original, there is a reason for our existence [...] We must take care of and value the silicon of our home terrain, but we must polish it according to European methods, so that it would sparkle, shine as a gem. It is time to give up the admiration of foreign glass pearls and their distribution.' (Laak 1996).

Professional organisation must result in the fact that man is not going to bow down before the parties, but he has to feel that those to whom he turns are his closest colleagues and that they agree on everything and work together and assert themselves. [...] Everyone must feel that they are one big family and that they can only live when they have a common roof of the Republic of Estonia. [...] And what is most important, they must teach a new moral, a new sense of honour, not only rights are of magnitude, but the one who does most for the state and sacrifices for it is of magnitude. (Karjahärm and Sirk 2002, 306)<sup>93</sup>

Such thinking was influenced by state-monopolist capitalism or *organic statism*, for which Western Europe served as an example. Between 1934 and 1936, fifteen corporations were founded, which also participated in legislative activities. The system of corporations and the creation of support funds, for example, in culture a book support fund, film fund etc., was copied from Italy, as Uljas (2005, 37) notes.

Authoritarian intentions could also be seen as belonging to the *public square*: societies and associations whose actions took place in the community houses, as I have suggested in the second of the articles (2012). As Vaan (2005, 48-49) has shown, the Government Propaganda Office organized powerful national propaganda events: the Estonianisation of names (including place-names), the propaganda of the national costumes in connection with the eleventh nationwide song festival (1938, home decoration, and the study of ancient Estonian culture. The network of community houses was also used to circulate these campaigns of national or ethnic culture at the grass-roots level. The state tried to replace the free-initiative characteristic of democracy with enforcement by the state and a corporative structure guided from above. It is possible to see clearly the changing mode of state cultural policy in the arguments expressing the essential role of community houses by the founder of the network of community houses, Aleksander Kurvits (1935).

In 1935, Kurvits, in his handbook, gave a detailed description about what should be taken into account in planning, constructing, decorating and managing a community house which has to become a spiritual and intellectual centre of the local community, but also an enjoyable place for spending leisure time.<sup>94</sup> He also gave detailed instructions on how to decorate the houses with national crafts and art, and how to make the garden around the village hall look beautiful and well-groomed, so that the civilizing intention as a main feature of modernizing state policy could be seen. Kurvits writes:

The most important task of community houses is to be a location of public festivities and meetings. [...] Primarily, singing, music, theatre plays, etc have a great meaning in creation of the feelings of togetherness and solidarity. This is why the most important task of community houses is to offer good conditions for activities which help to spread the feelings of togetherness and solidarity: to offer good conditions for singing and playing music which will elevate and connect the spirit of our citizens, warm up their souls and carry them to *higher mental spheres*, away from everyday life; theatre plays could reveal the soul and spirit of our nation as well as the spirit of oth-

<sup>93</sup> Author's translation.

<sup>94</sup> It was planned that by 1937 the approved number of community houses in the network would be 533. According to the plan, the optimal network of community centres had to develop by 1950.



er cultural nations in its artistic perfection, that our festivities and family celebrations could become beautiful and lovely gatherings; *that meetings could give knowledge and skills for more appropriate arrangement of life and economy to contribute to national goals.* (Kurvits 1935, 3-4)<sup>95</sup>

Kurvits is clearly aware of the impact of cultural involvement in national identity and local coherence. Kurvits develops and explains the role and goals of community houses as local actors of cultural policy, showing the wider benefits that cultural participation brings to the people, community, nation and economy in the context of national ideology, and also intention to civilize masses is evident. Kurvits suggests:

It is important to cultivate and train the understanding of citizens that a community house is also a sacred place, like the church, and that the way of conduct in this house must conform to the recognised rules of civility. (Kurvits 1935, 40-62)<sup>96</sup>

Kurvits expresses the civilising concept of the community houses, where Estonians could become cultivated citizens with a strong national identity; this concept was determined by the ideas of the political establishment of the time, which Kurvits as state official surely had to follow. This speaks about the intention of the state to change the network of community houses from agents acting in cultural field into a tool for top-down cultural policy.

Summarizing the analysis, the political system in Estonia 1934-49 and its official ideology had traits characteristic of authoritarianism: étatism, the positioning of the state and the national above the individual, the leader principle and the primacy of the head of state in the political system, and corporations, as Karjahärm (2002, 94) has noted. In the politics of culture, ideological control, censorship and nationalist propaganda prevailed, as I suggested in the article on periodization (2008). However, these traits were not carried out to the extreme or developed to their limits like in larger dictatorships. Estonia had a relatively soft form of dictatorship. With the banning of parties political activity did not die out; it became focused around academic and professional organisations. Karjahärm (2002, 88) refers to the analysis of Maruste and Schneider who claim that the 1937 constitution began a movement back towards popular sovereignty.<sup>97</sup>

In cultural policy, the authoritarian state's principal objective was to shape a homogeneous society with strong institutions to support national identity. The ideological content of the cultural policy was nationalism, which in the middle of the 1930s was a quite common interpretation of culture in Europe. Civilising, cultivating and nation-building purposes were the main aims of state cultural policies in the majority of nation-states in modernizing Europe during

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<sup>95</sup> Author's translation and emphasis.

<sup>96</sup> ditto

<sup>97</sup> The pro-government National Assembly convened in 1937, the elections to which were boycotted by the opposition. It drafted the third constitution of the Republic of Estonia on the basis of Päts' draft legislation, and it was passed on 28 June 1937 at a joint sitting of the chambers and came into effect on 1 January 1938. Karjahärm, (2002, 94).

the 1930s, as Hoffmann (2003, 2011) claims. Before independent statehood, the status of the ethnic group of Estonians was the lowest, after the Baltic-Germans and the Russians. Thus, it could be understood that a quite newly-discovered national identity and a nation-state which had achieved its' right to life, was something of an important thing not only for the state to support but by civil society initiatives. These were broadly involved in general civilizing and cultural, educational activities. According to Uljas (1987), by 1938 there were more than 440 community houses all over Estonia, which operated as local institutions for the development of Estonian cultural policy, being the expression of the socio-economic and cultural vitality of Estonian rural regions.<sup>98</sup> By 1940 there were 2200 organizations of cultural societies (non-formal education) with 60-70,000 individual members. As Mertelsmann (2012, 101) claims, despite the follow-up censorship, a number of political arrests, elements of corporatism, a high degree of state intervention in economics, the era of independence remained in the memories of people as a success story. The economy grew, living conditions improved for the vast majority. Education had expanded impressively: in terms of high school and university enrolment, the country ranked second in Europe.<sup>99</sup>

Thus, we can talk about *the Architect State model* of cultural policy in 1934-40 Estonia. Cultural life in Estonia was organised by the state and cultural policy led to an ethnic-nationalist cultural policy. *The Architect State* supports the arts as part of its social welfare objectives. The economic status of artists in the Architect state tends to be determined by membership in official artists' unions and by direct government funding (Hillmann-Chartrand and McCaughey 1989, 7-8).<sup>100</sup> In Estonia, guidelines were given to the creative intelligentsia by the Government Propaganda Office, where traditions were invented. Folklore was used because of its emotional ability to attach the eternal past of the nation (and future of the nation state as well) to legitimate the policies of the authorities. To create a homogeneous and strong nation state, state authorities also started to shape convenient cultural norms in the amateur arts and to use the network of community houses for ideological purposes. Cultural institutions, e.g. commu-

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<sup>98</sup> Köll (1994, 16, 43, 134), Annist (2011, 76-79), and Wieselgren (2002 [1942], 22) claim that Estonia was surprisingly egalitarian. It was because of the fundamental and radical reform. The Land Act, which was passed on 10 October 1919, had a strong impact on forming a relatively egalitarian society and economic basis of a new state. The Land Act expropriated almost all of the landed property, which had mostly belonged to the Baltic-German nobility (leaving them just over 50 ha each). The land was primarily given to those who had participated in the War of Independence, to set up viable smallholdings. Such a semi-socialist reform was possible mainly because the upper class had hitherto consisted of ethnic others and this had also prevented further stratification among Estonians. Modern ideas were spread among the educated rural population; education- and export-oriented agriculture became the main branches of the Estonian economy in 1930s despite the ongoing urbanisation.

<sup>99</sup> Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, *The Baltic States before the Second World War: Brief Collection of Statistical Data* (Riga, 2007, 17 cited in Mertelsmann 2012,101)

<sup>100</sup> In this model, state funds the fine arts through a Ministry or Department of Culture: granting decisions concerning artists and arts organizations are generally made by bureaucrats. (Hillmann-Chartrand and McCaughey 1989, 7-8)

nity houses, were used to enhance and circulate national or ethnic culture at the grass-roots level. Yet, free initiatives by people were not suppressed. See appendix 3, photos 9-13

*To summarize* the whole interwar period of cultural policy developments during the years of the Estonian First Republic (1918-40), it could be described as gradual movement from the free initiatives of civil society (before 1918-25) toward systematic and organized state interference. The developments of the administrative apparatus of the modern state and its powers could be viewed as tool and national culture as the basis for the formation of new *social order*, in the sense of Foucault's concept of governmentality.

Authoritarian cultural policy (1934-40), led from above, shaped national identity and was expressed in the state's support for all forms of professional and folk culture. At that time, most of the institutions subsidising culture that still function today were established. Despite the authoritarian political system from 1934 onwards, censorship was a follow-up, and state coercion against the creative intelligentsia, as well as against those parts civil society acting in the cultural sphere, was relatively mild. The historical development of Estonian cultural policy described above expresses the gradual change in the political system of Estonian society: from democratic governance towards specific authoritarian rule, which stands in fundamental contrast to democracy. However, it also differs from totalitarianism. Since authoritarian governments usually have no highly-developed guiding ideology, there is some toleration and pluralism in social organization. As political theorists posit, authoritarian government lacks the power to mobilize the entire population in pursuit of national goals, and it exercises power within relatively predictable limits.

*The main aims of the cultural politics of the modern Estonian nation-state were:* civilization, nationalism, institutionalization and corporatism in order to create a homogeneous and strong national identity and culture. Nation-building in the political sciences has been conceptualized as a modernist project, referring to the activities of civil society, as well as activities of the state apparatus – in education and cultural policies, also involving the use of propaganda in different political systems. In any case, both nationalism as an ideology and the nation-state as a mode of societal organization are *incarnations of modernity* (Berglund, et al, 2004, 14). Both modern institutional phenomena – the Estonian nation-state with its' patronizing practices (from 1934), as well as the vital civil society with its' entrepreneurial spirit, both broadly involved in civilizing and enuculation activities and thus interactions between *agent* and *structure* – still represent relatively smooth 'dialogue'. Both institutional phenomena – the modern Estonian nation-state (1918-40) and Estonian civil society and public sphere have emanated from, and developed in, the pattern of Western liberal modernization. However, Estonia also shares with the other Baltic states the historical experience of Soviet modernization in the period from 1940 to 1991.

### 3.3 Soviet modernity: principles and instruments in the cultural policy of totalitarian state

As discussed in chapter two within the comparison of modern state practices of the Soviet Union and Western states, Soviet state intervention is best understood as one particular (*coercive*) version of modern aspirations to fashion a rational order. These are aspirations that emanated from the Enlightenment idea that the social world was neither preordained nor fixed, but instead of humankind's own making.<sup>102</sup> In order to explain the use of the arsenal of the Soviet state monopoly of force (economical, ideological, military), I have used the concepts of *totalitarianism* in the first article where the periodization of Estonian cultural policy is offered, and the concept of *sovietization* which opens empirical practices of Soviet state in Estonia (1940-91) in the third article of the dissertation.

The specific features of Soviet cultural policy and how totalitarian state practices were implemented in Estonia will be analysed below. This analysis is based on the results of the third article: the case study on the sovietization of Estonian community houses (2014). The sovietization process – the ways in which total control was implemented and how domination was achieved in practice – followed the same pattern as in all other spheres of culture, the professional arts and education. The influence and practices of the Soviet state did change over time, but the main structures of the state model of the USSR established in the 1930s persisted until its collapse in 1991.

#### 3.3.1 Implementation of bureaucratic control and censorship in culture - the example of the sovietization of Estonian community houses

When the Soviet Union seized power in Estonia in 1940, one of its first steps was to *ban manifestations of civil society and free initiatives*. For the Estonian societies running the community houses, theatres, museums, cinemas, and other organizations based on private entrepreneurship, everything changed on 23 August 1940, when the Act of Nationalization of Private Companies was promulgated by the Council of the People's Commissars. This dissolved societies, nongovernmental organizations (i.e. museums, libraries, theatres, community houses, cinemas), foundations and private companies. The assets, collections, buildings and inventory of the societies and companies, now without owners, were taken over by the commissaries, were nationalized and handed over to the People's Commissariat for Education of the ESSR. On the basis of this acquired

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<sup>102</sup> As Hoffmann (2003, 3-8) explains, by the nineteenth century, there arose in countries throughout Europe a new ethos of social intervention by which the leaders of these movements – government officials (but also nongovernment professionals) – sought to reshape their societies in accordance with scientific and aesthetic norms. They sought to *civilize* the masses through productivity campaigns, housing inspections, temperance movements and primary education. Norms of efficiency, hygiene, sobriety, and literacy therefore received the utmost attention from government officials and non-state professionals alike as they sought to inculcate these values in the lower classes.

material basis, a state network of cultural institutions – community houses (as well as theatres, libraries, cinemas, museums) – was created. (Reference Book ... 1982, 4-14)<sup>103</sup>

On the basis of the regulation of the Council of People's Commissars of the ESSR, adopted on 9 October 1940, community houses were turned into centres for political education. The new mission of community houses covered the following fields:

Political education, agricultural, industrial and propaganda about the country's defensive capabilities, libraries, artistic expression of people, organization of work with children and youth, and many other spheres. (Reference Book ... 1982, 4-14)

From the very first moments of the new regime, community houses, in addition to the direct administrative subordination, had to follow methodical guidelines, which were labeled as assistance and sharing of experience. These guidelines, which were tied up and subordinated to the Five Year Plan cycle's directions and plans of the Soviet Communist Party, were compiled in the Soviet Union central institution, the N. Krupskaya All-Union House of Folk Art in Moscow, and shared by local institutions of Soviet Republics – in the forges of methodological guidelines, mandatory repertoire and censorship.

In 1940 and 1941, the legal structure for the sovietization of community houses was set but due to the beginning of World War II, there was no time for a full implementation of the system. Archival dossiers<sup>104</sup> show that the existing network of community houses was thoroughly studied by the authorities of the People's Commissariat for Education of the ESSR. Extensive reports with precise data on community houses and the people involved (location of the community house, year of construction, condition of buildings, the number and type of amateur hobby groups, the number of people participating in the activities, the social status, as well as educational level of the people leading the community houses and amateur art activities) about each Estonian county were compiled (*ibid.*). The grass-roots-level network of cultural institutions of the previous era suited the Soviet authorities, and it was adopted and filled with new content.

By the autumn of 1941, Estonia had been taken over by German troops. During the German occupation, the former state of cultural affairs was re-established and assets, buildings and collections were returned to societies. Cultural life in Estonia continued largely as it had during independence. However, the conditions of the occupation cannot be called free: the German occupying troops persecuted and executed Jews and communists (or suspected communists), including writers, artists and socially-active people.

During the years of the loss of independent statehood a large part of the cultural and artistic elite left. The strong nationalist feeling which had existed was dispersed into the different worlds of the East and the West. The biggest

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<sup>103</sup> Author's translation.

<sup>104</sup> Archival documents of the People's Commissariat for Education of the ESSR (1940-1941). Kulbok-Lattik, 2014)

losses of creative people and artists came with the emigration to Germany (1939-41), the 1941 June deportation and the forced conscription to the Soviet army.<sup>105</sup> From 1944, when the Red Army took over Estonian territory once again, the situation was again reversed and sovietization continued. After World War II, the Soviet legal structure for administering amateur arts was strengthened; nonetheless several restructurings took place until, in 1959, the administrative institution for amateur arts was named the Folk Art House of the ESSR, which was subject to the Ministry of Culture (Reference Book ... 1982; Kuuli, 2007). In May 1945, the Council of Peoples' Commissars of the ESSR adopted new rules for the administration of community houses (Borkman 1945).

The regulation was accompanied in the same year by instructions and mandatory standard statutes for community houses, which, in Chapter 5, laid down the following: the mission of community houses, the content and form of work, types of community house, administration and organization of work, rules for the management and dissolution of the community house. According to the document, community houses were categorized according to duties into the following types: town, central, county, central parish and local parish community houses. The network of community houses was drawn up by local party organizations in Estonian towns and counties and approved by the People's Commissariat for Education of the ESSR. The *new mission of community houses* was stated to be:

the cultivation of active and informed builders of the socialist society by politically educating people in the soviet spirit, organizing mass political, culturally and generally educating events and providing quality recreation and entertainment. (Reference Book... 1982, 84-85)<sup>106</sup>

Achieving the objectives according to the mission, a community house:

(a) carries out mass agitation in order to explain the decisions of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Soviet Government; helps party and council bodies in organizing masses of workers and officials for the execution of those decisions; (b) helps workers in learning the Marxist-Leninist theory; (c) teaches socialist regard to work and public property, explains and implements measures for increasing productivity, especially in agriculture, by popularizing agricultural engineering; (d) carries out work among the masses during the elections of the Councils of Workers' Representatives, public organizations, lay judges, etc, and arranges reporting events for workers' representatives and other publicly elected officials; (e) arranges the explaining of domestic and external policy events of the Soviet Union; (f) organizes mass propagation of military knowledge and helps in preparing the population for the protection of the immunity of the Soviet Union; (g) helps to raise the cultural-technical level of the population and popularizes scientific, technical, literary and artistic achievements; (h) organizes cultural recreation and entertainment. (ibid.)

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<sup>105</sup> Karjahärm and Luts (2005) and Kuuli (2007) describe the preparatory steps in reeducating the intelligentsia and creating the new cultural elite by the Soviet authorities during the war.

<sup>106</sup> Author's translation.

As can be seen from the above, the work, activities and functions of community houses were explicitly outlined by the authorities. It was a fully politicized agenda with the central task of ideological work for creating the Soviet person and cultivating the masses in accordance with the ideas of building socialist society – that is, the new reality of Soviet Modernity. In addition, with duties provided in the statutes, an institutional system of control and hierarchy was put into effect, with community houses of larger towns or county centres being in charge of coordinating the methodical (ideological) work, as well as central methodical and administrative bodies. (see appendix 2.)

The legal structure for the sovietization of community houses was set and prepared for the full implementation of the system straight after the war, in 1945. Comparing the mission and objectives given to the community houses by the state during the first period of Estonian Republic (Law adopted in 1931, see above) and Soviet Estonia (rules adopted in 1945), we can see remarkable differences in the roles given to the community houses by the state: from the '*centers for cultural and free educational activities*' (1931), community houses were turned into '*centres for the cultivation of active and informed builders of the socialist society by politically educating people in the Soviet spirit*' (1945).

For the people working in community houses, surrounded by a multitude of administrative-inspective institutions (see organigramm, appendix 2), reports and approvals related to the most miniscule of events (contents of a festive evening or concert programme) were a fact in daily Soviet cultural work until the end of the occupation. The legislative basis for Soviet censorship was the Decree on the Printed Word, adopted on 27 October 1917 by the Council of Peoples' Commissars; it was in force until 1990. Censorship in the ESSR followed the same pattern. The role of censorship (pre-, post- and permanent censorship) was broad: all artistic creations (literature, music, art, newspapers, television and radio programmes, as well as amateur art practices in community houses) were subject to it. As Veskimägi (1996, 327) notes, 'not a single printing office accepted any manuscript without the imprimatur of the censor'. The Soviet censorship system was duplicated and performed by many authorities: by the central committee of the Communist Parties of the republics, the KGB, the Council of Ministers and *Glavlit* (the USSR Chief Office of Literature and Publishing Affairs). Veskimägi (1996, 327-329) describes censorship in Estonia, which started in 1940 and continued again from 1944, as a tool of russification, labeled as an effort to build up communism:

Building up communism and Moscow's aspirations are not one and the same thing – the first is the form and the latter is the content, i.e., to create an empire (to restore it in its former borders, increase and strengthen it. When the term internationalism was used, intentions of Russian chauvinism were meant (ibid.)

Cultural workers in the community houses had to follow the 'Repertoire for Amateur Arts (Recommended List)', which was published in 1953. In 1968, a translated all-union regulation – 'Guidelines for the Pre-registration of Concert and Other Mixed Programmes' – by Moscow was issued, setting out rules for all professional and amateur collectives from 1 January 1968, and allowing

*Glavlit* control over repertoire. Conforming to the rules for registering repertoires was mandatory. Scenarios of festivities and thematic evenings also had to gain approval from *Glavlit*. The selection of repertoire was checked. Special seats were reserved for executive committee inspectors and party officials at community house events, as Veldi (2012) colourfully describes in his memoirs.

As it is shown in the third article (see Kulbok-Lattik 2014), in the 1960s, censorship became more of a formality, but, as can be seen from many archive documents, during the era of high Stalinism in 1945-54, the reports of inspectors of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education were thorough and detailed.<sup>107</sup> The reports the managers of community houses had to write for the Folk Art House<sup>108</sup> express the same attitude. What appears, reading these reports, is severe bureaucratic control and indoctrination of the Stalinist cultural canon during the first decades of Soviet rule. Inspectors visited all community houses, checking their working plans, the activity books of hobby group leaders, event records, repertoires and the Red Corners.<sup>109</sup> Inspectors checked whether visual-based agitation outside of the community house worked. Additionally, each community house had to carry out visual agitation tasks in the local agricultural organizations and also take care of topical banners and calls at the work locations of kolkhozes or sovkhozes. In addition, the inspectors of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education<sup>110</sup> acquainted themselves with the reports on the cinematic and dancing evenings, with the educational level, social class and overall views of the workers of community houses.

What also appeared from many reports was that the working conditions in community houses were often poor: buildings were old (several of them were built at the end of the nineteenth century), without heating or electricity. Reports reflect existential problems and shortages of money and other resources. Workers in community houses had to come up with the necessary means themselves. However, after World War II, new buildings for cultural centres (in the monumental Stalinist-style of architecture) were constructed by the Soviet authorities in Estonia also. Under Stalinism, canonized culture and education in Estonia expanded. The state (Soviet Union) invested enormous sums and saw itself in the tradition of Enlightenment, as Mertelsmann (2012, 142) has noted. According to the statistical overview by Uljas (1987), in 1940 there were 440 community houses in the state network of the previous era, and in 1950 there were already 651 organizations of cultural education and clubs<sup>111</sup> in the state

<sup>107</sup> Documents of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education (1945-1953). ERA.R.-1570.1.57, ERA.R.-1570.1.131; ERA.R.-1570.1.262; ERA.R.1570.1.339; ERA.R.-1570.1.322.

<sup>108</sup> Archival Documents of the Folk Art House (1940-1959). ERA.R.-28.2.87; ERA.R.-28.2.147; ERA.R.-28.2.151; ERA.R.-28.2.2.3.

<sup>109</sup> Red Corners were special areas (pinboards or table with books) set up by Soviet authorities in public places in Soviet Russia with the aim to disseminate Marxist ideas and promote the Communist classics.

<sup>110</sup> Archival Documents of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education (1950-1951). ERA.R.-1570.1.262; ERA.R.1570.1.339; ERA.R.-1570.1.322. (Kulbok-Lattik, 2014).

<sup>111</sup> New soviet terms were implemented. Community houses, in official documents, changed into clubs, houses of culture or organizations of cultural education. In Sta-



network. Community houses were seen by the authorities, as it was explicitly expressed, as an important ideological tool at grass-roots level until the end of the 1950s. It was because of the appearance of television (1955 saw the first programme broadcast in Soviet Estonia), a new means of mass communication, which became the primary means of ideological work. The number of clubs in Estonia no longer increased.. In 1961 there were 586 clubs. In 1970, the number of clubs was 435; in 1986 there were 336 cultural houses and in 1988 there were 323 cultural houses (*ibid.*).

The archival documents of the Folk Art House in the 1960s (1966, 1967, 1973) and later, reveal that the general atmosphere in cultural education work became more liberal and politically less suppressive. Community houses, with their everyday work and cultural activities, still remained in the grip of the all-union system of censorship, control and ideological propaganda, but the questions of raising the quality of amateur arts and the promotion of folk arts increasingly appeared in the documents (Kulbok-Lattik 2014). The courses, seminars for specialists of cultural work – choreographers, conductors, amateur theater directors, teachers of visual art and handicraft – dealt more with the improvement of special skills of specialists working in the community houses. Further, all kinds of local, national and all-union events, festivities, contests, were regularly organized by the central administration of folk art. Thus, it appears that Stalinist political indoctrination was gradually balanced by government-financed and organized leisure activities of people in the Soviet welfare state.

To summarize, many methodical materials were published right up to the collapse of the regime. In the guidelines, everyday activities of community houses were tied up and subordinated to the Five Year Plans' directions and plans of the Estonian Communist Party, which were subject to the Moscow guidelines. Community houses were guided and controlled through regulations, guidelines, administration and censorship, reports, and inspections on a regular basis. Community houses were, as I argued in the third article (2014), sovietized and became tools in the hands of the authorities (the ECP), creating a new reality by spreading the Soviet cultural canon and socialist ideology. Using Foucault's power theory, in order to be able to dominate, power has to create reality through 'the rituals of truth'. Soviet cultural policy can be viewed as the main instrument of power of the ruling ideology as well as a strong instrument of identity building in society. In this process, the individual obeys power not because of threats but because of discipline, as Foucault (1991) claims.

However, despite the heavy indoctrination and canonized frame for cultural practices in 1950s, community houses also maintained their original func-

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linist Estonia, the name 'community house' was no longer suitable, since the era the term had stemmed from had to be erased from the people's memory. While society houses and the society movement as symbols of the Estonian civil society disappeared instantaneously in 1940 as the societies were dissolved, community houses gave way to clubs and cultural houses in the mid-1950s, during the heyday of Stalinism and the active defamation campaign and overall denigration of the Republic of Estonia.

tion to provide space for amateur art practices, gatherings and leisure activities for many generations of the Estonian population during the Soviet period. How could this happen? I suggest that community houses maintained their original functions on one hand, because of their uncontrollable essence, which is characteristic to the party places in the sense of public squares, as theorized by Bakhtin, whose concept of public square has been used in this dissertation. Bakhtin's public square as a concept helps to explain the democratic and uncontrollable essence of community houses as public space for festivities within the polyphony of complex interactions and voices, including the hidden intentions and resistance of Estonians against the suppressive regime. On the other hand, the Soviet cultural policy had a dialectical and ambivalent nature despite its' totalitarian intentions.

With the example of community houses (in the other spheres of culture – professional arts, and education – the Sovietization process followed the same pattern, as has been shown by scholars, e.g. Kangilaski (1999), Kuuli (2002, 2007), Raudsepp (2005), Kreegipuu (2011), Nõmmela (2013), Helme (2013), Miil (2014). In these, we can follow the legal and administrative process of the Soviet state interference with aim of achieving total control over the population. From the agents of civil society, they were turned into the institutionalized tools of state in culture. Arendt (1985) has explained that the aim of total domination was not as end in itself, but as a tool for implementing and confirming the ideology. Total domination is needed for making people think and act in certain ways. Thus, analysis will be provided with which to reveal the content and aims of the ideology of Soviet cultural policy and how this content was formed to become a cultural canon and what kind of ambivalences it contained.

### 3.3.2 Ideological principles of the Soviet cultural policy and system of cultural education

Immediately after the Soviets took power in 1940 in Estonia (and in the other Baltic states) constantly repeated slogans on posters appeared in the press and public places, such as 'Soviet Culture is Nationalist in Form and Socialist in Content', 'Art Belongs to the People', 'Friendship of Soviet Brotherly Nations', 'Socialist Realism', etc. These slogans are the key to understanding the Soviet cultural canon and the ideology behind it. The cultural canon was needed to create a system for the indoctrination and re-education of people. It was a tool for political *agitation* and *propaganda*. These terms are closely connected, when speaking about Soviet practices. As was explained in chapter two, referring to Lasswell (1946, 435), both strategies – propaganda and agitation – were regarded as absolutely essential to political victory, and thus combined in the term *agitprop*. To recap, Lenin defined propaganda as the reasoned use of historical and scientific arguments to indoctrinate the educated and enlightened (the attentive and informed publics, in the language of today's social sciences). He defined agitation as the use of slogans, parables, and half-truths to exploit the grievances of the uneducated.

*The dialectical nature of Soviet politics of nationalities as the basis for cultural policy*

One of the ideological cornerstones of Soviet cultural policy was based on Lenin's idea of how to build up a strong and homogeneous empire with a multinational population. Lenin's core-idea was to support ethno-nationalism to guarantee its political stability. As Warshovsky Lapidus (1984, 566) has pointed out, Lenin, forced to grapple with the Tsarist legacy (e.g. suppressed nations and nationalist separatism, illiteracy and 'backwardness' of inhabitants of rural areas, etc.) and with the intention to create a united and militarily strong society, combined political centralisation with some form of administrative and cultural autonomy. He opted for a federal system that granted limited political-administrative recognition to major existing national groups, fostered the creation of new nationalities, and committed the Soviet leadership to their economic and cultural development.

Thus, the Soviet national policy was based on '*national diversity*', which was as a paradoxical prerequisite for ultimate unity (within Soviet Socialism). Lenin's basic concept for the nationalities policy was shared by Stalin, who in 1948 repeated his earlier statement on national rights:

Every nation, whether large or small, has its own specific qualities and its own peculiarities, which are unique to it and which contribute to what each nation gives to the common treasury of world culture, adding to it and enriching it. In this sense all nations, both small and large, are in the same position and each nation is equal to any other nation. (Stalin, *Sochineniia* 3(XVI),100. Cited in Slezkine 1994, 449)

According to Lenin, national culture was a reality, it was about language and certain 'domestic arrangements': nationality was a '*form*'. National form was acceptable because there was no such thing as national content, as Slezkine (1994, 423) notes. The content which filled *the national form was socialism*. The idea was expressed with slogan 'Soviet culture is nationalist in form and socialist in content!' As Slezkine (1994, 418) explains, Lenin's socialists needed native languages, native subjects and teachers ('even for a single Georgian child') in order to 'polemicize with 'their own' bourgeoisie, to spread anticlerical and anti-bourgeois ideas among peasantry and burghers' and to 'banish the virus of bourgeois nationalism from their proletarian disciples and their own minds'. Mertelsmann (2012, 12) points out that the Soviet nationalities policy, based on the concept of *korenizatsiia* ('taking root'), needed the help of national cadres to build up and secure the central power of the Soviet system.

On the other hand, a centralized state, the Soviet Union stressed Russian language and Russian culture: official propaganda referred to Russians as the 'elder brother' of other nationalities or 'first among equals'. Russification was another important aspect of the Soviet national and cultural policy. Thus, Russification and nationalism were both important ideological bases for Soviet cultural policy. The Soviet nationalities policy was based on '*national diversity*'<sup>112</sup>,

<sup>112</sup> See also Warshovsky Lapidus, G. Ethnonationalism and Political Stability: The Soviet Case. In: *World Politics*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (Jul., 1984). Cambridge University Press, 1984, 555-580.

which was a paradoxical prerequisite for 'ultimate unity' (within Soviet Socialism). These paradoxical principles formed the dialectical and ambivalent nature of Soviet cultural policy.

*Cultural revolution and acculturating the masses*

The idea of cultural revolution and acculturating the masses, was one of the basic ideas for the Soviet authorities during the whole era of the modernist project of the Soviet empire. Lenin considered cultural revolution to be the main aim for party leaders:

The main aim of the Cultural Revolution was [...] to cultivate a new human being characterized by a harmonious combination of spiritual richness, moral cleanliness and physical perfection. (V. I. Lenin, speaking about the Cultural Revolution, cited in Hoffmann [2003, 150]).

However, an enormous gulf loomed between the utopian visions of the party leaders and social reality, as Hoffman (2003, 15) notes: after the Revolution and Civil War, Russia was an undeveloped, agrarian country with an overwhelmingly peasant population. Rates of illiteracy, poverty, disease and infant mortality remained very high.

As Zubkova (2007) has explained, the formation of Soviet state policies was situational and depended on tasks which were set up in order to solve the various structural problems of Soviet Russia which the party leaders faced. The formation of the cultural canon and the Soviet cultural policy was also partly situational. Acculturating the masses was one of the central tasks of the Soviet authorities during the first Five Year Plan (1928-32) period. Fighting illiteracy, building up social and health care systems can be seen as part of a revolutionary attempt to achieve a rationalized and modernized society, as Hoffman suggests (2003, 15).

Another aspect of the cultural revolution was its use in class struggle and freeing society from the 'illnesses of capitalism' and the heritage of bourgeois culture, as Hoffmann (2003, 150-152) explains. Thus, the conception of culture during the first decade of Soviet rule, and the first Five Year Plan period (1928-32) - *Proletkult* - was futuristic, avant-garde, and iconoclastic.<sup>113</sup> Norms and values (culture, religion) of the previous bourgeois society of the Tsarist empire were to be re-evaluated by the breaking of all boundaries (including heated discussions between the proponents of sexual liberation and proponents of the family).

After World War II, the principle of *cultural revolution* in the Estonian SSR, as a new republic of the Soviet Union, was, in addition to the restoration of the national economy, the most important goal of the Estonian Communist Party (ECP) during 1945-48. It was related to the exchange of personnel,<sup>114</sup> thus, cre-

<sup>113</sup> As Vladimir Mayakovsky had declared after the revolution, 'We are shooting the old generals! Why not Pushkin?' in Hoffmann 2003,150.

<sup>114</sup> Kuuli (2007) in his research, describes the replacement of the former elite of the independent republic.

ating a loyal cadre for carrying out cultural revolution and class struggle, as Kinkar (1967) has stated.

*Socialist realism and project of nation-building - creating the Homo sovieticus and Soviet mass culture*

The modernist principle of Soviet cultural policy to create the Soviet intelligentsia, and to introduce socialist realism as a compulsory canon for the arts, was connected to the propagandistic use of culture during the Stalinist era. The avant-garde culture was no longer needed to destroy bourgeois culture after the remnants of capitalism had been eliminated (or deported), agriculture had been collectivized, and a planned economy established – as there was no further economic basis for exploitation and no bourgeois mentality. As Hoffmann (2003, 152) notes, a new and loyal intelligentsia had been created, as Stalin stated in November 1936:

Our Soviet intelligentsia is a completely new intelligentsia, connected by its roots to the working class and peasantry. It is now a fully-fledged member of Soviet society; together with workers and peasants, as one team, it builds the new classless socialist society. (ibid.)

Once socialism had been achieved (Soviet leaders believed they were achieving socialism already by the beginning of the 1930s), the new purpose of Soviet culture was the perpetuation and legitimation of power. The only officially acceptable form in art and literature after 1932 was socialist realism together with monumental architecture that legitimated the existing order. As Stalin stated in 1932:

The artist ought to show life truthfully. And if he shows it truthfully, he cannot fail to show it moving towards socialism. This is and will be socialist realism. (Hoffmann, 2003, 160)

Socialist realism was a 'realist' depiction of how life was supposed to be – an attempt by the Soviet cultural establishment to construct a reality that did not actually exist. Boris Groys (1998, 427) has argued that 'the avant-garde and socialist realism shared several traits: the desire to transform rather than merely represent life, the belief in a totalistic, all-encompassing artistic vision and contempt for commercialized culture as part of an overall aesthetic-political project – thus an attempt to organize society and everyday life according to aesthetic sensibilities and political principles.'

The slogan '*Art Belongs to the People!*' expressed one of the basic modernist principles of Soviet state practices. It was related to the idea of cultivated Soviet person, by providing wide access to high culture to the widest part of the population. Wide access was also supported by Lenin's ideas of a cultural education system, which was established all over the Soviet Union (in Estonia from 1966 as higher education, while at other levels, courses took place from 1941). According to the official rhetoric, the slogan '*Art Belongs to the People!*' was explained by party leaders as follows: the revolution did away with the exploita-

tion and suppression of workers. Factories, land, railways, and banks now belonged to the people. Making use of everything that was more worthy and better than the culture of the past, by critically selecting from the cultural heritage, the Soviet people were to begin building a new, higher kind of socialist culture, led by the Communist Party. This was expressed by Kalinin in 1938:

The Soviet system released the creative powers in people by making culture their own. A dream of the best of science, arts and literature came true: people showed due appreciation of and lifted high their cultural heritage, making it part of the new socialist culture. (cited in Medvedjev and Hlöstov 1954, 10)

Party leaders selectively incorporated past cultural heroes into the official cultural canon. Hoffmann (2003, 163) explains that selective rediscovery and incorporation of Russian classics and pre-revolutionary leading figures of the arts<sup>115</sup> into the canon of Soviet culture fulfilled both the (pre-revolutionary) elite's long-standing dream of bringing Russian high culture to the masses and the Soviet goal of creating a common culture to be shared by all the population. In 1939, in his speech fixing targets for the gradual transition from socialism to communism, Stalin said in a speech:

We want all the workers and all the farmers to become cultural and educated, and we will make it happen in time. (cited in Medvedjev and Hlöstov 1954, 14)

Stalinist culture and cultural policy entailed a wide range of norms and practices intended to transform people's behaviour and create a new social order: the Soviet society and identity of the Soviet person. However, Hoffmann (2003) claims that the Stalinist use of traditional institutions and culture for modern mobilization purposes reflected the general demands for mass politics in Europe after World War I. Stalinist culture was to become a particular Soviet version or incarnation of modern mass culture.

After World War II, Soviet cultural policy continuously followed the same modernist principles of *Soviet Enlightenment*: controlled and standardized education, canonized arts, refinement and civilization of masses, were important part of *Soviet nation building* project. It has to be said that implementing these principles guaranteed relatively successful nation-building as the Soviet person's identity was based on the Soviet mass culture. Artistic masterpieces of different works (Soviet patriotic songs, cartoons, films, dramatic arts, literature, music, classical ballet, folk culture and sports) created significant meaning for many generations during the Soviet era. In the context of this dissertation, focusing on the community houses and amateur art in cultural practices at the grass-roots-level of the Estonian population, it is also important to mention the

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<sup>115</sup> Pushkin, Tolstoy, and others were enshrined in the Soviet literary canon, in the music of Glinka and other classical composers of the pre-revolutionary era, particularly the 'Russian Five' (Balakirev; Mussorgsky, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov) – all famous for their efforts to compose Russian classical music. Also certain political and military leaders from the Tsarist past were rehabilitated (Yaroslav the Wise, Ivan the Great, Peter the Great etc). (Hoffmann, *Stalinist Values...* 2003, 163)

focus on folkloric culture – as the expression the pluralistic unity of the cultural policy of the USSR, expressed with the slogan '*Friendship of Peoples*'.

In the 1930s, the official Soviet cultural policy emphasized folklore, as Hoffmann (2003, 166-169) describes:

At the First Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934, Gorky championed folklore as 'a genuine expression of people's optimism and aspirations' and suggested that 'we need to share our knowledge of the past. It is important for all union republics that a Belorussian knows what a Georgian or Turk is like, etc.' (ibid.)

This statement marked the beginning of an official campaign to promote folklore. It was connected to another important thesis of the Soviet national and cultural policy – '*Friendship of Peoples*' – which required that all Soviet nationalities be deeply moved by the art of other Soviet nationalities and develop their folklore culture as a representation of Soviet pluralistic unity. As Slezkine (1994, 447) explains:

This resulted not only in frenzied translation activity but also in histories of the USSR that were supposed to include all the Soviet peoples, radio shows that introduced Soviet listeners to "Georgian polyphony and Belorussian folk songs", tours by hundreds of "song and dance ensembles", decades of Azerbaijani art in Ukraine, evenings of Armenian poetry in Moscow, exhibits of Turkmen carpets in Kazan, and festivals of national choirs, athletes and Young Pioneers all over the country. From the mid-1930s through the 1980s, this activity was one of the most visible aspects of official Soviet culture. (ibid.)

The government sponsored village expeditions to gather folkloric materials, folk singing competitions, and festivals of national art featuring works produced by various Soviet nationalities.<sup>116</sup> The government established the N. Krupskaya All-Union House of Folk Art in Moscow, as well as institutes of national culture all over the country. Folk culture was used by party leaders to promote a controlled and artificial representation of Soviet forms of national cultures. Foucault (1991) states that with the help of discipline – through supervision, control, distinguishing, hierarchiasation, homogenisation, elimination, in short through standardisation – an individual is created.

However, despite the fact that all the above-mentioned aspects of Soviet cultural canon were used as the Soviet political representation, all these aspects, in a way, formed the basis for national resistance in Estonian culture. The focus on folklore, broad access and 'civilizing' the masses, as well as cultural education, made this possible. Even further, it created bounteous conditions in which to develop traditional Estonian forms of institutionalized culture and to keep alive all the important traditions including the main ritual of Estonian nation-building: the Song Festivals. See appendix 3, photos 16-20.

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<sup>116</sup> Oinas, F. J., 1972 .The Political Uses and Themes of Folklore in the Soviet Union', In. *Folklore, Nationalism, and Politics*. Ed. Iunas Columbus, pp 77, 78. cited in Hoffmann 2003; see also Shay, Anthony. 2002. *Choreographic Politics: State Folk Dance Companies, Representation and Power*. Wesleyan University Press, 2002.

*Soviet system of cultural education*

Another important aspect of Soviet politics of culture was the above-mentioned Soviet cultural education-system with trained cultural workers, which in Estonia was introduced from 1941. The Soviet cultural education system was an additional channel for control and indoctrination of the Leninist principles of the unified Soviet cultural canon. It was implemented in accordance with the local varieties and cultural traditions of different of the Soviet Empire. According to the teaching materials compiled by Poola (1981, 1983) for the students of the Tallinn Ed. Vilde Pedagogical Institute (where Soviet cultural workers were prepared during 1966-91), the ideological and organizational basis for the Soviet cultural education was shaped under the direct leadership of V. I. Lenin, in 1917-1924:

The Soviet cultural education as a new system of cultural education was born along with the Great October Socialist Revolution. The victorious proletariat could not accept that millions of workers were culturally centuries behind – a legacy left by the bourgeois society.

Lenin, who put the term of cultural education to use, has said: „Cultural education is organized activity, the aim of which is communist education of people, raising the cultural level of people, and meeting the cultural needs of people.”

Cultural education is carried out in soviet clubs. ‘Club: an assembly of people (also place of assembly – in the Soviet Union: clubs, cultural houses, community houses, kolkhoz clubs) sharing a hobby, occupation or world view. In addition to clubs, the list of institutions of cultural education also includes theatres, cinemas, museums, libraries, cultural and recreational parks, philharmonics, concert organizations and circuses.’ (Poola 1981)

As we can see, the civilizing intentions, acculturation and ideological propaganda were the main aims of Soviet cultural education. Further, the list of institutions it involved was significant, containing the whole field of cultural production: professional and amateur arts, educational and recreational culture, as well as entertainment.

In the Estonian Republic (1918-40), cultural and educational activities for the people taking part in societies and community houses were driven by the free initiative of the members of those societies. Unions of societies and central unions published guides, brochures and other publications and organized courses.<sup>116</sup> In 1940, when civil society was banned, and the free initiative by people was subjected to the ideological interference of state, there was an urgent need for people. This meant paid personnel for state-owned cultural institutions, which were meant as centres for political education, since the people of the former societies were not trusted. To develop a loyal cadre, the Soviet authorities started to pre-

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<sup>116</sup> The Amateur Musicians’ Association (founded in 1918) organized courses for choir, band and folk dance masters. Tartu National Library Society (founded in 1912) and the Estonian Librarians Association (founded in 1923) organized preparatory courses for librarians. Considering that in 1939 there were more than 700 libraries, of which 57 in towns and 671 in the countryside, most of the librarians who were not paid had already attended courses. In 1924-40, 36 courses were organized, with about 1000 people attending (see Aassalu 2012, Riisalu, 2013, Salum 2002).



pare people inside the Soviet cultural education system, which was also implemented in Estonia from the very first days of Soviet power. Already in January 1941, the North Estonian School for Political Education was opened in Kunda Manor. The first of its students (with as little as four years of schooling – 60 students altogether) took a six-month course.

After World War II, the sovietization of cultural institutions quickly took up pace as hundreds of party and Soviet activists and communist youth, who were provided with elementary knowledge at special courses in Tallinn organized by the Committee for Institutions of Cultural Education, were sent to work in the field of cultural education, as Salum (2002, 7-9) describes. In June 1952, the chairman of the Committee for Institutions of Cultural Education, Ivan Helm, issued a directive establishing the Tallinn Culture School (later the Tallinn School of Cultural Education), providing specialists for club work and libraries. The duration of studies was 18 months.<sup>117</sup> From 1959, secondary school graduates were also admitted (*ibid.*).

In 1952-59 the structure of subject field lectures in the department for clubs was quite stable, according to Salum (2002, 9):

In the field of librarianship, the main subjects were librarianship, bibliography, organizing collections and catalogues of libraries, and study practice. In addition, Estonian and Russian literature of secondary schools, children's and international literature were taught, the volume of which increased year by year. In 1957, a course on Russian and Soviet literature of 252 hours was added. Speciality subjects also included banner work, book binding and art of spoken language.

Beside club work, the methodology for amateur groups and study practice was also important. Mandatory lectures included games for the masses, banner writing and the principles of Soviet art. Through the programmess and mandatory subjects, the Soviet cultural canon and socialist worldview was taught during the Stalinist era.

In 1959, changes in the teaching of cultural work took place: the relative importance of minor subject fields (drama and dance directing, orchestral and choral conducting) increased along with the number of relevant subjects taught, as Salum (*ibid.*) has noted. This upheaval made it possible to educate hobby group leaders in community houses and for Estonian cultural life it meant that under the guidance of school graduates, traditional cultural practices – choir singing, folk dancing, orchestral conducting, theatre art – that people had been accustomed to since the second half of the nineteenth century, continued. It was for exactly these activities that community houses had been built by people in the first place.

Along with the rising professional level of choir masters, musical, acting and dance group leaders, the overall level of amateur arts also increased. This provided a good basis for the strengthening of the Song and Dance Festival tradition. The Soviet authorities used the tradition of Estonian Song and Dance

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<sup>117</sup> The founder of the school was director Oskar Koljal (who had up until then been the director of the Central Bureau of Lectures), he hired teachers and other personnel and announced admission on the 7-year school basis. (Salum 2002, 9)

Festivals after the war (1947) as it was also suitable for the legitimising of Soviet power. Introducing the many aspects of the Soviet cultural canon among the whole population – the shared togetherness of pluralistic diversity of brotherly nations (visiting choirs and dance groups from the other Soviet Republics), singing and dancing in honour of Stalin within the unity of the socialist Soviet Union, fortified with the folklorist sentiment of national feelings – all had effect among the population after the difficult war years and gave hope for the future. In the light of this research, it appears that despite the domination of the politicized agenda within the socialist content of the Soviet culture, and careful censorship of the repertoire, the continuation of the national form of the official cultural canon expressed in the Song and Dance Festival tradition, helped to create continuity with the previous independent era. This kept strong national feelings under the official slogan *'Soviet culture is national in form and socialist in content.'*

In 1960, the Tallinn Culture School was moved to Viljandi, where it remained as a provider of vocational educating until the end of the Soviet era.<sup>118</sup> According to Salum (2002, 31), in total 2521 cultural workers graduated during the years of 1955-91. From 1966, cultural workers for the community houses were provided with higher education in the Tallinn Ed. Vilde Pedagogical Institute. At the beginning this was in two areas – sports and music – as Asszony (2012) describes. Soon, in addition to the musical department providing education in the field of choral and orchestral conducting, departments of choreography and dance were opened. The institute also prepared leaders of amateur theatres with professional knowledge of the Stanislavsky system in stage management and performance art. Librarians and people in the field of club work methodology, who later were employed either in the Ministry of Culture, methodical centre or methodical cabinets of cultural departments of towns, were trained. Their work consisted of mediating best practices, compiling methodical guides, gathering statistical information, carrying out analysis, inspection and control. According to Asszony (2012), during the years 1970-91, 1695 cultural workers from all subject fields and study types graduated from the Tallinn Pedagogical Institute. All together during from 1955 to 1991, 4216 cultural workers graduated in Estonia. Work was guaranteed for both the higher education graduates of the Tallinn Pedagogical Institute, as well as the graduates of Viljandi Culture School with secondary specialized education. The network of state cultural institutions and community houses was large, and many cultural administrative institutions, as mentioned above, needed personnel, as can be seen in organogram in appendix 2.

The implementation of the Soviet system of cultural education was related to the main aims of the totalitarian state: to civilize and control the population as an additional tool for state interference, harmonizing, standardizing cultural practices, cultivating the masses in the frame of developing of Soviet, homogeneous modernity. Changing the cultural creativity and leisure time of the people

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<sup>118</sup> Today the descendant of the school is called the University of Tartu Viljandi Culture Academy. (Salum, 2002)

into a matter of national importance, and creating culturally a homogeneous population, was an important precondition for Soviet mass politics and welfare

However, in time, when the socialist content lost importance and the pressure of political propaganda eased, the national form of culture, nurtured and fostered by educated cultural workers (choir, stage and dance masters), increasingly started to take central stage. This national aspect was based on hidden resistance, which, during song and dance festivals, manifested itself as a common feeling of the national identity of the masses. Simultaneously, the artistic level of widely-accessible amateur arts also rose, led by educated cadre of the state supported institutions. Thus, the Soviet cultural canon worked against itself dialectically by indoctrinating ethno-nationalist feelings, which were the precipitating power behind the Singing Revolution in Estonia (and other Baltic states). According to Lasswell (1946), in a highly authoritarian polity, the regime tries to monopolize all opportunities to engage in propaganda for itself. Often, it will stop at nothing to crush any kind of counterpropaganda. How long and how completely such a policy can be implemented depends, among other things, on the amount of force that the regime can muster, on the thoroughness of its police, and, perhaps most of all, on the level, type, and distribution of secular higher education.<sup>119</sup>

In sum, all the above-mentioned specific economic features and ideological principles of Soviet cultural policy were exported and implemented all over the Empire (as well as in Estonian SSR in the period 1940-91). Within state-owned and centralized institutions, the Soviet cultural canon, with local folklore variations, was mediated through community houses to the population of Estonia. In cultural policy research, such a dominant role for the state has been described according to Hillmann-Chartrand and McCaughey's (1989, 7-8) theoretical framework as the *Engineer state*. This acts as the owner of all the means of artistic production and supports only the art that meets political standards of excellence. Artistic activity (both professional and amateur) was organized into 'creative unions' (or methodically-guiding administrative bodies) so as to monitor new works and ensure conformity with the aesthetic principles of the Communist Party. Thus, the cultural policy model of the Soviet Estonia 1944-90s period was carried out according to the *Engineer state* model.

Sovietization changed the mental structure of society and led to the mentality of state guardianship and the alienation of the people. On the other hand, as Fitzpatrick (1999, 226) points out, the Soviet state was moving *towards welfare paternalism*, where the state acts with a strong sense of its responsibilities for leadership over the dependent population. She explains, referring to Janos Kornai (1980, 315),

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<sup>119</sup> Secular higher education invariably promotes scepticism concerning claims that sound dogmatic or are made without evidence; if such education is of a type that emphasizes humane and universalistic values, an ignorant or unreasonable authoritarian regime is not likely to please the educated for very long. If the educated engage in discreet counterpropaganda, they may in the end modify the regime.

The Soviet system with the allocative function of the state, created dependents. In Soviet – type systems the population is under the “paternalistic tutelage” and care of the party and state. All other strata, groups, or individuals in society are children, wards whose minds must be made up for them by their adult guardians. (Fitzpatrick 1999, 225)

Thus, Fitzpatrick offers also the concepts of the state as soup kitchen or relief agency to explain the states’ monopoly in distributing goods and services. The paternalistic dominance of the state apparatus was one of the significant features of the Soviet political system.

Through the creation of a cultural canon, Soviet leaders sought to provide a set of shared values and common heritage of Soviet mass culture to form a common way of life – a monolithic Soviet society. The final aim of the Soviet cultural canon and cultural policy entailed a wide range of norms and practices intended to transform people’s behaviour and create a new social order, a Soviet society and a Soviet person. The biggest change in Estonian society was the suppression of bottom-up initiatives by the people, which was not tolerated by the state in any spheres of life. People’s free-time self-expression was replaced by institutionally guided and coordinated cultural practices. The entrepreneurial spirit and activities of civil society were prohibited and replaced by patronizing state interference in culture. As Ray (2007, 512) claims, ‘this was inevitable in order to repress and hold back one of the most dangerous enemies of the Soviet totalitarian regime – civil society – with its liberal market values and community involvement’.

### 3.4 Discussion

#### 3.4.1 Was the goal of the Sovietization achieved?

It is time to discuss if, or to what extent, the goal of the Sovietization was achieved. How was sovietization perceived by the people? As has been shown here, indoctrination and the implementation of the Soviet cultural policy and canon was indeed heaviest during the period of high-Stalinism (1944-53) and I agree with Tiiu Kreegipuu, who claims that it is clear that constant ideological pressure did have its effects mostly in the direction of a passive acceptance of the Soviet regime (Kreegipuu 2011, 58-59). According to the official rhetoric, *the victory of the cultural revolution was achieved in Estonia by the early 1950s*. It was confirmed as ‘fact’ by the historians of the Estonian Communist Party, as Kinkar (1967) suggests:

Under the leadership of Party organisations, the results of revolutionary importance in the spirit of socialist ideology had been achieved in the field of socialist reorganization and development of culture and education, by the time of the V congress of ECP in December 1948.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Author’s translation

However, the victory of the cultural revolution and the complete fulfilment of the goals of Sovietisation are more than doubtful. Several scholars argue that sovietisation failed on a broader scale. For example, as eyewitness of Per Wiselgren (1942) has pointed out:

the regard of the Soviet regime of the conquered nations as if they were savage tribes in need of cultural education by the "higher Soviet cultural establishment" and the inability of the Soviets to modernize their methods according to the needs of the population of Estonia (and other Baltic states) with higher development status, resulted in discordance on a general scale. (Wiselgren 1942, 104-110)<sup>121</sup>

Wiselgren (1942, 105) described that many people perceived the hypocritical rhetoric of the new regime as *mental oppression*:

The constitution solemnly promised freedom of the press, speech, association and personal security; in reality none of it was true. Newspapers were day after day filled with detailed announcements about silly and vacuous meetings and of the decisions made, public calls, resolutions, mottos and watchwords thereof. Salutes to comrade Stalin and other party bosses in newspapers were permanent. Also biographies of Stalin and Lenin were repeated over and over and their portraits were displayed. [...] The new regime not only censors matters dealing with actual politics but *interferes with the free time of people* (e.g. workers were made to listen politicians lecture about Marxism and Leninism four times a week, with participation in meetings and demonstrations carefully documented).<sup>122</sup>

Aarelaid-Tart (2006, 175) has described how the abrupt reversal in cultural norms and values caused a syndrome of trauma and *double-mindedness* in people.<sup>123</sup> People were psychologically not ready to lose their memories of the independent nation state. Aarelaid-Tart (ibid.)<sup>124</sup> describes techniques of acting developed by the different cohorts of people trying *to cope with aggressive regime, as a response to the problem of survival in the post-war years* and later. Nationalist feeling, and the collective memory of lost independence and the terrible Stalinist past, belonged to the *home-centred private sphere: this was opposed to the public sphere*, which was dominated by the doctrine of the flourishing and united Soviet nations.

Kreepuu (2011, 57) describes in her doctoral dissertation the practices of silent and structural resistance in the Estonian press, pointing out that attempts at sovietizing the language – turning the Estonian language into Soviet *new-speak* full of ideology and specific rhetoric – were not particularly successful. Kreepuu (ibid.) claims that the Estonian language was not receptive to Soviet vocabulary and ideological phraseology and Soviet exclamations lost their ear-

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<sup>121</sup> ditto

<sup>122</sup> ditto

<sup>123</sup> 'Double-mindedness' (the emergence of double standards) is a deep socio-psychological mechanism for the adaptation of people living under the unfavourable conditions caused by major historical upheavals. The main function of this mechanism is the self-protection of individual identities in the permanent coercive process of switching from one ideological system to another (Aarelaid-Tart, A., 2006, 192-93).

<sup>124</sup> The totalitarian system created a deep discrepancy between public and private spheres, which in turn brought up the phenomenon of double-mindedness. (Aarelaid-Tart, 2006, 175)

nestness when translated. 'These, indeed, turned into parodies. In other words, the expressions were so obviously strange and out of context that they could be easily discerned and ignored', Kreegipuu (2011, 57) notes.

In community houses, similar mechanisms of resistance could be observed. The ideological slogans, banners and exclamations, as well as Soviet cultural practices such as agitation sketches (agit-prop-performances) in the fields and work places, turned into parodies. The *everyday approach of cultural workers was pragmatic and hidden resistance was put up via humour and jokes*. Harry Veldi (2012, 62-63), who worked in the community houses for 55 years (as an artist-designer, hobby group leader, musician, author and director of many comedy shows) colourfully describes in his memoirs how the ideological guidelines, party campaigns and coercion were regarded in daily cultural work – '*Party demands must be met – however ridiculous these are!*'

How much red fabric I have covered with white colour during my life? I think it has been hundreds of meters. In Haljala, after 1962 (after the Stalinism) banners were no longer required, but the beginning in Väike-Maarja community house, was quite bad. I often had to deal with the Second Secretary of the Party Committee, N. Abramov. I had to bend to his "artistic taste", because he was a dangerous man. If there was something he did not like, he yelled: "Who will be picked up this time?!" (Veldi 2012, 62-63)

There was a district song day in Porkuni. As always, it had to be "dedicated" to something. This time it was the anniversary of the Estonian SSR. According to the will of Nikolai Abramov, the stage and the site of the event were to be especially red this time. Banners were to be everywhere – behind the stage and on the sides, across the roads and even in the forest in between trees. I had a heated argument with him over his plan to put a banner "More meat to the state!" above the stage. Fortunately a few smarter communists took my side and the banner was put up farther, above a vending stall. On the morning of the song day I had to drive to Porkuni with all the banners. I was sitting next to the driver. Suddenly we spotted a large white thing rolling over the field. It was Lenin! The same large oval Lenin, with a wooden frame, that had to take the place of honour at every larger event. The wind had blown it off the back of the car. It was to be placed in the centre of the stage but now it was rolling over the field! We were lucky it was not harmed! Therefore Nikolai never found out what had happened to Lenin. He also never knew about a five-metre banner that had been slashed through with either a knife or razor blade. (ibid.)

In the pragmatic and ironic attitude with hidden resistance, expressed clearly in memories by Harri Veldi (2012), the uncontrollable and oppositional essence of the culture in the community houses – theorized in this dissertation using *Bakhtin's concept of public square* – appears. Bakhtin's (1987, 185-192) concept of *public square* enables the theorisation of cultural practices cultivated in the society and community houses as Estonian popular or folk-culture. The quintessence of *public square* for Bakhtin appears in the tradition of medieval carnival, *where the popular culture of the masses opposes and 'cancels the dominant cultural mindset of rational dogmatic antitheses of binary constraints,'* as Lotman (1987, 5-14) puts it. Community houses as public squares within the polyphony of complex interactions and voices, including the hidden resistance of Estonians, helped them to survive sovietization. John Gray (1996, 157) suggests that, whereas the totalitarian project succeeded in many instances, e.g. destroying civil society, it has no-

where forged a new humanity and the project turned out to be a stupendous failure in general. As Jelena Zubkova (2007, 184-206) points out:

Even the mass deportations did help the central power to completely solve the task which these actions tried to achieve – to make the Baltic region loyal on the example of other union republics. At the same time, open and more often disguised anti-Soviet feelings became part of the social consciousness in the Baltic countries. “Integration” process of the region to the Soviet system was dragging on and in the general it could not be completed. The Baltic countries remained also henceforth a problematic zone for Moscow.

Zubkova explains the specifics of the ‘Baltic problem’ under the following points:

1) orientation of the Baltic region towards the West; 2) weak position of the Communist ideology and the Communist parties in the region; 3) presence of the strong inclination towards the independent statehood; 4) presence of the active and armed opposition against sovietization policy.

As from the results of the this research, it can be argued that the dialectics built into the core elements of Soviet cultural policy and canon – nationalism, inclination to the folklore, wide access to culture for the whole population, supported by the educated cultural workers – all played important role in forming resistance in Estonia (and other Baltic states).

A number of scholars (Slezkine 1994, Warshovsky Lapidus 1984, Hoffmann 2003) have pointed out *that in reality the Soviet cultural and nationality policy inadvertently contributed to the nationalist separatism* that eventually broke up the Soviet Union. According to Warshovsky Lapidus, the continuing changes during the eras of Kruschev, Brezhnev, Andropov and Gorbachev, until the collapse of the USSR in 1990s, did not change the basic features of the Soviet national policy set out by Lenin. I would add the cultural policy, worked out by Lenin and Stalin, also did not change.

However, from the 1970s, the *socialist content* started to lose its importance in the practical life processes of the Soviet Union; step by step the *nationalist form* of culture later also became the content of cultural life of the National Republics of USSR. As Slezkine (1994, 450), referring to Roeder (196-233 in *Soviet Federalism*), explains:

Sixty years of remarkable consistency on this score had resulted in almost total ‘native’ control over most Union republics: large ethnic elites owed their initial promotions and their current legitimacy (such as it was) to the fact of being ethnic started.

Further, Rindzevičiute (2010, 671) points out that ethnicity was not perceived by Soviet ideologues as politically dangerous, and claims that the Soviet approach to ethnicity as a cultural and strictly non-political phenomenon allowed Lithuanian museum workers to continue the assembling of Lithuanian identity on linguistic and archeological grounds. The Soviet definition of ethnicity was limited to language and folk culture, which was ‘national in form and socialist in content’ (Rindzevičiute 2010, 671).

With these dialectics of the Soviet national and cultural policy, the revival of nation-states in Eastern Europe can be explained. As Rakowska-Harmstone (1985, 10-15) puts it:

Dependent on Moscow for funds, the political and cultural entrepreneurs owed their allegiance to "their own people" and their own national symbols. But if the politicians were structurally constrained within the apparatus, the intellectuals were specifically trained and employed to produce national cultures. Limits were set by the censor but the goal was seen as legitimate both by part sponsors and by national consumers. National intellectuals were professional historians, philologists, and novelists, and most of them wrote for and about their own ethnic group. (cited in Slezkine 1994, 451)

Summing up, it could be said that during the Stalinism cultural work had to follow the guiding principles of the Soviet cultural policy – ‘*Soviet culture – nationalist in form and socialist in content*’, ‘*Socialist Realism*’ and ‘*Friendship of the Peoples*’. In time, however, when the socialist content lost importance and the pressure of political propaganda eased, the national form of culture, nurtured and fostered by institutional setting and educated cultural workers (choir, stage and dance masters), started to take central stage more and more. Thus, the Soviet cultural canon and cultural policy model dialectically worked against its imperialist aims. With homogeneous institutionalized cultural practices, and through an indoctrinated nationalist form of culture, the Socialist state promoted ethnic particularism which was the precipitating power behind the Singing Revolution in Estonia (and the other Baltic states).

### **3.4.2 Interactions between civil society and state in the politics of culture during the different political eras of Estonian history**

Discussing interactions between civil society and the modern nation-state as institutional phenomena are the incarnations of modernity, an important aspect is that these institutions were not just new, but they were to serve as vehicles for the enhancement of a continuous process of innovation, as Wittrock (2000, 39-45) explains.

On one hand, this discussion leads to the theoretical questions of *agent-structure relation* in the macro-level interactions between individual agents and nation-state apparatus or state institutions as structure. In this discussion, I rely on Lotman (1999, 125-137) who places the historical process in his model of cultural dynamics, according to which the formation of the historical process is shaped in the tensions and interactions by long and continuous general processes (that might remain invisible to the individuals), and by the efforts – spiritual or based on the will – of individuals. Similarly, Greenfeld (1993, 18-21) explains that social reality is intrinsically cultural, as it is necessarily a symbolic, created by the subjective meanings and *perceptions of social actors*. As the particular image of social order provided by a culture form the constitutive element of any given society, then a change of the generalized identity (for example, from religious or estate to national) presupposes a transformation of the image of the social order”, Greenfeld (1993, 18-21) claims. Greenfeld (ibid) explains that every



social order (that is, the overall symbolic structure of a society) represents a materialisation, or objectivisation, of its image shared by those who participate in it. I share Greenfeld's (1993, 18-21) argument that social action which is determined by the motivations of men – the creators and carriers of ideas and the relevant actors of social action – *also creates structures* as certain the situational constraints which have a bearing on their interests and motivations.<sup>125</sup>

Speaking in the context of the macro-historical processes which created the conditions for the emergence of the Estonian nation-state as structure, it was created by the multidimensional process which contained the micro-level input of many individuals and the charismatic leaders of civil society. The Estonian nation-state was achieved due to the existence of a critical number of leading individuals, societies, civil activists or agents acting at the different levels of the society. These agents contributed significantly to the nation-building, political mobilization and formation of the nation-state, as pointed out by several scholars (Jansen 2004, 2007, Laar 2006, Karu, 1985, 1989, 1990, 1993, Karjahärm and Sirk 1997, 2001, Kuutma 1996, 2005, Uljas 2005, 1990). Civil society had the most significant role, historically, in general and was also investigated and developed consciously as the leading ideology for economic, political and cultural development in Estonia by Jaan Tõnisson<sup>126</sup> and his intellectual peers during the 1930s.

On the other hand, as a result of this study, it becomes clear that relations and interactions between civil society and state (in the sense of agent and structure), are determined and vary within different political systems, as pointed out by scholars such as Linz (2000), Arendt [1948, 1958], Habermas (1999 [1962]), Cohen and Arato (1999 [1994]), Giddens (1990, 58), Bauman (1991, xiii), Ray (2007, 512), Rikmann (2003, 11-31), and Lagerspetz (2003). These scholars discuss civil society, understood as a defence against excessive state power and atomized individualism, which otherwise threatens to create conditions for authoritarianism. In that case, the civil society acts as a social sphere which helps redistribute power in the society, providing people with opportunities to take part in the political decision-making process, instead of one power centre.

This is why the role and importance of Estonian civil society was reduced during the totalitarian regime. The short-lived democratic experience explains why Estonian terminology associated with civil society has even today connotations of the *society movement* and joint activities from the second half of the nineteenth century, e.g. *selts* (society), *seltsitegevus* (society movement), *seltskondlikud ühingud* (companionship associations), *omalgatus* (self-initiatives, or free initiatives), *ühistegevus* (joint activities). These words signify the specifics of the Esto-

<sup>125</sup> Greenfeld (1993, 18-21) refers to Durkheim's argument that *men are the only active elements of society*.

<sup>126</sup> In addition to the extensive political activities and outstanding work as chief-editor of *Postimees*, Jaan Tõnisson was elected professor of the chair of the *joint action* in the University of Tartu in 1935. His research on joint activities was published by the Tartu University Press in 1935. See more: Tõnisson, J. (1935). *Ühistegevuse alalt*; also Malene, Ü. (2014). *Jaan Tõnisson ja ühistegevus Eestis*; Runnel, S. (ed), (2010). *Jaan Tõnisson. Riigivanem*. Ilmamaa.

nian historical experience. During the Soviet era, research on civil society was replaced by political rhetoric, the main target of which was the struggle against 'bourgeois reactionary heritage' and a stigmatizing of the period of national independence. Important layers in the civil history of the Estonian (and other Baltic nations) were not only destroyed but also publically forgotten, as Ruutsoo (2002, 59) has noted.

Kreegipuu (2011) claims that in post-World War II central and eastern Europe, where independent non-state organizations were entirely swallowed up by Party state and planned economy, the existence of civil society became problematic.<sup>127</sup> She (ibid.) argues that, in the Soviet Union, everything that Habermas has pointed out as vital elements of the bourgeois public sphere – political diversity, freedom of the press, private autonomy (family, private property) and human rights (Habermas 1996, 83) – was either damaged or completely demolished. The public sphere in its traditional sense was suppressed (at least, its political functions were missing).

However, this does not mean that hidden 'debate', in lieu of articulated debate, between social practices did not continue. As Aarelaid (1996) argues, in Soviet Estonia, the meaning of the concept was altered: civil society was seen as having been pushed into the private or small 'secure' space between regime and the individual, where dissent against the regime occurred. Ruutsoo (2002) deals, in many chapters of his dissertation, with the hidden 'politics of identity' and the impact of the civil society of the previous era during the occupation, trying to historically reconstruct this 'internal hidden dialogue' of the Baltic nations and locating the origin of the 'power of resistance' of embedded structures to repeated colonization<sup>128</sup> and occupation. He finds that some elements in the civil history of each Baltic nation have been the greatest carrier of 'social pattern', societal fabric and civic culture, as embedded in a social fabric, which makes continuity possible in national history. (Ruutsoo 2002, 62-63)

Examining cultural practices in Estonian community houses, I found that the destruction of *civil society* in the sense of public sphere as official or formal public space – which could not function without the freedoms guaranteed by the liberal state based on the rule of law (the *Rechtsstaat*) – was compensated in a way by the existence of the *public square*. As conceptualized by Bakhtin (1985, 187-192) as the universal phenomenon of culture, seen as a specific characteristic feature of culture with its' un-informal nature, it helped Estonians to survive during each suppressive political regime. This is why that, even during the darkest Stalinist era of the Soviet totalitarian control-state, the regime was not

<sup>127</sup> Nevertheless, the term civil society has been used to describe Eastern and Central Europe under Soviet rule and by some authors, and even the Soviet Union itself (see Kreegipuu 2011; Buchowski 1996; Hann & Dunn 1996; Brinton 2002)

<sup>128</sup> Eve Annuk (2003, 26-29) referring to scholars e.g. Hennoste (2000), Kirss (2000, 2001), Kelertas, 1998), and to article 'Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet' by David Chioni Moore (2001), has offered colonialism and postcolonialism as fruitful concepts in conceptualizing the Soviet era. See also Epp Annus (2012) "The Problem of Soviet Colonialism in Baltics" in Journal of Baltic Studies, Vol. 43, issue 1, <http://www.aabs-balticstudies.org/announcements/journal-of-baltic-studies-vol-43-issue-1-2012>, posted on Mar, 3, 2012.

able to completely demolish this part of civil society, where human action was related to the cultural practices of people, leisure time, amateur art, popular folk dance etc, even if these practices were used as political representation. This list represents everything which could be conceptualized as *public square*, as the popular culture of masses opposes and 'cancels the dominant cultural mindset of rational dogmatic antitheses of binary constraints', as Lotman (1987, 5-14) explains.

Relying on the results of this dissertation, specific interactions between civil society and state interference clearly appeared when applying Hillmann-Chartrand and McCaughey's (1989) concept of cultural policy ideal models (Patron, Architect and Engineer State). This concept helped to identify the organizational and economic layout of the state's interference in culture. Obviously, it also depends on the respective political system. The examination of community houses as well as the historical periodisation of Estonia cultural policy showed that cultural policy developments during the years of Estonian First Republic (1918-40), the whole inter-war period, could be described as a gradual movement from private initiatives of civil society (before 1918-25) towards systematic and organized state interference. From the establishment of the Cultural Endowment in 1925 (the arm's length principle in cultural policy research) the cultural policy model of *The Patron State*<sup>129</sup> could be seen in Estonia. In the period of liberal and democratic 'dialogue' and cooperation between civil society and state structures, the public network of community houses was also set up by the state.

From 1934, we already can talk about *the Architect State model*<sup>130</sup> of cultural policy in 1934-40 Estonia. In this model, as mentioned above, the state funds the fine arts through a ministry or department of culture; grant-giving decisions concerning artists and arts organizations are generally made by bureaucrats (Hillmann-Chartrand and McCaughey 1989, 7-8). An authoritarian cultural policy led from above by Konstantin Päts (1934-1940), shaped national identity and was expressed in the state's support for all forms of professional and folk culture. However, despite the authoritarian political system from 1934, censorship was post-hoc and state coercion against private artistic initiatives and cultural activities of civil society, was relatively mild.

The Estonian network of cultural institutions suited the Soviet authorities (1940-91), who adopted it. However, the content and model of cultural policy was sovietized. All varieties of cultural production were rendered state owned and operated, and also controlled by centralized state institutions. Such a dom-

<sup>129</sup> Hillmann-Chartrand and McCaughey (1989, 6) describe *the patron state* funding of fine arts through arm's length arts councils as based on trust of the grant-giving commissions and decision-makers of funding can be the art professionals, politicians or state officials. The economic status of the artist and artistic enterprise depends on a combination of 'box office appeal', the taste and preferences of grants received from arm's length arts councils and private donors (ibid.).

<sup>130</sup> *The architect state* supports the arts as part of its social welfare objectives. The economic status of artists in the architect state tends to be determined by membership in official artists' unions and by direct government funding (Hillmann-Chartrand and McCaughey 1989, 7-8).

inant role is referred to in terms of Hillmann-Chartrand and McCaughey's (1989, 7-8) model as the *Engineer state*, which acts as the owner of all means of artistic production, and supports only art that meets its political standards of excellence.<sup>131</sup> Fitzpatrick suggest the ideas of the state as the soup kitchen or relief agency to explain the states' monopoly in distributing goods and services to represent the paternalistic dominance of state apparatus as the one of the significant features of the Soviet political system. The entrepreneurial spirit and activities of civil society were prohibited and replaced by patronizing state interference in culture. This was, as mentioned before, the largest change in Estonian society during the Soviet occupation. Sovietization led to a mentality of state guardianship, and further, an alienation of the people. Speaking with the notion of *Foucault's* theory of power in mind, sovietization established 'new rituals of thruth' in order to change the social order in Estonia.

Despite this, subordinating civil society and critical reflection in society had crucial results for the Soviet empire. Arnason (2000) points out that Soviet Union subordinated its' modernizing strategies to the rebuilding of imperial structures which had collapsed under the strain of competition with more advanced Western powers. Arnason (2000, 61-66) presents the conflict between two equally basic cultural premises of modernity (the tensions and interconnections between Enlightenment and Romanticism): on one hand, the vision of infinitely expanding rational mastery and on the other, the individual and collective aspiration to autonomy and creativity. This conflict could be seen between civil society and state in the sense of *agent-structure phenomena*, where the totalitarian state lost or was left without the considerable amount of creativity civil society can offer. When critical reflection and civil initiatives are subjected to doctrines, society will lose sources for innovation, which in the long term leads to the collapse of the system. Innovation in society is based on critical reflection in the public sphere and on collaboration between the state and civil society. As Arnason (2000, 61-66) explains, the main institutional frameworks of modern innovations – the capitalist economy and the bureaucratic state –

have been build on the results of long-term processes to which they give a more reflexive and dynamic turn, /.../ which involves an unprecedented development of self-defining, self-questioning, and self-transformative capacities. More complex ideological constructs claim to have found a formula for reconciling the aspirations to progress through mastery of individual and collective subjects in a quest for liberation. Such ambitions became crucial to the communist project of modernity, Arnason (ibid.) claims.

Summarising the discussion, the *concept of multiple modernities* provides a suitable theoretical framework to explain recent the history of Estonian society and culture. In itself, it offers a valuable example of various differing experiences of Western modernity from the 1860s to the 1940s. In this, the national awakening and rise of the public sphere, as well as civil society contributing to cultural

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<sup>131</sup> Artistic activity (both professional and amateur) was organized into 'creative unions' (or methodically-guiding administrative bodies) so as to monitor new works and ensure conformity with the aesthetic principles of the Communist Party.

emancipation, modern nation-building and political mobilization of Estonians can be followed. In the scheme of Western modernity with liberal industrial capitalism, the development of a bottom-up civil society and formation of modern nation-state and its administrative practices (1918-34) can be seen. This includes the shift in politics towards the authoritarian state with its' institutional power and practices (1934-40).

Soviet modernity in the period from 1940 to 1991 can be viewed, with the Communist project of Soviet nation-building and Soviet socialist state practices laid bare. In this, the attempt to re-educate and inculcate the masses, supressing civil society to achieve total institutionalized domination and control over the population, is evident.

At the same time, the dialectics and ambivalent aspects of Soviet cultural policy and cultural welfare, within the wide access to culture, created specific conditions for a homogeneous identity and cultural institutions promoted national resistance. With homogeneous cultural practices and institutionalized support for the nationalist form of culture, the Socialist state promoted ethnic particularism which was the actuating power behind the Singing Revolution in Estonia (and other Baltic states). Thus, the Soviet cultural canon and cultural policy model dialectically worked against its imperialist aims. In the light of the results of this study it was confirmed that agent-structure relations between individual agents and nation-state apparatus are determined by prevailing political discourse.

However, the examination of community houses revealed that historically formed institutions also convey their original functions or values from the previous political systems - which might be contradictory to the existing system and its' *rituals of truth*, and therefore might have an ambivalent influence on the agent-structure relations. Obviously, this aspect demands more indepth discussion on the historical role and nature of institutions in the framework of institutionalist theories, which due to limited space has been omitted from this dissertation, yet represent areas for further research.

## 4 ARTICLE SUMMARIES

The first article, 'On the Historical Periodisation of Estonian Cultural Policy', presents one possible periodisation of cultural policy divided into a series of eras (1918-2009) and is the first attempt to use the method of historical periodisation in Estonian contemporary cultural policy research. Periodisation reflects state interference and governmental practices as public policy in the field of culture. When compiling the periodisation, a characteristic dominant feature of political ideological discourse in each period has been taken as a central base of the cultural policy at the time. From these the title of the period was derived. These features characterise the dominating attitude or principle, or how cultural policy was put into practice during each period. By identifying a set of unifying factors in cultural policy, a set which naturally greatly coincides with the periods of political history, the historical continuity of Estonian cultural policy is mapped.

According to the periodisation we may observe the prologue as Estonian pre-state era of cultural activism. Five clearly distinguishable periods in the history of Estonian politics of culture follow:

The prologue from the era of awakening to the creation of statehood

- 1860–1918: 'Self-initiative and the Society Movement';
- I 1918 –1925: 'The Years of Quests and Foundation';
- II 1925 –1934: 'The Formation of Purposeful Cultural Policy';
- III 1934 – 1990: '(Pro-)totalitarian Cultural Policy' and its sub-periods:
  - 1. 1934 - 1940 'The Silent Era'
  - 2. 1940 - 1944 'The Years of Loss of Independent Statehood'
  - 3. 1944 - 1953 'Stalinist Terror'
  - 4. 1953 - 1969 'The Thaw and Hoarfrosts'
  - 5. 1969 - 1987 'Stagnation'
  - 6. 1987 - 1990 'The Collapse of the Regime and the Singing Revolution'
- IV 1991–1995: the transition period: 'Post-totalitarian Lack of Paradigm';
- V 1995–2007: 'Elitist and Preservationist Cultural Policy'

The prologue (1860-1918) is presented because most Estonian cultural institutions – theatres, artistic associations, community centres and others, which are significant pillars of independent statehood – were born spontaneously of the people’s civil activism in that era. This is a significant historical feature of Estonian cultural policy compared to those of the old monarchist imperial states.

Thus, from the era of awakening until the creation of statehood, cultural activities in Estonia were initiated spontaneously; state-run cultural policy existed only inasmuch as measures implemented by the Russian Empire towards one of the Baltic provinces allowed. The prologue of the periodisation was a time during which the pre-requisites for the formation of a nation-state were created. The society movement engaged quite a broad range of the population. The endeavour for common activities, and the vision and actions of the outstanding individuals who guided it, was in its essence cultural and political, with the objective of breaking away from the patronage of the Baltic-German nobility and the Russian Empire towards national independence and self-determination.

As can be seen from the periodisation, after the long awakening and bottom-up cultural practices in the pre-state period (1860-1918), the Estonian state with its young democracy had merely short experience of a purposeful and democratic cultural policy (1918-34). However, most of the cultural institutions and organizations subsidising culture that function today were established at that time. Cultural policy developments during the years of Estonian independence (1918-40) can be described as a gradual movement from the free initiatives of civil society (before 1925) toward systematic and organized state interference. The years 1925-29 are considered those that stabilized the country, within the establishment of state-supported cultural institutions. In addition, the democratic arm’s length principle<sup>132</sup> was implemented. Estonia lost its young democracy in the middle of the 1930s, when political-economic turbulence (economic crises and nationalistic ideas) spread in Europe between the World Wars. This era brought an authoritarian ideology developed by the propaganda office, which was implemented with the support of a nationalist/popular cultural policy.

Period III begins in the middle of the 1930s, when a pro-totalitarian<sup>133</sup> regime gained power. At this point, cultural life in Estonia began to be organised by the state, partly through a strict view of the function of cultural policy which led to an ethno-nationalist cultural policy (1934-40) set by president Päts, and partly through the hierarchical cultural policy which perpetuated cultural insti-

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<sup>132</sup> In 1925, the law on the Cultural Endowment (*Kultuurkapital*) was introduced and enacted.

<sup>133</sup> By this, I mean a policy with totalitarian characteristics, but which was not totally and repressively controlling and authoritarian. The difference between (pro)-totalitarian and totalitarian cultural policy lies in the strength of the oppressiveness of the ideology: during the pro-totalitarian period there was only a *tendency towards* totalitarianism, but during the totalitarian period cultural policy was profoundly totalitarian. (Kulbok-Lattik 2008)

tutions that followed during the Soviet period. Both were guided and led from above, albeit in a very different manner.

The ideological content of cultural policy during the autocratic rule of 'State Elder' Pääts (1934-1940) was nationalism, which in the mid-1930s was quite widespread interpretation of culture in modernizing Europe. The objective of Pääts'<sup>134</sup> ideology was a homogeneous and strong nation state, with strong state institutions. As Karjahärm (2002, 75) points out, Pääts' socio-political ideas were influenced by social liberalism, solidarity, communal and neo-rural social reformism and agrarian socialism. Pääts believed that balanced and stable statehood is based on secure, organised institutions, which together support the social government. The ideas of Pääts influenced very much the development of Estonian state; the most important aspect was his conviction that social life is maintained and carried forward by institutions, the larger and stronger the institutions the stronger and more stable the nation:

The history of nations is in fact the history of institutions created by a nation. [...] The life of the institutions links together generations and bequeaths the future through the fruit of labours and losses of the past. People come and go, but institutions survive generations. (cited in Karjahärm 2002,78)

These words by Pääts proved to be prophetic in the light of Estonia's later cultural life and its direction. The cultural policy model this created and its network of institutions also suited the Soviet authorities, who adopted it. The personnel of the institutions were replaced by ideologically educated and loyal employees. The system continued to function purposefully, though the political and ideological content saw a radical change and the measures used were far from the soft follow-up censorship of the previous era. The new content came from the manipulative rhetoric of a totalitarian state shaping the *Homo Sovieticus*, the actual expression of which resulted in a hierarchy of culture and censorship. This was implemented through a deeper institutionalisation, centralisation and fully state-financed model of culture. As a sub-trend of the new ideology, the national psychology was retained as a form of covert resistance, which was also one of the key factors in re-attaining independence.

In connection with the appearance of a 'new world order' (1991-2007), an elitist mentality drawn from the laws of the liberal market economy was added to cultural policy and its earlier national and hierarchical institutions. In the strong driving winds of economic liberalism the viewpoint began to prevail that culture must be generally able to manage itself, and that the state should deal mainly with professional culture. Since 1995, after transitional confusion, Estonian interpretation of culture and the corresponding policy, can thus be described as preservationist and elitist. State cultural policy conceived culture as the activities of established cultural institutions whose principal role is to sup-

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<sup>134</sup> Pääts saw an ideal society as a balanced integral whole, the individual parts of which were to function in absolute harmony, just like the organs of a living being. The basis of Pääts' organic or institutional statehood was the thesis that only those organs that have grown out of the life and needs of the nation and blended in with the state have a right to live. (Karjahärm 2002,75-78)



port national identity, not as an abundant collection of subcultures where activities that synthesise national and global culture in viable subcultures may also renew and strengthen the common cultural consciousness of the nation. Cultural policy aimed to retain a system developed to shape a monolithic and homogeneous society, although we are dealing now not with a homogeneous, but with a heterogeneous multicultural society, within the frames of nation state. The article poses questions of whether the model of cultural policy led from above created 70-80 years ago, which stemmed from the creation of national policy and took root during the Soviet period with a tight institutional network, is satisfactory. Further, it questions whether it offers sufficient opportunities for sustainable development in Estonia's changed context, in the common European context, and in a world that is open and without borders.

**The second article, 'Estonian Community Houses as Local Tools for the Development of Estonian Cultural Policy'** examines the foundation and development of society<sup>135</sup> and community<sup>136</sup> houses from the second half of the nineteenth century until final last years of the first period of Estonian statehood at the beginning of 1940s. The article observes the establishment of community houses by ordinary people in local communities and discusses how these cultural centres contributed to the process of nation-building and how they became a characteristic tool of Estonian regional cultural policy.

Similarly to European societies, the Estonian cultural and public sphere also evolved as a result of several activities: Estonian newspapers, society and temperance movements and cultural practices showed the growing involvement of Estonian people in public life. Important preconditions for these developments were wide-spread literacy among Estonians and agrarian reforms of the nineteenth century, which had a direct impact on the majority of the population on Estonian territory as peasants became land owners. As a result of the Russian centralised power and the socio-economic situation dominated by the Baltic German nobility, the elite of the 'awakened peasants' was highly motivated to build up their cultural and public sphere with the intention to improve the status of Estonians in society.

The article discusses the Estonian nation-building process, which was theorized using the results of Hroch's (1996) research. This underlines four factors in successful nationalist movements: (1) a strong sense of identity and common historical past within the group; (2) a certain level of vertical mobility (some educated people must come from the non-dominant ethnic group without being assimilated); (3) an increasing level of social communication, including literacy; and (4) a nationally relevant conflict. The article reveals the connections between Hroch's factors of successful Estonian nation-building and foundation of community houses, which became the new important places for the develop-

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<sup>135</sup> A society house was built for the activities of one certain society (music, drama, educational, farmer's, firemen, temperance etc).

<sup>136</sup> A community house was built for the activities of many societies, for the general use by the people of local communities.

ment of culture of Estonians, who certainly shared a common historical past within the group.

Community houses provided the space and possibilities for new modern cultural practices, such as: singing in polyphonic choirs, playing music in brass bands, acting in plays, lending books from libraries and taking part in lectures, as well as having public festivities. Even if these cultural practices were borrowed from Baltic Germans, in the light of postcolonial theories, they had an exceptionally great importance, both in cultural life, as well as raising the educational standards of the rural population, as Estonian ethnologist Ellen Karu (1985, 281) points out. Karu (1985) stresses that, despite the high rate of literacy (96.2% in 1881, already high) of Estonian rural dwellers, the opportunities to take up intellectual pursuits had been extremely limited for them for centuries. The society and temperance movement, with their wide range of cultural activities, played the most progressive role historically. By building society and community houses, *people themselves created the conditions necessary for the development of their culture*. Obviously, the establishment of society and community houses was also based on a nationally-relevant conflict between Estonians and Baltic Germans, with the basic intention to improve the status and suppressed rights of Estonians.

As party and meeting places for local communities, without open political intentions, the community houses have been, in the article, theorised by using Bakhtin's concept of *public square*. Open discussions in newspapers, political debates and activities among the Estonian elite, who guided the political and social movements, are theorised using the the concept of Habermasian *public sphere*. Community houses with their cultural practices as *public squares* – ambivalent and uncontrollable – channelled the ideas of the elite and the shared feeling of national identity into the masses and so contributed in evolving an Estonian *public sphere* in the Habermasian sense. This prepared the ground for the political mobilisation and supporting political demands of the elite in the twentieth century. Two parallel directions of the historical development of the nation-building processes (*cultural nationalism* and *civic (openly political) nationalism*) intertwined with each other, and contributed to the formation of national identity, based on a common culture and ended up resulting in political self-determination and the emergence of nation state.

During the years of the first Estonian independent state (1918-40), the network of community houses was set up by the state. The Law on Community Houses was adopted in 1931, which stated the aim and objectives of community houses as follows:<sup>137</sup>

Article 1: The aim of a community house is to be a centre for cultural and free educational activities and a home for educational and social associations in its area of operation.

Article 2: In order to meet the objectives mentioned in Article 1, community houses should have rooms for libraries, reading rooms, studios, rooms for lectures and pub-

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<sup>137</sup> Author's translation

lic meetings, rooms for singing, musical and theatrical rehearsals as well as rooms for physical training and other educational activities. (RT 53, 1931)

By 1938 there were more than 400 community houses all over Estonia, which operated as local institutions for the development of Estonian cultural policy, being the expression of the socio-economic and cultural vitality of Estonian rural regions. It also explains how the official concept of national culture in the frame of forming cultural policy of the Estonian nation-state evolved, defining rural culture as popular or folk culture.

Since the beginning of the 'silent era' (1934-38) the state started to use the network of community houses for ideological purposes, and top-down cultural policy was applied. The network of community houses was used to circulate national or ethnic culture at the grass-roots level. With the setting up of the network of community houses, and with laws and regulations which legalised the free initiative of people in the local communities, one of the characteristic tools of Estonian cultural policy or, more specifically, the tool for regional cultural policy, was established for the following periods of cultural policy, which lasted over 60 years (i.e. 1931- 91).

Thus, by analysing the establishment of community houses, the historical development of the Estonian cultural policy have been demonstrated. Rooted in *bottom-up cultural initiatives of people*, with the aim of constituting the basis for cultural, national and political self-determination from since the foundation of Estonian nation-state, the basic role of the politics of culture was to (re)produce the institutions and conditions for cultural practices drawn from national narratives, thus ensuring the affirmation of a significant and meaningful common culture: Estonian national culture.

**The third article, 'The Sovietization of Estonian Community Houses (*rahvamaja*): Soviet Guidelines'** discusses the process of *sovietization* of Estonian community houses, i.e., how they were turned into the ideological tools of Soviet totalitarian propaganda. The article examines the formation of the Soviet cultural canon, its features, and also the model of the Soviet cultural policy, and the process of how the free-initiative amateur art and educational activities in community houses were restructured into subordinate cultural institutions. The article explores the official documents and methodical guidelines provided by state bodies as tools of coercion, control and censorship in making Estonian community houses function as centres of political education.

After the invasion of the Baltic states by the Soviet Union<sup>138</sup> took place in June 1940, extensive restructuring – or as Mertelsmann (2012, 14-19) has ex-

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<sup>138</sup> After the Soviet Union and Germany signed the Treaty of Non-Aggression (the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact), in September 1939, the Soviet Union forced the Baltic countries to sign pacts of mutual assistance. Soviet military bases (with 25,000 Soviet soldiers) were subsequently established in Estonia (similarly in Latvia and Lithuania). Although *de jure* independent, *de facto* the Baltic countries were controlled by the Soviet Union in 1939-40, and became its unwilling allies. (see Tarvel and Maripuu 2010; Raun 2001; Zetterberg 2009).

plained – the *sovietization* of the public administration, economy, and with it the nationalization of private property, propagandistic land reform and mass deportations in Estonia began. In general, Soviet state practices were coercive and violent: class struggle and oppression of the ‘enemies’ of the Soviet state, attempts to achieve total control over the population, nationalisation of private property and enterprises, strict censorship, political agitation and propaganda, the provision a set of canonized cultural norms were but some of the key elements of sovietization. While Soviet state practices did change over time (influenced by the development of its own internal policies, as well as external pressure through the Cold War), the main structures of the state model of the USSR established in the 1930s persisted until its collapse in 1991.

The sovietization process in respect of community houses meant the importation of the Soviet cultural canon (invented tradition bearing Soviet values) in order to re-educate the population of the occupied territories and the introduction of a cultural policy model (organisational structure of state practices in culture) as tool for creating the new socialist reality. In the community houses (as in the whole cultural field) ideological coercion alongside total censorship and systematic indoctrination of Soviet values, which the vast majority of population perceived as unfamiliar and odd, took place. Constantly-repeated slogans appeared in the press and public places, such as ‘Soviet Culture is Nationalist in Form and Socialist in Content’, ‘Art Belongs to the People’, ‘Friendship of Soviet Brotherly Nations’ and ‘*Socialist Realism*’ etc. The article opens the ideology behind these slogans as the key to understand the Soviet cultural policy.

By 1940, when the Baltic states were incorporated into the Soviet Union, Soviet official culture had gone through different phases. The avant-garde and iconoclastic *prolet-cult* which with the slogans of class struggle and Cultural Revolution aimed to destroy the traditional culture of tsarist Russia. This was replaced by neoclassicism and socialist realism during the mid-1930s, the era of Stalinist rule. Socialist realism became the Stalinist canon of official culture. Soviet state practices and formation of cultural norms and values have been described as cultivating the masses in the frame of developing Soviet modernity. Civilizing and cultivating the masses was the main purpose of state cultural policies in the majority of European nation-states at that time. According to Hoffmann (2003, 2011), Soviet state practices could be seen as a specific type of modernity because of its coercive nature.

In the same period a characteristically Western modern social structure had gained ground in independent Estonia for two decades. The state practices of culture in the Estonian Republic (1918-40) were similar to Western liberal democracies, where the cultural institutional network originated from national and cultural emancipation and initiatives of nineteenth century civil society. From 1940, Estonian Western-style modern development was replaced by Soviet state practices, by Soviet modernity. Bottom-up initiatives by societies were prohibited and community houses (as well as all other private cultural enterprises) were closed and their property was expropriated. The legal structure for

the sovietization of community houses was set and prepared for the full implementation of the system directly after the war in 1945.

The work, activities and functions of community houses were explicitly stated by the authorities. Comparing the mission and objectives given to the community houses by the state during the first period of Estonian Republic (Law adopted in 1931, see above) and Soviet Estonia (rules adopted in 1945), we can see remarkable differences in the roles given to the community houses by the state: from the '*centres for cultural and free educational activities*' (1931), community houses were turned into '*centres for the cultivation of active and informed builders of the socialist society by politically educating people in the soviet spirit*' (1945). It was a fully politicized agenda with the central task of contributing actively in the process of re-education of the Estonian population.

To understand how the process was conducted practically, I analysed some of the new tasks of community houses, which were mediated through methodical guidelines. Mandatory guidance materials, thematic brochures and recommended repertoires of methodical guides were compiled in the N. Krupskaya All-Union House of Folk Art in Moscow, the Estonian Ministry of Culture, and its subsidiary, the Central Methodical Cabinet for Cultural Education, later the Folk Art House of the Estonian SSR.<sup>139</sup>

The article presents various booklets which were provided in order to support larger all-union economic goals, for teaching hygiene, work education, atheism, moral codes for the builder of communism, etc. (ERA.R.-28.2.87; ERA.R.-28.2.147). The guidelines were tied up in and subordinated to the Five Year Plans' directions, schemes, and decisions adopted at party congresses and sittings. For instance, 'The Restoration and Development of the National Economy, 1946-50' was set as the main goal for the first postwar five-year plan of the USSR, adopted at the March 1946 sitting of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. All-union objectives set by the communist party were mandatory as the ultimate goals for all Soviet republics. However, in each republic, the implementation of all-union goals depended on local party leaders, cultural administrators, professionals and historical specificities. In Estonia, as a new republic of the Soviet Union, in addition to the restoration of the national economy, the most important goals of the Estonian Communist Party (ECP) during 1945-48 were related to the change of personnel, thus, creating a loyal cadre for carrying out *cultural revolution and class struggle* as Kinkar (1967) has stated. Kuuli (2007), in his study, describes the replacement of the former elite of the independent republic in the education and cultural system, which was needed for creating new "*rituals of truth*" in the society.

To summarize, many methodical materials were published right up to the collapse of the regime. Community houses were guided and controlled through regulations, guidelines, administration and censorship, reports and inspections on a regular basis. Community houses were sovietized and became tools in the hands of authorities (the ECP), creating a new reality by spreading the Soviet

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<sup>139</sup> Archival Documents of the Folk Art House (1940-1959); Dossiers of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education (1045-1953).

cultural canon and socialist ideology. With the example of Estonian community houses, we can see how the network of cultural organizations of the first Republic of Estonia, with its roots in the nineteenth century civil activism of society, was subjected to governmental coercion by the totalitarian state. Within state-owned and centralized institutions, the Soviet cultural canon, with local variations, was mediated through community houses to the population of Estonia.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The dissertation, *The Historical Formation and Development of Estonian Cultural Policy: Tracing the Development of Estonian Community Houses (Rahvamaja)* is based on peer-reviewed articles and belongs to the field of historical sociology. The methods used in the dissertation are, first, historical periodization as a method of history writing and second, case study analyses with an historical and sociological focus on cultural policy research with the aim of identifying historical patterns and the developmental processes of Estonian cultural policy as modern state practice.

The concept of cultural policy is conceptualized in two ways: *in a broad sense*, cultural policy deals with the clash of interests, the history of ideas, institutional struggles and power relations and the circulation of symbolic meaning in society, as McGuigan (1996, 1) notes. *In a limited perspective*, cultural policies are seen as tools for the administration of the arts, the cultural practices of the general population and researched as one of the public policies of the modern state.

The roots of the concept of cultural policy as modern state practice lie in the emergence of post-Enlightenment nation states, when culture interpreted in terms of the arts became linked to the administrative apparatus of the state. The state, with its institutions, has the ability to guarantee the development of education and national culture as an aspect of identity politics which form the basis for the legitimation of the state as an institution of governance. In these connections also lie other civilizing aims of the state politics of culture: education, cultivation, as well as state custody of the arts shaping the cultural canon, which is imposed by inclusion and exclusion mechanisms of state support and financial aid to the different cultural practices. In respect of different cultural practices – fields of aesthetics and forms of arts, decisions of exclusion or inclusion are determined by a specific historical outline of a system of values, structure of feelings and social order, the orientation of which is specific to each country. Thus, the differences in the specific historical conditions which shape the selective tradition are key in considering the differences in the historical development of cultural policies as state policies.

Estonian cultural policy in this dissertation is defined as an agreed conglomeration of decisions and regulations, with the help of which – on the basis of historically formed and legitimised values – generally preferred cultural practices are selected, implemented administratively and institutionally, including the receiving of funding from the state budget. However, as it appears in this study the state, with its institutions shapes cultural policy, does not alone shape cultural policy. The historical experience of Estonia reveals the most significant role of civil society in the development of culture and society as well the remarkable impact of the activities of civil society in state politics of culture. To understand the ambivalent connections and interactions between civil society and the modernizing state during different political eras of Estonian history, I have chosen the historical emergence and development of Estonian community houses as my case study.

As a whole, I have been interested in discovering the roots of the cultural policy of the Estonian state and its developments during the first period of Estonian Republic (1918–40), as well as during the period of Soviet occupation (1940–91). I have found answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the specific features of the historical development of Estonian cultural policy?
2. How was the Soviet cultural policy implemented in Estonia between 1940 and 1991?
3. What was the role of community houses in the development of Estonian national culture and public sphere during the different political systems?

## 5.1 The specific features of the historical development of Estonian cultural policy

The roots of Estonian cultural policy and the origin of cultural institutions lie in the bottom-up initiatives of civil society activities with civilizing aims (*Bildung*) in order to support cultural and national development. Estonian *awakening* (since the 1860s) was driven by nineteenth century economic, social and political modernization, which formed the preconditions for the emergence of civil society and cultural emancipation, as has been noted by scholars e.g. Jansen 2004, 2007; Laar 2006; Karu 1985; Karjahärm & Sirk 1997; Laur & Pirsko 1998. As a result of Russian absolutist central power and the socio-economic situation dominated by the Baltic German nobility, the elite of the '*awakened peasants*' was highly motivated to build up their cultural and public sphere with the intention of improving the status of Estonians in society, as these scholars (*ibid.*) have pointed out.

Estonian national aspirations (which initially were connected with cultural goals) with time became more political, demanding '*equal rights*' compared to



the ruling Baltic-German nobility with regard to participation in the running of local affairs. In this dissertation, open discussions in newspapers, political debates and activities among the Estonian elite who guided the political and social movements are theorised using the Habermasian idea of *public sphere*.

Bottom-up cultural activities – including the building of society and community houses which became the first cultural institutions and fora for civil society without explicit political aims – are theorised using Bakhtin's *public square* in this dissertation. These two parallel cultural movements, as part of civil society, intertwined and so contributed to the formation of a successful Estonian nation-building movement. The movement started with cultural practices and a shared feeling of togetherness, reinforcing the basis for national identity and thus supported the process of state-building by bringing the ideas of the Estonian elite to the grass-roots level. This resulted in mass mobilization and political self-determination (1860-1918).

Political mobilization connected inherently with cultural emancipation is not the specific feature of the Estonian experience, as this kind of developmental path has been a typical process of modernization also of the many other nations with a colonial past in Europe, as Hroch (1996) has shown. The main aims of the politics of culture of the modern Estonian nation-state (1918-40) were a civilizing, nationalist programme and the institutionalization of the cultural field in order to support national identity and culture. Similar aims appeared to be the central in the cultural policies of nation-states at the beginning of twentieth century, all over Europe. However, as it appears here, despite the similar aims, state practices and the ways in which cultural policy was implemented differ radically in various political systems and are always determined by the prevailing political discourse.

In order to contextualize Estonian historical experience within the different state practices in culture during various political systems, I have used the concept of '*multiple modernities*'. The concept of '*multiple modernities*' is an approach that acknowledges divergent trajectories of development in the modern era and offers a theoretical umbrella with which to discuss, compare and contrast the different macro-historical paths of Western and Eastern Europe. Thus, in the pattern of Western modernity we can follow the Estonian nation-building process as hidden resistance, cultural emancipation and the emerging public sphere as inherently cultural political process which started from the bottom-up activities of civil society in the circumstances of the repressive Tsarist Empire during the years 1860-1918. We can follow the rise and development of nation-state with liberal and industrial capitalism of (1918-30s) and democratic practices in cultural policy. In this pattern the dialogue and practical cooperation between the state and the civil society (interactions between *agent* and *structure*) was vital in culture (and in all other spheres of life). Civil society with its' entrepreneurial spirit was broadly involved in civilizing and inculcation activities, while a well-developed state network of cultural institutions was also established in Estonia.

From 1934-40, the practices of the authoritarian state with a cultural policy aimed at creating homogeneous Estonian nation followed, but this variety of state practices of nation-building still could be described as an authoritarian type of Western modernity. Both modern institutional phenomena – the Estonian nation-state with its' practices of patronizing (from 1934), as well as civil society as *agent* and *structure* – still formed a relatively smooth dialogue.

From 1940, Estonian Western modernity was replaced by Soviet modernity, with Soviet state practices (1940-91) and Soviet cultural policy, with the aim of creating a unified multinational Soviet nation and an homogeneous identity of the Soviet person within the institutionalized system of cultural production and total control of authorities. This did not tolerate any bottom-up initiatives of civil society or private entrepreneurs. In this pattern we can follow the attempt to re-educate, inculcate the masses, and suppress civil society in order to achieve total domination and control over the population. According to the Soviet cultural canon, the national form was the required form for the Socialist content of Soviet culture. In terms of the Estonian (and Baltic) case, the Soviet cultural policy model was adapted to the institutions taking into account the previous experience of Western modernity which became the basis for conducting autonomous strategies that helped in escaping from Soviet hegemony.

The main difference in the nation-building programmes and state practices in cultural policies during the different modernities could be pointed out as follows: during the Western variety of modernity (1860-1940), the core idea (as a basis and main aim for state cultural policy) of Estonian nation-building, was cultural emancipation, which was not derived merely from a top-down fictional political ideology of the state, as happened during Soviet modernity (1940-91), but was based on the historical national awakening which expressed the will of the majority of the population to improve the status and position of Estonians up to and including national self-determination. During the Western modern state practices (1918-40) cultural policy was developed in cooperation between the state and civil society in Estonia.

However, it appears that civilizing aims, the national identity-building programme in the cultural canon and institutionalization were the driving forces and the historical cornerstones during all political systems and historical eras considered, as well as some of the basic aims in Estonian cultural policy. These features are typical of any modern nation-state's cultural policy, as they are related to identity politics and used for the political representation in order to legitimate of the state as structure with its apparatus and political authority.

## 5.2 Soviet cultural policy in Estonia 1940-91

Soviet state practices have been conceptualized as a specific type of coercive modernity. While Soviet state practices did change over time, the main structures of the state model of the USSR established in the 1930s persisted until its collapse in 1991.

Soviet modernist cultural policy can be viewed via the Communist project of Soviet nation-building. Within this, the attempt to re-educate and inculcate the masses, suppressing civil society to achieve total institutionalized domination and control over the population – even in leisure – is evident. A range of party officials, administrative professionals and cultural workers prepared established norms and routines within a specific cultural education system for the rest of the population to follow. Through the creation of a cultural canon, Soviet leaders sought to provide a set of shared values and a common heritage of Soviet mass culture to form a common way of life – a monolithic Soviet society. The final aim of the Soviet cultural canon and cultural policy was to transform people’s behaviour through a wide range of norms and practices, and to create a new social order, a Soviet society and a Soviet person – a mass-man in the Arendtian sense, in an atomized society.

The greatest change in Estonian society was the suppression of the bottom-up initiative and people’s free time self-expression was replaced by guided and coordinated cultural practices. The entrepreneurial spirit and activities of civil society were prohibited and replaced by patronizing state financing and state interference in culture. However, subordinating civil society and critical reflection in society had crucial results for the Soviet empire. The conflict between civil society and state in the sense of *agent-structure* phenomena could be seen, where the totalitarian state lost or was left without the considerable amount of creativity civil society can offer. At the same time, the dialectics and ambivalent aspects of Soviet cultural policy and cultural welfare, within a broader access to culture, created the specific conditions for a homogeneous identity and promoted national resistance. With homogeneous cultural practices and institutionalized support for the nationalist form of culture, the Socialist state promoted ethnic particularism which was the precipitating power behind the Singing Revolution in Estonia (and other Baltic states). Thus, the Soviet cultural canon and cultural policy model dialectically worked against its imperialist aims.

### **5.3 The roles of community houses during different political systems**

Community houses were built by ordinary people with the aim of offering space for the cultural activities of choirs, plays, orchestras, libraries and the public festivities of the local communities all over the current territory of Estonia during the Tsarist empire from the 1880s onwards. These buildings became first the Estonian cultural institutions where a democratic *public* could appear in the Arendtian sense. Cultural practices in the community houses contributed to a general cultural emancipation and shared feeling of togetherness, spreading the national consciousness among Estonians at the grass-roots level. Thus, community houses played a vital part in the Estonian national awakening in the

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as well as in the inclusion of the rural population in the cultural and national developments of the country during the interwar period of the Estonian republic (1918-40). The Estonian nation-state coordinated and supported the initiatives of civil society, but also standardized the functions and harmonized the architecture of these buildings. We can follow the democratic and liberal state interference and cooperation between the state and civil society. By 1938, more than 400 cultural centres belonged to the state network of community houses all over Estonia. Community houses operated as local institutions of Estonian cultural policy, being also the expression of the socio-economic and cultural vitality of Estonia's rural regions.

The sovietization process (1940-91) in respect of community houses meant the importation of the Soviet cultural canon (norms, values) and cultural policy model. The new official role for the community house was to be a political training centre for the local community. Censorship, a mandatory repertoire and guidelines were implemented for cultural activities. Songs, dances, orchestras, plays and party evenings were controlled by inspectors. Community houses were sovietized and became cultural policy tools in the hands of the authorities (that being the Communist Party), creating a new social order by the spreading of the Soviet cultural canon and socialist ideology. After World War II, new buildings for cultural centres (in the monumental Stalinist style of architecture) were constructed by the Soviet authorities in Estonia and by 1950 there were 651 clubs and cultural centres.

However, due to the dialectics of Soviet cultural policy and the ambivalent nature of the community houses as party places, conceptualized here as Bakhtin's public square, these institutions also became arenas for the hidden resistance of Estonians against the oppressive regime. This kind of democratic ambivalence was a significant feature of the community houses during several political systems since the first of these houses were founded in 1887. Through time, Stalinist political propaganda was gradually balanced by the state-financed homogeneous and standardized leisure activities of the people. As it appeared from the archival documents and reports of the Folk Art House in the 1960s and later, the general atmosphere in cultural work and education became more liberal and politically less suppressive. In the documents, the questions of raising the quality of amateur arts, the promotion of folk arts and tradition of the Song Festival increasingly appeared. The Soviet cultural education system, courses, seminars for cultural work specialists (choreographers, conductors, amateur theatre directors, teachers of visual arts and handicraft) dealt more with the improvement of artistic skills of specialists working in the community houses. Widely accessible, publicly-funded cultural leisure, folk and amateur art and homogeneous mass culture accounted for a substantial part of the Soviet cultural welfare of the closed society and state. At the same time as traditional cultural practices as the official canon of Soviet cultural policy was mediated, national resistance was promoted in the community houses. The strength (the mass mobilization) of the Estonian Singing Revolution came from this basis of

indoctrinated, homogeneous cultural practices and the dialectics of Soviet cultural policy.

During the transition period (1991-95), a post-totalitarian lack of paradigm could also be observed in the community houses, while, simultaneously, the political, economic and official rhetoric on national identity changed in Estonia. Since then, community houses have lost their national importance and central government budget. Although state support for cultural institutions continued and community houses have been supported by local governments, in several cases the form of ownership of community houses has also been changed. (Kulbok-Lattik, Rüütel 2012)<sup>140</sup> During the first transitional decade, some decline in the prestige of community houses due to their previous role as centres of Soviet political education was also felt. In addition, the transformation from a fully-financed system to a market economy resulted in some inability to adapt by the cultural workers, who also lacked ideological guidance that they could relate to, either for or against.

By now, neoliberal capitalism as prevailing political discourse has clearly expressed its rules and rhetoric during the twenty-plus years of the newly-independent Estonia. It has included statements like 'there is no such thing as a free lunch!' or 'money doesn't grow on trees!', as used widely by politicians. Together with these slogans, the new public management ideology – with the keywords of the three E's (economic value, effectiveness and efficiency) as its main aspects – has modelled the general understanding of the state, economy and culture (Kulbok-Lattik and Čopič, forthcoming). Cultural workers in community houses are trained to write applications for cultural projects and deal with fundraising and other cultural management techniques in order to act. However, even today, despite the changes in political discourse, community houses are fulfilling their original functions of being the place for public meetings where local communities can discuss important matters (*public sphere*) and party places, offering space for cultural practices as well as for the festivities of the local people (*public square*). According to the data of Estonian Folk Culture Centre,<sup>141</sup> there are today 464 community houses or cultural centres. Also, politicians visit public gatherings in order to give speeches, to meet their voters and it could be claimed that community houses have been used for political representation by the authorities during all of the different political systems in Estonia. However, it has been the nature of (as well as one of the original roles of) community houses to contribute to the cultural formation of the local public sphere, as well as the political. See the timeline and statistics in Appendix 1.

Finally, as this dissertation on the historical formation and development of Estonian cultural policy belongs to the field of historical sociology, I have tried to

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<sup>140</sup> After 1991, the network of community houses has been excluded from central state budget and it has real consequences - increasingly, the community houses are handed over to local NGOs which have in many cases privatised the house, but in some cases, therefore dispossessing the local community of its communal centre. (Kulbok-Lattik, Rüütel 2012)

<sup>141</sup> <http://www.rahvakultuur.ee/?s=108>

demonstrate how social structures are shaped by agents as well as complex historical socio-economic processes and how they affect society and individuals. I have analysed the politics of cultural policy within different political systems, and the study has revealed that top-down authoritarian or (pro) totalitarian cultural policies (1934-91) have been the most enduring historical experience in the Estonian experience of multiple modernities. In accordance with this, homogeneous cultural practices with nationalist overtones, institutionalized and centralized administration, and a silenced critical reflection of the public sphere have been the main features of the politics of Estonian cultural policy. Suppressed critical reflection alongside a subordinated civil society for such a long period has consequences: on one hand, Estonian society still lacks the viewpoint of critical self-reflective studies with historical and sociological consciousness. On the other hand, it appears that if critical reflection and civil initiatives (also of the market) are subject to political doctrines, society will lose a considerable source of innovation.

It has been shown that each political system creates a specific set of management and institutional tools for cultural production in society. Thus, state interference in culture with its' dynamics of institutional meaning-making, shapes the selective tradition of culture and *Foucauldian* 'rituals of truth' and has an extended impact on the social order or the structure of feelings in the society. Culture is affected by the state's cultural policy, which shapes education, memory work and cultural institutions, creates professions, provides jobs and therefore has a broad impact on the identity and life of the individual. This clearly shows that cultural policy is a considerably powerful political instrument and needs a strong critical approach.

## FINNISH SUMMARY

Tämä kulttuuripolitiikan tutkimuksen ja historiallisen sosiologian aloille sijoitettava väitöskirja pohjautuu vertaisarvioituihin tieteellisiin artikkeleihin. Tutkimuksen tavoite on analysoida Viron valtiollisen kulttuuripolitiikan juuria ja kehitystä ensimmäisen Viron tasavallan (1918–40) sekä neuvostomiehityksen aikana (1940–91).

Väitöskirjan keskeinen teema on Viron modernisaatiokehityksen ominaispiirteiden ja siihen liittyvän institutionalisoitumiskehityksen ymmärtäminen. Tutkimus käsittää markkinoiden, kansalaisyhteiskunnan ja kansallisvaltion vuorovaikutusta ohjanneen poliittisen järjestelmätason yleiskartoituksen sekä Viron kulttuuristen ja sosiaalisten muutosten historiallis-sosiologisen, aineistolähtöisen, analyysin.

Tutkimuksessa avataan virolaisten kansantalojen (rahvamaja) kautta kansalaisyhteiskunnan ja modernisoituvan valtion vuorovaikutusta eri poliittisten ajanjaksojen aikana. Virolaiselle kehitykselle leimalliset kansantalot mahdollistavat virolaisen kulttuuripolitiikan historiallisten juurien, politiikan muodostumisen, sen kehityksen ja tavoitteiden käsittelyn rajatun ja käsiteltävissä olevan aineiston kautta.

Tutkimuksen ensimmäisessä artikkelissa periodisoidaan Viron poliittisen järjestelmän muutoksia ja kuvataan näiden muutosten vaikutuksia kulttuuriin. Toisessa ja kolmannessa artikkelissa avataan kulttuuristen käytänteiden ja käytäntöjen, valtionmuodostuksen ja valtiollisen kulttuuripolitiikan yhteyksiä.

Kokonaisuutena tarkasteltuna tämä tutkimus kehystää virolaisen kulttuuripolitiikan historiallista kehitystä ja muutoksia eri poliittisten järjestelmien aikana erilaisten moderniteettien (different modernities)- käsitteen kautta: kansallisvaltion kehitys liittyi liberaalin demokratian ja teollisen kapitalismin nousuun Viron ”läntisen modernisaation” (Western modernity) (1918–30-luku) vaiheessa; ”kommunistisen modernisaation projektissa” (Communist project of Modernity) (1940–1991) myös kulttuuripolitiikan kehitys kiinnitettiin Neuvostoliiton valtiollisiin käytänteisiin.

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*Sources of the posters, photos, figures*

Photo of Lenin in the preface:

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/478875/propaganda/23837/Measurement-of-the-effects-of-propaganda>

### Photos in appendix 3:

Photo 1. Musicians from the Kuusalu orchestra in 1869, Ludvig Lepik (62) (left) and Karl Lepik (72) (right) Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F32452)

- Photo 2. Studying music in school, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F18915-1).
- Photo 3. Group of musicians in 1920s on the stage of a community house, Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F5518-2).
- Photo 4. Young women dancing in the 1920s Estonian History Museum, photo collection (F26624).
- Photo 5. Modern dance in the 1920s, in Nissi society house (inspired by Ella Ilbak or Isadora Duncan), Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F27369).
- Photo 6. Sindi factory brass band in 1922, with the conductor, Mihkel Hendrikson (centre), Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F5355).
- Photo 7. Musical group of the Guardian (Valvaja) Temperance Society in 1923-24, photographed by J. Vääna, Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F5339).
- Photo 8. The Library of Education Society from Ambla parish, Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F27087).
- Photo 9. Folk-dancers in Nissi society house, in 1923, pupils from sixth class, Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F27370).
- Photo 10. Choir of TRMÜ secondary school in 1927, Tallinn, Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F31433\_1).
- Photo 11. Valjala Choir, before 1930, Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F18610).
- Photo 12. Drama spectacle "In the Harbour" staged by G. Enels in the community house of Väike-Maarja Farmers' Society in 1930ies, EHM, photo collection (F18181).
- Photo 13. Female acrobats's pyramide in Pärnu, in 1930ies, EHM, photo collection (N-11768).
- Photo 14. Summer orchestra in Haapsalu in 1935, Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F27770).
- Photo 15. State Elder Konstantin Päts speaking at Lihula Song Day in 1934, EHM, photo collection (t2-n39946).
- Photo 16. Choirs and opening speeches in the song and dance festival in Mustvee 1951, Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F4233-70).
- Photo 17. Dancers in 1951, Mustvee, Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F4233-61).
- Photo 18. Girls of the dancing group of Koeru community house, in 1951, Mustvee, Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F4233-60).
- Photo 19. Song festival procession in 1950s, EHM photo collection (t2-29946).
- Photo 20. Folk dance as a stage dance in 1960-70s, EHM photo collection (t2-n2606).

### Posters, photos, figures in articles

**Article 2.** Estonian Community Houses as Local Tools for the Development of Estonian Cultural Policy (2012/2), in *Nordisk Kulturpolitisk Tidsskrift*, pp 254-283:

- Photo 1, 2. Children in Harju-Jaani parish school; Estonian History Museum, author: Heinrich Tiidermann. Album "Estonica" Ethnographic photos from 1890ies (F 11684/1-321).
- Photos 3, 4. Estonian choirs in the end of 19th century; Estonian History Museum, author: Heinrich Tiidermann. Album "Estonica" Ethnographic photos from 1890s (F 11684/1-321).
- Photo 5. Estonian Song festival in Haapsalu in 1896; Estonian History Museum, author: Heinrich Tiidermann. Album "Estonica" Ethnographic photos from 1890s (F 11684/1-321).
- Photo 6. Estonian Song festival in Pärnu in 1890s; Estonian History Museum, author: Heinrich Tiidermann. Album "Estonica" Ethnographic photos from 1890ies (F 11684/1-321).
- Photo 7. The first society house in Estonia, built by Music Society in Kanepi 1887, from the private collection of E. Karu, used with permission.
- Photo 8. Estonians in the pub; Estonian History Museum, author of photo: Heinrich Tiidermann. Album "Estonica" Ethnographic photos from 1890ies (F 11684/1-321) original: Bagpipe blower, lithography from 1840s, Art Collection of Estonian History Museum, author: Theodor Gehlhaar, (G4157).
- Photo 9. Firemen's Society House in Otepää, from the private collection of E. Karu, used with permission.
- Plan 10. A Plan of community house for the societies of Rõuge Village, Kurvits 1935.
- Photo 11. Firemen's Society House in Paistu parish, Kurvits 1935.
- Photo 12. A perspective sketch for the community house of Aruküla, Kurvits 1935.
- Photo 13. The community house in Võhma, opened in 1934, Kurvits 1935.

**Article 3.** The Sovietization of Estonian Community Houses (rahvamaja): Soviet Guidelines, (2014) published in: *Acta Historica Tallinnensia*, Estonian Academy of Sciences, pp 157-190:

- Poster 1. Evening of Folklore Art in Tallinn 1947; Estonian History Museum, Collection of Posters (F158-1-36).
- Poster 2. Expression of 'national diversity' and 'ultimate unity'; Estonian History Museum, Collection of Posters (F158-1-23).

- Poster 3. 'To Develop Soviet Folklore: Nationalist in Form and Socialist in Content!' Estonian History Museum, Collection of Posters (F158-1-7).
- Photo 1. Wallboard "Red Ray" 1941 (Seinaleht "Punakiir") Celebration of Lenin's death anniversary in 1941; Estonian History Museum (AM 1480/R F 2569).
- Photo 2. Women's handicraft exhibition in Valga community house, with leaders and a banner saluting the "Friendship of the Nations" on the wall, 1940; Repro, Estonian History Museum, (N15056).
- Figure 1. Example of how banners of socialist competitions should look; 'The Agricultural Corner in a Club', 1961.
- Figures 2, 3. Examples of the hall of fame and different compositions of banners (their location has to be designated); 'The ABC of Visual Agitation. Methodical Guide to Creating Visual Means in Club.' 1962.

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APPENDIX 1 Timeline and statistics concerning community houses with summarised outline of the general socio-economic changes and politics of culture in the Estonian experience of different modernities

Time (year or decade)	Historical event, characteristic process or statistics indicating the development of Estonian civil society, public sphere and public square	Summarised outline of the general socio-economic changes and different modernities	
1820	The first Estonian choir society was established by local clerk and schoolteacher.	From the second half of the nineteenth century, the development of Estonia could be characterised by a general Western modernisation starting with the reorganising of the static agrarian society into a modern European one.	
1838	The Learned Estonian Society was established.		
1840-1850	The foundation of the parish schools, which became the basis for choral music tradition, song societies as well as general cultural emancipation among the Estonians.		
1857	Establishment of <i>Perno Postimees</i> , the first Estonian national newspaper.		
1860s	National awakening, the number of Estonian song and drama societies starts to grow. The first real society movement of Alexander's Schools spread all over the country for the establishment the first Estonian language higher popular school		
1866	Peasant township law frees the peasants' local government councils from landlords' authority and grants them extensive rights to decide their own economic and social affairs.		
1860s and 1870s	Expansion of song and drama societies: <i>Vanemuine</i> (1865), song societies in Tallinn, Viljandi, Narva, Pärnu, Rakvere and so on. Also other societies with different aims (educational, literature, firemen's and farmers' temperance etc.)		
1869	First Estonian Song Festival		
1870	The first Estonian theatre performance was held in Vanemuine society.		
1878	Sakala, the first Estonian political newspaper started to mobilise the masses for active national participation.		Important preconditions for cultural emancipation were widespread literacy among Estonians, and the nineteenth-century agrarian reforms by the Alexander II, in Tsarist Russia.
1887	<b>The first modern society house in Kanepi</b>		
1880s	Cultural societies and Estonian newspapers were closed. The percentage of literacy among Estonians was 96.2 by 1881.		
1890s	There were 25 Estonian societies and 27 German societies in the governate of Livonia and 15 Estonian newspapers circulated. By the end of the nineteenth century the peasants in Southern Estonia (Livonian province) possessed over 80%, and in Northern Estonia (Estonian province) 50%, of the available farmland.		
1900	The number of Estonian societies had grown to 102, (40 of them were temperance societies), as the number of German societies was 71 in the Estonian part of the territory of Governate of Livonia.		
1904	Estonians achieved their first major breakthrough at the Tallinn municipal elections, the Estonian-Russian block gained a majority, defeating the Germans who had so far held power.		
1905	There were more than 500 Estonian societies and associations. The movement of young Estonian intellectuals called		
		In the Baltic provinces the native population became landowners and the capitalist economy developed together with the emerging civil society.	
		The Estonian national awakening was repressed by the Russification policies of Alexander III; civil society was controlled and suppressed while the public sphere was silenced.	
		Western liberal modernization and a weakening Tsarist state enabled the development of culture and national feelings within active civil society in the Baltic provinces.	
		Cultural emancipation formed the base for nation-building and the political demands of Estonians.	

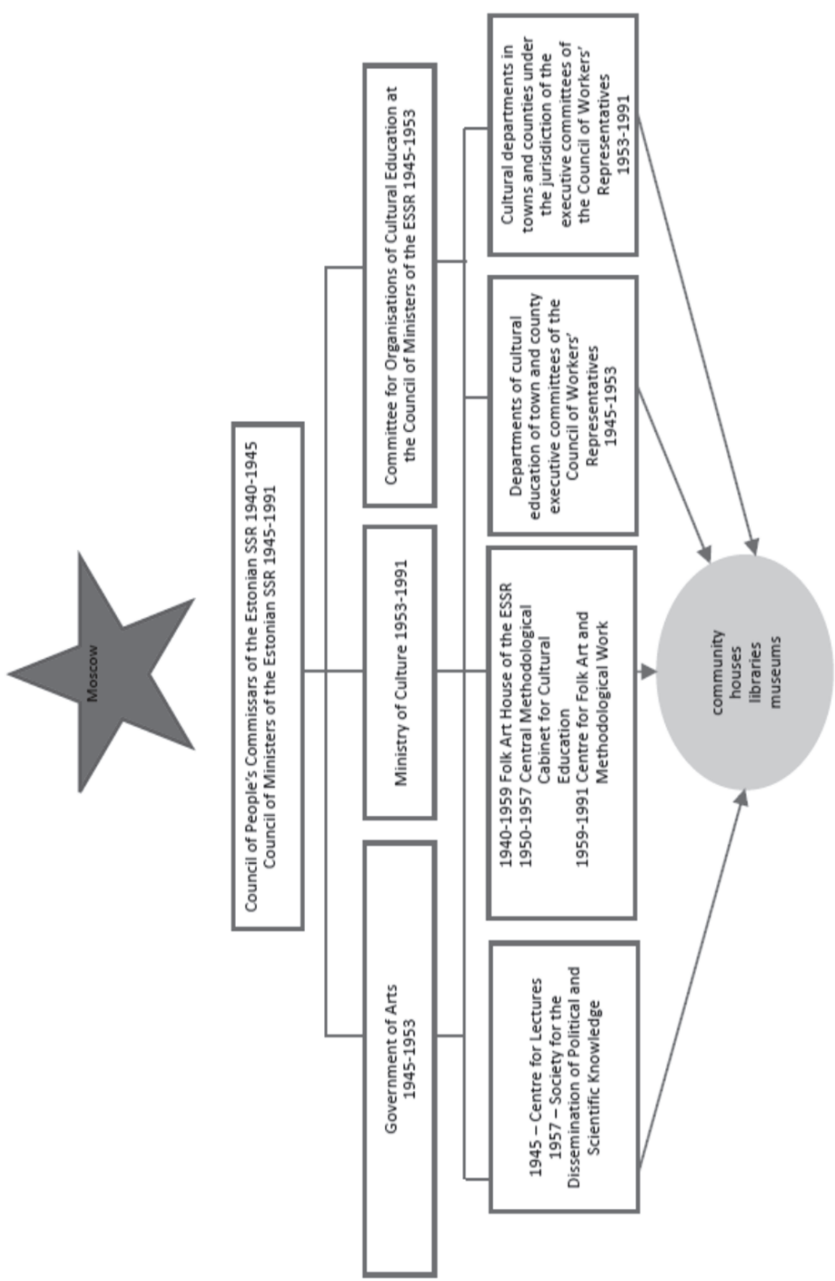
	'Young Estonia' expressed the aim of cultural nation-building in 1905: 'More culture! More European culture! Let's be Estonians, but let's also become Europeans!'	
1913	The growth of urbanization among Estonians was considerable: the percentage of ethnic Estonians in Tallinn was 71.6% and 73.3% in Tartu.	
1914	The first decade of the twentieth century saw the revival of the building activities which lasted until the beginning of World War I, <b>54 society houses</b> had been built by 1914.	
1915-17	Within two decades, ethnic Estonians accounted for about <b>7000</b> of the secondary school students in the Northern Baltic region or a little more than half of the total number ( <b>13,000</b> ). Explosive growth was also evident at university level, from about <b>200</b> students in <b>1900</b> to about <b>1000</b> by <b>1915</b> , although in this case more than half were enrolled at institutions of higher learning outside of Estland and Northern Livland (Raun 2009, 41)	
1918	On 24 February 1918 the independence of the Republic of Estonia was declared.	<p>During the period of Western modern state practices (1918-40) cultural policy was developed in cooperation between the state and civil society in Estonia.</p> <p>Between 1925 and 1934, the establishment of state cultural institutions and principles in the field of culture were created with the help of cultural legislation on the basis of previous civil society.</p>
1919	The Land Act expropriated almost all of the landed property, which had mostly belonged to the Baltic German nobility, leaving them just over 50 ha each. Land was given to those who had participated in the War of Independence. This had a strong impact on forming a relatively egalitarian society and economic basis of new state.	
1920s	Institutionalization of the culture: Estonian Singers' Union (1921), Estonian Writers' Union and Estonian Sports Association (1922), Estonian Artists' Union (1923), Estonian Academic Society of Musicians (1924). The Law of Cultural Endowment was completed (1925)	
1929	From the beginning of statehood the construction of community houses was supported by state. By 1929 there were <b>1385</b> associations dealing with different cultural activities in Estonia, intensive grass-root action needed a special space for cultural and amateur arts' activities	
1931	The Law on Community houses was enacted and through it and the Regulation on the Construction of Community Houses, the state network of community houses was established	
1934	The Silent Era of authoritarian political system with top-down cultural policy was applied. The Government Propaganda Office was established, nationalist cultural canon and state control over the mass organizations and civil society was	
1938	By 1938 there were more than <b>400</b> community houses, which acted both as public sphere as well as public square. By 1940, there were <b>2200</b> organizations of non-formal education with <b>60-70,000</b> individual members and approximately <b>500</b> community houses operating in the Estonian Republic.	

		ous and strong national identity and culture.  However, both modern institutional phenomena - the Estonian nation-state with its' patronizing practices (from 1934), as well as the vital civil society with its' entrepreneurial spirit, both broadly involved in civilizing and enucation activities and thus interactions between agent and structure - still represent relatively smooth 'dialogue'.
1940	The Act of Nationalization of Private Companies was promulgated by the Council of People's Commissars. This dissolved societies, non-governmental organizations (i.e. museums, libraries, theatres, community houses, cinemas), foundations and private companies.  On the basis of acquired the material basis, a state network of cultural institutions - community houses (as well as theatres, libraries, cinemas, museums) - was created.	Estonian Western-style modern development was replaced by Soviet state practices, through Soviet modernity.  Community houses became cultural policy tools in the hands of the authorities (the Communist Party), creating a new social order by the spreading of the Soviet cultural canon.
1945	In May 1945, the Council of Peoples' Commissars of the ESSR adopted new rules for the administration of community houses. Censorship, a mandatory repertoire and guidelines were implemented for cultural activities. Songs, dances, orchestras, plays and party evenings were controlled by inspectors.	Civil society and public sphere were silenced
1950	After World War II, new buildings for cultural centres (in the monumental Stalinist style of architecture) were constructed by the Soviet authorities in Estonia, by 1950 there were <b>651 clubs and cultural centres</b>	Widely accessible, publicly-funded cultural leisure, folk and amateur art and homogeneous mass culture accounted for a substantial part of the Soviet cultural welfare of the closed society and state.
1961	From the 1960s and later, the general atmosphere in cultural work and education became more liberal and politically less suppressive The number of clubs decreased to <b>428</b> (by Taal), because of the means of mass communication - television - which took over as the primary means of ideological work. Through time, Stalinist political propaganda was gradually balanced by the state-financed homogeneous and standardized leisure activities of the people. The Soviet cultural education system, courses, seminars for cultural work specialists (choreographers, conductors, amateur theatre directors, teachers of visual arts and handicraft) dealt more with the improvement of artistic skills of specialists working in the community houses.	Due to the dialectics of Soviet cultural policy and the ambivalent nature of the community houses as party places, conceptualized here as Bakhtin's public square, these institutions also became arenas for the hidden resistance of Estonians against the oppressive regime.
1980s	There were about <b>330</b> cultural house, where traditional cultural practices as the official canon of Soviet cultural policy was mediated. National resistance was promoted in the community houses. The strength (the mass mobilization) of the Estonian Singing Revolution came from this basis of indoctrinated, homogeneous cultural practices and the dialectics of Soviet cultural policy.	

1991	Since 1991, community houses have lost their national importance and central government budget. Although state support for cultural institutions continued and community houses have been supported by local governments, in several cases the form of ownership of community houses has also been changed.	A new era of Western modernity of liberal of capitalism, together with the new public management ideology, modelled the general understanding of the state, economy and culture in Estonia.
2004	Estonia becomes a member state of European Union.	Community houses are fulfilling their original functions of being the place for public meetings where local communities can discuss important matters ( <i>public sphere</i> ) and party places, offering space for cultural practices as well as for the festivities of the local people ( <i>public square</i> ).
2015	There are <b>464</b> community houses or cultural centres acting in Estonia (data of Estonian Folk Culture Centre)	

APPENDIX 2

Organogram of top-down and institutionalized government of leisure time, amateur art, and folk-culture between 1945 and 1991 in Estonia





## APPENDIX 3 Some examples of amateur arts and other activities in community houses



Photo 1 *Musicians from the Kuusalu orchestra in 1869, Ludvig Lepik (62) (left) and Karl Lepik (72) (right) Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F32452)*



Photo 2 *Styding music in school, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F18915-1)*



Photo 3 *Group of musicians in 1920s on the stage of a community house, Estonian History Museum, collection of photos (F5518-2)*



Photo 4 *Young women dancing in the 1920s Estonian History Museum, photo collection (F26624)*



Photo 5 *Modern dance in the 1920s, in Nissi society house (inspired by Ella Ilbak or Isadora Duncan) EHM, photo collection (F27369)*



Photo 6 *Sindi factory brass band in 1922, with the conductor, Mihkel Hendrikson (centre), EHM, photo collection (F5355)*



Photo 7 *Musical group of the Guardian (Valvoja) Temperance Society in 1923-24, photographed by J. Väina, EHM, photo collection (F5339)*



Photo 8 *The Library of Education Society from Ambla parish, EHM, photo collection (F27087)*



Photo 9 *Folk-dancers in Nissi society house, in 1923, pupils from sixth class, EHM, photo collection (F27370)*



Photo 10 *Choir of TRMÜ secondary school in 1927, Tallinn, EHM, photo collection (F31433\_1)*



Photo 11 *Valjala Choir, before 1930, EHM, photo collection (F18610)*



Photo 12 *Drama spectacle "In the Harbour" staged by G. Enels in the community house of Väike-Maarja Farmers' Society in 1930ies, EHM, photo collection (F18181)*



Photo 13 Female acrobats's pyramide in Pärnu, in 1930ies, EHM, photo collection (N-11768)



Photo 14 Summer orchestra in Haapsalu in 1935, EHM, photo collection (F27770)



Photo 15 *State Elder Konstantin Päts speaking at Lihula Song Day in 1934, EHM, photo collection (t2-n39946)*

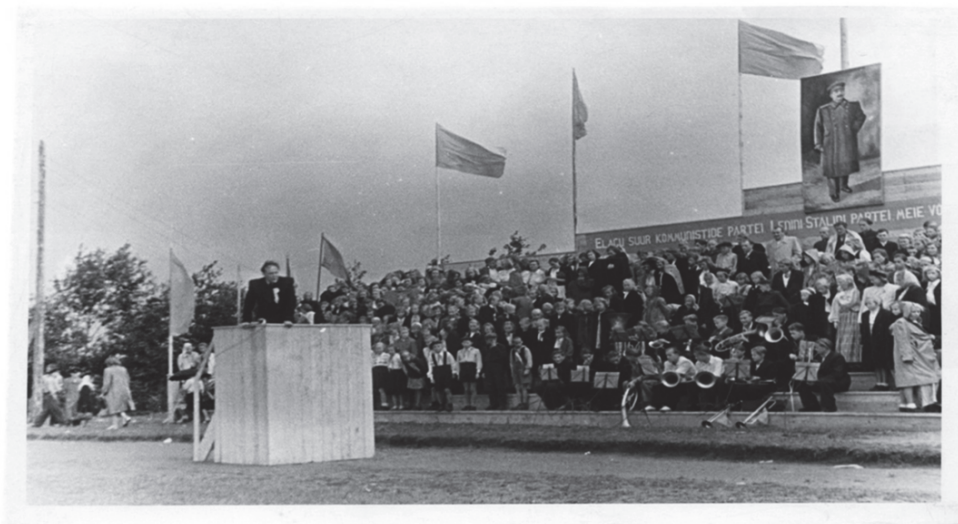


Photo 16 *Choirs and opening speeches in the song and dance festival in Mustvee 1951, (EHM photo collection F4233-70)*





Photo 17 *Dancers in 1951, Mustvee, EHM photo collection (F4233-61)*



Photo 18 *Girls of the dancing group of Koeru community house, in 1951, Mustvee, EHM photo collection (F4233-60)*



Photo 19 *Song festival procession in 1950ies, EHM photo collection (t2-29946)*



Photo 20 *Folk dance as a stage dance in 1960-70ies, EHM photo collection. (t2-n2606)*

## ORIGINAL PAPERS

### I

#### EESTI KULTUURIPOLIITIKA AJALOOLISEST PERIODISEERIMISEST

by

Egge Kulbok-Lattik, 09, 2008

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Article is translated in English



## **EESTI KULTUURIPOLIITIKA AJALOOLOSEST PERIODISEERIMISEST**

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Artiklis on esitatud Eesti kultuuripoliitika üks võimalikke periodiseeringuid. Sissejuhatavas osas on arutletud periodiseerimise kui ajalookirjutuses kasutatava meetodi sisu ja põhjendatuse üle. Seejärel on avatud kultuuripoliitikaga seotud mõisteid selle artikli kontekstis ja kirjeldatud ülevaatlikult Eesti kultuuripoliitika erinevaid perioode. Artikli kokkuvõttes on esile toodud seosed praeguse Eesti kultuuripoliitika ja varasemate perioodide ajaloolise kogemuse vahel.

### **SISSEJUHAATUSEKS**

Käesolev Eesti kultuuripoliitika periodiseering lähtub ajastu kesksest dominantist. See ei ole detailselt liigendatud ega kaugeltki lõplik, vaid on esmane katse piiritleda ja määratleda Eesti kultuuripoliitika erinevaid perioode. Rõhuasetus on riiklikult reguleeritud kultuurielul, kehtiva kultuuripoliitika põhiolemust ühisenimetaja alla välja tuues (loomulikult kattub see suures osas poliitilise ajaloo perioodidega). Periodiseerimisel on autor toetunud Eesti ajaloo periodiseerimisega tegelnud ajaloolaste ja eesti ning välismaiste uurijate kultuuripoliitika-alastele töödele.

Sissejuhatavas osas on arutletud periodiseerimise kui ajalookirjutuses kasutatava meetodi sisu ja põhjendatuse üle. Seejärel on avatud kultuuripoliitikaga seotud mõisteid selle artikli kontekstis ja kirjeldatud ülevaatlikult Eesti kultuuripoliitika perioode. Artikli kokkuvõttes on esile toodud seosed praeguse Eesti kultuuripoliitika ja varasemate perioodide ajaloolise kogemuse vahel.

### **Üldiselt periodiseerimisest**

Üheks viisiks möödunud rekonstrueerida on ajalooprotsesse periodiseerida. Olles küll alati subjektiivne ja tinglik meetod, on sel väärtus laiema üldistuse ning ülevaatliku pildi saamiseks. Järgnevalt on antud põgus ülevaade neist eesti ajaloo-

kirjutuses levinud põhiseisukohtadest periodiseerimise kohta, mida ka autor õigeaks peab. See valik peaks ka selgitama, miks on kultuuripoliitika periodiseerimine vajalik.

Periood on ajajärk, ajalõik kahe pöördepunkti – epohhi – vahel. Epohh tähendab nimelt peatust, peatuspunkti, millel on ajavoolus markantne koht. Epohhi-loovad sündmused (näiteks loodus- või majanduskatastroofid, sõjad jms) märgivad muutusi ja on seega väljaulatuvad pidepunktid ajaloo protsessis, võimaldades seda liigendada ning vaadelda erisuste põhjal.<sup>1</sup> Juhul kui ei ole mingit radikaalset murrangut (sõjad, epideemiad, riigipöörded, revolutsioonid jne), on ajalugu pidev protsess selles mõttes, et minevik ei lakka iialgi järsult, vaid igal uuel on oma eel-lugu, mis avaldab talle kaua järelmõju. Sellisel juhul on ajaloo periodiseerimine ikkagi vaid retrospektiivne konstruktsioon, protsesside kronoloogiline raamimine, ja alati mõneti meelevaldne ning sõltub periodiseerimise objektist või teemast.<sup>2</sup>

Epistemoloogiliselt põhjendab periodiseerimist selgusevajadus: vajame selgeid piirjooni faktide ja sündmuste kogumist, millega ajalooteadus tegeleb. See võimaldab hoomata ajaloo kulgu ja mõtestada keerulisi suhteseoseid, mis seda kulgu on suunanud.

Jaak Valge peab periodiseerimist tänuväärseks üldistuseks, mis aitab uurimistööd liigendada, samuti on sel pedagoogiline eesmärk: klassifitseerimise kaudu on lihtsam avada ja selgitada muutuste sisu ning just periodiseerimise kaudu tekib ajaloolaste “ühine keel”. Samas on selge, et ükski periodiseering ei saa olla kivistunud: kui ilmnevad uurimistulemused, mis kehtivad periodiseeringud kummutavad, tuleb senine periodiseering kõhklemata kõrvale jätta.<sup>3</sup>

Igasugune periodiseerimine sisaldab ka kultuurilist identiteediloomet, mis omakorda kätkeb endas võimumehhanismi. Vladimir Biti toob esile, et kuna kultuuriline identiteet ei saa üheski ühiskonnas olla homogeenne ja allutatud ühtsele “kultuurimälu” ühiskehandile, vaid on rahvuslikest, etnilistest, rassilistest, religioossetest, sotsiaalsetest, soolistest ning professionaalsetest erinevustest tulenevalt heterogeenne ja paljunäoline, siis tuleb alati uurida, millisel eesmärgil ning kelle huvides on kultuurilist ühismälu periodiseeritud.<sup>4</sup> Periodiseerimise kui identiteediloomelise instrumendi kasutamine on jälgitav, kui vaadelda ja analüüsida, kuidas eri poliitiliste režiimide ajal on ajalugu kehtivale ideoloogiale sobivalt periodiseeritud (lähiminevikust näiteks nõukogude aja periodiseeringud).

Seega: kui arvestada kultuuripoliitika kui ainese mitmeplaanilisust ja interdistsiplinaarsust (ajalugu, kultuuriuuringud, politoloogia, avalik haldus), siis annab selle liigendamine eri ajastutest hea pildi, tehes mahuka ning detailirohke ainese

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<sup>1</sup> **Tarvel, E.** Eesti lähiajaloo periodiseerimisest. – Rmt: Ajaloolise töö otsinguil. 20.1.1999 Tallinnas toimunud konverentsi “Eesti lähiajaloo allikakriitilisi probleeme” materjalid. Toim E. Tarvel. Tallinn, 1999, 105.

<sup>2</sup> **Valge, J.** Kuidas periodiseerida Eesti aega? – Tuna, 2004, 1, 122.

<sup>3</sup> Samas.

<sup>4</sup> **Biti, V.** Periodization as a technique of cultural identification. – Rmt: Cultural History after Foucault. Toim J. Neubauer. New York, 1999, 177–184.

hoomatavaks ja paremini mõtestatavaks, mis ongi ajaloolase mõtestamistegevuse üks eesmärke. Mart Kivimäe sõnul on ajaloolane mõtestamistegevus ühtlasi meie ajalisele maailmale kohandumise viis (enesemõtestamine), ja see on – kriitilisest historismist ajalootraditsioonis juurdud – ajaloolise teadmise antropoloogiline mõte.<sup>5</sup>

### Periodiseerimise lähtealustest

Kriteeriumide valik, mille järgi saab ajaloo protsessi jagada kronoloogilisteks ajalõikudeks, on põhimõtteliselt vaba. Kõige vanem (Egiptusest ja Babülonist alates) ja levinum on periodiseerimine poliitilise ajaloo ehk valitsejate, riigivormide, sõdade vms silmapaistvate sündmuste järgi.<sup>6</sup>

Periodiseerida saab ka eri valdkondade – poliitika, majanduse, kultuuri – muutuse (või selle tajumise) jooni üldistades. Eri elualade periodiseeringud ei saa kokku langeda: kunstiajaloolane peabki teisiti periodiseerima kui kiriku- või majandusajaloolane. Samuti ei saa ükski periodiseering olla globaalne ja kehtida kõikjal.<sup>7</sup>

Võimalik on periodiseerida ka nii, et leitakse perioodi keskne dominant ja ignoreeritakse seejuures vähem või rohkem teisi protsesse. Just seda printsiipi on alljärgnevas Eesti kultuuripoliitika periodiseeringus rakendatud. See tähendab, et eri pikkusega ajaperioodid – hoolimata näilisest ajalisest disproportsioonist – on perioodi keskset dominantti kokku võtva ühisnimetaja alla viidud. Ühisnimetajat määratledes on ka kultuuripoliitika perioodid pealkirjastatud: pealkiri võtab kokku ja iseloomustab perioodi põhilist kultuuripoliitikat kujundavat hoiakut, printsiipi või ka kultuuripoliitika ellurakendamise viisi. Nii näiteks on väga pikk (pro)totalitaarne periood mitmeti vaadeldav – nii ühisnimetaja järgi kui ka selgelt eristuvate alaperioodide kaupa. Selle perioodi üldnimetajaks on (pro)totalitaarsus: kogu selle pika perioodi vältel kehtib ülalt juhitud, ehkki periooditi kardinaalselt eri kangusega tembitud ja eri ideoloogiliste eesmärkidega riiklik režiim. Samas on ka selgelt eristatavad alaperioodid, mis kattuvad osaliselt poliitilise ajaloo periodiseeringuga, ent sobivad iseloomustama ka nende aastate Eesti kultuuripoliitikas valitsenud põhihoiakuid.

### MÕISTED

Kuna kultuuripoliitika olemuslik eeldus on kultuurikäsitlus ehk arusaamine kultuurist, siis esmalt sellest, kuidas selles artiklis on mõistetud *kultuuri*, *poliitikat*, *kultuuripoliitikat* ja teisi kultuuripoliitika arutlustes esile kerkivaid mõisteid.

<sup>5</sup> Kivimäe, M. Kirjandus ja teaduslik objektiivsus ajaloos. Meie ajalooteaduses pidamata dialooge. – Sirp, 2005, 23. sept.

<sup>6</sup> Tarvel, E. Eesti lähiajaloo periodiseerimisest, 107.

<sup>7</sup> Samas, 109.

Oxfordi filosoofialeksikonile tuginedes võib kultuuri üldiselt defineerida nii: inimeste eluviis, sh nende hoiakud, väärtused, uskumused, kunstid, teadmised, tajumisviisid ja mõtlemisharjumused. Eluvormide kultuurilised tunnused on õpitud, kuid sageli nii sisseimbunud, et neid on raske seestpoolt märgata.<sup>8</sup> Siinses artiklis on aga keskendunud kultuurile kultuuripoliitika kontekstis, mistõttu on tegemist oluliselt kitsama kultuuri määratlusega.

Mikko Lagerspetzi sõnul on kultuuri mõiste kultuuripoliitika kontekstis poliitiliselt määratud ja seega normatiivne, ajalooliselt kujunenud, ajas muutuv ning riigiti erinev.

Kultuuri mõiste nii üldisemas mõttes kui kultuuripoliitika kontekstis on avardunud tänu ühiskonna- ja kultuuriuuringutele. Briti kultuuriuurija Angela McRobbie väidab, et kriitiline kultuuriuurimus ja selle paljud esindajad, sh “Brecht, Benjamin ja Bourdieu, on eelkõige andnud meile kultuurist arusaamise, mis tähendab kultuuri demüstitiseerimist ning ka nende sotsiaalsete suhete demüstitiseerimist, mis toodavad nii kultuuri kui ka akadeemilist arusaamist kultuurist”.<sup>9</sup>

On oluline põgusalt vaadelda, kuidas on muutusi kultuurist arusaamises käsitletud Lääne-Euroopas, sest vastavalt kultuurikäsitusele on muutunud ka kultuuripoliitika. Muutusi kultuurikäsituses on kirjeldanud Cambridge’i ülikooli kultuuriajaloo professor Peter Burke. Ta iseloomustab vana, klassikalist kultuurikäsitust kui eliidi refleksiooni, mida viljelesid haritud inimesed haritud inimestele alates Vana-Kreeka tsivilisatsioonist kuni Lääne tsivilisatsiooni 20. sajandini:

See on kanoniseeritud ja “ooperiteaterlik” ning orienteeritud kõrgkultuurile, jättes kõrvale või pöörates vähe tähelepanu muudele inimtegevuse sfääridele. Selline kultuurikäsitus pole tänapäeva kultuuridemokraatiast kõnelevas maailmas enam kohane.<sup>10</sup>

Tuleb mõelda kultuuriuurimuse ja kultuuripoliitika vahelisi seoseid “postmodernistlikes tingimustes” analüüsinud Jim McGuigani järelduse õigsust, kui ta ütleb, et termin *kultuur* on vohamas tasemeni, mil termin muutub sisutuks, kuna kõik on kultuur ning et elamegi “kultuuri ühiskonnas”.<sup>11</sup>

Määratleda tuleb ka *poliitika*. Sellel sõnal on hulgaliselt tähendusi, näiteks inglise keeles on kolm vastet: *polity*, *politics* ja *policy*. Esimene osutab poliitika formaalsele struktuurile – institutsioonidele, menetlustele ja normidele. *Politics* kirjeldab poliitikat kui huvide vahendamise ja läbisurumise, konfliktide reguleerimise ning poliitiliste otsuste tegemise protsessi. *Policy* tähistab poliitikat kui väärtustele ja eesmärkidele suunatud riiklikku tegevust. Siin on jutt konkreetsetest poliitikest, näiteks majanduspoliitika, hariduspoliitika, tervishoiupoliitika, kultuuripoliitika jne. Kuna poliitika on David Eastoni käsituses väärtuste jaotamine, nende hulk on aga piiratud, võivad ühed ühiskonnarühmad poliitikast rohkem kui teised.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Blackburn, S. Oxfordi filosoofialeksikon. Vagabund, Tallinn, 2002, 242.

<sup>9</sup> McRobbie, A. Cultural studies for the 1990s. Innovation. – The European Journal of Social Sciences, 1993, 6, 3, 269.

<sup>10</sup> Burke, P. Kultuuriajaloo ühtsus ja mitmekesisus. – Tuna, 2004, 4, 102–117.

<sup>11</sup> McGuigan, J. Cultural analysis and policys in the information age. – Rmt: Construction of Cultural Policy. Toim P. Ahponen, A. Kangas. Minerva Kustannus Oy, Jyväskylä, 2004, 125–147.

<sup>12</sup> Palmaru, R. Eesti kultuuripoliitika teelahkmed. – Riigikogu Toimetised, 2005, 12, 4.



## Kultuuripoliitika kui valitsemisvorm, selle haardeulatus ja aspektid

Lagerspetz on iseloomustanud kultuuripoliitika olemust nii:

Oma poliitilise olemuse tõttu on kultuuripoliitika normatiivne, ja selles kontekstis on kultuuri definitsioon poliitiliselt määratud. Kultuuripoliitika ala on kujunenud ajalooliselt, ta on ajas muutuv ja riigiti erinev. Kultuuripoliitikas väljendub ametlik, riiklik arusaam kultuurist, selle läbi teadvustatakse ühiskonna väärtushoiakud ja ootused kultuurile.<sup>13</sup>

Kui kirjeldada üldisemas mõttes kultuuripoliitika olemust, siis võib nõustuda Jim McGuigani väitega, et kultuuripoliitika on üks valitsemise vorme. Ta viitab Michel Foucault' (1991 [1978]) teooriale valitsemisest. Foucault' kontseptsioon valitsemisest seisneb väga üldistatult moodsa riigi tekkega kaasnenud administratiiv-aparaadi ja sotsiaalsete regulatsioonide kehtestatud võimukäsituses. Sotsiaalsele regulatsioonile toetuv võim on Foucault' järgi palju avaram mõiste kui moodsa riigi kultuuripoliitikast tulenev võim. Seda esiteks ja eelkõige sellepärast, et kultuur on sotsiaalse regulatsiooni poolt jagatud praktikateks, millele on antud erinev tähendus.<sup>14</sup> Riiklikult hallatud kultuurielu oma institutsioonidega aga toetab ja taastoodab ühiskonnas kehtivat sotsiaalset regulatsiooni, mis annab kultuurilistele praktikatele erineva tähenduse ning staatuse ja sel moel kujunevad kultuurielus valitsevad hierarhiad.

Foucault käsitleb võimu kui mehhanismi, võrgustikku, mis ei toimi ainult ülevalt alla, vaid ka vastupidi. Kuigi võimu püramiidilaadne ülesehitus annab sellele konkreetse "pea", toodab võimu kogu institutsionaalne aparaat tervikuna. See võimaldab distsiplinaarsel võimul olla korraga nii otsene kui kaudne: otsene, kuna ta on korraga igal pool; kaudne ses mõttes, et see võim toimib pidevalt ja enamasti vaikselt ning märkamatu. Foucault' võimuteooria kohaselt peab võim selleks, et domineerida, tootma reaalsust läbi "tõe rituaalide". Selles protsessis allub indiviid võimule mitte niivõrd ähvarduste kui distsipliini tõttu. Foucault väidab, et distsipliini abil – järelevalve, kontrolli, võrdluste, eristuste, hierarhiseerimise, homogeniseerimise, välistuste, lühidalt normeerimise kaudu, – luuakse indiviid.<sup>15</sup> Foucault' mõttekäigule toetudes võib riiklikku kultuuripoliitikat vaadelda kui valitseva ideoloogia ja identiteediloome instrumenti ning mõista kultuuripoliitika varjatuid seoseid ühiskonna arusaamaga kultuurist ja nende vastastikust mõju ning seotust sotsiaalse regulatsiooniga.

Kultuuri on võimu teenistusse rakendatud, st kultuuripoliitikat viljeldud ja selle abil ühiskonnas eliidile sobivaid ideoloogiaid kehtestatud, varastest ühiskonnavormidest alates. Sellises ajaloolises mõttes väljendub kultuuripoliitika näiteks kultuurimetseenluses ja -patronaažis, juurdepääsupiiranguga haridussüsteemis. See-

<sup>13</sup> **Lagerspetz, M.** Eesti kultuuripoliitikast. Avaldamata materjal. 2004.

<sup>14</sup> **McGuigan, J.** Cultural analysis and policies in the information age, 132.

<sup>15</sup> **Foucault, M.** The means of correct training. – Rmt: Discipline and Punish: The Birth of Prison. Penguin Books, London, 1991, 194.

sugust mõttekäiku kultuuripoliitikast toetab hästi ka mõte klassikalisest kultuurikäsitusest, mille kohaselt on vaadeldud kultuuri kui eliidi refleksiooni.

Siinses kontekstis on *ideoloogia* igasugune ulatuslikum uskumuste, mõtteviiside ja kategooriate süsteem, mis on aluseks poliitilistele ning ühiskondlikele tegevustavadele.<sup>16</sup>

Kultuuripoliitikat ajaloos jälgides ilmneb hästi ajastu ideoloogiline diskursus. Selgesti väljendab seda valitsevate ideoloogiate ja kultuuripoliitika seost ka Norra kultuuripoliitika uurija professor Marrit Bakke, kes tänapäevase kultuuripoliitika eelkäijana eristab Lääne tsivilisatsiooni ajaloos olulisemad kultuuripatronaazi kui kultuuri haldamise vormid ning periodiseerib neid järgnevalt:

- 1) kirik: umbes aastad 700–1300;
- 2) aristokraatia: umbes aastad 1300–1600;
- 3) kuninglikud õukonnad: aastad 1600–1770;
- 4) kodanluse eraklubid, seltsid ja ühingud: alates 18. sajandi lõpust;
- 5) valitsused ja riigid: peamiselt pärast Teist maailmasõda;
- 6) erapatroonid: läbi ajaloo, tänapäeval eriti alates 1960. aastatest.<sup>17</sup>

Selgesti võib kultuuripoliitika mõistet avada ja jälgida moodsa riigi tekke taustal, mil hakati kultuurielu kui üht riiklikku valdkonda reguleerima seaduste, kindlate rahastamisviiside ja kultuurielu korraldavate institutsioonide asutamisega. Selles valguses võib kultuuripoliitika sünniajaks pidada alles Herderi ja valgustusjärgse rahvusriikluse teket, mil kultuur seoti rahvusluse ideoloogia abil kindlalt rahvusriigiga, mis loob kultuuri jätkusuutlikkust tagavad institutsioonid. Siinses kontekstis on riik spetsiaalne, selgelt määratletud, rangelt tsentraliseeritud ja distsiplineeritud sotsiaalne toimejõud või jõudude kompleks, mis eri sanktsioonidest ainsana võib korra säilitamiseks äärmise abinõuna tarvitada jõudu.<sup>18</sup> Ernest Gellneri sõnul on riik ka ainuke organism, mis suudab kindlustada haritud ja unifitseeritud kultuuri efektiivse produtseerimise, et hariduse tulemused poleks viletsad ning allpool standardit.<sup>19</sup> Gellner näitab veenvalt kultuuri, rahvusluse ideoloogia ja riigi seoseid.

McGuigani sõnul piiritles 20. sajandi kultuuripoliitikat suhteliselt kitsas kultuurikäsitlus. Riigid asusid sekkuma kultuuriellu, toetades “kunste”, kultuuri, eri eesmärkidel: rahvuslikel, propagandistlikel ja ümberjagavatel eesmärkidel, reguleerides sümboolsete kultuurivormide tootmist ning ringlemist.<sup>20</sup>

Kultuuripoliitika esiletõus iseseisva temaatikana Teise maailmasõja järgses Euroopas oli seotud nii majanduslike muudatustega (üleminek heaoluühiskonnale 1960.–1970. aastatel), ühiskonnauuringutest tulenenud diskursiivsete muudatustega kultuuri käsitlemisel kui ka muutunud ja avardunud kultuurikontseptsiooniga.

<sup>16</sup> Blackburn, S. Oxfordi filosoofialeksikon, 177.

<sup>17</sup> Duelund, P. Cultural policy: an overview. – Rmt: The Nordic Cultural Model. Toim P. Duelund. Nordic Cultural Institute, Copenhagen, 2003, 16.

<sup>18</sup> Gellner, E. Rahvused ja rahvuslus. – Akadeemia, 1994, 10, 2223.

<sup>19</sup> Samas.

<sup>20</sup> McGuigan, J. Cultural analysis and policies in the information age, 132.

Helsingi Ülikooli professor Ilkka Heiskanen on põhjendanud kultuuripoliitika teemade ringi esiletõusu 1980. aastate lõpu radikaalsete muutustega Euroopas. Ilmnesid jõuliselt niisugused kultuuripoliitika võtmeteemad, nagu rahvusriik, natsionalism ja rahvuslik identiteet – teemad, mis olid bipolaarses (külma sõja) maailmas aastail 1945–1989 praktiliselt unustatud. Kui ida blokis on enamasti tegeldud natsionalismi ja rahvusriigi temaatikaga, siis Lääne-Euroopa kultuuripoliitikaalane diskussioon kajastas postkolonialistlikke – etnilisi ning rassilisi – pingeid, mis tule-nesid massilisest tööjõu ja põgenike sissevoolust. Aga samuti pani uute info-tehnoloogiate kiire areng ja sellega kaasnev angloameerika päritolu universaalse audiovisuaalse kultuuri massiivne vohamine ka lääneriigid küsima rahvuskultuuri tuleviku üle.<sup>21</sup>

Alates heaoluühiskonna saavutamisest on tänapäeva Euroopa riikide kultuuripoliitikad püüdnud ületada industriaalühiskonnale tüüpilisi barjääre – sotsiaalseid, klassi- ja geograafilisi. Kuid postmodernistliku ajastu paradigma muutus seab uusi ülesandeid ja püstitab küsimusi nendele kultuuripoliitikele, millele otsitakse vastuseid kultuuripoliitikaalastes uurimustes.

Tony Bennetti järgi on kultuuripoliitikauurimus üks kriitilise kultuuriuurimuse suundi. Tema sõnul peaks sellealane haridus andma kultuuritootmise väljal aktiivselt haaratud teadlikke tegutsejaid, mitte ainult kriitikuid, kes selle asemel, et sekkuda “väljal” toimuvasse, jäävad kõrvaltvaatajatena kritiseerima:

Ja seda eelkõige seetõttu, et kuigi paljud teoreetikud on pidanud kultuuriuuringute fookuseks suhteid kultuuri ja võimu vahel, jäävad kultuuriuuringud – nii nagu neid tavapäraselt tehakse – suuresti haakumatuks tegeliku poliitika juhtimise ja kujundamisega. Uurimisvaldkonna kohta, mis tituleerib end “poliitiliseks”, on see pehmelt öeldes eksitav.<sup>22</sup>

Loetletud põhjused on pannud Euroopa ühiskonnateadlasi ja kultuuriuurijaid kirjeldama oma riikide kultuuripoliitikaid ning analüüsima kultuuripoliitikat ajaloolisest aspektist ja hindama kultuuripoliitiliste otsuste ning rakenduste sotsiaalset mõju ühiskonnas. Ehkki Eestis on kultuuripoliitikat eraldi valdkonnana uuritud üsna vähe, ei ole siinses töös siiski ruumi, et sellest ülevaadet anda.

### **Eesti kultuuripoliitika määratlus**

Autor defineerib tänapäeva Eesti kultuuripoliitikat järgnevalt: kultuuripoliitika on kokkuleppeline otsuste ja regulatsioonide kogum, mille abil ajalooliselt kujunenud ning riiklikult legitimeeritud väärtushinnangutele tuginedes valitakse välja ühiskonnas eeldatavalt eelistatavaid kultuurilisi praktikaid ja kehtestatakse neid halduslikult ning institutsionaalselt, sh riigieelarve kaudu.

<sup>21</sup> **Heiskanen, I.** Cultural Policy in Finland. National Report. Arts Council of Finland, Helsinki, 1995, 29.

<sup>22</sup> **McGuigan, J.** Cultural analysis and policies in the information age, 134.

## EESTI KULTUURIPOLIITIKA PERIOODID

Eesti kultuuripoliitika ajaloos võib täheldada viit küllalt selgelt eristuvat perioodi koos alaperioodidega.

Eellugu ärkamisajast kuni riigi loomiseni 1918. aastal: “Omaalgatus ja seltsi-  
liikumine”

I. 1918–1925: “Otsingud ja kujunemisaastad”

II. 1925–1934: “Sihipärase kultuuripoliitika kujundamine”

III. 1934–1990: “(Pro)totalitaarne kultuuripoliitika” ja selle alaperioodid:

1. 1934–1940: “Vaikiv ajastu”

2. 1940–1944: “Omariikluse kaotamise aastad”

3. 1944–1953: “Stalinlik terror”

4. 1953–1969: “Sula ja hallad”

5. 1969–1987: “Stagnatsioon”

6. 1987–1991: “Režiimi lagunemine ja laulev revolutsioon”

IV. 1991–1995: üleminekuperiood “Siirdeaja paradigmat”

V. 1995–2007: “Elitistlik-säilitav kultuuripoliitika”

Autor on periodiseerimisel lähtunud ajastu kesksest dominandist – kokkuvõtvalt ühisenimetajast, mis on väljendatud pealkirjades. Neis on iseloomustatud perioodi põhilist kultuuripoliitikat kujundavat hoiakut, printsiipi või ka kultuuripoliitika ellurakendamise viisi.

(Pro)totalitaarne periood jaguneb kuueks alaperioodiks, selle perioodi üldnime-  
tajaks on aga (pro)totalitaarsus – kogu pika perioodi vältel kehtib ülalt juhitud,  
periooditi kardinaalselt eri kangusega tembitud ja eri ideoloogiliste eesmärkidega  
riiklik režiim. Protototalitaarse ja totalitaarse kultuuripoliitika ühisjooni on täpsemalt  
selgitatud alapeatüki sissejuhatuses. Nende erinevus seisneb ideoloogia peale-  
surumise jõulisuses. See väljendub ka pealkirjas: kui protototalitaarsel perioodil  
võis täheldada *kalduvust* totalitaarsusele, siis totalitaarsel perioodil oli kultuuri-  
poliitika läbinisti totalitaarne. Etteruttavalt olgu lisatud, et käesoleva periodisee-  
ringu põhikontseptsioon on seotud järeldusega, et (pro)totalitaarne kultuuripoliitika  
on meie ajalooline põhikogemus.

### Eellugu ärkamisajast kuni riigi loomiseni 1918. aastal

Eellugu on esitatud seetõttu, et suur osa meie rahvusriikluse märgilisteks kand-  
jateks kujunenud kultuuriinstitutsioone on sel ajastul alguse saanud – nii teatrid,  
loomeliidud, rahvamajad kui teisedki –, olles seltsipõhiselt spontaanse ja vaba-  
algatusliku tekkelooga. Seesugune kultuuriinstitutsioonide vabaalgatuslik teke on  
üks olulisi kultuuripoliitika ajaloolisi erisusi vanade monarhistlike impeeriumi-  
riikidega võrreldes.

Ärkamisajast kuni omariikluse tekkeni algatati kultuuritegevusi Eestis spon-  
taanselt. Kultuuripoliitikast selle tavapärases “riigilises” tähenduses saab rääkida  
vaid kui Vene keisririigi meetmetest ühe Balti kubermangu suhtes. Tegu on ajas-

tuga, mil põhieeldused rahvusriigi tekkeks võtsid selgema vormi. Maarahva seltsiliikumine ja püüe ühistegevuse poole ning seda suunavate üksikute väljapaistvate isikute rahvuskultuuriline visioon ja tegevus olid olemuselt kultuuripoliitilised – eesmärgiga jõuda välja nii baltisaksa aadelkonna kui Vene impeeriumi ülemvõimu alt rahvusliku iseolemise ning enesemääramiseni. Ea Jansen nimetab riikluseni jõudmise põhieeldusteks eestikeelset kooliharidust, ajakirjanduse levikut ja rahvusluse ideid kandvate ning propageerivate juhtkujude (Faehlmann, Kreutzwald, Koidula, Jannsen, Jakobson, Hurt jt) olemasolu, samuti tugevat seltsiliikumist, mille abil kõik need eeldused kandusid igamehe tasandini ja tagasid omariikluse loomiseks vajaliku rahva massilise toetuse.<sup>23</sup>

Selle aja kultuurielu, nii harrastuslik kui ka professionaalsust taotlev, toimis vabaalgatuslikult ja seltsipõhiselt. Eesti loomeinimestel oli sel ajajärgul raske oma loomingust elatuda, sest kultuuri tarbijaskond oli piiratud ja nii kirjanduse, kunsti kui ka heliloomingu honorarid olid tühiselt väikesed.

### I periood. 1918–1925: “Otsingud ja kujunemisaastad”

Eesti rahvusriikluse kujunemisprotsesside põhjal võib jälgida Gellneri väiteid kultuuri ja rahvusriigi seotusest ning neile kinnitust leida, sest 1919. aastal, kui Eestis käis alles sõda, arutati kultuuri toetamise teemat loovintelligentsi kokkusaamistel palju ja innukalt. Jüri Uljase sõnul arutati loovisikutele palgamaksmist ja sellealaseid reegleid nii kujutava kunsti kongressil 1919. aasta augustis kui ka kirjanike kongressil sama aasta septembris. (Kuna selle perioodi kultuuripoliitika käsitus siinse artikli kontekstis on Eestis seni üsnagi napp olnud, siis on seda ja järgmist perioodi kirjeldades toetunud põhiliselt Uljase teosele “Eesti Kultuurkapital”<sup>24</sup>.) Üks jõulisemaid loovintelligentsi seisukohtade eest võitlejaid oli Friedebert Tuglas. 1919. aasta jaanuaris kirjutas ta artikli “Kunstide riiklik edendamise”, milles visandas kultuuritoetamise kava.

11. novembril 1918 asus ametisse vabariigi esimene valitsus. Haridusministeeriumis tegeles kunsti- ja kultuuripoliitika küsimustega kunsti ning muinsuskaitse osakond, mis alates 1919. aasta juunist jagunes kirjanduse, kujutava kunsti, helikunsti ja lavakunsti toimkonnaks ning muinsusvalitsuseks. Osakond püstitas kaks ülesannet: 1) luua soodsad eeltingimused kunsti arenemiseks, andes eelkõige kunstiloojatele paremaid elamis-, õppimis-, arenemis- ja töötamisvõimalusi; 2) luua eeltingimused kunstikultuurilise tasapinna tõstmiseks kogu riigis ja ühiskonnas. Lisandus veel kolmas: hoolitseda kunstikultuurilise representatsiooni eest nii Eestis kui ka välismaal.

Samal ajal tõusid päevakorda teatrite finantsküsimused. Põhimõtteliselt otsustati 30% lavategelaste palkadest riigi kanda võtta, seda eeskätt kahe suurema teatri – Estonia ja Vanemuise – puhul. Ka teised teatrid (näiteks Draamateatri Selts) pöördusid abi saamiseks haridusministeeriumi poole.

<sup>23</sup> Jansen, E. Vaateid eesti rahvusluse sünniaegadesse. Ilmamaa, Tartu, 2004, 20.

<sup>24</sup> Uljas, J. Eesti Kultuurkapital 1921–1994. Eesti Kultuurkapital, Tallinn, 2005, 6–34.

1920. aastate algul ei olnud ühiskond veel valmis loomeintelligentsi toetama. Puudusid ka selged arusaamad riigipoolsetest reguleerimismehhanismidest. Aastatel 1921–1924 valitses võrdlemisi liberaalne majanduspoliitika ja lähtuti ideest, et riigivõim peab raha ning kapitali tegevusvabadust igati soodustama, ja kultuuri toetamiseks konkreetseid seadusi ei loodud.

Ka sel perioodil domineeris kultuuris altpoolt tuleva algatusena kogu rahvast haaranud ühistegevus (näiteks Vabadussõja monumentide massiline püstitamine). Seltsiliikumine laienes veelgi, haarates haridus-, noorsoo-, nais-, laulu- ja mängu-, põllumeeste, kirjameeste, tuletõrje- jm seltside tegevuse, tekkisid institutsioonid, organisatsioonide võrk. Toonaseid ühisaktsioone võib tänapäevases tähenduses käsitleda kodanikuühiskonna ilmingutena.

1920. aastate algus oli aeg, mil loomeintelligents teadvustas ja sõnastas oma huvid. Seda tõestab kutseühenduste (kui erihuvide väljendajate) tekkimine. 1921. aastal loodi Eesti Lauljate Liit, 1922 Eesti Kirjanike Liit ja Eesti Spordi Keskliit, 1923 Eesti Kunstnike Liit ning 1924 Eesti Akadeemiline Helikunstnike Selts.

Ka 1920. aastate tähtsaim kultuuripoliitiline samm – kultuurkapitali sünd – algatati kirjanike eestvõtmisel (seadus valmis ja rakendus 1925. aastal). See ongi üks fundamentaalsemaid demokraatliku kultuuripoliitika ilminguid nii sõjaeelses kui ka iseseisvuse taastanud Eestis. Kultuurkapitali kujunemist saatsid raevukad sõnasõjad ja vaidlused. Põhilised vaidlusküsimused olid: kas üldse toetada? keda ja mil määral toetada? kes on otsustaja?

Üldiselt oli kultuuripoliitika enne 1925. aastat aga üpriski kaootiline ja hüplik. Kultuurielu mõjutas valdavalt altpoolt tulev algatus, mitte niivõrd sihipärane kujundamine. Kultuuripoliitika oli vaimu- ja poliitilise eliidi intensiivse vaidluse objekt.

## **II periood. 1925–1934: “Sihipärase kultuuripoliitika kujundamine”**

Alates 1924. aastast hakkas domineerima püüd tugevdada riigi majanduslikke funktsioone. Oluline osa oli Otto Strandmani uuel lähenemisel, mis võttis suuna üldise majanduspoliitika kindlaksmääramisele. Sel ajal kujundati välja riigi kultuuriinstitutsioonide finantseerimise alused. Loodi seadusi ja määrusi, kus sätestati riikliku toetuse laekumise kord ning suurus, fikseeriti finantseerimise allikad ja eri osapoolte õigused ning kohustused. Näiteks: avalike raamatukogude seadus (1924); Tartu Ülikooli seadus (1925); vähemusrahvaste kulturomavalitsuse seadus (1925); ühingute ja nende liitude seadus (1926), mis mõjutas kultuuri ning haridus-seltside tegevust; Riigi Kunsttööstuskooli seadus (1929).

Aastaid 1925–1934 võibki nimetada kultuuriinstitutsioonide loomise perioodiks, samuti seati sellal õigusaktidega raamid peamiste kultuurivaldkondade toetamiseks.

1927. aastal võeti vastu kultuurkapitali uus seadus, mille olulisim muudatus seisnes valitsuse võimu tugevdamises kultuurkapitali üle (kultuurkapitali nõukogu muudetud koosseisus, kuhu sihtkapitalide liikmed enam ei kuulunud).

1928. aastal moodustati kultuurkapitali nõukogus kultuuripoliitiline komisjon (kuhu kuulus ka Konstantin Päts). Suuresti tänu selle komisjoni tegevusele algasid

kultuurkapitali tegevuse viljakaimad aastad, mil algatati mitmed olulised kultuuripoliitilised suunad (näiteks rahvamajade võrgu loomine, teatrite reorganiseerimine, muuseumide ja kunstikoolide töö korraldamine). Samuti pani see komisjon aluse Tallinna kolme kunstitempli – konservatooriumi, kunstimuuseumi ja kunstihoone – rajamisele. 1929. aasta veebruaris võttis komisjon vastu kultuurkapitali kultuuripropaganda fondi kodukorra, Päts pidi aga välja töötama kunstimuuseumi sihtasutuse põhikirja. Hiljem töötati välja ka Eesti Rahva Muuseumi ja Eesti Kultuurifilmi sihtasutuse põhikiri. Seega oli tegu väga laia kultuuripoliitilise haardega, mille keskmeks oli Päts oma uuenduslike ideedega riigi ehitamisest.

Ideaalset ühiskonda käsitas Päts tasakaalustatud tervikuna, mille üksikosad pidid töötama laitmatus kooskõlas ja harmoonias – nii nagu elusorganismi elundid. Pätsi orgaanilise või institutsionaalse riigikäsituse aluseks oli tees, et eluõigus on vaid neil organitel, mis on rahva elust ja vajadustest välja kasvanud ning riigikehasse sulandunud. Toomas Karjahärmi sõnul avaldasid Pätsi ühiskondlikele ideedele mõju sotsiaalliberalism, solidarism, kommunaalne ja maauuenduslik sotsiaalreformism, agraarne sotsialism ning see, kuidas anglosaksid on osanud rajada kodanike vabadusi austava tasakaalustatud ja püsiva riigikorra. Selle aluseks on kindlad korrastatud asutused, mis üheskoos rahvavalitsust toetavad.<sup>25</sup> Pätsi mõtte suundus vajaduseni tugevate asutuste järele juba Peterburi Teatajas kirjutamise ajal.<sup>26</sup> Võib väita, et Eesti riik ehitati üles suuresti Pätsi ideede najal, millest olulisim oli tema veendumus, et ühiskondlikku elu hoiavad ja jõuavad edasi viia asutused: mida suuremad ning tugevamad on asutused, seda tugevam ja püsivam on rahvas.

Rahvaste ajalugu on tõepoolest asutuste ajalugu, mis keegi rahvas loonud on. /.../ Asutuste elu seob üksikud rahva-põlved ja pärandab tulevikule mineviku võitude ja kaotuste vilja. Inimesed sünnivad ja surevad, kuid asutused elavad põlvest põlve.<sup>27</sup>

Need Pätsi sõnad osutusid paikapidavaks, kui vaadelda hilisemat Eesti kultuurielu ja selle suunamist.

### **III periood. 1934–1990: “(Pro)totalitaarne kultuuripoliitika” ja selle alaperioodid**

1. 1934–1940: “Vaikiv ajastu”
2. 1940–1944: “Omariikluse kaotamise aastad”
3. 1944–1953: “Stalinlik terror”
4. 1953–1969: “Sula ja hallad”
5. 1969–1987: “Stagnatsioon”
6. 1987–1991: “Režiimi lagunemine ja laulev revolutsioon”

<sup>25</sup> **Karjahärm, T.** Konstantin Pätsi poliitilised ideed. – Rmt: Konstantin Pätsi tegevusest. Artiklite kogumik. Koost K. Arjakas, toim A. Velliste. MTÜ Konstantin Pätsi Muuseum, Tallinn, 2002, 75.

<sup>26</sup> **Aru, K.** Konstantin Päts ja “Teatajad”. – Rmt: Konstantin Pätsi tegevusest. Artiklite kogumik. Koost K. Arjakas, toim A. Velliste. MTÜ Konstantin Pätsi Muuseum, Tallinn, 2002, 41.

<sup>27</sup> **Karjahärm, T.** Konstantin Pätsi poliitilised ideed, 78.

III periood algab 1930. aastate keskel, kui Eestis nagu ka mitmel pool Euroopas võtsid võimust jäigalt rahvuslikud-konservatiivsed ideed, mis viisid riigi prototalitaarse valitsemiskorrani. Selle all on silmas peetud totalitaarsete joontega poliitikat, mis polnud aga kõikehõlmavalt ja represseerivalt kontrolliv ning käskiv. Järgnevalt on esitatud põhiargumendid, miks on sedavõrd pikka perioodi käsitletud ühena, tuues samas välja põhjused, miks on mõistlik ses ajastus ka alaperioode eristada.

Prototalitaarse ja totalitaarse kultuuripoliitika erinevus seisneb ideoloogia pealesurumise jõulisuses: kui prototalitaarsel perioodil võis täheldada *kalduvust* totalitaarsusele, siis totalitaarsel perioodil oli kultuuripoliitika läbinisti totalitaarne.

Aastatel 1934–1991 kasutati ideoloogia kehtestamisel kultuuripoliitiliste instrumentidena:

- tsenseeritud ajakirjandust ja teisi võimule allutatud massiteabevahendeid, mille tulemusel alternatiivne avalikkus enamal või vähemal määral puudus;
- juhtnööre (või ka otseseid käske) loominguks intelligentsile ehk riikliku propaganda ülimuslikkust loometegevuses;
- tihedat ülalt kontrollitavat ja hierarhilist institutsionaalset võrgustikku (nii maal kui linnas, nii professionaalidele kui harrastajatele);
- tsentraliseeritud riiklikku rahastamist, mis keskendus ülalt juhitavatele ideoloogiliselt lojaalsetele institutsioonidele;
- vaba kodanikualgatuse riigistamist, kontrollimist või asendamist riikliku sunniga.

Kõik need kultuuripoliitika instrumendid iseloomustavad Eesti kultuuripoliitikat aastail 1934–1991 ehk kogu (pro)totalitaarset perioodi. Seetõttu on ka põhjendatud nimetada III periood selle põhilise iseloomustava joone – selge ülalt ja terviklikult juhitavuse ehk (pro)totalitaarsuse – järgi. Oluline on märgata – ja see on käesoleva periodiseeringu üks põhijäreldusi –, et (pro)totalitaarsus ehk range ülalt juhtimine ongi valdav kogemus Eesti kultuuripoliitika ajaloos koos kõige sellest tulenevaga.

Muidugi rakendati eeltoodud meetmeid eri aegadel eri ideoloogiate ja eesmärkide teenistuses, mis tingibki alaperioodide väljatoomise. Ei saa panna võrdusmärki Pätsi-aegse pehme järeletsensuuri ja rahvuslikku identiteeti üles ehitava/toestava kultuuripoliitika ning teisalt Stalini aja terroriga kaasnenud võõra kultuuri vägivaldse kehtestamise vahele, isegi kui ühisjooned on selgelt märgatavad. Nõukogude okupatsiooni ajal ei vahetunud kuni 1991. aastani Pätsi loodud kultuuripoliitika institutsiooniline mudel, üksnes kultuuripoliitika instrumentidega ühiskonna kõigi kihistusteni kanaliseeritav ideoloogia pöörati pea peale. Ettevalmistus selleks oli hea: nõukogude võim võttis üle tolleaegse Euroopa kohta väga korrallikult töötava prototalitaarse süsteemi, muutes selle totalitaarseks ja kehtestades selle sees oma ideoloogia.

### *1. alaperiood. 1934–1940: “Vaikiv ajastu”*

Kui 1920. aastate algul toimus üldrahvalike ühisürituste algatamine spontaanselt, juurdus demokraatia ja aastaid 1925–1929 peetakse riigi stabiliseerumise



ajaks, siis ülemaailmne majanduskriis aastail 1929–1933 viis ka Eesti majanduse raskesse seisu. See mõjutas rahva poliitilisi nõudmisi ja eelistusi. Peataolekust ja pidevatest valitsuskriisidest tüdinenud rahvas nõudis kriisist väljatulekuks jõulisi lahendusi. Neid nõudmisi lubas täita uus, tõusev erakond Eesti Vabadussõjalaste Keskliit ehk vapsid. 12. märtsil 1934 kuulutasid ajutine valitsusjuht Päts ja kindral Laidoner välja sõjaseisukorra ning likvideerisid vapside partei.

Aastail 1934–1938, vaikival ajastul, juhtisid riiki sisuliselt kolm meest: Konstantin Päts, Johan Laidoner ja Kaarel Eenpalu. Parlamendi tegevus peatati (seda ei saadetud küll ametlikult laiali, ei kutsutud aga ka uuesti kokku), poliitilised erakonnad marginaliseeriti (neid naeruvääristati ja süüdistati riigi probleemides), demonstratsioonid ning koosolekud keelati ja valitsuskriitilised ajalehed suleti. Ajakirjanduses, kirjanduses ja teatris kehtestati järeletsensuur. 1934. aastal keelati ajalehtedel ja ajakirjadel kritiseerida valitsust ja riigijuhte ning poleemikaga kodu- rahu rikkuda. 1935. aasta jaanuarimäärusega nõuti sama ka brošüüride ja raamatute osas. Määrust rikkunud väljaanne võidi raskemal juhul sulgeda, kergemal juhul määrati toimetajale trahv või arest, väikeste eksimuste puhul piirduti märkuse või hoiatusega. Järelevalve trükitoodete üle pandi Riiklikule Propagandatähtsusele (loodi 1934. aastal). Uue Eesti riigi ideeliseks aluseks pidi saada rahvuslus, isamaa-armastus ja solidaarsus, poliitikaelu aluseks elukutseorganisatsioonid ning riigi juhitavad massiorganisatsioonid ja majanduse aluseks eraomand koos tugeva riigisektoriga.<sup>28</sup>

Pätsi arvates pidi rahvas olema organiseeritud mitte poliitiliste vaadete järgi erakondadesse, vaid kutsealade järgi kodadesse. Ta oli seisukohal, et “riikide kindlustus seisab kindlates asutustes”.<sup>29</sup> Järgnev tsitaat on ilmekas näide Pätsi nägemusest vaikiva ajastu korporatiivsest ühiskonnakorraldusest:

Kutseline organiseerimine peab andma seda, et inimene ei lähe parteide ette kummardama, vaid ta peab tundma, et need, kelle poole ta pöördub, on ta lähemad kaastöölised, ja et nad ühisel nõul ja jõul võivad ja peavad ennast maksma panema. /.../ Kõik peavad tundma, et nad on üks suur pere, et võivad elada ainult siis, kui neil on ühine Eesti Vabariigi katus. /.../ Ja peaasi on see, et nad peavad õpetama uut moraali, uut autunnet, mitte üksi õigused ei ole mõõduandvad, vaid mõõduandev on see, kes riigi kasuks kõige rohkem teeb ja ohverdab.<sup>30</sup>

Seesugust mõtlemist mõjutas riigimonopolistlik kapitalism, eeskujuga saadi mitmelt poolt Lääne-Euroopast. Aastail 1934–1936 asutati viisteist koda, mis osalesid ka seadusandlikus tegevuses. Itaaliast võeti üle kodade süsteem ja toetusfondide loomine kultuuris (näiteks raamatufond, filmikapital jne).<sup>31</sup>

Kunstidele (nii kirjandus, teater kui kujutav kunst) anti ülesandeks toetada ja propageerida rahvuslikke aateid. Arhitektuuris pidi väljenduma rahvusriiklik väarikus ja tugevus.

<sup>28</sup> **Elango, Ö., Ruusmann, A., Siilivask, K.** Eesti maast ja rahvast. Maailmasõjast maailmasõjani. Olion, Tallinn, 1998, 283.

<sup>29</sup> **Karjahärm, T., Sirk, V.** Vaim ja võim. Eesti haritlaskond 1917–1940. Argo, Tallinn, 2001, 306.

<sup>30</sup> **Karjahärm, T.** Konstantin Pätsi poliitilised ideed, 86–87.

<sup>31</sup> **Uljas, J.** Eesti Kultuurkapital 1921–1994, 37.

Lisaks kehtestati kokkulepe riigi kui “leivaisa” ja kultuurkapitali toetatud kunstnikkonna vahel. Näiteks selgitati kirjanikele, millest, mida ja kuidas kirjutada. Kõnekalt kirjeldab seda konteksti kultuurkapitali kirjanduse sihtkapitali esimehe Eduard Hubeli tsitaat tema programmartiklist “Kirjanduslikke ääremärkusi”, mida võib tõlgendada kui kompromissi otsimist ametliku tellimuse (võimu) ja kunsti (vaimu) vahel:

Meie kirjandus saab olemasolu õigustuse omapärasest vaimust, omapärasest laadist. Nõnda palju, kui oleme omapärased, nõnda palju on mõtet meie olemasolul. /.../ Peame hoidma ja hindama oma kodupinna ränikildu, kuigi lihvida tuleb teda Euroopa meetodite järele, et ta sätendaks, hiilgaks kalliskivina. Aeg on loobuda võõraste klaaspärlite imetlemisest ja nende levitamisest.<sup>32</sup>

1935. aastal märkis propagandatalituse juht Hugo Kukke raadiokõnes teemal “Kujutavate kunstide arendamisvõimalusi rahvuskultuurilisest lähtekohast. Üleskutse seltskonnale ja kunstnikele”, et kunstiarengu edaspidine suund peab juhtima “neile ülesannetele, millel on suurem tähtsus ka riiklikust, rahvuskultuurilisest ja sotsiaaleetilisest seisukohast vaadatuna”.<sup>33</sup>

Rahva- või omakultuuri suunamiseks n-ö rohujuuretasandil plaaniti 1931. aasta rahvamajade seadusega luua ühtlane üleriiklik rahvamajade võrk. Rahvamajade (seltsimajade, klubide) asutamine sai alguse juba 19. sajandi teisel poolel, mil hakati laialdaselt võitlema kõrtside ja joomise vastu. 1900. aastal kehtestati Eestis viinamonopol ja selle tulemusena suleti enamik maakõrtse, mis tingiski vajaduse rajada maale sobivaid seltskondliku kooskäimise kohti. Rahvamajade võrgustiku koordineeritud loomine ja arendamine on seotud Aleksander Kurvitsa nimega. Tema kirjast haridusministrile (18.5.1928) leiame võrgu kujundamise idee koos vastavate põhjendustega.<sup>34</sup> 1938. aastaks oli rahvamaju juba üle 250. Rahvamajade seaduse täitmiseks võeti vastu rida määrusi, näiteks rahvamajade ehitamise määrus ja haridus- ning sotsiaalministri määrus rahvamajade võrgu korrastamise kohta. Võrgu kujundamisel tuli silmas pidada, et rahvamaja asuks piirkonna keskkohas, oleks kodanikele kättesaadav ja tegevusraadius oleks vähemalt seitse kilomeetrit.<sup>35</sup> Rahvamajade võrgu näol on kindlasti tegu ühe eesti ühiskonda kujundanud eripärase nähtuse ja omas ajas mõjusa kultuuripoliitilise instrumendiga. Nende rolli – nii maal kui linnas – kooskäimise koha ja meelelahutusliku asutusena ning ühiskondliku mõtte küpsetaja ja levitajana ei saa alahinnata.

1930. aastatel jagunes intelligents autoritaarse poliitika suhtes kaasaminejateks ja opositsionäärideks. Vastasrinnale siiski palju sõna ei jäetud. Ühe näitena eemaldati

<sup>32</sup> **Laak, M.** Kultuurkapitali lugu 1920. aastate kirjanduskriitika mõistmiseks. (Eesti Kirjandusmuuseumi aastaraamat. Paar sammukest, XII.) Tartu, 1996.

<sup>33</sup> **Uljas, J.** Eesti Kultuurkapital 1921–1994, 40.

<sup>34</sup> **Uljas, J.** Rahvamajad Eestis 1920–1940. Õppematerjal. E. Vilde nim. Tallinna Pedagoogiline Instituut, Tallinn, 1990, 9–15.

<sup>35</sup> **Kiis, R.** Kohalikud omavalitsused ja kultuur. Rahvakultuuri Arendus- ja Koolituskeskus, Tallinn, 1998, 115–120.

opositsiooni ja demokraatia eestkõneleja, Postimehe peatoimetaja Jaan Tõnisson, valitsuse kritiseerimise tõttu ajalehe juurest.<sup>36</sup>

Kokkuvõtvalt: Karjahärmi sõnul oli Eesti poliitilises korras ja ametlikus ideoloogias totalitarismile iseloomulikke jooni: etatism, riigi ning rahvuse asetamine üksikisikust kõrgemale, juhi põhimõtte rakendamine ja riigipea primaat poliitilises süsteemis, poliitiliste parteide tasalülitamine ning monopolierakonna prototüübi (Isamaaliit) olemasolu, integraalne rahvuslus, korporativism (kutsekojad), ideoloogiline kontroll ja tsensuur, riiklik propaganda, kaitseseisukorra režiim ning kodanikuõiguste kitsendamine. Ent need jooned polnud äärmuseni viidud ega lõpuni välja arendatud nagu suurtes diktatuurimaades. Eestis oli tegu diktatuuri pehmema vormiga. Parteide keelustamisega ei surnud poliitiline tegevus välja, see koondus akadeemilistesse ja kutseorganisatsioonidesse.<sup>37</sup>

Veebruaris 1937 kokku tulnud valitsusmeelne rahvuskogu, mille valimisi opositsioon boikoteeris, töötas Pätsi eelnõu alusel välja Eesti Vabariigi kolmanda põhiseaduse, mis kodade ühisistungil 28. juunil 1937 vastu võeti ja 1. jaanuaril 1938 jõustus.<sup>38</sup>

Rait Maruste ja Heinrich Schneideri sõnutsi: kui 1933. aasta põhiseaduse muudatustega liikus riigikord superparlamentarismilt autoritaarsusele, siis 1937. aastal algas tagasilikumine rahva suveräänsuse suunas. Selle põhiseaduse nurgakivideks olid rahvavõimu idee (nagu ka 1920. ja 1933. aasta põhiseaduses), võimude lahusus ning nende tasakaalustatus, seaduslikkuse järelevalve tugevdamine ja ametnike vastutuse suurenemine. 1938. aasta põhiseaduse rakenduspraktika jäi väliste tegurite sunnil lühiajaliseks. Riigiõiguslikku ressursi demokraatia taastamiseks ei kasutatud ära – ei jõutud ära kasutada täies ulatuses.<sup>39</sup>

Pätsi vaikiv ajastu tõi endaga kaasa riikliku propagandatalituse välja töötatud, olemuselt prototalitaarse ideoloogia, mida teostati vormilt rahvusliku/rahvaliku kultuuripoliitika toel. Selle põhieesmärgiks oli kujundada tugeva identiteediga homogeenne ühiskond.

Pätsi kultuuripoliitika väljendus jõulistes ülemaalistes rahvusliku (omakultuuri) propaganda aktsioonides: nimede (ka kohanimede) eestistamine, rahvarõivaste propaganda seoses XI üldlaulupeoga (1938), kodukaunistamine ja muistse eesti kultuuri uurimine.

Avalikkus oli paralüüsitud. Demokraatiale iseloomulikku vaba kodaniku-algatust püüdis võim asendada riikliku sunni ja ülalt inspireeritud korporatiivse struktuuriga. Režiim püüdis riigistada või kontrollida suurt osa kodanikualgatuslikku välja, eriti seda, mis puudutas poliitilisi organisatsioone ja ametiühinguid, aga ka seltse ning ühinguid.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>36</sup> **Aru, K.** Milleks, millest ja kuidas tervendati "Postimeest" 1935. aastal. (Eesti Kirjandusmuuseumi aastaraamat. Paar sammukest, XII.) Tartu, 1996.

<sup>37</sup> **Karjahärm, T.** Konstantin Pätsi poliitilised ideed, 94.

<sup>38</sup> Samas, 88.

<sup>39</sup> Samas, 88–90.

<sup>40</sup> Samas, 91–92.

## 2. alaperiood. 1940–1944: “Omariikluse kaotamise aastad”

Selle perioodi algus on mõistagi tinglik: alguseks võiks pidada ka Nõukogude sõjaväebaaside loomist Eesti Vabariiki. Siiski polnud kuni Teise maailmasõja lõpuni Eesti (Balti riikide) tulevik üheselt selge. Nõukogude Liit ja Saksamaa olid totalitaarse ideoloogia ja praktikaga okupandid ning totalitarismi olemusse kuulub püüe kontrollida ja suunata kõiki ühiskondliku elu avaldusi, sealhulgas ka kunsti-elu.<sup>41</sup>

1941. aasta juulis-augustis evakueeriti Eestist Nõukogude Liidu tagalasse 25 000 tsiviilisikut ja 33 000 mobiliseeritud. Tagalasse sattunud kunstniimesed koondati ENSV Riiklikesse Kunstiansamblitesse Jaroslavlis. Nende seas tehti agarat ajaloolis-poliitilist selgitustööd.<sup>42</sup> See oli oluline ettevalmistav samm uue kultuurieliidi kasvatamisel. Kahtlemata tuleb siin näha teadlikku kultuuripoliitilist tegutsemist Nõukogude totalitaarse kultuuripoliitika suunas, ühtlasi oli see märgiks teel Eesti omariikluse lõpule.

1941. aasta sügiseks oli kogu Eesti Saksa vägede käes. Saksa okupatsioonivõimud hukkasid ja kiusasid taga juute, kommunistimeelseid või selles kahtlustatud inimesi, sh kirjanikke ning kunstnikke, kuid loomingulistesse küsimustesse ei sekkunud. Vilgas kunstielu kulges Eestis edasi iseseisvuse aja rööbastel. Kuigi sel perioodil võis täheldada teatavat kultuurielu liberaliseerumist vaikiva ajastu kontrolliga võrreldes, ei saa okupatsioonitingimusi siiski vabadeks nimetada. Omariikluse kaotamise aastatel lahkus suur osa kultuuri- ja kunstieliidist ning senine enam-vähem ühtne rahvustunne pihustus ida ja lääne eri maailmadesse. Kunsti-inimeste suuremad kaotused olid seotud ümberasumisega Saksamaale (1939–1941), 1941. aasta juuniküüditamise ja sundmobilisatsiooniga Nõukogude armeesse.<sup>43</sup>

Nõukogude režiim nägi kultuuris sotsialistliku riigikorra legitimeerijat, kultuur oli kommunistliku kasvatustöö vahend, ideoloogia tööriist, osa parteitööst.<sup>44</sup> Karjahärm ja Luts nimetavadki selle perioodi Nõukogude kultuuripoliitika üheks põhi-ülesandeks intelligentsi ümberkujundamist. Sisuliselt tähendas see vana intelligentsi kõrvaldamist ja hävitamist ning selle asemel uue, nn sotsialistliku – töölistest ja talupoegadest pärineva – intelligentsi loomist.

## 3. alaperiood. 1944–1953: “Stalinlik terror”

Stalini aeg erineb järgnevast sulaajast totaalse hirmutamise, repressioonide ja vägivalda poolest, mil inimestelt nõuti tingimusteta kuuletumist ning ei sallitud ka minimaalseid hälbeid ametlikust joonest. Hirmutamise mõte oli maha suruda vastupanu ja välja juurida igasugune lootus vabanemisele. Kremli eesmärk oli

<sup>41</sup> Kangilaski, J. Okupeeritud Eesti kunstiajaloo periodiseerimine. – Ajalooline Ajakiri, 1999, 1, 23–29.

<sup>42</sup> Kuuli, O. Sula ja hallad Eesti NSV-s. Kultuuripoliitikast aastail 1953–1969. AS Ühiselu, Tallinn, 2002, 13.

<sup>43</sup> Karjahärm, T., Luts, H. Kultuurigenotsiid Eestis. Kunstnikud ja muusikud 1940–1953. Argo, Tallinn, 2005, 145.

<sup>44</sup> Samas, 144.

sõltumatu vaimueliidi täielik allutamine ja muutmine režiimi kuulekaks tööriistaks.<sup>45</sup>

Nõukogude totalitaristlik ajastu tõi Eestis endaga kaasa n-ö vormilt rahvusliku, sisult sotsialistliku kultuuripoliitika. Kultuur pandi taas toimima propaganda tööriistana. Rahvamajade võrgustik täideti punanurkade ja poliitõppustega. Aga aastaga muutus nn sotsialistliku realismi propageerimine ähvardavamaks, kasvades üle sunduseks. Olaf Kuuli sõnul lähtusid ideoloogilised kampaaniad teatrikritikute, muusikute ja kirjanike vastu Moskvast. Võitlust peeti formalismi, estetismi ja kodanliku natsionalismiga. Ent kuni 1940. aastate lõpuni pehendas võimude repressioonikatsed Eesti kohalik juhtkond, näiteks Hans Kruus, Nigol Andresen ja Johannes Semper. Ka EK(b)P esimene sekretär Nikolai Karotamm mõistis vajadust säilitada maksimaalselt niigi räsitud haritlaskonda.<sup>46</sup>

Kõige enam kontrollis režiim kirjandust, seejärel visuaalseid kunste. Kõigist kunstiliikidest oli muusikas selle spetsiifikast tingituna kõige enam väljendusvabadust. Seetõttu oli Gustav Ernesaksal ja Georg Otsal eestlaste eneseteadvusele eriline tähtsus.<sup>47</sup>

Jaak Kangilaski sõnul püüti hävitada eesti kunsti omapära, et seda täielikult NSV Liidu ametlikku kultuuri assimileerida. Pseudoetnograafiline rahvuslik vorm oli lubatud, kuid suurem osa rahvuslikust pärandist ja kõik vihjedki lääne kunstile põlustati. Lööksõnadega *natsionalism*, *kosmopolitism* ja *formalism* hävitati kunstnike võimalus isikupärasele loomingule.<sup>48</sup>

1949. aasta märtsis küüditati Eestist Siberisse üle 20 000 inimese, neist enamik talupojad ja nende pereliikmed. Paralleelselt senise külaelu likvideerimisega hoogustus ka “vaenlaste” otsimine kultuurivallas, algas iseseisvusaegse kultuuripärandi ulatuslikum ümberhindamine ja kultuuritegelaste tagakiusamine. Kuri kuulus EKP 8. pleenum 21.–26. märtsini 1950 sai aluseks repressioonidele vaimu-elu edasikandjate suhtes.

Pleenumile järgnevat kirjeldab Kuuli:

Kõigepealt vahetati pleenumi otsuse alusel välja Eesti NSV senine juhtkond. Üheks tähtsamaks etteheiteks senisele juhtkonnale oli ebapiisav võitlus “kodanliku natsionalismi” vastu ja väär kaadripoliitika. H. Kruus ja N. Andresen heideti parteist välja ja vangistati. Pärast 8. pleenumit võttis kampaania eestiaegse vaimu-elu riisumise hävitamiseks suure hoo. Pääaegu täielikult vahetati välja teaduste akadeemia ja kõrgkoolide juhtkonnad, massiliselt vallandati teadureid ja õppejõude. Kümnete kaupa heideti välja loominguliste liitude liikmeid.<sup>49</sup>

Sellesse perioodi jääb kultuuriinstitutsioonide personali põhjalik puhastamine ja väljavahetamine partei määratud kultuuritegelastega. Eelmisest ajastust pärit eliit, kes sõja ajal polnud põgenema pääsenud, kõrvaldati kultuurielu võtmepositsioonidelt, sageli hävitati psüühiliselt, aga ka füüsiliselt.

<sup>45</sup> Samas, 152.

<sup>46</sup> Kuuli, O. Sula ja hallad Eesti NSV-s, 16.

<sup>47</sup> Karjahärm, T., Luts, H. Kultuurigenotsiid Eestis, 151.

<sup>48</sup> Kangilaski, J. Okupeeritud Eesti kunstiajaloo periodiseerimine, 27.

<sup>49</sup> Kuuli, O. Sula ja hallad Eesti NSV-s, 22.

Eesti kultuur tervikuna sai kõrgstalinismi ajal kohutava laastamise osaliseks. Kremli üldine eesmärk oli euroopaliku rahvuskultuuri väljasuremine ja selle asendamine vene nõukogude kultuuriga. Selle sihi saavutamise katkestas Stalini surmale järgnenud sulaaeg.<sup>50</sup>

Eduard Shilsi analüüsist ilmneb (ta võrdles 1950. aastate lõpul publitseeritud uurimuses itaalia fašismi, saksa natsionalismi, vene bolševismi, prantsuse ja itaalia kommunismi jt radikaalseid poliitilisi liikumisi), et ideoloogia on 20. sajandi ekstreemsete poliitiliste jõudude võimuinstrument, millele on iseloomulik “intellektuaalne pahelisus”.

Shils märgib, et ideoloogia seisukohast peab poliitikat kontrollima kõikehõlmav ja kõiki teisi kaalutlusi eirav seostatud veendumuste kogu. Ideoloogia on totalistlik (*totalistic*), sest taotleb oma ettekirjutuste vaimus valitseda kogu sotsiaalset ja kultuurielu; ideoloogia on “doktrinaarne”, sest kuulutab end valdavalt täielikku ning eranditult poliitilist tõde; ideoloogia on dualistlik, sest see, kes ei ole minuga, on automaatselt “minu vastu”; ideoloogia on võõrutav (*alienative*), kuivõrd ta umbusaldab, ründab ja õõnestab kehtivaid institutsioone; ideoloogia on futuristlik (*futuristic*), sest on rakendatud ajaloo utoopilise kulminatsiooni teenistusse.<sup>51</sup>

Shilsi analüüsi abil võibki selgelt jälgida mehhanisme, mis kujundasid “vaimse” kultuuri võimu teostamise instrumendiks. Ideoloogia suhe kultuuriga oli ideoloogia poolt agressiivne, subordineeriv ja filtreeriv.<sup>52</sup>

#### 4. alaperiood. 1953–1969: “Sula ja hallad”

Stalini surmale järgnenud liberaliseerimise ajajärku kirjeldas sõnaga *sula* esmakordselt Ilja Ehrenburg, kes pealkirjastas nii oma 1954. aastal ilmunud jutustuse. Eelkõige tähistas see kirjanduslik väljend muutust inimeste ellusuhtumises ja mõttemaailmas, aga ka muudatusi esile kutsunud sündmusi ning protsesse: näiteks NKVD repressioonimasina nõrgenemine, paljude poliitvangide vabastamine, Stalini isiku ja tema tegevuse kriitika ning seniste hoiakute ümberhindamine. Loomeinimeste kaudu kajastus *sula* kultuurielus.<sup>53</sup>

Eestis väljendus sula muu hulgas iseseisvusaegse kultuuri mõningases ümberhindamises. 1950. aastate algul oli ametlik ideoloogia andnud täiesti negatiivse hinnangu nii iseseisvale Eesti riigile tervikuna kui ka aastail 1920–1940 viljeldud kultuurile, nimetades seda mandunud kodanlikuks kultuuriks. 1950. aastate keskel ilmnes intelligentsi protest sellise seisukoha vastu nii diskussioonis ajaloo- ja kirjandusõpikute koostamise kui ka kogu kultuurielu ning loomevabaduse üle. Mõningal määral korrigeeriti ka suhtumist iseseisvusaegsesse intelligentsi. Kõiki neid arenguid tabasid siiski ka tagasilöögid.

Ajaloolased on täheldanud 1956. aastast alates üsna üksmeelselt majandusliku ja poliitilise elu mõningast normaliseerumist. Kultuurielus algas see 1955. aastal

<sup>50</sup> Karjahärm, T., Luts, H. Kultuurigenotsiid Eestis, 152.

<sup>51</sup> Lepik, P. Nõukogude kultuur ja ideoloogia. – Rmt: Acta Humaniora A19, TPÜ Toimetised. Eesti kultuur 1940. aastate teisel poolel. Toim K. Kirme, M. Kirme. Tallinn, 2001, 9–16.

<sup>52</sup> Lepik, P. Nõukogude kultuur ja ideoloogia, 14.

<sup>53</sup> Kuuli, O. Sula ja hallad Eesti NSV-s, 154.

nn liialduste hukkamõistuga arhitektuuris, mis avas tee funktsionalismi ja hiljem ka disainiideoloogia levikule kunstis.<sup>54</sup>

Kuuli sõnul saabus sula kõrgperiood NLKP 20. kongressiga 1956. aastal, mil Nikita Hruštšov tegi kinnisel istungil ettekande “Isikukultusest ja selle tagajärgedest”.

Järgnenud liberaliseerumisele tegi lõpu Ungari ülestõusu verine mahasurumine 1956. aasta sügisel. Sula asendus hallaga. Stalini aja ja nõukogude süsteemi “liigne kriitika” paigutati revisionismi alla ning partei eesotsas Hruštšoviga nõudis 1957. aastal taas loomeharitlastelt nõukogude ühiskonna saavutuste esiletoomist.<sup>55</sup>

Nõnda vaheldusid liberaalsed meeleolud ja jäigemad ideoloogilised surveavaldused kultuurielule jätkuvalt kuni režiimi lõpuni. Ent kuna Stalini ajal üles ehitatud totaalset repressioonimasinat piirati ja karistussüsteem pehmenes, nõrgenes inimeste hirm KGB ees – totalitaarsesse süsteemi tekkisid sel perioodil mõrad, mis kergendasid süsteemi lõplikku kokkuvarisemist. Kuuli sõnul võib sula lõpuks pidada Tšehhoslovakkia demokraatiseerumise vägivaldset mahasurumist 1968. aasta augustis, mille järel süvenes NLKP juhtkonnas hirm demokraatia ja reformide ees ning seetõttu suurenes ideoloogiline surve vaimuelule.<sup>56</sup>

##### *5. alaperiood. 1969–1987: “Stagnatsioon”*

Pärast NSV Liidu vägede sisseviimist Tšehhoslovakkiasse asendusid lootused vabaneda leppimise ja stagnatsiooniga.

Eesti nõukogude inimese vaba aja tegevust juhtisid Viljandi kultuurikoolis ja Tallinna pedagoogilises instituudis (alates 1966. aastast) koolitatud ning ideoloogiliselt haritud kultuuritöötajad. Kuna nõukogudeaegse kultuuripoliitika ideoloogiline loosung oli “vormilt rahvuslik, sisult sotsialistlik”, siis tegelesid kultuuritöötajad, vaatamata ateismi ja punaainete suurele mahule nende hariduses, rahumeeli traditsiooniliste rahvuslike rahvakultuurivormidega (koorilaul, rahvatants, näitekunst). Kõik see toimus riikliku tellimuse ja finantseerimise, aga ka kindla tsensuuri raames. Nii kultuuri- kui ka spordiharrastused olid kättesaadavad suurele osale rahvast, täites nõnda oma osa ühtse homogeense nõukogude inimese identiteedi juurutamisel.

Professionaalse kunsti ülesanne oli endiselt toetada kehtivat süsteemi. Kunstis kehtestati esteetilised ja žanrilised kaanonid, mis pidid sobima nõukogude inimese kui kommunismiehitaja moraalkoodeksiga (kujutavas kunstis sotsialistlik realism, etenduskunstides Stanislavski süsteem ning vene klassikaline ballett, filmikunstis ja muusikas heroilised, pateetilised vormivõtted). Kriitikas vastanduti valjult manduva lääne ja roiskuva kapitalismi pahelise kultuuriga. Tsensuuriorgan Glavlit hoidis kogu kultuurielul ja ka massiteabevahenditel silma peal. Ühtlasi juurduis nõukogude ühiskonnale omane, ka kultuuripoliitikas kehtestatud varjatult hierarhiline süsteem koos privilegeeritud, süsteemile lojaalsete loomeinimestega.

<sup>54</sup> Kangilaski, J. Okupeeritud Eesti kunstiajaloo periodiseerimine, 27.

<sup>55</sup> Kuuli, O. Sula ja hallad Eesti NSV-s, 156.

<sup>56</sup> Samas, 157.

Ometi toimisid kultuuriinstitutsioonid kinnimakstuna ja igaühele kättesaadavana paradoksaalsel kombel ka rahvusliku vastupanuliikumise varjatud kanalina. Ainuline kommunikatsioonisfäär, alternatiivsete avalikkuste puudumine ja ühisele eesmärgile allutatud kultuuriinstitutsioonide võrgustik võimaldas kultuuriinimestele ametliku ideoloogia varjus kohati siiski üsna tugevat ja varjatud vastupanu. Tänu sulaaajal löödud mõradele imbus läbi raudse eesriide vaba maailma mõjusid. Kirjanduses ja kunstis omandati ohtlik balansseerimine lubatud piiridel ja teater muutus omaette vaba mõtte kuulutajaks, sest publik ootas ning otsis peidetud sõnumeid, luges ridade vahelt ja mõistis tunnussõnu.

Varjatud vastupanu kulmineerus iga viie aasta järel peetud laulupeol ja pühitsetes rahvusliku identiteedi tugevust ning peegeldas kasvavat iseseisvuspüüdlust. Kõik see toimus, vaatamata venestamispoliitikale (etniliste eestlaste osakaal rahvastiku üldarvus langes 88%-lt 1938. aastal 61,5%-ni 1989. aastal) ja püüdele assimileerida rahvast ühtseks nõukogude inimeste massiks. Nõukogude võimu kultuuripoliitika enesestmõistetavateks põhialusteks olid hierarhilisus ja tugev tsentraliseeritus, mis püüdis saavutada ühisteadvuse ning ühtse elulaadi teket – ideaaliks monoliitne ühiskond.<sup>57</sup>

#### 6. alaperiood. 1987–1991: “Režiimi lagunemine ja laulev revolutsioon”

Üheks alaperioodiks võib pidada režiimi igakülgset majanduslikku ja poliitilist lagunemist aastail 1987–1991.

Hirvepargi sündmused 23. augustil 1987 kujutasid vaimset murrangut – üldise hirmu kadumist või vähenemist. Samasuguse olulise psühholoogilise tähtsusega oli üldrahvalik fosforiidikampania, mis tähendas samuti vastuhakuhirmu murdumist.<sup>58</sup>

Tähtis on märkida, et ajastu keskseks dominantiks olid radikaalsed poliitilised muudatused ja kultuuripoliitikaga selle sõna tavapärasest tähendusest ei tegeldud. Kuid poliitiline protsess tervikuna kui võimuhoobadeta rahva vastupanu ja muutmis- tahe oli olemuselt kultuuripoliitiline. Seda perioodi võib nimetada teiseks ärkamis- ajaks, mil vaimuelu liidritel ja kunstilistel, kultuurilistel ning intellektuaalsetel algatustel oli põhiline osatähtsus.

Ka otsese signaali vabanemiseks andis 1988. aasta aprillis toimunud loome- liitude pleenum, mis avaldas *de facto* umbusaldust ENSV poliitilisele juhtkonnale. Mõni kuu hiljem algas vabanemise esimeseks järguks nimetatud laulev revolutsioon. Muusika ja ühislaulmine inspireerisid ning koondasid rahvaliikumist iseseisvuse suunas. Vanalinnapäevade ajal tekkisid spontaansed öised laulupeod, kus lehvitsid tuhanded sinimustvalged lipud.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>57</sup> **Lagerspetz, M.** Institutsionaliseeritus ja avatus kultuuripoliitikas. – Looming, 2003, 7, 1227–1228.

<sup>58</sup> **Tarvel, E.** Eesti lähiajaloo periodiseerimisest, 105–116.

<sup>59</sup> **Lagerspetz, M., Raud, R.** Eesti kultuuripoliitika Euroopa Nõukogu kultuurikomitees: riiklik ülevaade Eesti kultuuripoliitikast ja selle mõjust aastatel 1988–1995. Ettekanne Euroopa Nõukogu kultuurikomiteele. Kultuuriministeerium, Akadeemia Trükk, Tallinn, 1995, 157.



Võib öelda, et kunstid ja kultuur olid perioodil 1988–1991 poliitilise ning ühiskondliku edasimineku esmasteks liikumapanijateks.

Kui vabadus oli saavutatud ja algas poliitiliste institutsioonide rajamine ning turumajandusele ülemineku praktiline töö iseseisvas Eestis, pidid rahvus- ja ühtekuuluvustunde äratajana seni kesksel kohal olnud kultuuriinimesed ning intellektuaalid järjest enam tagaplaanile tõmbuma. Esile tõusis majanduslik ja poliitiline eliit.

#### IV periood. 1991–1995: “Siirdeaja paradigmat”

Üleminekuperiood “Siirdeaja paradigmat” on jälgitav aastatel 1991–1995. Postsotsialistlikke ühiskondi iseloomustanud Claus Offe on kirjeldanud neis toimuvat kui kolmiktransformatsiooni, mil üheaegselt muutub poliitiline, majanduslik ja kultuuriline ning rahvuslik identiteet. Selle perioodi oluline ülesanne – legitimeerida uus majandus ja poliitilised institutsioonid uue kultuurilise identiteedi abil, mis oleks ühine kõigile rahva liikmetele – oli ühildamatu kultuurilise killustatuse süvenemisega.

Selgelt ilmnes paradoksaalsus, et demokraatlik ja sõltumatu ühiskonnakord toetab rahvuslikku identiteeti hoopis vähem kui varjatud vastupanu repressiivsele režiimile, mil eestlaste ellujäämisstrateegia venestamispoliitika vastu seisnes koondumises kultuuriliste institutsioonide ümber.<sup>60</sup>

Ka tajusid inimesed teravalt läbiva ideoloogia puudumist, millega oleks võimalik suhestuda – kas poolt või vastu. 1994. aastal kirjutas Ants Juske:

...me pole siiani harjunud elama ilma ideoloogiata. Nüüd, mil rahvusliku ideoloogia aeg hakkab ümber saama, haarab meie kultuuritegelasi “mureideoloogia”. Viimane on väga tihedalt seotud nii sotsialismi kui ka laulva revolutsiooni aegse ideoloogiaga. /.../ Ikka see ajast ja arust hoiak, et tingimata peab olema mingi kogu kultuuri või rahvust koos hoidev ideoloogia. /.../ Teisalt me näeme, et rõõmsalt kasvab peale uus põlvkond, keda /.../ huvitab vähe, kas nende asjadele pannakse ette sõna “rahvuslik” või “sotsialistlik”, parem osa neist ei huvitu ka mõistest “turg”. Ühesõnaga, oleme juba uues paradigmas, kus ka sõnal “rahvuslikkus” on teine kvaliteet ning vaevalt aitab enam näiteks Hasso Krulli või Raoul Kurvitzat Mikiveri murelik rahvussotsialistlik tämber.<sup>61</sup>

Oluliseks seda ajastut iseloomustavaks nähtuseks võib nimetada kultuuriinimeste esialgset šokki ja kohanematust, mis kaasnes lausfinantseerivalt ühiskonnakorralt turumajanduse tingimustesse sattumisega, kuigi osaline kultuuriinstitutsioonide riiklik toetamine jätkus. Olgu loetletud ka mõned siirdeühiskondade kultuuripoliitilised ühisjooned, mis olid Eestiski selgelt esindatud: järjepidetud kultuurialane seadusandlus; riikliku toetuse ebaühtlane jaotamine; kolmanda sektori vähene suutlikkus; nõukogudeaegsete kinomajade ja osalt teistegi kultuurihoonete müük; ametliku või ka riiklikult toetatud kultuuri prestiiži langus ja kommertsipealetung.

<sup>60</sup> **Lagerspetz, M.** Estonian identity entering the post-modern world: the role of national culture. – Rmt: Management of Change: Cultural Aspects of European Enlargement and the Enlargement of the EU. KulturKontakt, Graz, 1998, 55–59.

<sup>61</sup> **Juske, A.** Mure-ideoloogia. – Looming, 1994, 4, 559–560.

Võib ka öelda, et Pätsi ajal rajatud ja nõukogude ajal süvendatult hierarhiliseks muudetud, seni ainuliselt kehtinud kultuuriinstitutsionaalne võrgustik oli desorienteeritud, mis andis kultuurielule loova impulsi. Seniste kindlate võrgustike ja hierarhiate prestiiž kultuuris lagunes uute nähtuste mõjul, mis viis Foucault' mõistes kehtiva sotsiaalse regulatsiooni nähtamatu haarde lõdvenemiseni. Just nende segaste aegade viljastavates oludes said vaba algatuse korras tekkida ja levida uued katsed ning kunstivormid (näiteks erateatrid või nüüdistsants) ja mitmesugused uued festivalid. Uued tegijad viisid oma initsiatiivid ellu, mida asus demokraatlikult toetama vastavatud kultuurkapital.

Tähtsaimateks kultuuripoliitilisteks sammudeks sel kriitilisel ajajärgul saidki kultuurkapitali tegevuse taastamine 1994. aastal ja kultuuripoliitikat käsitleva aruande koostamine ning Euroopa Nõukogu ekspertide kommentaarid sellele. Kultuurkapital sai tol perioodil tõhusaks demokraatlikuks kultuuriprotsesside elavdajaks, toetades väljaspool riiklikke institutsioone tekkinud algatusi, enne kui 1996. aastal töötati Jaak Alliku eestvõttel välja "Eesti riigi kultuuripoliitika põhialused" ja Riigikogu need 1998. aastal heaks kiitis.

### **V periood. 1995–2007: "Elitistlik-säilitav kultuuripoliitika"**

Elitistliku-säilitava kultuuripoliitika periood algas tinglikult 1995. aastal, kui minister Jaak Allik võrdles Eestile minevikupärandina jäänud riiklike kultuuriinstitutsioonide võrku Egiptuse püramiididega, mis oma ainulaadsuses väärivad säilitamist. Seda võib pidada eelneva, (pro)totalitaarse mudeli säilitamisele suunatud kultuuripoliitikaks.<sup>62</sup>

Säärase säilitava-elitaarse kultuuripoliitikaga suutis Allik, kes oli kultuuriminister aastatel 1995–1999, luua siirdeühiskonna segaduses mõningase ratsionaalse korra ja sõnastada 1998. aastal Riigikogus vastu võetud "Kultuuripoliitika põhialustes" ka kultuuri arenguprogrammi. Sisuliselt juhtis Allik kultuurielu taas harjumuspärasele, riiklike kultuuriinstitutsioone säilitavatele ja põlistavatele mudelitele. Sageli väljendus see uusi algatusi tõrjuvas kultuuripoliitikas, jättes uued projektid rahastamata või rahastades neid väga vähesel määral. Sinna juurde käis sageli parempoolne retoorika turegulatsioonist ja erinevate kunstiprojektide elujõulisusest. Ka kultuurkapitali ressursse suunati järjest enam ministeeriumi haldusalas tehtavate kulude katteks, mis aga vähendas summasid, mida jagada väljastpoolt institutsioone tulevatele algatustele.

Seisukohta kultuuriinstitutsioonide säilitamisest kui riikliku kultuuripoliitika peamisest eesmärgist on üldjoontes jaganud ka järgmised kultuuriministrid, kuigi ükski neist ei ole tegelnud kultuuripoliitikaga nii süsteemselt kui Allik aastatel 1995–1999.

Sellest ajast peale on riigi kultuuripoliitika juhtimine olnud pikalt Reformierakonna käes, kes on üldjoontes sama poliitikat jätkanud: Signe Kivi (1999–2002), Margus Allikmaa (2002–2003) ja Urmas Paet (2003–2005).

<sup>62</sup> Lagersepz, M. Institutsionaliseeritus ja avatus kultuuripoliitikas, 1227.

Tähtis on märkida, et mõlemad printsiibid – nii säilitamine kui ka elitism – on kitsastes oludes õigustatud: tuleb hoolitseda rahvuslikku identiteeti loovate institutsioonide eest ja professionaalkultuur on vaieldamatult oluline. Nii on mõlemad suunad endistviisi vajalikud ja väärtuslikud.

Raivo Palmaru ministriaastate (2005–2007) iseloomulikumaks märksõnaks võib pidada loomemajanduse temaatika tõstatumist kultuuriministeriumis. Siiski on liiga vara öelda, kas see võiks olla uue kultuuripoliitilise mudeli kujunemise alguseks.

## KOKKUVÕTE

Eesti kultuuripoliitikas väljendub n-õ ühiskonna ametlik, riiklik arusaam kultuurist. Riigi nooruse tõttu on meie kogemus eesmärgistatud kultuuripoliitikast suhteliselt lühike. Kultuuripoliitika ajaloolisi perioode vaadeldes saavad ilmseks eri aegade ideoloogiline taust ja eesmärgid, mida riik ning selle suunajad on kultuuris ja ühiskonnas tähtsaks pidanud. Eesti kogemus demokraatlikult toimivast kultuuripoliitikast on teiste – ülalt juhivate mudelitega – võrreldes olnud sootuks napp.

Kuni käesoleva ajani on Eesti kultuurielu korraldatud riiklikult eelkõige president Pätsi kehtestatud väga jõulisele kultuuripoliitilisele nägemusele vastava rahvaliku-rahvusliku kultuuripoliitika alusel ühelt poolt ja teisalt sellele järgnenud okupatsiooniaegse hierarhilise, kultuuriinstitutsioone põlistava kultuuripoliitika toel. Mõlemad on ülalt suunatud ja juhitud.

Neist esimese kultuuripoliitika ideoloogiline sisu oli rahvuslus, mis 1930. aastate keskel oli kultuurikäsitlusena mõistetav: eestlastel oli õnnestunud saada oma riik, mis tuli üles ehitada mitte üksnes majanduslikult, vaid ka kultuuriliselt, kui-võrd enne rahvusriigi loomist oli eestlaste staatus pärast baltisakslasi ja venelasi kolmandajärguline. Tuli kõigiti toetada rahvuslikku identiteeti, mis sai oma riigis uue põhja.

Pätsi ülalt juhitud prototalitaarse kultuuripoliitika iseloomulikuks jooneks identiteedikujundamise kõrval oli riigi toetus kõigile professionaalse ja rahvakultuuri valdkondadele, mille tulemusena rajati ka enamik meil tänaseni funktsioneerivatest kultuuriinstitutsioonidest.

Pätsi ideoloogia eesmärgiks oli homogeenne rahvus ja tugev rahvusriik – et juurduks ärkamisajal tuule tiibadesse saanud rahvustunne nii maal kui linnas.

Loodud kultuuripoliitilise mudeli ja institutsioonide võrgustiku võttis selle vormilise sobivuse tõttu üle ka okupatsioonivõim. Institutsioonide kaader vahetati välja ideoloogiliselt haritud ja lojaalsete töötajatega. Süsteem töötas eesmärgipäraselt edasi, ehkki poliitilis-ideoloogiline sisu tegi kannapöörde ja tarvitusele võetud meetmed olid kaugel vaikiva ajastu pehmest järeletsensuurist.

Uus sisu lähtus totalitaarriigi manipuleerivast retoorikast nõukogude inimese kujundamisel, mille tegelikuks väljenduseks oli kultuuri hierarhilisus ja tsensuur. Seda teostati veelgi süvendatuma institutsionaliseerimise ja tsentraliseerimise abil. Uue ideoloogia varjus säilis siiski ka rahvuslik mentaliteet, mis oli üheks iseseisvuse taastamise võtmeks.

Seoses uue riigikorra tulekuga lisandus varasemale rahvuslikule ja hierarhiliste institutsioonidega kultuuripoliitikale liberaalse turumajanduse seadustest lähtuv elitistlik mentaliteet. Majandusliberalismi tugevas tõmbetuules kippus võimust võtma seisukoht, et üldjoontes peab kultuur end ise ära majandama, riik saab tegelda vaid professionaalse kultuuriga. Eesti praegust kultuurikäsitlust ja sellele vastavat poliitikat võibki kirjeldada kui säilitavat-elitistlikku. Tuleb tunnistada, et mõlemad printsiibid – nii säilitav kui elitism – on kitsastes oludes õigustatud. Loomulikult tuleb hoolitseda rahvuslikku identiteeti loovate institutsioonide eest ja mõistetakse on ka toetada professionaalkultuuri kui riigi konkurentsivõime üht iseloomustajat.

Siiani käsitleb riiklik kultuuripoliitika kultuuri kui etableerunud kultuuriasutuste tegevust, mille põhiülesandeks on rahvusliku identiteedi toetamine, mitte kui hulga subkultuuride kogumit, kus elujõuliste subkultuuride rahvus- ja globaal-kultuuri sünteesiv tegevus uuendaks ning tugevdaks rahva kultuurilist ühisteadvust. Kultuuripoliitika on suunatud monoliitse ja homogeenise ühiskonna kujundamiseks välja töötatud süsteemi säilitamisele, ehkki tegu pole enam kaugeltki homogeenne, vaid heterogeenne ühiskonnaga, millel on oma rahvusriik.

Samas: kuna kultuuripoliitika pole Riigikogu valimistel kordagi majandus- ja sotsiaalpoliitikaga vähegi võrreldavat tähelepanu pälvinud, puudub ühiskonnas laiemalt diskuteeritud terviklik platvorm, idee või ka ideoloogia selle kohta, mis-sugune peaks olema Eesti riigi kultuuripoliitika tulevikuvision. Tsiteerides Tõnu Seilenthali:

...praegune võimupõlvkond, kes põhjendatult on hüljanud tühjalt kõmiseva sovjetliku rahvaste sõpruse ja vendluse loosungi, ei ole Brüsselisse kiikamise tuhinas suutnud endale formuleerida mingit selget rahvusliku identiteedi ideoloogiat. Seda on aga hädasti vaja, et teha lõpp mõttemanipulatsioonidele, kus “Euroopa Liidu nõudmised” või teisalt “Venemaa huvid” oleksid manööverdunud mõistesse “Eesti huvid”.<sup>63</sup>

Eesti kultuuripoliitikas pole otsitud vastust küsimusele, kas 70–80 aastat tagasi rajatud rahvusliku identiteedi loomest lähtuv ja okupatsiooniajal kinnistunud tiheda institutsionaalse võrgustikuga ülalt juhitud kultuuripoliitika mudel rahuldab ning pakub piisavalt võimalusi jätkusuutlikuks arenguks eesti kultuurile muutunud kontekstis – Euroopa ühisruumis, piirideta ja avatud maailmas.

## ON THE HISTORICAL PERIODISATION OF ESTONIAN CULTURAL POLICY

Egge KULBOK-LATTIK

The article presents one of the possible periodisations of Estonian cultural policy. The introduction discusses the content and reliability of periodisation as a method of putting down history. Further on the term “cultural policy” within the

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<sup>63</sup> Heinapuu, A. Hõimusolidaarsus aitab jääda iseendaks. – Horisondi lisaväljaanne, 2007, Fennouugria, MTÜ Loodusajakiri, Tallinn, 2007, 1.

context of this article is examined and an overview description of the different periods of Estonian cultural policy is provided. The summary of the article indicates links between the contemporary problems of Estonian cultural policy and the historical experience of earlier periods.

The current interpretation of culture in Estonia has been established and results predominantly from, on the one hand, a strong view of cultural policy corresponding to an ethnic-nationalist cultural policy set by President K. Pääs, and on the other hand, the hierarchical cultural policy that perpetuated cultural institutions that followed during Soviet times. Both were guided and led from above.

The (pro)totalitarian cultural policy led by Konstantin Pääs shaped the national identity. The objective of Pääs' ideology was a homogeneous and strong nation state.

The cultural policy model of the era of Konstantin Pääs and the network of institutions suited the Soviet authorities, who adopted it. The system continued functioning purposefully, although the ideological content changed and the measures used were far from the soft follow-up censorship of the Pääs era.

The new content proceeded from the manipulative rhetoric of a totalitarian state shaping the *Homo soveticus*, the actual expression of which resulted in a hierarchy of culture and censorship. This was implemented through a deeper institutionalisation and centralisation. As a sub-trend of the new ideology, the national psychology was retained as a form of covert resistance, which was also one of the key factors in attaining re-independence.

In connection with the appearance of a new world order an elitist mentality proceeding from the laws of the liberal market economy was added to the cultural policy and its earlier national and hierarchical institutions. Right-wing politicians started to say that culture must be able to manage itself, so that the state can deal with professional culture alone.

The problems of the current cultural policy predominantly proceed from the fact that Estonia's experience of a democratically functioning cultural policy, as opposed to models guided from above, is scarce. There is a desire to retain a system developed to shape a monolithic and homogeneous society, although we are dealing now not with a homogeneous, but with a heterogeneous multicultural society, which has its own nation state. Cultural policy conceives culture as an established system of cultural institutions, not as a collection of many sub-cultures, whose abundance and whose vitality may also strengthen the cultural common consciousness of the nation.

# I

## ON THE HISTORICAL PERIODISATION OF ESTONIAN CULTURAL POLICY

(Translated in English from the original article  
*Eesti Kultuuripoliitika ajaloolisest periodiseerimisest*)

by

Egge Kulbok-Lattik, 09, 2008

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## ON THE HISTORICAL PERIODISATION OF ESTONIAN CULTURAL POLICY

*This article presents one possible periodisation of Estonian cultural policy, dividing it into a series of eras. The article claims neither to cover every detail nor by far to be final, but it is the first attempt to delimit and determine different periods of cultural policy in Estonia.*

### INTRODUCTION

This article focuses on state regulated cultural life, by identifying a set of unifying factors in cultural policy, a set which of course greatly coincides with the periods of political history. While presenting the periodisation the author has made use of works on the periodisation of Estonian history by historians involved in the field and on works on cultural policy by Estonian and foreign researchers.

The introduction discusses the content and reliability of periodisation as a method of putting down history. Further on, the term “cultural policy” within the context of this article is examined and an overview description of the different periods of Estonian cultural policy provided. The summary of the article indicates links between the contemporary problems of Estonian cultural policy and the historical experience of earlier periods.

### About Periodisation in General

One way of reconstructing the past is the periodisation of historical processes. This is always a subjective and conditional method, but the author believes that it has value in that it allows a broader generalisation and an overview when discussing a topic in a complex manner. In this article the author provides a brief overview of the principal points of view on periodisation in Estonian history, which should also explain why the author considers it necessary to periodise cultural policy.

A period is an era, a timespan between two turning points, or epochs. An epoch is a stop, a stopping place that marks a conspicuous point in the flow of time. Epoch creating events (for example, natural or economic disasters, wars etc.) denote changes and are thus notable anchors in the process of history, allowing it to be

broken up and viewed on the basis of the differences.<sup>1</sup> Where no radical upheavals (wars, epidemics, coups, revolutions etc.) have taken place, history is a continuous process in the sense that the past never stops abruptly, but each new part of it has its own previous history that has a long-lasting effect on it. In this case the periodisation of history is still a retrospective construction, a chronological framing of processes and always somewhat arbitrary and dependent on the object or topic of periodisation.<sup>2</sup>

Epistemologically, periodisation is justified by the natural human need for clarity: we need to find clear boundaries in the collection of facts and events that history deals with. This enables us to comprehend humanly the course of history and interpret the complicated relationships and links that have guided this course.

Jaak Valge considers periodisation a convenient generalisation that helps to break up research, but one which also serves a pedagogical objective – through classification it is easier to open up and explain the content of changes and through periodisation a “common language” for historians is formed. At the same time periodisation leads to a dangerous simplification and a modern perspective of history. It is clear that no periodisation can be fossilised, because if new research results should emerge that would disprove the valid periodisations, researchers would unquestionably have to abandon the existing periodisation.<sup>3</sup>

Any kind of periodisation may also contain the creation of cultural identity, as it conceals within itself a power mechanism. Vladimir Biti explains that as cultural identity cannot be homogeneous and subjected to a common embodiment of “cultural memory” in any society, but is heterogenic and multi-faceted due to national, ethnic, racial, religious, social, gender and professional differences, then we must always find out, for what purpose and in whose interests common cultural memory has been periodised.<sup>4</sup> The usage of periodisation as an instrument for creating identity can be observed if we look at and analyse how under different political regimes history has been periodised according to and suitably for the

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<sup>1</sup> Tarvel, E. Eesti lähiajaloo periodiseerimisest. – Ajaloolise tõe otsingul. – 20.01.1999 Tallinnas toimunud konverentsi „Eesti lähiajaloo allikakriitilisi probleeme” materjalid. Toim E. Tarvel. Tallinn, 1999, 105

<sup>2</sup> Valge, J. Kuidas periodiseerida Eesti aega? – Tuna, 2004, 1, 122

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 122

<sup>4</sup> Biti, V. Periodization as a Technique of Cultural Identification. – Cultural History after Foucault. Ed. J. Neubauer, New York, 1999, 177–184



dominant ideology (from the recent past, for example, the periodisations of the Soviet times).

Thus it follows that, given that cultural policy as a subject is so multifaceted and interdisciplinary (history, cultural studies, political sciences, public administration), then parsing it into different historical periods gives us a better overview and clearer picture about this multi-detailed subject, which is one of the aims of our history-related interpretation. Mart Kivimäe says that our history-related interpretation is also a way of conforming with our temporal world (self-interpretation), and this is – from critical historicism rooted in the tradition of history – the anthropological idea of historical knowledge.<sup>5</sup>

### **About the Starting Points of Periodisation**

“The choice of criteria according to which the process of history can be divided into chronological time slots is in principle a free one. The oldest (from Egypt and Babylon) and most wide-spread choice is periodisation using the categories of political history or rulers, types of states, wars or other notable events.”<sup>6</sup>

Periodisation is also possible by generalising the traits of change (or the perception of it) in different fields, such as politics, economy or culture. The periodisations of different spheres of life cannot coincide: an art historian must periodise differently from an ecclesiastical or economic historian. Similarly, no periodisation can be global and still be valid everywhere.<sup>7</sup>

It is also possible to periodise in such a way that the central dominant feature of the period is found and the other processes are more or less ignored. The author of this paper applies this principle in the following periodisation of Estonian cultural policy. This means that time periods of different lengths, despite their seeming temporal disproportion, have been put under a common denominator that describes the central dominant feature of the period, and the common denominator of the

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<sup>5</sup> Kivimäe, M. Kirjandus ja teaduslik objektiivsus ajaloos. Meie ajalooteaduses pidamata dialooge. Sirp, 2005, 23.09. 3–4

<sup>6</sup> Tarvel, E. Eesti lähiajaloo periodiseerimisest, 107

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 109

cultural policy periods thus defined gives their names or titles. The title of the cultural policy period expresses, summarises and characterises the main or central dominant feature of the period – the dominating attitude or principle which shaped cultural policy, or the way cultural policy was put into practice. Thus the temporally very long (Pro)totalitarian period can also be viewed as clearly distinct sub-periods, but the common denominator of this period is (Pro)totalitarianism – during the entire long period, a state regime steered from above, although with different strengths and with different ideological aims at different times. At the same time different sub-periods, which partly coincide with the Estonian periodisation of political history, may be clearly distinguished. Thus these sub-periods are also able to explain the dominating attitudes in Estonian cultural policy of that era.

## TERMS

As the essential assumption of cultural policy is cultural interpretation or understanding of culture, let us first clarify the context of the terms *culture*, *policy* and *cultural policy* and other terms arising in cultural policy discussions in this article.

According to the Oxford Companion to Philosophy the term culture in general can be explained as a people's way of life, including their attitudes, values, beliefs, arts, knowledge, ways of perception, and habits of thinking. The cultural traits of forms of life are learned, but often permeate so deeply that they are difficult to notice from within.<sup>8</sup> The present article focuses on the culture in the context of cultural policy, and in that case the concept of culture is normative and narrow. Lagerspetz says that the concept of culture in the context of cultural policy is politically determined and therefore normative, and is formed historically, changing in time, and that it differs between states.

The enlargement of the term of culture in general as well as in the context of cultural policy has taken place thanks to research into society and culture. The British cultural researcher Angela McRobbie claims that critical cultural studies and many of

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<sup>8</sup> Blackburn, S. Oxfordi filosoofialeksikon. Oxford University Press, 2002, 242

its representatives, “including Brecht, Benjamin and Bourdieu have given us an understanding of culture, which means the demystification of culture and also the demystification of those social relations that produce both culture and academic understanding of culture.”<sup>9</sup>

It is important to have a brief overview of the changes in interpretations of the concept of culture in Western societies, because as understanding of what culture is has changed, so cultural policies have also been changed. Peter Burke, professor of cultural history at the University of Cambridge, has described how the understanding of culture or cultural interpretation has changed. He characterises the old classical interpretation of culture as the reflection of an elite that was cultivated by educated people for educated people starting from Ancient Greek civilisation and continuing through Western civilisation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. “This is canonised and “opera-theatre like” and oriented at high culture, leaving aside or paying very little attention to other spheres of human activity. Such a cultural interpretation is not appropriate any more in a world which speaks of contemporary cultural democracy.”<sup>10</sup>

Jim McGuigan's analyses of the links between culture, cultural research and cultural policy in “post-modernist conditions” conclude that the term *culture* is proliferating to the point where the term becomes meaningless as everything is culture and we live in “the culture society”.<sup>11</sup>

The term *policy* also requires definition, as English has three equivalents for this Estonian concept: *polity*, *politics* and *policy*. *Polity* points to a formal structure – institutions, procedure and norms. *Politics* describes the process of intermediating and pushing through interests, regulating conflicts and making political decisions. *Policy* is a state activity aimed at values and objectives and covers specific policies like economic policy, education policy, healthcare policy, cultural policy etc. As David Easton argues, policy is a division of values, but the the number of values is

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<sup>9</sup> McRobbie, A. Cultural Studies for the 1990s. Innovation: The European Journal of Social Sciences, 1993, Vol. 6 Issue 3, p 269

<sup>10</sup> Burke, P. Kultuuriajaloo ühtsus ja mitmekesisus. – Tuna, 2004, 4, 102–117

<sup>11</sup> McGuigan, J. Cultural Analysis and Policys in the Information Age. – Construction of Cultural Policy. Eds: P. Ahponen, A. Kangas, Minerva Kustannus Oy, 2004, 125–147

limited and some groups in society gain more from a particular policy than do others.<sup>12</sup>

### **The Concept, Scope and Aspects of cultural policy. Cultural Policy as a Form of Government**

Mikko Lagerspetz has described the essence of cultural policy: "Due to its political nature, cultural policy is normative, and in this context the definition of culture is politically determined. The field of cultural policy has developed historically, it changes in time and differs between states. In cultural policy the official, national understanding of culture is expressed, through this the values and expectations of the culture of a society are consciously expressed."<sup>13</sup>

Describing in general terms the essence of cultural policy, Jim McGuigan makes the valid point that cultural policy is one of the forms of government, referring to Michel Foucault's (1991 [1978]) theory of governmentality. Foucault's concept of governmentality refers in a very general way to the administrative apparatus of modernity, the emergence of the modern state and its powers of social regulation. According to Foucault, power based on social regulation is a much broader term than power stemming from the cultural policy of a modern state, this first and foremost because "culture" is restricted to practices that social regulation has provided with different meanings.<sup>14</sup> The cultural life controlled by the state with its institutions supports and reproduces the social regulation of the society, providing a different meaning and status to the cultural practices, and thus the hierarchies on which the cultural field are shaped.

Foucault handles power as a mechanism, a network, which interacts not only from the top to the bottom but also vice versa. Although the pyramidal structure of power has its clearly defined "head", the institutional apparatus as a whole produces power. This enables the disciplinary power to be both direct and indirect: direct, as it

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<sup>12</sup> Palmaru, R. Eesti kultuuripoliitika teelahkmed. – Riigikogu Toimetised 2005, 12, 4

<sup>13</sup> Lagerspetz, M. Loengumaterjal kultuuripoliitika, avaldamata materjal. 2004

<sup>14</sup> McGuigan, J. Cultural Analysis and Policies in the Information Age, 132

is everywhere at the same time; indirect because this power interacts constantly and mostly silently and inconspicuously. According to Foucault's power-theory, in order to be able to dominate, power has to create reality through "the rituals of truth". In this process the individual obeys the power not because of threats but because of discipline. Foucault states that with the help of discipline – through supervision, control, distinguishing, hierarchisation, homogenisation, elimination, in short through standardisation – an individual is created.<sup>15</sup> Using Foucault's idea we can view national cultural policy as one of the power instruments of the ruling ideology as well as a strong instrument of identity-building in society. Foucault's idea helps us to understand the concealed relations between cultural policy and the understanding of culture as well as the interaction of cultural policy and social regulation.

Culture has been used for the service of power, just as cultural policy has been cultivated and imposed in order to implement ideologies suitable for the elite since the earliest forms of the society. Cultural policy in such a historical point of view is expressed in cultural patronage, a system of education with limited access. Such a historical view of cultural policy is also supported by the classical interpretation of culture as a reflection of the elite.

In the current context, *ideology* is any broader system of beliefs, ways of thinking and categories which serves as a basis for political and social practices.<sup>16</sup>

Tracing cultural policy through history, the ideological discourse of each era becomes evident. This link between the governing ideologies and cultural policy is also clearly expressed by Marrit Bakke, a Norwegian researcher of cultural policy, who differentiates between the most important forms of cultural patronage in the history of western civilisation and classifies them in the following manner:

- the church: approximately 700–1300;
- aristocracy: approximately 1300–1600;
- royal courts: 1600–1770;
- private clubs, societies and associations of the bourgeoisie: from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century;
- governments and states: primarily after WWII;

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<sup>15</sup> Foucault, M. The Means of Correct Training. – The Foucault Reader. Ed. P. Rabinow. London, 1991, 194

<sup>16</sup> S. Blackburn. Oxfordi filosoofialeksikon. Oxford University Press, 2002,177

- private patrons: throughout history; nowadays especially since the 1960s.<sup>17</sup>

The concept of cultural policy can be clearly illuminated and observed if we look at the development of cultural policy in the context of the formation of the modern state. As structural changes happened in the public cultural life, as one aspect of national consciousness, clear means of financing, and the founding of institutions to run cultural life started to be legally regulated. In this light it may be argued that the birth of cultural policy lies in the emergence of Herder and post-Enlightenment nation states, when culture became linked to the nation state which is able to create institutions that guarantee the sustainability of culture. In the current context the state is a specialised, clearly determined, strictly centralised and disciplined socially active power or complex of powers that alone may use force as an extreme measure in order to preserve the order of different sanctions, as Ernest Gellner (1994, 223) has noted. He (ibid.) explains, that the state is the only body that can guarantee the effective production of an educated and unified culture, so that the results of education would not be poor and below standard. Gellner<sup>18</sup> shows convincingly the connections between culture, the nation state and the ideology of nationalism.

McGuigan says the cultural policy of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was defined by a narrow interpretation of culture. States began to interfere in cultural life, supporting “arts” and culture for different purposes such as national, propaganda and redistribution purposes, and for generally regulating the production and circulation of symbolic cultural forms.<sup>19</sup>

Cultural policy emerged as an independent concept in Europe after World War II due to both the economic changes (the transition to a welfare society in the 1960s-70s) and the discursive changes stemming from social studies which covered a changed and expanded concept of culture.

Professor Ilkka Heiskanen of the University of Helsinki has explained the emergence of the topics of cultural policy as resulting from the radical changes in

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<sup>17</sup> Bakke, M. 2001. „Arts Funding“. – *International encyclopaedia of the social & behavioral sciences*. Volume 2, 821-825. Oxford: Elsevier cited in Duelund, P. 2003. *Cultural Policy: An Overview*. – *The Nordic Cultural Model*. Ed: P. Duelund, Copenhagen Nordic Cultural Institute, 2003, 16

<sup>18</sup> Gellner, E. *Rahvused ja rahvuslus*. – *Akadeemia*, 1994, 10, 2223

<sup>19</sup> McGuigan, J. *Cultural Analysis and Policies in the Information Age*, 132

Europe at the end of the 1980s. Such key issues of cultural policy as the nation state, nationalism and national identity emerged, topics that were practically forgotten in the bipolar (cold war) world of 1945–1989. While in the Eastern block the discussion has mostly centered around the topics of nationalism and nation states, debates related to the cultural policy of Western Europe echoed ethnic and racial tensions that stemmed from the massive influx of workers and refugees. But the rapid development of new information technologies and the accompanying massive proliferation of a universal audio-visual culture of Anglo-American origin also made Western countries ask about the future of national culture.<sup>20</sup>

Ever since the achievement of establishing the welfare society, modern European cultural policies have tried to overcome the social, class and geographical barriers typical of an industrial society. But the change of the paradigm of the post-modern era raises questions for these cultural policies.

According to Tony Bennett, cultural policy studies are one of the trends in critical cultural studies. He believes that an education in this field should produce actively involved conscious participants in cultural production, not just critics who, rather than becoming involved with what is going on in the field, remain outside to criticise as bystanders. “And all this because although many theoreticians have considered the relations between culture and power as the focus of cultural studies, cultural studies remain – as they normally do – largely uncoupled from the management and shaping of the actual politics. For such a field of study to call itself “political” is, to put it mildly, misleading.”<sup>21</sup> The reasons listed here have made the sociologists and cultural researchers of Europe reflect on the cultural policies of their states and analyse cultural policy from a historical perspective and assess the influence of different instruments and implementations of cultural policy in society. Although cultural policy as a field has not been widely researched in Estonia, we have been involved the current article includes an overview of it.

The author of the current article defines contemporary Estonian cultural policy in the following way: cultural policy is an agreed conglomeration of decisions

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<sup>20</sup> Heiskanen, I. Cultural Policy in Finland. National Report. Arts Council of Finland, Helsinki, 1995, 29

<sup>21</sup> McGuigan, J. Cultural Analysis and Policies in the Information Age. – Construction of Cultural Policy. Eds: P. Ahponen, A. Kangas, Minerva Kustannus Oy, 2004, 134

and regulations, with the help of which – on the basis of historically formed and nationally legitimised values – generally preferred cultural practices are selected and are implemented administratively and institutionally, including receiving funding from the state budget.

## THE PERIODS OF ESTONIAN CULTURAL POLICY

Studying the history of Estonian cultural policy we may observe five clearly distinguishable periods:

**The prologue from the era of awakening to the creation of statehood (1860–1918):**

**“Self-initiative and the Society Movement”;**

**I 1918 –1925: “The Years of Quests and Foundation”;**

**II 1925 –1934: “The Formation of Purposeful Cultural Policy”;**

**III 1934 – 1990: “(Pro)totalitarian Cultural Policy” and its sub-periods:**

**1. 1934 - 1940 “The Silent Era”**

**2. 1940 - 1944 “The Years of Loss of Independent Statehood”**

**3. 1944 - 1953 “Stalinist Terror”**

**4. 1953 - 1969 “The Thaw and Hoarfrosts”**

**5. 1969 - 1987 “Stagnation”**

**6. 1987 - 1990 “The Collapse of the Regime and the Singing Revolution”**

**IV 1991–1995: transition period “Post-totalitarian Lack of Paradigm”;**

**V 1995–2007: “Elitist and Preservationist Cultural Policy”**

When compiling the periodisation the author has taken a central dominant feature of each period, a central base of the cultural policy at the time, and from it derived the title of the period. These features characterise the dominating attitude or principle or how cultural policy was put into practice during each period.

The (Pro)totalitarian period is divided into six clearly distinct sub-periods, but the common factor of this period is (Pro)totalitarianism – during the whole of this long period a state regime steered from above, although with different strengths and with different ideological aims at different times. The common features of pro-



totalitarian and totalitarian cultural policy have been more precisely described in the introduction to the chapter on the third period of Estonian cultural policy. The main difference between these periods lies in the strength of the implementation of the ideology. This dissimilarity is also mentioned in the titles of the periods: during the pro-totalitarian period there was only a *tendency* towards totalitarianism, but during the totalitarian period the cultural policy was profoundly totalitarian. To anticipate the conclusion of the present periodisation, (pro)totalitarian cultural policy is the main historical experience in Estonia.

### **The Prologue; from the Era of Awakening to the Creation of Statehood in 1918**

The prologue is presented because most of our cultural institutions – theatres, artistic associations, community centres and others, which are significant pillars of independent statehood – were born spontaneously of free initiative in that era. This is an important historical special feature of our cultural policy compared to those of the old monarchist imperial states.

From the era of awakening until the creation of statehood, cultural activities in Estonia were initiated spontaneously. State-run cultural policy existed only inasmuch as measures implemented by the Russian Empire towards one of the Baltic provinces can be so considered. This was a period during which the pre-requisites for the formation of a nation state were created. The society movement of the rural population, and the endeavour for common activities and the vision and actions of the outstanding individuals who guided it, was in its essence cultural and political, with the objective of breaking away from the patronage of the Baltic-German nobility and the Russian Empire to national independent existence and self-determination. Ea Jansen says the pre-requisites for achieving independent statehood were the provision of education in Estonian, the spread of journalism, and the work of leading figures (Faehlmann, Kreutzwald, Koidula, Jannsen, Jakobson, Hurt and others) who carried and propagated nationalist ideas, and the strong society movement, with the

help of which all these pre-requisites reached the grass-root level and guaranteed the mass support necessary for the creation of an independent state.<sup>22</sup>

During that time cultural life, both amateur and professional, operated only within societies, there were no state institutions. It was difficult for the Estonian intelligentsia to make a living from their creative work, as, first and foremost, the numbers of consumers of culture were limited, and secondly, the royalties from literature, art and music were so trivially small.

### **I period. 1918–1925: “The Years of Quests and Foundation”**

From the process of the foundation of Estonian independent statehood, it is clearly possible to observe and confirm Gellner’s claims about the correlations and interaction between culture and the nation-state. In 1919 with a war in progress the subject of subsidies for culture was widely and enthusiastically discussed at the meetings of the creative intelligentsia. Jüri Uljas says that paying salaries to creative people and the rules for this were discussed at the figurative arts congress in August 1919 and at the writers’ congress in September of the same year. (As there has been very little discussion of cultural policy of this particular period in the context of this article in Estonia, the author relies on Jüri Uljas’ work “Eesti Kultuurkapital”<sup>23</sup> when describing this period and the following one.) One of the most vigorous fighters for the creative intelligentsia’s position was the writer and poet Friedebert Tuglas. In January 1919 he wrote an article “The National Development of the Arts”, in which he sketched a plan for subsidising culture.

On November 11, 1918, the first government of the Republic of Estonia took office. Within the Ministry of Education, issues of art and cultural policy were the province of the department of art and heritage protection, which from June 1919 was divided into working groups for literature, figurative art, music and drama, and the heritage board. The department was set two tasks: 1) to create favourable pre-requisites for the development of art, first and foremost by providing artists with better living, studying, working and development conditions; 2) to create the

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<sup>22</sup> Jansen, E. Vaateid eesti rahvusluse sünniaegadesse. Ilmamaa, Tartu, 2004, 20

<sup>23</sup> Uljas, J. Eesti Kultuurkapital 1921–1994. Eesti Kultuurkapital, Tallinn, 2005, 6–34

conditions for improving the artistic and cultural level of the whole of the country and society. A third task was later added, responsibility for artistic and cultural representation both within and outside the country.

At practically the same time the question of the financial problems of theatres was raised. In principle, it was decided that the state would cover 30 per cent of the actors' salaries, a point which concerned the two biggest theatres "Estonia" and "Vanemuine". Other theatres (for example, the Drama Theatre Society) turned to the Ministry of Education for help as well.

At the beginning of the 1920s the general mood of society was not yet ready to support the creative intelligentsia, and there were also no clear ideas for regulatory mechanisms from the state. The years 1921–1924 saw quite a liberal economic policy, and the idea prevailed that the state should promote the freedom of financial activity and of capital, and so no specific acts to subsidise culture were passed.

Also during this period, communal activity, which started as an initiative from the bottom and seized the entire nation, dominated within culture (for example, the extensive setting up of War of Independence memorials). The society movement developed even further, taking in the activities of educational, youth, women's, singing and acting, farmer's, writer's, fire-fighter's and other societies and institutions, and a network of organisations were created. The communal activities of the time may also be regarded, within a contemporary context, as expressions of civic society.

The beginning of the 1920s was a time when the creative intelligentsia became conscious of, and started to express, its interests. This is vividly proven by the formation of professional associations, as these defend special interests. In 1921 the Estonian Singers' Union was formed, in 1922 the Estonian Writers' Union and the Estonian Sports Association, in 1923 the Estonian Artists' Union, and in 1924 the Estonian Academic Society of Musicians.

One of the most important activities of cultural policy in the 1920s, the birth of the Cultural Endowment, was also initiated by the writers, and the law was completed and passed in 1925. This is one of the most fundamental events in democratic cultural policy during both the first period of the Republic of Estonia and

the time of re-independence. The establishment of the Cultural Endowment was accompanied by frantic wars of words and debates between different opinion and interest groups. The principal issues of debate were whether to subsidise culture at all; to what extent to do so; and how to decide the subsidies and who allocates them.

Cultural policy before 1925 was rather chaotic and jumpy. The national cultural life was mostly influenced by initiatives from the grass-root level, not through coordinated organisation. Cultural policy was the subject of intensive debate among the intelligentsia and the political elite.

## **II period. 1925-1934: "The Formation of Purposeful Cultural Policy"**

From 1924 the desire to strengthen the economic functions of the state began to dominate. The new approach drawn up by Otto Strandman played an important role in setting economic policy, which took the course of determining general economic policy. During this period the principles for financing the cultural institutions of the state were established. Acts were passed, or government regulations adopted, which set the terms and amount of state subsidies, and the sources of financing were set, as were the rights and obligations of the participating parties. Examples of this include the Public Libraries Act of 1924; the University of Tartu Act 1925; the National Minorities Cultural Autonomy Act 1925; the Societies and their Associations Act of 1926, which affected the activities of cultural and educational societies; and the State Applied Art School (Riigi Kunsttööstuskool) Act of 1929.

The years 1925-1934 may be called the period of establishment of cultural institutions, as it was also during this time period, with the help of cultural legislation, that the framework for the support of the principal fields of culture was created.

In 1927 the new Cultural Endowment Act was passed, the most important change in which concerned the strengthening of the government's power over the Cultural Endowment through a change of the staff on the supervisory board of the Cultural Endowment, of which endowment panel members were no longer members.

In 1928, within the supervisory board of the Cultural Endowment a committee on cultural policy was formed, of which Konstantin Päts, among others, was a member. Largely thanks to the work of this committee the most prolific years of the Cultural Endowment began, during which many initiatives in cultural policy were launched, for example, the creation of the network of community centres, the reorganisation of theatres, and the organisation of the work of museums and art schools. This committee also oversaw the establishment of the three cultural temples of Tallinn – the conservatoire, the art museum and the art hall. In February 1929 the committee passed the regulations of the Cultural Endowment cultural propaganda foundation, while K. Päts was appointed to develop the collection of statutes of the art museum foundation. Later the statute collections of the Estonian National Museum and the Estonian Culture Film foundations were developed. Thus, the work of committee involved a very wide spectre of cultural policy. The central figure of the committee was K. Päts, (President of Estonia 1934-1939) who had innovative ideas about constructing Estonian statehood.

Päts saw an ideal society as a balanced integral whole, the individual parts of which were to function in absolute harmony, just like the organs of a living being. The basis of Päts' organic or institutional statehood was the thesis that only those organs that have grown out of the life and needs of the nation and blended in with the state have a right to live. Toomas Karjahärm, a leading cultural historian, says that Päts' socio-political ideas were influenced by social liberalism, solidarity, communal and neo-rural social reformism, agrarian socialism and the way the Anglo-Saxons have been able to create a balanced and stable statehood respecting the rights of citizens. This is based on secure organised institutions, which together support the social government.<sup>24</sup> Päts' thoughts already reached for the need for strong institutions while writing for the newspaper "Peterburi teataja"<sup>25</sup> ("The St. Petersburg Courier"). It can be claimed that the Estonian state was largely built up based on the ideas of K. Päts, the most important one being his conviction that social life is maintained and carried forward by institutions: the bigger and stronger the

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<sup>24</sup> Karjahärm, T. Konstantin Pätsi poliitilised ideed. – Konstantin Pätsi tegevusest. Artiklite kogumik. Koost K. Arjakas. Toim A.Velliste. MTÜ Konstantin Pätsi Muuseum. Tallinn, 2002, 75

<sup>25</sup> Aru, K. Konstantin Päts ja „Teatajad”. – Konstantin Pätsi tegevusest. Artiklite kogumik, 41

institutions the stronger and more stable the nation.

“The history of nations is in fact the history of institutions created by a nation. /.../ The life of the institutions links together generations and bequeaths the future through the fruit of labours and losses of the past. People come and go, but institutions survive generations.”<sup>26</sup>

These words by Päts were very true in the light of Estonia’s later cultural life and its direction.

### **III period. 1934–1991: “(Pro)totalitarian Cultural Policy” and its sub-periods**

1. 1934 – 1939 “The Silent Era”
2. 1940 – 1944 “The Years of Loss of Independent Statehood”
3. 1944 – 1953 “Stalinist Terror”
4. 1953 – 1969 “The Thaw and Hoarfrosts”
5. 1969 – 1987 “Stagnation”
6. 1987 – 1990 “The Collapse of the Regime”

Period III begins in the middle of the 1930s, when in Estonia as in many places around Europe rigidly nationalist and conservative ideas began to gain command, which led the state to a pro-totalitarian regime of governance. By this the author means a policy with totalitarian characteristics, but which was not totally and repressively controlling and authoritarian. This chapter presents the principal arguments why such a long period is viewed as one, while at the same time it is reasonable to differentiate between sub-periods within this era.

This difference between prototalitarian and totalitarian cultural policy lies in the strength of the oppressiveness of the ideology: during the pro-totalitarian period there was only a *tendency* towards totalitarianism, but during the totalitarian period the cultural policy was profoundly totalitarian.

In the years 1934-1991 the following instruments of cultural policy were used to impose the ideology:

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<sup>26</sup> Karjahärm, T. Konstantin Pätsi poliitilised ideed. – Konstantin Pätsi tegevusest. Artiklite kogumik, 78

- censored media or other means of mass communication subjected to the authorities, as a result of which there was effectively no alternative publishing;
- guidelines (or direct commands) to the creative intelligentsia or the supremacy of nationalist propaganda in creative work
- a thorough hierarchical institutional network controlled from above (in both rural and urban areas, for professionals and amateurs);
- a centralised state budget, which focused on ideologically loyal institutions governed from above;
- the nationalisation, control over or replacement of free private initiative by state pressure.

All these instruments of cultural policy can be found in cultural policy in Estonia between the years 1934 and 1991, or the entire (pro)totalitarian period. That is why it is justified to call the III period after its most characteristic trait, clear and total leadership from above or (pro)totalitarianism. It is important to note, and this is one of the main conclusions of this periodisation, that (pro)totalitarianism or strict leadership from above is the prevailing experience in the history of Estonian cultural policy together with everything that results from it.

Naturally the above methods were used at different times in the service of different ideologies and objectives, which results in the sub-periods. There is a great difference between the soft follow-up censorship of the Päts era and a cultural policy constructing/supporting national identity on the one hand, and the violent implementation of foreign culture that occurred during the Stalinist era on the other hand, even though similar traits are clearly noticeable. The institutional model of cultural policy created by Päts did not change during the Soviet occupation until 1991, only the ideology channelled to all strata of the society through all the instruments of cultural policy was turned upside down. The preparation for this was good – the Soviet power took over a very well operating pro-totalitarian system for the Europe of that era, making it totalitarian and implementing its own ideology within it.

### *1. Sub-period. 1934-1939: "The Silent Era"*

At the beginning of the 1920s joint events that involved the entire nation were organised spontaneously and democracy was rooted, and the years 1925–1929 are considered those that stabilised the country, but the world-wide economic crisis between 1929 and 1933 dealt a severe blow to the Estonian economy and affected the nation's political demands and preferences. The people, who were tired of not having a leader and of constant government crises, demanded vigorous solutions to overcome the crisis. Fulfilment of these demands was promised by a rising new political party Eesti Vabadussõjalaste Keskliit (The Union of Participants in the Estonian War of Independence), known as the Vaps. The reputation of the new political party was clean, unspoilt by corruption and political bargaining and that is why they gained support among the people. On March 12, 1934, the acting head of government Konstantin Päts and General Johan Laidoner declared a state of emergency and eliminated the Vaps party.

Between 1934–1938, during the silent era, the state was practically governed by three men: Konstantin Päts, Johan Laidoner and Kaarel Eenpalu. The work of the parliament was halted, and while it was not officially dissolved, it was never summoned, political parties were marginalised and were ridiculed and blamed for the country's problems, demonstrations and meetings were banned, and newspapers critical of the government were shut down. Follow-up censorship was set up in the media, literature and theatre. In 1934 newspapers and journals were forbidden from criticising the government and heads of state and from disturbing the domestic peace with polemics, while a January 1935 regulation applied the same rules to brochures and books. A publisher that violated the regulation could in an extreme case be closed down or fined or have its editor arrested, while for milder violations a reprimand or warning was given. The supervision of publishers was placed in the hands of the Riiklik Propagandatalitus (Government Propaganda Office), formed in 1934. The ideological basis of the new Estonian state was to consist of nationalism, love of country and solidarity, while the basis of political life was to comprise professional organisations and mass organisations led by the



state, and the basis of the economy was to be private property with a strong government sector.<sup>27</sup>

According to Päts' political ideas the nation was to be organised not into political parties based on their political ideas, but into corporations according to their professions. He was of the opinion that "the insurance of states lies in strong institutions".<sup>28</sup> The following quote is a characteristic example of Päts' view of the corporative organisation of society during the silent era: "Professional organisation must result in the fact that man is not going to bow down before the parties, but he has to feel that those to whom he turns are his closest colleagues and that they agree on everything and work together and assert themselves. /.../ Everyone must feel that they are one big family and that they can only live when they have a common roof of the Republic of Estonia. /.../ And what is most important, they must teach a new moral, a new sense of honour, not only rights are of magnitude, but the one who does most for the state and sacrifices for it is of magnitude."<sup>29</sup> Such thinking was influenced by state-monopolist capitalism, in which Western Europe served as an example. Between 1934 and 1936 fifteen corporations were founded, which also participated in legislative activities. The system of corporations and the creation of support funds, for example, in culture a book support fund, film fund etc., was copied from Italy.<sup>30</sup>

The role of the arts (literature, theatre and figurative arts) was to implement and propagate national ideals. In architecture national dignity and strength were to be expressed.

Additionally, in the field of arts the agreement between the state as employer and artists supported by the cultural endowment was put into practice. For example, writers were told what and how to write. This context is very vividly described by a quote from literary life. The programme article "Literary Marginalia" by Eduard Hubel, the head of the Cultural Endowment Literature Foundation Board may be interpreted as a search for a compromise between official procurement (power) and

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<sup>27</sup> Elango, Õ, Ruusmann, A., Siilivask, K. Eesti maast ja rahvast. Maailmasõjast maailmasõjani. Tallinn, 1997, 283

<sup>28</sup> Karjahärm, T., Sirk, V. Vaim ja võim. Eesti haritlaskond 1917–1940. Argo, Tallinn, 2001, 306

<sup>29</sup> Karjahärm, T. Konstantin Pätsi poliitilised ideed. – Konstantin Pätsi tegevusest. Artiklite kogumik, 86–87

<sup>30</sup> Uljas, J. Eesti Kultuurkapital 1921–1994, 37

art (mind). He writes: "Our literature gains its justification for existence from an original mind, an original style. As long as we are original, there is a reason for our existence /---/ We must take care of and value the silicon of our home terrain, but we must polish it according to European methods, so that it would sparkle, shine as a gem. It is time to give up the admiration of foreign glass pearls and their distribution."<sup>31</sup>

In 1935 the head of the Government Propaganda Office, Hugo Kukke, made a radio speech on the subject of "The opportunities for the development of figurative arts from the starting point of national culture. An appeal to society and artists." He stressed that the further trend in the development of art must be guided by "those tasks that have greater importance from the state, national and cultural, and socio-ethnic point of view".<sup>32</sup>

To guide national or ethnic culture at the grass-root level it was planned, with the 1931 community centres act, to create a nationwide network of community centres. The foundation of community centres (village halls, clubs) had already started in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when a broad campaign against taverns and drinking began. In 1900 the vodka monopoly was established in Estonia and as a result of this many of the country taverns were closed, as a result of which there arose a need for suitable places for social interaction to be founded in the rural areas. The coordinated foundation and development of a network of community centres is linked to a man called Aleksander Kurvits, in whose letter to the Minister of Education (18.05.1927) we find the arguments for the idea of setting up the network.<sup>33</sup> By 1938 there were more than 250 community centres. In order to meet the requirements of the Community Centres Act several regulations were passed, for example the community centres building regulation, and the ministry of education and social affairs regulation, which aimed to organise the network of community centres. When organising the network, it was important to remember that the community centre should be located in the central point of a region, that it should be

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<sup>31</sup> Laak, M. Kultuurkapitali lugu 1920.aastate kirjanduskriitika mõistmiseks. – Eesti kirjandusmuuseumi aastaraamat. Paar sammukest XII. Toim S. Olesk. Tartu, 1996.

<sup>32</sup> Uljas, J. Eesti Kultuurkapital 1921–1994, 40

<sup>33</sup> Uljas, J. Rahvamajad Eestis 1920–1940. – Õppematerjal. E. Vilde nim. Tallinna Pedagoogiline Instituut, Tln, 1990, lk 9–15

accessible for the people, and that its radius of activity would be at least seven kilometres.<sup>34</sup> The network of community centres is one of the special phenomena that shaped the Estonian society and an effective instrument of cultural policy of its time. Their role, both in towns and in the countryside as a place for people to get together, and as an institution providing entertainment and as the initiator and distributor of the communal ideas cannot be underestimated.

In the 1930s, the intelligentsia either supported the authoritarian regime or opposed it, though the opposition was not allowed to say much. One example of this was the dismissal of the editor-in-chief of the newspaper "Postimees", Jaan Tõnisson who spoke for the opposition and for democracy, for criticising the government.<sup>35</sup> In summary, Toomas Kärjahärm says that the political situation in Estonia and its official ideology had traits characteristic of totalitarianism: etatism, the positioning of the state and the national above the individual, the principle of the leader and the primacy of the head of state in the political system, the harmonisation of political parties and the existence of a monopoly party prototype (Isamaaliit, the Fatherland Union), integral nationalism, corporations, ideological control and censorship, nationalist propaganda, the state of emergency and the infringement of civil rights. But these traits were not carried out to the extreme or developed to their limits like in bigger dictatorships. Estonia had a softer form of dictatorship. With the banning of parties political activity did not die out, it became focused around academic and professional organisations.<sup>36</sup>

The pro-government National Assembly convened in 1937, the elections to which were boycotted by the opposition, wrote the third constitution of the Republic of Estonia on the basis of Päts' draft legislation, and it was passed on June 28, 1937 at the joint sitting of the chambers and came into effect on January 1, 1938.<sup>37</sup>

According to Rait Maruste and Heinrich Schneider, whereas the 1933 constitutional amendments moved the public order from super parliamentarianism towards authoritarianism, the 1937 constitution began a movement back towards the

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<sup>34</sup> Kiis, R. Kohalikud omavalitsused ja kultuur. Rahvakultuuri Arendus- ja Koolituskeskus, Tln, 998, 115–120

<sup>35</sup> Aru, K. Milleks, millest ja kuidas tervendati „Postimeest” 1935.aastal. – Eesti kirjandusmuuseumi aastaraamat. Paar sammukest. XII. Toim S. Olesk. Tartu, 1996

<sup>36</sup> Kärjahärm, T. Konstantin Pätsi poliitilised ideed. – Konstantin Pätsi tegevusest. Artiklite kogumik, 94

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 88

people's sovereignty. The cornerstones of this constitution were the idea of the people's power (like the constitutions of 1920 and 1933), the separation of powers and the balance between them, the strengthening of judicial review, and an increase in the powers of government officials. The 1938 constitution wasn't in force for long due to external factors, and the constitutional mechanisms for the restoration of democracy were not implemented as there was not time to make full use of them.<sup>38</sup>

The silent era of Pääts brought an essentially pro-totalitarian ideology developed by the national propaganda office, which was implemented with the support of a nationalist/people's cultural policy. Its principal objective was to shape a homogeneous society with a strong identity.

Pääts' cultural policy was expressed through powerful nationwide national propaganda events: the Estonianisation of names (including place-names); the propaganda of the national costumes in connection with the XI nationwide song festival (1938); home decoration; and the study of ancient Estonian culture.

The public sphere was paralysed. The state tried to replace the free initiative characteristic of democracy with enforcement by the state and a corporative structure inspired from above. The regime tried to nationalise or control a large part of free initiative, especially as it concerned political organisations and trade unions, but also societies and associations.<sup>39</sup>

## *2. Sub-period. 1940-1944: "The Years of Loss of Independent Statehood"*

The beginning of this period is very clearly marked by the building of Soviet military bases in the Republic of Estonia. However, until the end of World War II the future of Estonia and the other Baltic states was not entirely clear. The Soviet Union and Germany were occupiers with a totalitarian ideology and practice and one of the essences of totalitarianism includes an effort to control and guide all expressions of public life including art.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 88–90

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 91–92

<sup>40</sup> Kangilaski, J., Okupeeritud Eesti kunstiajaloo perioodiseerimine. Ajalooline Ajakiri nr 1, Tallinn, 1999, 23–29

In the July and August of 1941 25 000 civilians and 33 000 conscripts were evacuated from Estonia to areas away from the front. Artists who were in those areas were united into the Estonian SSR Yaroslavl Artistic Ensembles. Zealous historical and political explanatory work was carried out among them,<sup>41</sup> an important preparatory step in raising the new cultural elite. Obviously the conscious ideology of Soviet totalitarian cultural policy lies behind this, and it is a step on the way to the end of Estonia's independent statehood.

By the autumn of 1941 Estonia had been taken over by the German troops. The German occupying troops persecuted and executed Jews and communists or suspected communists, including writers and artists, but they did not interfere in creative matters. An active art life in Estonia continued as it had during independence, but although a certain liberalisation of cultural life could be noted as compared to the control of the silent era, the conditions of the occupation cannot be called free. During the years of the loss of independent statehood a large part of the cultural and art elite left and the strong nationalist feeling which had existed was dispersed into the different worlds of the East and the West. The biggest losses of artists came with the emigration to Germany (1939-1941), the 1941 June deportation and the forced conscription to the Soviet army.<sup>42</sup>

The Soviet regime saw culture as a legitimiser of the socialist public order, culture was a means of communist educational work, a tool of ideology, a part of party work.<sup>43</sup> Toomas Karjahärm and Helle Luts say that one of the principal tasks of the Soviet cultural policy of this period was to reshape the intelligentsia. This meant removing and destroying the old intelligentsia and forming a new socialist intelligentsia based on workers and farmers.

### ***3. Sub-period: 1944-1953 "Stalinist Terror"***

The Stalinist era differs from the period of the thaw that follows because of its total terror, repressions and violence, where unconditional subordination was demanded from people and even minimal deviations from the official line were not

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<sup>41</sup> Kuuli, O. Sula ja hallad Eesti NSV-s. Kultuuripoliitikast aastail 1953–1969. Tallinn, 2002,13

<sup>42</sup> Karjahärm, T., Luts, H. Kultuurigenotsiid Eestis. Kunstnikud ja muusikud 1940–1953. Argo, Tallinn, 2005,145

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 144

tolerated. The aim of the terror was to suppress resistance and root out any kind of hope of freedom. The objective of the Kremlin was to subjugate totally the independent intelligentsia and make it an obedient tool of the regime.<sup>44</sup>

The totalitarian Soviet era brought with it a cultural policy which was national in form but socialist in content. Culture was made to function as a propaganda tool. The network of community centres was filled with Red Corners and political training. Year by year the propaganda of social realism became more and more menacing, growing into a compulsion. Olaf Kuuli says that ideological campaigns against theatre critics, musicians and writers were initiated in Moscow. The fight was against formalism, aestheticism and civil nationalism. But until the end of the 1940s the state's attempts at repression were softened by the local leaders in Estonia, surviving representatives of the intelligentsia of the previous era for example Hans Kruus, Nigol Andresen and Johannes Semper. Also the Estonian Communist Party first secretary Nikolai Karotamm understood the need to preserve the already battered intelligentsia.<sup>45</sup>

The regime controlled literature most strictly, then the visual arts. Of all forms of art, music, due to its nature, had the most freedom of expression, which is why composer and conductor Gustav Ernesaks and singer Georg Ots hold special importance in the self-awareness of Estonians.<sup>46</sup>

According to Jaak Kangilaski, attempts were made to destroy the originality of Estonian art in order to assimilate it entirely into the official culture of the Soviet Union. Pseudo-ethnographic national form was allowed, but most of the national heritage and all allusions to Western art were frowned upon. Under such labels as *nationalism*, *cosmopolitanism* and *formalism*, the opportunities for artists to create original work were destroyed.<sup>47</sup>

In March 1949 more than 20 000 people from Estonia were deported to Siberia, mostly farmers and their families. In parallel with the liquidation of the earlier village life the search for "enemies" in the field of culture increased, and the re-evaluation of the cultural heritage of the independence era and the persecution of the

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 152

<sup>45</sup> Kuuli, O. Sula ja hallad Eesti NSV-s. Kultuuripoliitikast aastail 1953–1969. Tallinn, 2002, 16

<sup>46</sup> Karjahärm, T. ja Luts, H. Kultuurigenotsiid Eestis. Kunstnikud ja muusikud 1940–1953, 151

<sup>47</sup> Kangilaski, J. Okupeeritud Eesti kunstiajaloo periodiseerimine. Ajalooline Ajakiri, 1, Tallinn, 1999, 27

cultural elite began. The notorious 8<sup>th</sup> full assembly of the Communist Party of Estonia on March 21-26, 1950 was the basis for repressions against people engaged in cultural activities.

Kuuli describes what followed the assembly: "Firstly, on the basis of the assembly decision the leaders of the Estonian SSR was replaced. One of the main things the leaders were criticised for was not fighting hard enough against "civil nationalism" and choosing the wrong staff. Hans Kruus and Nigol Andresen were evicted from the party and imprisoned. After the eighth assembly the campaign to destroy the remnants of the cultural elite gained pace. The governing bodies of the academy of sciences and institutions of higher education were almost entirely replaced, and researchers and academic staff were massively laid off. Members of creative societies were evicted by dozens.<sup>48</sup>

This period also saw the wholesale cleansing of the staff of the cultural institutions, and their replacement by cultural officials appointed by the communist party. Those of the elite from the previous era who hadn't been able to escape during the war were removed from the key positions of cultural life, and often destroyed psychologically, sometimes physically.

Estonian culture as a whole was thoroughly devastated during the high period of Stalinism. The general objective of the Kremlin was to make the European national culture extinct and to replace it with Russian Soviet culture. The achievement of this objective was interrupted by the period of the thaw that followed Stalin's death.<sup>49</sup>

Eduard Shils, in his research published at the end of the 1950s, compared Italian Fascism, German National-Socialism, Russian Bolshevism, French and Italian communism and other radical political movements, and reached the conclusion that ideology as the tool of power of the extremist political powers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was characterised by its "intellectual viciousness".

Shils notes that ideology demands that politics must be controlled by a comprehensive set of beliefs that ignores all other considerations. Ideology is totalistic, as, in the spirit of its dictations, it aspires to govern all social and cultural

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<sup>48</sup> Kuuli, O. Sula ja hallad Eesti NSV-s. Kultuuripoliitikast aastail 1953–1969. Tallinn, 2002, 22

<sup>49</sup> Karjahärm, T. ja Luts, H. Kultuurigenotsiid Eestis. Kunstnikud ja muusikud 1940–1953, 152

life; ideology is “doctrinal”, as it proclaims the total and exclusive political truth that rules it; ideology is dualistic, as anyone who is not with me is automatically against me; ideology is alienative, as it mistrusts, attacks and subverts existing institutions; ideology is futuristic, as it is employed for the utopian culmination of history.<sup>50</sup>

With the help of Shils’ analysis the mechanisms that shaped mental culture into an instrument for implementing power can clearly be observed. The relationship of ideology to culture was aggressive, subordinating and filtrating from the side of ideology.<sup>51</sup>

#### ***4. Sub-period. 1953 – 1969: “The Thaw and Hoarfrosts”***

The era of liberalisation that followed Stalin's death was described for the first time with the word *thaw* by Ilja Ehrenburg, who in 1954 gave this title to his novel. Most of all, this literary expression noted a change in people’s attitude towards life and their way of thinking; but it also tackled the events and processes that caused the changes. For example, the weakening of the NKVD (the People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs), the freeing of many political prisoners, criticism of Stalin and his actions, and a re-evaluation of the current attitudes. Through the creative people the *thaw* was also echoed in cultural life.<sup>52</sup>

Among other things, the thaw in Estonia was also expressed in the re-evaluation of a kind of the culture of the independence era. At the beginning of the 1950s the official ideology had portrayed the independent Estonian state as a whole and the culture from 1920s to 1940 in a totally negative light, calling it a deteriorated civil culture. In the middle of the 1950s the protest of the intelligentsia against this standpoint became evident in discussions about the contents of history and literature textbooks and the entire cultural life and artistic freedom in general. The attitude towards the intelligentsia of the independent time was somewhat corrected. But all these developments still saw setbacks.

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<sup>50</sup> Lepik, P. Nõukogude kultuur ja ideoloogia. – Acta Humaniora A19, TPÜ toimetised. Eesti Kultuur 1940. aastate teisel poolel. Toim K. Kirme ja M. Kirme. Tallinn 2001, lk. 9–16.

<sup>51</sup> Lepik, P. Nõukogude kultuur ja ideoloogia, 14

<sup>52</sup> Kuuli, O. Sula ja hallad Eesti NSV-s. Kultuuripoliitikast aastail 1953–1969. Tallinn, 2002, 154



Historians almost unanimously agree that from 1956 onwards a change in economic and political life towards normalisation may be detected. In cultural life this began in 1955 when the so-called exaggerations in architecture were condemned, opening the path to functionalism, and later to the spread of the ideology of design in art.<sup>53</sup>

Kuuli says that the high point of the thaw arrived with the 20<sup>th</sup> congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, where Nikita Khrushchev made a speech "On the Personality Cult and its Consequences" behind closed doors.

But the liberalisation that followed was shattered by the bloody suppression of the Hungarian uprising in the autumn of 1956. The thaw was replaced by hoarfrosts. The "excessive criticism" of the Stalinist era and the Soviet system was revised and in 1957 the party, lead by Khrushchev again, demanded that the creative intelligentsia stress the achievements of Soviet society.<sup>54</sup>

Thus liberal moods and stricter ideological attempts to put pressure on cultural life alternated continually until the end of the regime. But as the total machine of repressions built by Stalin was constrained and the punishment regime softened, the popular fear of the KGB weakened, and during this period cracks appeared in the totalitarian system, easing the final collapse of the system. Kuuli notes that the violent suppression of democracy in Czechoslovakia in the August of 1968 may be considered the end of the thaw, after which fear of democracy and reforms broadened among the Communist Party leaders and that is why ideological pressure on culture increased.<sup>55</sup>

##### ***5. Sub-period. 1969 - 1987: "Stagnation"***

After the Soviet troops rolled into Czechoslovakia Estonian hopes of becoming free were replaced by tolerance and stagnation.

The free-time activities of the Homo Sovieticus in Estonia were guided by ideologically educated cultural workers who were trained at the Viljandi School of Culture, and after 1966 at the Tallinn Pedagogical Institute. As the ideological slogan

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<sup>53</sup> Kangilaski, J. Okupeeritud Eesti kunstiajaloo periodiseerimine. Ajalooline Ajakiri, 1, Tallinn, 1999, 27

<sup>54</sup> Kuuli, O. Sula ja hallad Eesti NSV-s. Kultuuripoliitikast aastail 1953-1969. Tallinn, 2002, 156

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 157

of the cultural policy of the Soviet era was “national in form but socialist in content”, cultural workers did not hesitate to develop traditional national ethnic forms of culture (choir music, folk dancing, drama) despite the heavy weight of atheism and Soviet-related courses in their education. All this took place within the framework of public organisation and financing, but also under strict censorship. Culture and sports were available to a large part of the nation, thus fulfilling their role in rooting the identity of a unified homogeneous Soviet person.

The role of professional art was still to support the existing system. Aesthetic and genre canons were set in art, which were to suit the moral code of Soviet man as a builder of communism (socialist realism in art, the Stansilavski system in drama and Russian classical ballet, heroic and bathetic forms in film and music). In criticism there was a sharp opposition to the deteriorating Western and rotting corrupt culture of capitalism. The censorship body GLAVLIT kept an eye on the entire cultural life and means of mass communication. A covert hierarchical system was also imposed in cultural policy, and a privileged creative class loyal to the system – a characteristic of Soviet society – was established.

Cultural institutions, financed by the state and accessible to everyone, functioned paradoxically enough as a covert channel for national resistance. A unique sphere of communication, the lack of alternative media, and a network of cultural institutions subjected to a common goal still at times enabled strong resistance to flourish under the cover of the official ideology. Thanks to the cracks made during the thaw, influences from the free world penetrated through the iron curtain. In literature and arts a dangerous balancing act on the permitted limits was performed and theatre became a forum for free thought, because the audience expected and looked for hidden messages, read between the lines, and understood the keywords.

Covert resistance culminated at the song festivals held every five years, which celebrated the strength of national identity and reflected the growing desire for independence. All this took place despite the policy of russification (the share of ethnic Estonians within the population decreased from 88% in 1938 to 61.5% in 1989) and the attempt to assimilate the nation into a united mass of Soviet people. The self-

evident fundamentals of the cultural policy of the Soviet authorities were hierarchies and a strong centralisation, which tried to create a common consciousness and common way of life, reaching for the ideal of a monolithic society.<sup>56</sup>

#### **6. Sub-period. 1987 - 1990: "The Collapse of the Regime"**

The all-round economic and political collapse of the regime in 1987-1991 may be considered as one of the sub-periods. The events in the Hirvepark on August 23, 1987 denoted a major psychological break – the disappearance or lessening of the general fear. The nationwide campaign against phosphate mining also played a similar psychological role, breaking the fear of resistance.<sup>57</sup>

It is important to note that the dominant features of the era were radical political changes, and there was no cultural policy in the usual sense of the word. However, the entire political process drawn from the resistance of a nation without the levers of power and the will to change revolved around cultural policy in its essence. This period may be considered a second era of awakening, when artistic, cultural and intellectual initiatives were relatively important.

The direct signal for liberation was given by the joint plenum of Estonia's creative unions in April 1988, which expressed *de facto* no confidence in the political leaders of the Estonian SSR. A few months later the "Singing Revolution", referred to as the first stage of liberation, began. Music and communal singing inspired and united the popular movement towards independence. During the Tallinn Old Town Days festival spontaneous night-time song celebrations began, where thousands of blue, black and white flags were flown.<sup>58</sup>

It can be said that culture and the arts were the principal levers of political interests in 1988-1991 and the first motives of political and social progress.

When independence was achieved and the organisation of political institutions and the practical work of making the transition to a market economy began in independent Estonia, the intellectuals and people involved in culture, who

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<sup>56</sup> Lagerspetz, M. *Institutsionaliseeritus ja avatus kultuuripoliitikas*. *Looming*, 7, 2003, 1227-1228

<sup>57</sup> Tarvel, E. *Eesti lähiajaloo periodiseerimisest*. – *Ajaloolise töö otsinguil*. 20.01.1999 Tallinnas toimunud konverentsi „Eesti lähiajaloo allikakriitilisi probleeme” kogumik. Toim E. Tarvel. Tallinn, 1999, 105-116

<sup>58</sup> Lagerspetz, M. ja Raud, R. *Eesti Kultuuripoliitika Raport*. 1995, 157

so far had played a central role, had to withdraw, as the economic and political elite came forth.

#### **IV period. 1991-1995: "Post-totalitarian Lack of Paradigm"**

The transition period "Post-totalitarian Lack of Paradigm" could be observed in the years 1991-1995. Claus Offe, who has described post-socialist societies, has described the events as a triple-transformation, when the political, economic and national identity change simultaneously. The most important priority of this period – to legitimise the new economy and the political institutions with the help of a new cultural (national) identity which would be common for all members of the nation – was not congruent with the deepening of the cultural dispersion. The paradox became clearly evident that a democratic and independent social system supports national identity less than does covert resistance to a repressive regime, when the survival strategy of the Estonians against the Russification policy consisted of uniting around cultural institutions.<sup>59</sup>

People also felt intensely the lack of a thorough ideology that they could relate to, either for or against. In 1994 art critic Ants Juske wrote: "/---/ we are still not used to living without an ideology. Now that the time of national ideology is about to end, our cultural people are grasped by a "puberty ideology". The latter is closely connected to the ideology of the time of socialism and the singing revolution. /---/ Its is the attitude from way back that there certainly must be an ideology that holds together the entire culture or nation. /---/ On the other hand, we see that a new generation is happily growing up, who is /---/ little interested in whether these things have the word "national" or "socialist" in front, most of them are not interested in the word "market" either. To sum it up, we have already reached a new paradigm, where the word "nationalism" carries a different quality and Hasso Krull or Raoul Kurvitz will not be helped by Mikk Mikiver's distressed national or socialist timbre."<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Lagerspetz, M. Estonian identity entering the post-modern world: The role of national culture. – Management of Change: Cultural Aspects of European Enlargement and the Enlargement of the EU. Graz: KulturKontakt, 1998, 55–59

<sup>60</sup> Juske, A. Mure-ideoloogia. Looming, 4, 1994, 559–560

An important phenomenon characterising this era is the initial shock and inability of the cultural figures of the era to adapt in the face of the transformation from a fully financed social system to a market economy, although state support for cultural institutions continued. The author would also like to list some common traits of cultural policy of post-socialist societies that are clearly represented in Estonia too: the lack of any monitoring and analysis system for cultural policy; inconsistent legislation concerning culture; monopolist cultural institutions benefiting from state support and the low capability of the third sector; the sale of cinemas and other cultural buildings from the Soviet era; a decline in prestige resulting from all this; and the onslaught of commerce.

It can also be said that the unique network of cultural institutions created during the era of Päts and made rigidly hierarchical during the Soviet times became disorientated, where previously it had provided cultural life with a create impulse. The prestige of stable networks and hierarchies in culture fell apart, affected by new phenomena, which led to a weakening of the invisible grip of social regulation in the *Foucauldian* sense. In the fertile conditions of these complicated times new directions and forms of art such as contemporary dance were able to emerge and spread as a result of free initiative and various festivals. The newcomers brought their initiatives to life, and this was democratically supported by the newly opened Cultural Endowment.

The most important steps in cultural policy during this critical time were the restoration of the work of the Cultural Endowment in 1994 and the compilation of a report concerning cultural policy, and the comments of the experts of the Council of Europe on this report. The Cultural Endowment became an efficient reviver of cultural processes during this period, supporting initiatives outside the state institutions, until in 1996 on the initiative of Jaak Allik "The Fundamentals of the Estonian Cultural Policy" were developed, and in 1998 the Riigikogu, the parliament of Estonia, approved them.

## V period. 1995-2007: "Elitist-preservationist Cultural Policy"

The period of the elitism-preservationist cultural policy provisionally began in 1995, when minister Jaak Allik compared the network of state cultural institutions that Estonia had as legacies from the past to Egyptian pyramids, which in their uniqueness require preservation. This may be considered a cultural policy aimed at retaining the former models.<sup>61</sup> With such an elitist-preservationist cultural policy Jaak Allik, who was minister of culture 1995–1999, could create something of a rational order in the confusion of a transition society, and also word the development plan for culture in the "The Fundamentals of the Estonian Cultural Policy" approved by the Riigikogu in 1998. Allik led cultural life back to traditional models of preserving and establishing state cultural institutions. Often this resulted in a cultural policy superseding new initiatives, not funding new projects or only minimally funding them. This was supported by right-wing rhetoric about market regulation and the vitality of different art projects. The resources of the Cultural Endowment were also directed to cover the costs within the administration of the ministry, which again cut the sums to be given to initiatives coming from institutions on the outside.

The idea of preserving cultural institutions as the principal objective of the state cultural policy has also been shared by subsequent ministers of culture, although none of them have been involved in cultural policy as systematically as Jaak Allik in 1995–1999.

After Allik the position of minister of culture was for a long time held by the Reform Party, who tried to continue the same policy under Signe Kivi (1999–2002), Margus Allikmaa (2002–2003) and Urmas Paet (2003–2005). Those who implement this model are characterised by the desire to centralise the activities of the Cultural Endowment, the desire not to create the links favoured by the state between culture and business, and the lack of a systematic analysis of cultural policy.

It is important to note that both principles, preservation and elitism, are justified within strict limits; institutions creating national identity must be

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<sup>61</sup> Lagerspetz, M. *Institutsionaliseeritus ja avatus kultuuripoliitikas*. Looming, 7, 2003, 1227

maintained and professional culture is equally important. Thus both trends are still important and valuable. The most important keywords of Raivo Palmaru, minister of culture 2005-2007, are the mapping of the analysis and fields of creative industries. However, it is too early to tell whether this could be a new beginning for a new model of cultural policy.

## CONCLUSION

Estonian cultural policy reflects the official state cultural policy of the society. As the country is young, it has only a short experience of a purposeful cultural policy.

Thus far cultural life in Estonia has been organised by the state, partly through a strong view of the function of cultural policy which led to an ethnic-nationalist cultural policy set by president Pääts, and partly through the hierarchical cultural policy which perpetuated cultural institutions that followed during the Soviet times. Both were guided and led from above.

The ideological content of the first of these was nationalism, which in the middle of the 1930s was understandable as an interpretation of culture, as Estonians had managed to set up their own state, which needed to be built up both economically and culturally. Before independent statehood the status of the Estonian was third-class, after the Baltic-Germans and the Russians. The national identity, which had just been created in a nation-state and had just achieved its right to life, had to be supported.

The pro-totalitarian cultural policy led from above by Konstantin Pääts shaped the national identity and was expressed in the state's support for all forms of professional and folk culture, and at that time most of the institutions subsidising culture that function today were established.

The objective of Pääts' ideology was a homogeneous and strong nation state, so that the feeling of nationalism that started during the awakening era would become rooted in both the towns and the countryside. The cultural policy model this created and its network of institutions also suited the Soviet authorities, who adopted it. The

staff of the institutions were replaced by ideologically educated and loyal employees. The system continued to function purposefully, though the political and ideological content saw a radical change and the measures used were far from the soft follow-up censorship of the silent era.

The new content came from the manipulative rhetoric of a totalitarian state shaping the Homo Sovieticus, the actual expression of which resulted in a hierarchy of culture and censorship. This was implemented through a deeper institutionalisation and centralisation. As a sub-trend of the new ideology, the national psychology was retained as a form of covert resistance, which was also one of the key factors in attaining re-independence.

In connection with the appearance of a new world order, an elitist mentality drawn from the laws of the liberal market economy was added to the cultural policy and its earlier national and hierarchical institutions. In the strong driving winds of economic liberalism the viewpoint began to prevail that generally culture must be able to manage itself, and that the state should deal with professional culture alone. The current Estonian interpretation of culture and the corresponding policy can be described as preservationist and elitist. It is true that both principles, the preservationist and elitism are justified in narrow terms. Obviously institutions creating national identity have to be looked after and it is understandable that professional culture be supported as key factor in the competitiveness of the state.

At present the state cultural policy conceives culture as the activities of established cultural institutions whose principal role is to support national identity, not as an abundant collection of subcultures where activities that synthesise national and global culture in viable subcultures may also renew and strengthen the common cultural consciousness of the nation. Cultural policy aims to retain a system developed to shape a monolithic and homogeneous society, although we are dealing now not with a homogeneous, but with a heterogeneous multicultural society, which has its own nation state.

At the same time, as cultural policy has never gained as much attention as economic and social policy at the general elections, Estonian society lacks a widely-



discussed concise platform, idea or ideology of what the future vision of the cultural policy of Estonia should be. Quoting Tõnu Seienthal:

[...] the current generation of educated people, who for a good cause have deserted the hollow-sounding Soviet slogan of people's friendship and brotherhood, have not been able, while peeking into Brussels, to formulate a clear ideology of national identity for themselves. But it is very necessary, in order to end the manipulations where "the requirements of the European Union" or "Russia's interests" are manoeuvred into the term "Estonia's interests."<sup>62</sup>

Estonian cultural policy has not yet looked for an answer to the question of whether the model of cultural policy led from above created 70-80 years ago, which stemmed from the creation of national policy and took root during the Soviet time with a tight institutional network, is satisfactory and whether it offers enough opportunities for sustainable development in Estonia's changed context, in the common European space, in a world that is open and without borders.

Egge Kulbok-Lattik,

07th of September, 2008

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<sup>62</sup> Heinapuu, A. Hõimusolidaarsus aitab jääda iseendaks. – Horisondi lisaväljaanne 2007, Fenno-Ugria, MTÜ Loodusajakiri, Tallinn, 2007,1

## II

### **ESTONIAN COMMUNITY HOUSES AS LOCAL TOOLS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ESTONIAN CULTURAL POLICY**

by

Egge Kulbok-Lattik, 2012

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ARTICLES

# Estonian Community Houses as Local Tools for the Development of Estonian Cultural Policy

*Egge Kulbok-Lattik*

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PEER REVIEWED ARTICLE

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## 1. Introduction

This article will analyse the foundation and development of society<sup>1</sup> and community<sup>2</sup> houses from the second half of the 19th century until the last years of the first period of Estonian statehood in the end of 1930s.

Society houses (later community houses) were founded on the initiative of ordinary people and rural intelligentsia all over Estonia since the 1880s, with the aim to provide space for cultural activities of choirs, orchestras, theatre groups and libraries; for common festivities and leisure time of the local communities in villages (also in towns). By offering possibilities and space for self-expression and feeling of togetherness of ordinary people, society houses were part of the emergence of Estonian nation-building and a public sphere, where new ideologies and a system of values were channelled among the population of rural areas on the eve of a change in the historical framework of Estonia – from an agrarian society to a capitalist economy.

Preconditions and historical reasons for establishing community houses, just as many other spontaneous and free initiatives of the second half of the 19th century, lie in several socio-political changes in Europe, e.g. the spread of ideas of enlightenment and national awakening and progressing



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capitalist economy. In Estonia these processes appeared as the expressions of society and temperance movements of the whole population, guided by the emerging national elite. The endeavour for common activities and the vision and actions of outstanding individuals were in its essence cultural political (Kulbok 2008), with the objective of moving towards independent existence and national self-determination, breaking away from the patronage of the Baltic-German nobility and the Russian Empire. (see Karu 1985; Raun 2003; Jansen 2004; Karjahärm and Sirk 1997; Laar 2006; Zetterberg 2009)

During the first period of Estonian independent state (1918–1940), with the adoption of the Law of the Community Houses in 1931, the network of community houses was set up by the state. According to §1 of the Law of the Community Houses (1931), the aim of a community house is to be a centre for cultural and free educational activities and a home for educational and social associations in its area of operation. §2 states that in order to meet the objectives mentioned in §1, community houses should have rooms for libraries, reading rooms, studios, rooms for lectures and public meetings, rooms for singing, musical and theatrical rehearsals as well as rooms for physical training and other educational activities. (RT 53, 1931)

The coordinated foundation and development of a network of community centres is linked to Aleksander Kurvits<sup>3</sup>, whose letter to the Minister of Education (18 May 1927) provides arguments in support of the idea of setting up the network of community houses. In 1935 Kurvits wrote:

The most important task of community houses is to be a location for public festivities and meetings. /.../ Singing, music and theatre plays in particular contribute to the creation of feelings of togetherness and solidarity. That is why the most important task of community houses is to offer good conditions for activities which enable the full spread of feelings of togetherness and solidarity... (Kurvits 1935: 3–4)

According to Uljas, there were more than 400 community houses by 1938 in Estonia (Uljas 1990:19).

The main aims of this article are as follows: firstly, to examine socio-historical preconditions and reasons for establishing Estonian society houses in the second half of the 19th century and to describe how they contributed to the national self-determination and the creation of a public sphere in Estonia, connections between cultural practices and political mobilisation will be described. Secondly, to investigate how society houses developed and became community houses within the formation of state-subsidized network - as an instrument of cultural policy during different cultural policy periods in Estonia and so the historical formation of Estonian cultural policy will be reviewed.

Literature on cultural policy has various takes on the concept. In a broad sense, cultural policy deals with the class of interests, history of ideas, institutional struggles and power relations and the circulation of symbolic meaning in society. In a limited perspective, cultural policies are seen as tools for the administration of arts. (McGuigan 1996: 1) This article will investigate both: the historical formation of Estonian cultural policy, using the expanded concept of cultural policy (Eräsaari 2009: 64) as “epistemic and interpretative approach between cultural analysis and cultural policy, including historical reflection”. In order to examine how community houses developed as an instrument of cultural policy during different cultural policy periods in Estonia, I will also use the more specific approach to cultural policy – as a tool for the administration of arts and cultural practices.

## 2. Theoretical concepts

### 2.1. From a public square to nation-building, from a public sphere to a nation state

One of the main developments in the societies and intellectual life of Europe in the 19th century was the increasing involvement of people in public life. Various initiatives in the framework of society movement based on the free will of people expressed the growing strive towards freeing the society from the strict limitations of corporative or class society. Such initiatives were influenced by the ideas of Enlightenment, French Revolution about equal human rights and the newly emerging national consciousness (see Karu 1985; Jansen 2004; Aarelaid 1996; Karjahärm & Sirk 1997; Laar 2006).

Similarly to European societies, Estonian cultural and public sphere also evolved as a result of combined activities: Estonian newspapers, society and temperance movements and cultural practices showed the growing involvement of Estonian people in public life. Important preconditions for these developments were wide-spread literacy among Estonians and agrarian reforms of the 19th century which had a direct impact on the majority of the population on the Estonian territory as peasants became land owners. As a result of the Russian central power and the socio-economic situation dominated by the Baltic German nobility, the elite of the 'awakened peasants' was highly motivated to build up their cultural and public sphere with the intention to improve the status of Estonians in society. (see Karu 1985; Aarelaid 1996; Raun 2003; Jansen 2004; Karjahärm & Sirk 1997; Laar 2006; Zetterberg 2009)

The concept of public sphere has a long and complex genealogy: Max Weber sees cultural change revolve around different parts of social life (Schroeder 1992: 23), many theorists and thinkers (like Arendt (1959), Gramsci (1957), Williams (1958), Bourdieu (1993), Foucault (1984) etc) have conceptualised public sphere in different ways. Jürgen Habermas formulated the whole concept of public sphere with its historical development in his analysis "The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere" (1962). Habermas describes how the forming publicness starts to mediate between the state and private individuals and how the public sphere involves the self-cultivation project of bourgeoisie (Habermas 1989). Crossley and Roberts have summarized that "Habermas describes public sphere as a bourgeois public in which "large number of middle class men, qua private individuals, came together to engage in reasoned argument over key issues of mutual interest and concern, creating a space in which both new ideas and practices and discipline of rational public debate were cultivated in the late 18–19th centuries in Germany, France and Britain" (Crossley and Roberts 2004:2).

Hence, to understand the developing public sphere in Estonian newspapers and discussions held in the circles of new Estonian national elite among their personal friendships and social salons (see Laar 2006:343–354), the use of Habermasian concept of public sphere is clearly relevant. As Habermas reveals the connection between the public sphere and political mobilisation, it is possible to examine the role of forming Estonian public sphere as a bridge between the emerging cultural and national self-determination and the political demands for equal rights in society.

However, since this article aims to describe the foundation of Estonian society and community houses as emerging cultural institutions contributing to the development of Estonian public sphere, some of the aspects, which express their ambivalent nature, need more precise conceptualisation. In the context of Estonian cultural policy research, Bakhtin's<sup>4</sup> concept of *public square* opens the

essence of society and community houses, which were to be a public places for festivities and cultural practices of ordinary people living in villages and towns. Bakhtin's concept also enables to theorise cultural practices cultivated in the society and community houses as the Estonian popular or folk-culture<sup>5</sup>.

Bakhtin's concept of *public square* is connected to the ancient and medieval European popular culture of masses – garish, diverse, and playful, which flourished on public squares and marketplaces, during the festivities of ordinary people, which by nature was ambivalent, and strongly democratic and rebellious. (See Lotman<sup>6</sup> 1987:5-14; Bahtin 1987:185-192) Lotman explains that in the Bakhtin's concept of *public square*, the „carnevalesque“ laughter culture of people with its ambivalent and creative coexistence of opposite dispositions of culture reveals: where high and low, sinner and sacred, terrific and fun, dirty and clean exchange places and balance each other. Its quintessence for Bakhtin appears in the tradition of medieval carnival, where the popular culture of masses opposes and “cancels the dominant cultural mindset of rational dogmatic antitheses of binary constraints” (Lotman 1987:5-14).

A similar idea was expressed by Michael Gardiner<sup>7</sup> (2004: 28–48), who analysed the Habermasian concept of “public sphere” and Bakhtin's ideas about “public square”, and has said that, “for Bakhtin the *public sphere* in European history never confirmed the realm of sober and virtuous debate of the sort that Habermas claims to have identified in “The Structural Transformation”. Gardiner claims that Bakhtin's marketplace and public square in early modern times “were witness to a tumultuous intermingling of diverse social groups and widely divergent styles and idioms of language, ranging from the serious to the ironic and the playful” (Gardiner 2004:38). In Bakhtin's view, the dialogic tradition provides a vital counterweight to an abstract Enlightenment version of truth, which “knows only a single mode of a cognitive interaction among consciousnesses”, that real public sphere was always marked by pluralistic and polyphonic, conflictual situation of interactions. (Gardiner 2004: 36 and Bakhtin, 1984a: 81 cited in Gardiner 2004)

Examining Estonian society and community houses, Bakhtin's concept of *public square* enables to explain the ambivalent nature of community houses which appeared during several historical eras since they were founded. It is important to remember that since the 1880s society houses were built under the conditions of reactionary politics of Russian Empire, where all other cultural initiatives except the temperance movement were forbidden. Therefore, Bakhtin's *public square* as a concept helps to discover the polyphony of complex interactions and voices, including the hidden intentions and resistance of Estonians against the suppressive regime. As in the framework of temperance movement, traditional cultural practices were continued (choirs, orchestras, theatre plays, etc), Estonians could diligently sing songs to praise the Tsar, whilst continuing to express their feelings towards their home and country. Bakhtin's concept of *public square* enables to explain the ambivalent essence of Estonian community houses as party-places for local communities without open political intentions, with the most important task to be a location for public festivities, meetings and cultural practices where people shared joy, pleasure and feelings of togetherness and solidarity and at the same time society and community houses contributed to the increasing national consciousness and identity.

According to the scholars of Estonian nation-building (e. g. Raun 2003; Jansen 2004; Aarelaid 1996; Karjahärm & Sirk 1997; Laar 2006), in the beginning of the national movement, the Estonian national aspirations were mainly connected with cultural goals, however, with time the national

movement became more and more political, demanding “equal rights” with the ruling Baltic-German nobility with regard to participation in running local affairs. Hence, open discussions in the newspapers, political debates and activities among the Estonian elite who guided the political and social movements are theorised with the Habermasian *public sphere*.

Society and community houses with their cultural practices, theorised within the framework of Bakhtin’s *public square*, supported the process of state-building by bringing the ideas of the Estonian elite to the grass-root level. These two parallel directions of the historical development of culture intertwined with each other and so contributed to the formation of a successful Estonian nation-building movement. The movement started with cultural practices and a shared feeling of togetherness, so reinforcing the basis of national identity and ended with political self-determination. This kind of explanation is coherent with the findings of prominent theorist of nations, Hroch<sup>8</sup>, who empirically develops and demonstrates the concept of a three-stage process of nationalist mobilisation: heightened *cultural* awareness of national distinctiveness among intellectuals and literati, a concept of nationalism as a political programme, mass mobilisation on behalf of this programme. Hroch also shows these phases in relation to other social transformations, especially economic changes. (Hroch 1996).

## 2.2. Society and community houses contributed to the Estonian nation-building

The emergence of Estonian national consciousness is traditionally associated with the spread of Herder’s<sup>9</sup> (1744–1803) ideas, that all people have their own culture and popular spirit *Volksgeist*, and culture as a common identity of folk and nation<sup>10</sup>. Current article aims to examine how society and community houses contributed to the national self-determination and the creation of a public sphere in Estonia (as arguments given above already partly showed). Therefore, the general discourse of the theories of nationalism and the academic discussion – whether the nations are constructed by the elite as modernists<sup>11</sup> claim, or are they an ancient, ethnic, territorial and linguistic phenomena as the primordialist<sup>12</sup> thinkers argue – will be left aside. We can find many convincing arguments from different theories. It is relevant to describe the Estonian nation-building with the results of Hroch’s research which underlines four factors of successful nationalist movements: (1) a strong sense of identity and common historical past within the group; (2) a certain level of vertical mobility (some educated people must come from the non-dominant ethnic group without being assimilated); (3) an increasing level of social communication, including literacy; and (4) a nationally relevant conflict. (Hroch 1996)

The article reveals the connections between the factors of successful Estonian nation-building and community houses, which became the new important places for the development of culture of Estonians, who certainly shared the common historical past within the group (1). Community houses provided space and possibilities for new cultural practices, such as: singing in many-voiced choirs, playing music in brass bands, acting in theatre plays, lending books from libraries and taking part in lectures, as well as having public festivities. Even if these cultural practices were borrowed from Baltic Germans, in the light of postcolonial theories, they had an exceptionally great importance, both in the cultural life, as well as raising educational standards of the country people. Cultural activities in the society houses involved a large number of country people from the whole strata: from the rural intelligentsia, to handicraftsmen and hired farm labours. It also attracted women, married or not, to leave the confines of the family and domestic circle, thus paving the way for the development of the feminist movement. Hence, the society and community houses provided a

certain level of vertical mobility (2), and also served increasing the level of social communication and literacy (3). Estonian ethnologist Ellen Karu points out that despite the high rate of literacy (96, 2 per cent already in 1881) of Estonian country people, the opportunities to take up intellectual pursuits had been extremely limited for centuries for them. The society and temperance movement with their wide range of cultural activities played the most progressive role historically. By building society and community houses, people themselves created the conditions necessary for the development of their culture (Karu 1985:281). Finally, the establishment of society and community houses was based on nationally relevant conflict between Estonians and Baltic Germans (4), with the basic intention to improve the status and suppressed rights of Estonians.

### **2.3. Institutionalised context for constructing national identity – roots of the cultural policy of a nation state**

In order to open up the connection between the nation-building process and formation of Estonian cultural policy, it is necessary to define the concept of national identity. It represents socially constructed phenomena. British scholar Stuart Hall claims that the construction of identity<sup>13</sup> is a process, which works through marking down the differences and symbolic limits, and that identity construction requires the existence of the other. (Hall 1996: 3–4)

Hall (1994) emphasises the role, culture plays in the construction of nations and national identities, describing nations not only as political constructs, but also as ‘*systems of cultural representations*’ (Hall 1994: 200). People are not only citizens by law they also participate in forming the idea of the nation as it is represented in their national culture. “National cultures construct identities by creating meanings of ‘the nation’, with which we can identify; these are contained in stories that are told about the nation, in memories which link its present to its past and in the perceptions of it that are constructed”. (Hall, 1994: 201) Hall claims that a nation is a symbolic community constructed discursively: a national culture is a discourse, a way to construct meanings which influence and organise both our actions and our perceptions of ourselves. Nationality is explained as a narrative (Geertz 1975), a *story* which people tell about themselves in order to lend meaning to their social world. National narratives do not emerge from nowhere and do not operate in a vacuum. They are, rather, produced, reproduced and spread by actors in concrete (institutionalised) contexts. (de Cilla, Reisigl, Wodak 1999)

Here the historical role of the cultural policy of nation-state appears with a primary goal to form and develop an institutionalised context for cultural practices. Since statehood, national identity is a subject of cultural production, reinterpretation and circulation of symbolic meanings of culture, and it is shaped by the tools of cultural policy, or as E. Gellner states it, “the role of the state as the “organism” is to ensure that this literate and unified culture is effectively produced, that the educational product is not shoddy and sub-standard” (Gellner 1994).

Montserrat Guibernau<sup>14</sup> points out the importance of the role “elite culture” plays in construction of the narratives of national culture, as ““elite culture”, by definition, is a high culture with an established language and a substantial body of literature and knowledge”. Guibernay explains that the control of the learning process lies in the hands of scholars and institutions ready to preserve, develop and inculcate the culture upon a diverse population. “Their mission is to achieve a linguistically and culturally homogeneous population able to communicate with each other and to work and live within that culture” (Guibernau 2007:16-19). At the same time Guibernau argues that



“culture-based unity” between the elite and the masses stands at the heart of the conception of a shared national identity. “A common culture legitimizes the existence of the nation and is employed as an argument in favour of social cohesion and unity among all sectors of an otherwise diverse national population” (Guibernau 2007:16-19). Guibernau claims that top-down dissemination of a common culture has to be compensated for by some bottom-up contributions, because through common traditions, symbolism and ritual, elites and masses unite as members of a single nation, which is then placed above and beyond social differences. “By sharing common culture, history, attachment to a particular territory and project for the future, elites and masses come to regard themselves as a community of fate”. (Guibernau 2007:16-19)

Examining the foundation of Estonian society and community houses as the bottom-up initiatives of country people gives a wonderful example of the strength and potential of the grass-root level activities and contribution to the efforts of elite in building up national identity with shared common culture.

### 3. Roots of community houses: historical preconditions for the foundation of society houses in Estonia in the 19th century

#### 3.1. The roots of Estonian community houses lie in the society movement

Th. Nipperdey explains that before the “era of societies, individuals spend most of their lifetime in a “life circle (*Lebenskreis*) designed by home, corporation (guild, nobility) and the church. Breakthrough from such a “life circle” began with the spread of societies and journalism and important factor in this process was literacy, which widened individual’s ability to communicate and to become involved in public affairs. (Jansen 2004:155)

European society movement can already be found from professional and student societies of the Middle Ages as well as from the movements of different religious confessions. In the modern sense, it is possible to follow the society movement since the 18th century Europe, when, especially in Germany, the establishment of reading and music societies, but also societies based on other interests, increased. (Jürjo 2004:115–120) Similar movements flourished in many European countries – enlightening cultural houses in Tsarist Russia, Finland and Sweden as heralds of the springing development of citizenship<sup>15</sup> (see Hackmann, Clark, Alapuro, Tumanova & Aleksandravicius) and settlement houses<sup>16</sup> in England and America which were based on the ideas of Mathew Arnold and Jane Addams. (Bilton 2006:135–150)

Baltic provinces of Tsarist Empire were described by a specific feature – abundance of voluntary organisations – in describing life in the more advanced Governate of Livonia<sup>17</sup> in the second half of the 19th century. This is stated in the Russian and Baltic-German newspapers of the time and by officials of the Tsar. In 1860 *Revalsche Zeitung* stated that associative spirit is the most significant spirit of the era. It was believed that “associative spirit” or “mania for societies was just in the blood of Germans”. (Jansen 2004:153) Baltic-German “associative spirit” was taken over by the elite of indigenous people, Estonians, whose intention was to improve their social status.

The society movement relied on education and the spread of journalism in the Estonian language. Estonians own their widespread literacy to the Baltic-German Estophiles<sup>18</sup> who were influenced by Hamann’s and Herder’s ideas<sup>19</sup>. (Jürjo 2004) Literacy was spread through the network of public

schools developed in the first half of the 19th century, as there had to be a school in every parish. The network of schools and literacy played the most significant role in the general advancing process of the rural population and the whole society in Estonia. (see Andresen 1970, Karjahärm and Sirk 1997; Jansen 2004; Laar 2006; Vahtre 1993; Zetterberg 2009).



*Photo 1. Children in Harju-Jaani parish school; Estonian History Museum, author: Heinrich Tüdermann. Album "Estonica" Ethnographic photos from 1890ies (F 11684/1-321)*



Photo 2. Children in Harju-Jaani parish school; Estonian History Museum, author: Heinrich Tüdermann. Album “Estonica” Ethnographic photos from 1890ies (F 11684/1-321)

In addition to the literacy, the foundation of parish schools in the 1840s and 1850s helped spread a new type of choir–music tradition, as the first choirs were attached to schools. The founders of the choirs were mostly parish clerks–schoolteachers, them being the only people in the countryside with a musical education. The singers in these choirs were teachers and senior pupils of the schools, as well as people of the neighbourhood from all strata of the country people interested in singing (Karu 1985:272). Deep roots of Estonian pre–industrial tradition of music<sup>20</sup> – singing the runo-songs (*regilaul*) as a historical feature of Balto-Finnic culture and its later developments of spreading many-voice German choral singing and orchestra music, played an important role as basis in laying the ground for 19<sup>th</sup> century music societies, the most wide-spread type of societies.

### 3.2. National awakening and the first bloom of society movement

The mid19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the national awakening of Estonians. In 1857, the first Estonian national newspaper “Perno Postimees” was founded and in 1878, Estonian political newspaper “Sakala” started to mobilise masses for active national participation. Name “Estonian folk” was introduced to people who used to call themselves “the country folk”. The leading force in the Estonian national movement was the new elite. Main figures who defined two parallel ideologies of emerging Estonian national movement were: Jakob Hurt (1839-1907) who offered the most explicit vision of culture as the key role for Estonian national identity, and Carl Robert Jakobson (1841-82), the author of *Three Fatherland Speeches*, offered the ideas for political nationalism. These ideas found passionate discussion and compliance of emerging intellectuals, the middle class consisting of civil servants, merchants and artisans, school-teachers, and, increasingly, the ethnic

Estonian clergy (see Kruus 1939; Karjahärm & Sirk 1997; Raun 2001, 2003; Jansen 2004; Laar 2006; Zetterberg 2009).

Since the national awakening in the 1860<sup>21</sup>s, the number of Estonian societies started to grow in the first hand in towns: Vanemuine Men`s Song Society in Tartu (1865); the song societies Revalia (1863), Estonia (1865) and Lootus (Hope; 1877) in Tallinn; Koit (Dawn, 1872) in Viljandi; Ilmarine (1865) in Narva; Endla (1872) in Pärnu; the Kalevipoeg Society (Kalev's Son, after the hero of the Estonian national epic; 1876), mainly known as school society in Rakvere; and others. These societies served as an example for the activities of the choirs in the countryside, where the first officially registered music society was the Jüri Music Society, founded on the basis of the Jüri parish choir near Tallinn in 1866. Soon in 1871 Sangaste- Laatre Choir and Music Society began to work on the basis of fixed rules. (Karu 1985:272)

By the 1870s the choirs had reached a level of development enabling them to arrange concerts and parties on their own. However, it was extremely difficult for them to obtain the permission of the authorities for giving performances. Only an officially registered society with fixed rules guiding its activities could be the avenue for more extensive field of activities. In the 1880s fifteen music societies all over the Estonia<sup>22</sup> had their rules officially registered, more vividly the action was taken in economically more advanced South-Estonia (Karu 1985:274-275, 1993:161).

The first society movement which spread all over the country was a fundraising operation. It was intended for setting up the first Estonian language higher popular school called Estonian Alexander School<sup>23</sup> in the honour of Alexander I. This social movement gave an experience of acting as equal members of a voluntary organisation and so supported the emergence of modern civil society and citizenship among the Estonians.



*Photo 3. Estonian choirs in the end of 19th century; Estonian History Museum, author: Heinrich Tüdermann.  
Album "Estonica" Ethnographic photos from 1890s*



Photo 4. Estonian choirs in the end of 19th century; Estonian History Museum, author: Heinrich Tüdermann. Album "Estonica" Ethnographic photos from 1890s (F 11684/1-321)

The song and drama societies (i.e. theatrical societies) forming "Vanemuine" (1865) laid a foundation for the Estonian national theatre (the first performance was held in 1870) and, following the example of Baltic German song festivals in Riga (1836) and in Tallinn (1857), organised the first<sup>24</sup> Estonian song festival in June 1869. Nearly one thousand singers and musicians and an audience of 12 000 participated in the event. (see Põldmäe 1969, 1976; Karu 1985; Kuutma 1996; Aarelaid 1996; Karjahärm & Sirk 1997; Raun 2001; Jansen 2004; Laar 2006; Zetterberg 2009) The song festival marked a breakthrough in the Estonian national feelings. Consciousness about common identity awoke from the solidarity people shared when singing and playing music together.

The chief organizer of the event, Johann Voldemar Jannsen<sup>25</sup>, who was a well-known writer and journalist, had composed the lyrics to the melody by a Finnish composer, Fredrik Pacius. During the festival that song was presented to a wider public with the result of it later becoming the national anthem of Estonia. According to Kuutma, this major event in the musical as well as cultural political sense outlined the objectives of national advancement, national unity and cultural independence. (Kuutma 1996) The song festival was widely covered in the Estonian newspapers, so it is possible to follow the connections between cultural practices, public sphere and the emergence of first signs of the political mobilisation of Estonians.



Photo 5. Estonian Song festival in Haapsalu in 1896; Estonian History Museum, author: Heinrich Tüdermann. Album "Estonica" Ethnographic photos from 1890s (F 11684/1-321)



Photo 6. Estonian Song festival in Pärnu in 1890s; Estonian History Museum, author: Heinrich Tüdermann. Album "Estonica" Ethnographic photos from 1890ies (F 11684/1-321)

The most significant feature of the societies established with different aims (educational, literature, firemen's, farmers', temperance societies etc) was, that amateur arts began to play a major role within

their activities. Besides singing and playing music, also amateur theatre gained great popularity in the Estonian countryside. Besides the general propagation of drama, the societies took practical steps from the very beginning: they looked for stage directors, obtained drama books and stage properties at the society's expense, and tried to find rooms for performances. Hence, one of the pre-requisites for the societies to function and pursue their cultural aims was the existence of suitable places for meetings and rehearsals. (Karu 1985:276-278) Also educational activities, such as lecturing (about wide range of thematic – agriculture, temperance, history, education and natural sciences) and setting up libraries (which was not easy as tsarist authorities hindered the establishment of library societies in order to control the people's aspiration<sup>26</sup>). Mixing these activities during the parties with programmes: so that there were meetings with speeches first, and drama sketches followed by music numbers and dancing afterwards – these were new cultural practices introduced by societies and differed considerably from the earlier traditional get-togethers of the country people. As Karu puts it, societies introduced new standards – generally associated with town life and parties with programme. The lectures promoted the spreading of modern outlook centred on the natural sciences and dislodging religion and old beliefs of the country people. (Karu 1985:280) Hence, lack of the rooms suitable for parties with artistic programme – with giving performances, concerts and having place for dancing, was one of the major obstacles to social life in the country in general at that time.

In the last decades of 19th century the most important communal buildings in the countryside included churches, pubs, schools and parish government houses that together with the pharmacy, hospital, a few shops and larger dwellings constituted the parish centre. Schoolhouses and parish government houses were best suited for the societies' needs (meetings and concerts). The availability of those rooms depended on local authorities, community board, or the pastor, who often held schoolhouses too sacred for the "sinful society activities", as well as having concerts with secular music in church, and prohibited their use. (Karu 1990:620-622) In order to find a way out, the societies themselves had to rent or begin building suitable rooms – i.e. society houses. The first one was the modern house of the Kanepi Song Society at Kanepi in 1887.





Photo 7. The first society house in Estonia, built by Music Society in Kanepi 1887, from the private collection of E. Karu, used with permission.

In 1890 the music society of Vara-Matjama (Maarja Magdaleena parish) rebuilt an old communal granary into a society house. The 1890s witnessed the building of houses for the voluntary firemen of Jõhvi (1896) and for the music society of Tudulinna (Iisaku parish). Although in the 19th century only a few societies could build their own house (because of the lack of resources and suitable site), the foundations had been laid for the births of a new type of building in Estonian village – the society house, i.e. the cultural centre of the village. (Karu 1985:278)

In 1890 there were 25 Estonian societies and 27 German societies in the Governate of Livonia. In 1900 the number of Estonian societies had grown up to 102, as the number of German societies was 71 in the Estonian part of the territory of Governate of Livonia. (Jansen 2004:176) The activities of Estonian societies were covered in Estonian newspapers widely and with enthusiasm, which indicates that the developing Estonian public sphere already demonstrated the first signs of political demands. This was a warning signal to Baltic-Germans and the officials of Russian Empire. Since the middle of the 1880s different society movements originated from the ideas of Estonian national awakening were repressed by the Russification politics of the tsar Aleksander III. The society movement of Alexander's Schools (using Estonian language and being a more popular school) was ended with force and schools started teaching exclusively in Russian. Estonian newspapers were closed, strict control and censorship was set about establishing new societies. If any detail in a statute of a society referred to the national movement, it was banned. (see Kruus 1939; Raun 2001, 2003, 2009; Karjahärm & Sirk 1997; Jansen 2004; Laar 2006; Zetterberg 2009.) Emerging Estonian *public sphere* was paralyzed but also evolving *public square* was hit hard.

However, under the circumstances of repressions from the state, the society movement continued to expand by transforming into a temperance movement – further fuelled by the social need for frontline force in the battle against the growing number of pubs and drinking. The ideas of temperance had already been introduced to the Estonian society in the beginning of the 19th century

by church and later by the leading figures of Finnish temperance movement. Kreutzwald<sup>27</sup>, due to his work as a doctor<sup>28</sup> in Võru (a small town in Southern Estonia), was very much aware about the lifestyle, health and social problems of Estonians in town and peasantry nearby, and as a result he became one of the leaders of early temperance movement in Estonia. (Gustavson 1980)

### 3.3. Pubs (inns) – arena of egalitarian *public square* of peasantry and temperance movement

Inns and pubs were popular and traditional meeting places in Estonia already in the 18th century. The traditional celebrations mostly took place in the farmsteads or in the open air meeting places of the villages (youth dancing, swinging) during summertime but people (mainly men but also women) also gathered in inns, traditionally on Thursdays or on Sundays after going to the church. Pubs were not just places for drinking alcohol and having fun as public square, but they were also important spaces for the Estonian public sphere in rural areas where peasants exchanged news and discussed important social matters (for instance wrote letters to the Tsar complaining about the arbitrary of Baltic-German landlords). Pubs became increasingly important as they were used by farmers for trading, hiring servants for coming seasons and spending their leisure time, dancing and having fun. (Karu 1985:62; Zetterberg 2010:228–244; Uljas 1990:8–11)



*Photo 8. Estonians in the pub; Estonian History Museum, author: Heinrich Tüdermann. Album “Estonica” Ethnographic photos from 1890ies (F 11684/1-321). Original: Bagpipe blower, lithography from 1840s, Art Collection of Estonian History Museum, author: Theodor Gebllhaar, (G4157)*

Pubs also expressed the progress of new capitalist economy based on value exchange relations, as commercial institutions and alcohol was a commodity to be bought and sold. (See Rosenzweig 1983) In the 1860s, Estonian peasants began buying farmsteads at free market prices<sup>29</sup> from the estates. By the end of the 19th century, the peasants in Southern Estonia (Livonian province) possessed over 80% and in Northern Estonia (Estonian province) 50% of the available farmland. Some of the farms were rented and farm owners comprised the major economic power in the Estonian society at the time farm owners were also the most active and vital group of people at the time.

(Laur, Pirsko 1998:180) Despite many positive aspects, the growing number of inns and pubs and increasing alcohol consumption also caused social problems among the peasantry. (see Eisen<sup>30</sup> 1914:184).

An organised temperance movement started to fight against pubs. As all other societies were forbidden, temperance societies spread. As a result of the work done by the local school teacher Jüri Tilk<sup>31</sup> for several years, the first Estonian Temperance Society “Täht” [*Star*] was established in Tori<sup>32</sup> in 1889, following the example of similar Finnish societies “Alku” and “Raittiuden Ystävät”. The statute of the society was legally recognised by the authorities of tsarist government and soon it gathered 100 members. By the 1903 more than 50 temperance societies had been established in Estonia, especially in these areas where previous cultural societies had been closed. In addition to anti-drinking propaganda the activities of temperance societies were similar to those of music societies offering amateur art opportunities for singing in choirs, theatre plays, different lectures, organising parties, exhibitions, sell-outs, so they raised funds for their activities. Tea houses or society houses (*seltsimajad*) were built for the activities, but mainly schools or rented rooms were used for meetings. (Karu 1989:29)

In 1900 vodka monopoly was established by the Russian state in Estonia and most pubs (2400) were closed. Only a small part of pubs continued working as alcohol shops owned by the state or as buffets (Vahtre 1997:957–971). This also marked the beginning of moderation of temperance movement. Since 1906, when establishing educational societies became legal again, many people moved away from temperance movement – several temperance societies were closed. It is possible to draw parallels with the analysis of Alasuutari<sup>33</sup> between the impacts of the Finnish temperance movement on people’s way of life and the similar impacts in Estonia. Alasuutari points out the role of the ideology of temperance movement on the state formation and on modern character formation, describing temperance as a civic religion which may have had on people’s way of life on several levels: “First, such social movements restructure the social organisation. As free and equal members of a voluntary organisation, people became citizens, and members of the Finnish nation. Organised into social and political movements, citizens began to make claims to the state. Second, the ideology of a social movement can be seen as a response to social changes. (Alasuutari 1991:182)

As a result of closing the pubs, one of the pillars of public sphere of local communities in countryside – traditionally a church, school and pub – was unbalanced. There was a social demand for more suitable meeting places to fulfil the social needs of local communities as well as for the cultural and educational activities of the societies.

## 4. Modernisation and the foundation of independent state in Estonia in 1918

### 4.1. Engagement with modernity and the second bloom of society movement

Under the still repressive, but weakening Russian empire, the early years of the 20th century provided a unique opportunity for an Estonian engagement with modernity<sup>34</sup>. (Raun 2009:39) The whole society was greatly enlivened by the emergence of a new generation of Estonian politicians<sup>35</sup>. A characteristically Western modern social structure gained ground. The growth of urbanisation among Estonians was especially noteworthy<sup>36</sup>. The general educational and cultural level of the population steadily increased, prosperity increased, and the standard of living improved<sup>37</sup>. New

generations of Estonian students gained confidence from their larger numbers and felt a growing sense of intellectual community (Raun 2009:41). Most famously, the movement of young Estonian intellectuals called “Young Estonia” and its principal ideologist Gustav Suits developed a fundamental aim for cultural nation-building in 1905: “More culture! This is the first condition for the emancipation of ideals and goals. More European culture! Let’s be Estonians, but let’s also become Europeans!” (Raun 2009:41) Estonian *public sphere* developed and flourished during this period: newspapers played an essential part in the Estonians’ social and political awareness. Also the *public square* advanced and grew: in 1905 there were more than 500 societies and associations in Estonia which were very important in involving masses in public life and in the social mobilisation of society (see Karjahärm 1973:628; Aarelaid 1996; Jansen 2004; Laar 2006; Raun 2009; Zetterberg 2009). The foundation of society houses had already started in the second half of the 19th century, but the extensive building of society houses started in the beginning of the 20th century and lasted until the World War I, being most intense from 1905–1914. There were 55 association houses in 1914. (Uljas 1990:9; Karu 1990:624)

However, building society houses in the villages was not an easy process despite the rapidly developing capitalist relations in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Estonia. Even if the money for building was raised through the income from parties, bazaars and out-sells organized by societies and donations of local people, a building site, design plans and builders were still needed. According to Karu, building site was a major problem as there were few farmers who owned land in appropriate areas (in a parish centre, near big roads). As it was common problem to many societies all over the country, it was reflected in several newspapers.

On August 31, 1901, the newspaper *Postimees* wrote in its editorial:

There is no place like home, the Estonians, say. Our people know the value of home. But a real home you need a house of your own. And your own house you can build on your own land. This has taught Estonians the value of land... because land is only basis that a better life can be built upon. If our people strive to improve their lives, our societies should set their aims on getting their own houses. Many societies have been taken aback, because this is not easy to achieve. But nothing comes easy in this world and one’s own house is certainly worth any amount of trouble. (Karu 1990:622-624)

Several Estonian societies went on with the building process despite the amount of troubles it caused in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and, with the help and money of the local people, put up a number of society houses that are used even today, 100 years later. Such are the society houses at Kanepi, Iisaku, Puhja, Väike-Maarja and some other places<sup>38</sup>. Some society houses were built jointly, e.g. the house of Vaivara farmers’ society and the temperance society Külvaja (1910), the house of Torma firemen’s society. In some places Tori, Vigala, Mõniste etc) communal granaries or taverns were rebuilt into society houses. (*ibid*).



*Photo 9. Firemen's Society House in Otepää, from the private collection of E. Karu, used with permission.*

The building of society houses in the countryside also marked the birth of an architecturally new type of building, which meant a big change in the rather monotonous and traditional appearance of Estonian villages. As all the societies were inclined towards amateur art activities, they all needed a stage, first of all, a hall and a stage, as well as additional rooms (cloakrooms, actors' rooms, etc). The library and reading room also had to be accommodated. Therefore, the society houses differed very little from one another in their interior planning. Their size and external architectural construction differed and varied based on the financial situation of the society and local community. With general advancement in time, bigger and bigger society houses were built, which shows also the growing interest in the activities of societies. (Karu 1990:628-629)

To summarize: by building society and community houses, Estonian people themselves created the conditions necessary for the development of their culture. As Karu claims, building their own houses can be considered one of the most praiseworthy undertaking of the societies, as it created favourable conditions for pursuing society activities for many years to come and at the same time improved greatly Estonians' self-reliance and belief in their own potential. After all, these houses were built with the money and work of the people from the local communities, without any aid from the outside. (Karu 1985:79)

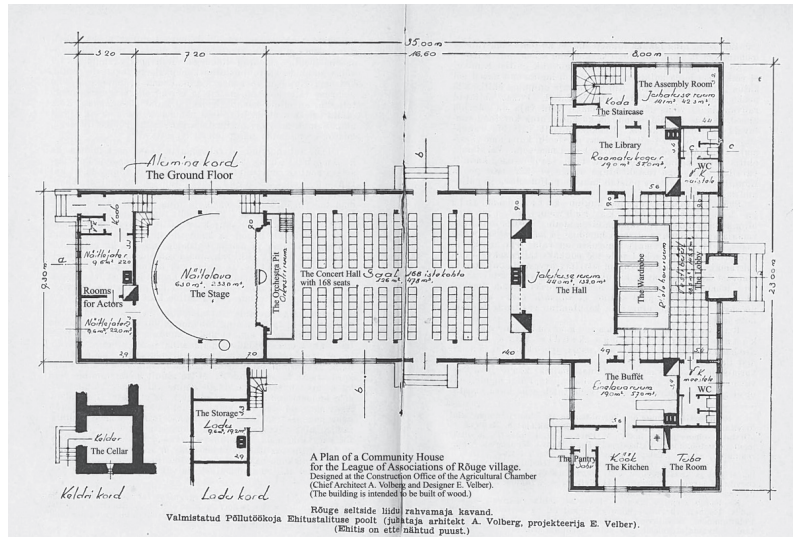


Photo 10. A Plan of community house for the societies of Rõuge Village, Kurvits 1935

From the era of awakening in the 1860s until the independent statehood in 1918, the state-run cultural policy existed only inasmuch as measures implemented by the Russian Empire towards one of the Baltic provinces. This was a reactionary and suppressive cultural policy towards the national awakening of Estonians with the aim to Russify both, the educational system, and the public sphere. Despite this context, the era was also *the Prologue* to the formation of Estonian cultural policy (Kulbok 2008:120–144), the period of foundation of Estonian public and cultural sphere and most of cultural institutions – theatres, artistic associations, community houses and others, which became significant pillars of independent statehood. Compared to the old monarchist imperial states, in Estonia (like in many other new nation-states) activities and institutions were born spontaneously from the bottom-up initiative of people. (Kulbok 2008:127–128).

In order to sum up the process of nation-building in Estonia during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the words of Estonian scholar Ea Jansen could be used: “The spread of journalism, the work of the new national elite who carried and propagated nationalist ideas, and the strong society movement, which reached the grass-root level and guaranteed massive support, were important prerequisites necessary for the creation of an independent state” (Jansen 2004:20). In this article these social interactions are conceptualized as *Habermasian public sphere* and *Bahktin’s public square*. Combining the activities of the national elite and the bottom-up cultural activities of people, the common cultural-based national identity was formed, which became the basis for the political demands.

#### 4.2. Independent republic of Estonia and the formation of (regional) cultural policy

After the World War I in 1914–1918, historic circumstances opened up opportunities for several small nations for self-determination. On 24 February 1918 the independent republic of Estonia was declared with the Manifesto to the Peoples of Estonia. A basic and radical reform – The Land Act – was passed on 10 October 1919 which had a strong impact on forming a relatively egalitarian

society and an economic basis of a new state. The Land Act expropriated almost all of the landed property, which had mostly belonged to the Baltic-German nobility, leaving them just over 50ha each<sup>39</sup>. The land was primarily given to those who had participated in the War of Independence, to set up viable small-holdings. Such a semi-socialist reform was possible mainly because the upper class had hitherto consisted of ethnic others and this had also prevented further stratification among Estonians. According to some foreign observers<sup>40</sup> (see Wieselgren 2002 (1942):22 via Annist 2011:76–79), Estonia was surprisingly egalitarian. Modern ideas were spread among the educated rural population; education- and export-oriented agriculture became the main branches of the Estonian economy in 1930s despite the ongoing urbanisation. (Annist 2011:76–79)

During the first years of independence the society movement developed even further (for example, memorials for the War of Independence were extensively set up), taking in the activities of educational, youth, singing and acting, women's, farmers', writers', fire-fighters' and other societies and institutions. By 1929 there were 1385 associations, dealing with different cultural activities in Estonia in all over the country. Intensive grass-root cultural action needed continuously a special space in villages therefore community houses were actively built. Since the beginning of independent statehood the building of society houses and community houses was usually supported by Cultural Endowment, Regional Endowment or by the Head of the State Capital; the Ministry of Education also offered advice and support.



The community house of the fire brigade society of Paistu parish.  
Opened in 1934.

*Photo 11. Firemen's Society House in Paistu parish, Kurvits 1935.*

In a previous article (Kulbok 2008), I have described the cultural policy of 1918–24 as rather chaotic, and have labelled it *The Years of Quests and Foundation*. It was the time when the cultural life was mostly influenced by initiatives from the grass-root level, not through coordinated organisations. The founding of the Cultural Endowment (*Kultuurkapital*), initiated by the creative intelligentsia<sup>41</sup>, was one of the most innovative acts in cultural policy in the 1920s, the law was completed and

passed in 1925<sup>42</sup>. The beginning of the 1920s was a time when the creative intelligentsia became conscious of and started to express its interests. It is proven by the establishment of professional associations, as these protect special interests. In 1921 the Estonian Singers' Union was formed, in 1922 the Estonian Writers' Union and the Estonian Sports Association, in 1923 the Estonian Artists' Union, and in 1924 the Estonian Academic Society of Musicians. (see Kulbok 2008; Uljas 2005). Cultural policy as a whole in that period was the subject of intensive debate among the intelligentsia and the political elite, where important role was played by Farmers' Party. The Republic of Estonia was a country with relatively educated rural people and egalitarian society during its first period of independence. Emerging community houses clearly expressed the vitality of cultural life in the rural regions of Estonia, and they became significant institutions of regional cultural policy.

## 5. Community houses as local actors

### 5.1. Network of community houses in 1930ies

The coordinated establishment and development of a network of community houses is linked to Aleksander Kurvits<sup>43</sup>, a state official, whose letter to the Minister of Education (18 May 1928) included the idea of setting up the network<sup>44</sup> of community houses and presented arguments and principles on how to organise state subsidies for supporting the establishment of community houses. Kurvits's ideas became the basis for the strategic planning of the network, and in 1929 a draft of the "Law about Public Community Houses" ("*Avalikkude rahvamajade seaduse eelnõu*") was sent out.

The draft received criticism from the local municipalities who were assigned to take on their shoulders the financing and construction of community houses. In a letter from the Union of the Rural Municipalities of Estonia it was pointed out that, "It can hardly be expected that if the responsibilities for the constructing and maintenance of community houses were to be given to the local municipalities, it would enforce the self-initiative actions of associations. On the contrary, it may cause the spread of a negative attitude against top-down policy, like "*krõõnu asi*"<sup>45</sup> or "*herrojen metkuu*" within the free educational and cultural work, which will be the end of free initiatives." (cited in Uljas 1990:17)

Another argument was the lack of money. Externalisation of costs was proposed as a solution: "the idea of self-initiative of local associations, with a reasonable amount of support from the state and local municipalities, should remain the leading principle of the law" (Uljas 1990: 17). After gaining acceptance from most of the critics, the Law of Community Houses<sup>46</sup> was passed in 1931, together with The Regulation of the Construction of Community Houses.

When drawing up the network, the aim of the Ministry of Education was that community houses should be located in the central point of a region, that they should be accessible for the people, and that their activities would reach as far as at least seven kilometres (Kiis 1998:115–120). The construction and maintenance costs of the houses belonging to the network<sup>47</sup> were partly covered by the state budget (low-percentage of state-guaranteed loans were given and also support by Cultural Endowment, Regional Endowment or by Head of the State continued (Uljas 1999:24–25). It was planned that by the year 1937 the approved number of community houses in the network would be 533. By that time there were 222 independent community houses and 235 local schools that were used as community houses. According to the plan, the optimal network of community centres had to develop by 1950.



With these laws and regulations, which legalised the free initiative of people in the local communities, one of the characteristic tools of Estonian cultural policy or, more specifically, the tool for regional cultural policy, was established for many decades. Table 1 shows that community houses were started in all the counties in Estonia (see table 1).

*Table 1. The number of community houses in Estonian counties in the 1930s*

County	Number of community houses accepted in the network	Number of rejected community houses	Number of community houses belonging to the network in 1939
Harjumaa	51	9	53
Järvamaa	30	19	40
Läänemaa	44	12	54
Tartumaa	58	12	66
Virumaa	42	5	45
Võrumaa	37	13	41
Viljandimaa	34	3	38
Pärnumaa	53	10	63
Valgamaa	18	2	19
Petserimaa	18	8	18
Saaremaa	34	7	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>477</b>

Source: *Uljas 1999: 19*

The years 1925–1934 are called the period of establishment of cultural institutions, as it was during this period that the framework for the support of the principal fields of culture (not only for community houses) was created with the help of cultural legislation. Examples of this include the Public Libraries Act in 1924; the University of Tartu Act in 1925; the National Minorities Cultural Autonomy Act in 1925; the Societies and Their Associations Act in 1926, which affected the activities of cultural and educational societies; and the State Applied Art School (*‘Riigi Kunstiõõstuskool’*) Act in 1929. (Kulbok 2008; Uljas 2005) I have distinguished a second period in Estonian cultural policy from 1925 to 1934 and labelled it *The Formation of Purposeful Cultural Policy*: from 1924 the desire to strengthen the purposeful<sup>48</sup> functions of the state began to dominate. In 1928 a committee on cultural policy was formed within the supervisory board of the Cultural Endowment. Largely thanks to the work of this committee the most prolific years of the Cultural Endowment began when many new initiatives were launched<sup>49</sup> in cultural policy. (Kulbok 2008:120–144; Uljas 2005)

According to §1 of the Law of the Community Houses (1931), the aim of a community house is to be a centre for cultural and free educational activities and a home for educational and social associations in its area of operation.

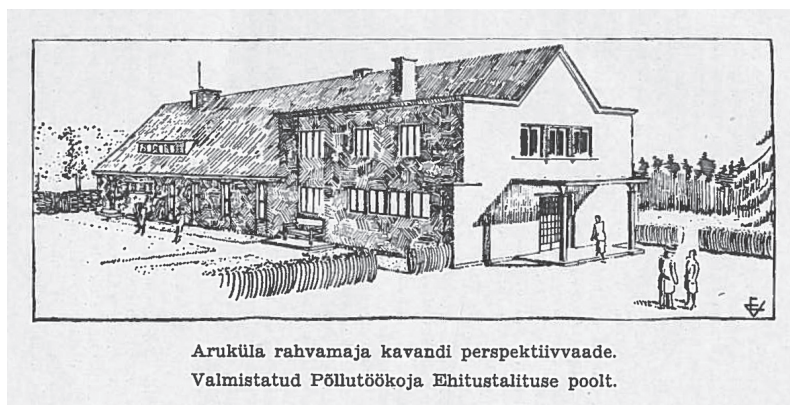
§2 states that in order to fulfil the aims mentioned in §1, community houses should have rooms for libraries, reading rooms, studios, rooms for lectures and public meetings, rooms for singing, musical

and theatrical rehearsals as well as rooms for physical training and for other educational activities. (RT 53, 1931)

In 1935 Kurvits gave a comprehensive overview of his ideas about the role of community houses in a published handbook entitled “Community House.” In his handbook Kurvits gives a detailed description about what should be taken into account in planning, constructing, decorating and managing a community house which has to become a spiritual and intellectual centre of the local community but also an enjoyable place for spending leisure time. He also gave detailed instructions on how to decorate the houses with national crafts and art and how to make the garden around the village hall look beautiful and well-groomed.

Kurvits writes: “The most important task of community houses is to be a location of public festivities and meetings. Looking at the historical development and main aims of our community houses, we can say that many community houses have been built mainly to fulfil that task. Nowadays we also have to admit that community houses are mainly used as party-places and all kinds of educational activities mostly take place in schools, parish houses or elsewhere. /.../ Primarily - singing, music, theatre plays, etc have a great meaning in creation of the feelings of togetherness and solidarity. This is why the most important task of community houses is to offer good conditions for activities which help to spread the feelings of togetherness and solidarity: to offer good conditions for singing and playing music which will elevate and connect the spirit of our citizens, warm up their souls and carry them to higher mental spheres, away from everyday life; theatre plays could reveal the soul and spirit of our nation as well as the spirit of other cultural nations in its artistic perfection, that our festivities and family celebrations could become beautiful and lovely gatherings; that meetings could give knowledge and skills for more appropriate arrangement of life and economy to contribute to national goals.” (Kurvits 1935:3–4)

It is possible to see Kurvits expressing his thoughts here about the essential role of community houses as places for the amateur art activities, joy and leisure time of the local community. Kurvits seems to be clearly aware of the impact of cultural involvement into the national identity and local coherence. Kurvits develops and explains the role and goals of community houses as local actors of cultural policy, showing the wider benefits that cultural participation brings to the people, community, nation and economy in the context of national ideology. Such rhetoric and ideas have meaning and relevance today, as they sound quite often in the rhetoric of the contemporary cultural policy.



A perspective sketch for the community house of Aruküla.  
Designed at the Construction Office of the Agricultural Chamber.

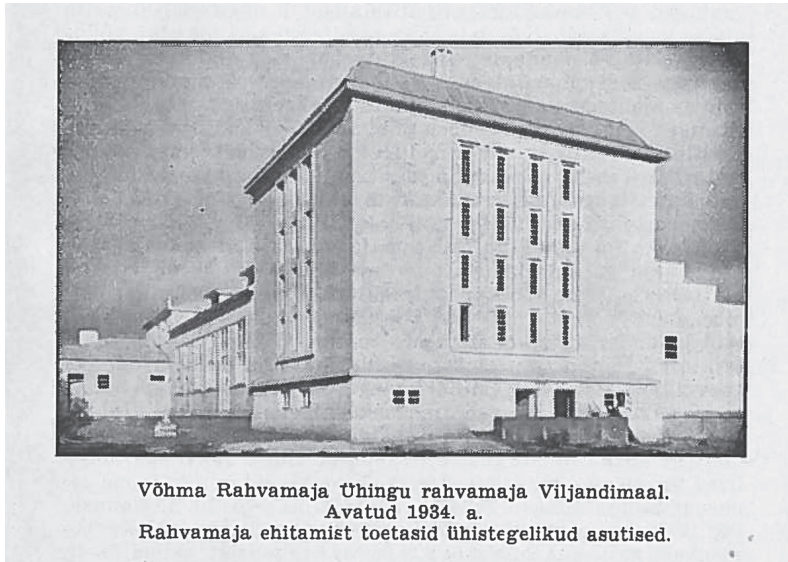
Photo 12. A perspective sketch for the community house of Aruküla, Kurvits 1935.

## 5.2. Network of community houses becomes a tool for top-down cultural policy

Kurvits wrote, “It is important to cultivate and train the understanding of citizens that a community house is also a sacred place, like the church, and that the way of conduct in this house must conform to the recognised rules of civility” (Kurvits 1935:40–62). Kurvits and his civilising concept about the community houses, where Estonians could become cultivated citizens with a strong national identity, combined with the ideas of political establishment of the time. From 1934–1938, during the silent era, Estonia lost its democracy<sup>50</sup> and the Government Propaganda Office (*Riigi Propagandatalitus*) was established in 1934. Political parties were marginalised, ridiculed and blamed for the country’s problems. Demonstrations and meetings were prohibited newspapers that were critical about the government were shut down. Follow-up censorship was set up in the media, literature and theatre. (Kulbok 2008:132) The *public sphere* was muted and silenced.

The ideological basis of the new political power consisted of nationalism, love for one’s country and solidarity, while the basis of political life was to establish professional organisations and mass organisations led by the state, and the basis of the economy was to be private property with a strong government sector. (Elango, Ruusmann, Siilivask 1997:283) The role of the arts (literature, theatre and fine arts) was to implement and propagate national ideals. In architecture, national dignity and strength were to be expressed. The network of community houses was used to circulate these campaigns of national or ethnic culture at the grass-root level. The silent era of Päts<sup>51</sup> brought an essentially pro-totalitarian ideology developed by the national propaganda office, which was implemented with the support of a nationalist/popular cultural policy. The state tried to replace the free initiative characteristic of democracy with enforcement by the state and a corporative structure inspired from above. The regime tried to control a large part of free initiative; especially as it concerned political organizations and trade unions, but also *public square* - societies and associations whose actions took place in the community houses. (See Karjahärm 2002; Kulbok 2008) Step by step, the state attempted to use the network of community houses as local tools for ideological and political purposes. (Kulbok 2008:132) Government Propaganda Office<sup>52</sup> organized powerful nationwide national propaganda events: the Estonianisation of names (including place-names); the

propaganda of the national costumes in connection with the XI nationwide song festival (1938); home decoration; and the study of ancient Estonian culture. (see Vaan 2005:48-49).



The community house of the Võhma Community House Association in Viljandimaa (Viljandi county). Opened in 1934. The construction of the community house was supported by different societies in cooperation.

*Photo 13. The community house in Võhma, opened in 1934, Kurvits 1935.*

## 6. Conclusions

This article observes the establishment and historical development of community houses as a characteristic tool of Estonian cultural policy and analyses how community houses contributed to the process of nation-building. Connections between cultural practices and political mobilisation, with the focus on the history of Estonian cultural policy, are also examined.

Community houses were founded all over Estonia from the 1880s onwards with the aim to offer free space for the educational and cultural activities of the local communities. The most important task of community houses was to be a location for public festivities, get-togethers with new cultural practices within amateur arts (choirs, orchestras, drama) played major role.

As party-places for local communities, without open political intentions, the community houses are theorised by using Bakhtin's concept of *public square*. Open discussions in the newspapers, political debates and activities among the Estonian elite, who guided the political and social movements, are theorised with the concept of Habermasian *public sphere*. Community houses supported the process of state-building by bringing the ideas of the Estonian elite to the grass-root level. This made it possible to gain wide support to the ideas and the political programme of the elite among the whole population, which is one of the preconditions to establish a nation-state according to the theory of M. Hroch. Two parallel directions of the historical development intertwined with each other, and

contributed to the formation of national identity, based on common culture and ended up with political self-determination.

By analysing the establishment of community houses, historical development of the Estonian cultural policy have been revealed. Since the foundation of Estonian nation-state, the basic role of cultural policy was to (re)produce the institutions and conditions for cultural practices emerged from national narratives, thus ensuring the affirmation of significant and meaningful common culture – national culture of Estonians.

During the first period of Estonian independence (1918–1940), with the adoption of the Law for Community Houses in 1931, the network of community houses was set up by the state. By 1938 there were more than 400 community houses in Estonia. The construction of community houses as cultural institutions was clearly the expression of socio-economic vitality of rural regions. It also explains how the official concept of national culture in the frame of forming cultural policy of the Estonian nation-state evolved, defining regional culture as popular or folk culture.

Since the beginning of the silent era (1934–1938) the state started to use the network of community houses for ideological purposes, and top-down cultural policy was applied. The network of community houses was used to circulate national or ethnic culture at the grass-root level. With setting up the network of community houses, and with laws and regulations which legalised the free initiative of people in the local communities, one of the characteristic tools of Estonian cultural policy or, more specifically, the tool for regional cultural policy, was established for next periods of cultural policy, which lasted over 60 years (1931- 1991).

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- 1 Society house was built for the activities of one certain society (music, drama, educational, farmer's, firemen, temperance etc).
  - 2 A community house was built for the activities of many societies, for the general use by the people of local communities.
  - 3 Aleksander Kurvits (1896–1958), state official of the Ministry of Education from 1921–1940, who made a significant contribution to the development of Estonian free education work and the foundation of the network of community houses.
  - 4 Mikhail Bakhtin (1895 - 1975) was a [Russian philosopher](#), [literary critic](#), semiotician and scholar, who was persecuted by the regime in Soviet Union. His writings, on a variety of subjects, inspired scholars working in a number of different traditions and his distinctive position did not become well known until he was rediscovered by Russian scholars in the 1960s.
  - 5 The concept of folk (popular) culture which gained more attention by historians and cultural researchers after Bahtins' work was published in English in 1960s (e.g Tamm, M. 2007. *Kuidas kirjutatakse ajalugu. (How to Write History.)* Varrak, Tallinn, p. 24; Burke, P. 1981. The “Discovery” of Popular Culture. In: *People’s History and Socialist Theory*. (ed. by) R. Samuel. Routledge, London, p. 216-221; Burke, P. 1988. What is History of Popular Culture? In: (ed. by) J. Gardiner. *What is History Today...?* Humanities

- Press, Atlantic Highlands, p.121-123; Shay, A. 2002. *Choreographic Politics: State Folk Dance Companies, Representation and Power*. Wesleyan University Press p. 224-225; Kuutma, K. 2010. From the Construction of Concepts to Knowledge Production: the Interdisciplinarity of Folkloristics. In: *Keel ja Kirjandus*, p. 687-702; etc.
- 6 Yuri Mikhailovich Lotman (1922 - 1993) was a prominent Russian literary scholar, semiotician, and cultural historian in Estonia. He was the founder of the Moscow-Tartu school of cultural semiotics and is considered to be the first Soviet structuralist because of his early essay *On the Delimitation of Linguistic and Philological Concepts of Structure (1963)* and works on structural poetics. Lotman analysed Bakhtin's cultural concept in the introductory article "Kutse dialoogile" published in Estonian in 1987 as collection of Bakhtin's works, see *Bakhtin, M. 1987. Valitud töid. Ed. P. Torop. Tallinn, Eesti Raamat*.
  - 7 See Gardiner, M. (2004). "Wild publics and grotesque symposiums: Habermas and Bakhtin on dialogue, everyday life and the public sphere" In: "After Habermas. New Perspectives on the Public Sphere", (eds) Nick Crossely and John Michael Roberts, Blackwell Publishing/The Sociological Review, UK, p.28-48.
  - 8 M. Hroch has empirically studied and analysed Estonian nation-building as well as other nations in Eastern Europe (Slovacs, Slovenians, Latvians, Finns, etc) without the political past of statehood. See Hroch, M. 1985, 2000. *Social preconditions of national revival in Europe: a comparative analysis of the social composition of patriotic groups among the smaller European nations*. Cambridge University Press, New York; Hroch, M. 1996. *From National Movement to the Fully-formed Nation: The Nation-building Process in Europe*. New York and London: Verso.
  - 9 Since Herder, there have been many theories about nations and nation-building: philosophers and thinkers e.g. Hegel, Marx, Engels, Weber, Hobsbawm, Bauer, Gellner, Smith, Breuilly, Geertz, Armstrong, Kedourie, Kohn, Connor, Deutch, Hroch and many other theorists whose different positions are classified as primordialist, modernist, ethno-symbolist. (See Guibernau and Hutchinson 2001, Laar 2006)
  - 10 Herder specifically emphasised the multitude and diversity of cultures, and thus he greatly encouraged cultural nationality, as evinced by numerous suppressed people of the Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Turkish Empire including Estonians, Latvians, etc. (Jürjo 2004, Jansen 2004, Laar 2006)
  - 11 e.g. Anderson 1983; Gellner 1983; Breuilly 1996; Kedourie 1960; Hobsbawm 1990 (see Guibernau and Hutchinson 2001, Laar 2006)
  - 12 e.g. Herder; Bauer 1908; Geertz 1973, close to it also Armstrong 1982 and Kohn 1965 (see Guibernau and Hutchinson 2001, Laar 2006)
  - 13 In contemporary research on *identity*, perceptions of identity ("identity" and "sameness") are seen as relative phenomena that may be abandoned, changed or constructed by different levels (personal, professional, community, national, constitutional, etc) in a dialogic process. (see also Hall, Du Gay. (1996). *Questions of Cultural Identity*. Sage, UK.; Kotov, K. (2002). *Polylogical Estonia: National Identity and Languages of Culture*. [http://www.sotsioloogia.ee/vana/esso3/15/kaie\\_kotov.htm](http://www.sotsioloogia.ee/vana/esso3/15/kaie_kotov.htm); De Cilla, Reisigl, Wodak.(1999).*The Discursive Construction of National Identities*. [http://brigitazepa.biss.soc.lv/magistri/veci/DA/Semin/C4%81ru%20literat%C5%ABra/analizes\\_pancmieni/D9%20Identitate\\_Wodak.pdf](http://brigitazepa.biss.soc.lv/magistri/veci/DA/Semin/C4%81ru%20literat%C5%ABra/analizes_pancmieni/D9%20Identitate_Wodak.pdf))
  - 14 See Guibernau, M. (2007). *The Identity of Nations*. Cambridge, Polity Press, UK.
  - 15 Materials of the V International Symposium of the North-Eastern Culture and History in Tallinn City Archive in 2004. The theme of the V symposium was "Associations and Civil Society in North-Eastern Europe. Regional Peculiarities in the European Context?". ~[histor/osteuropa/datei/tagungen.htm](http://histor/osteuropa/datei/tagungen.htm),
  - 16 The *settlement movement* was a reformist social movement, beginning in the 1880s and peaking around the 1920s in England and the US. Bilton, C. "Jane Addams, pragmatism and cultural policy", *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 2006, 12:2, p 135–150.
  - 17 Governate of Livonia - historical district in Southern Estonia and Northern Latvia.
  - 18 Three pastors, Otto Wilhelm Masing, Johann Heinrich Rosenplänter and Eduard Ahrens, were prominent advocates of peasant education in Estonia by giving out a newspaper for peasants, founding an academic magazine and compiling the grammar of the Estonian language. (Jürjo 2004: 406–410)
  - 19 Johann Georg Hamann (1730–1788) and Herder (1744–1803) saw folklore as an expression of spontaneity, naturality and truth in his collection of European folk songs, Estonian and Latvian among them – which became an inspiration for the Baltic-German intelligentsia who discovered new values in the indigenous people living around them. (Jürjo 2004: 398–406)
  - 20 18<sup>th</sup> century religious movement of Herrnhuter denomination, descending from Moravian Brothers gained ground among the peasant Estonian bringing along their spiritual songs and introduced also egalitarian attitudes. See: Pöldmäe, R. (1988). *Vennastekoguduse muusikalisest tegevusest meie maal*. In: *Teater. Muusika. Kino. (The Musical Activities of Moravian Brethren in Our*

*Country*); Leichter, K. (1991). Seitse sajandit eestlaste lauluteel: kultuuriloolisi andmeid aastaist 1172–1871. Tallinn (*Seven Centuries of the Estonians' Path of Singing: Cultural Data from 1172–1871*).

- 21 The 1860s also marked the beginning of Estonian national music-writing. From that time on, the choirs could perform songs and folk-songs arranged by Estonian composers instead of the widely spread choral music of the German *Liedertafel* type prevalent at that time.
- 22 The Sõprus (Friendship) Estonian-Russian Song Society in Mustvee (1881), The Salme Music and Song Society in Tori (1882), the Edendus (Progress) Song Music Society at Laius-Tähkvere (1883), the Kanepi Song Society, the Tartu-maarja Music Society (both 1885) and the Ilmatar Song and Music Society at Suure-Jaani (1887). (See Karu 1990)
- 23 The fundraising began in Viljandi County and turned into an all-Estonian mass organisation founded in 1869, with its own chief committee (1870–1884) which arranged various cultural events and agitation activities. (see Kruus 1939, Andresen 1970, Karjahärm and Sirk 1997; Laar 2006, Zetterberg 2009)
- 24 The event was inspiring for neighbours and similar song festivals were organized in Latvia (1873) and in Finland (1884). (see Põldmäe, R. 1969. *Esimene Eesti Üldlaulupidu* 1869; Põldmäe, R. 1976. *Kaks laulupidu* 1879-1880)
- 25 Jannsen, Johann Voldemar (1819-1890) established first Estonian newspaper “Perno Postimees” in 1857, together with his daughter, famous national poet (1843-1886), they both played a crucial role in the
- 26 The first society which gained the right to set up library was the Edendus (Progress) Song Society at Laius-Tähkvere 1883 (Karu 1985: 280).
- 27 Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald (1803 – 1882) and one of the first intellectuals, leaders of the , wrote the (Kalev's Son) and many other works based on .
- 28 Gustavson, H. (1980). Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald ja meditsiin Võrus. Tallinn, käsikiri.
- 29 The peasants made use of long-term bank credits, which they later paid back from income received from growing flax and potatoes (the flax prices went up because of the American Civil War and the consequent drop in cotton imported to Europe). (Laur, M. and Pirsko, P. 1998, p. 173-192)
- 30 Eisen, J.M. (1914). Eesti Karskusseltside Keskoimekonna Kirjastus, no 53, p 184.
- 31 Jyri Tilk (1865–1929) was a teacher and activist of the temperance movement.
- 32 Tori village in Western Estonia, Pärnu county.
- 33 Alasuutari, P. (1991). Individualism, Self-Control, and the Finnish Temperance Movement. *Ethnos* 56 (1991: 3–4), p.173–188, Tampere.
- 34 Modernity also implies a new cultural code, i.e. a transformed set of values, well summarised by Alberto Martinelli: “Rationalism, individualism/subjectivity, utilitarianism, the incessant quest for knowledge, innovation and discovery, the constitution of the self as an autonomous subject, the refusal of limits, the principles of liberty and equality of rights and opportunities.” (Raun 2009:39)
- 35 In 1904, Estonians achieved their first major political breakthrough at the Tallinn municipal elections. The Estonian-Russian bloc gained a majority, defeating the Germans who had so far remained in power.
- 36 In 1913, the percentage of ethnic Estonians had increased in Tallinn to 71.6% and in Tartu to 73.3%, the two largest towns in Estland and Northern Livland. (Raun 2009:41; Reiman 1936:191; Pullat 197:60)
- 37 With two decades, by 1916–1917, ethnic Estonians accounted for about 7 000 of the secondary school students in the Northern Baltic region or a little more than half of the total number (13 000). The explosive growth was also evident at the university level, from about 200 students in 1900 to about 1 000 by 1915, although in this case more than half were enrolled at institutions of higher learning outside of Estland and Northern Livland (Raun 2009:41).
- 38 As examples can be named: music societies built their houses at Päidla (Otepää parish) in 1905, Puhja in 1906, Laius Tähkvere in 1909, Pala (Kodavere parish) in 1901, Rõngu in 1910, Iisaku in 1910, and Maarja Magdaleena 1912; temperance societies at Haaslava (Kambja parish) in 1907, Ropka (Tartu-Maarja parish, in 1909; firemen’s societies at Suure-Jaani in 1904, Elva (Nõo parish) in 1909, and Palmse (Kadrina parish) in 1910; farmers’ societies at Valgjärve in 1905, Väike-Maarja in 1910 and Varbla in 1913 and the Põlva educational society in 1910 and many others (see Karu 1990:624)
- 39 No compensation was initially paid for the expropriated land; this was done starting in 1925, and at lower rates than the market value. The expropriated land formed the state reserve, which was divided up to form new farms.
- 40 Swedish Professor Per Wieselgren describes Estonia in the 1930s as a country where there is no sign of social differences, which can be observed in some other countries, such as Poland (Annist 2011: 76–79).

- 41 In 1919 with a war in progress the subject of subsidies for culture was widely and enthusiastically discussed at the meetings of the creative intelligentsia. One of the most vigorous fighters for the creative intelligentsia's position was the writer and poet F. Tuglas. In January 1919 he wrote an article "The National Development of the Arts" where he sketched a plan for subsidising culture. (Kulbok 2008:129; Uljas 2005)
- 42 Almost at the same time the question of financial problems of theatres was raised. In principle, it was decided that the state would cover 30% of the actors' salaries which caused serious problems for the two biggest theatres "Estonia" and "Vanemuine". Other theatres (for example, the Drama Theatre Society) turned to the Ministry of Education for help as well. (Kulbok 2008; Uljas 2005)
- 43 Aleksander Kurvits (1896–1958), state official of the Ministry of Education during 1921–1940, contributed to the development of Estonian free education and establishment of the network of community houses. Estonian researches also own Aleksander Kurvits the systematic overview of laws and regulations concerning culture and education, which he collected and reproduced in the Ministry of Education since 1929, thus making it easier to focus on the development of the cultural and educational policy of the time.
- 44 Kurvits wrote, ".../ It appears that both: contact and united coordination between local associations is lacking which may have caused parallelism in actions and perhaps not the best use of resources. The strategic plan for the network of community houses would solve a lot of problems with funding and the coordination of the establishment of the houses" (Uljas 1990:9–15).
- 45 "*Kroonu asi*" in Estonian, "*Herrojen Metkut*" in Finnish; it refers to top-down policies and orders, which are imposed on people.
- 46 Community houses in the towns were also added into the law.
- 47 To get financial support from the state budget, associations that wanted to construct a community house should present coordinated architectural solutions, worked out by the Ministry of Education. According to the law, it was also possible to leave the network three years after getting the financial support. (Uljas 1999:24–25)
- 48 Otto August Strandman (1875–1941) Estonian politician, key figure in composing the radical land reform law and the 1920 Constitution, Minister of Finance (1924)
- 49 For example, the creation of the network of community houses, the reorganisation of theatres, and the organisation of the work of museums and art schools. This committee also oversaw the establishment of the three cultural temples of Tallinn – the conservatory, the art museum and the art hall. In February 1929 the committee passed the regulations of the Cultural Endowment cultural propaganda foundation, while Konstantin Päts was appointed to develop the collection of statutes of the art museum foundation. Later the statute collections of the Estonian National Museum and the Estonian Culture Film foundations were developed. Thus, the work of committee involved a very wide spectre of cultural policy. The central figure of the committee was Konstantin Päts (President of Estonia 1934-1940) who had innovative ideas about constructing Estonian statehood. (Kulbok 2008; Uljas 2005)
- 50 The country was practically governed by three men: Konstantin Päts, Johan Laidoner and Kaarel Eenpalu. The work of the parliament was halted, and while it was not officially dissolved, it was never summoned. (Kulbok 2008:132)
- 51 See Karjahärm, T. (2002). Konstantin Pätsi poliitilised ideed. *Konstantin Pätsi tegevusest. Artiklite kogumik*, Tallinn, p 88-94.
- 52 See Vaan, L. (2005). Propagandatalitus Eesti Vabariigis 1934-1940. *Tuna*3/2005, p 43-54.

### **III**

## **THE SOVIETIZATION OF ESTONIAN COMMUNITY HOUSES (RAHVAMAJA): SOVIET GUIDELINES**

by

Egge Kulbok-Lattik, 2014

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## THE SOVIETIZATION OF ESTONIAN COMMUNITY HOUSES (*RAHVAMAJA*): SOVIET GUIDELINES

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Estonian Community houses were built in towns and the countryside by local people, who joined cultural and other societies since the second half of the 19th century. These cultural centers supported the process of Estonian state building. During the years of the first Estonian independent state (1918–1940), the network of community houses was set up by the state.

After the invasion of the Baltic states by the Soviet Union in 1940, extensive restructuring or sovietization of the Estonian public administration, economy and culture, began. The article examines the sovietization process of Estonian community houses, i.e., how they were turned into the ideological tools of Soviet totalitarian propaganda.

### INTRODUCTION

Estonian community houses, with roots in the 19th century tradition of grass-roots-level social activism, were built in towns and the countryside by ordinary<sup>1</sup> people, who joined cultural, agricultural, temperance and other societies. These houses became the pillars of the emerging Estonian civil society and public sphere, by offering space for new cultural practices of Estonians, such as singing in many-voiced choirs, playing music in brass bands, acting in theater plays, establishing local libraries, organizing lectures, as well as hosting public festivities of local communities. Community houses, with their cultural practices, supported the process of state building by bringing the ideas of the Estonian elite to grass-roots level. During the years of the first Estonian independent state (1918–1940), the network of community houses was set up by the state.<sup>2</sup> The Law on Community

<sup>1</sup> Ordinary people are understood as “little men”, as opposed to the “great” or elite.

<sup>2</sup> New cultural practices of Estonians were borrowed from the Baltic-German aristocracy, in the light of postcolonial theories. See **Kulbok-Lattik, E.** Estonian community houses as local tools for development. – Nordisk Kulturpolitisk Tidsskrift, 2012, 2, 253–283.

Houses was adopted in 1931, which stated the aim and objectives of community houses as follows:<sup>3</sup>

Article 1: The aim of a community house is to be a center for cultural and free educational activities and a home for educational and social associations in its area of operation.

Article 2: Community houses should have rooms for libraries, reading rooms, studios, rooms for lectures and public meetings, rooms for singing, musical and theatrical rehearsals as well as rooms for physical training and other educational activities (RT 1931, 53).<sup>4</sup>

By 1940, there were approximately 500 community houses all over Estonia,<sup>5</sup> which operated as local institutions for the development of Estonian cultural policy, being the expression of the socio-economic and cultural vitality of Estonian rural regions.

In June, 1940, after the invasion of the Baltic states by the Soviet Union, the extensive restructuring or *sovietization* of the public administration, economy, with the nationalization of private property, propagandistic land reform and mass deportations began.<sup>6</sup> Sovietization was carried out in all spheres of life. The sovietization process of community houses meant the importation of the Soviet cultural canon (norms, values) and cultural policy model. Bottom-up initiatives by societies were prohibited, community houses (as well as all other private cultural enterprises) were closed and their property was expropriated. As all cultural organizations became state-operated and guided, the Soviet cultural policy model was fully implemented in Estonia. The network of community houses was filled with Red Corners<sup>7</sup> and obligatory political training of the population took place. The new content for cultural policy came from the manipulative rhetoric of a totalitarian state shaping the *Homo Sovieticus*, which resulted in strong centralization, guidelines being issued to the community houses, and censorship.

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[http://www.idunn.no/ts/nkt/2012/02/estonian\\_community\\_houses\\_as\\_local\\_tools\\_for\\_the\\_developmen](http://www.idunn.no/ts/nkt/2012/02/estonian_community_houses_as_local_tools_for_the_developmen); **Jansen, E.** Estonians in the Changing World: From Estate Society to Civil Society. Eesti Ajaloo Arhiiv, Tartu, 2007; **Karu, E.** On the Development of the Association Movement and Its Socio-Economic Background in the Estonian Countryside. (Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia, 2.) Stockholm, 1985.

<sup>3</sup> Author's translation.

<sup>4</sup> **Kurvits, A.** Rahvamaja: käsiraamat rahvamajade asutamise ja ülalpidamise, ruumide ja ümbruse korraldamise ja kaunistamise ning tegevuse juhtimise ja edendamise alal [*Community House: Handbook for the Foundation and Management of Community Houses*]. Kirjastus kooperatiiv, Tallinn, 1935, 72.

<sup>5</sup> **Uljas, J.** Rahvamajad Eestis, 1920–1940 [*Community Houses in Estonia, 1920–1940*]. E. Vilde nim. Tallinna Pedagoogiline Instituut, Tallinn, 1987, 19, 28.

<sup>6</sup> Aigi Rahi-Tamm has mapped Estonian deportations in her PhD dissertation: <http://dspace.utlib.ee/dspace/bitstream/handle/10062/528/RahiTamm.pdf?sequence=5>; <http://okupatsioon.ee/en>, see also <http://www.riigikogu.ee/public/Riigikogu/TheWhiteBook.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Red Corners were special areas (pinboards or table with books) set up by Soviet authorities in public places in Soviet Russia with the aim to disseminate Marxist ideas and promote the Communist classics.

### Aims of the article

In this article I analyse the *sovietization* process of Estonian community houses, i.e., how they were turned into the ideological tools of Soviet propaganda.<sup>8</sup> To do this, I examine: (1) the formation of the Soviet cultural canon to identify its targets, features and also the model of the Soviet cultural policy; (2) the process of how the free-initiative amateur art and educational activities in community houses were restructured into subordinate cultural institutions; (3) the methodical guidelines provided by state bodies as tools of coercion, control and censorship in making Estonian community houses function as centers of political education.

Empirical data, archival materials and methodical guidelines (published from 1940 onwards) are used and analysed. In order to contextualize the Soviet state practices I use the term *sovietization*. The description of the role of the state in cultural policy is based on the theoretical framework of Hillman-Chartrand and McCaughey's (1989) concept of cultural policy models.<sup>9</sup> The methods of the article are: the case study and historical analysis, and the focus – cultural policy research, which is interdisciplinary research on society, comprising cultural theory, social history, ethnology, political science, etc. In respect of the development of Estonian state practices in cultural policy, the paper helps to reveal certain facets of socio-economic developments and macro-historical path-dependencies of Estonia (as well as the other Baltic states). Given the large amount written on Soviet Russia in this context (put in lots of references in a big line) I do not directly deal with this topic here.

### SOVIETIZATION, SOVIET CULTURAL CANON AND CULTURAL POLICY MODEL

*Sovietization* is conceptualized as the process of exporting the Soviet model of a state. The process of sovietization, as historians Tannberg (2007), Zubkova (2007), Mertelsmann (2012) explain, implied more than a mere political takeover –

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<sup>8</sup> Propaganda is the dissemination of information – facts, arguments, rumors, half-truths, or lies – to influence public opinion. Propaganda is the more or less systematic effort to manipulate other people's beliefs, attitudes, or actions by means of symbols (words, gestures, banners, monuments, music, clothing, insignia, hairstyles, designs on coins and postage stamps, and so forth): **Smith, B. L., Lasswell, H. D., Casey, R. D.** Propaganda, Communication, and Public Opinion: A Comprehensive Reference Guide. Princeton University Press, 1946, vii, 435.

<sup>9</sup> The concept of the cultural policy model helps to identify the way how the state's interference in culture is organized in different states and political systems. Various cultural policy models are described and defined by **Hillmann-Chartrand, H., McCaughey, C.** The arm's length principle and the arts: an international perspective – past, present and future. – In: Who's to Pay? for the Arts: The International Search for Models of Support. Eds M. C. Cummings Jr, M. Davidson Schuster. American Council for the Arts, N.Y.C., 1989.



it also meant social, economic and cultural restructuring.<sup>10</sup> While institutional restructuring took only a few years, the restructuring of society and culture took much longer. The population had to be “re-educated” and a new, socialist elite had to be created. According to Mertelsmann,<sup>11</sup> the basic model of sovietization consisted of Lenin’s and Stalin’s Cultural Revolution, forced collectivization of agriculture and the start of the campaign of industrialization and the planned or command economy. In general, Soviet state practices were coercive and violent as Gerlach and Werth (2009, 133–179)<sup>12</sup> explain: class struggle and terror, oppression of the “enemies” of the Soviet state, (kulaks, priests, bourgeois specialists), attempts to achieve total control over the population, nationalization of private property, strict censorship, political agitation, the provision a set of canonized cultural norms were some of the key elements of sovietization. While Soviet state practices did change over time (influenced by the development of its own inner policies as well as external pressure through the Cold War), the main structures of the state model of the USSR established in the 1930s persisted until its collapse in 1991.

In terms of culture, censorship and indoctrination<sup>13</sup> of the Soviet values, which the vast majority of population perceived as unfamiliar and odd, took place. In order to ‘re-educate’ the population of the occupied territories, the Soviet cultural canon (invented tradition bearing Soviet values)<sup>14</sup> and policy model (organizational structure of state practices in culture) were exported as tools for creating the new socialist reality. By 1940, when the Baltic states were incorporated into the Soviet Union, the Soviet official culture had gone through different phases. The avant-garde and iconoclastic *prolet-cult*, which with the slogans of class-fight and Cultural Revolution aimed to destroy the traditional culture of tsarist Russia, was replaced by neoclassicism and socialist realism during the mid-1930s – the era of

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<sup>10</sup> **Mertelsmann, O.** *Everyday Life in Stalinist Estonia.* (Tartu Historical Studies, 2.) Peter Lang Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, 2012; see also **Zubkova, J.** *Problematic zone: peculiarities of sovietization in the Baltic States during the post-war period in 1944–1952.* – In: **Tannberg, T.** (ed.) *Soviet Estonia 1944–1953: Mechanisms and Consequences of Sovietization in Estonia in the Context of Development of Soviet Union and East-Europe.* Tartu, 2007.

<sup>11</sup> **Mertelsmann, O.** *Everyday Life in Stalinist Estonia,* 14–19.

<sup>12</sup> **Gerlach, C., Werth, N.** *State violence – violent societies.* – In: *Beyond Totalitarianism. Stalinism and Nazism Compared.* Eds M. Geyer, S. Fitzpatrick. Cambridge University Press, 2009, 133–179.

<sup>13</sup> Indoctrination refers to infiltrating (drilling, inculcating, etc.) concepts, attitudes, beliefs and theories into a student’s mind by passing her free and critical deliberation. According to Huttunen the opposite of indoctrination, is *communicative teaching*, which is based on “*The Bildung as a human teaching situation*” referring to Schäfer and Schaller (1975, 57), where students are not treated as passive objects but as active learners. The Communicative teaching is a simulation of democracy and democratic mode of action, Huttunen explains. See more: [http://cepat.net/lib/exe/fetch.php?media=habermas\\_and\\_the\\_problem\\_of\\_indoctrination.pdf](http://cepat.net/lib/exe/fetch.php?media=habermas_and_the_problem_of_indoctrination.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> R. Raud defines cultural canon as an outlook on cultural tradition established in the cultural environment by a symbolic authority, a list on texts supporting its development, which is used as the most valuable part of heritage: **Raud, R.** *What is Culture? Introduction into the Theories of Culture.* Tallinn University Press, 2013, 430.

Stalinist rule. Socialist realism became the Stalinist canon of official culture. Soviet state practices and formation of cultural norms and values have been described as cultivating masses in the frame of developing Soviet modernity. Civilizing and cultivating masses was the main purpose of state cultural policies in the majority of European nation-states at that time. Soviet state practices could be seen as a specific type of coercive modernity according to David Hoffmann.<sup>15</sup>

Sheila Fitzpatrick<sup>16</sup> offers several concepts explaining the modernizing practices of Soviet state, for example: Soviet society as prison or a conscript army, or strict type of school, with the elements of strict discipline within a closed institution with its own strict codes of behaviour, and fear of punishment. On the other hand, as Fitzpatrick<sup>17</sup> points out, the Soviet state was moving toward the welfare paternalism, where the state acts with the strong sense of the responsibilities of leadership over the dependent population (1999, 226). Thus, Fitzpatrick offers also the concepts – state as the soup kitchen or the relief agency, to explain the state’s monopoly of distributing goods and services and the paternalistic dominance of the state apparatus as the one of the significant features of the Soviet political system.

In the same period (1918–1940), a characteristically Western modern social structure gained ground in Estonia for two decades of independence. The state practices of culture in the Estonian Republic (1918–1934) were typical to those nation-states of Western liberal democracies, where cultural institutional network originated from the national and cultural emancipation and initiatives of the 19th century civil society. The Estonian engagement with modernity started in the middle of the 19th century with the growing social activism and continued, as Raun (2009) has described, with the emergence of a new generation of Estonian intellectuals and politicians at the beginning of the 20th century. Also the growth of urbanization among Estonians, and the educational and cultural level, prosperity and the standard of living of the population improved.<sup>18</sup> Cultural policy developments during the years of Estonian independence (1918–1940) could be described

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<sup>15</sup> Hoffmann, D. L. *Stalinist Values. The Cultural Norms of Soviet Modernity [1917–1941]*. Cornell University Press, 2003; Hoffmann, D. L. *Cultivating the Masses: The Modern Social State in Russia, 1914–1939*. Cornell University Press, 2011.

<sup>16</sup> Fitzpatrick, S. *Everyday Stalinism. Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s*.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 226.

<sup>18</sup> T. Raun presents data and statistics: in 1904, Estonians achieved their first major political breakthrough at the Tallinn municipal elections. In 1913, the percentage of ethnic Estonians had increased in Tallinn to 71.6% and in Tartu to 73.3%, the two largest towns in Estonia and Northern Livland. The movement of young Estonian intellectuals called “Young Estonia” and its principles developed a fundamental aim for cultural nation-building in 1905: “More culture! This is the first condition for the emancipation of ideals and goals. More European culture! Let’s be Estonians, but let’s also become Europeans!” (Raun, T. *The Estonian engagement with modernity: the role of Young-Estonia in the diversification of political and social thought. – Tuna [Magazine Past]*. Special issue on history of Estonia of National Archives, Tartu-Tallinn, 2009. [http://www.digar.ee/arhiiv/en/download\\_all/76914](http://www.digar.ee/arhiiv/en/download_all/76914)

as gradual movement from the free initiatives of civil society<sup>19</sup> (before 1925) toward systematic and organized state interference. The years 1925–1929 are considered those that stabilized the country, within the establishment of state supported cultural institutions as well as democratic arm's-length principle<sup>20</sup> was implemented. Estonia lost its young democracy in 1934, when the political-economic turbulence (economic crises and nationalistic ideas) spread in Europe between the world wars. This era brought nationalist ideology, developed by the propaganda office, which was implemented with the support of a nationalist/popular cultural policy. The objective of the state was a homogeneous and strong nation-state. Authoritarian state practices<sup>21</sup> in cultural policy, with the main aim to enhance the national cultural identity, were implemented and a well-developed network of cultural institutions was established in Estonia, as Kulbok-Lattik (2008, 2012) has noted.

From 1940, the Estonian Western modern development was replaced by Soviet state practices. An authoritarian state<sup>22</sup> was replaced with the practices of totalitarian state. Discussing the classic concepts, trying to formulate the distinctive feature that differentiates a totalitarian society from other nondemocratic societies, Juan J. Linz<sup>23</sup>, points out two important characteristics of totalitarianism – a monistic center of power and citizen (forced or manipulated) participation in political and social tasks, when active participation is replaced by passive obedience and apathy, society is losing its totalitarian nature and degrading into authoritarianism.

Community houses, which had operated since the second half of the 19th century on the basis of civil society by hosting leisure time and cultural practices of local people, offer a good example of the sovietization process – how the free initiative activities were subjected to the state administration. In the next chapter

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<sup>19</sup> According to the statistics presented by Uljas (1987), in 1929 there were 1385 societies of culture in Estonia, in 1940 there were 2200 organizations of non-formal education in Estonia, 60,000–70,000 individual members.

<sup>20</sup> In 1925, the law of Cultural Endowment (*Kultuurkapital*) was completed and passed: **Kulbok-Lattik, E.** Eesti kultuuripoliitika ajaloolisest perioodiseerimisest [*On the historical periodization of Estonian cultural policy*]. – Acta Historica Tallinnensia, 2008, **12**, 120–144.

<sup>21</sup> Authoritarianism is the principle of submission to authority, as opposed to individual freedom of thought and action. In government, authoritarianism denotes any political system that concentrates power in the hands of a leader or a small elite that is not constitutionally responsible to the body of the people. Authoritarian leaders often exercise power arbitrarily and without regard to the existing bodies of law, and they usually cannot be replaced by citizens choosing freely among various candidates in elections. The freedom to create opposition political parties or other alternative political groupings with which to compete for power with the ruling group is either limited or non-existent in authoritarian regimes. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/44640/authoritarianism>

<sup>22</sup> Authoritarianism stands in fundamental contrast to democracy. It also differs from totalitarianism, however, since authoritarian governments usually have no highly developed guiding ideology, tolerate some pluralism in social organization, lack the power to mobilize the entire population in pursuit of national goals, and exercise that power within relatively predictable limits. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/44640/authoritarianism>

<sup>23</sup> **Linz, J. J.** Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes. Lynne Rienner Publisher, Colorado, 2000, 70.

the formation of the Soviet cultural canon and cultural policy model will be briefly examined by concentrating selectively on the aspects which influenced the cultural practices of folk culture and amateur art in the Soviet Union.

### Formation of the Soviet cultural canon

Immediately after the Soviets grasped power in 1940 in Estonia (and in the other Baltic states) constantly repeated slogans on posters appeared in the press and public places, such as “*Soviet Culture is Nationalist in Form and Socialist in Content*”, “*Art Belongs to the People*”, “*Friendship of Soviet Brotherly Nations*”, “*Socialist Realism*”, etc. These slogans are the key to understanding the Soviet cultural canon and the ideology behind it. Cultural canon was needed to create a system for indoctrination and for re-education of people, it was a tool for political agitation and propaganda.

The term “*propaganda*” is closely connected with the term “*agitation*” when speaking about the Soviet practices. According to Lasswell<sup>24</sup> these two terms were first used by the Marxist Georgy Plekhanov, who defined “*agitation*” as the use of slogans, parables, and half-truths to exploit the grievances of the uneducated and the unreasonable. Since he regarded both strategies as absolutely essential to political victory, he twinned them in the term *agitprop*, which was later elaborated upon by Lenin in a pamphlet *What Is to Be Done?* (1902). In the pamphlet Lenin defined “*propaganda*” as the reasoned use of historical and scientific arguments to indoctrinate the educated and enlightened (the attentive and informed public, in the language of today’s social sciences).

An examination of how the Soviet cultural canon was formed reveals the aims, features and model of Soviet cultural policy, as the formation of the cultural canon and the Soviet cultural policy was situational, as Zubkova (2007) has mentioned. It depended on tasks which were set up in order to solve various structural problems of Soviet Russia that the party leaders were faced with – illiteracy, general backwardness of Russia, the restructuring of the economy, etc., which reveals the highly instrumental use of culture in the Soviet cultural policy.

#### *Cultural Revolution and acculturating the masses*

Lenin considered the Cultural Revolution to be the main aim for party leaders:

The main aim of the Cultural Revolution was [...] to cultivate a new human being characterized by a harmonious combination of spiritual richness, moral cleanliness and physical perfection (V. I. Lenin, speaking about the Cultural Revolution, cited in Hoffmann (2003, 150)).

However, an enormous gulf loomed between the utopian visions of the Party leaders and social reality, as Hoffmann (2003, 15) notes, after the Revolution and Civil War, Russia was an undeveloped, agrarian country with an overwhelmingly

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<sup>24</sup> Smith, B. L., Lasswell, H. D., Ralph, D. C. Propaganda, Communication, and Public Opinion: A Comprehensive Reference Guide, vii, 435.

peasant population. Rates of illiteracy, poverty, disease and infant mortality remained very high. Acculturating the masses was one of the central tasks of the Soviet authorities during the first Five Year Plan (1928–1932) period. Fighting illiteracy, building up social and health care systems can be seen as part of a revolutionary attempt to achieve a rationalized and modernized society (ibid.).

Another aspect of the Cultural Revolution was its use in class struggle and freeing society from the “illnesses of capitalism” and the heritage of bourgeois culture, as Hoffmann<sup>25</sup> explains it. Thus, the conception of culture during the first decade of the Soviet rule, the first Five Year Plan period (1928–1932) – *Proletkult*, was futuristic, avant-garde, and iconoclastic. Norms and values (culture, religion) of the previous bourgeois society of the tsarist empire were to be re-evaluated by the breaking of all boundaries (including heated discussions between the proponents of sexual liberation and proponents of the family).

#### *Creating Soviet intelligentsia and socialist realism*

The avant-garde culture was no longer needed to destroy bourgeois culture after capitalist remnants had been eliminated (or deported), agriculture had been collectivized, and a planned economy established, as there was no further economic basis for exploitation and no bourgeois mentality. A new and loyal intelligentsia had been created, as Stalin stated in November 1936:

Our Soviet intelligentsia is a completely new intelligentsia, connected by its roots to the working class and peasantry. It is now a fully-fledged member of Soviet society; together with workers and peasants, as one team, it builds the new classless socialist society.<sup>26</sup>

Once socialism had been achieved (Soviet leaders believed they were achieving socialism already at the beginning of the 1930s), the new purpose of Soviet culture was the perpetuation and legitimation of power. The only officially acceptable form in art and literature after 1932 was **socialist realism** together with monumental architecture that legitimated the existing order. As Stalin stated in 1932:

The artist ought to show life truthfully. And if he shows it truthfully, he cannot fail to show it moving towards socialism. This is and will be socialist realism.<sup>27</sup>

Socialist realism was a “realist” depiction of how life was supposed to be – an attempt by the Soviet cultural establishment to construct a reality that did not actually exist. Boris Groys<sup>28</sup> has argued that the avant-garde and socialist realism shared several traits: the desire **to transform** rather than merely represent life, the belief in a totalistic, all-encompassing artistic vision and contempt for commercialized culture as part of an overall aesthetic-political project – an attempt to organize society and everyday life according to aesthetic sensibilities and political principles.

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<sup>25</sup> As Vladimir Mayakovsky had declared after the revolution, “*We are shooting the old generals! Why not Pushkin?*”, cited in Hoffmann, D. L. *Stalinist Values*, 150.

<sup>26</sup> Hoffmann, D. L. *Stalinist Values*, 152.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 160–161.

<sup>28</sup> Groys, B. *Stalin – stiil [Stalin-style]*. – Akadeemia, 1998, 2, 427.

*“Art Belongs to the People!”*

According to official rhetoric, the revolution did away with the exploitation and suppression of workers. Factories, land, railways, and banks now belonged to the people. Making use of everything that was more worthy and better than the culture of the past, by critically selecting from the cultural heritage, the Soviet people were to begin building a new, higher kind of socialist culture, led by the Communist Party. As expressed by Kalinin in 1938:

The Soviet system released the creative powers in people by making culture their own. A dream of the best of science, arts and literature came true: people showed due appreciation of and lifted high their cultural heritage, making it part of the new socialist culture (cited in Medvedjev and Hlöstov 1954, 10).<sup>29</sup>

Party leaders selectively incorporated past cultural heroes into the official cultural canon. Hoffmann (2003, 163) explains that selective rediscovery and incorporation of Russian classics and pre-revolutionary leading figures of the arts<sup>30</sup> into the canon of Soviet culture fulfilled both the (pre-revolutionary) elite’s long-standing dream of bringing Russian high culture to the masses and the Soviet goal of creating a common culture to be shared by all members of the population. In 1939, in his speech fixing targets for the gradual transition from socialism to communism, Stalin in a speech said:

We want all the workers and all the farmers to become cultural and educated, and we will make it happen in time (cited in Medvedjev and Hlöstov 1954, 14).

Stalinist culture and cultural policy entailed a wide range of norms and practices intended to transform people’s behaviour and create a new social order: the Soviet society. Hoffmann (2003) claims that the Stalinist use of traditional institutions and culture for modern mobilization purposes reflected the general demands for mass politics in Europe after World War I. Stalinist culture was to become as a particular Soviet version or incarnation of the modern mass culture.

*Folklore culture – the pluralistic unity of the USSR, “Friendship of Peoples”*

In the 1930s, the official Soviet cultural policy emphasized folklore. As Hoffmann (2003, 166–169) describes it, at the First Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934, Gorky championed folklore as

“a genuine expression of people’s optimism and aspirations” and suggested that “we need to share our knowledge of the past. It is important for all union republics that a Belorussian knows what a Georgian or Turk is like, [...]”.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Medvedjev, A., Hlöstov, F. *Külanõukogude kultuurharidustöö [Cultural Educational Work of Local Administrations in the Villages]*. Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus, Tallinn, 1954, 10.

<sup>30</sup> Pushkin, Tolstoy, and others were enshrined in the Soviet literary canon, in the music of Glinka and other classical composers of the pre-revolutionary era, particularly the “Russian Five” (Balakirev, Cui, Mussorgsky, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov) – all famous for their efforts to compose Russian classical music. Also certain political and military leaders from the tsarist past were rehabilitated (Yaroslav the Wise, Ivan the Great, Peter the Great, etc.): Hoffmann, D. L. *Stalinist Values*, 163.

<sup>31</sup> Hoffmann, D. L. *Stalinist Values*, 166–169.

This statement marked the beginning of an official campaign to promote folklore. It was connected to another important thesis of the Soviet national and cultural policy – “*Friendship of Peoples*” – which required that all Soviet nationalities be deeply moved by the art of other Soviet nationalities and develop their folklore culture as a representation of the Soviet pluralistic unity. As Slezkine (1994, 447) explains it:

This resulted not only in frenzied translation activity but also in histories of the USSR that were supposed to include all the Soviet peoples, radio shows that introduced Soviet listeners to ‘Georgian polyphony and Belorussian folk songs’, tours by hundreds of “song and dance ensembles”, decades of Azerbaijani art in Ukraine, evenings of Armenian poetry in Moscow, exhibits of Turkmen carpets in Kazan, and festivals of national choirs, athletes and Young Pioneers all over the country. From the mid-1930s through the 1980s, this activity was one of the most visible aspects of official Soviet culture.<sup>32</sup>

The government sponsored village expeditions to gather folkloric materials, folk singing competitions, and festivals of national art featuring works produced by various Soviet nationalities. The government established the N. Krupskaya All-Union House of Folk Art in Moscow, as well as institutes of national culture all over the country.<sup>33</sup> Folk culture was used by party leaders to promote controlled and artificial representation of Soviet forms of national cultures. An example of political representation of Estonian folklore, see poster 1 from 1947:



**Poster 1.** Evening of Folklore Art in Tallinn 1947. Estonian History Museum, Collection of Posters (F158-1-36).

<sup>32</sup> Slezkine, Y. The USSR as a communal apartment, or how a socialist state promoted ethnic particularism. – *Slavic Review*, 1994, 53, 2, 447.

<sup>33</sup> Oinas, F. J. The political uses and themes of folklore in the Soviet Union. – In: *Folklore, Nationalism, and Politics*. Columbus, 1972, 77–78, cited via Hoffmann, D. L. *Stalinist Values*, 166–169; see also Shay, A. *Choreographic Politics: State Folk Dance Companies, Representation and Power*. Wesleyan University Press, 2002.

### Russification and nationalism as the ideological basis for Soviet cultural policy

As a centralized state, the Soviet Union stressed Russian language and Russian culture – official propaganda referred to Russians as the “elder brother” of other nationalities or as “first among equals”. Russification was one aspect of the Soviet national and cultural policy. However, the Soviet nationalities policy was based on “national diversity”<sup>34</sup>, which was a paradoxical prerequisite for “ultimate unity” (within Soviet Socialism).

As Slezkine (1994, 418) explains it, Lenin’s socialists needed native languages, native subjects and teachers (“even for a single Georgian child”) in order to “polemicize with ‘their own’ bourgeoisie, to spread anticlerical and antibourgeois ideas among peasantry and burghers” and to “banish the virus of bourgeois nationalism from their proletarian disciples and their own minds”. Mertelsmann (2012, 12) points out that the Soviet nationalities policy, based on the concept of *korenizatsiia* (“taking root”), to build up and secure the central power the Soviet system needed the help of national cadres. The basic concepts for national and cultural policies were worked out by Lenin and developed by Stalin. The Soviet concept of “national diversity” and “ultimate unity of nations” under the red flag and leadership of Stalin, has been visualized on poster 2:



**Poster 2.** Expression of “national diversity” and “ultimate unity”. Estonian History Museum, Collection of Posters (F158-1-23).

<sup>34</sup> See also **Warshovsky Lapidus, G.** Ethnonationalism and political stability: the soviet case. – *World Politics*, 1984, **36**, 4, 555–580.



In 1948, closely resembling his earlier statement on national rights, Stalin said:

Every nation, whether large or small, has its own specific qualities and its own peculiarities, which are unique to it and which contribute to what each nation gives to the common treasury of world culture, adding to it and enriching it. In this sense all nations, both small and large, are in the same position and each nation is equal to any other nation.<sup>35</sup>

According to Lenin, national culture was a reality, it was about language and a few “domestic arrangements”: nationality was a “form”. National form was acceptable because there was no such thing as national content, as Slezkine (1994, 423) notes. The content which filled the national form was socialism. This basic principle for Soviet cultural policy – as set by Lenin and Stalin – was expressed with the main slogan: “*Soviet Culture is Nationalist in Form and Socialist in Content*”, the concept is visualized on poster 3.

### State-funded cultural bureaucracy shaping cultural norms and canon

A specific feature of Soviet cultural policy was its highly bureaucratic nature. As all cultural organizations were state funded, they were also guided and controlled



**Poster 3.** “To Develop Soviet Folklore: Nationalist in Form and Socialist in Content!” Estonian History Museum, Collection of Posters (F158-1-7).

<sup>35</sup> Stalin, J. Sochineniya, 3(XVI), 100: cited in Slezkine, Y. The USSR as a communal apartment, 449.

by the bureaucracy of state institutions.<sup>36</sup> However, as Hoffmann notes (2003, 5), the party leaders, who retained absolute power in the system, could not dictate the contents of every single propaganda film, hygiene-promoting poster and school textbook produced in the Soviet Union. Instead, they set up a network of institutions and a control mechanism to oversee cultural production and the promulgation of official norms and values.

In cultural policy research, such a dominant role of the state has been described in the Hillmann-Chartrand and McCaughey's theoretical framework as the "engineer state" model (1989). The engineer state acts as the owner of all means of artistic production, supports only the art that meets political standards of excellence. Funding decisions are made by political commissars. Artistic activity (both professional and amateur) is organized into "creative unions" (or methodically-guiding administrative bodies) so as to monitor new works and ensure conformity with the aesthetic principles of the Communist Party.<sup>37</sup>

To summarize, the aims of the Soviet cultural policy were to control and restructure the masses, to set a common cultural canon and norms to reform and restructure society, with the final aim of constructing a monolithic society and a new type of human being: the Soviet Person. The Soviet cultural policy was characterized by the following features: the cultural policy was hierarchical in essence, promoting high culture and Russian culture for the arts, yet with a strong inclination to support folklore which had become used as the politicized representation of Soviet pluralistic unity. The cultural policy model of the Soviet Union in the mid-1930s–1990s period was carried out according to the *engineer state* model which was exported and implemented all over the occupied territories of the Soviet Union.

The biggest change in the Estonian society was mental change, related to the suppression of bottom-up free initiative of people, which was not tolerated by state in any spheres of life. The Soviet system with the allocative function of the state, created dependents, as Fitzpatrick<sup>38</sup> explains, referring to Janos Kornai<sup>39</sup> who has pointed out that, in Soviet-type systems the population is under the "paternalistic tutelage" and care of the party and state. "All other strata, groups, or individuals in society are children, wards whose minds must be made up for them by their adult guardians." A citizen's natural posture toward a state that

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<sup>36</sup> The coercive mechanisms of institutionalized structures and practices as the impact of Soviet institutionalization on Estonian cultural policy can be analysed referring to the theoretical concepts of institutional isomorphism. See **DiMaggio, P., Powell, W.** The iron cage revisited: institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields. – *American Sociological Review*, 1983, **48**, 2, 147–160.

<sup>37</sup> **Hillmann-Chartrand, H., McCaughey, C.** The arm's length principle and the arts, 7–8.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 225.

<sup>39</sup> **Kornai, J.** Economics of shortage. – In: *Contribution to Economic Analysis* #131, 2 vols. Amsterdam, 1980, 315, cited in **Fitzpatrick, S.** *Everyday Stalinism. Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s.*

controls the distribution of goods and benefits is one of supplication, not resistance. As Ray (2007, 512) explains it, “This was inevitable in order to repress and hold back one of the most dangerous enemies of the Soviet totalitarian regime – civil society – with its liberal market values and community involvement.”<sup>40</sup>

Below, I try to demonstrate the upheaval related to the sovietization of the cultural practices of folk culture, amateur art of the Estonian population.

### **THE EXPORTING OF SOVIET CULTURAL POLICY INTO ESTONIAN COMMUNITY HOUSES**

When the Soviet Union seized power in Estonia in 1940, Leninist principles and well-tried scenarios, which the Soviet authorities had used for the purpose of the Cultural Revolution in the Soviet Union, were immediately applied in the reorganization of cultural life.

#### **Banning manifestations of civil society and free initiatives**

For the Estonian societies running the community houses, and other free initiative organizations, everything changed on August 23, 1940, when the Act of Nationalization of Private Companies was promulgated by the Council of the People’s Commissars.<sup>41</sup> This dissolved societies, non-governmental organizations (i.e. museums, libraries, theatres, community houses, cinemas), foundations and private companies. The assets, collections, buildings and inventory of the societies and companies, now without owners, were taken over by the commissaries, were nationalized and handed over to the People’s Commissariat for Education of the ESSR. On the basis of acquired material basis, a state network of cultural institutions – community houses (as well as theatres, libraries, cinemas, museums) – was created.<sup>42</sup>

On the basis of the regulation of the Council of People’s Commissars of the ESSR, adopted on October 9, community houses were turned into centers for political education. The guidelines,<sup>43</sup> issued a few days later, instructed that the network of community houses was to be set up, and it was to be approved by the People’s Commissariat for Education in towns and counties. The new mission of community houses covered the following fields:

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<sup>40</sup> Ray, L. Civil society. – In: Ritzer, G. (ed.). *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*. Blackwell Publishing, Malden, 2007, 512–513.

<sup>41</sup> Riigi Teataja (RT) 1940, 109, 1105.

<sup>42</sup> Eesti NSV kultuuriasutuste ajaloo teatmik, I osa [*Reference Book of the History of Estonian Cultural Institutions, I part*]. Ed. E. Taal. Central State Archives of Estonian SSR, Tallinn, 1982, 4–14 (hereinafter: Reference Book).

<sup>43</sup> The Commissariat for Education of the ESSR issued guidelines for community houses on October 15, 1940. Reference Book, 1982, 4–5.

Political education, agricultural, industrial and propaganda about the country's defensive capabilities, libraries, artistic expression of people, organization of work with children and youth, and many other spheres.<sup>44</sup>

Aleksander Kurvits' account offers a personal perspective on this process.<sup>45</sup> In 1940, the Ministry of Education issued a compendium compiled by Kurvits – *A Systematic Guide to Acts, Regulations, Circular Letters and Guidelines on Estonian National Education and Culture*.<sup>46</sup> The publication contains all the acts and regulations, circular letters and guidelines of the Ministry of Education issued in the Republic of Estonia in the period 1918–1940 on the management of national education, activities of educational organizations, qualifications, youth work, libraries, community houses, science, art, literature, heritage protection, and the education and career of academicians, along with respective explanations.

Several months later, in 1941, Kurvits, had to announce *a completely new view on free education and culture* in the first issue of the Bulletins of the People's Commissariat, which replaced the Bulletin of the Ministry of Education.<sup>47</sup> In the regulation, specific instructions – proceeding from the N. Krupskaya All-Union House of Folk Art in Moscow – on how to celebrate Lenin's death anniversary in community houses are provided:

It is necessary to make proper arrangements for the memorial day in community houses, clubs, the Red Corners, libraries, etc. early enough and begin preparation and implementation immediately:

1) to arrange a festive memorial meeting in every community house; 2) to arrange various working meetings in different study groups in order to learn about the life and work of V. I. Lenin and the events of the Bloody Sunday; 3) to arrange, also before and after January 22, at an available opportunity, public lectures on V. I. Lenin and January (9) 22, 1905 events in St. Petersburg; 4) to make respective presentations – speeches, declamations, and other – part of various public memorial day meetings and party programs; 5) to publish special issues of pin-board news in community houses and public libraries etc.<sup>48</sup>

This is followed by detailed and elaborate guidelines on how Lenin's memorial day was to be celebrated in community houses and public libraries, what the program must look like, which music and declamations are to be selected, how the Red Corners in community houses are to be decorated, see below (Photo 1).

<sup>44</sup> Law: ENSV RKN määrus nr. 260 9. oktoobrist 1940. a. ENSV ORKA f R-1, n 1, s 37, l 457 jj. Reference Book, 1982, 4–14.

<sup>45</sup> Kurvits, Aleksander (1896–1958) state official of the Ministry of Education during 1921–1940, who contributed to the development of Estonian free education and establishment of the network of community houses. See **Kurvits, A.** (ed.). *Eesti rahvaharidus ja kultuuriala korraldus [Administration of Estonian Free Education and Culture]*. Haridusministeeriumi väljaanne, Tallinn, 1938.

<sup>46</sup> **Kurvits, A.** (ed.). *Eesti rahvahariduse ja kultuuriala seaduste, määruste, ringkirjade ja juhendite süstemaatiline üldjuht [Systematic Guide to Acts, Regulations, Circular Letters and Guidelines on Estonian National Education and Culture]*. Haridusministeeriumi väljaanne, Tallinn, 1940.

<sup>47</sup> **Kurvits, A.** (ed.). *Hariduse Rahvakomissariaadi Teataja. Ametlik Ajakiri [Bulletin of the People's Commissariat, the Replacement of the Bulletin of the Ministry of Education]*. Tallinn, Jan. 6. 1941.

<sup>48</sup> **Kurvits, A.** (ed.). *Hariduse Rahvakomissariaadi Teataja. Ametlik Ajakiri [Bulletin of the People's Commissariat of January 6 (the Replacement of the Bulletin of the Ministry of Education)]*. 1941. Author's translation.



**Photo 1.** Wallboard “Red Ray” 1941 (Seinaleht “Punakiir”) to celebrate Lenin’s death anniversary in 1941. Estonian History Museum (AM 1480/R F 2569).

How was the situation perceived by people from community organizations, who had up until August 1940 operated on free citizen initiatives, upon their reading of the new rhetoric and guidelines? Per Wiselgrad (1942, 105) has described that many people perceived the hypocritical rhetoric of the new regime as mental oppression. The constitution solemnly promised freedom of the press, speech, association and personal security; in reality none of it was true:

Newspapers were day after day filled with detailed announcements about silly and vacuous meetings and of the decisions made, public calls, resolutions, mottos and watchwords thereof. Salutes to comrade Stalin and other party bosses in newspapers were permanent. Also biographies of Stalin and Lenin were repeated over and over and their portraits were displayed.

The new regime not only censors matters dealing with actual politics but *interferes with the free time of people* (e.g. workers were made to listen politicians lecture about Marxism and Leninism four times a week, with participation in meetings and demonstrations carefully documented).<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> **Wiselgrad, P.** *Fran Hammarén till Hakkorset. Estland 1939–1941.* Ide och Form Förlag, Stockholm, 1942, 105.

Aarelaid (2006, 175) has described how the abrupt reversal in cultural norms and values caused traumatic syndrome and *double-mindedness* in people.<sup>50</sup> People were psychologically not ready to lose their memories of the independent nation state.

As described above, from the very first moments of the new regime, community houses, in addition to the direct administrative subordination, had to follow methodical guidelines, which were labelled as help and sharing of experience. These guidelines, which were tied up and subordinated to the Five Year Plan cycle's directions and plans of the Soviet Communist Party, were compiled in the Soviet Union central institution, the N. Krupskaya All-Union House of Folk Art in Moscow, and shared by local institutions of Soviet Republics<sup>51</sup> – in the forges of methodological guidelines and mandatory repertoire.

With the same regulation of October 9, 1940, with which societies and unions were dissolved and their assets nationalized in Estonia, the Centre for Folk Arts was established under the department of political education in the People's Commissariat of the ESSR. The Centre for Folk Arts took over the functions of the Estonian Education Association, the Estonian Singers' Union and the National Estonian Youth Organization of the previous era. All larger choirs, folk dance groups and orchestras which had operated as part of the dissolved societies were now subject to the Centre for Folk Arts, the code of conduct of which was adopted on October 30, 1940.<sup>52</sup> The mission of the Centre for Folk Arts was "*to promote and administer amateur arts*".<sup>53</sup>

In 1940 and 1941, the legal structure for the sovietization of community houses was set but due to the beginning of World War II, there was no time for a full implementation of the system. Archival dossiers<sup>54</sup> show that the existing network of community houses was thoroughly studied by the authorities of the People's Commissariat for Education of the ESSR. Extensive reports with precise data on community houses and the people involved (location of the community house,

<sup>50</sup> Double-mindedness (the emergence of double standards) is a deep socio-psychological mechanism for the adaption of people living under the unfavourable conditions caused by major historical upheavals. The main function of this mechanism is the self-protection of individual identities in the permanent coercive process of switching over from one ideological system to another (Aarelaid-Tart, A. Cultural Trauma and Life Stories. (Kikumora Publications A., 15.) Gummerus Printing, Vaajakoski, 2006, 192–193.

<sup>51</sup> Methodical guidelines from the N. Krupskaya All-Union House of Folk Art in Moscow to Estonian Centre for Folk Art in 1955. Eesti Riigiarhiiv (ERA) [*Estonian State Archive*]. ERA.R.-28.2.147; Archival Documents of the People's Commissariat for Education of the ESSR (1940–1941). ERA.R.-14.1.926; ERA.R.-14.1.914; ERA.R.-14.1.556; Archival Documents of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education (1945–1953). ERA.R.-1570.1.57; ERA.R.-1570.1.247; ERA.R.-1570.1.179; ERA.R.-1570.1.152; ERA.R.-1570.1.192; ERA.R.-1570.1.262; ERA.R.-1570.1.339; ERA.R.-1570.1.434; ERA.R.-1570.1.131; Archival Documents of the Folk Art House (1940–1959). ERA.R.-28.2.87; ERA.R.-28.2.147; ERA.R.-28.2.151; ERA.R.-28.2.2.3; Archival Documents of the Folk Art House (1966, 1967, 1973). ERA.R.-28.2.318; ERA.R.-28.2.338; ERA.R.-28.2.314; ERA.R.-28.2.369; ERA.R.-28.2.487.

<sup>52</sup> Reference Book, I, 84–85.

<sup>53</sup> ENSV Teataja 1940, 37, 442.

<sup>54</sup> Archival documents of the People's Commissariat for Education of the ESSR (1940–1941). ERA.R.-14.1.926; ERA.R.-14.1.914; ERA.R.-14.1.556.

year of construction, condition of buildings, the number and type of amateur hobby groups, the number of people participating in the activities, the social status, as well as educational level of the people leading the community houses and amateur art activities) about each Estonian county were compiled (ibid.).

By the autumn of 1941, Estonia had been taken over by German troops. During the German occupation, the former state of cultural affairs was re-established and assets, buildings and collections were returned to societies. An active cultural life in Estonia continued largely as it had during independence. However, the conditions of the occupation cannot be called free: the German occupying troops persecuted and executed Jews and communists or suspected communists, including writers, artists and socially active people.

During the years of the loss of independent statehood a large part of the cultural and art elite left and a strong nationalist feeling, which had existed were dispersed into the different worlds of the East and the West. The biggest losses of creative people and artists came with the emigration to Germany (1939–1941), the 1941 June deportation and the forced conscription to the Soviet army.<sup>55</sup> From 1944, when the Red Army took over the Estonian territory once again, the situation was again reversed and sovietization continued. After World War II, the Soviet legal structure for administering amateur arts was secured; nonetheless several restructurings<sup>56</sup> took place until in 1959 the administrative institution for amateur arts was named the Folk Art House of the ESSR, which was subject to the Ministry of Culture.

### Sovietization of community houses after World War II

In May 1945, the Council of Peoples' Commissars of the ESSR adopted new rules for the administration of community houses.<sup>57</sup> The regulation was accompanied in the same year by instructions and mandatory standard statutes for community houses, which, in Chapter 5, laid down the following: the mission of community houses, the content and form of work, types of community house, administration and organization of work, rules for the management and dissolution of the community house. According to the document, community houses were categorized according to duties into the following types: town, central, county, central parish and local parish community houses. The network of community houses was drawn

<sup>55</sup> Karjahärm and Luts (2005) and Kuuli (2007) describe the preparatory steps in re-education the intelligentsia and creating the new cultural elite by the Soviet authorities during the war. See **Karjahärm, T., Luts, H.-M.** *Kultuurigenotsiid Eestis. Kunstnikud ja muusikud 1940–1953* [*Cultural Genocide in Estonia. Artists and Musicians from 1940–1953*]. Argo, Tallinn, 2005; **Kuuli, O.** *Stalini aja võimukaader ja kultuurijuhid Eesti NSV-s (1940–1954)* [*Stalin-era Cadres in Power and Cultural Administrators in the Estonian SSR (1940–1954)*]. Tallinn, 2007.

<sup>56</sup> Referencwe Book, I; **Kuuli, O.** *Stalini aja võimukaader ja kultuurijuhid Eesti NSV-s (1940–1954)*.

<sup>57</sup> **Borkman, A.** (ed.). *Eesti ENSV RKN määruse juurde nr. 464 25. maist 1945. Rahvamajade töö korraldamise eeskirjad. Eesti NSV Asjadevalitseja Riiklik Kirjastus "Poliitiline kirjandus", trükikoda "Kommunist", Tallinn, 1945.*

up by local party organizations in Estonian towns and counties and approved by the People's Commissariat for Education of the ESSR. The *new mission of community houses* was stated to be:

the cultivation of active and informed builders of the socialist society by politically educating people in the soviet spirit, organizing mass political, culturally and generally educating events and providing quality recreation and entertainment.<sup>58</sup>

Achieving the objectives according to the mission, a community house:

(a) carries out mass agitation in order to explain the decisions of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Soviet Government; helps party and council bodies in organizing masses of workers and officials for the execution of those decisions; (b) helps workers in learning the Marxist-Leninist theory; (c) teaches socialist regard to work and public property, explains and implements measures for increasing productivity, especially in agriculture, by popularizing agricultural engineering; (d) carries out work in masses during the elections of the Councils of Workers' Representatives, public organizations, lay judges, etc., and arranges reporting events for workers' representatives and other publicly elected officials; (e) arranges the explaining of domestic and external policy events of the Soviet Union; (f) organizes mass propagation of military knowledge and helps in preparing the population for the protection of the immunity of the Soviet Union; (g) helps to raise the cultural-technical level of the population and popularizes scientific, technical, literary and artistic achievements; (h) organizes cultural recreation and entertainment (ibid.).

As can be seen from the above, the work, activities and functions of community houses were explicitly outlined by the authorities. It was a fully politicized agenda with the central task of ideological work for creating the Soviet person and cultivating the masses in accordance with the ideas of building socialist society, that is, the new reality of Soviet Modernity. In addition, with duties provided in the statutes, an institutional system of control and hierarchy was put into effect, with community houses of larger towns or county centers being in charge of coordinating the methodical (ideological) work, as well as central methodical and administrative bodies.

The legal structure for the sovietization of community houses was set and prepared for the full implementation of the system straight after the war in 1945. Comparing the mission and objectives given to the community houses by the state during the first Estonian Republic (Law adopted in 1931, see above) and Soviet Estonia (rules adopted in 1945), we can see remarkable differences in the roles given to the community houses by the state: from the "*centers for cultural and free educational activities*" (1931), community houses were turned into "*centers for the cultivation of active and informed builders of the socialist society by politically educating people in the soviet spirit*" (1945).

The examination of the rules and guidelines above shows that the importation of Soviet coercive state practices and the cultural policy model was systematic, starting with an abrupt legal reconstruction of society, and proceeding with the building up of a top-down governed network of institutions (including trained personnel and professionals).

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<sup>58</sup> Reference Book, I, 84–85.



## NEW ROLES OF COMMUNITY HOUSES AS CENTERS FOR POLITICAL EDUCATION, SOVIET GUIDELINES

As centers for political education, community houses were intended to contribute actively in the re-education process of the Estonian population. To understand how the process was conducted practically, I analyse some of the new tasks of community houses, which were mediated through methodical guidelines. As mentioned above, the guidelines were tied up and subordinated to the Five Year Plans' directions, plans, and decisions adopted at party congresses and sittings. "The Restoration and Development of the National Economy, 1946–50" was set as the main goal for the first postwar Five Year Plan of the USSR, adopted in March 1946 sitting of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. All-union objectives set by the communist party were mandatory as ultimate goals for all Soviet nations.

However, in every republic, the implementation of all-union goals depended on local party leaders, cultural administrators, professionals and historical peculiarities. In Estonia, as a new republic of the Soviet Union, in addition to the restoration of the national economy, the most important goals of the Estonian Communist Party (ECP) during 1945–1948 were related to the exchange of personnel, thus, creating a loyal cadre for carrying out cultural revolution and class fight as Kinkar (1967) has stated.<sup>59</sup> Kuuli (2007) in his study describes the replacement of the former elite of the independent republic<sup>60</sup> in the education and cultural system.

Archival dossiers from 1946 and 1948 of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education<sup>61</sup> show that Stalinist coercion, the re-education with the Soviet cultural canon, became the reality for Estonian community houses immediately after World War II, when the activity was based only on controlled and prescribed guidelines. Mandatory guidance materials, thematic brochures and recommended repertoires of methodical guides were compiled in the N. Krupskaya All-Union House of Folk Art in Moscow, the Estonian Ministry of Culture, and its subsidiary, the Central Methodical Cabinet for Cultural Education, later the Folk Art House of the Estonian SSR.<sup>62</sup> Various booklets were provided in order to support larger all-union economic goals, for teaching hygiene, work education, atheism, moral codes for the builder of communism, etc. (ibid.).

However, it has to be mentioned that ideological pressure was just a part of the matter. Not all the guidelines and activities of the Folk Art House of the

<sup>59</sup> Kinkar, F. EK(b)P Keskkomitee pleenumite ja büroo istungite protokollid Eesti NSV-s toimunud kultuurirevolutsiooni uurimise allikana (1944–1948) [*On the activities of the Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party in leading cultural work in the years 1944–1948*]. (Tõid NLKP ajaloo alalt, V.) Tartu Riiklik Ülikool, 1967, 111–123.

<sup>60</sup> Kuuli, O. Stalini aja võimukaader ja kultuurijuhid Eesti NSV-s (1940–1954).

<sup>61</sup> Archival documents of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education (1946). ERA.R.-1570.1.57 and (1948). ERA.R.-1570.1.131.

<sup>62</sup> Archival Documents of the Folk Art House (1940–1959). ERA.R.-28.2.87; ERA.R.-28.2.147; Dossiers of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education (1945–1953). ERA.R.-1570.1.322; ERA.R.-1570.1.434; ERA.R.-1570.1.192; ERA.R.-1570.1.152.

Estonian SSR should be treated as pure ideology work, especially during the post-Stalinist era. For example, according to Lenin's call, "Communism – Soviet authority together with the electrification of the whole country", an all-union goal was set to build large power plants, hydro- and thermoelectric plants based on local fuels, in order to provide electricity for districts and kolkhozes. In 1953, the guidelines "Program for the Electrotechnical Group in the Community House"<sup>63</sup> were published, providing 50 theoretical and 26 practical lessons for Estonian community houses. Practical manual labor skills were important for overcoming the material shortages of the postwar years, the burden of which was eased by programs organized in community houses. For example, the 1957 "Model Program for the Sewing Group"<sup>64</sup>:

Manual and machine sewing, program of 160 hours with work taking place from September–May, 1–2 times a week, 2–3 hours at a time: practice work, making a cotton dress, a blouse, a skirt, a woolen dress, construction of cutting etc. (ibid.).

In order to promote the work of acting groups, in 1958 a study book on declamation art, *The Work of a Declamator*, based on the technique of psychological realism by Stanislavski, was published.<sup>65</sup>

All in all, the guidelines reveal that despite the changes in the political climate in the Soviet Union after the death of Stalin in 1953, from the second half of 1950s, when repressions were replaced by the Khrushchev Thaw, and the liberal trends of the 1960s, *the official ideological line and rhetoric in the central cultural policy remained the same: expressing the norms of Soviet cultural canon with the aim of cultivating the masses*. In 1970, "Thematic evenings" were published, with thematic and artistic suggestions on how to organize leisure activities for the Estonian population, e.g.: "Montage, Programmes for Declamation and Agitation", "My Other Heart", "Lenin – The Flag of All Victories", "Lenin – State Leader and Man".<sup>66</sup> In 1971, a brochure about "Military/Patriotic Education" was released.<sup>67</sup>

In order to demonstrate the process of sovietization of Estonian community houses, I have chosen to include in this article some of those guidelines from among various booklets mediated via Folk Art House of the Estonian SSR to community houses, which clearly demonstrate the use of guidelines for ideological purposes of Soviet propaganda.

<sup>63</sup> **Kozlov, M. D.** Õppekava Elektrotehnika ringile rahvamajas [*Programme for the Electrotechnical Group in the Community House*]. – In: Eesti NSV Kultuurhariduslike asutuste peavalitsus, kultuurharidustöö metoodiline keskkabinet. Ed. H. Kulbok. Trükikoda "Kommunist", Tallinn, 1953.

<sup>64</sup> Õblemisringi näidisõppekava [*Model Program for the Sewing Group*]. Kultuurharidustöö metoodiline keskkabinet, trükikoda "Tallinn", 1957.

<sup>65</sup> **Bender, N. A.** Deklamaatori töö [*The Work of a Declamator*]. Eesti NSV Kultuuriministeeriumi kultuur-hariduslike asutuste valitsus, Eesti NSV Rahvaloomingu ja metoodilise töö keskmaja, trükikoda "Tallinn", 1958.

<sup>66</sup> Teematilised õhtud [*Thematic Evenings*]. Eesti NSV Rahvaloomingu Maja, trükikoda "Tallinn", 1970.

<sup>67</sup> Sõjalis-patriootlik kasvatustöö [*Military/Patriotic Education*]. Eesti NSV Rahvaloomingu Maja, trükikoda Tallinn, 1971.

### Community houses as tools for the sovietization of Estonian rural life

During the first independent state, the establishment of the network of community houses as significant tools of regional cultural policy was clearly the expression of socio-economic and cultural vitality of Estonian rural regions. The vitality of rural regions based on the successful Land Act (1919), which expropriated almost all of the landed property which had mostly belonged to the Baltic-German nobility, leaving the latter just over 50 ha each.<sup>68</sup> The Estonian government chose a peasant-based strategy of development (along the lines of Denmark and the Netherlands) where agriculture was the predominant sector of the economy. Modern ideas spread among the educated rural population. Peasant-based development has been described as a success story – due to agricultural societies and state subsidies. Kõll (1994, 12–15, 130) has pointed out that Estonian peasants were relatively successful agricultural exporters on the world market in the 1930s (especially of meat and dairy products). Estonia was one of the largest food producers per capita in Europe.<sup>69</sup>

With the incorporation of the Baltic states into the USSR in the summer of 1940, the transition from market to Stalinist command economy began. Together with the radically changing principles of economy,<sup>70</sup> the traditional look of Estonian villages had to be changed, as had happened in Russia, in accordance with the vision of Party authorities. In his speech at the AUCP(b) 17th Congress in 1934, Stalin said to characterize old villages:

The old village with a church in the most distinguishable spot, with finer houses of the *uriadnik*, priest and *kulak* in the forefront – is disappearing. It is taken over by a new village with its societal and economic buildings, its clubs, radio, cinema, schools, libraries and nurseries, its tractors, combine harvesters, threshing machines and cars. There are no more such notable characters as *kulaks*/exploiters, usurers/bloodsuckers, traders/profiteers, and patronizing *uriadniks* (Stalin 1934, cited in Medvedjev and Hlöstov, Cultural Educational Work, 1954, 10).<sup>71</sup>

Noting the rapid increase in cultural level in the Soviet villages, Kalinin wrote in 1937:

Earlier a peasant had a hard time making his way to the heights of human knowledge... Now the village has almost caught up with the town – there is quite a dense network of not only elementary schools but also secondary schools in the villages. Machine powered production itself promotes development of initiative in villages, the courageous steps of the children of peasants in

<sup>68</sup> Such a semi-socialist reform was possible mainly because the upper class had hitherto consisted of ethnic Others (Baltic Germans and Russian officials) and this had also prevented further stratification among Estonians. See **Annist, A.** *Otsides kogukonda sotsialismijärgses keskkülas: arenguantropoloogiline uurimus [Seeking Community in Post-Socialist Central Villages]*. Tallinna Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2011, 76–79.

<sup>69</sup> **Kõll, A. M.** *Peasants on the World Market: Agricultural Experience of Independent Estonia 1919–1939*. Stockholm, 1994, 12–15, 130.

<sup>70</sup> Mertelsmann (2012) and Keep (1995) introduce the wider aims of Stalinist agricultural policy, which might be seen as a mode to channel funds from agriculture into the hands of the state to finance industrial investments: **Keep, J. L. H.** *Last of the Empires. A History of the Soviet Union 1945–1991*. Oxford University Press, 1995, 244–262.

<sup>71</sup> Stalin 1934, cited in Medvedjev and Hlöstov: Cultural Educational Work, 10.

the fields of science, technology and arts. [...] The peasant has become the small-holding collectivist creating cultural, prosperous life... The peasant has become the real master, creator of his own happiness (Kalinin, 1938 cited in Medvedjev and Hlöstov, Cultural Educational Work, 1954, 10).

However, according to Mertelsmann (2012, 90), Estonian people had heard (from soldiers of the Red Army and the German Army, and also from people returning from evacuation to the Soviet Union after the war) about the realities of the collective farm system and about poverty, hunger and devastation in the kolkhozes. Estonian peasant households tried to stay away from kolkhozes.

After the mass deportation of 1949, the locals who had so far collectively avoided joining the kolkhozes/sovkhozes, were forced to join both by fear and by various tax measures. By January 1, 1950, 80% of farms were collectivized; one year later the figure was 93%. While in 1939 there were approximately 140,000 single farms in Estonia, by the end of the Stalinist era there were 934 agricultural and 84 fishing kolkhozes in the country.<sup>72</sup>

Community houses had to assist the authorities in carrying out the collectivization of Estonian agriculture and the reshaping of life in the villages.<sup>73</sup> Already in November 1944, the Estonian Communist Party was discussing thoroughly the question of “the work of community houses in the village”. Kinkar (1967, 123) has described the 5th plenary session of the ECP in 1945, where the direction was taken to the fight against bourgeois nationalist tendencies and anti-soviet elements in rural areas.<sup>74</sup> In 1949, the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education issued the “Standard Statutes for Kolkhoz Clubs”, with Chapter 6 stating the aim of the kolkhoz club, rooms and furnishings, organization of work, funds, auditing of finances, and liquidation:

Organizations of cultural education in the village help party organizations to educate village workers in the communist spirit, develop their culture, mobilize *kolkhozniks* to meet the plans of the national economy.

The correct deployment of communists and communist youth in the most important sections of work, systematic control and fixing of work plans of clubs, reading rooms, cultural houses, and libraries, organizing the work of political-agro-zootechnical clubs and village lecture rooms, managing the work of the press and radio, massive development of amateur activities in the field of physical culture, sports and arts are focused on increasing the importance of organizations of cultural education in the communist education of workers in the kolkhoz village, etc.<sup>75</sup>

The de-Stalinization and modest liberalization of Soviet society following the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956 ended the so-called “severe class struggle period” in Estonia, as Aareleid-Tart (2006, 169)

<sup>72</sup> Liquidation of the kulaks as a class was carried out according to the Stalinist model, with at least 1,200 families deported in 1947, and in March 1949, 20,700 people were deported to Siberia, with the aim of scaring the Estonian people into submitting to the kolkhoz regime (Aareleid-Tart, A. Cultural Trauma and Life Stories, 168).

<sup>73</sup> See Paavle, I. Sovietization of Local Administration in Estonia 1940–1950. Thesis of Tartu University, 2009. [http://dspace.utlib.ee/dspace/bitstream/handle/10062/14206/paavle\\_indrek.pdf?sequence=1](http://dspace.utlib.ee/dspace/bitstream/handle/10062/14206/paavle_indrek.pdf?sequence=1)

<sup>74</sup> Kinkar, F. EK(b)P Keskkomitee pleenumite ja büroo istungite protokollid Eesti NSV-s toimunud kultuurirevolutsiooni uurimise allikana (1944–1948), 123.

<sup>75</sup> Kolhoosiklubi tüüp-põhimäärus [Standard Statutes for Kolkhoz Clubs]. Trükikoda “Punane Täht”, Tallinn, 1949, 20.

argues, and created an environment for certain social liberalization. Khrushchev's campaign to increase the role of the agricultural economy and to minimize the difference between rural and urban regions resulted in prospering agriculture in Estonia, a country with a long tradition of peasant farming.<sup>76</sup>

#### *Promoting socialist working competitions*

To promote the planned economy in the relevant Five Year Plan cycles (where demand and supply in production were not necessarily interrelated) and its dwindling productivity, socialist working competitions were used. The following guideline offers an example of how community houses contributed to such Communist Party tasks. A methodical guide of 1958, "A Guide for Club Workers. Evening for Advanced Agricultural Workers in Keila District Cultural House" begins with an assertion:

The aim of workers in the field of cultural education is to assist village workers in carrying out their obligations. In the brochure, an evening of *kolkhozniks* in Keila district cultural house on the topic of 'We shall catch up with the United States in per capita butter, meat and milk production' is described.

Soviet people have warmly welcomed the party call for catching up with the United States in the per capita production of butter, meat and milk in the coming years. Those working in the field of agriculture understand that the goal set by the party is not easy, but it can be accomplished.

To reach the goal set by the party (to gain on America), the club must become a center where *kolkhozniks* and *sovhozniks* can learn and further their education. In order to increase production rapidly and in the shortest period of time, one must rely on science and progressive practices. In his speech at the January plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU, N. S. Khrushchev called science a compass without which it is impossible to move on.<sup>77</sup>

Heroes of socialist labor were presented with red flags and pennants, one of the rehearsal rooms of the cultural house was made to look like a national farmhouse, selling home brew, blood sausages, legs of pork, and other national dishes; the acting group performed the play *Fortune Hunters* on the topic of kolkhoz life by E. Vaigur.

The evening's dance was to take place to the music of the brass band and folk music orchestra of the cultural house: *Program of the evening*:

1. Presentation "Reaching the national goal – catching up with the United States in per capita butter, meat and milk production in the coming years – in district kolkhozes" Presenter Comrade Vooglaid, secretary of the Committee of Keila District of the ECP.
2. Speeches by progressive agricultural workers.
3. Rewarding of progressive agricultural workers.
4. *Fortune Hunters*, a comedy by E. Vaigur, by the drama group of the cultural house.
5. Dancing to the music of a brass band and folk music orchestra.

<sup>76</sup> However, it was not the case everywhere in the Soviet Union. In general, agriculture in the Soviet Union remained inefficient despite enormous inputs of money and manpower, explains **Keep, J. L. H.** Last of the Empires. A History of the Soviet Union 1945–1991, 119.

<sup>77</sup> Abiks klubitöötajale. Põllumajanduse eesrindlaste õhtu Keila rajooni kultuurimajas [*A Guide for Club Workers. Evening for Advanced Agricultural Workers in Keila District Cultural House*]. Ed. K. Võsa. ENSV Rahvaloomingu ja metoodilise töö keskmaja, trükikoda "Bolševik", Viljandi, 1958.

The guidelines instruct that thematic evenings should be organized in order to increase the motivation of kolkhoz workers:

Also the performances of amateur agitation brigades have to aid in every way in achieving the competitive goal set by the party. The workers of our clubs are experienced in organizing thematic evenings. Thematic evenings as an influential form of club work must widely be used in helping *kolkhozniks* achieve the goals set to them.

Guidelines and instructions on how to create agricultural corners in community houses were published. A guideline from 1961, “The Agricultural Corner in a Club”, instructs:

Clubs and libraries must tirelessly advocate the communist party policy and decisions, act as centers for disseminating agro-biological sciences and advanced experience. Also of importance is the development of socialist competition between workers, promoting the work experience of advanced workers, and helping colleagues who are lagging behind. In this case, all verbal and visual forms of agitation must be used.

Clubs and libraries must organize lectures, presentations and discussions on the following topics: “Catching up with the US in per capita livestock production in the coming years – this is an inseparable part of the main goal of the economy of the USSR” or “The slogan of the party – to catch up with the United States in per capita meat, milk and butter production – expresses the tireless care of the CPSU for the wellbeing of people”.

Also visual agitation – banners, placards, periodically-issued bulletins, leaflets, flyers, etc. – have an important role to play in highlighting the socialist competition and encouraging advanced work results.<sup>78</sup>

An example of how banners of socialist competitions should look, see Fig. 1:

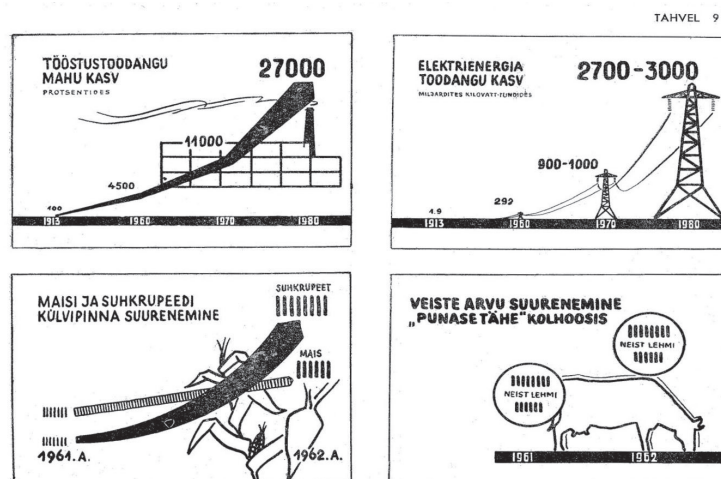


Fig. 1. The Banner in the Agricultural Corner in a Club, 1961.

<sup>78</sup> Põllumajandusnurk klubis [Agricultural Corner in a Club]. Eesti NSV Rahvaloomingu Maja klubitöö metoodiline kabinet, trükikoda “Kommunist”, Tallinn, 1961.

### Visual agitation

Visual agitation was meant to be not only in clubs but also in kolkhoz centers, cattle farms and agricultural brigades. A methodical guide of 1962, the “ABC of Visual Agitation. Methodical Guide to Creating Visual Means in Club” states:

Beside verbal and printed propaganda, visual agitation in institutions of cultural education is also important; it is in fact the first measure a club uses in educating its visitors. Visual means helping to introduce the public to the noble ideas of Marxism-Leninism, the goals of the CPSU programme, party and government decisions, scientific and technological achievements, working victories in all spheres of the national economy, the fight for peace, etc.<sup>79</sup>

In order for the visual agitation to work, it must be current, tied to local topics, aesthetically pleasing, and meet certain artistic requirements:

- Banners (permanent banners, temporary banners, their location, composition, choice of materials, implementation)
- Hall of Fame, pinboard news, sample montage, tables with statistics of working victories, framing, composition, etc. (ibid.).

In order to achieve aesthetically impressive results, many examples about how to design a hall of fame, banners, adverts of concert programs, cinema or dancing evenings, etc., were given in the booklet. Examples of the hall of fame and different compositions of banners (their location has to be designated) see Fig. 2.

To improve the skills of people who worked in the community houses, the centralized system of Soviet cultural education was established in Estonia. Cultural workers were trained at innumerable courses and seminars, held on regular basis under the guidance of professionals: visual artists, choir and orchestra conductors,

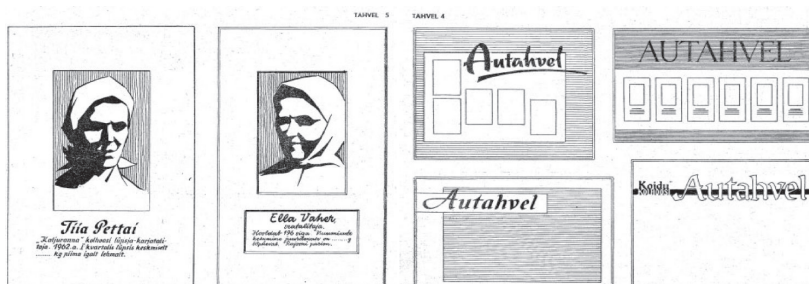


Fig. 2. Compositions of a hall of fame “The ABC of Visual Agitation. Methodical Guide to Creating Visual Means in Club,” 1962.

<sup>79</sup> Virkus, M., Kivi, A. Näitliku agitatsiooni ABC. Metoodilisi juhendeid näitlike vahendite kujundamiseks klubis [The ABC of Visual Agitation. Methodical Guide to Creating Visual Means in Clubs]. Eesti NSV Rahvaloomingu maja klubitööde meetodika teaduslik kabinet, trükikoda “Pärnutrük”, 1962.

dancers and choreographers, also library work, theatre and declamation and other activities were taught, which naturally increased the professional quality of cultural workers and thus improved the level of amateur art practices. However, standardization and dissemination of the prevailing canon, as well as ideological training, represented an important part of this type of training course and seminar.

### Industrialization and “Friendship of Nations”

In 1952, active campaigning of the norms of the Soviet cultural canon including russification and friendship of nations was taking place simultaneously with major changes in the Estonian economy. During the early part of the century, the major emphasis had been on textile and food production. By 1950, however, a significant shift towards heavy industry had taken place. The Moscow Administration started to send large numbers of Russian-speaking workers to be employed in these industries in other republics, although the officially declared aim was to remedy the lack of a sufficiently large workforce caused by heavy losses during the war. Forced industrialization was closely connected with a specific political policy, aimed at restricting the role of native Estonians in society, as Aareleid-Tart (2006, 168) pointed out. The share of ethnic Estonians within the population decreased from 94% in 1945 to 62% in 1989.<sup>80</sup>

Explanations and re-education of the population was needed for the on-going processes of sovietization, so in 1952, the Central Methodical Cabinet issued the following guidelines: “Demonstrating the Friendship between Estonian and Russian People in the Historical Expositions of Museums”. The first paragraph of the document explains:

Studying the historical connections of Estonian and Russian people, the development of friendship between the masses of both nations, and showing the correct treatment of this based on the Marxist-Leninist view on history is a political goal of immense importance. The brotherly friendship of Soviet people grows and strengthens day by day in this monolithic competitive union of communism being built in our country. This friendship must actively be reinforced by the workers of the Soviet ideological front, the first goal of whom is educating people in the spirit of friendship between nations and co-operation. The key to solving this matter lies in the revealing of bourgeois-nationalist tendencies and the scientific invalidation of those tendencies, etc.<sup>81</sup>

Examples on how to enhance the friendship between the brotherly nations of the Soviet Union republics and other socialist countries of the Eastern Bloc are provided in a series of methodical booklets introducing life, cultural and economic achievements made during socialism, e.g., “Introducing Brotherly Republics: Hungary

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<sup>80</sup> Kasekamp, A. A History of the Baltic States. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, 155.

<sup>81</sup> Eesti ja vene rahva sõpruse näitamine muuseumi ajaloolises ekspositsioonis [*Demonstrating the Friendship between Estonian and Russian People in Historical Expositions of Museums*]. Kultuurharidustöö metoodilise keskkabineti materjal. Ed. A. Sillaots. 40 eksemplari, paljundatud Loengute Keskbüroo rotaatoril. Tallinn, 1952.



and the Tajik SSR”,<sup>82</sup> issued in 1965 by the Estonian Central Methodical Cabinet for Cultural Education.

However, the basic ideological orientation of the Soviet cultural policy was set already in the 1940s, thus this kind of slogans and photos had to be displayed on walls before World War II, as can be seen in Photo 2, below.

### Mandatory repertoire and censorship

In Soviet grass-roots-level cultural work, persistent checks, reports, fixed repertoire in music, theatre plays and other amateur arts became an inevitable part of everyday life from the first days of the new regime. The legislative basis for Soviet censorship was the Decree on the Printed Word, adopted on October 27, 1917 by the Council of Peoples’ Commissars, and it was in force until 1990. The role of censorship (pre-, post- and permanent censorship) was broad – all artistic creations (literature, music, art, newspapers, TV and radio programs, as well as amateur art practices in community houses) were subject to it. As Veskimägi (1996, 327) notes, “not a single printing office accepted any manuscript without the imprimatur of the censor. The Soviet censorship system was duplicated and performed by many authorities – by the central committee of the CP of the republics, the KGB, the Council of Ministers and *Glavlit* [The USSR Chief Office of Literature and Publishing Affairs].”<sup>83</sup>



**Photo 2.** Women’s handcraft exhibition in a Valga community house, with leaders and a banner saluting the “Friendship of the Nations” on the wall, 1940. Repro, Estonian History Museum (N15056).

<sup>82</sup> **Poola, M.** Tutvustame vennasvabariike: Ungari ja Tadžiki NSV [*Introducing Brotherly Republics: Hungary and the Tajik SSR*]. (Eesti NSV Rahvaloomingu Maja klubitöö metoodika teadusliku kabineti väljaanne.) Tallinn, 1965.

<sup>83</sup> **Veskimägi, K.-O.** Nõukogude unelaadne elu [*Life as a Dream in the Soviet Union*]. Tallinna Raamatutrükikoda, Tallinn, 1996, 327–329.

Censorship in the Estonian SSR followed the same pattern. Veskimägi (1996, 327–329) describes censorship in Estonia, which started in 1940 and continued again from 1944, as a tool of russification, labelled as an effort to build up communism:

Building up communism and Moscow's aspirations are not one and the same thing – the first is the form and the latter is the content, i.e., to create an empire (to restore it in its former borders, increase and strengthen it. When the term internationalism was used, intentions of Russian chauvinism were meant) (ibid.).

In 1953, “Repertoire for Amateur Arts (Recommended List)” was published.<sup>84</sup> In 1968, a translated all-union regulation – “Guidelines for the Preregistration of Concert and Other Mixed Programs” – by Moscow was issued, setting out rules for all professional and amateur collectives from January 1, 1968, and allowing *Glavlit* control over repertoire.<sup>85</sup> Conforming to the rules for registering repertoires was mandatory. Scenarios of festivities and thematic evenings also had to get an approval from *Glavlit*. The selection of repertoire was checked. Special seats were reserved for executive committee inspectors and party officials at community house events.<sup>86</sup>

For the people working in community houses, surrounded by a multitude of administrative-inspective institutions, reports and approvals related to the tiniest of events (contents of a festive evening or a concert program) were a fact in daily soviet cultural work until the end of the occupation. In the 1960s, the censorship became more of a formality, but, as can be seen from many archive documents, during the era of high-Stalinism in 1945–1954, the reports of inspectors of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education were thorough and detailed.<sup>87</sup>

The reports the managers of community houses had to write for the Folk Art House<sup>88</sup> express the same attitude. What appears, reading these reports, is severe bureaucratic control and indoctrination of the Stalinist cultural canon during the first decades of the Soviet rule. Inspectors visited all community houses, checking their working plans, the activity books of hobby group leaders, event records, repertoires and Red Corners. Inspectors checked whether visual agitation outside of the community house worked (ibid.). Additionally, each community house had

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<sup>84</sup> Kunstilise isetegevuse repertuaar (soovitav nimekiri) [*Repertoire for Amateur Arts (Recommended List)*]. Ed. L. Levald. Eesti NSV Kultuuriministeeriumi Kunstide Peavalitsus, Eesti NSV Rahvaloomingu Maja kultuurharidustöö metoodiline keskkabinet, trükikoda “Kommunist”, Tallinn, 1953.

<sup>85</sup> NSVL kultuuriministri asetäitja V. Kuhharski käskkiri 8. dets. 1967. NSVL Ministrite Nõukogu 29. augusti 1967 määrus nr. 829. Juhend kontserdi- ja muude segaeeskavade eelregistreerimise korra kohta [*Decree of the Deputy Minister of Culture of the Soviet Union, V. Kuhharski, about the Guidelines for the Preregistration of Concert and Other Mixed Programmes*]. Tallinn, 1968.

<sup>86</sup> Veldi, H. Imelik töö [*Strange Work*]. Haljala, 2012.

<sup>87</sup> Documents of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education (1945–1953). ERA.R.-1570.1.57; ERA.R.-1570.1.131; ERA.R.-1570.1.262; ERA.R.-1570.1.339; ERA.R.-1570.1.322.

<sup>88</sup> Archival Documents of the Folk Art House (1940–1959). ERA.R.-28.2.87; ERA.R.-28.2.147; ERA.R.-28.2.151; ERA.R.-28.2.2.3.

to carry out visual agitation tasks in the local agricultural organizations and also take care of topical banners and calls at the working locations of kolkhozes or sovkhoses. In addition, the inspectors of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education<sup>89</sup> acquainted themselves with the reports on the cinematic and dancing evenings, with the educational level, social class and overall views of the workers of community houses. Furthermore, whether the work in community houses corresponded exactly to examples given in the guidelines was noted. Also censorship and inspections were carried out based on specific tasks. The task of the 1951 inspection, for example, was “to check and help the work of organizations of cultural education in relation to spring sowing and preparations for the 10th anniversary of the ESSR” (preparing for the Song Festival) (ibid.).

What appears from many reports<sup>90</sup> is that the working conditions in community houses were often poor: buildings were old (several of them were built at the end of the 19th century), without heating or electricity. Reports reflect existential problems and shortages of money and other resources. Workers in community houses had to come up with the necessary means themselves. Later, when agriculture was on its feet, prosperous economic units helped to support Estonian community houses and also build relatively well-appointed cultural houses.

This reveals the priorities of the Moscow cultural policy: a centrally-funded system of cultural institutions together with the administrative bureaucracy, and the hordes of inspectors, censors, etc., was expensive for the government. There was a lack of the resources required to improve the working conditions in the community houses. It can also be seen as a pragmatic choice by the authorities. The Soviet regime gained the network of community houses, which was set up by people during the era of independent Estonia, without investing too much money into it.

However, after World War II, the new buildings for cultural centres (in the monumental Stalinist-style of architecture) were constructed by the Soviet authorities in Estonia also. According to the statistical overview by Uljas (1987)<sup>91</sup>, in 1940 there were 440 community houses in the state network of previous era, and in 1950 there were already 651 organizations of cultural education and clubs<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Archival Documents of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education (1950–1951). ERA.R.-1570.1.262; ERA.R.-1570.1.339; ERA.R.-1570.1.322.

<sup>90</sup> **Veldi, H.** Imelik töö; Archival Documents of the Committee for Organizations of Cultural Education (1950–1951). ERA.R.-1570.1.262; ERA.R.-1570.1.339.

<sup>91</sup> **Uljas, J.** Rahvamajad Eestis, 1920–1940 [*Community Houses in Estonia, 1920–1940*]. E. Vilde nim. Tallinna Pedagoogiline Instituut, Tallinn, 1987, 19, 28.

<sup>92</sup> New soviet terms were implemented – community houses, in official documents, changed into clubs, cultural houses or organizations of cultural education. In Stalinist Estonia, the name community house was no longer suitable, since the era the term had stemmed from had to be erased from people’s memory. While society houses and society movement as symbols of the Estonian civil society disappeared instantaneously in 1940 as the societies were dissolved, community houses made way to clubs and cultural houses in mid-1950s, during the heyday of Stalinism and the active defamation campaign and overall denigration of the Republic of Estonia.

in the state network. Community houses were seen by the authorities first and foremost as an important ideological tool at grass-roots level until the end of the 1950s. It was because of the appearance of television (in 1955 saw the first program of Soviet Estonian broadcast), a new means of mass communication, which became the primary means of ideological work, and a number of clubs in Estonia did not increase any more. In 1961 there were 586 clubs. In 1970, the number of clubs was 435; in 1986 there were 336 cultural houses and in 1988 there were 323 cultural houses in Estonia (ibid.).

The archival documents of the Folk Art House in the 1960s (1966, 1967, 1973) and later,<sup>93</sup> reveal that the general atmosphere in cultural education work became more liberal and politically less suppressive. Community houses with their everyday work and cultural activities still remained in the grip of the all-union system of censorship, control and ideological propaganda, but in the documents increasingly appeared the questions of raising the quality of amateur arts and the promotion of folk arts. The courses, seminars for specialists of cultural work – choreographers, conductors, amateur theater directors, teachers of visual art and handicraft – dealt more with the improvement of special skills of specialists working in the community houses. Also, all kinds of local, national and all-union events, festivities, contests, were regularly organized by the central administration of folk art. Stalinist political indoctrination was gradually balanced by government-financed and organized leisure activities of people in the Soviet welfare state.

To summarize, many methodical materials were published right up to the collapse of the regime. In the guidelines, everyday activities of community houses were tied up and subordinated to the Five Year Plans' directions and plans of the Estonian Communist Party, which were subjected to the Moscow guidelines. Community houses were guided and controlled through regulations, guidelines, administration and censorship, reports and inspections on a regular basis. Community houses were sovietized and became tools in the hands of the authorities (the ECP), creating a new reality by spreading the Soviet cultural canon and socialist ideology. However, despite the heavy indoctrination and canonized frame for cultural practices, community houses also maintained their original function to provide space for amateur art practices, gatherings and leisure activities for many generations of Estonian population during the Soviet occupation.

## CONCLUSION

Importing the Soviet coercive state practices, the authorities aimed to control and manipulate Estonian citizens in all spheres – even in leisure. People's free time self-expression was replaced by guided and coordinated cultural practices.

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<sup>93</sup> Archival Documents of the Folk Art House (1966, 1967, 1973). ERA.R.-28.2.318; ERA.R.-28.2.338; ERA.R.-28.2.314; ERA.R.-28.2.369; ERA.R.-28.2.487.

Extensive ideological rhetoric was used as mental oppression of people. An abrupt reversal in cultural norms and values caused a traumatic syndrome and double-mindedness in people. Sovietization changed the mental structure of the society – by suppressing the entrepreneurial spirit; this led to the mentality of state guardianship and alienation of people.

With the example of Estonian community houses, we can see how the network of cultural organizations of the first Republic of Estonia, with its roots in the 19th century civil activism of society, was subjected to governmental coercion by the totalitarian state. The Estonian well-developed network of cultural institutions suited the Soviet authorities, who adopted and sovietized the content and model of cultural policy. Within state-owned and centralized institutions, the Soviet cultural canon with local folklore variations was mediated through community houses to the population of Estonia.

Through the creation of a cultural canon, Soviet leaders sought to provide a set of shared values and common heritage of Soviet mass culture to form a common way of life – a monolithic Soviet society. The final aim of the Soviet cultural canon and cultural policy entailed a wide range of norms and practices intended to transform people's behaviour and create a new social order, a Soviet society and a Soviet person – a mass-man in an atomized society, as Arendt (1985, 318–323) has described.<sup>94</sup>

However, the main structures of the state model of the USSR established in the 1930s persisted until its collapse in 1991, but changed over time (being influenced by inner policies as well as external pressure of the Cold War). As it appeared from the archival documents and reports of the Folk Art House in the 1960s (1966, 1967, 1973) and later, the general atmosphere in cultural work and education became more liberal and politically less suppressive.

Community houses with their everyday work and cultural activities still remained in the grip of the all-Union system of censorship, control and ideological propaganda, but in the documents increasingly appeared the questions of raising the quality of amateur arts and the promotion of folk arts. The courses, seminars for specialists of cultural work – choreographers, conductors, amateur theater directors, teachers of visual art and handicraft – dealt more with the improvement of skills of specialists working in the community houses. Also, all kinds of local, national and all-Union events, festivities and contests were regularly organized by the central administration of folk art. Stalinist political propaganda was gradually balanced by state-financed homogeneous and standardized leisure activities of people. Widely accessible, publicly funded leisure, folk and amateur art and homogeneous mass culture accounted for a substantial part of the closed Soviet society's "cultural" welfare state.

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<sup>94</sup> Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. A Harvest Book, New York, 1948, 1985, 318–323.

## EESTI RAHVAMAJADE SOVETISEERIMINE: NÕUKOGUDE KULTUURITÖÖ JUHENDID

Egge KULBOK-LATTIK

Artiklis on uuritud Eesti kultuuri sovetiseerimist rahvamajade näitel, avades Nõukogude Liidu kultuuripoliitika ideoloogilisi eesmärke ja kultuurikaanoni kujunemist ning rakendamist okupeeritud Eestis.

19. sajandi viimasest veerandist alates hakati Liivimaal ja pisut hiljem ka Eestimaal kohalike inimeste ettevõtmisena seltsimaju rajama.<sup>95</sup> Nende (hiljem rahvamajade) ehitamist tõukas tagant eestlaste kui maarahva kujunev kultuuriline emantsipatsioon, rahvusteadvus ja kogukondade vajadus oma avaliku ruumi ning kultuurikeskuste järele. Rahvamajad olid Eesti esimesed eelriiklikud omaalgatuslikult rajatud kultuuriasutused, kus kujunes laiem demokraatlik avalikkus. Uued kultuurilised praktikad – koorilaul, näitemäng, ühised peod eeskava ja tantsuõhtutega, raamatulaenus ning üldharivad loengud, kõnekoosolekud, näitused jne – tagasid rahvuslike ideede massilise leviku, millele tuginedes sai kujunev majanduslik ja poliitiline eliit esitada poliitilisi nõudmisi.

Eesti Vabariigi ajal (1918–1940) jätkusid nii seltsitegevus kui ka seltsimajade rajamine. Riik toetas nende ehitust soodsate laenudega, 1925. aastal loodi ka Eesti kultuurkapital. Hariduse- ja Sotsiaalministeeriumi ametniku Aleksander Kurvitsa<sup>96</sup> eestvõttel tehti teoks idee luua rahvamajade riiklik võrk, mis sai oluliseks riiklikuks regionaalse kultuuripoliitika institutsiooniks. Rahvamajade seadus kinnitati 1931. aastal. 1938. aastal oli riiklikus rahvamajade võrgustikus üle 400 rahvamaja, neist 252 olid seltside ehitatud hooned ja 188 koolimajad, mida kasutati ka kultuurikeskusena.

Kui 1940. aastal okupeeris Nõukogude Liit Eesti, rakendati kultuurielu kujundamisel kohe leninlikke printsiipe ja läbiproovitud stsenaariume, mida enamased olid 1917. aastast alates kasutanud kultuurirevolutsiooni eesmärkide saavutamisel Nõukogude Venemaal. Eesti kultuuri, mille institutsiooniline areng oli esimesel iseseisvusperioodil arenenud läänelikult moderniseeruva riigi halduspraktikate mõjul, asuti kavakindlalt sovetiseerima. Läänelik moderniseerumine asendus nõukoguliku modernsuse ja totalitaarse riigi praktikatega. Nõukogude Liidu kultuuripoliitika nägi riigi rolli kultuuris tellijana, ülalpidajana, eestkostja ja kontrollijana, kultuur oli ideoloogilise töö ning elanikkonna kasvatamise vahend. Artikli eesmärk on avada Eestis kohaldatud nõukogude kultuurikaanoni aspektid ja sovetiseerimise praktiline protsess. Artiklis on uuritud, kuidas riiklik sekkumine mõjutas elanikkonna töövälisest harrastuskultuuri rahvamajades, mil moel õnnestus riigil seda suunata ja mis oli selle eesmärk.

<sup>95</sup> Esimese seltsimaja Kanepis rajas 1887. aastal kohalik lauluselts.

<sup>96</sup> Aleksander Kurvits (1896–1958), riigiametnik aastatel 1921–1940, panustas olulisel määral Eesti vabahariduse ja kultuuripoliitika arengusse. Eesti kultuuripoliitika uurijad võlgnevad Kurvitsale süsteemsed ülevaateväljaanded seadustest ja määrustest, mis reguleerisid kultuurielu ning vabahariduse toimimist (nt **Kurvits, A.** Eesti rahvaharidus ja kultuuriala korraldus. Haridusministeeriumi väljaanne, 1938).

Eesti seltside ja rahvamajade elu muutis 23. augustil 1940 välja antud eraühingute riigistamise seadus<sup>97</sup>, mis hõlmas ka kõiki eramuuseumide, ühingute, seltside ning sihtasutuste ülalpidamisele kuuluvaid varasid. Seltside ja ühingute kogud, hooned (sh rahvamajad, muuseumid, teatrid jne) ning inventar anti üle Eesti NSV Hariduse Rahvakomissariaadile, kes nende varade ja hoonete põhjal asus sisse seadma riiklikult rahastatud kultuuriorganisatsioonide võrku.

Pärast II maailmasõda püüdis nõukogude võim muuta seni vabaalgatuslikult tegutsenud rahvamajad eeskätt poliitilise kasvatustöö ja kommunistliku ideoloogia kohalikeks agitatsiooni- ning propagandakeskusteks ja allutada need parteilisele juhtimisele. Seda tehti kohustusliku repertuaari, tsensuuri, kontrolli ja rahvamajade tööd juhtivate meetodiliste juhendite abil. Eriti rõhuv oli lauskontroll sõjajärgsel kõrgstalinismiperioodil (1945–1959), kui plahvatuslikult kasvas kultuuritööd juhtivate bürokraatlike institutsioonide hulk, mille juurutamine oli Nõukogude riigi halduspraktika üks eriomadusi. Bürokratiat oli vaja tsensuuri ja kontrolli huvides, selle ülalhoidmiseks tegi riik märkimisväärsed kulutusi. Nõukogude impeeriumi kultuuripoliitika lõppeesmärk oli ideoloogiliselt suunatud massikultuuri abil kujundada nõukogude inimese identiteet ja homogeenne allutatud ühiskond.

Nõukogude riigi kultuuripoliitika põhijooned ja praktikad säilisid üldjoontes kuni impeeriumi lagunemiseni (1991), kuid need muutusid aja jooksul nii sise- kui ka välispoliitiliste mõjurite tõttu vähem repressiivseteks. Arhiividokumentidest ilmneb, et stalinistlik kontroll ja parteipoliitiline propaganda Eesti rahvamajades asendus 1960. aastatel traditsiooniliste harrastuskultuuri praktikatega – rahvatantsu, koorilaulu ja näitemänguga –, mida õpetasid koolitatud spetsialistid (tantsu-, näite- ning koorijuhid). Ideoloogiline surve vähenes ja asendus kvaliteedinõuetega riiklikult koolitatud spetsialistidele. Laialt kättesaadav, riiklikult rahastatud rahva- ja harrastuskultuur ühtsete standardiseeritud praktikatena moodustas olulise osa Nõukogude suletud ühiskonna “kultuurilisest” heaoluriigist.

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<sup>97</sup> RT 1940, 109, 1105. 1940. aastal tegutses Eestis 2200 vabahariduse- ja kultuuriseltsi 60 000 – 70 000 liikmega.