



## **The Curving Mirror of Time**

Approaches to Culture Theory Series  
Volume 2

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# **The Curving Mirror of Time**

Edited by  
Halliki Harro-Loit and Katrin Kello



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## Contents

List of figures . . . . .	7
Notes on editors and contributors . . . . .	9
Introduction . . . . .	11
Halliki Harro-Loit	
Temporality and commemoration in Estonian dailies . . . . .	17
Halliki Harro-Loit, Anu Pallas	
Divided memory and its reflection in Russian minority media in Estonia in 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	59
Valeria Jakobson	
Journalistic commemoration of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in Estonia 1989–2009 . . . . .	93
Ene Kõresaar, Kristiina Müür, Tiiu Kreegipuu	
22 September 1944 in Soviet Estonian anniversary journalism . . . . .	115
Marek Miil	
The visual representation of women in the Estonian media, 1848–1940 . . . . .	139
Roosmarii Kurvits	
Index of names . . . . .	188



## List of figures

The second commemoration sample of two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009 . . .	31
Average number of stories per issue in two Estonian dailies, 1989 and 2009 . . . . .	33
Dominant time focus of stories in two Estonian dailies, 1989 and 2009 . . . . .	33
Representation of the past in two Estonian dailies, 1989 and 2009 . . . . .	34
Finished events or topics of stories in two Estonian dailies, 1989 and 2009 . . . . .	35
References to historical periods in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	42
Geo-political space in past-related stories in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	43
Six news factors in past-related stories in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009	45
Anniversaries in conjunction with other news factors in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	46
Past-related stories during the weeks in February in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	47
Past-related stories during the weeks in March in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	47
Past-related stories during the days in February in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	48
Genres of past-related stories in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	49
Sources in past-related stories in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	50
Timescale of the Russian-language sample, 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	63
One week time-frame in <i>Postimees</i> in Russian, 2009 . . . . .	64
The importance of historical topic in stories in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	65
References to historical periods in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	66, 89–90
Tsar Peter I in the Russian-language press: Sources and discourses, 2006–2009 . . .	70
World War II in the Russian-language press: Sources and discourses, 2009 . . . . .	78
Sources of historical references in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	81, 90
Speakers on historical topics in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	82, 91
Geo-political space related to the past in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009 . . . . .	83, 91
News components in stories on the MRP and related issues, 1989, 1999 and 2009 .	100



## List of figures

Information sources in stories on the MRP and related issues, 1989, 1999 and 2009 . . . . .	102
Speakers in stories on the MRP and related issues, 1989, 1999 and 2009 . . . . .	103
Time references in stories on the MRP and related issues, 1989, 1999 and 2009 . . . . .	105
Geo-political space in stories on the MRP and related issues, 1989, 1999 and 2009 . . . . .	105
Symbols used in the anniversary journalism of Soviet Estonia ( <i>Noorte Hääl</i> 1964, 1969, 1984; <i>Õhtuleht</i> 1969, 1979, 1984; <i>Rahva Hääl</i> 1979) . . . . .	117
Narrative of the day of liberating Tallinn (22 September 1944) . . . . .	119–120
22 September 1944 in Estonia as an “Expulsion of Alien Enemies” and another milestone on society’s inevitable development path . . . . .	123
Former frontline fighter at the work front ( <i>Noorte Hääl</i> , 22 Sept 1954, 1) . . . . .	127
Aging of war veterans in anniversary journalism. General Lembit Pärn in 1945, 1968 and 1972 . . . . .	132
The first women picture in Estonian print media: Cable-stayed bridge in Brighton (England) ( <i>Ma-ilm ja mõnda</i> 1848, 57) . . . . .	147
The title picture: Estonian pastoral scene ( <i>Eesti Postimees</i> 1869, 8 Oct, 149) . . . . .	149
Berber people migrating ( <i>Meelejahutaja</i> 1882, 21 Jan, 42) . . . . .	149
Alexander II of Russia and Empress Maria Alexandrovna ( <i>Eesti Postimees</i> 1880, 19 Feb, 29) . . . . .	150
Estonian poetess Lydia Koidula ( <i>Meelejahutaja</i> 1885, 12 Oct, 275); Finnish teetotaler Hilda Hellmann ( <i>Linda</i> 1895, 11 Aug, 485); Eleonore Dahlmann, a director of Rakvere girls’ gymnasium ( <i>Päewaleht</i> 1929, 22 Jan, 6) . . . . .	151
Circassians driving Bulgarian women and girls to captivity ( <i>Sakala Lisaleht</i> 1878, 29 Apr, 3) . . . . .	152
Sewing machine advertisement ( <i>Sakala</i> 1878, 29 Apr, 4) . . . . .	153
Mixed choir of Keila Firefighters’ Society ( <i>Külaline</i> 1911, 6 Aug, 241) . . . . .	156
Mermaids of our time ( <i>Rahva Lõbu-Leht</i> 1900, No 7, insert) . . . . .	157
Vignette ( <i>Linda</i> 1905, 14 Apr, 248) . . . . .	158
Vanemuine Theatre actresses and actors ( <i>Külaline</i> 1912, 18 Feb, 51 & 58) . . . . .	159
Battlefield hospital ( <i>Walguse lisaleht</i> 1905, 20 Dec, 781) . . . . .	160
Cleopatra of our time: a snake charmer ‘Beautiful Mirka’ ( <i>Külaline</i> 1910, 20 Feb, 4) . . . . .	161
English-Dutch oil king Henri Deterding with his wife ( <i>Päewaleht</i> 1929, 31 Jan, 3); golden wedding anniversary couple the Niggols ( <i>Päewaleht</i> 1925, 24 Dec, 6) . . . . .	165
Shoe polish advertisement ( <i>Postimees</i> 1925, 11 Oct, 3); fashion drawing ( <i>Päewaleht</i> 1922, 26 Aug, 8) . . . . .	166
German beauty queen Irma Hose ( <i>Päewaleht</i> 1929, 13 Jan, 5) . . . . .	166
L. Sepp, Estonian Minister of Economy, presenting the national budget to the Estonian Chamber of Deputies ( <i>Päewaleht</i> 1939, 24 Jan, 5) . . . . .	167
Half a hundred new (Estonian) Samaritans ( <i>Päewaleht</i> 1939, 7 Feb, 6) . . . . .	168
Radio set shop’s advertisement ( <i>Postimees</i> 1929, 10 Feb, 1) . . . . .	169
Light bulb advertisement ( <i>Postimees</i> 1939, 4 Jan, 3) . . . . .	169
Movie advertisements ( <i>Päewaleht</i> 1925, 14 Nov, 1; <i>Päewaleht</i> 1929, 24 Jan, 1) . . . . .	170
One-person bomb shelter in England ( <i>Päewaleht</i> 1939, 14 Feb, 1) . . . . .	170

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## Introduction

Halliki Harro-Loit

*The Curving Mirror of Time* aims to explore the configuration of the ‘everyone knows’ phenomenon in our daily practices: time, commemoration and news journalism.

In cultural research the notion of *time* is a recurring phenomenon; temporality, timing and memory is a multilayered field of research. In journalism and media studies time has remained on the periphery of academic attention. Barbie Zelizer notes that the issue of temporality, especially for cultural scholars, was frequently used as a background variable for the shaping of the cultural inquiry of journalism. In addition, numerous scholars tracked the cultural parameters of journalism over time or in a given period (Zelizer 2004, 211–212).

The notable growth of research into commemorative practices, especially in the 21st century, has influenced journalism studies, although most of the research has concentrated on the question of how journalism uses history and how history is increasingly represented in the media (e.g. *How Journalism Uses History*, Martin Conboy (ed), 2012; *History and the Media*, David Cannadine (ed), 2004; *The Historical Film: History and Memory in Media*, Marcia Landy (ed), 2001; *Television Histories: Shaping Collective Memory in the Media Age*, Gary R. Edgerton and Peter C. Rollins (eds), 2001).

The goal of the present book is to take a step further and shift the focus from the question “when” to “what” and “how”. Specifically, what are the temporal structures of news journalism and how do these affect the cultural transformation of society; how does daily news, while providing links between the past and the present, contribute to the construction of collective memory?

The importance of the analysis of media temporality becomes apparent when one recalls the importance of the non-simultaneity of different temporalities for cultural dynamics. As Jan Spurk (2004, 42) points out:

The classic works of social science (Comte or Marx for example) interpret non-simultaneity and, consequently, the coexistence, confrontation and

union of different temporalities as the engines of the social dynamic. [...] For this reason, we may gain insight about profound social changes by studying the non-simultaneity of different temporalities and changes from one temporality to another.

Bearing this in mind it is worth asking to what extent mediated communication imposes its temporalities on a society, and to what extent the media reflects and frames the social and cultural change and acceleration of social time? In order to answer this question one needs to keep in mind that within the journalistic discourse different temporalities coexist, compete and contribute to the construction of social time and collective memory. Hence, on the one hand the speed of social time, the calendar and collective memory are reflected in daily news flows, while on the other hand the news itself constructs and imposes rhythms of collective life, temporalities and commemorative practices.

In addition, archived newspapers preserve daily tempos and therefore enable us to reconstruct the speed of social time in the past as well as reconstruct the past according to our present standpoints.

Anyone who is used to the constructionism in media studies acknowledges that newspapers are concurrently the conservators and mediators of cultural reality, hence their role in national culture and memory agents becomes obvious. Therefore, the aim of the present book is to provide empirical analysis and evidence about the way newspapers have been fulfilling these functions. Again, explicit and implicit here are mixed. For example, it is easy to perceive the role of news mediums as national fora for discussions and debates about history when a new and untraditional history book is published and the news gives high value to the event. However, systematic empirical analysis is required to reveal for example the cultural change in the discourse of memory politics in daily news flows. Therefore special focus is put on binding empirical analysis to the theoretical and methodological discussions about the temporality of news(paper) culture.

An important concept for this book is 'anniversary journalism', a theoretical approach that enables the revelation of the connection between news journalism and the national calendar. An inspiring author for this volume has been Eviatar Zerubavel, who in his book *Time Maps* (2003) developed the idea of socio-mnemonic patterns, the 'mountains and valleys' of commemoration and the annual cycles of commemorative holidays in national calendars.

*The Curving Mirror of Time* summarises the results of several years' work by a team of researchers at the Centre of Excellence in Cultural Theory (CECT), University of Tartu, and partly arises out of the Third CECT Autumn Conference,

“Time in Culture: Mediation and Representation”, held in 2010. The categories of content analysis concerning the time structures and commemoration in newspapers (as presented by Harro-Loit & Pallas; Jakobson; Kõresaar et al) were created by the CECT research group on cultural communication.

The aim of the first and second articles is to analyse the role of newspapers as memory agents for different memory communities. To begin with, by using content analysis, Halliki Harro-Loit and Anu Pallas provide a ‘relief map’ of tenses in Estonian dailies in 1989 and 2009 in order to see to what extent the past is newsworthy for its own sake and how much commemoration of the past is simply woven into narratives about the present. To what extent do the newspapers report on the present and to what extent do the texts refer to the future? A diachronic analysis of newspaper texts from different periods of time demonstrates that the temporal focus of newspapers changes over time: in some periods, the past gets remarkably more attention, while in other periods the news timeframe is biased towards current events and the future. The social time in 1989 was slower and more oriented towards the past than in 1994 or 2009. In 2009 again interest in the past has increased although instead of describing the past, the history and the meaning of the past for current policy now receive more attention. Harro-Loit and Pallas emphasise the complexity of temporal structures in newspapers in their article and explain how the construction of these temporalities is linked to the specific features of journalistic discourse: news value, genres and information sources.

Valeria Jakobson provides an analysis of the construction of the past in Russian-language newspapers published in Estonia in the 1990s and 2000s. She asks to what extent the news media synchronises the minority’s time with national time: how similar or different is the (re-)construction of the past in Estonian daily newspapers, published in Estonian and Russian in 1994 and 2009? She analyses the intense discussion surrounding the most controversial events of the past, the polyphony of voices and points of view. One more important aspect is the analysis of changes of representation of historical time and space in 1994 and 2009. Jakobson’s detailed analysis provides a proof that the ‘historical geography’, represented in the Russian minority media, becomes narrower by 2009 and that the representations of the collective memory in the Russian-language media remain controversial.

The third and fourth articles focus on one of the phenomena that makes the news media an important memory agent: anniversary journalism. More precisely, the analysis of the cyclical reporting of past-related anniversaries over longer periods enables the authors to reveal the changes of memory policy. Ene Kõresaar, Kristiina Müür, and Tiiu Kreegipuu analyse the dynamics of the memory

work of the news media when covering historical anniversaries in the Estonian calendar during the Soviet period as well as during the Estonian Republic. The object of this article is the analysis of the reporting of the commemoration of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (MRP) during the period from 1989 to 2009 (on the 50th, 60th and 70th anniversaries). The Non-Aggression Pact that was signed between Germany and the USSR on 23 August 1939 in Moscow is looked upon as a turning point in the history of the Baltic states as it paved the way for the illegal occupation and annexation of the Baltic states by the USSR. The authors' analysis shows that, in 1989, the year of the 50th anniversary, the commemorative form of the event was still developing and commemoration was mainly directed towards the future. By the 60th anniversary in 1999, commemorative activity is almost entirely directed towards the past – it focused on the MRP as a historical event. By the 70th anniversary the role of journalists has increased and the meaning of the MRP as a historical and political (and not experiential) event becomes rooted. This case study enables the authors to show the links between social remembering and anniversary journalism.

The article written by Marek Miil focuses on the other anniversary that is closely linked to World War II and has a very different meaning to the different memory communities: 22nd of September. During the Soviet era this anniversary was celebrated as the Day of Liberating Tallinn. In 2007 the Estonian Parliament decided to create a new anniversary: Resistance Day to commemorate the Otto Tief Government (Otto Tief tried to re-establish the Estonian Republic in 1944 and held power for one and a half days). Marek Miil presents ways in which newspapers in the 1944–1989 period constructed a political myth by using the narrative of the victorious Red Army and its soldiers as liberators. Miil's case study reveals the changes in Soviet propaganda as well as looking at how the commemoration of certain events changes over the years and how narratives change, both according to the daily needs as well as according to the time that passes as the heroes get older.

The fifth article provides an overview of the visual representation of women in Estonian newspapers and magazines from 1848 to 1940. Within this period Estonian society went through a period of social modernisation, as did the roles of women and journalism. Roosmarii Kurvits carries out a detailed analysis of the changes of framing women in the Estonian press. She shows that in the 19th century, representations of women in the media were driven by enlightening ideas. Estonian readers could see pictures of exotic women, widening Estonian readers' horizons. The representation of people did not distinguish the sexes explicitly. From the beginning of the 20th century, media representations of women were increasingly influenced by consumerism; beauty, sex appeal and youthfulness

gained special value. Thus visual representations of women reflected the transformation of Estonian journalism from an enlightening media to a news and commercialised media.

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# Temporality and commemoration in Estonian dailies

Halliki Harro-Loit, Anu Pallas

## Introduction

The daily news helps us to situate ourselves in time, influencing our temporality-consciousness by expanding our sense of past, present and future. While news journalism has a strong connotation of immediacy (Schlesinger 1999, 124–125) and up-to-the-minute event reporting, a close analysis of journalistic discourse demonstrates that journalistic texts often involve a far more complicated time-frame than the field's values might suggest. Journalists report about *how life is*, *how it was* and also frequently pose questions about *how life will be* in the future. Daily news discourse also constructs the way certain events or periods of time are collectively remembered, while other periods of time or events are forgotten.

A diachronic analysis of newspaper texts from different periods of time demonstrates that newspapers' temporal focus changes over time: in some periods, the past gets remarkably more attention, while in other periods, the news time-frame is biased towards current events and the future. Journalism is largely dependent on the socio-cultural clock of the society (or community) that composes its audience: its calendar (with regards to events that are celebrated and therefore news-valuable), rhythms (seasonal, monthly, weekly and daily rhythms, as well as those defined by religion or the education system) and speed of life (e.g. transport systems, decision-making habits, communication technology, etc.). This socio-cultural clock defines anniversaries that are framed in certain ways by various journalistic mediums, as certain topics are discussed every year at a specific time.

Concurrently, journalism itself is an influential constructor of social time. Journalism certainly has a stretching effect on present time, by informing us about people, events and places we could physically never reach.

Another mode in the way journalism functions resembles the way in which communities without calendars recall the flow of time by describing events, for example: "when the winter was especially hard and 10 men were frozen to death". News media, by recalling and linking the same type of events, are also creating such 'event-calendars'. For example, journalism directs our attention to certain

events by reporting very intensively about them for a sustained period (Paimre & Harro-Loit 2011). Later on these intensively covered events may be referred to as “key events” (Kepplinger & Habermeier 1995), which might then function as lighthouses on the social time axis. Eviatar Zerubavel, author of *Time Maps*, wrote about the effect of this time construction on collective memory, describing the phenomenon as “a relief map on the mnemonic hills and dales of which memorable and forgettable events from the past are respectively featured. Its general shape is formed by a handful of historically ‘eventful’ mountains interspersed among wide, seemingly empty valleys in which nothing of any historical significance seems to have happened” (Zerubavel 2003, 27).

Taking Zerubavel’s “relief map” pattern as a starting point, our first aim was to create a relief map of time (tenses) in Estonian dailies in 1989 and 2009. By using content analysis our aim was to see to what extent the past is newsworthy for its own sake (history is the major focus of the newspaper article) and how much commemoration of the past is simply woven into narratives about the present. To what extent are the newspapers reporting about the present and to what extent do the texts refer to the future? We were interested in comparing possible differences between attention to the present, past and future in Estonian dailies in 1989 and 2009.

Another and more general aim of the present study is to look more closely at the commemorative function of Estonian dailies. There is quite a lot of research available about the role of journalism in the construction and articulation of collective memory (e.g. Kitch 2003a; 2003b; 2007; Edy & Daradanova 2006; Le 2006; Carlson 2007; Ebbrecht 2007; Winfield et al 2002; Winfield & Hume 2007; West 2008). It is conventional knowledge that among many memory institutions in contemporary society (e.g. schools, museums), the mass media is an extremely powerful instrument of ordering our perception of the past. In 2012 several authors in the book *How Journalism Uses History* (edited by Martin Conboy) asked how journalism, and newspapers in particular, frame history? Most of the authors agree that the past has something to offer the present. Horst Pöttker claims that in the digital world, where journalism’s function as a transmitter of news turns to an orientation function, history is a reservoir of potential knowledge which enables orientation in the present (Pöttker 2012, 15–32).

On the other hand, one may ask how people use memory and how commemoration is explainable in terms of its contemporary circumstances: how does the present make the past? Tim Edensor, representing this approach, therefore asks how media constructs collective memory and “the time of the nation” (Edensor 2006). Edensor argues that the everyday temporalities (e.g. the routinised, official temporal framework established by the state; national habits and routines;

the synchronisation of national time in popular culture; serialised time-spaces (op cit, 530)) deepen a sense of national belonging.

The presumption of this study is that journalism has both the ability to store and transmit critical historical narration as well as the power to shape the collective memory. The notion of history is separate from the notion of collective memory as the latter has the tendency to present the past from a more subjective perspective (Wertsch 2002, 44). Therefore in this study we form the research question: how was the *past* reflected and discussed in the dawn of the Estonian Republic, in the middle of the 1990s, and in 2009?

Characteristic to the news media is a phenomenon that we label 'actualization of the past' – past events or some interpretations of the past are reported because they are given a meaning in the present. Actualisation of the past means that selected past events, narratives, ideologies are transformed into daily news discourses of memory as historical background elements, 'history lessons' or debates on memory politics. The latter in the present study refers to the topics where interpretations of history are discussed in a political context, the political implications of one or another statement or event are the main frames of the article.

We realise that the cultural memory of a nation is shaped by many factors and the media is only one of them (Misztal 2003, 131; Palacios 2010) but in this study we are more interested in how the actualisation of the past is related to major journalistic conventions, like newsworthiness, functions of different genres and the use of sources. Hence, while journalistic conventions change over time, the mode of actualisation of the past changes.

In order to operationalise the empirical analysis of the commemoration of past in Estonian newspapers we elaborated six sub-questions. First: what are the most eventful and thus memorable periods that we are directed toward by Estonian newspapers? Second: spatio-temporal perspectives in news discourse. Third: the influence of past-related anniversaries on the retrospective discourse in newspaper content. Fourth: newsworthiness of past-related topics. On what occasions does the past become the major focus of the news story? Fifth: influence of genres to the actualisation of the past – is the past represented more in opinion pieces that might refer to memory-political discourse or is the past described more in feature style articles that might be more helpful for describing past events? Sixth: the use of sources in reporting history. We included people in different roles (e.g. expert, historian, witness to an event), as well as documents and other media among the coding categories. The dynamics in the use of sources also provides hints about the changes in past-related discourse in newspapers.

The first three sub-topics help to draw the relief map of history representations concerning the time of the nation. The next three sub-topics enable us to

analyse how the conventions and practices of journalism influence the actualisation of the past and Estonian collective memory. We combined qualitative and quantitative content analysis to address the question of how best to capture certain time-frames in news discourse, in different periods of Estonian history. Small-scale qualitative text analysis was employed to illustrate our rationale for the categories we selected in the content analysis.

Two different (and partly overlapping) samples were created for the study. For the first sample (relief map of tenses) we used the “synthetic week” method to select our texts, taken from the first Monday in February, the second Tuesday in March, the third Wednesday in April, and so on. Accordingly, we did content analysis of six days of two Estonian dailies in 1989 and six days of the same (but under different names) Estonian dailies in 2009. Instead of having to choose weeks that might include intensive coverage of specific events, this method hints at everyday coverage.

The second sample – articles that clearly represented actualisation of the past – included the years 1989, 1994 and 2009. 1989 was a special year in Estonian history: under *perestroika* and *glasnost* (from 1987) Soviet power was challenged. The Baltic countries were awakening, and as people began publicly asking questions about the past, society started to speak about deportations and the Soviet occupation. Although history was on the agenda at the end of the 1980s, there was not much discussion about its meaning. But by 2009, the discourse about the past included more memory policy debates, and there were more news stories on books, performances, and films that looked at Estonian history. Society became much more interested in reflectively interpreting the past and its meaning in the context of the present. Additionally we included the year 1994 as this was very intense time of transition. Estonian people had to learn quickly while this was also the dawn of the information society (e.g. in 1995 Estonian newspapers went online). Therefore our hypothesis was that the past got less attention than in 1989 only because the on-going present offered daily challenges.

Therefore, in order to analyse Estonian newspapers as agents of memory policy, six months of content from two national dailies in 1989, 1994 and 2009 were coded: February, March, May, June, August and September. The year 1994 was included in order to follow the social rhythms of newspapers’ temporal discourses. While in 1989 the two national dailies were *Edasi* and *Noorte Hää*, by 1994 *Edasi* had been re-named *Postimees* and *Noorte Hää* had become *Päevaleht*. In 2009, *Postimees* retained its title, but *Päevaleht* had become *Eesti Päevaleht* in 1995.

The main aim of the article is to provide a theoretical and methodological introduction to complex problems concerning temporality in news. The content

analysis methods enable us to make a macro analysis and to reveal ‘temporality streams’ in daily news flow, how these streams change over time and how journalistic discourse influences the way we remember our collective past. In order to illustrate the most important qualitative changes we found during the coding process we shall add a few micro-case studies.

### **Temporality in newspaper discourse**

News stories have the ability to stretch the past, present, and future into a seemingly uninterrupted time flow. The discursive structure of the news genre consists of attribution, abstract, and the story proper. Three additional categories can be found in any news story: background, commentary, and follow up. If the background goes beyond the recent past, it is classified as “history” (Bell 1998, 67). The duration of the time covering either historic or future events is highly variable: a news story could refer to events that happened hundreds of years ago, a few hours ago, or that will happen tomorrow (Harro-Loit & Kõresaar 2010). The different time dimensions that enter into each story make the news genre an appropriate means to bridge past, present, and future events.

Different media, including newspapers and magazines (either off- or online), as well as television and radio programmes, have a variety of impacts on social time construction. For example, the medium of television establishes clock-bound activities while online news and offline newspapers provide more flexibility. Some television programmes or media events result in large audiences watching synchronically (e.g. the Olympic Games) while others support increasingly individual media consumption. Newspapers are not institutionally organised around remembering the past (Schudson 1986, 85), yet most news requires some degree of shared historic depth (Schudson 1986, 80, 84; Harro-Loit & Kõresaar 2010; Bell 1998; van Dijk 1988). Concurrently newspaper issues and magazines are sites of a dense and constantly regenerating verbal and visual history. When news content is given over to records, and the information transforms from periodical reporting to permanent record, its status shifts from journalism to history (Kitch 2006, 98).

Concerning temporality, newspapers hold some universal elements that should be taken into account. First, the temporal discourse of newspapers depends to some extent on their format: weeklies, dailies, and online portals as periodicals create specific socio-cultural rhythms and depend on collective tempos and calendars (e.g. the seven-day week). The special character of the Sunday paper is a result of most readers having more time to read on that day (Schudson 1986, 102). When dailies started to be published in the 19th century European

cities, the technological opportunity to print news more quickly changed the speed of social time so that consumers wanted daily news.

Secondly, time patterns in newspapers are constructed by their columns. For example in 2009, the Estonian daily *Postimees* had a weekly feature that highlighted a news item from the same day in the past: “*Postimees* today in 1929”. This feature created cyclic attention to certain years in the past. But features like this may also construct certain life rhythms. For example, in 1989, each Tuesday *Edasi* featured the column, “The week ended, another began”. This series enabled readers to construct each week as a certain ‘extended present’, in which a specific time span included certain events that were worth bringing to the fore.

The following extract illustrates how events are framed according to the days of the week: on 16 May 1989 (*Edasi*, 1) Asta Niinemets, a journalist, wrote:

It was a strange week: a short week for working but long and eventful to comment. [...] Although three days were left between holidays, the youth of the city seemingly lived in another rhythm than usually. It was the rhythm of the 11th Tartu Music Festival that surprised even the organizers. There was a lot of visitors in the town before but on Saturday more were coming...

The idea of this feature was to recall the most important events of the week. Expressions that refer to the subjective and collective time-frames are underlined. One can find similar programmes on television and radio. The week, a rhythm that arranges human life, is used here as the main organising line of the article. Events are selected according to the week in which they fell, and then evaluated and framed by the journalist. Columns may also reserve space and resources for certain topics and the way they are presented. For example, in 1989, *Postimees* published a daily serial which looked at the history of a variety of topics (e.g. the union of Estonian journalists).

Finally, newspaper content can invoke different time models (Harro-Loit & Kõresaar 2010) such as news time, the time of a nation (Bhabha 1990; Edensor 2006), biographical time (e.g. Phoenix et al 2007), political time (Schudson 1986, 84–85), or the ‘time horizon’ of a generation (Lovell 2007). These time models are dependent on patterns of textual organisation, or genre types.

Journalistic genres can be divided into four basic categories: news, opinion articles, features, and interviews (Harro 2001). Some genre types summon specific time models or favour a specific tense. For example, obituaries represent individual ‘histories’ or biographical time, while opinion pieces express the personal time of the narrator. One type of feature story, the portrait, focuses on narrating the life story of an individual or community. Opinion articles usually focus more

on interpretation of process(es) than on a single event, and sometimes speculate on the future more than reportage or news stories. Feature stories (especially reportage) often use the present continuous tense to create the feeling that the audience is witnessing the described events at the same time as the journalist.

Some events and topics are decidedly more newsworthy than others. A surprise event requires immediate reporting, making it an influential news factor, although many stories are about routine events that can be anticipated.

Anniversary (calendar-based) journalism can be seen as a form of ritual communication (Carey 1989) that functions both in linear and cyclical time. It is a “temporal sphere in which national identity is continually reproduced, sedimented and challenged” (Edensor 2006, 526). Commemorative holidays, for instance, require that news journalism frame and disseminate existing narrative templates about past events, or discuss the meaning of the commemoration in the present context. Anniversary journalism can also reflect important events at the level of smaller groups that may have no direct outlet in the official calendar (e.g. anniversaries of organisations, national or community events outside Estonia, or the commemoration of the birth or death of certain people).

### **How to capture the structure of time in news stories**

In a single news story there are a number of linguistic devices to explicitly express temporal relations: the form and syntax of verbs, adverbials in time, and the discourse structure of the stories beyond the page (Bell 1998, 93). These three qualities make up a method for an analysis of the time structure of almost any news story: “Take the time of the central event as ‘Time 0’, label earlier events as ‘Time -1, -2’, and so on, and later events as ‘Time +1, +2’, and so on, in the chronological sequence in which they actually occurred” (Bell 1998, 78). This method allows us to reveal the way the news overturns the temporal sequences of a linear narrative and moves backwards and forwards in time by picking out and bringing together different actions and agents according to socially relevant concepts of temporality (Harro-Loit & Kõresaar 2010). Past and present become blurred, nearly indistinguishable even in a single sentence. According to Bell the category of background covers any event prior to the current action – the stories past (Bell 1998, 67). Since news discourse creates bridges between the present, past and future (Jaworski et al 2003a) it is methodologically important to investigate what kind of narrative links present to past, and how.

Different parts of news stories can refer to different times. For example, as Schudson points out: “Newspaper headlines are almost always in the present tense, but newspaper stories are almost invariably written in the past tense. [...]



And yet the ‘developing’ story that unfolds over time offers a newspaper version of the ‘continuous present’ tense” (1986, 89). At the same time, Jaworski, Fitzgerald and Morris focus on the importance of news that refers to the future (2003a; 2003b; 2004). They and Neiger (2006) show that a large degree of uncertainty and speculation is involved in news-making in the future tense. The following extract from a news article demonstrates this problem with reporting in the future tense:

*Eesti Päevaleht*, 26 September 2009. <http://www.epl.ee/news/majandus/jaan-omblus-500-kroonised-rahatahed-voivad-kaibelt-kaduda.d?id=51178657>

Headline: 500 ESTONIAN KROON BANKNOTES MAY DISAPPEAR FROM CIRCULATION

By Jaan Õmblus

500 Estonian kroon banknotes may soon disappear from circulation in Estonia: such indications may be found both in developments in France, Spain and elsewhere, as well as in the desire of the Estonian Government to distinguish itself internationally by extremely eager copying of solutions that are not

rational for Estonia. [...] Taking all the above into account, we cannot be sure that the 500 kroon note still stays in circulation for long. No one can predict how the economy will actually react to the withdrawal of this banknote. However, it will definitely be interesting.

This excerpt uses speculative language, alluding to an issue which “may be found” in the development of some countries, though the author clearly states that, “no one can predict how the economy will actually react”. This future vision presupposes that an event will take place only if another event has already occurred.

Schokkenbroek (1999, 71–73) argues that events in news narratives are temporally organised, either implicitly or explicitly. She notes that temporal order may be explicated by temporal adverbials, called “anchors” and “temporal connectors”. Anchors are temporal references that place the story at a particular moment in history, e.g. words like “now”, “at this moment”, “on Monday”, “since August”. Anchors serve to orient the reader in relation to the time of the story and sometimes indirectly express the temporal order of underlying events. In other words, anchors help to answer the question of “when” events took place. When there are two or more anchors in one story that refer to different times, they can explicate the temporal order of the narrated events. Anchors are important variables in content analysis, especially since our aim here is to compare newspapers across time. “Actuality”, “immediacy” and “proximity” are all news factors that influence anchors.

By definition, temporal connectors explicate temporal order (or simultaneity) of events. Adverbials such as “earlier”, “afterward”, “after”, “before”, and “at the

same time” explicitly relate events to one another (Schokkenbroek 1999, 73). In the Estonian language, three past tenses express the different ‘reach’ of the past, though there is no continuous or future tense. Therefore the context and grammar of the sentence, as well as words like “currently”, “now”, “today”, “yesterday”, “tomorrow”, or “next Monday” indicate what events are on-going or set to occur.

Although news narratives are often temporally organised, either implicitly or explicitly, with an interwoven past, present and future, readers are usually still able to recognise that some stories are mainly about the distant past, while others refer to recent events. The following article from *Edasi*, 16 June 1989, 2 (by Ene Puusemp) provides an example of how different tenses are used throughout a news story about Estonian cultural history. Expressions that implicitly or explicitly refer to time are underlined. The chronology of events – using Bell’s system – is marked by numbers and points out the prolonged and complex time-frame of this one story. Bell’s system does not allow us to differentiate the complexity of present time (on-going events, completed events, process); in addition “today” in Estonian might refer to the present day or just the contemporary time-frame, therefore the present time is just marked as ‘o’.

*Edasi*, 16 June 1989, 2

**Headline:** A STAMP OF HOLIDAY ATTACHED TO TARTU

**Sub-headline:** Tartu to host (o; +1) big song festivities on 17 and 18 June

By Ene Puusemp

Mr August Tamman[n] who has studied (-5) our first song festivals (-6; -7) has asked himself when reading (-4) festivity descriptions of those times (-6): “What actually presented more excitement to the organisers of and participants in the festivities, was it the very days of the festivities (-6) or the day preceding the event, 17 June (-7)?” (The Festival was then held on 18, 19 and 21 June (-6; -7)). “Singers and listeners started to come together to Tartu from everywhere already in the Monday evening (-7), and Vanemuine hall (today (o)) we must clarify: the building of the Men’s Song Association Vanemuine was situated (-6; -7) in Tähe street, opposite the present (o) University Club) was the venue where

joyful greetings and welcomings took place (-7), which became even wider next morning (-6). [...]” This is how it was 120 years ago (-6; -7).

What else has the Steering Committee of our City to say (o) to the participants in the party and all the people coming to the party (o; +1)?

At this Song Festival performers represent their former counties. Harjumaa, Järvamaa, Läänemaa, [...] counties have given notice of their coming (-2). Only Petserimaa (Pechory Land) is missing today from among 11 counties of those times. Harjumaa and Tartu have (o) the biggest delegations with their top choirs... The City of Tartu is not ready today (o) for stately acceptance of all the singers and players from

all over Estonia. It gives accommodation (0; +1) to the guests (floor area and roof). Those who control (0) the hot water supply of the city will wait (+3) until the song and games festival is over (+4) before closing (+5) the taps. [...]

However, the recognition of which our head producer, Mr Heiki Unt, informed us (-1) after returning (-2) from his meeting with young foreign Estonians is perhaps also very important and worthy of contemplation: thanks to Estonian song and dance festivals we understand (-3) that both Motherland and Exile Estonia still exist (0). No matter what you ever sang during those years (-3), you sang and danced in your own

national costumes, and in your mother tongue and in your own spirit.

Tomorrow (+1) and the day after tomorrow (+2) our hearts should also sing. The concert programme includes (0; +1; +2) the songs that are close to the hearts of both the singers and listeners which have survived (-3; 0) through all the song festivals up to this day (from the first festival (-7... +1; +2): “Sind surmani” and “Mu isamaa on minu arm” by A. Kunileid and L. Koidula, and “Mu isamaa, mu õnn ja rõõm” by F. Pacius). Tomorrow’s programme also includes one piece for the orchestra that dates back to the first festival (-6; -7). [...]

The beginning of the story is characteristic to 1980s journalistic style: there is no ‘proper lead’; the story begins as a novel or essay. The reader is supposed to know when August Tammann (author of the book *Eesti üldised laulupidud XIX aastasajal* (*Estonian Song Festivals in the 19th Century*), published in 1923) carried out his study of the first Estonian Song Festival. The story quickly takes the reader back to 1869 with the sentence “Singers and listeners started to come together”. The text does not provide details, but the Estonian reader can use his/her schemas to interpret the temporal frames of the text. It is the journalistic way to point out period that extends to the past from the present moment like “120 years ago” instead of the exact year. The reoccurrence of event and place is newsworthy.

The bridge between past and present time in a news story is both temporal and spatial: the sub-headline and sentence “the festival was then held”; sentences like: “Today we must clarify [...] present University Club”. The second paragraph of the news article is partially in future tense (“all the people coming to the party”), and partially about events and decisions that have already occurred (“counties have given notice of their coming”).

Anchors and temporal connectors like “missing today” and “the City of Tartu is not ready today” require consideration of context. “Today” in this sentence means the present time, not the actual day the author wrote the story. The third paragraph of the story refers again to the history of Estonian song festivals. Though time anchors are not explicit, the Soviet period is referred to as “during those years”. This is remarkable as officially in June 1989 there was no Estonian Republic yet, but this expression refers to the pre-*perestroika* time.

The story also includes clues to the future (“will wait until”). The temporal connectors (“has asked himself when reading”, “the day preceding the event”, “will wait until the song and games festival is over”, etc.) explicate a micro-level temporal order of the five events in four time sequences: the 1869 Song Festival period in June; the time during which Tammann wrote the study; the descriptions of “those times” that Tammann used; the description of the 1989 Song Festival; and the events following it. The story clearly constructs continuity: “we understand that both Motherland and Exile Estonia still exist” and “singers and listeners who have survived through all the song festivals up to this day (from the first festival)”. These time-frames and the author’s use of several tenses create a dominant discourse of durability. The story describes and actualises an eventful period in the Estonian history narrative: the time of first national awakening.

This example also illustrates 1980s journalistic style in Estonia, before the turn to western-style news journalism. The story contains more detailed, emotional (e.g. “our hearts should also sing”), and lengthy descriptions than modern news stories usually include. In addition, the everyday problems of life during the Soviet period are mentioned (“those who control hot water supply of the city will wait until the song and games festival is over before closing the taps”). It is not clear if “will wait” here is a speculation about the future, or if it has already been decided that the citizens of Tartu can enjoy more hot water than usual. (The central hot water supply was cut off every summer during the Soviet period.) In Appendix, there are two articles, one from 1989 and the other from 2009, covering more or less the same issue (the opening of a trade centre). They further illustrate the difference between journalistic styles in these periods.

### **Methodology: content analysis categories**

As previously mentioned, to analyse the role of newspapers as memory policy agents in 1989, 1994, and 2009, in the first instance we needed to find out how much newspapers report about the present, past and future in one week. Each article in the first sample was coded according to its basic data: headline, date, and page.

We then created the following categories.

1. Genre (a message/short news story; news story; opinion article; feature; interview; something else).

2. Tense (present, present continuous; future – indefinite, certain, far future; recent past – yesterday, last week, last month, 1–1.5 years ago, up to 3 years ago; 3–5 years ago; 6–10 years ago; 11–15 years ago; more than 15 years ago; indefinite past – more than 3 years ago).

3. Event is over. (An example of this category will be presented below – see the 1 April 2009 story about skating in Tallinn.)

4. Time is indeterminate.

5. Dominant time of the reported event or topic: present; recent past; past; future (only one tense should be chosen).

6. Dominant temporal frame of the story: balanced past–present; balanced present–future; balanced past–present–future; mainly present; mainly past; mainly toward the future (only one sub-category should be chosen).

First, we created six samples for the researchers to use while coding. Two researchers coded the same three days of news stories. Because we did some training before this, about 80% of the coding corresponded.

As mentioned before, since newspapers are dependent on a weekly rhythm, we decided to compose our samples in the following way: one synthetic week from *Edasi* in 1989, one from *Noorte Hää* in 1989, one from *Postimees* in 2009, and one from *Eesti Päevaleht* in 2009. One week usually consists of 6 daily issues. The dates we used for *Edasi* 1989 were the following: 7 February 1989; 15 March 1989; 11 May 1989; 16 June 1989; 26 August 1989; 3 September 1989.

The first sample contains 1024 articles; without supplements this is 977 articles.

For the second sample (commemoration analysis), articles were selected from each issue over a 6-month period of each year studied. The content analysis categories were the following:

1. Basic data (headline, date, page).

2. Routine topic (rubric).

3. Focus. Is the past, or history: 3.1. a major focus of the story, 3.2. a secondary focus of the story (but still discussed in more than 1–2 sentences), 3.3. the extended background element that clearly explains the present events (discussed in more than 1–2 sentences)? In this sample the “past” referred to the events of over 3 years ago.

4. Genre: a short news story in an informative form, such as a factual news story with little to no background information; extended news story; opinion article (e.g. editorial or political commentary); feature; interview; reportage; serial story (factual or fiction); other genres.

5. Year and/or century referred to: all references to certain years or periods were coded qualitatively. The data was later transformed into centuries and decades. One article usually referred to various periods of time. Journalistic texts usually include “120 years ago” rather than a specific year. Still one can ‘translate’ this expression into a certain year. For example, the context of a story might

enable the reader to understand the relevant years might be either 1940–1945 or 1941–1945, even if the precise years are not mentioned.

6. Newsworthiness: the group of categories that take into account the reason why an event or topic has been evaluated by journalists. 6.1. Fiction (e.g. book, film, or exhibition about the past). 6.2. Calendar anniversary and commemoration. 6.3. Person (biography or commemoration of someone who has been important in the past). For example, on 4 February 1989, *Edasi* published a feature story called “Who was Artur Adson?”, an essay about an Estonian author who died in 1977. Its main focus is history and the article is clearly focused on one person. 6.4. The history of an organisation. 6.5. A historical event. 6.6. An announcement concerning past events or history. 6.7. Other.

7. Space: 7.1. undefined, 7.2. city or town in Estonia, 7.3. Estonia, 7.4. Russia, 7.5. Europe (or a country or town in Europe), 7.6. USA, 7.7. other countries/states (global dimension), 7.8. other.

8. Sources: 8.1. document(s), 8.2. historian(s), 8.3. expert(s) (but not historian(s)), 8.4. witness(es) or participant(s) in the event(s), 8.5. archive(s), 8.6. other Estonian medium(s)/journalistic source(s), 8.7. foreign media, 8.8. no references, 8.9. other.

“Focus of the story” in this study refers to temporal aspects that get more emphasis than others. The “angle” of the story is usually the main point stressed in the introduction (or lead); “angle” usually helps to define “the main temporal focus” of the story. In this study “major focus” and “secondary focus” were introduced in order to distinguish between the articles about the “history and past” from the articles in which past time and present were entirely intertwined.

For example, the news story “The opinion of the leaders of Hungary” (*Edasi*, 2 February 1989, 2, source: TASS), focused on the statements of some Hungarian political leaders, concerns events from 1956. The newsworthy event is the memory policy revisiting process in Hungary, although the events of 1956 are referred to several times. We classified the story as 3.3 (the past as the extended background element), since brief references to the historical events provided a strong sense of contextual meaning for the article. Another story (*Edasi*, 3 February 1989, 1) called “Library” was categorised as 3.2 (a secondary focus of the story). Quite a lot of the content was devoted to recalling the discussions and events that took place over 3 years ago. In this article, the present problems of libraries are linked to opinions that were published in 1986. The quote from the past itself includes references to the long history of the University of Tartu Library. More than half of this fairly short article is spent recalling past ideas, while the news factor itself

is clearly the present (1989) situation at the library. Still, the main angle of the news story is contemporary problems concerning the libraries.

Genre category is important as the sample includes the journalistic discourse in 1989, 1994 and 2009. Specifically, during the Soviet regime, especially in the 1980s, we saw a tendency toward “long journalism” (Harro 2001). Short news stories were politically most highly controlled and not designed to convey new information. (Extended) news stories (usually labelled just as “article”) provided lot of details and descriptions. The lead was missing in Soviet news discourse, since most news items presented a homogeneous list of actions. At this time, different forms of participatory reportage became very popular: long (1 full page) feature articles that included a strong news element, as these articles were about actual problems and daily events. One issue often included 2–6 long stories. Therefore news article and feature is not well distinguishable. During the first half of the 1990s, Estonian journalism experienced a turn to the Western news paradigm. The number of long format articles in each newspaper issue decreased.

Newsworthiness is one of a vast array of factors that influence what becomes news (Shoemaker 2006, 105), but certainly an important organising category that spotlights and draws public attention to certain periods, events or interpretations of past. In this study our special interest was in finding out how often the past becomes newsworthy as a result of anniversaries (national anniversaries as well as anniversaries of organisations and people); how newsworthy are various cultural events and commodities that actualise and interpret history (books, exhibitions, performances); and how often news journalism provides news value to memory-political announcements.

We introduced the fifth and seventh category in order to discuss proximity (geographical, political and cultural). In journalism studies, this term relates to the idea that events close to home are more likely to become a topic of public interest than events in far away places or culturally distant countries (Eilders 2006). In the context of the present study, proximity is related to time-space configuration; we ask about reporting about ‘our past’ as opposed to ‘their past’.

The sixth category helps to plot in what circumstances the past becomes newsworthy. While unexpected events often generate more attention than predictable events, past-related newsworthy topics are usually predictable (i.e. national or institutional anniversaries). A past-related article might correspond to more than one news factor. For example, news media loves openings (e.g. of monuments, historically-themed exhibitions, or the presentation of a new book about history). A past-related exhibition devoted to the anniversary of the Tartu Peace Treaty might be categorised as fiction (6.1) and anniversary (6.2).

**Figure 1. The second commemoration sample of two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009**

The number of sampled stories per month. The second commemoration sample contains stories that clearly discuss history (more than 3 years from the date of reporting).

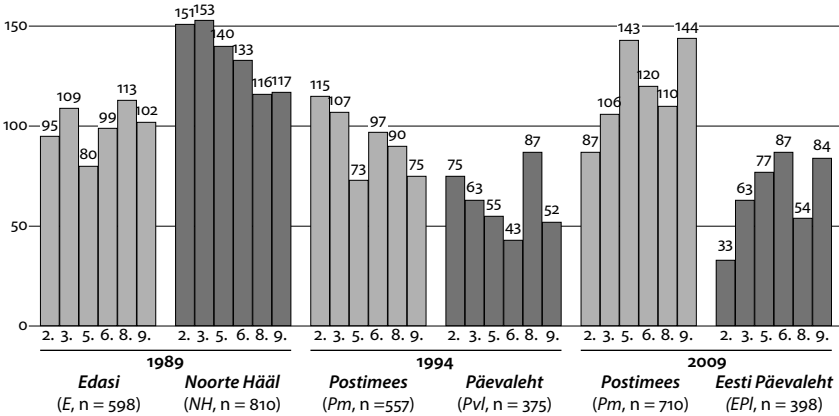


Figure 1 provides an overview on the second sample which contains 3450 articles. For this sample, we selected those articles that clearly contain history (more than 3 years from the date of reporting). If the journalist did not clearly state the dates or time period under discussion, but we were able to discern the era through the article's context, the piece was considered historical.

Sample included:

- 1989 daily *Edasi* and *Noorte Hääli*: February, March, May, June, August and September.
- 1994 daily *Postimees* and *Päevaleht*: February, March, May, June, August and September.
- 2009 daily *Postimees* and *Eesti Päevaleht*: February, March, May, June, August and September.

In the context of the research presented in this volume February, March, June, August and September were selected because these months include relevant historical anniversaries from the Estonian national calendar.

- 2 February – anniversary of the Tartu Peace Treaty (1920),
- 24 February – anniversary of the Estonian Republic (1918),
- 9/10 March – bombing of Tallinn (1944),
- 25 March – deportation anniversary (1949),
- 14 June – first deportation anniversary (1941),



- 23 June – Victory Day; the victory of Võnnu battle (during the War of Independence, 1919) has been celebrated since 1934,
- 24 June – Midsummer day,
- 23 August – anniversary of the MRP (Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, 1939).

### **Temporal dimensions of journalistic discourse in one week: the present makes the past**

It is common knowledge in journalism studies that the past bleeds into the present as a routine part of the planning of the news when it comes to regular, cyclical or daily events. It is often correctly asserted that news consists of a perpetual present preoccupation with novelty (Conboy 2012, 5). The aim of the analysis of the ‘general time map’ of Estonian newspapers was to reveal configurations of past, present and future in order to get an overview of to what extent newspapers use history and are interested in past at all.

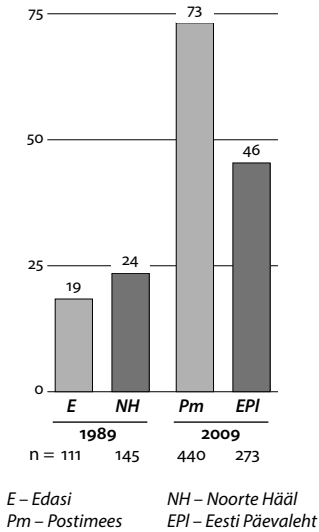
In 1989, Estonian dailies contained fewer articles than in 2009 and no supplements. In order to compare the usual time-frame in daily news discourse, we compared the volume of news and looked for differences between the two dailies during the same year. Figure 2 shows the average number of articles per issue in two Estonian dailies in the years 1989 and 2009.

In addition we asked to what extent one issue used the past, present and future tenses. Most (extended) news stories contain a historical background to the present event and provide some statements about the future. Hence, most of the news stories included past, present and future time horizons. But the historical background might only take one sentence, or be extended to several paragraphs of a news story. Therefore, we coded articles according to their major focus.

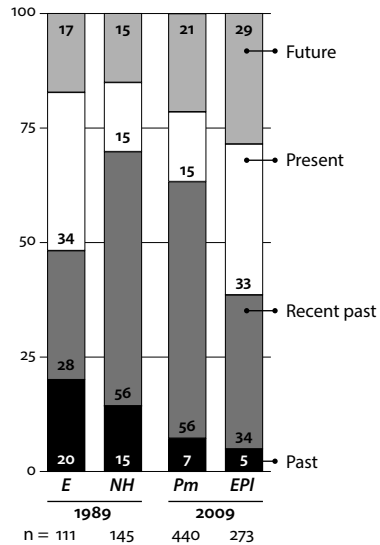
As seen from Figure 3 the newspapers mainly focused on events and problems related to the recent past and present time. Newspaper interest in the past is different: proportionally, the past was discussed more in 1989 than in 2009. In 2009, the newspapers covered more topics related to future expectations.

Estonian grammar does not enable us to distinguish between simple and continuous tenses. The perpetual present comes from the context. Different categories of “present” are especially important for the analysis that focuses on the question of the interval between reporting and reported happening; what is to be reported and the report which will require a closer investigation (Pöttker 2012, 17). Newspapers report quite a lot about those events Michael Schudson labelled as “developing stories” (Schudson 1986, 88–91). Schudson explains: “Stories that matter are stories that persist and take different turns over days or weeks or

**Figure 2. Average number of stories per issue in two Estonian dailies, 1989 and 2009**



**Figure 3. Dominant time focus of stories in two Estonian dailies, 1989 and 2009**  
Percentage of stories in synthetic week



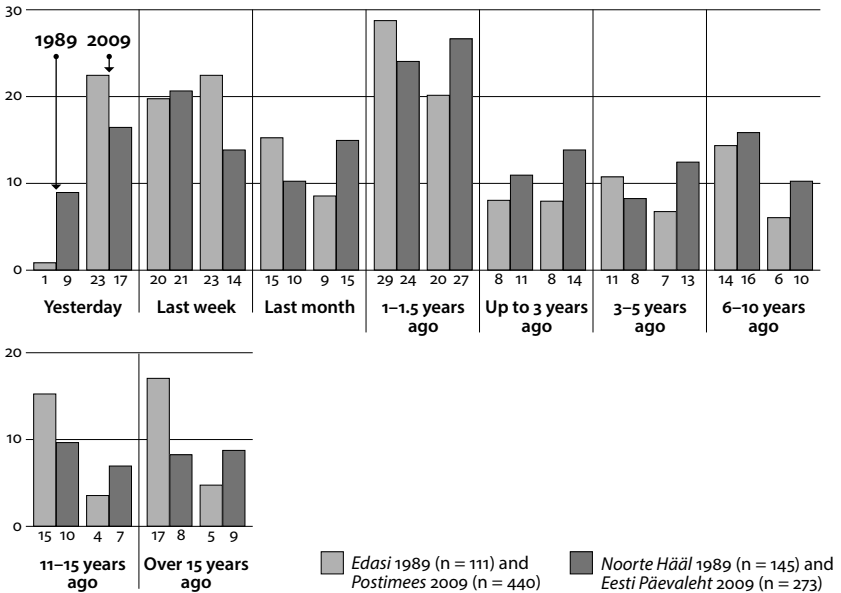
longer. [...] the ‘developing’ story that unfolds over time offers a newspaper version of the ‘continuous present’ tense” (op cit, 89).

In order to create a ‘time map’, we created categories that allowed us to deconstruct time-frames in a more detailed way, hence we distinguished the following categories: present, recent past (this morning – but the event has already happened; yesterday; last week; last month; a year ago; up to 3 years ago), past (3–5 years ago; 6–10 years ago; 11–15 years ago; more that 15 years ago), and future. It should be noted that the aim of this map was not to distinguish the time-frame of a single article. Instead, the idea was to count how many times (during the whole synthetic week) newspapers referred to events or topics concerning different periods of the past and present. As one article could refer to different periods the percentage is over 100%.

The category “up to 3 years” means the time reference was not very clear. Figure 4 demonstrates that newspapers quite frequently look back about 1–1.5 years. “Yesterday” was a more active timeframe in 2009 than in 1989. In 1989, “week” seems to be most important. One can see that in 1989, the socially constructed ‘news time’ was slower. That year, there was an exceptionally high public interest in Soviet history.

**Figure 4. Representation of the past in two Estonian dailies, 1989 and 2009**

Percentage of sampled stories for selected year. One story may include several time references, thus percentages do not add up to one hundred.



In addition to the popularity of the “yesterday” category in 2009, Figure 4 also suggests that *Edasi* (after becoming *Postimees* in 2009) became less interested in the past, while the other daily *Noorte Hääl* (after its transformation to *Eesti Päevaleht* in 2009), paid more attention to history. In fact, in these terms, *Edasi* in 1989 and *Eesti Päevaleht* in 2009 are almost comparable. Figure 3 shows that most of newspaper content devoted to the past looks at events and/or problems from the recent past. This is important because it gives us a clue that via news media the society is predominantly oriented to recall the recent past.

The following text is an example of a typical “recent past” news story. We underlined the activities that were carried out in the past. The news story reports on events that took place over the course of approximately one year; the reported activities have generally finished by the time of the report.

*Eesti Päevaleht*, 2 April 2009, 8

**Headline: MORE THAN 30,000 PEOPLE VISITED  
THE HARJU STREET SKATING RINK DURING WINTER**

By Kertu Kalmus

According to Assistant Mayor, Mr Denis Boroditsh, the decision to create a skating rink of artificial ice in the green area of Harju Street has fully justified itself.

“During the season of 2008/2009, the skating rink was open from 9 November till 29 March, which is the longest period so far when the Harju Street skating rink was in use,” said Boroditsh via the Press Service of the City Government.

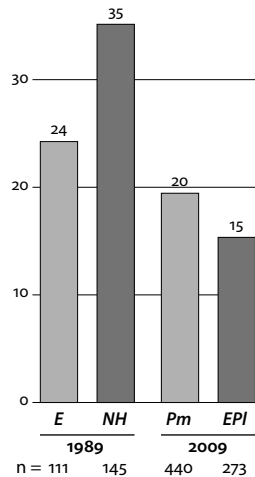
“31,191 visitors were registered on

the skating rink throughout the season, while 3,802 of them were schoolchildren who had their physical training lessons on the skating rink, and 27,389 were normal visitors,” said Assistant Mayor.

Various activities conducted on the skating rink included celebrations of Shrove Tuesday and introducing curling, several companies organised sporting family days on the rink, and on 20 March the beginning of spring was celebrated on the skating rink.

In order to understand how often newspapers refer to finished or complete events (without referencing further developments), we created a special category. One can see, in Figure 5, that in 2009, the percentage of such stories is less than in 1989, when newspapers were more interested in distant past events. The statistics about finished events indicate the extent to which journalistic discourse informs people about events that have already happened. On the one hand when journalists report on events whose information is not completely available, their valuation might be more volatile. On the other hand, especially in political reporting, progressive news journalists follow decision-making processes, while in the case of finished events they are informing the public about already accepted decisions. In 1989, the high percentage of reporting on finished events may suggest society’s interest

**Figure 5. Finished events or topics of stories in two Estonian dailies, 1989 and 2009**  
Percentage of stories



in reflecting upon recent changes and/or past events, and in constructing narratives about them.

The following text is an extract from a whole page mosaic of opinions about the congress of Estonian journalists (*Edasi*, 11 May 1989, 2). This is a short example of a narrative that involves a definite sequence of stages and central organising idea of the beginning and end. The whole page functioned as a retrospective story about an event that was over by the time the newspaper reported on it. (Only one sentence related to future expectation.)

With this example, we wish to stress and illustrate the typical character of Estonian journalism in 1989: it was full of stories about the past that helped to explain the great changes during that pivotal time. At that time, journalists often used a storytelling technique and may have conceived people of their topics more like storytellers and less like ‘watchdogs’. The temporal horizons of the story show how the journalist incorporated his knowledge about previous events into this story about an event he witnessed “nearly two months ago”. References to time are underlined. One can find expressions (“chronological anchors” for the narrator) that provide temporal location for events that illustrate gradual weathering of Soviet power: “nearly two months ago”, “the 1987 Congress of Journalists”, “the late stagnation era”, “Bovin’s work in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR in the 1960s”. Other expressions – “was sent”, “was not elected”, etc. – refer to the narrative in past simple tense as finished. The very last sentence links the narrative to the present context and explains why this story has to be told in May 1989.

*Edasi*, 11 May 1989, 2

**Headline:** CONGRESS OF JOURNALISTS HELD

By Aimar Jugaste

Nearly two months ago I happened to see how deputies were elected in Moscow from amongst journalists of the whole Union. One of the candidates was a well-known foreign affairs commentator, Alexandr Bovin, one of the most courageous observers of the late stagnation era, who was the only one who was sent to rostrum with applause at the 1987 Congress of Journalists – and still he was not elected as deputy now; he was short of quite a lot of votes. Skilful lobbying was conducted

against Bovin: he was asked with ostensible curiosity how many orders or medals he had (although the audience discerned quite well the true intention of the person who asked the question to recall to the electorate Bovin’s work in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR in the 1960s. [...] Lack of trust towards people who have been more or less related to the apparatus seems to be extremely characteristic of present time.

Finally, as is seen from Figure 5, the category “finished events” enables us to see that in 1989 the society was more devoted to retelling stories about the past, and finished events.

### **Retrospective content in the Estonian dailies: 1989, 1994 and 2009**

In comparison to the historian who composes stories about the past, newspapers have a specific role: news is mostly used to evoke the past in order to make sense of the present (Edy 1999). Our analysis of synthetic weeks in 1989 and 2009 provided evidence that almost every issue contained only a few articles devoted to the past (2–5 articles per issue and only very rarely, 7–10 articles per issue). A few issues did not contain any history-focused articles.

The collective memory, as well as attention to the past, of Estonians underwent change at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. Therefore, the year 1994 was added to the second sample. In 1994, the “present” was actual and the speed of social change was rapid. People had to learn about capitalist financing systems, laws, the structure of market economy, Western technology and Western information. As a result, our hypothesis was that, in 1994, the public’s interest in the past had decreased because the present time (in progress) was taking up so much attention, resources, and time.

In 2009, the year the economic crisis began, Estonia had been open to a discursive struggle with the West concerning different interpretations of history for decades. During the 2000s there were certain events that placed issues of memory politics onto the public and journalistic agenda. In 2004, for example, a monument in Lihula dedicated to Estonian soldiers who fought – against the Soviets – with the Waffen-SS troops in the World War II was removed. Soon after the upheaval at Lihula and the Soviet celebration of the 60th anniversary of Victory Day (9 May) in Moscow, the problems surrounding Tallinn’s Bronze Soldier monument, which had been erected to honour the Soviet ‘liberator’, brought memory politics to the fore. The discussion around the Bronze Soldier lasted several years, and peaked with riots in Tallinn on 26 April 2007. These events made it clear that the collective memory of ethnic Estonians and the official Estonian history of WWII conflicted with the Russian-speaking community’s understanding of the past. Estonian society started to realise actively that there is more than one mnemonic community in Estonia.

Our analysis of past-oriented texts by synthetic week suggests that narratives about the past were no longer narratives about events but rather news stories on memory policy. To illustrate this change we present a small-scale case study that compares news discourse about the deportations in 1941 and 1949. The first article

is from 1989, and the following three are from 2009. The 1989 story is about the meeting that was held that year to commemorate the deportations of June 1941. The second and the third articles are about the presentation of the deportation, as represented in the headline of the former. The third article is a typical news story about official memory politics. The phrases that refer to the different discourses are underlined. In the first article (especially in the first section) one can recognise the continuous tense, e.g. “the sufferings last”, “how long [...] keep silent”. While in the second and third article one can recognise that dominant discourse is revisiting history writing. Expressions like “writers of Estonian history have now found” and “documents have been preserved about the action” refer to the qualitative change in the discourse of commemoration in 2009 in comparison to 1989. In 2009 historical interpretation is driven by political perspectives. The fourth article illustrates a typical news story about memory-political statements.

*Edasi*, 16 June 1989, 1

**Headline:** IN COMMEMORATION OF INNOCENT SUFFERERS

By Asta Niinemets

How much longer? Our people have carried this question in their souls for decades. “How long will the suffering last?” thought those who were deported far away from their homes for no reason whatsoever. “How long do we have to keep silent about our suffering?” asked every Estonian family when reminiscences about injustice were still banned.

14 June was declared as the Day of Freedom of the Baltic States in the whole world. We declared it a day of mourning because these two feelings – desire for freedom and grief – are inseparable in our souls. One of the speakers at the service of the day of these hard and sad memories in St. Paul’s Church was the provost of Tartu deanery, Harald Tammur, who has memories of his own to remember from those years of suffering. He spoke from heart to heart to his co-sufferers, and emphasised: “Evil has not caught our souls, as belief, hope and love were

with the Estonian people throughout those hard times. In those grievous years, one could not find a single home in Estonia where the mother would not turn to God in her prayers for her children and her family. [...] Harald Tammur inaugurated in St. Paul’s Church the flag of the Tartu division of the Estonian Memento Union – the association of people who were repressed by the Soviet regime. After the service people headed towards the Aardla railway station in procession, where a stone of commemoration to those deported was dedicated. This too was inaugurated with the word of God by Harald Tammur.

Among others, chairman of the Tartu Association for Preservation of National Heritage, Mr Tõnn Sarv, and member of the council of the Tartu division of Memento, Mr Enn Tarto, made a speech at the opening of the stone [...] Tõnn Sarv recalled that people gathered on the grounds between

two railways, behind the former St. Paul's (present Ropka-Tamme) graveyard, for the first time last year on 14 June. This stone was not there yet then. People came for the second time this spring to commemorate the deportation of 25 March 1949. On Wednesday people were again here for the third time.

"We will keep coming here for as long as we are able to remember," Tõnn Sarv promised. The same promises

were given by other speakers who re-called the times of injustice and spoke about the wrongful system which, indeed, cannot bring about anything other than suffering.

A garland was placed at the stone of commemoration by the organisers; flowers were also placed at the stone. After placing the flowers, Mr Paul Muuli also spoke about the times of evil that Estonians had gone through [...].

The next article commemorates the March 1949 and June 1941 deportations.

*Eesti Päevaleht*, 31 March 2009, 2

**Headline: DEPORTATION AND ITS DISPLAY**

By Ardo Kaljuvee

Writers of Estonian history have now found in the archives of Russia several documents that allegedly allow more detailed descriptions to be given of the great deportations that took place 68 and 60 years ago. These deportations were planned in Moscow with the clear aim of genocide. It is important to compare the documents found in the Russian archives with the writings of those who have returned from the slave camps of the Soviet Union and banishment. If this is not done, and the archives of the Soviet Union are treated as trustworthy sources, we ourselves may leave an utterly incorrect picture to our descendants of the extremely brutal situation in which those deported to Russia were forced to live, and what kind of death many of them had to suffer.

Editors of today have already published lots of pictures that describe the lives of those deported. These pictures could be made only when these people had escaped from slave camps to banishment. I remember a picture of the deported that was published in a newspaper where young and cheerful women sawed firewood for themselves. The mood and clothing displayed in the picture enabled the viewer to conclude that reminiscences of those who escaped extremely inhuman circumstances were just exorbitances disseminated by 'Russophobes'. Relying on such pictures, it is possible for our friends in the West to conclude that our present demands to declare the deeds of the Soviet Union equal to the crimes committed by the Nazis is simply not justified. Why do we act like this then?



*Eesti Päevaleht*, 24 March 2009. <http://www.epl.ee/news/eesti/kapo-kuuditamine-polnud-eestlaste-omavaheline-arveteoiendus.d?id=51163258>

**Headline:** DEFENCE POLICE: DEPORTATION WAS NOT MUTUAL REVENGE AMONG ESTONIANS

By Urmas Jaagant

At the scientific conference held in the History Museum several myths related to the March deportation were refuted. One of the biggest among such myths has been the understanding that deportation was a mutual getting-even between Estonians.

According to the historian and Superintendent of the Defence Police, Mr Andres Kahar, who made a presentation at the conference, such an understanding is disseminated by Russian

propaganda, as ERR [Estonian Public Broadcasting – HHL] News cited the news programme *Aktuaalne kaamera*.

According to Kahar's assessment, the victims and witnesses actually knew nothing about preparations for deportation as the whole action was strictly secret and very few documents have been preserved about the action; this is actually the reason why several myths are spread through hearsay in connection with the deportations...

*Eesti Päevaleht*, 24 March 2009. <http://www.epl.ee/news/eesti/riigikogu-vottis-vastu-kuuditatuid-malestava-avalduse.d?id=51163225>

**Headline:** THE RIIGIKOGU ADOPTED A DECLARATION IN COMMEMORATION OF THOSE WHO WERE DEPORTED

By Tuuli Aug

The Riigikogu adopted a declaration stating “Let us recall, commemorate, sustain” initiated by 46 members of the Riigikogu with 72 votes in favour.

“With this Declaration the Riigikogu commemorates those people of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania who became victims of the March deportation of 1949,” the press service of the Riigikogu explained. The Declaration emphasises that deportation is an international crime that does not expire. Neither does the responsibility of those

guilty of deportation.

The Declaration supports the proposal of the European Parliament to declare 23 August European Day of Remembrance. The Riigikogu also supports the initiatives of the European Parliament and other institutions of the European Union as well as of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to investigate and raise awareness of the crimes of totalitarianism. Nobody voted against the Declaration and nobody remained undecided.

In the first article, the dominant discourse is suffering, national trauma, and injustice. Personal trauma, memories, and feelings are clearly represented. We found phrases like “times of evil” and “wrongful system”, terms indicating how newspapers used emotional euphemisms instead of the juridical word “crime”, which was used more often in 2009.

In the second and third article, the dominant discourse related to history, research, testimony, and a demand for political accountability for past wrongdoings. These examples represent the aforementioned change in journalistic discourse: in 1989, the articles were longer, and in 2009, Estonian journalism used a shorter and more precise style, with less explicit emotions. The third article (2009) represents the discourses of victims and guilt, and labels the deportation clearly as an “international crime”. In addition, it contextualised the history of the Baltic states in the European context. In the first article, the news event itself is a meeting, the news event in the third article is a scientific conference, and the fourth article is about an official decision and declaration.

This discursive change from commemoration towards memory politics is not occasional but the content analysis of the whole sample shows that in 2009 more news stories do not just describe the past or what we feel about the past but give the past meaning and political implications through interpretation and analysis. In the 1989 stories, the June 1941 deportation was stressed more, in 2009 the deportation in March 1949 received more attention. While in 1989, the focus was on victims, by 2009, the discourse of guilt has appeared.

The examples suggest that retrospective justice continues to be important; the years 1941 and 1949 are continually real, but are framed differently.

### **A relief map of the past: the mountains and hills of remembrance, the valleys of forgetfulness**

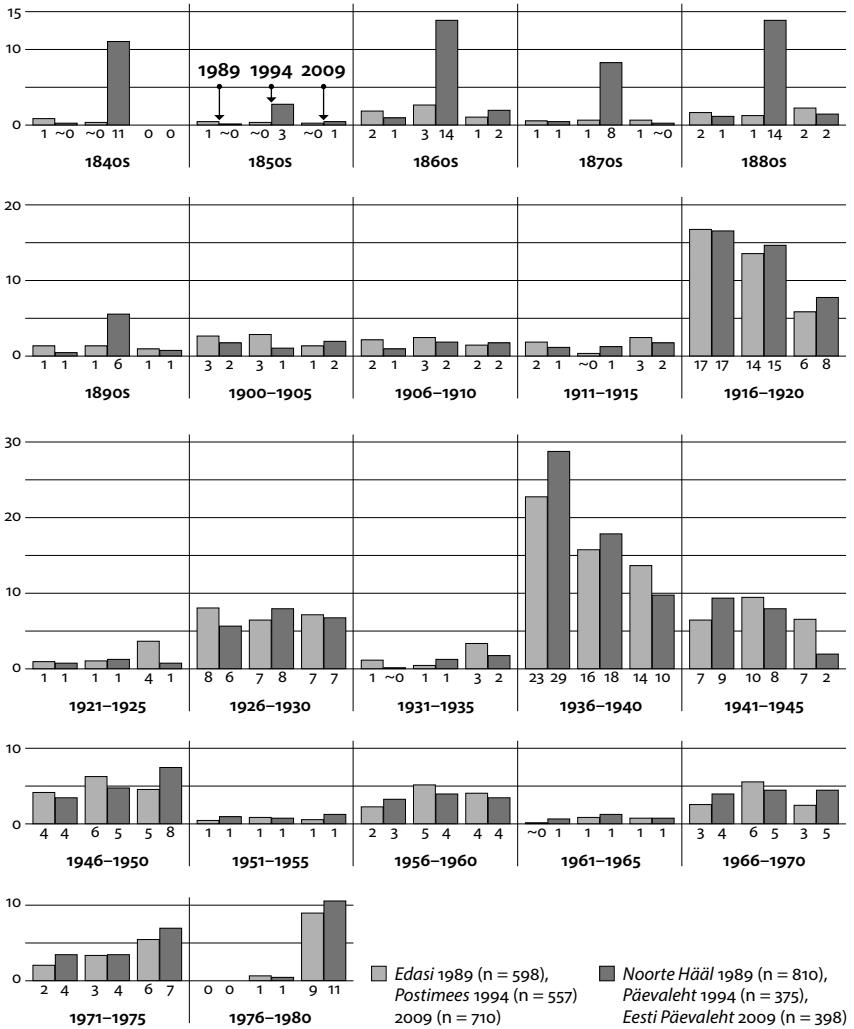
As Eviatar Zerubavel has shown (2003), historical narratives vary considerably in their perceived ‘density’ – how intensely we actually remember different historical periods and what periods we compress. As becomes clear from Figure 6, for Estonian newspapers the most memorable period is 1916–1940. This figure shows newspapers’ interest in the second Soviet occupation of 1940/41. Surprisingly, the period from 1926 to 1930 also received media attention. The first half of the 1950s and the same period of the 1960s received less retrospective attention and seem to be quite empty compared to the times of destruction of Estonian nation and republic.

It also becomes clear that in 1989, 1994 and 2009 the periods that newspapers consider historically eventful are different. For example in 1994 *Päevaleht* pays more attention to the 19th century. The difference between two national dailies is significant.

Figure 6 clearly demonstrates that 1989 was a year in which the establishment and occupation of the Estonian Republic was covered much more intensively than in other periods. In 1994, more attention was also given to the 19th

**Figure 6. References to historical periods in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009**

Percentage of sampled stories for selected year. Several historical periods may be discussed in one story, thus percentages do not add up to one hundred.



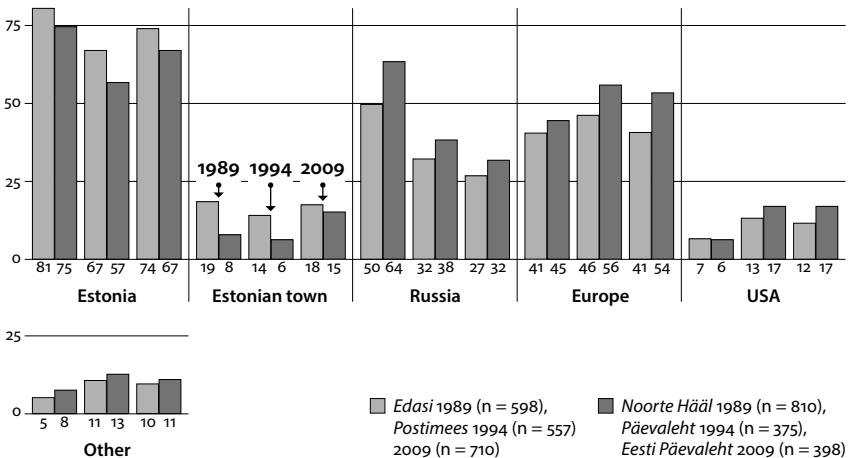
century. One reason for this is intensive coverage of the Song Festival in June (the 125th anniversary festival in 1994). In addition, on 4 June 1994 the Estonian flag celebrated its 110th anniversary. Several articles were about important people in Estonian culture who were born and/or active in the 19th century. In sum, national anniversaries increased interest in the 19th century.

### Whose past? Space in past-related articles

A group’s memory is linked to places, ruins, landscapes, monuments and urban architecture, which – as they are overlain with symbolic associations to past events – play an important role in helping to preserve group memory (Misztal 2003, 16). As for the Estonian-language press, the Estonian nation as the main mnemonic community in Estonia (in the meaning of space) certainly contributes significantly to the construction of national identity. We were interested on the one hand in how often past-related articles in the national dailies focus on local areas (small towns and villages that might prefer the memories of smaller groups than nation to be important). On the other hand we were interested in how often the European Russian and global past was given newsworthiness for Estonian readers.

**Figure 7. Geo-political space in past-related stories in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009**

Percentage of sampled stories for selected year. One story may include several spatial references, thus percentages do not add up to one hundred.



As seen in Figure 7, there is almost no changes in referring to different locations in 1989, 1994 and 2009. As expected, Estonia is the most significant space. Slightly more significant is that the Europe-related past is mentioned more often than the Russian.

### **News factors: when the past is important enough**

Newsworthiness is often defined as the reason why a particular topic or event is selected for publication (Kepplinger & Ehmgig 2006). We were particularly interested in news selection that shapes the actualisation of the past. As was pointed out previously, it is important to distinguish the articles about the past from articles that discuss the interpretation and the meaning of history. Some articles are apparently neutral news stories (see the micro case study above), but often these texts represent the discourse of the ‘battles over memory’ in society. Such stories would be selected for publication because of their ‘significance to society’ (this is how news theory would classify them). In the case of history representations such stories often include a proclamation about history, commemorative speeches, etc., either announced by a politician or expert, witnesses at the public meetings or people expressing their ideas about history in opinion articles. In order to capture how much opinion about the past or history is the main frame of an article we created a special category called “statement”.

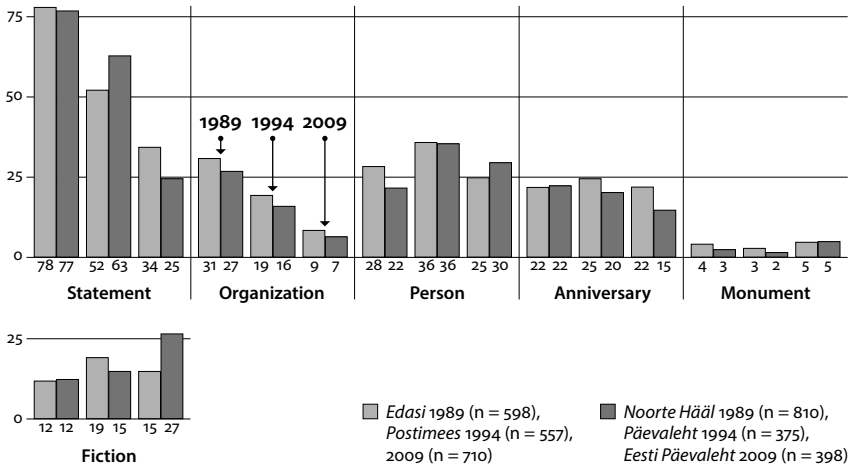
As monuments and memorials increasingly provoke discussions we created a special category for news content that creates a relation between monuments and collective memory. As Misztal points out, there are political implications and controversies concerning the monuments, because of the question “whose vision of the past is put into a monument?” (Misztal 2003, 121). Public commemorations are arranged at the monuments during history-related anniversaries. But for this research, monument category was separately identified because this category enables us to get an overview of how often the newspapers refer to a place or site to which certain groups are emotionally attached. Classical news theory does not define “monument” as a news factor, but the weakness of this theory is that it does not pay much attention to the planned and cyclically repeated news about commemoration.

This also explains why anniversaries are not usually considered to be news factors. Notwithstanding, the empirical research shows that these are significant news factors concerning articles that actualise the past.

For this study we also introduced a category that generates input to the discourse of the interpretation of the past: fiction (speculation and imagination concerning the past). This category includes all kinds of books and writings

**Figure 8. Six news factors in past-related stories in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009**

Percentage of sampled stories for selected year. One story may include several news factors, thus percentages do not add up to one hundred.



about history, performances, exhibitions (and museums), films and programmes. History has become very fashionable in recent years and especially on television there are numerous history channels that broadcast seven days a week. Television has several advantages in bringing the past to the screen, for example television can use reconstructions. Newspapers rather report about the publication of a history book, judge historical films or inform readers about various popular representations of the past. However, especially in 1989, newspapers also published longer serial articles on history.

Finally, news frequently reports on people who have been important for national culture or who have done something important in the past. This personalisation of news is a well-known phenomenon in journalism, and past-related articles are often portrait stories that are published in connection to personal anniversaries (see Figure 9).

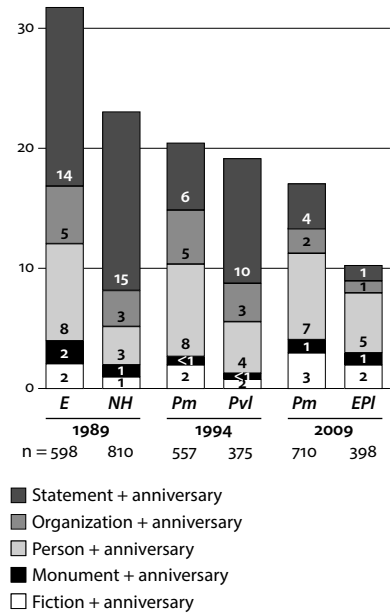
Figure 8 provides an overview of the percentage of stories that relate to the named six categories. Anniversaries are a recurrent topic, covered to a greater or lesser extent by the press. Therefore we asked additionally: how many of the five news factors occurred in conjunction with the anniversary category? Figure 9 presents the corresponding percentages.

As Figure 8 points out, in 1989 and 1994 newspapers were reporting the history of various organisations quite strongly, while in 1989 the “fiction” category was far less represented than in 2009. As was said previously, the “statement” category is quite broad, although it is noticeable that in 2009 the importance of statements in the news has decreased considerably. We could not find discrete major reasons for this, rather it is a general change in journalistic convention.

Figure 8 and 9 reveal that the discourse on monuments (which has increased in 2009 in comparison to other periods) stands fairly independent of the anniversaries. Another noticeable result is that reporting on the history of different organisations is less connected to the anniversaries than we expected. We expected that the history of organisations would be commemorated in case of anniversaries.

**Figure 9. Anniversaries in conjunction with other news factors in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009**

Percentage of sampled stories for selected year



**The influence of past-related anniversaries on retrospective discourse in newspaper content**

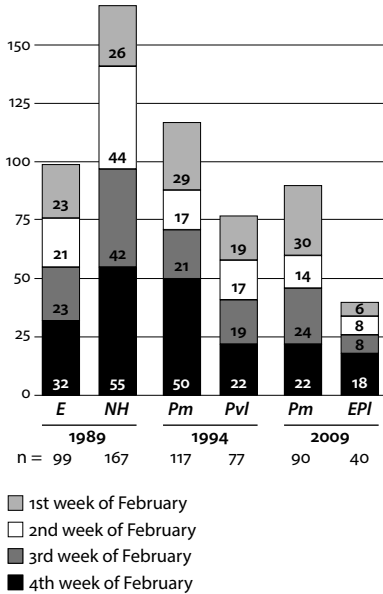
According to our hypothesis, anniversaries that are linked to national history would increase the actualisation of a certain past in newspapers. Figure 10, relating to February (two important national anniversaries), shows that this hypothesis was correct (cf. Figure 12, past-related stories in March).

One can see that at the end of February (around the anniversary of the Estonian Republic) the number of articles reflecting past events is higher. The anniversary of the Tartu Peace Treaty at the beginning of February also increases the number of articles. However, the figure also shows that there is quite a big difference between the two selected dailies and periods.

Figure 11 shows a more detailed picture of the influence of anniversary. This figure also contains the days when newspapers did not appear (Sundays and

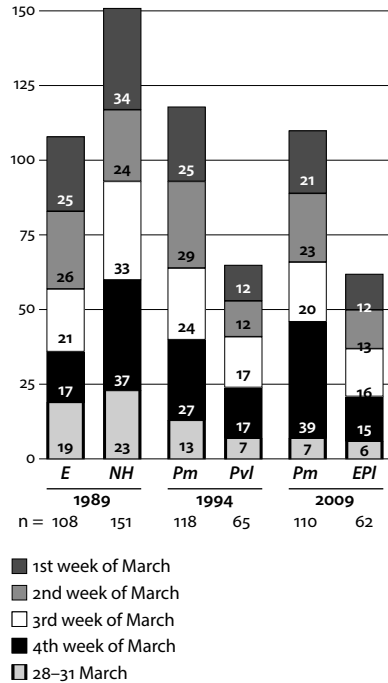
**Figure 10. Past-related stories during the weeks in February in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009**

Number of stories. There are two anniversaries in February: the Tartu Peace Treaty was signed on 2 February 1920; the Estonian Declaration of Independence was issued on 23–24 February 1918.



**Figure 12. Past-related stories during the weeks in March in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009**

Number of stories. Around 21 thousand Estonians were deported to Siberia on 25–29 March 1949.



holidays). From this figure it is possible to see that in 2009 the Tartu Peace Treaty was mainly a news topic in *Postimees* and covered only superficially in *Eesti Päevaleht*.

### Relationship between the use of genres and reporting past

Finally, as in journalistic discourse framing is partly linked to genre, Figure 13 shows how past-related stories divide between genres. The frequency of news, feature or other genre on the one hand enables us to get an ‘aerial photograph’ of the transformation of journalism culture. On the other hand the ‘map of genres’ enables us to recognise the diachronic dimension of framing the past. For example



**Figure 11. Past-related stories during the days in February in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009**

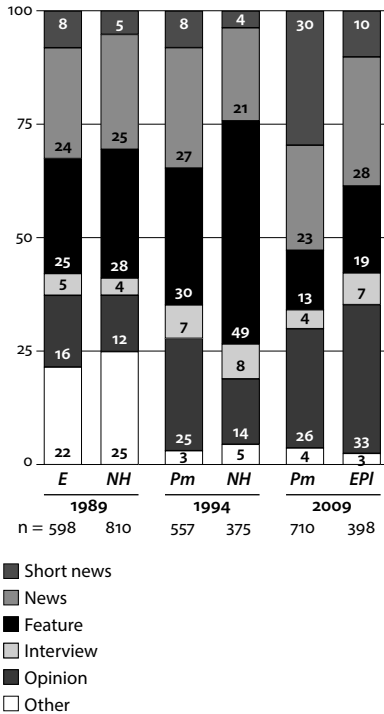
Number of stories. There are two anniversaries in February: the Tartu Peace Treaty was signed on 2 February 1920; the Estonian Declaration of Independence was issued on 23–24 February 1918.

	1989		1994		2009		Total
	<i>E</i>	<i>NH</i>	<i>Pm</i>	<i>Pvl</i>	<i>Pm</i>	<i>EPI</i>	
1 Feb	5	6	8	3	–	–	22
<b>2 Feb</b>	7	5	7	5	2	2	28
3 Feb	3	5	7	3	9	1	28
4 Feb	3	5	2	3	6	1	20
5 Feb	5	5	5	5	6	0	26
6 Feb	–	–	–	–	4	1	5
7 Feb	6	7	5	2	3	1	24
8 Feb	5	10	2	4	–	–	21
9 Feb	5	8	1	2	2	1	19
10 Feb	5	6	2	1	1	0	15
11 Feb	0	6	3	5	4	0	18
12 Feb	0	7	4	3	2	2	18
13 Feb	–	–	–	–	2	3	5
14 Feb	4	9	2	3	3	2	23
15 Feb	4	8	4	7	–	–	23
16 Feb	6	6	4	2	1	1	20
17 Feb	2	6	3	1	3	1	16
18 Feb	3	8	4	2	3	0	20
19 Feb	4	5	4	4	5	0	22
20 Feb	–	–	–	–	5	3	8
21 Feb	2	7	4	4	7	3	27
22 Feb	4	5	10	1	–	–	20
23 Feb	3	9	9	5	5	4	35
<b>24 Feb</b>	4	11	–	–	–	–	15
25 Feb	10	8	15	0	4	2	39
26 Feb	5	6	4	4	4	0	23
27 Feb	–	–	–	–	3	6	9
28 Feb	4	9	8	8	6	0	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>584</b>

the feature stories, interviews and opinion articles have the capacity to make the narrator more visible. The journalist, historian, politician or common man has the possibility to become a spokesperson for the story. The conventions of news genre usually hide the storyteller and rather focus attention on the commemorative event or extended historical background of the event or topic (Sanders 2010).

**Figure 13. Genres of past-related stories in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009**

Percentage of stories



In addition the news genre, especially short news stories – because of the limited content – construct the ‘surface memory’ which, in conjunction with the speed of the consumption of such news texts, would rather increase the fragmentation of representations of the past.

However, Griffen-Foley points out that some outstanding historical features that were published in the Australian newspapers in the 1940–1980s contributed to the perception and construction of Australian history (Griffen-Foley 2012, 67–71).

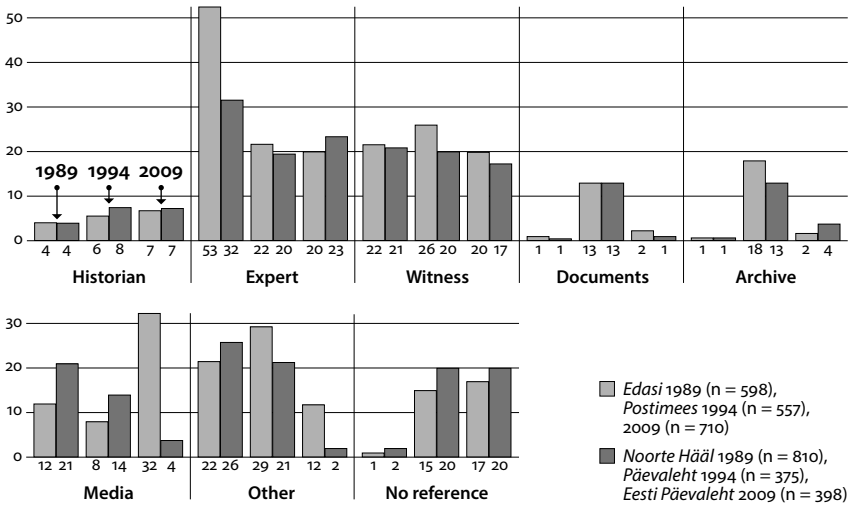
Figure 13 shows that in 2009 the past was more covered in the news and opinion genres than previously. As mentioned before, this change is explainable because in 2009 the discourse of memory politics and interpretation of the past had increased. The large number of “other stories” in 1989 refers to the variety of non-journalistic genres at that time.

### Sources as memory agents

George Orwell’s famous saying that “who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past” (*Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 1949) is in compliance with the question posed by the memory researchers in journalism studies: to whom has the news media entrusted the authority to tell its most important stories? Eyal Zandberg points out five main sources in daily newspapers that create the realms of memory: biographic, official, academic, cultural and journalistic (Zandberg 2010). Zelizer (1992) and Meyers (2002) demonstrated the dominant role of journalists as memory agents. However, it is still important to distinguish first-hand journalistic sources from second-hand. Newspapers often refer to stories that have been published already in other media outlets (Lund 2002). We were also more interested in official, academic and cultural sources,

**Figure 14. Sources in past-related stories in two Estonian dailies, 1989, 1994 and 2009**

Percentage of sampled stories for selected year. One story may include several sources, thus percents do not add to hundred.



therefore we created categories that enabled us to distinguish documents and people (experts and witnesses). In the case of witnesses, personal memories are orchestrated editorially so that the memories of common people become part of the public memory. Finally we were interested in highlighting the second-hand media and other stories without references. If this category is frequent it would point to a tendency that the newspaper is rather a transmitter of news than an informative supporter of orientation.

Politicians were counted as “other” in this study.

As the Figure 14 reveals, the role of experts was much greater in 1989 than in 2009. *Postimees* particularly uses many second-hand media sources while *Eesti Päevaleht* publishes a lot of content without referring to the sources. Unexpectedly, many “witnesses” were given ‘voice’. The “witness” category includes people who were publicly recounting their personal or family stories about the deportations and their war memories.

## **Conclusions and discussion. Differences between 1989, 1994 and 2009**

The first part of the study demonstrated that the daily newspapers predominantly cover the recent past and use the present continuous tense. In 2009 the future in news receives more attention than in 1989. We propose that this tendency notes that society is not only planning more but is also worried more about the future, because 2009 was a time of (economic) turmoil in society. Presuming that the past in newspapers is actualised and reconstructed in a dialogical relationship with the present, the present study clearly demonstrates that the majority of the daily news does not build very long memory bridges. The present database enables us to do further analysis and ask – by using qualitative methods – how online news media has shaped ‘yesterday’ and what is the interval of events and reporting about these events in online news sites. In other words: how is present time constructed and what might we lose because ‘news time’ has increasingly fewer ‘finished events’?

The results of this study enable us to describe the newspapers as sites of memory more precisely. First, the different periods of the Estonian, European, Russian and global past are covered unevenly: ‘our’ Estonian past is dominant, but European and Russian pasts get quite a lot of attention. The ‘hills’ mark the decisive periods for the nation state. Unlike many European countries, World War II did not gain any more attention than the beginning of the 1930s.

Past-related anniversaries help to make the past and commemoration more newsworthy, but it should be kept in mind that most of the issues include several articles concerning history, therefore the steady actualisation of different moments from the past should not be underestimated when one considers the newspapers’ impact in transforming the descriptions of the past into individual or collective memory.

The whole study was more focused on the question of the change in temporal frames of news content in 1989, 1994 and 2009. As we presumed, in 1989 society was more interested in the past than in 2009, as *perestroika* in the Soviet Union enabled the country to start its struggle against ‘forced forgetting’ practices. In 2009 the past orientation was still higher than we expected, although now instead of just telling stories the past-related content is more interpretative. This is very well reflected in the use of genres: in 2009 the number of opinion articles in the sample was considerably higher than in 1989 or 1994. The study also enables us to realise how the changes in journalistic culture may affect the way the temporal frames and cultural memory are displayed.

One has to take into consideration the limits of the present study. Namely, this kind of broad content analysis enables us to prepare rather a general overview

for further qualitative research. The content analysis does not allow us to explain many reasons for the changes as this can be revealed by close textual analysis only. Analysis using the SPSS program revealed that there are no typical past-related article groups except anniversary stories.

The research question is how much these different news factors influence the memory construction of the news media. We presume that the national calendar and political agenda are very important factors, while at the same time revealing the specific information processing methods of the news media explains some effects the media has on commemoration. Specifically, the newsworthiness of certain event and topics (in configuration with beginnings, durations and ends), and the specific temporal structure of the discourse of news constructed dynamic remembering. Even when the commemoration events remain similar from year to year, the news angles change according to the current agendas in society. From this study one can also see that two national dailies construct different temporalities.

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## Appendix. Two future-oriented (major focus in headline) news stories about the same topic, in 1989 and 2009

The time structure (different tenses in the stories) is underlined

*Edasi*, 16 May 1989, 1

Headline: AWAITING COMMISSIONS

By Indrek Nõlv

The saying goes that a fence does not stop a thief. However, it does keep away casual intruders. Now the fence that was rich in colour and information has been dismantled from around Kesklinna market hall, and the building is openly visible to everyone. This does not mean, however, that everyone is allowed to loaf about freely on the site. (Impermissible hanging around may have particularly unpleasant consequences at night: the house is guarded, and the watchman has an angry dog at his disposal.)

There is currently enough work for nearly 80 labourers, finishing workers and contractors in the market hall. The building is big; there are lots of rooms – the eye cannot grasp them all at once. The outer walls will be covered with a slap dash layer. The construction company Tartu Ehitustrust only has a couple of specialists for this work. This is another example of our construction policy: the plasterer becomes

unqualified because he has to do beautiful plaster work very seldom.

Elvo Kahar's team, which has been performing construction works on the site from the very beginning, is currently pottering around doing minor works. The workers are eagerly awaiting components for suspended ceilings and granite plates for outer stairs. Suspended ceilings are produced in a plant that is located close to Moscow, while granite is treated by Tallinn stone cutters. 170 square metres must be covered with these plates, which is an extremely large job that requires great precision.

According to the foreman, Mr Kaarel Türn, the team of the Tallinn Division of Kaubandustehnika deserves particularly high praise amongst the numerous contractors. Builders from Tartu have never met such a decent, high-cultured and hard-working Russian-speaking company before. The team's task is to install chilled counters and other equipment in the grocery



stores.

As from 9 January the Director of Kesklinna market hall has been Mrs Marvi Kibe. "Sometimes I feel like I work at a building concern. Elvo Kahar's men are extremely attentive and kind. They have never refused my requests to redo anything," Kibe says.

Kesklinna market hall became the first shop in Estonia with a special job position for an engineer. Igor Ionov is a shop equipment specialist, and thus a perfectly fit man to manage and maintain the technological systems of the large department store.

There will be an industrial goods shop on the first floor of the market hall. Just now Finnish-type shelves are being installed there. The shelves have been manufactured by the Institute of Design and Technology of the Ministry of Commerce. On the ground floor – where the food shop will be – two sets of Hungarian refrigerating equipment will be installed.

So far Marvi Kibe's main task has been to form the team to run the market hall (nearly 200 people). The Director has selected heads of divisions and

other managers, and they in turn will select shop assistants. The number of candidates has been high (particularly for the section of industrial goods). And why not? No other shop in Tartu has such good working conditions! The Director is also waiting for people who would like to work as shopkeepers or cleaners (perhaps also part-time).

The Advertising Factory of the Ministry of Commerce has completed the neon and internal advertising. There will be two art designers working in the market hall. Display windows are the business card of a shop. There is no doubt that commercial designers will give them interesting design, although it is another issue how to keep the countless windows of the building clean.

The technical commission will come to inspect Kesklinna market hall at the end of May; the state commission will give its assessment to the building in late June. And then the new large market hall will open its doors to customers.

*Eesti Päevaleht*, 26 september 2009. [www.epl.ee/news/](http://www.epl.ee/news/)

**Headline: THE ROTERMANN QUARTER HOPES TO OPEN  
AN INDOOR MARKETPLACE BEFORE WINTER**

By Mari Kodres

According to plans, the historical wheat and rye mill building will be re-designed to become trading rooms. The official trading season of the outdoor market of local products, which was opened in spring and which has been operating from the middle of each week until Sunday, was closed yesterday, although the market continues to function on a smaller scale. Those

sellers who wish to continue their business in the indoor market are going to brave the coming cold at their outdoor counters. "This way the traders will not suffer a longer break," the project manager of the market, Mrs Merilin Pärli, explained.

According to her, the advantage of the indoor market that is to be launched would definitely be wide

choice of fresh products. “It would be possible to offer both meat and fish products. Unfortunately, only the sale of packed products is permitted in outdoor conditions but a real market should definitely have fresh stuff,” Pärli said. According to her there will probably be places for more traders in the indoor market than in the yard, where 20 sellers have been operating so far.

### **Pasties straight from Saaremaa**

Restoration of the wheat and rye mill situated next to the lengthy grain elevator building has been planned in the second development phase of the Quarter. Between these two buildings there is also a voluminous bread factory/gallery. Although the owners’ circles have not yet approved the decision to launch an indoor market, there is no doubt that, despite the availability of rooms, several urgent problems will have to be tackled, the most important of which include insulation, illumination and foodstuff preservation conditions.

“There is no way to overlook the regulations set by the Veterinary and Food Board in everyday food produce management,” the marketing manager of the Rotermann Quarter, Mr Andre Poopuu, said. Traders are very

interested in continuing in the indoor market, and in the new possibilities, according to Poopuu, although the situation is still unclear. The initial optimistic plan was to open the indoor market in late October, but now Poopuu does not dare to give any promises.

Grandmother Mai, that is Mrs Mai Suurpere, who has successfully sold her pasties in the market, also says that she would like to continue in the indoor market. “I also sell in Kuressaare but there are bigger crowds in Tallinn,” she says. Every morning Mai dispatches from Kuressaare about five hundred fresh cakes/pasties that are hand-made from beginning to end.

According to the project manager, Merilin Pärli, both the Quarter developers and traders were satisfied with the results of the outdoor market, which got into the swing in spring. “Although we did not count our visitors, the difference was clearly visible: people were coming and going all the time. They bring real life into our Quarter,” she added.

“The majority of the sellers who started their market business in spring have stayed. Only very few have left, and they have been replaced by others immediately.”



# Divided memory and its reflection in Russian minority media in Estonia in 1994 and 2009

Valeria Jakobson

## Introduction

Estonia is one of the countries that have faced several changes in the power relations of various ethnic communities. In the course of history Germans, Swedes, the Russian Empire and the USSR, among others, have governed the territory. Each of these powers (and the respective ethnic communities in Estonia) tried to re-interpret history and their own role in the history of this country. Thus, it is not surprising that the same events were often given opposing meanings. For example, 'Russian-Estonian friendship' versus 'oppression'/'Russification', 'liberation' versus 'occupation', etc. (see Ahonen 2001, 182). In addition, the respective communities' folk cultures and religion were different (Catholic, Lutheran, Orthodox), and each community had its own 'calendar' of events.

There is a great variety of terms and concepts included under the umbrella of collective memory. Authors agree more or less on the following: it is a contrasting concept to academic history (collective memory ignores or resists complexity, ambiguity and counter-evidence in order to preserve established narratives) (Wertsch & Roediger 2008, 321–322) and cannot be reduced to individual memories. This study took the approach of the 'distributed collective memory' concept (Tileaga 2009), meaning that collective memory is re-created and distributed via various cultural vehicles, including museums, textbooks, commemorative rituals, etc. This study explored media texts as vehicles that transform events that took place at various places along the selected time-scale into images and ideas which might, to varying degrees, contribute to present-day identity projects.

It is a commonplace to say that the media have the potential to form the national memory. In 'divided societies' such as Estonia (Reilly 2001; Titma & Rämmer 2006; Brüggemann & Kasekamp 2009; etc.) we also face the phenomenon of divided memories (Vihalemm & Jakobson 2011, 728; Gi-Wook & Sneider 2011). In the same way that media synchronise personal time with social time, or our annual holidays with the historical events (Zerubavel 2004, 47), in some

societies the media may synchronise the minority's time and national time, i.e. 'calendars' or important events of the past, used as reference points for evaluating current events (Harro-Loit & Kõresaar 2010) in case of conflict. The media may also deepen the division between majority and minority memories.

Since the 19th century the Estonian media has published in a minimum three languages (there were periods like the 1920–1930s and 1988–1994, when it could be 6–7 languages). These newspapers served the needs of different communities, which preserved, and preserve, cultural differences. In the 1990–2000s Russian-language media in Estonia can be considered a minority media (Riggins 1992, 276–285), meaning that this media content is produced in Estonia by and for the members of a minority group. They were smaller in number and in size, and the information was more concentrated on minority issues (see Jakobson 2002, 47–48). Other studies show that in the Russian-language media in Estonia, various and even conflicting positions concerning different political, social and cultural issues were presented, while in the Estonian-language media the voices of the (Russian) ethnic minority, which made in these years from 33 to 25% of population, were underrepresented.

This study aims to compare the (re-)constructing of the past in Estonian daily newspapers, published in Estonian and Russian languages in 1994 and 2009. I will examine which time periods have found intense representations and which are more or less 'neglected', what the differences are in interpretations of the same (most frequently mentioned) events. I will try to describe these meaningful differences qualitatively as well as to check what sources are relied on and given word. The main focus will be on a comparison between 1994 and 2009 and between the Estonian- and Russian-language press. I will try to ascertain how similar (or not) the collective historical memories of these ethnic groups are, if this difference decreased or increased between 1994 and 2009, and if it did, in what aspects.

Relying on previous studies that reveal a variety of ethnocultural identities among Russians in post-Soviet republics (Vihalemm & Jakobson 2011; Vihalemm & Masso 2007), I assume that the representations of collective memory in the Estonian-language press will be more homogeneous, while the Russian-language media will reflect the multiplicity of representations of collective memories. By this I mean that in the Estonian-language media the representations produced by different speakers in both years will be based on one and the same calendar or connected with the same events. In the Russian-language media different, sometimes conflicting historical discourses and competing calendars (Soviet, Estonian, Russian, Orthodox) should be presented.

I also assume that from 1994 to 2009 the collective memories of Russians and Estonians, represented in the media in two languages, became closer, but that some conflict points remain. Otherwise there would be no ground for the Bronze Soldier crisis of April 2007, when demonstrators resisted the removal of a Soviet war monument from the centre of Tallinn.

On one hand, the nation-building ethnic group was oppressed for a sustained period and has had only a short experience of a nation state. On the other hand, a sizable part of the minority perpetuates memory about their historical Motherland. Over 90% of the minority population speak Russian as their mother tongue and consume Russian media, while 60% report feelings of strong discrimination (rus.delfi.ee 2011). Therefore, it is also important with which geographical places the historical memories of the different ethnic communities are connected, i.e. is the past connected with Estonia, certain towns or districts in Estonia, Europe, Russia, etc., and which particular periods and events are connected with these locations.

## Methodology and sample

The research is based on content analysis of daily newspapers in 6 months in 1994 and 2009. By means of the content analysis, media texts where the historic past was either a newsworthy aspect by itself or used to explain present events, were identified.

The empirical basis of the research was texts mentioning past time periods in the Estonian- and Russian-language press in 1994 and 2009. The periods covered by the analysis were February–March, May–June and August–September. These months were selected because they contained events which seemed to be important for the development of the Estonian nation (the Tartu Peace Treaty, end of WWII, the anniversaries of mass deportations, Day of Restoration of Independence, anniversary of the MRP, etc.).

The main method of this study, quantitative content analysis, was supported by qualitative text analysis. In total, in 1994, 932 articles from Estonian- and 668 from Russian-language newspapers were coded, in 2009 – 1108 articles from Estonian- and 377 from Russian-language newspapers. For the overview of coded Estonian-language newspapers, please see the article of Harro-Loit and Pallas in the current volume (27–32). As to Russian-language newspapers, in 1994 there were coded *Estonia* and *Molodyozh Estonii* as the oldest dailies (*Sovetskaya Estonia*, which had become *Estonia* by August 1991, was published in 1940, and from 1944; *Molodyozh Estonii* is published since 1956) with the largest circulations.

In 2009, on the same principle of coding, *Molodyozh Estonii* and *Postimees* in Russian were selected.

The difference in the number of Estonian- and Russian-language publications was due to the fact that in May 2009 two of the three Russian-language dailies, including *Molodyozh Estonii*, had folded for economic reasons, so that by the beginning of May 2009 only one national Russian-language daily, *Postimees* in Russian, could be considered. It is also worth mentioning that, as a minority media, the Russian-language dailies are thinner than the Estonian-language dailies, so that the number of articles was generally smaller in both years.

The coding instructions included 16 blocks of categories of analysis, not all used in the article. The year from the past, the historical topic/event, and the location were coded. Sources of the information were coded as follows: documents, historians, other experts (lawyers, political scientists, sociologists, culturologists, etc.), spectators/participants, archives, Estonian media, other media, “without references”, and other. Speakers were coded separately: journalists, experts, politicians, spectators/participants, and other.

In order to answer the question of how often the past was mentioned during the week in 1994 and 2009, i.e. how important it was and how its importance has changed over 15 years, we coded one randomly selected week (i.e. five or six numbers) for February, March, May, June, August, and September. These months were pre-selected because of anniversaries related to different historical events, national identity and religion. The sample for the timescale analysis therefore represented a “one week” cycle.

In 1994, *Estonia* published on average 172 articles per week/six issues (28.7 per issue) and *Molodyozh Estonii* on average 184 articles per week/five issues (36.8 per issue, although the size of the articles was usually smaller). In 2009, *Postimees* in Russian published on average 215 articles per week/five issues (43 per issue) and *Molodyozh Estonii* (until March 2009) published 174 articles per week/five issues (35 per issue). For this study, “past” was defined as starting three years before the coded year.

### **Timescales in 1994 and 2009**

In order to see the main tendencies of temporalisation in the media texts we coded the articles according to the “major time focus”. We coded one week from *Estonia* and *Molodyozh Estonii* for February, March, May, June, August and September 1994 and *Postimees* in Russian for the same period of 2009. *Molodyozh Estonii* is coded only for February–March 2009. Figure 1 presents the result of this coding in absolute figures.

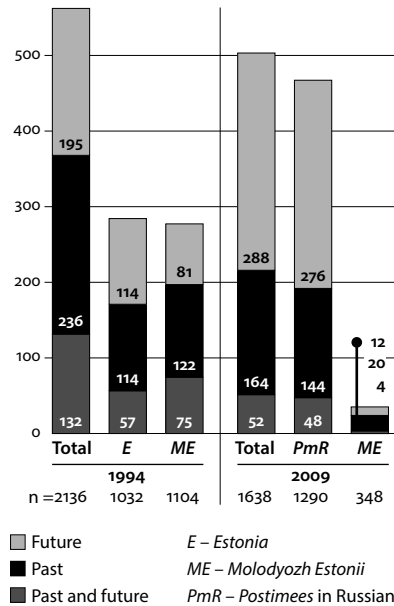
From Figure 1 we see that in 2009 the newspapers were more future-oriented. Here I mean close future, as in “it will take place soon / next week/month / in the next years / abstract future”. Both years were crisis years, but the comparison shows that in 1994 in the Russian-language press future prospects are very pessimistic. There are many rhetorical questions, for example, “if we have a future”, and statements like, “the future is dark” or “we have no future”. There are also many statements in the texts such as, “I am afraid to make plans/forecasts”, “we don’t know what will happen”. The sources are mainly either businessmen or ‘simple readers’. Journalists rather avoided any references to the future. The future is mainly mentioned in official news and politicians’ interviews, speeches and reports. There are also fewer ‘bridges’ where future and past are mentioned together, and here the past is generally presented as clear and positive and the future as unclear or doubtful. In the Estonian-language media, apart from criticism of the present day, hopes for a better future are expressed. Unlike the Russian-language media, businessmen and politicians speak about their plans.

In 2009 news temporalisation in *Postimees* in Russian is closer to Estonian-language newspapers in the sense that it is future-oriented, although future and the past are more often presented in different kinds of publications than in Estonian newspapers. While in the Estonian-language press there are more texts where present events are given with their historical background and perspectives for the future, the Russian-language texts mainly contain either the past (as a focus or background) or the present day plus the future.

Apart from this, the future mainly has a normative or conditional modality in the Russian-language newspapers: “we should/should not...” and “if ... then...”. Notwithstanding this, perspectives are not as pessimistic as in 1994. In *Molodyozh*

**Figure 1. Timescale of the Russian-language sample, 1994 and 2009**

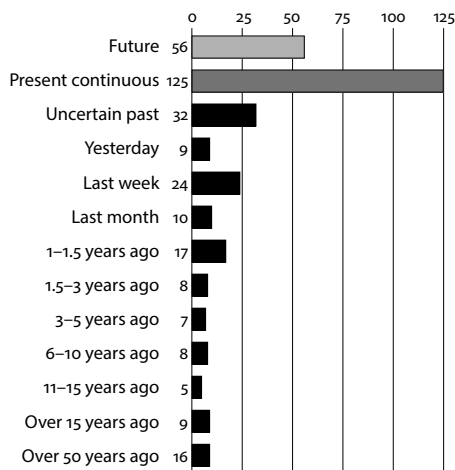
Number of time references in sampled stories





**Figure 2. One week time-frame in *Postimees* in Russian, 2009**

Number of time references in sampled stories (n = 215). One story may include several time references, thus the number of time references exceeds the number of stories.

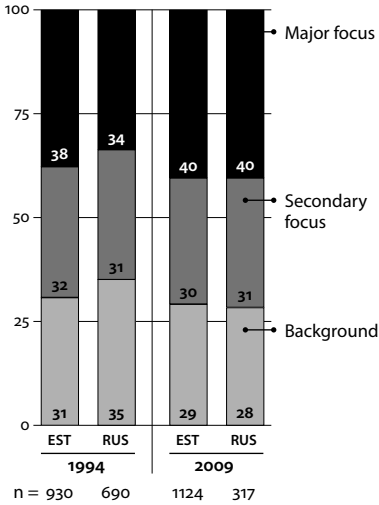


*Estonii*, struggling for survival, the time presentation at this period is very specific, and different from both other Russian-language dailies and Estonian-language newspapers. There is a focus on the past, the future is mentioned less often and there are practically no ‘time bridges’ (see Figure 1).

In order to provide a more detailed comparison with the Estonian-language newspapers, I present an example of the one week time-frame in *Postimees* in Russian (16–20 February 2009, see Figure 2). One article sometimes covers several time categories.

Concerning the past, in both media ‘peaks’ come for the “uncertain past” (when the period is not defined past perfect or past indefinite are used). For example in *Eesti Päevaleht* the next peak comes for the period “1–1.5 years ago”. In comparison, in *Postimees* in Russian there are more references to the period “last week”, “1–1.5 years ago” and “over 50 years ago”, in decreasing scale. In the Estonian-language newspapers such categories as “yesterday”, “last week”, and “last month” (recent past) are much more important than the distant past. Further I will analyse these differences in detail. Here I will just mention Kansteiner’s (2002) argument that collective memories of distant historical events may be more clearly ‘collective’ than experienced events, since there is no individual memory interacting with the collective memory. In the Russian-language newspapers “present continuous” is used 2.5 times more often than “future”, while

**Figure 3. The importance of historical topic in stories in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009**  
Percentage of stories



EST – Estonian-language newspapers  
RUS – Russian-language newspapers

in Estonian-language newspapers less than 2 times more often. Again we see that the Estonian-language press is more future-oriented.

The most general conclusion of the content analysis is that in 1994 newspaper coverage of the past was rather intensive in comparison to the percentage of the whole content of newspapers, especially in the Russian-language press. Figure 3 presents absolute numbers with the focus on the representation of the past.

### Past as presented in 1994 and 2009

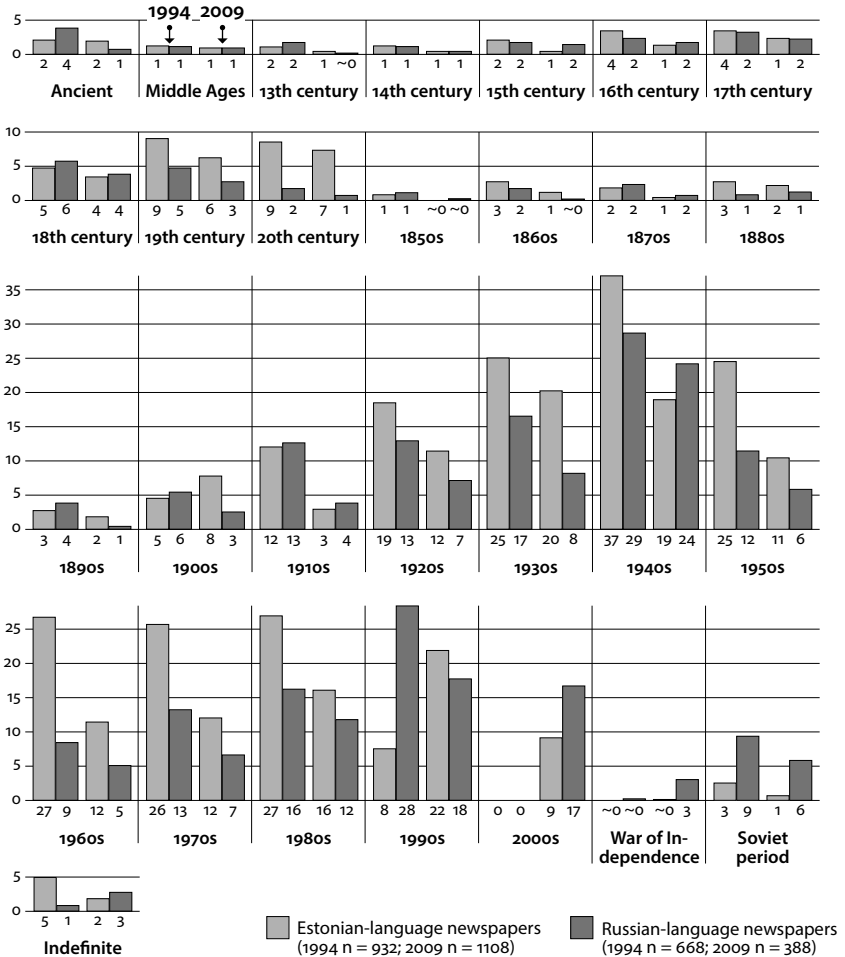
As was stated before, there are always a number of articles in which historical background is used to explain current events. At the same time history could be a secondary focus, e.g. in the case of anniversary celebrations, the presentation of a history book or portrait story that includes personal biography. Presented here are past time focuses of stories in 1994 in *Estonia* and *Molodyozh Estonii* and in 2009 in *Molodyozh Estonii* (February–March) and in *Postimees* in Russian. As the number of articles in *Molodyozh Estonii* is so small in this year, Figure 3 presents the data in such a way that it would be possible to see absolute figures, and also the percentage of all publications for this year, in order to be able to follow the tendency.

We can see that by 2009 similarity in the frequency of mentioning the past between the Estonian- and Russian-language press structurally increases: in spite of the difference in absolute numbers, the percentage of articles with specific focuses is the same. In 1994 the difference is not very significant, although in the Russian-language newspapers the structure is more even and each focus is a little over 30%, while in the Estonian-language press the main focus in representations of history dominates.

Studying the politics of regret, partly applicable in our case, Olick (2007, 8) puts forward a goal “to understand the ways in which and reasons for which,

**Figure 4. References to historical periods in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009**

Percentage of sampled stories for selected year. Several historical periods may be discussed in one story, thus percentages do not add up to one hundred.



images of the past change or remain the same [...]”. To my mind, this includes 1) the general time structure, i.e. which periods are represented more or less intensively and which are totally excluded or forgotten, 2) the content of the same

periods, i.e. which events are mentioned, how they are constructed, who are the meaningful actors, how they are evaluated, etc.

In order to follow the tendencies, the data from Table 1 (in the Appendix) has been presented in Figure 4.

In general, the recent past (the last decade of the Soviet Union and the first two decades of post-Soviet transition) was mentioned more often than the distant past. The distant past was in general weakly represented in both media in both periods, although in 1994 it is mentioned more often than in 2009.

The ‘mountains and valleys’ (Zerubavel 2004) are especially noticeable in the representation of the past in the Russian-language press in 2009, where whole periods are underrepresented compared with the Estonian-language press. Subsequently, I will discuss possible reasons for these ‘exclusions’.

### **Representation of the distant past (from ancient times to the 20th century)**

The representations of time until the 17th century were very different in 1994 in the Estonian- and Russian-language press. In the former these periods are mainly mentioned in connection with the events either in Estonia or in Europe.

In the Russian-language press these were mainly topics, events and personalities from Russian history (Kievan Rus, Orthodoxy, the Romanov family, fleet building, army creation, geographical ‘discoveries’, cultural activists and Tsar Ivan IV). A novel by Ivan the Terrible’s period *The Harem of Ivan the Terrible* was even published over two weeks, which is not included in the selection however (as it is not a journalistic product, but a piece of literature, a novel – at this period the Russian-language newspapers published excerpts of novels in every issue, thus trying to increase the circulation).

Parallels can be found between the personalities of Ivan the Terrible and Stalin in 1994: both are reflected negatively and both are constructed as anomalies in Russian/Soviet history. In addition, attention is sometimes drawn to the ‘Eastern component’ of their personalities – the Georgian origin of Stalin and Tatar cultural influence over Ivan the Terrible (for example, having a Harem is not typical of a Russian Tsar).

Concerning Stalin, I would like to add that in 1994 the Soviet period is clearly divided in many publications into the “Stalinshina” and the “Soviet period”. We come across expressions like, “the ‘real’ Soviet period – i.e. after 1953”, “I don’t mean the repressions before and after the war, but the time starting from the ‘thaw’ period”, etc. There are several reasons for this, of social-psychological and factual character.

The possible social-psychological reason is that as Estonian public discourse in this year repeatedly speaks about occupation, the historical guilt of the Russians, etc., the Russian-language media proposed to its Russian audience a mechanism to cope with the double cognitive trauma connected with re-evaluation of the historical role and place of Russians in Estonia (see Vihalemm & Kalmus 2008).

The objective reason definitely was that what we consider Soviet culture, including the final calendar of Soviet celebrations, was formed only by 1980. On 1 October 1980 a Decree of the Supreme Council of the USSR on Holidays and Memorial Days<sup>1</sup> was adopted. Moreover, 9 May as Victory Day was not celebrated between 1947 and 1965, i.e. during Stalin's and Khrushchev's rule. The status of Victory Day was given to 9 May in 1965<sup>2</sup>. In 1965–1975 a number of films were produced that formed a certain image of World War II as the Great Patriotic War, establishing connections between generations and making the younger generation of Soviet people feel sympathy and compassion with Soviet soldiers<sup>3</sup>. In 1975 the first minute of silence was held all over the USSR in order to show honour to the heroes of this war. Such silences became traditional in the 1975–1991 period. This is the time when, according to L. Gudkov (2005), “for Russia, the war has become a surrogate for ‘culture’”.

The representations of different historical periods became much more similar with the Estonian-language press by 2009. One of the reasons is that by that time the Russian-language press had started using many translations from the Estonian-language press. The difference is in focus: the Russian-language press mentions more facts connected with life in the towns, while the Estonian-language press mentions rural areas more often. The life in towns in 15th–18th-century Estonia was portrayed as multicultural, geopolitically and culturally open and vivid – which may serve as an ideal for current inter-ethnic relations and evaluate the position of the habitation of the Russian-speaking population. Conditionally, one may say that the general narrative in the Estonian-language press was an evaluation of European cultural space (i.e. the Enlightenment) and presentation of Estonia as a part of it (for example contacts with Scandinavia/Europe, and the discovery of a Viking boat and treasure).

### **Tsar-creator or Tsar-conqueror?**

The 18th century is the only period in the distant past which is more often mentioned in the Russian-language media in 1994 and 2009. In both periods it is connected with the political and constructive activities of another Russian Tsar – Peter I. In 1994 it is in connection with opening a school, building a port in

Paldiski, building a port in Odessa. In 2009 the personality of Peter I becomes even more important: 40% (6 of 15) of the articles in which the 18th century was mentioned were devoted to Tsar Peter I, and to his military and civic-cultural activities in the territory of Estonia. This topic (i.e. these activities of the Russian Tsar) was missing from the Estonian-language press.

As 6 articles is too small a sample of material to describe such an important topic, I have made a special electronic search through online versions of *Postimees* in Russian and *Molodyozh Estonii* for 2006–2009, using keywords *Петр I, Петр Великий, император Петр* and *Петр Алексеевич*. I found 65 articles. Two discourses on Peter I can be found in the Russian-language press in these years.

1. The representation of the Tsar as a destroyer of traditional life, aggressor and cruel occupier was mentioned in 26 items of 65. This topic was handled by Estonian politicians and also some cultural historians in connection with public discussion about establishing a memorial to Peter I in Narva. The evaluation of Peter I himself and the planned monument was defined explicitly at the highest level – by Prime Minister Ansip – in the following excerpt:

I don't see any reasons why we in Estonia should respect Peter I. As a Tartu citizen I don't approve of the fact that, following Peter's order, Tartu was demolished and settlers were deported (Bärenklau 2006).

Cultural critic Boris Tuch points out that the representation of Peter's politics and personality as cruel and aggressive has also appeared in new Russian cinema:

In a new Russian film “The ruler's servant” [“Слуга государев”] many viewers expected to see a romantic story... Or vice versa, something patriotic, with a tough, but generally fair Tsar Peter I [irony over stereotypes from Karamzin's and Soviet historiography – V]. Here is no place for gentleness (packs of women are killed), generosity (wounded de Brese is left to die – Peter doesn't care about the losers), beautiful legends (Poltava battle looks like a bloody massacre and the Tsar's feast turns into an orgy) (Tuch 2007).

2. The opposing discourse presented Peter I as a person who modernised Estonia. This discourse was found in 35 articles of 65. Legitimisation was performed by listing the Tsar's constructive activities – building Kadriorg palace and park, establishing the Haapsalu resort, bringing new plants to Estonian parks, and re-opening the University of Tartu. The following quotation makes indirect comparisons with other colonisers of the Estonian territory, presenting the Russian

**Figure 5. Tsar Peter I in the Russian-language press: Sources and discourses, 2006–2009**

Number of references in the sampled stories (n = 65). One story may include several sources and discourses.

	Peter-aggressor	Peter-winner	Peter-moderniser
<b>Historians</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>
– Estonian	3	0	2
– local Russian	0	1	11
– from Russia	2	0	0
<b>Other experts</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
– Estonian	2	0	0
– local Russian	1	0	2
<b>Politicians</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
– Estonian	13	0	0
– from Russia	0	0	2
<b>Journalists</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>
– Estonian	5	0	1
– local Russian	2	3	8
– from Russia	0	0	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>33</b>

tsars as founders of economic, social and cultural values with strong connotations to consumerist pleasures, building an emotional connection to the present day:

The Teutonic knights, Swedes and Danes who ruled this territory for many centuries did not build here [...] the Large and Chocolate Promenades, with rose bushes of thirteen types, large wooden Kursaal [...] a railway with a station ‘carved’ from wood that was so well decorated. Russian tsars made all these. [...] Indeed once Haapsalu was one of the main Baltic health resorts of the Russian Empire. It was visited by Peter the First, the tsar-enthusiast, the founder of the mud treatment and health resort business in a new Russia (Istomina 2007).

The structure of sources of the above-mentioned discourses, plus the “Peter the winner” positive evaluation is presented in Figure 5.

From Figure 5 we can see that the Peter-aggressor discourse was presented mainly by Estonian politicians (13), journalists (5), experts (2), 2 historians from Russia and only 3 local Russian journalists and other experts. The local Russian journalists, historians and other experts, as well as politicians and journalists from Russia, supported the discourses of Peter the moderniser and Peter the

winner. The Estonian historian Jüri Kuuskemaa turned out to be the only person who presented in his Estonian-language publications both the first and third discourses, trying to be as objective as possible.

In general, when mentioning events from the 18th and 19th centuries in the 2006–2009 period the Russian-language press mainly presented the role of Russians and Russian rule in the local cultural and civic life, polemicising to the Estonian public about Russians as ‘bad colonisers’.

### **Tartu Peace Treaty as one of the central events of the national calendar**

First, we see a decrease in the frequency of mentioning the 1920s from 1994 to 2009. In addition, the 1920s are mentioned less in the Russian-language press than in the Estonian (see Figure 4). In the representations of the beginning of the 20th century, the War of Independence, the Tartu Peace Treaty and the creation of the Estonian Republic were the main events from the history of the 1920s in both media in 2009. In 1994 the situation was different: while in the Estonian-language media the significance of the Tartu Peace Treaty for Estonian statehood was often mentioned and the topic was presented both at the official and personal levels (e.g., J. Laidoner’s published letters, the speech of President L. Meri devoted to the Tartu Peace Treaty, etc.), in the Russian-language newspapers it was mentioned just once in every newspaper, with an Estonian official being quoted. This shows the absolutely different significance of this event for the collective memory of Estonian- and Russian-speaking communities at that time.

In 2009 the Treaty of Tartu was mentioned much more often in the Russian-language media, showing that it formally ‘accepted’ the official Estonian ‘calendar’ (set of anniversaries). Notwithstanding there is a difference in focuses: while the Estonian-language press described the battles against the Russians and the Red Army, the Russian-language press described the role of the Russians in the War of Independence (1918–1920) in the Western-Northern Army. In addition, the killing and extradition of White Russian officers by the Estonian government, concomitant with signing the Tartu Peace Treaty, was described. In the Estonian-language media this topic is either avoided or presented as unimportant. The role and fate of the Western-Northern Army Russians was not mentioned in 1994 in either media and presented as not worth mentioning in 2009 in the Estonian-language media.

Reporting on the parade of the Defence Forces dedicated to the anniversary of the Estonian Republic in February 2009, which was carried out in Russian-speaking Narva in Estonian language, the journalist somewhat ironically commented



on an attempt by Estonian state officials to raise civic identity among the inhabitants of Narva:

Perhaps someone imagined that naming the Russian soldiers who joined the Estonian army during the War of Independence at the parade should cause excitement among the locals. However, since the 'lesson' was read out in Estonian, the majority of the Narva inhabitants could not understand its importance and necessity (Denisov 2009).

In sum, in 2009 the given period is constructed as a basis of Estonian national statehood by media published in both languages. The difference in revealing aspects of this historical period refer to considering/ignoring the role of the ethnic minority in gaining independence of Estonia in 1918–1920 and thus acknowledging/ignoring the special needs of recognition of the minority role in connection with celebration of the historical events. The 'official' version of history is quite exclusive: these events are mainly constructed as 'belonging' to Estonians as an ethnic group, which causes a new clash of socio-mnemonic structures.

### **Meaningful 'forgettings' from the 1930s: crisis or history of success?**

Constructing the 1930s in both media in 1994 and 2009 has the common factor of many references to positive aspects of the development of the Estonian Republic in this period.

In 1994 the media narrate the audience what the Estonian Republic in the 1930s looked like. It is especially important at that time as the re-established Estonian Republic was identified as a continuation of the pre-war Republic. The Russian post-war migrants and their descendants have only a vague idea about this society, its culture, values, and history. Apart from this, when the 1930s are mentioned in the biographies of great people what they mention is fascism, Stalinism, the repressions of 1937–38, the life of emigrants from the USSR to Europe, and Russians in Estonia. So the picture is really quite loaded and detailed; representations are geographically diverse in both media.

In 2009 there are less publications in general and these are more focused on the story of the Estonian Republic. In the Estonian-language media, the Estonian Republic in the 1930s is constructed as an ideal society with strong economics and a vibrant social and cultural life (where rural life flourished, from where agricultural products were exported to the West, where literature, a media and architecture developed, and whose sportsmen made great achievements in sport, etc.). The Russian-language media focuses on culture and sport. There are not

only quantitative but also qualitative differences in the media of the different language communities.

1. In the Estonian-language media the important place belongs to the events of 1939, when the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (MRP) was signed and Estonia was forced to agree to Soviet military bases, following which Estonia was occupied (there are published opinions as to historical alternatives to the relationship between the potential allies at the beginning of World War II). Also mentioned is that hatred of Russians appeared in this period. These aspects are less mentioned or avoided by the Russian-language media. As to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Estonian-language media represented only one discourse, negatively evaluating the historical meaning of this pact, as well as the comparison of MRP with the present Russian-German agreements concerning building the Nord Stream gas pipeline. In the Russian-language media in addition to the same discourse a supplementary or oppositional point of view appears. The newspaper quotes Prime Minister of Russia Mr Putin: “Undoubtedly, one could blame the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, concluded in August 1939. Still, one year earlier UK and France had signed a well-known agreement with Hitler in Munich, having broken all hope of creating a united front for the struggle against fascism” (*Postimees* in Russian 2009a). Another publication quotes the results of a public opinion poll carried out in Russia in August 2009, which revealed that 63% of the population justify Stalin’s signature of the MRP (*Postimees* in Russian 2009b). There are no evaluations in all these articles. Rather, the newspaper presents the different discourses, positions and arguments expressed by Estonian and Russian politicians and official sources, but never openly supports any of these points of view and does not go to the personal level in connection with this topic. The newspaper is a stage for the presentation of official memory, opposing community memory and the official memory of the other state (the Russian Federation).

2. Only in 6 of 223 Estonian-language articles mentioning the 1930s compare the economic crisis in 2008–2009 and in the 1930s. At the same time, the economic crisis appears in nearly half of the articles in the Russian-language media that mention this period. The official version of the Estonian Republic (1918–40) as a ‘Golden Age’ is not openly argued, while additional aspects are introduced by quotes from other sources: Estonian economists, the Estonian-language media, the foreign media. The Russian journalists very seldom (once) present this discourse themselves. This is a typical way to introduce an alternative dimension of time while avoiding conflict and accusations of ‘disloyalty’ for contradicting the majority discourse.

3. The Estonian media has mentioned Ukrainian demands that the Hague Tribunal should recognise the Holodomor (organised starvation in Ukraine in

1932–33) as an act of genocide of the Ukrainian people by USSR. The Russian-language media has published several reprints from Russian information sources stating that Ukrainian national activists have cheated the world community, showing pictures of starving people that were taken in the USA at the time of the Great Depression as pictures of Holodomor. Here are the aspects of the same event on which both media focus totally different. The fact that this is not one occasional publication but several of the same type shows that the topic of accusations towards the USSR is actually a painful one and the Russian-language media are happy to pick up the facts, which indirectly, through quoting the media of the other countries (RIA Novosti, newsru.com), show that these accusations are ungrounded.

4. It is also necessary to mention that unlike 1994, in 2009 the events that took place in the USSR in the 1920–1930 period are totally excluded from the content of the Russian-language media. The explanations could be various. In the 1990s the local Russian community experienced the cultural trauma connected with the change of their role, values, symbols, calendar, etc. (see Aarelaid-Tart 2004) and therefore the media avoided mentioning facts and periods that could be traumatic for their self-evaluation, using the strategy of forgetting in order to help adapt to swift changes. The media avoided constructing historical identity with the regime which is called ‘occupational’ in the official discourse and thus prevents members of the Russian-speaking community from feeling like the grandchildren of occupants. On the other hand, this strategy of forgetting and localisation helps the minority to localise themselves in Estonia and thus to interiorise Estonian civic identity and integrate into Estonian society.

5. The crisis of democracy after the revolt of the veterans of the War of Independence (the so-called *vapsid*) and K. Päts’s coup on 12 March 1934 are not spoken about. One could assume that it is a painful topic for Estonian collective memory. The Russian-language media never mentioned this issue either. They generally avoid any antagonistic topics that conflict with the dominating political discourse or refer to the contradictions between Estonians themselves (like support for Communism by a number of Estonians in 1939 and 1940, etc.), despite these topics being sometimes mentioned by the Estonian media.

These ‘forgettings’, in combination with the above-mentioned indirect hints and choice of sources of information, are very important. Ernest Renan (1990 [1882]) argued that forgetting is an essential element in the creation and reproduction of a nation, because to remember everything could bring a threat to national cohesion and self-image. Although nations could be characterised by “the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories”, the essence of a nation is not only that its members have many things in common but also “that

they have forgotten some things” (Renan 1990, 11). To ensure national cohesion, there is the need to forget about violence and unity-threatening events and to remember heroes and glory days (Misztal 2005).

### **Conflicting versions: the 1940s**

The 1940s were presented in contradictory and even conflicting ways in the Russian- and Estonian-language press, expressed through the choice of topics, linguistic and stylistic means, and discursive and explicit evaluations of certain people and events.

This period was more important for the Estonian-language press in 1994, but by 2009 the relevance had increased for the Russian-language media (see Figure 4, Table 1). In 1994 there were more publications in general, than in 2009. In 1994 the scene, presented in the newspapers in both languages, was equally diverse. In both media the choice of topics included the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the occupation, the deportations of Estonians and Soviet repression of local Russians, the history of Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church, the development of Estonian sport and culture in the 1940s, the battles of the World War II in Europe and the Far East, life in Estonia under fascist occupation, the closing of the libraries, newspapers and cultural institutions in 1940, etc.

As regards the war period differences start with the terms applied and especially what the war is called in each media. In the Estonian-language media it is called only World War II – the expression Great Patriotic War is not used. In the Russian-language media the expression World War II is used when the Second Front (assistance of states allied to the USSR) is mentioned, or the war between Poland and Germany, France and Germany, the common actions of the anti-Hitler coalition, or the Holocaust. The expression Great Patriotic War is used when talking about the war between the USSR and Germany, Soviet civilian Red Army casualties, and about different interpretations and evaluations of the events of this period in Russia.

In the Russian-language media in 1994 we can see the discourse of liberation from fascism mainly in connection with present day events, i.e. the growth of nationalism and xenophobia in the society. In 2009 this liberation discourse is also detectable in connection with discussions concerning removal of the Bronze Soldier from Tõnismägi:

Today the memory of the fighters fallen against fascism is threatened not only with obliteration, but also outrage. Fascism, apparently destroyed, attempts

to revive [...] The most terrible dangers of post-totalitarian societies are nationalism, xenophobia, and unhealthy moral climate (Appellation of the Representative Assembly<sup>4</sup> 1994).

The important issues here are 1) the respect given to veterans of the Great Patriotic War – this issue is relevant both in 1994 and 2009; and 2) preservation of the traditional Soviet ideological evaluation of liberating Estonia from fascist occupation as ultimately beneficial.

In constructing these events in both years in the Russian-language media, meaningful patterns of Soviet cultural heritage are used, as, for example, quoting popular lyrics. In 2009 the war is more ‘localised’ than in 1994. In 1994 the war is more spoken about in an all-union or global context, while in 2009 the Russian-language media mainly mentioned battles in and around Estonia (Pskov and Leningrad oblast, from where about half of the Soviet period Russian settlers came to Estonia). Such events as the evacuation of the Soviet fleet from Tallinn to Kronstadt, the Mereküla landing, the breaking of the Leningrad Blockade, the liberation of Narva, Luga, Kingisepp, Tallinn, and the battles around Porkhov are mentioned only in the Russian-language media.

In the Russian-language media the war is personalised – the speakers are members of the Russian-speaking community (veterans, public figures, journalists). In addition, there are regular personal histories of women who survived under occupation, were evacuated and worked at the frontline as medical assistants (in contrast, the Estonian-language press presented the personal stories of those who suffered Soviet repressions). So the Great Patriotic War and victory over the fascism are constructed as deeply personalised and localised events, important not only for the elder generation, but also for their children and grandchildren. Thus, they become not just part of history, but part of ‘home history’, not of Russians in general, but of Russians in Estonia.

And I want to bow low to officers, alive and dead, because in few days it will be their holiday – the 23rd of February. But we remember them not only on holidays because every family has the memory of their own father or grandfather. And this private memory merges into one common memory, without which a people cannot exist (Kouznetsova 2009).

In addition, the evaluation of certain personalities (A. Meri, E. Puusepp) is totally different in the Estonian- and the Russian-language media. In 1994 they are not mentioned. In 2009 in the Estonian-language media they are either neglected or presented as criminals who committed crimes against the Estonian people,

while in the Russian-language press they are represented as heroes of the USSR. In the Estonian-language newspapers Arnold Meri is presented as a person who organised the deportation of people from Hiiumaa island, who “took the side of one evil against the other” (*Postimees* 2009). In the Russian-language media heroisation of Arnold Meri, Hero of the Soviet Union (6 references in 2009) competes with accusation of Meri in deportations and justification of the tribunal findings relating to him (two references in 2009). The same relates to Endel Puusepp, whom the Estonian-language media present as a person who participated in bombing Tallinn in 1944, while he is a hero in the Russian-language press for flying a Soviet delegation to the USA during the war.

The main discursive means – sacralisation, personalisation and stressing the unity of the nation – used in the Russian-language press were the same methods used in hegemonic representations of the war in the Soviet Union and in the Russian Federation. In addition, the topic of World War II itself was central in the representation of the past in the Russian-language press, as well as in the official ‘history writing’ of the Russian Federation. Some authors have suggested that the centrality of the war and victory is caused by a deficit in other symbolic bases for positive self-identification and has become a surrogate for ‘culture’ in Russia (Gudkov 2005, 9).

The revisionist view of World War II was not presented in the Russian-language press in 1994 and was rarely presented in 2009: there were only 7 articles following the reflective discourse, compared with 36 texts following the Russian ‘official’ discourse. Next is one example from the reflective discourse:

As the real history of the USSR has not been written yet, today’s reader cannot picture the Red Army soldiers at that time. They were the same people whose parents, sisters and brothers – tens of millions of people – passed through the horrors of the Red terror, the liquidation of the upper classes, the persecution of Orthodoxy, civil war, starvation, punishments, deportations, the GULAG [...] It is not surprising that in many places the German troops were met with flowers, people seeing in the Germans civilised Europeans who would save them from kolkhozes and Stalinism (Chubais 2008).

The general structure of the sources of the materials about World War II in the Russian-language media in 2009 and their division into two main discourses is presented in Figure 6.

Figure 6 illustrates that emphasising the necessity of analysis, reconciliation and responsibility is mainly a professional discourse shared by historians from all countries and a few journalists. Although being underrepresented in the official

**Figure 6. World War II in the Russian-language press: Sources and discourses, 2009**  
 Number of references in the sampled stories (n = 43). One story may include several sources and discourses.

	'Sacred war'	Necessity of analysis and reconciliation
<b>Historians</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>
– Estonian	0	1
– local Russian	0	1
– from Russia	0	4
<b>Other experts</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>
– Estonian	0	0
– local Russian	4	0
<b>Politicians</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0</b>
– Estonian	0	0
– local Russian	2	0
– from Russia	20	0
<b>Journalists</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>
– Estonian	0	2
– local Russian	5	1
– from Russia	2	0
Western media	2	0
Veterans of WWII	1	0
Readers	4	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>9</b>

TV channels available to Russians in Estonia (PBK, Russia and NTV), this discourse is quite widely presented in Russian Internet sources (YouTube, blogs, etc.). Nevertheless, the discourse of 'sacred war' is much more popular in the local Russian-language press. It is clear from Figure 6 that these evaluations mainly come from the Russian Federation. Notwithstanding this, it is likely that the local Russian-speaking community has to a high degree internalised the Russian hegemonic representation of the war. Salvation from fascism of the Slavic and Baltic people feeds pride and legitimises the identity of post-war settlers from the Soviet Union.

In spite of all these differences, there is also one historical event constructed in a similar way in both media in 1994 and 2009: this is the deportations of 1941 and 1949. Various standpoints are presented: personal stories, European Union and Estonian officials' points of view, opposing opinions of Russian historians (for example Dyukov, who estimates the number of repressed people as several times smaller than the official number). In the Estonian-language media this topic is deeply personalised. Personal stories are presented and the deportations

are mentioned in the official speeches of President and Parliament members, historians' essays, etc., using keywords like, fear of Russians, family separation, escape, deportation, imprisonment, etc. These events also associate with Estonians escaping over the Baltic Sea in 1944, the founding of collective farms (*kolkhozes*), camps in Siberia, and the 'forest brothers'.

So the meaning of the 1940s for the Russian and Estonian communities seems to be quite different. This difference just concerning the events of World War II even increased from 1994 to 2009. As regards the rest of the given period, the same events are mentioned and same words used to describe them. The official 'Estonian' discourse is reproduced by the minority media. Although the frequency of reference differs, the mnemohistoric patterns do not conflict.

### **The 1950–1980s: a filtered past**

As to the Soviet period, it was much better represented in both languages in 1994 than in 2009. In 1994 the following aspects are mentioned: cultural, political, economic events; events from the biographies of interesting people from Estonia, Russia, Europe, and the USA; events from the 'biography' of factories suffering from economic crisis; events from the development of the European Union and EU–USA and USSR–USA relations. The media produces a picture of the last 50 years to demonstrate how our present situation in different spheres is based on previous developments. These events are more often presented as a context, a pre-history of current processes. In 2009 the amount of references decreases, still the Soviet period from the 1950s to the 1980s is mentioned more often in the Estonian- than in the Russian-language press. The range of topics in the Estonian-language press varied greatly: there were references not only to Soviet Estonia, but also to other parts of the USSR (e.g. the Abkhazian-Mingrelian conflict in the 1980s) and the rest of the world (e.g. the uniting of Europe in the 1950s, economic growth in Japan in the 1950s, the economic crisis in Europe in the 1970s, the Chinese occupation of Tibet in the 1950s, etc.). Daily life in Soviet Estonia was presented through accounts of consumption and media culture (e.g. coffee, restaurants and Finnish TV), and via accounts of sport, medicine, journalism, agriculture and buildings from the Soviet period. In addition, protests against the Soviet regime were presented: student demonstrations in the GDR, the Polish *Solidarność*, the 'forest brothers' in Estonia, and even rock music as a protest subculture in the 1980s. The Russian-language media references to the period between 1953 and 1988 mainly indicated the development of Estonian fine arts, sport and architecture. Unlike the Estonian-language media, the Russian-language media mentioned several times that the present-day Estonian leaders had started



their careers in the USSR as Communist Party activists. The Estonian citizen Mr Aleksey Ridiger was presented in terms of his present-day position as Patriarch of All Russia Aleksius II. Life in the Russian Federation or other former Soviet republics was discussed neither in the Estonian- nor Russian-language press.

The most frequently mentioned event of 1989 in 2009 was the Baltic Way, which was considered to be one of the key events that helped Estonians to rebuild a national state. As in other cases, in the Estonian-language media the personal level in constructing this event is very important: many people still remember this event and speak about it in media. In the Russian-language media this event is again de-personalised: it is mentioned as a part of the official story, but none of the members of the Russian-speaking community are given the chance to speak about it.

In general, the Estonian-language press has the tendency, as revealed by Zerubavel (2004), to mention the fairly recent past (the last 50, especially 20 years) more often than the distant past. Apart from this there is the very important period of the 1940s, which is connected with several traumas for both communities. For Estonians it meant three forceful and abrupt changes in political regime, cultural environment, and social relations, as well as further repressions, deportations, closing all cultural institutions, etc. For Russians the first part of the war was a national catastrophe (occupation of nearly all of the European part of the USSR, millions of captured soldiers, etc.) and WWII resulted in tens of millions of lost lives.

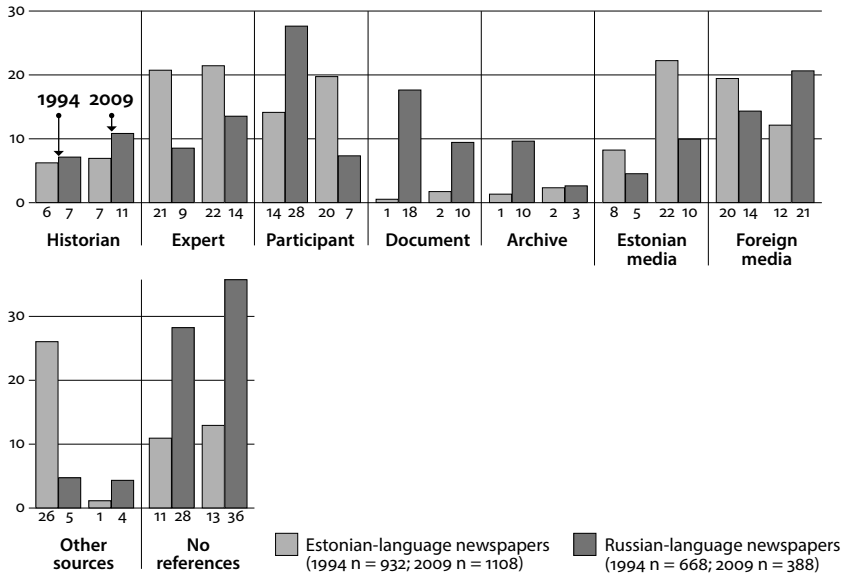
In 1994 the period of the 1920s to 1930s was so important in the media of both languages that it was necessary to (re-)introduce the historical context of the pre-war Estonian Republic. In 2009 there could only be a few representations of the Soviet period and 1930s in the USSR in the Russian-language press because the media avoid reminding the audience of their Soviet heritage. In content, polemical representations were evident in the case of several time periods and events: Russian rule and Peter I, the Tartu Peace Treaty, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the economic crisis of the 1930s and, most of all, World War II.

### **Sources and speakers in 1994 and 2009**

In order to understand the origins of the discourses described above, it is necessary to analyse who the authors and sources of the historical representations described above are: are they rather experts, politically engaged figures or journalists? How did this situation change over 15 years? As to sources in 1994 and 2009, see Table 2 (in the Appendix) for absolute numbers and Figure 7 for percentages.

**Figure 7. Sources of historical references in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009**

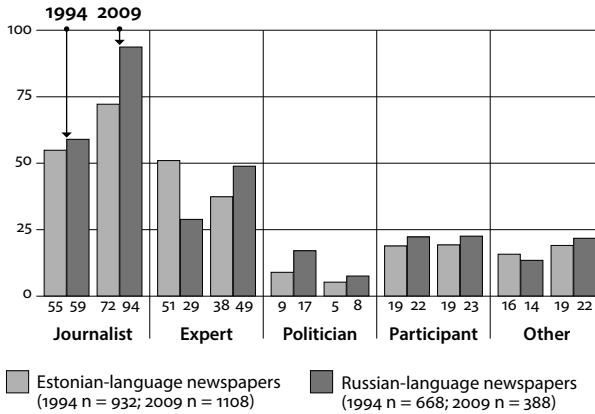
Percentage of sampled stories for selected year. One story may have several sources, thus percentages do not add up to one hundred.



In 1994 the dominant sources in the Estonian-language press were experts and the foreign media, while in the Russian-language press it was participants and documents, and then the foreign media and archives. Historians have similar importance as sources in both media in 1994. In 2009 the picture changes: for the Estonian-language media the most important source has become the Estonian media themselves, then experts and participants. This shows a certain ‘circularity’: the historical discourse is reproduced while documents are almost irrelevant and historians are underrepresented. In addition, the foreign media are less important than in 1994. In the Russian-language press there is a huge amount of material without references (nearly 36%), the most important source is now foreign media (mainly Russian but also European newspapers and electronic channels) and experts. This usage of foreign media gives the possibility of introducing versions that contradict the Estonian official version. At the same time it avoids expressed evaluation of certain events or personalities. The usage of the Estonian-language media, as well as experts and participants, introduces the Estonian historical discourse. Notwithstanding this, historians (11%) and

**Figure 8. Speakers on historical topics in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009**

Percentage of sampled stories for selected year. One story may have several speakers, thus percentages do not add up to one hundred.



documents (9,5%) are presented more often than in the Estonian-language press. It shows that during the 15 years between the two samples, historical discourse became less documentary, more opinion based, although the discourse of the Russian-language media is more diverse and opened to various and even contradictory points of view.

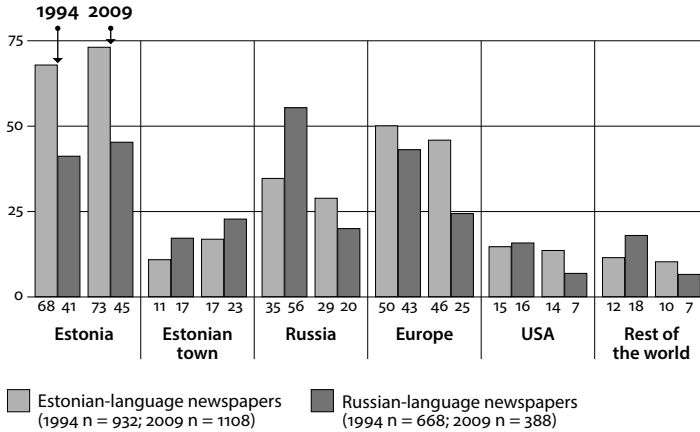
As to the speakers in 1994 and 2009, see Table 3 (in the Appendix) for absolute numbers and Figure 8 for percentages.

Here we can see that the speakers in both presses are mainly journalists. In 1994 their share was just over 50% of texts, while by 2009 the press has become a place where mainly professional journalists speak. As to very high percentage of journalists as commentators in the Russian-language media, we should remember that this figure includes not only local Russian, but also Estonian and Russian (from the Russian Federation) journalists due to wide usage of materials from other media (see Figure 8).

The share of experts has decreased in the Estonian-language media and increased in the Russian-language media. The share of participants remained unchanged during these years and is similar in the Estonian- and Russian-language media (19–22%). The amount of politicians as commentators has decreased in both media.

**Figure 9. Geo-political space related to the past in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009**

Percentage of sampled stories for selected year. One story may include several spatial references, thus percentages do not add up to one hundred.



## Past and space

The last set of data I present here is the representation of different geo-political spaces related to the past in the media. Absolute numbers are presented in Table 4 and data in percentages are given in Figure 9. This figure presents very interesting data, depicting how the historical ‘chronotope’ of two ethnic communities has changed in the 15 years of independence and how the historical geography of Estonians and Russians in Estonia correlates.

First we can say that in the Estonian-language press we do not see significant changes between 1994 and 2009. The structure is logical and stable: most often the events of the past take place in Estonia, i.e. the national past is the most important and becomes even more so by 2009 (growth from 68 to 73.2%). Europe is very important too (a decrease from 50 to 46%), as it is a goal as well as a main political and economic partner. It is also a relevant cultural landmark in 1994 due to the slogan “Back to Europe”. Rest of the world and the USA are at the same level as Estonian towns, so the historical space is diverse, but with a strong focus on Estonia and Europe.

In the Russian-language press in 1994 events that took place in the past in Russia (55.5%) and Europe (43.2%) are even more important than those in Estonia (41.3%). As with the Estonian-language press, rest of the world and the USA

are at the same level as Estonian towns. The image of the past is geographically very diverse, with Russia, the USA and Asia (rest of the world) presented much more widely than in the Estonian-language press. The setup changes drastically by 2009: the frequency of mentioning Estonia grows a little from 41.3 to 45.4%, the frequency of mentioning Russia falls from 55.5 to 20.1%, and the frequency of mentioning Europe from 43.2 to 24.5%. As to Russia, in 2009 the Russian-language media avoided mentioning certain periods in Russian and Soviet history when Russians pictured themselves as a large, strong state-shaping nation. The decrease in frequency of references to Europe could also be connected with a certain degree of disappointment with Estonian membership of the European Union. (Aspects relating to the hopes and disappointments surrounding EU membership, and the political status and labour rights of non-citizens, are described in Jakobson 2004.) Other places are mentioned very seldom (in 6–7% of articles).

Russian-speakers' historical geography becomes very narrow and classical 'ghettoisation' of the minority media occurs (Riggins 1992). The frequency of referencing historical events that took place in certain towns, especially those where multi-ethnic trade communities lived, increased. Russians were not represented as town inhabitants before the 20th century, but a positive image of towns as good places to live was constructed: Tallinn, Narva and Tartu are represented as multicultural, geo-culturally 'open', aesthetic places of habitation, not as peripheral spaces but rather as standing at the crossroads of cultural flows. This kind of representation may feed personal pride in having a strong local civic identity, and this might also help in the formation of this type of identity (Vihalemm & Jakobson 2011).

## Conclusions

This article studied the similarities, or lack thereof, of (re-)constructions of the past in Estonian daily newspapers, published in Estonian and Russian languages in 1994 and 2009, and how these (re-)constructions changed over the two years in question. Analysis showed that for the Estonian- and Russian-language presses in 1994, the tendency, as revealed by Zerubavel (2004), was for the fairly recent past (the last 50, and especially the last 20 years in the long-term perspective, "yesterday", "last week", and "last month" in the short-term perspective) to be mentioned more often than the distant past. Notwithstanding, the Russian-language press in 2009 had many 'gaps', which could have different explanations, including those proposed in this article. Apart from this, Estonian-language newspapers are more future oriented than the Russian-language newspapers.

In 1994 the 'calendar' of the Estonian- and Russian-language media was very different. By 2009 the Russian-language press has formally accepted the Estonian 'national calendar' and 'pantheon of heroes,' although in addition there are some 'alternative heroes': for example, Russian Tsar Peter I, veterans of the World War II, including Heroes of the USSR A. Meri and aviator E. Puusepp.

The most popular period referenced in 1994 in both media is the 1940s. In 2009 this tendency persists in the Russian-language press, while in the Estonian-language press in 2009 this period drops to second place. In the Russian-language media the most polemical representations in connection with this period were found. In descriptions of this period I have detected two major discourses – the discourse of 'sacred war' and the 'professional' discourse, focusing on the necessity of honest and critical analysis of the past and reconciliation. The latter is mainly shared by historians from Russia and Estonia and few journalists. However, the discourse of the 'sacred war' was much more popular in the local Russian-language press. This discourse is clearly reproduced by politicians from the Russian Federation, although it is also supported by a significant part of the local Russian-speaking community, which has to high degree internalised the Russian hegemonic representation of WWII. Slavic and Baltic salvation from fascism feeds pride and legitimises the identity of post-war settlers from the Soviet Union.

In spite of all these differences, in this period (the 1940s) there is also one historical event that is constructed in a similar way in both media in 1994 and 2009, the deportations of 1941 and 1949. Various standpoints are presented: personal stories, European Union and Estonian officials' points of view, and the opposing opinions of Russian historians. However, in the Russian-language media this topic is presented not as 'ours', but as an 'Estonian' topic via official speeches of President and Parliament and other translations from the Estonian-language media. In 1940–1941 Russian people, who escaped from the Soviet regime in 1918–1920 and settled in the Estonian Republic (see Issakov 2000, 7), were also heavily repressed. However, this aspect is totally excluded from both media, although potentially it could help the Russophone audience interiorise the tragedy of deportations, to identify themselves more deeply with the victims.

Some polemical representations could be found in connection with Tsar Peter I, the Tartu Peace Treaty, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and the economic crisis of the 1930s. The most visible are the contradictions connected with the personality of Peter I. Here three main discourses were found: Peter the aggressor, Peter the winner and Peter the moderniser. The first was presented mainly by Estonian politicians, journalists, experts, historians from Russia, and only a few local Russian journalists and other experts. The local Russian journalists,

historians and other experts as well as politicians and journalists from Russia were more in support of the discourses of Peter the moderniser and Peter the winner. The Estonian historian Jüri Kuuskemaa turned out to be the only person who presented in his Estonian-language publications both the first and third discourses, trying to be as objective as possible.

In conclusion, the hypothesis that from 1994 to 2009 the collective memories of Russians and Estonians represented in the media in the two languages became closer, while some conflict points remained, was confirmed. As was the assumption that the representations of collective memory in the Estonian-language press were more homogeneous, while the Russian-language media reflected the multiplicity of representations of collective memories. In 1994 the events of the distant past and their geographical location were very different in the Estonian- and Russian-language press. In the Estonian-language press events taking place in Estonia were mentioned most often, while in the Russian-language media the most referenced events occurred in Russia, then in Estonia. Other parts of the world were also strongly represented. For the Estonian-language media Europe was highly significant. Rest of the world was as important as Estonian towns, so the historical space is diverse, but with a strong focus on Estonia and Europe.

In the Russian-language press in 1994 the picture of the past is geographically very diverse: Russia, the USA and Asia are presented more than in the Estonian-language press. The picture changes drastically by 2009. The frequency of mentioning Estonia has grown a little; the frequency of mentioning Russia has more than halved while the frequency of references to Europe has nearly doubled. As to Russia, the Russian-language media in 2009 avoid mentioning certain periods in the history of Russia and the USSR when Russians felt like a large, strong state-shaping nation. Rest of the world is mentioned very seldom. Thus Russian-speakers' 'historical geography' becomes very narrow, and a 'ghettoisation' of the minority media takes place. The increasing frequency of referring to historical events that took place in certain towns may help in the formation of the local civic identity of Estonian Russian-speakers.

As to sources, we saw that in 1994 the Estonian-language press relied more on experts and foreign media while the Russian-language press referred more to documents and participants. By 2009 the picture has changed: for the Estonian media the most important source was the Estonian media themselves, then experts and participants. This shows a certain 'circularity' – the historical discourse is reproduced, documents are of little importance and historians are underrepresented. In the Russian-language press there is a significant amount of material without references (nearly 36%), which also says something about the existence of some common mythology. The most important source is now the

foreign media, which gives the possibility to introduce various versions without maintaining responsibility for their content and correlation with the Estonian official versions. In general, in both media during these 15 years historical discourse became less documentary and more opinion based, although the discourse of the Russian-language media remained more diverse and opened to various and even contradictory points of view.

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## Notes

1 Указ Верховного Совета СССР “О праздничных и памятных днях” (adopted 1 October 1980).

2 Указ Президиума Верховного Совета СССР об объявлении 9 мая нерабочим днем (adopted 26 April 1965).

3 “Майор Вихрь” (1967), “Щит и меч” (1968), “Белорусский вокзал” (1970), “А зори здесь тихие...” (1972), “В бой идут одни старики” (1973), “Семнадцать мгновений весны” (1973), “Они сражались за Родину” (1975), “Аты-баты, шли солдаты” (1976), “Судьба” (1977), “Военно-полевой роман” (1983).

4 A socio-political organisation, representing a variety of Russian-speaking political organisations and business structures in Estonia in 1992–1994, formed after the Parliamentary elections of 1992 in Estonia, when not a single representative of the Russian-speaking community was elected to Parliament.

## Appendix

**Table 1. References to historical periods in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009**

Absolute numbers. How many times each period is mentioned in the selection is coded; in some stories several periods are mentioned.

Selection of stories (n)	1994		2009	
	Estonian	Russian	Estonian	Russian
	<b>932</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>388</b>
Ancient	20	26	23	3
Middle Ages	12	8	12	4
13th century	20	12	10	1
14th century	12	8	10	2
15th century	20	12	10	6
16th century	33	16	16	7
17th century	32	22	26	9
18th century	45	34	39	15
19th century	85	32	70	11

Continued...

**CONTINUATION. Table 1. References to historical periods in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009**

	1994		2009	
	Estonian	Russian	Estonian	Russian
20th century	80	12	82	3
1850s	8	8	2	1
1860s	26	12	14	1
1870s	18	16	10	3
1880s	26	6	25	5
1890s	26	26	21	2
1900s	42	37	87	10
1910s	113	85	33	17
1920s	173	87	127	28
1930s	234	111	223	32
1940s	346	192	209	94
1950s	229	77	116	23
1960s	250	57	128	20
1970s	240	89	133	26
1980s	252	109	179	46
1990s	71	190	243	69
2000s	–	–	102	65
War of Independence	1	2	2	12
Soviet period	24	63	8	23
Indefinite	47	6	21	11
<b>Total historical references</b>	<b>2485</b>	<b>1355</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>549</b>

**Table 2. Sources of historical references in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009**

Absolute numbers. How many times each source is mentioned in the selection is coded; in some stories several sources are mentioned.

	1994		2009	
	Estonian	Russian	Estonian	Russian
<b>Selection of stories (n)</b>	<b>932</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>388</b>
Historian	59	48	77	37
Expert	194	57	236	46
Participant	132	185	218	25
Document	6	118	20	37
Archive	13	65	27	9
Estonian media	77	31	245	34
Foreign media	182	96	134	70
Other	243	32	185	17
No reference	103	189	143	139
<b>Total sources</b>	<b>1009</b>	<b>821</b>	<b>1285</b>	<b>414</b>

**Table 3. Speakers on historical topics in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009**

Absolute numbers. How many times each speaker speaks in the selection is coded; in some stories several speakers are presented.

	1994		2009	
	Estonian	Russian	Estonian	Russian
<b>Selection of stories (n)</b>	<b>932</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>388</b>
Journalist	513	395	795	364
Expert	476	194	412	190
Politician	85	115	60	30
Participant	177	150	214	88
Other	148	46	211	85
<b>Total speakers</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>1692</b>	<b>757</b>

**Table 4. Geo-political space related to the past in the Estonian- and Russian-language press, 1994 and 2009**

Absolute numbers. How many times each place is mentioned in the selection is coded; in some stories several places are mentioned.

	1994		2009	
	Estonian	Russian	Estonian	Russian
<b>Selection of stories (n)</b>	<b>932</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>388</b>
Estonia	587	278	806	176
Estonian town	103	116	187	89
Russia	324	371	320	78
Europe	468	289	506	95
USA	138	106	151	27
Rest of the world	108	121	115	26
<b>Total spatial references</b>	<b>1728</b>	<b>1281</b>	<b>2085</b>	<b>491</b>



# Journalistic commemoration of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact in Estonia 1989–2009

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## Introduction

This article focuses on the dynamics of the memory work of journalism in covering historical anniversaries in the calendar.<sup>1</sup> Anniversaries form a part of society's attempt to combine linear and cyclical treatments of time and synchronise calendar time ('now') and historical time ('then'). For mnemonic communities anniversaries are strategies to create and maintain connection between the past and present by amalgamating historical moments and places that are not coherent by origin, into a seemingly coherent stream of experience (Zerubavel 2004). In this imaginary coherence, anniversaries may also have the socio-mnemonic role of constructing historical disruptions that will function as 'chronological anchors' (Zerubavel 2004, 90) or meaningful turning points in a group's comprehension of the past. A specific 'time map' (Zerubavel 2004, 109) will be formed of anniversaries in a national calendar that will function as a 'general organisational guide' for the creation of meanings of historical objects and events. Such 'time maps' serve as foundations for the historical narratives of mnemonic communities.

With close connections with the calendar year and other social, cultural and political practices, anniversary journalism adopts these main national narratives around which the national mnemonic community is formed. In this study, anniversary journalism is primarily understood as a space of political culture in which collective memory and national identity are constantly being recreated and reinforced as well as disputed and tested (e.g. Zelizer 2008; Kitch 2008; Harro-Loit & Kõresaar 2010), and political processes and structures are being (de)legitimised (e.g. Misztal 2003). The role of anniversary journalism is to give sense to relationships between the past and present through commemoration of a certain event. When doing so, it relies on both narratives of the past that are currently topical within the mnemonic community as well as on earlier similar acts of commemoration (Wertsch 2002; Olick 2007). The mnemo-dynamic insight into anniversary journalism presented in this study relies on the idea that

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Harro-Loit, H. & Kello, K. (eds) (2013) *The Curving Mirror of Time*. Approaches to Culture Theory 2, 93–114. University of Tartu Press, Tartu.

commemoration of a past event reflects both the event that is commemorated as well as the circumstances of the time of commemoration. Moreover, the commemoration of an event depends both on previous remembrance celebrations of the event as well as events that have taken place between such celebrations (Olick 2007). The dynamics of the memory approach also imply that different forms and spaces of remembrance are looked upon as mutually connected and interdependent: collective (political), cultural and intergenerational communicative memories ‘intersect’ in anniversary journalism discourse. Both journalists as well as their audience play a role in this ‘memory soup’ (Kitch 2008, 318) through their participation in a cultural and political community (Le 2006).

The object of the commemorative activity under analysis is the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (MRP) – i.e. the Non-Aggression Pact that was signed between Germany and the USSR on 23 August 1939 in Moscow.<sup>2</sup> From the Baltic perspective MRP and its secret protocols are considered one of the triggers of World War II. The pact is looked upon as a turning point in the history of the Baltic states as it paved the way to the illegal occupation and annexation of the Baltic states by the USSR, functioning as a trigger for the events that lead to discontinuation of statehood in these countries.<sup>3</sup> The post-war mnemonic history of the MRP with its central events, like the Baltic Appeal of 1979<sup>4</sup> and a demonstration in Hirvepark in Tallinn in 1987 that was organised by MRP-AEG,<sup>5</sup> generally focuses around this main argument (Kaasik & Piirimäe 2007). Demand for public disclosure and condemnation of the secret protocols of the MRP was at the centre of movements for independence in the Baltic states. Insisting on this demand reached its climax on the 50th anniversary of conclusion of the MRP when approximately 2 million people joined hands in an almost-600-kilometres-long chain of people connecting the three Baltic capitals – an event that has become known as the Baltic Way.

After Estonia regained independence, the MRP and its secret protocols have definitely been a *lieu de mémoire* (Nora 1989) in the Estonian collective memory that symbolises the occupations of the times during and after World War II. Commemoration of the MRP has become an established part of the ritual year. Moreover, a shift of generation is taking place from the generation of ‘witnesses’ to the generation of those who were not directly exposed to the events (Troebst 2009). As a result of generational change the MRP commemoration culture may habituate and, at the same time, become routine, while active creation of commemoration will shift elsewhere to other events.

Moreover, the MRP is still a complicated topic in Estonian/Baltic–Russian relations: the issue of the MRP and its secret protocols is directly related to interpretations of the events of June 1940 and of autumn 1944. While the Baltic

countries have unambiguously called these landmarks as ‘occupations’, the Russian interpretation of these events is more ambivalent. The MRP and its secret protocols are justified on both official and social levels using the security interests of the USSR (Scherrer 2011; Wertsch 2009). Such conflict between Baltic and Russian interpretations came sharply to the fore in Moscow before and during celebrations of the 60th anniversary of victory in the Great Patriotic War. Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, then President of Latvia, who was the only state leader from the Baltic states who attended the celebrations, emphasised the secret protocols of MRP in her pre-visit declaration and recalled the role of the USSR in this issue (Vīķe-Freiberga 2005; Wezel 2011). In contrast, Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation, called the events of 1939 and 1940 an ‘absorption’ during his press conference after the celebrations: “Being absorbed into the Soviet Union in 1939 [...], the Soviet Union could not occupy [the Baltic countries] in 1945 because they had already become part of its territory”<sup>6</sup> (Doroņenkova 2011, 23). Immediately before the 70th anniversary of the MRP the Russian President, Dmitry Medvedev, formed a so-called Commission to Counter the Falsification of History, which was an act in which the policy of equalisation of the totalitarian regimes of the Baltic states played quite an important role (Rogers 2009).

After the breakdown of the USSR and the Communist bloc, Eastern European countries have constantly emphasised the importance of the MRP in their policies of the past as a “tragic embodiment” of the complicity of the two totalitarian systems, Nazism and Bolshevism, “which gravely undermined the Europe [of the 20th] century” (Motion for a Resolution on the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, 12 July 1995).<sup>7</sup> After the enlargement of the European Union the history-policy related ambitions of the former Communist states re-positioned into the Western European framework of mnemonic history, in which commemoration of the Holocaust had been developed into one of its pillars by the end of the 20th century (Judt 2007). In those countries that joined the EU in 2004 the Holocaust did not have the same central position in their collective memories as the crimes of Communism (Closa Montero 2009). On the other hand, it was also true that in the collective memories of Western European countries, the MRP was not an event that would stand out against other events of the early stage of World War II (Troebst 2009). The Baltic countries and Poland have been particularly active in their demands for the inclusion of their experiences of World War II in the pan-European memory of war and to achieve condemnation of the crimes of Communism. The MRP has always occupied central position in their policies of the past. Political antagonisms that broke out around celebrations of the 60th anniversary of World War II (Onken 2007) as well as intensive public debates and extensive international attention that the Baltic states enjoyed enabled to clarify



these understandings of the past and generally contributed to the change of the European memory policy (Mälksoo 2009).<sup>8</sup> Stefan Troebst (2011) has pointed out how another formula, ‘No totalitarianism ever more’, appeared beside ‘No holocaust ever more’ on the European level when the 70th anniversary of MRP was approaching. In September 2008, the European Parliament adopted a resolution proclaiming 23 August as European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism (European Parliament 2008). The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly also expressed its support to this initiative in its Vilnius Declaration of July 2009 (OSCE PA 2009). With these steps 23 August was institutionalised as the anniversary of the MRP with the aim to harmonise the positions of the Member States of the European Union concerning European history of the 20th century.<sup>9</sup> The date of conclusion of the MRP was given the meaning of a date that split Europe, while the impact of the event was emphasised through the victims of World War II. However, according to a Report from 2010 of the European Commission, only Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia and Sweden had approved 23 August as official anniversary by the time (European Commission 2010).<sup>10</sup> Although 23 August 1939 is undoubtedly of fundamental importance in European history, it still does not have the same status in European memory (Troebst 2009; 2011).

The above is a brief context for this study. This study focuses on questions of the role of Estonian journalism in commemoration of the MRP during the period from 1989 to 2009. Into what kind of temporal and spatial landscape does Estonian journalism position the MRP, and what kind of frameworks of meaning does it thereby create for the event? Which sources are relied on when the MRP is recalled and who are given the word in this process? To give answers to these questions the coverage of the MRP on the 50th, 60th and 70th anniversaries of conclusion of the Pact have been analysed in the national daily newspapers *Edasi* (1989) and *Postimees* (1999 and 2009).

## Sample and method

The sample for the research was formed of articles that mentioned the MRP or the Baltic Way in the daily *Edasi* of 18–26 August 1989, and the daily *Postimees* of 18–26 August 1999 and 19–27 August 2009.<sup>11</sup> The newspaper issues from the date of the MRP anniversary and of three dates directly before and after the anniversary were examined focussing on the articles published in the paper issues of the newspapers and their supplements.<sup>12</sup>

The total number of articles analysed (with reference to the MRP) was 54, composed of 18 articles from the year 1989, 20 articles from the year 1999, and

16 articles from the year 2009. In terms of their genre, the texts are news stories, interviews as well as feature and opinion stories. The proportions of the genres represented were relatively similar across the years: opinion, commentary or analysis had a small majority, followed by news story. In 1989, reports from MRP commemoration events were also published, while no such genre occurred later in connection with the MRP. In 1989 and 2009, 5 and 6 articles, respectively, were published in a special rubric dedicated to the MRP, while there was no such rubric in 1999. The articles were analysed with the methods of quantitative content analysis and qualitative text analysis. Specific research questions can be divided into three major categories:

**The first set of questions** is related to the news value of the MRP and its commemoration, and the ‘applicability’ of the MRP as a historic event in the memory landscape. We asked how the proportion of articles covering the MRP as a main and auxiliary topic has changed over the years. This is a question about the commemorative function of the MRP. There are several possibilities for journalism to commemorate a past event. Event-oriented commemoration focuses on events in the present that are organised to commemorate events from the past. In such cases journalists describe both the event that takes place in the present as well as the historical event that is the object of commemoration (Edy 1999). An example of this kind of commemoration is the coverage of the Baltic Way. This study also asks how the proportion of those articles that associate the Baltic Way with the MRP and those which do not create any link between these two events has changed over the years amongst the articles that have the Baltic Way as their main topic. Another form of commemorating the past in journalism is past-focused informative stories dedicated to the anniversary of the past event. These stories may also create an emotional link between the past and the present by utilising other, more occasional possibilities of recalling history, such as referring to the past as kind of ‘lesson of history’ (Edy 1999).

The levels of commemoration covered were also studied by the question of the news threshold of the MRP. The following possibilities were distinguished as components that exceeded the news threshold: “event”, “recollections/review/analysis/commentary”, “statement/allegation”, “cultural text” (i.e. books, films, theatre performances), and “other”. It was also necessary to include answer options within the subject of the MRP that would reflect complexity between different round anniversaries related to the MRP: within the same year there could be references to different commemorative events related to the MRP, as well as to events that in turn commemorated these anniversary events.

**The second set of questions** looked into the problems of agency, authority and continuity in the discourse of journalistic commemoration. We asked who

is given the word in commemoration of the MRP, and which sources are referred to when writing about the MRP. Commemoration of events of the first half of the 20th century is broadly changing within society due to the shift of generations of commemorating agents: it is no longer the generation of witnesses who does the heaviest work of commemoration but the following generations who were not directly exposed to the events (Troebst 2009). Because of this it is possible that commemoration of these events will become journalistic routine, the maintaining of which will converge under the competency of the journalist as a professional. On the other hand, a journalist may also delegate interpretation of the past to others by using politicians, researchers or creative people as presenters (Robinson 2006; Zandberg 2010).

The following variants were coded as sources in the articles related to the MRP: “politician”, “historian”, “other expert”, “a person who took part in a commemoration event”, “media” and “other”. The speaker’s category was defined according to the question “who is the author of the article?”. Both in the case of sources and speakers, several options were possible (depending on the event) concerning participants/eyewitnesses/organisers (of events), which in some cases coincided with another variant, e.g. “politician” or “other expert”. In such cases the option “participant” was preferred, if the speaker talked about the relevant event.

**The third set of questions** within our research concerned the time and spatial framework of the MRP and its commemoration. We asked how the time context and the political/geographical space into which MRP and other matters relating to the MRP were placed had changed in the articles over the years. Defining the time and spatial framework enables us to explore the ideological context of the MRP, including what is the present juncture of commemoration of the MRP. We asked into which time context the MRP was positioned and what was the level of generalisation associated with commemoration of the MRP. In looking into spatial limits, the scale of the MRP remembrance policy was explored: who were seen as the main actors in the events; was the event localised as merely an Estonian and Baltic problem or was there any broader meaning attached to it? Further, we asked about the remembrance context in which meaning-making took place: was it within commemoration of the MRP itself or within the framework of later events commemorating the MRP?

The main unit for coding time was the decade. In addition to decades, the variants 1939, 1979, 1989, 1999 and 2009 were pointed out separately in order to map the dynamics of referring to the year of conclusion of MRP and to the years of round anniversaries of the MRP. References to corresponding years are also indicated under relevant decades at the same time. The options “the Soviet period

/ Cold War” and references to the 20th and 21st centuries were also pointed out separately. World War II was included under the option “the 1940s”, if, in this case, no specific references to the year 1939 was made.

In the spatial category, the following coverage levels were differentiated: national level – Estonia, Russia/the USSR, Germany; and regions – the Baltic states, Europe, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, the rest of the world. References to Russia and Germany also included references to the Soviet Union, Stalin’s Russia, or to the Third Reich/State, Hitler’s Germany and also the GDR and the FRG, respectively.<sup>13</sup> A reference to the national level does not imply reference to a region: e.g. “Estonia” does not refer to the Baltic states at the same time, “the Baltic states” in turn does not refer to Eastern Europe, etc. The option “Europe” only included specific references to Europe as such. Expressions like “the West”, “Western countries”, or “the Western world” were categorised under Western Europe.<sup>14</sup>

### **Methods of commemoration of the MRP**

In the period 1989–2009 articles mentioning the MRP as the main topic were coded as follows: 5 in 1989, 14 in 1999 and 10 in 2009. The Baltic Way was the main topic in 4 articles in 1989 and 3 articles in 1999 and 2009 respectively. While in 1999 and 2009 articles with the MRP as their main topic had a clear majority amongst all texts that mentioned the MRP, then in 1989, the proportion of articles that had the MRP as their main focus was substantially lower as compared to later years. The particularity of 1989 as compared to the years 1999 and 2009 lay in the fact that it was the first round anniversary of the MRP when the (Soviet) Estonian media could cover the topic more freely. Apart from the MRP there were a number of other events and themes that had become topical within the context of *perestroika* and the movement for national independence that needed public disclosure and clarification. Thus the MRP figures in the articles of 1989 as just one event in a broader sequence of events from 1939 to 1940 that were associated with the loss of national independence or with other themes and events that were topical within the context of *perestroika*. In 1999 and 2009, the main topic in the overwhelming majority of articles that mentioned the MRP was the MRP itself, which demonstrates that by then the event had become distinct as an independent object of commemoration and had stabilised as such an object.

Analysis of the news threshold of the MRP topic suggests that commemoration of the MRP has three forms. The first form of commemoration takes retrospective views of the MRP as a historical event. The second form of commemoration focuses on the Baltic Way as the central event of the anniversary of the MRP in 1989. The third group of articles have later retrospective views and

**Figure 1. News components in stories on the MRP and related issues, 1989, 1999 and 2009**

Number of stories

	1989	1999	2009
Cultural text	0	1	2
The Baltic Way 1989	4	0	0
Event of commemoration			
– MRP (excl the Baltic Way) in 1989	4	0	0
– MRP in 2009	–	–	2
– the Baltic Way	–	1	0
Other event	1	0	0
Overview			
– MRP	0	9	6
– the Baltic Appeal	0	1	0
– the Baltic Way	0	2	2
– the event of commemoration of 1989	–	1	0
– other	8	1	2
Statement about MRP or the event of its commemoration	1	2	1
Other statement	0	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>

events of commemoration related to the MRP or the Baltic Way as their focus. The Baltic Way is the central event of commemoration of the MRP covered in the articles beside which the Baltic Appeal of 1979 and a demonstration dedicated to the anniversary of the MRP that took place in Leningrad in 1989 also find remembrance.

The news threshold of the MRP topic showed the following dynamics over the years.

**In 1989**, when the number of texts dealing with the MRP as the main topic was the same as of those dealing with the MRP as a minor topic, components of the commemoration of the MRP in society that exceeded the news threshold (cf. Figure 1) followed the same distribution. In the case of articles in which the main topic was not directly linked with the MRP, the components that reached the news threshold were (in cumulative order) a reunion of the Estonian Memento Union – the association of people who were repressed by the Soviet regime –, an overview of Estonian pursuits for regaining independence, or other pivotal historical events (the 1968 events in Czechoslovakia), and an overview or analysis of Soviet annexation and statehood status of Estonia. In articles that dealt with the MRP as the main topic, the components exceeding the news threshold were the Baltic Way or other events of commemoration of MRP, and a statement

made about the MRP.<sup>15</sup> Thus, in 1989, the MRP was predominantly covered via events of commemoration of the MRP, while there were actually no retrospective overviews or analyses fully focused on the MRP. Instead, the MRP was rather integrated into the themes of Estonia's loss of independence or the process of its regaining independence.

In 1999, proportion of articles with the MRP as their main topic had substantially increased. More than 2/3 of these were retrospective opinion articles on the MRP as a historical event or about events of commemoration dedicated to the MRP. As compared to 1989, retrospective stories relating to the MRP that contained the author's opinion predominated in 1999. On the one hand, this indicates the smaller scale of MRP commemoration events in 1999 (there was no second Baltic Way), while on the other hand, the media started covering mnemonic history of the MRP (the Baltic Appeal, the Leningrad demonstration in 1989). Both the increasing number of texts with the MRP as the main topic and change of focus in articles indicate that the role of the media as mediator of the past had increased by the MRP anniversary in 1999 (cf. Sources).

**The 2009 coverage of the MRP** partly repeats the 1999 practice, with the restriction, however, that commemoration of the MRP is mainly focused on two events: on the MRP itself and, out of events of its commemoration, unexceptionally on the Baltic Way. In addition, there is an increasing tendency for no references to the MRP or its anniversary as the underlying cause of the Baltic Way to be made in articles that recall the Baltic Way or deal with commemoration events of the Baltic Way. While in 1999 there was one article with the Baltic Way as its main topic, but which did not mention the MRP, in 2009 there were four such articles. The results also show that the number of articles dealing with the Baltic Way as their main topic made a sudden increase in 2009, being nearly twice as high as in 1989 or 1999. Thus, in the media, the Baltic Way has taken the form of an event that is significant in itself and constitutes more and more a separate historical event. On the one hand, the Baltic Way is itself becoming an object of commemoration, and, on the other hand, this event is being unbound from the MRP.

### Sources and speakers

Analysis shows that the number of texts in which no sources have been referred to in connection with the MRP and related issues was more than twice as high in 1989 as in 1999, which is nearly three times higher than in 2009 (see Figure 2). As the 1989 and 1999 texts referring to the MRP do not significantly differ in their genres, the reasons must be looked for in journalistic conventions and their time

**Figure 2. Information sources in stories on the MRP and related issues, 1989, 1999 and 2009**

Number of stories

	1989	1999	2009
Historian	1	3	3
Politician	1	5	3
Other expert	1	1	2
Participant			
– witness of the MRP era 1939	0	2	2
– the Baltic Way 1989	1	0	1
– other event of commemoration in 1989	1	0	0
– other	0	1	1
Documents, archive	2	1	4
Estonian media	0	3	0
Other media	0	1	1
No reference	11	5	4
Other	2	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>

specifics. Halliki Harro has pointed out that a distinguishable characteristic feature of Estonian journalism the 1980s is its monologism: according to Harro's data monologue as a journalistic method was increasingly taken into use from the 1960s and was applied over 9 times more in 1981 than in 1999 (Harro 2001). On the other hand, in 1989 the MRP was the main topic in only 50% of articles, and thus there might have been no need for direct or indirect reference to sources. In addition, there are no obvious preferences among the sources referred to: one can find references to documents, a book on the history of the Estonian SSR, an expert, and participants in the events of commemoration of the MRP of 1989. No references have been made to sources related to the signing of the MRP in 1939, e.g. memoirs, reports, etc.

In contrast to the MRP jubilee year of 1989, references to people connected to the 1939 events have also been referred to in 1999 and 2009. At the same time the trend of not using participants/eyewitnesses/organisers in/of MRP commemoration events as sources has become more evident (participants in the Baltic Way were referred to only once in 2009). On the other hand, significantly more references to historians and politicians are made in 1999 and 2009. Moreover, the number of articles that referred to (historical) documents also showed a small increase in 2009.

**Figure 3. Speakers in stories on the MRP and related issues, 1989, 1999 and 2009**  
Number of stories

	1989	1999	2009
Journalist	9	12	13
Historian	0	8	1
Politician	5	1	1
Other expert	4	0	1
Participant			
– the Baltic Appeal of 1979	0	1	0
– the Baltic Way 1989	0	0	2
– other event of commemoration in 1989	1	0	0
Other	0	1	1
Not defined	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>

No unambiguous trend of referring to the newspaper itself can be observed. For obvious reasons there were no such articles in 1989. In 1999, there were 4 such references, in 2009, one.<sup>16</sup>

Amongst the speakers in the articles, a high proportion of journalists can be observed, which has constantly risen (see Figure 3). While in 1989 a little less than 50% of all the speakers were journalists, the proportion was a bit higher than 50% in 1999, and 66% in 2009.

Another common feature in the comparison of the three years is the minor interest in the opinions of participants in the events related to the mnemo-history of the MRP (1989 – 1; 1999 – 1; 2009 – 2).

The third aspect as well as the main difference between the speakers across the years can be observed in the proportion of various experts, which has constantly decreased. In 1989, the proportion of historians, politicians and other experts was nearly 50% of the total number of speakers. In 1999, they formed a little more than 1/3, and in 2009 only less than 1/6. In 1989, the experts included lawyers who discussed the themes of annexation of the Baltic states/Estonia, international law, and Estonian status of statehood. In 1999, the speaker in vast majority of articles was a historian (Ant 1999). In 2009 no tendencies are revealed as to the preference of the speakers.

Thus the following trend was revealed from the 1989–2009 comparison: it is primarily the journalists themselves who are the creators of collective memory related to the MRP on the newspaper pages; coverage of MRP from the points of view of experts has decreased and no definitive emphasis has ever been put on this from the experiential aspect. The decrease in referencing sources and the



domination of journalists as speakers also demonstrates that the MRP anniversary was becoming a routine (journalistic) anniversary.

### **MRP meaning-making: time and space**

Time references related to MRP topics can be generally divided into three major categories across the years. The 1930s and 1940s stand out among the references as the decades related to the conclusion of the MRP and of World War II;<sup>17</sup> the 1980s stand out as the decade when the Baltic Way took place; and the changing present time (the 1980s to 2000s) stand out as the memory-political (commemorating) present. The results were the following across the years under research (see Figure 4).

**In 1989**, the greatest number of articles referred to the 1980s, which was factually twice as big as the number of articles that referred to the 1940s or 1930s. The 1980s figured in the texts predominantly as the present time of MRP memory policy (work of the MRP Commission of the Congress of Deputies of the USSR,<sup>18</sup> the Baltic Way, conferences dedicated to the MRP), and less as related past (Resolutions of the European Parliament of 1983 and 1988).

In articles from **1999** it is interesting that the decades that received the greatest number of references (the 1930s, 1940s, 1980s and 1990s) were represented in nearly equal numbers of articles. It seems that the commemorative past of the MRP in the break-through 1980s (particularly in 1989) has become nearly equal to the event itself, and the Baltic Way has its role as a historical milestone that is becoming independent of its historical cause.

The trend continues in the **2009** texts. The 1990s did not find their firm place as the commemorative past of the MRP, while the 1980s did find such a place (the same repertoire of events: work of the MRP Commission of the Congress of Deputies of the USSR, the Baltic Way, the Hirvepark demonstration), and to a small extent also the 1970s (the Baltic Appeal).

In the context of the 1930s and 1940s, the MRP is predominantly associated with World War II and the occupation and annexation of Estonia, although here too certain dynamics can be observed. A characteristic feature of 1989 is that all the concerned articles associate the MRP with a loss of independence for the Estonian Republic, while none of them associate the MRP with breakout of World War II. This treatment of events was characteristic of the policy of the past of the late 1980s, where the legal discourse on the status of Estonia within the Soviet Union predominated (Rahi 1999, 9–12; cf. the role of experts above).<sup>19</sup> By contrast, in the following two MRP jubilee years the trend of associating the

**Figure 4. Time references in stories on the MRP and related issues, 1989, 1999 and 2009**

Number of stories	1989	1999	2009
1920s	0	0	1
1930s	6	10	6
1940s	7	10	7
1950s	1	2	0
1960s	0	0	1
1970s	4	3	1
1980s	13	9	9
1990s	–	9	2
2000s	–	–	12
The Soviet period	0	1	2
20th century	0	4	3
21st century	–	–	2
Not defined	1	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>46</b>

**Figure 5. Geo-political space in stories on the MRP and related issues, 1989, 1999 and 2009**

Number of stories	1989	1999	2009
Estonia	13	11	15
The Baltic states	11	8	10
Russia	14	13	10
Germany	6	12	9
Eastern Europe	6	7	6
Western Europe	5	6	6
Europe	4	5	7
Rest of the world	3	6	7
Not defined	1	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>70</b>

MRP with World War II has emerged and become more widespread: in 2009 the MRP was associated with these two events in an approximately equal number of articles; there were both texts where one of these events was mentioned as well as articles where the MRP was referred to in the contexts of both World War II and occupation of Estonia.

In the commemorations of 1999 and 2009 the MRP is placed in the contexts of the ending and commencing centuries: in 1999 the MRP was assessed from the point of view of 20th century history, while in 2009 the persistence of MRP era thinking (spheres of influence, *Realpolitik*) was pointed out. In 1999 and 2009 the MRP is also placed more into the “European” context (cf. Figure 5): on the one hand, the role of the MRP in defining the ‘European fate’ is emphasised (Bahovski & Kagge 1999; Soosaar 2009; Aavik 2009). On the other hand, this is postulated as a “moral problem of Western Europe” (Lobjakas 2009) and cause of Eastern Europe going through the experience of Communist dictatorship (Mertelsmann 2009).<sup>20</sup>

The main geopolitical actors in the field of journalistic commemoration of the MRP are still (in diminishing order) Estonia, Russia/USSR, the Baltic states and Germany (cf. Figure 5). These data reflect both subjective preferences of the commemorators as well as the time context of the event commemorated. The comparison of the three jubilee years shows that Germany was mentioned

less than half as much in connection with the MRP in 1989 than Russia/the USSR. Moreover, Germany is never mentioned in any article together with Estonia or the Baltic states. This may be related to the methods of commemoration characteristic of 1989. On the one hand, the MRP topics were embedded in the discussion of the Soviet occupation and annexation of Estonia. On the other hand, no retrospective overview articles on the MRP were published that would present both parties engaged in the event.

The interrelatedness of the geopolitical landscape of memory and the form of journalistic commemoration is further exemplified by the 1999 sample. In 1999 Germany is mentioned twice as much as in 1989 and 1/3 more than 2009. Moreover, the number of those articles that mention Russia/USSR and Germany together is substantially higher than before. In terms of the form of commemoration, 1999 stands out for the great proportion of analytical overview articles written by the same historian. The selection of texts in 1999 included 7 articles on the MRP by Jüri Ant in which both the parties to the pact were covered equally throughout the series (Ant 1999). The balanced treatment of the roles of Germany and the USSR in MRP coverage is in turn related to the emergence of the discourse of World War II in addition to the discourse of occupation and annexation. Karsten Brüggemann has pointed out that in Estonia the MRP is so strongly bound to the later establishment of the Soviet regime (occupation – annexation – deportation) that German engagement in the issue seems to be forgotten (Brüggemann 2011). This argument is definitely true for the journalistic commemoration of 1989, which was described above. The data for the year 1999 indicate, however, that the connection drawn by Brüggemann is valid only in case of a certain method of commemoration. In commemoration that is directed towards the past, where the MRP is recalled as a historical event that remains in the past, both the parties to the pact are quite equally mentioned.

In 2009, Estonia was mentioned most of all in connection with the MRP, followed by Russia/USSR, the Baltic states and Germany as a unitary group, and all the other regions thereafter in approximately equal numbers. As before, Germany was referred to in connection with the events of 1939. Mentioning the Baltic states can also be specifically associated with the events of 1939 and 1989. On the other hand, references to Russia/USSR reflect a substantially more complex temporal framework. First, Estonia/the Baltic states, Germany and Russia/USSR is continuously mentioned together when the MRP is treated as a historical event. Second, the Baltic states and Russia/USSR (together and separately) are predominantly mentioned in the mnemo-historical context of the MRP of the breakthrough late 1980s (the Baltic Way, demonstration of commemoration of the MRP in Lenin-grad, annulment of the secret protocol of the MRP). The memory policy related

to the MRP today, however, is a topic in which Russia figures as the main actor in the texts on this issue. In 1999, for example, there were three articles (of 13 texts that mentioned Russia/USSR) that considered attitude towards the MRP in Russia, Estonian–Russian relations, and the moral obligation of Russia to make its apologies to the Baltic states. In 2009, the number of texts referring to Russia/USSR was 10. The topics (in diminishing order) included Russia's interpretation of history and its changes since 1989, the present parallels to MRP-era politics of influence (Nord Stream, the Russian–Georgian War, NATO defence facilities in Eastern Europe), and Russia's painful reaction to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Vilnius Declaration, which drew parallels between National Socialism and Communism. Thus the texts that scrutinise the status of the MRP from the point of view of present memory policy focus on developments in the foreign and history policies of Russia, whereby changes in the European memory regime are only touched by way of mentioning.

The European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism is not reflected in the paper version of *Postimees* at all.<sup>21</sup> From the eight news stories on the subject in the online version of *Postimees* of 23 August 2009 three mentioned the Day of Remembrance. All in all the 20th anniversary of the Baltic Way was the main topic in newspaper coverage of 23 August, while the MRP was treated as the motive for the Baltic Way. Indeed, while issues relating to the MRP that are covered before or after 23 August focus on the MRP and its present impact, issues reported on the very anniversary of the MRP are rather centred on the Baltic Way. Moreover, if the Day of Remembrance is associated with the MRP as a historical event, Russia is singled out in this connection; if, however, the Day of Remembrance is linked to the Baltic Way, references are made to Europe and its common values.

## Conclusion

“The file of memory is never closed; it can always be reopened and reconstructed in new acts of remembering” (Assmann & Schortt 2012, 3). Interpretations of historical events that are mediated and disseminated by the mass media alter reminiscences, form opinions, synchronise public interest and harmonise collective memory. Anniversary journalism is an influential actor in the field of collective remembering through its regular (and ritual) functioning. This article studied the role of Estonian anniversary journalism in the commemoration of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact (1939) within the period 1989–2009.

Analysis showed that, during the past twenty years, commemoration of the MRP in the Estonian media has gone through three phases of ritual

commemoration, which have been referred to by Jay Winter in the context of the monumental commemoration of war (Winter 2008). In 1989, the year of the 50th anniversary of the MRP, the commemorative form of the event was still developing. The MRP was hardly ever represented as an independent topic but was integrated into the themes of the occupation of Estonia, the loss of statehood and independence and subsequent Soviet repressions; or it was part of the agenda via MRP commemoration events (which were also topical political demonstrations at the same time). This was the kind of commemoration that was mainly directed towards the future: figuratively speaking, the MRP was one of the reference points of current policies of public disclosure and regaining of national independence. Experts, and lawyers in particular, had a great role to play in the discussions on the MRP, while the journalist was just one speaker amongst others in the commemoration of the MRP. In short, several characteristics of the 'pre-' phase of Estonian memory policy are manifested in commemoration of the MRP of 1989 (Tamm 2012): integration with legal discourse, manifestation in the combination of occupation-annexation-deportation, representation of new contents via old formal conventions.<sup>22</sup>

By the 60th anniversary of the MRP, in 1999, commemoration of the event had acquired its firm position as a ritual calendar-based activity wherein the mediating and constructive role of the journalist had increased. The commemorative activity is almost entirely directed towards the past: it is focused on the MRP as a historical event, whereas the voice of the historian amplifies the effect of balance and emotional distance. In this period, official state memory policy can also be characterised by pragmatism, stability and lack of major change (Anepaio 2003; Tamm 2012), while in the sphere of social remembrance, even a kind of surfeit of repression and victim discourse can be perceived (Jõesalu & Kõresaar 2013). In this sense journalistic commemoration of the MRP keeps pace with what is going on in other spheres of collective remembering.

On the 70th anniversary of the MRP, on the one hand journalistic commemoration of the event continued the trends that became apparent a decade before: the role of journalists increases and the meaning of the MRP as a historical and political (and not experiential) event becomes rooted. As a result of events that took place between the two round anniversaries the role of the MRP as a source of historical analogy with which to interpret real political problems of the current time is stronger. Commemoration of the MRP has also been colourfully linked with conflicts with Russia in the sphere of memory and history policy. The media's attitude towards the European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism, the symbolic centre of which is the MRP, is lukewarm. European

memory policy rather becomes topical in commemoration of the MRP on the occasions when it is possible to report on the Russian negative attitude towards it.

On the other hand, it seems that the anniversary of conclusion of the MRP is entering a new phase of commemorative ritual as both the form and essence of the anniversary are going through transformation (Winter 2008). In 2009, this tendency was constituted in the creation of positive collective memory via commemoration of the Baltic Way, which emphasised European integration, Baltic cooperation, national unity and positive values related to the future. Apart from a positive image of the past, the possibility to re-perform history also contributes to the anniversary of the Baltic Way becoming distinct, as here the regular anniversary is in happy combination with the constancy of the location (Zerubavel 2004). Although tendencies that helped the Baltic Way to become a distinct object of commemoration were already present in 1999, several circumstances could be observed in 2009 that further contributed to this development: first, entering the Baltic Way in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register immediately before the anniversary (UNESCO 2009), and second, wide celebrations in Europe of the ‘20th anniversary of democratic changes in Central and Eastern Europe’. The 20th anniversary of the Baltic Way was a positive event that was targeted towards the future. On 23 August 2009, the commemoration of the Baltic Way was much more than a commemoration of the MRP associated with European memory policy, while the significant ‘other’ that was attached to commemoration of the MRP was still Russia. Thus, analysis of the dynamics of journalistic commemoration of the MRP within the period from 1989 to 2009 shows that a certain ambivalence is written into the anniversary of 23 August: “determination of the stranger through the Pact and self-determination through the [Baltic] Way” (Brüggemann 2011, 291) have become more engraved in the discourse of Estonian anniversary journalism and taken the form of two events of commemoration that are partly unbound from each other. The study of the anniversary media demonstrated that calendar anniversaries that are based on historical events constitute public commemoration that is both regular and systematic as well as changing and transitory at the same time.

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## Notes

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2 For the naming of the event in historiographies of different countries see Müller & Troebst 2011.

3 About evaluations of the MRP in Baltic historiography see Vizulis 1990; Misiunas & Taagepera 1993; Vahtre 2005; Lindpere 2009; Wertsch 2009; Kasekamp 2011.

4 The Baltic Appeal – a public letter written by Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian dissidents with the demand of public disclosure of the pact and its secret protocols, annulment of the pact and restoration of the independence of the Baltic states and sent to the Secretary General of the United Nations and governments of the countries associated with the MRP on 23 August 1979. The Appeal constituted the basis for the European Parliament decision of 13 January 1983 in support of its demands.

5 MRP-AEG – Estonian Group for the Disclosure of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (Estonian: Molotov-Ribbentropi Pakti Avalikustamise Eesti Grupp), founded in August 1987.

6 See materials of the Kremlin press conference after the Russia–European Union Summit of 10 May 2005, and the Press Statement and Responses to Questions Following the Russia–European Union Summit, 10 May 2005, Great Kremlin Palace, Moscow, available at [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2005/05/10/2030\\_type82914type82915\\_88025.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2005/05/10/2030_type82914type82915_88025.shtml).

7 For the role of the MRP in the policy of the past of the former Communist states in late 1980s and in 1990s see Troebst 2011.

8 Most important among the new developments was the 2006 resolution of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, "Need for international condemnation of crimes of totalitarian communist regimes" (Council of Europe 2006).

9 For other similar European Parliament resolutions related to memory policy that are targeted towards harmonisation of interpretations of totalitarian histories within the framework of the European Union see Troebst 2011.

10 In Estonia, 23 August was enforced as the Day of Remembrance for Victims of Communism and Nazism on 6 July 2009.

11 During the course of analysis it turned out to be necessary to code the articles that only and separately covered the Baltic Way in order to study the process of commemoration of this event becoming independent of commemoration of the MRP.

12 As 23 August fell on Sunday in 2009, the sample was formed of the articles that met the sampling criteria and were found in the three issues preceding, and four issues following, 23 August. In order to answer certain questions, it turned out to be necessary during the course of analysis to include the news review in *Postimees Online*.

13 References to Hitler or Stalin (e.g. the Hitler–Stalin machinations) were not considered as referring to space. Neither were any references to nationalities categorised as references to space, unless there was a spatial extension attached to such a reference.

14 Concepts like “the West”, “the Western world” and “Western countries” could probably also include the USA and thus be categorised under “the rest of the world”, but given that such concepts could not be defined more specifically in the journalistic text, their meaning was restricted to Western Europe for the purposes of our research.

15 A statement made by Mr Igor Gräzin, deputy of the Supreme Council of the USSR, saying that the MRP would definitely be annulled.

16 In addition to this, an overview of the coverage of the Baltic Way and the MRP in the Western media was published on 23 August 2009 in *Postimees Online*.

17 The main unit for coding time was the decade. Reference to the year of conclusion of the MRP and to the years of round anniversaries were also indicated under relevant decades at the same time.

18 For the work of the USSR Congress of Deputies MRP Commission, positions of the interest groups and participation of Estonia in such work see Lindpere 1991; Sato 2011.

19 Cf. from the newspaper of 1989: “the MRP is one factor in the line of pieces of evidence which demonstrate that [...] Estonia was annexed in 1940” (Niinemets 1989).

20 In 1999, the ‘European dimension’ emerged in commemoration of the MRP to a great extent through a serialised article by Jüri Ant on the context of the MRP (Ant 1999), which gave an overview of the events related to the MRP in Germany and the USSR as well as elsewhere in Europe. In 2009, an overview of the 23 August 1939 events by Olaf Mertelsmann was published, which followed the same style as Ant’s article (Mertelsmann 2009), although much more opinion-oriented texts predominated in the big picture of the year.

21 23 August 2009 was Sunday and *Postimees* was not issued in paper version. It is noteworthy, however, that the recently approved pan-European day of commemoration does not play any role at putting the MRP into a broader framework before its anniversary.

22 Presenting new, anti-Communist approaches to the past by relying on the Soviet genre conventions is more broadly typical of the Estonian memory landscape in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Kõresaar 2007).

## 22 September 1944 in Soviet Estonian anniversary journalism

Marek Miil

### Introduction

Collective memory is created by various symbolic means like texts, images, memorials, anniversaries and commemoration rituals, thus it also entails writing a history and its narratives. Journalism is simultaneously shaped by and shapes collective memory. Indeed, researchers studying the role of journalism in shaping collective memory consider journalism to be a kind of ‘social time machine’ (Harro-Loit & Kõresaar 2010, 323). Carolyn Kitch (2002) argues that particularly journalism celebrating important anniversaries has a role in collective memory and collective memory in turn has a role in anniversary journalism. Anniversary journalism reshapes and ‘revisits’ the past by republishing earlier texts and photographs explaining their on-going significance. Such stories reshape as well as ‘revisit’ the past. Current news contextualises the past within the present and the present (and future) within the past (Kitch 2002, 48).

The most important tools of anniversary journalism relating to past events are descriptions of a diachronic sequence of events and actions causally or logically related to each other, i.e. narratives. By regularly repeating the stories about past events, anniversary journalism helps people to remember significant events. In addition to logical relations, memorable details and remarkable heroes are used in order to do this. There can be a number of narrators of the events and various photographs and drawings can be used to illustrate the stories; however, the main plot, characters and heroes of such narratives, created in the context of a certain ideology, tend to remain stable over time. As soon as such a narrative undergoes a fundamental and content-related transformation, it can be called a new narrative. Such content-related and fundamental changes of narratives can be caused, for example, by radical changes in interpretations of events, caused, for example, by discoveries in academic history or a new regime rewriting history for political reasons.

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Harro-Loit, H. & Kello, K. (eds) (2013) *The Curving Mirror of Time*. Approaches to Culture Theory 2, 115–137. University of Tartu Press, Tartu.

Due to its repetitiveness, anniversary journalism is a fitting tool for totalitarian regimes, where society's memory of the past events can be controlled by telling and retelling ideologically suitable narratives or 'myths'. Thomas Sherlock (2007) has defined political myth as a narrative of past events that has given a special meaning to the present and the future and creates and reinforces a political identity, granting power to those who are leaders or hope to be leaders (Scherlock 2007, 3). Political myth is intended to bind groups to a unified whole by way of remembering the past in a unified way (Scherlock 2007, 3).

One of the myths created by the propaganda machine of the Soviet Union from 1941 was the Soviet view on World War II, which was labelled the Great Patriotic War by Soviet propaganda. 22 September 1944 in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, is remembered by many residents of the city as the day when the retreating German forces were followed by Red Army units that thereafter remained in the country for nearly half a century. The Communist Party, who led the occupation and sovietisation of Estonian territory, wanted to regulate what and how much of the events of that day were either obligatory or forbidden to remember. The great narrative about the victory in the Great Patriotic War became associated with narratives constructed about the events in June 1940, claiming that the working people of Estonia voluntarily joined the Soviet Union. This myth in turn provided an opportunity to demonstrate that on 22 September 1944 the Red Army liberated the capital of a Soviet Republic. To create this great narrative, anniversary journalism started to present stories about the events of liberating Tallinn where the main heroes were Soviet citizens of Estonian origin who returned to their home country and home city as soldiers of the Red Army. Thus, the reoccupation of Estonia was fitted into the framework of the Soviet narrative about the Great Patriotic War and the events of 1944 started to be told as stories of liberation of Soviet Estonia. The liberation of Tallinn as the capital of a Soviet Republic on 22 September 1944 became especially important for Soviet propaganda.

That symbolic importance was why the liberation of Tallinn was shaped into a propaganda event by the Communist Party; it was regularly celebrated and commemorated in Soviet Estonia with meetings, ceremonies for placing wreaths, organised gatherings of war veterans, publishing bulletins and books, etc. In Estonia, one very important aid and tool of the Soviet propaganda machine in commemorating the events of 22 September 1944 and using those for the current policy affairs was the mass media of the Soviet Republic. Every year on 22 September newspapers were used to remind the Estonian population what happened during the liberation of Tallinn and what the meaning of the events was for the present.



**Figure 1.** Symbols used in the anniversary journalism of Soviet Estonia (*Noorte Hääl* 1964, 1969, 1984; *Õhtuleht* 1969, 1979, 1984; *Rahva Hääl* 1979).

However, the function of this kind of anniversary journalism had two important limits due to time moving on and the events of 1944 remaining further and further in the past.

First, the stories told by anniversary journalism about 22 September 1944 had to be based on the ideologically important narrative components that remained unchanged for decades. But a newspaper is by nature a ‘reporter of today’, so the retelling of past events had to be placed into the context of remembering in the present. In other words, the newspaper inevitably also presented the event of commemoration. Narratives as the supporting base were necessary to ensure that the stories told by anniversary journalism fitted together.

Second, when constructing both the events of 22 September and the event of commemorating them, a newspaper had to take into account the central characters of the specific anniversary – initially the liberators and over time the war veterans that they turned into. For decades, Soviet Estonian newspapers had the opportunity to use the surviving war veterans who had participated in the liberation of Tallinn when commemorating the events of 22 September 1944. The interviews conducted with the people who had been in the war, their memoirs reproduced (referenced) in newspapers and the photographs depicting the war veterans at their former battlegrounds added credibility, attractiveness and a human dimension to the stories told by anniversary journalism. But over the years those war veterans aged, and some changes were made into what they were allowed to remember and how the war was depicted. This inevitably started affecting the content of the stories told by anniversary journalism.

Regardless of the fact that the main storylines and characters of the narratives used in anniversary journalism remained largely unchanged during the Soviet period, there were factors that affected their content. First, narratives reflect socio-political processes. For example, Soviet journalism was affected differently by the period of Stalin's personality cult and the 'thaw' period of Khrushchev. According to Vladislav M. Zubok (2007), during the years of the personality cult, all the greatest achievements of the Soviet Union were assigned to the genius and leadership skills of Joseph Stalin; during Khrushchev's time there were optimistic and considerably more open discussions about how to build a 'humane socialism'.

Another important factor affecting the narratives is the effect of time on direct witnesses of the historic events. Anniversary journalism related to past events uses memoirs of direct witnesses and assigned heroes who participated in those events in order to make its narratives more powerful and believable. However, the further into the past those events remain, the older the participating heroes become and the less they remember what happened years and decades ago. It is also inevitable that in the end, the witnesses to, and heroes of, the events die of old age. For anniversary journalism, this means a reduction of the characters available for interview, dropping to zero over time. Therefore, the narratives of anniversary journalism related to past events will sooner or later necessarily be limited to retelling, repeating and interpreting the existing documented memories.

In this study I will look at examples of the printed press of Soviet Estonia 1944–1989 and review how the newspapers constructed a political myth depicting the victorious Red Army as the liberators of Tallinn. I will also look for how the use of direct witnesses as sources in newspaper stories of the events changed over time.

## **Sample and method**

My sample includes 299 articles dedicated to the events of liberating Tallinn, published in the newspapers *Rahva Hääl*, *Noorte Hääl* and *Õhtuleht* from the Estonian SSR period of 1945–1989. The sample is comprised of articles published in the daily newspapers on 22 September of each year of that period. If the relevant newspaper was not issued on that date, articles from the immediately previous issue were used. The sample includes all articles dedicated to the liberation of Tallinn, except for a few ETA (Estonian News Agency) news items containing only the bare facts of ceremonies and the placing of wreaths. Poems dedicated to the anniversary were also excluded from the sample.

I will look into how the events of the liberation of Tallinn were depicted in the daily newspapers of the Estonian SSR: for example how their descriptions of the

**Figure 2. Narrative of the day of liberating Tallinn (22 September 1944)**

Number of articles containing narrative components

<b>Narrative components</b>	<b>n</b>
The landing group of the Estonian Rifle Corps received with a "Hooray!" The news that they have to go to Tallinn.	7
The landing group was multinational: apart from Estonians it also incorporated Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Kazakhs, Armenians, etc.	11
One of the main parts of the landing group's strike force was the tanks of the tank regiment of Lieutenant Colonel Kuslapuu, decorated with the words "For Soviet Estonia!"	9
The commander of the Corps, Lieutenant General Pärn, urged the landing group: "Immediately enter Tallinn and liberate the city by tomorrow morning!"	11
As the autumn nights were dark, slowing movement towards Tallinn, the decision was made to go at full lights, against all customs.	16
That is why the German traffic officer standing at the Ambla crossroads thought the landing group to be Germans and kindly indicated the direction towards Tallinn.	6
Marked enemy opposition was met at the River Pirita, near Jüri Village.	31
Nearing Tallinn, the warriors saw smoke clouds and the lights of fires above the city, so they picked up the pace even more.	14
When reaching the city, the landing group moved along Tartu Highway, singing the popular Estonian song "Kalevite kants".	6
In the city centre the landing group divided: some moved to the port, some towards Balti railway station.	14
Lieutenant Lumiste took his men to Toompea Hill where he hoisted the red flag of victory at the top of Tall Hermann Tower.	82
Soon the forward group of the 117th Rifle Corps reached Tallinn via the Narva Highway and after cleaning the city of the enemy, continued moving on via Nõmme district.	9
The workers of Tallinn were not passively waiting either; they defended the factories on their own, hindering the actions of the enemy's destruction commandoes.	20
Hitler's men tried to flee by sea but were attacked by the Baltic Fleet.	14
The 1st group of torpedo boats of the Baltic Fleet also had an important role in liberating the city.	9
The population of Tallinn greeted the liberators with delight.	27
There were heart-melting meetings where mothers found their sons, wives found their husbands, children found their fathers.	9
But it also became apparent that fascist propaganda had scared the locals in relation to the Soviet forces.	7
The fascists had planned to render the city into ruins.	14

Continued...



**CONTINUATION. Figure 2. Narrative of the day of liberating Tallinn**

<b>Narrative components</b>	<b>n</b>
For example, 12 tonnes of explosives were found in a gallery below Toompea Hill, and later 75 mined locations were discovered and 100 tonnes of explosives and high-yield bombs were removed.	12
A captive German sapper admitted that the Germans planned to place the explosives under the most important buildings of Tallinn and to blow up the city when leaving the port.	6
After Tallinn was liberated, Colonel Vörk established 270 guard posts to protect the enterprises, shops and institutions of the capital against looters.	11
At 22:30 in the evening Moscow saluted the liberators of Tallinn with 24 salvos from 324 cannons.	32
The next day in front of Toompea Palace, Colonel Vörk reported to General Pärn that the mission was complete.	8
The units that liberated the capital of the Estonian SSR were decorated with the name of Tallinn or the Order of the Red Banner.	17

diachronic sequence of events and actions were adapted into the 24-hour period of 22 September 1944. I will also look at how newspapers reconstructed 22 September by causally or logically fitting events together (see Figure 2). The narrative was made up of 25 different narrative components, each depicting a stage in the chronologically told course of events (for example, the splitting of the Red Army column upon reaching the city centre) or an allegation directly accompanying the story of liberating the city (for example, the fascists' plan to render the city into ruins).

Stages and allegations were considered to be components of the constructed narrative only if they were present on at least six occasions in various articles during the study period. The narrative components told in different articles were sometimes depicted with different levels of detail, but the basic nature of the event had to be the same. For example, the conflict with the enemy forces on the River Pirita was sometimes described in detail while other articles simply mentioned that the first opposition on their road to Tallinn was met at the line of the River Pirita. Some articles wrote only about the fact of assigning the name of Tallinn to the units that participated in liberating the city, while others listed all units that were granted the right to bear that name.

**Narrative and time in the events of 22 September 1944**

The considerable effect of narratives as 'cultural tools' in the processes of remembering has been highlighted in the works of James Wertsch (1997; 2002; 2004;

2008). According to Wertsch, we are all parts of “socialised narrative communities” where collective memory is mediated by narratives used for understanding the everyday world, and those narratives do some of the remembering for us. Narrative is one of the few means that we have for presenting past backgrounds, characters and events (Wertsch 2002, 55). Narratives as ‘cultural tools’ have two functions: the referential function and the dialogic function. The referential function is based on the relation between the narrative and the object (background, characters and events) that it presents. On the other hand, the dialogic function deals with relations between narratives, i.e. narratives are viewed as phenomena talking to each other.

Wertsch divides narratives, as defined in the present study, into specific narrative templates and schematic narrative templates. Specific narrative templates deal with specific backgrounds, characters, locations, events, dates, etc., and they have specific temporal and spatial borders; schematic narrative templates are rather more generalised and abstract and they are created by repeated use of certain specific narrative templates in history teaching, media and elsewhere (Wertsch 2002, 60; Wertsch 2004, 51). Schematic narrative templates impose their plot structure on specific narratives dealing with specific events, locations, etc., and help organise what we say or think – and their abstract nature leaves them unnoticed and ‘transparent’ to their users. This results in schematic narrative templates functioning as unseen but powerful ‘co-authors’ when someone tries to tell what ‘really happened’ (Wertsch 2002, 60; Wertsch 2004, 51).

The data gathered from the above sample allowed for an analysis of how the use of the narrative of the liberation day of Tallinn changed with the passing of decades and to which extent the depiction in anniversary journalism of these events fits Wertsch’s schematic narrative template: “Expulsion of Alien Enemies”.

As the printed press of Soviet Estonia was part of the propaganda machine, centrally coordinated by the totalitarian regime and subjected to ideological supervision of the Communist Party, the depictions of history in the framework of reporting the anniversary events in the printed press reflected the Soviet take on history. The anniversary of liberating Tallinn as told by Soviet Estonian printed press fits Wertsch’s schematic “Expulsion of Alien Enemies” narrative template characteristic to Russia (Miil 2011, 210). According to Wertsch (2002; 2004; 2008; 2010), that schematic narrative template can be applied with various specific identifiers, events, dates and circumstances, but its essence remains relatively constant and consists of four parts: 1) the initial situation where the Russian people live in peace and without anything threatening them; 2) that peace being interrupted by an alien force or factor that causes hardship or aggression, i.e. beginning of troubles; 3) a time of crisis or great suffering where nearly everything is lost

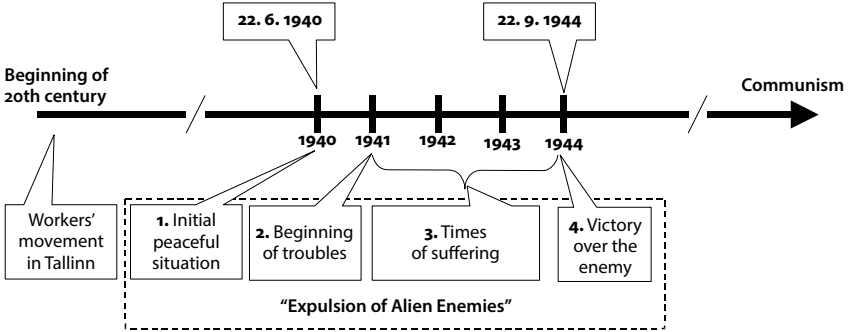
in total defeat and the enemy tries to destroy Russia as a civilisation; 4) victory over the alien forces, brought about by heroic individual Russian people.

In the case of liberating Tallinn, the first part of the schematic narrative template is the constructed prologue to the event, necessary to legitimise the conquering of Tallinn by the Soviet forces as 'liberation'. According to that prologue, after "joining the family of Soviet nations" in 1940, the Estonian working people lived "happy and free lives" and lots of good was achieved during that time. "Factories were expanded and new ones were built. Unemployment was eliminated in a few months. Industrial production volumes increased by more than 60% in a single year" (Vader 1944, 1). The second part of the template starts with an interruption of the first part's happy period by 'fascist invaders': "This peaceful life was interrupted by the treacherous attack of fascist Germany against the Soviet Union" (NSV Liidu Ministrite Nõukogu esimehele 1946, 1). The alien enemy was at fault for the catastrophe: "The war started by Hitler's Germany caused immeasurable damages and a huge loss of lives" (Laksberg 1961, 1). This was followed by the third part of the schematic narrative template, i.e. the time of suffering under the German occupation, where the fascists started to implement their 'new order':

But the brave and the unrelenting were subjected to bloody reckoning and death in the torturing basements of Gestapo. [...] Tallinn was to become a totally German city, it was assigned the damned name 'Reval', its streets were decorated in German fashion and bore German signs. [...] That organised robbery took on especially large proportions when the position of Hitler's army became uncertain at the front (Vaba Tallinn 1946, 1).

That period of crisis and suffering was often illustrated with statistics showing the extent of material damage caused by Germans. "The total damage caused by the German occupation to our Republic was financially expressed as over 16 billion roubles. [...] As a reminder, the entire budget of the Estonian SSR for 1950 was just above one billion roubles" (Undusk 1964, 3). The fourth part of the schematic narrative template is the end of the dark era, where the Soviet forces and the Estonian Rifle Corps 'alone' achieved victory over the 'fascist robbers-conquerors': "Only the fast and decisive frontline action of the Soviet Army and its Estonian Rifle Corps saved the capital of our Republic from total destruction" (Viis aastat võidulipu 1949, 1). The period of suffering ended with a hopeful and bright perspective: "The return of the Soviet order gave the people a new reason to live, a conviction that a better and happier future was ahead" (Kründel & Belousov 1946, 1).

**Figure 3. 22 September 1944 in Estonia as an “Expulsion of Alien Enemies” and another milestone on society’s inevitable development path**



Soviet propaganda exploited the above “Expulsion of Alien Enemies” schematic narrative template as an example of a milestone on society’s unwavering path towards communism (see Figure 3). Thus the liberation of Tallinn was a significant turning point after the Estonian workers’ movement that started before the ‘times of suffering’, and after the events of June 1940. And it was followed by a trajectory prescribed and forecasted in the Marxist-Leninist dogmas, leading to communism.

This standard depiction reproduced by anniversary journalism based on the “Expulsion of Alien Enemies” remained unchanged until the so-called ‘disclosure and innovation era’ of the 1980s. Only then did journalism provide readers with alternative opinions about the events in Tallinn on 22 September 1944; like the re-occupation of Estonia, Otto Tief’s attempt to establish a lawful Republic of Estonia government before the arrival of the Red Army in Tallinn, and accusations regarding the crimes of the Red Army.

On the other hand, Wertsch (2002; 2008) has stressed that unlike schematic narrative templates, a characteristic feature of specific narrative templates is continuous changing in parallel with socio-political processes. When looking at the narratives used by journalism in the depiction of the events that took place on the day of liberating Tallinn and considering it as an example of a specific narrative template, it can be seen that this narrative was also constantly changing. In other words: the description of liberating Tallinn was repeated every year and retained its symbolic meaning, again and again reminding people of the story of ‘expulsion of alien enemies’ (i.e. the schematic narrative template), although the descriptions of the events themselves and the people who participated in them (i.e. the

specific narrative template) changed constantly over the decades. For example, descriptions differed concerning the origin of the red flag that was hoisted at the top of Tall Hermann Tower, the exact list of important buildings in Tallinn where other red flags were hoisted, the extent of the fascist opposition at River Pirita and whether the enemy used only handheld firearms or had the use of mortars and artillery as well, whether local workers did anything for the liberation of Tallinn, and if so, what, etc. (Miil 2011, 200–210). Such on-going transformation of specific narratives may have had various causes, from the socio-political processes at work in the Soviet Union and in Soviet Estonia to situations where historians or journalists managed to find some new facts about the events of 22 September 1944. In the next half of this article I will analyse how veterans were used in commemoration of events, as regular repeaters of narrative and what effect time has had on these processes.

### **Use of war veterans in commemoration of events**

Anniversary journalism of Soviet Estonia had periods where the former front-line men were practically unmentioned in the context of liberating Tallinn, for example in 1948–51 (Miil 2011, 212). This was a period when the Soviet regime was afraid of reformist thoughts and censored war memoirs. Moreover, during Stalin's lifetime the Soviet Union refused to acknowledge the social consequences of the war and the emergence of a new social group – war veterans (including those disabled by the war).

The period of ignoring the former frontline men in newspapers ended in the second half of the 1960s when more and more stories related to the anniversary of liberating Tallinn were dedicated to specific war veterans, allowing them to speak as well. At that time, heroes started to be personified and war veterans began to be shown as 'people from among us' with a story to tell. Similarly, from 1964 articles about the day of liberating Tallinn became more colourful and varied in content. One reason for publishing veterans' stories was the fact that Leonid Brezhnev, who became the leader of the Soviet Union in 1964, tried to create a sense of unity via war myths. At the time, the celebration of victory was used to demonstrate public loyalty and for political legalisation of Brezhnev's regime (Figs 2010, 663). This attempt was characterised by the message that the nation had fought together, young people had given their lives and future generations were indebted to the past (Merridale 2007, 382). Catherine Merridale (2007) calls this "the golden era of specific actions and many words", where middle-aged veterans were encouraged to take on patriotic roles: they were sent to schools to talk about battles and to infect young people with romantic images of the

war. Another reason to personify veterans was certainly the 1964–1965 euphoria around the celebration of the 20th anniversary of Tallinn's liberation and victory in World War II (the Great Patriotic War).

The quotes, memoirs and pictures of the surviving war veterans as direct witnesses of the events of 1944 were used to lend credibility to the stories of Tallinn's liberation as told by anniversary journalism. Compared to the fact-rich but dry and boring articles referencing official Soviet history books, the personal memoirs of war veterans undoubtedly provided freshness, excitement and emotionality to the newspaper stories and opened the human dimension of past events. This is part of the specifics of journalistic discourse, where various genres can be used to create human closeness.

War veterans as mediated by anniversary journalism had a significant role in symbolically highlighting the landmarks of collective memory and in perpetuating those landmarks. Two categories of such landmarks can be discerned. First, landmarks that were already there before the historic events commemorated by the Soviet regime, but which were given a new, special symbolic meaning by the communist history and propaganda in its depictions. One such landmark is Tall Hermann Tower; it was an important symbol due to the principle that whoever has their flag there has power over Tallinn and all of Estonia. Therefore, in depicting the liberation of Tallinn Soviet propaganda paid much attention to detailed descriptions of who and how hoisted the red flag at Tall Hermann Tower on 22 September 1944. The role of veterans was to tell their memoirs at the sites of those historic events, refer to specific details, and pose in front of the landmarks. With this, the war veteran established a symbolic link between himself as the participant in past events, and the landmark. Now the veteran and the landmark were connected by joint participation in the context of the historic events. For example, photographs depicting former frontline soldiers posing in front of a landmark added authenticity and authority to the descriptions and memoirs of the events and were supposed to awaken the historic events to new life in the readers' imagination. And on the other hand, with such photographs as documents, the propaganda ensured that the landmarks obtained additional meaning related to the liberation of Tallinn and that those additional meanings were preserved. The photographs could then be republished later to refresh the meanings as necessary, even if the war veteran who had posed for the photograph was no longer alive.

The other category of landmarks was objects that were assigned a symbolic meaning already at the time of their creation. This category includes monuments, memorial plaques and memorial stones. In Tallinn, one such landmark was undoubtedly the monument to liberators (the Bronze Soldier) that was erected at

Tõnismäe in 1947. By reporting the annual commemoration events taking place there – placing of wreaths and flowers – anniversary journalism created a symbolic link to the fallen heroes via the war veterans who participated in those ceremonies, and via the fallen heroes in turn with the relevant landmark. The surviving war veterans, who had talked to the fallen and commemorated soldiers, had shared their hardships and joys, were now a bridge between the dead and the living. Similarly, the looks, age, and stories of the war veterans participating in wreath-placing ceremonies and commemoration meetings reflected the fallen soldiers who, had they survived, would have been the same age and would probably have told the same stories as their living battle comrades.

The members of the Estonian Rifle Corps who arrived in Tallinn in 1944 – originally from Estonia and Tallinn – were depicted in the context of legalising the events of June 1940 as ‘our guys’ who liberated the capital of their homeland and thus returned home. All those returning soldiers had waiting relatives, families or friends in Estonia or Tallinn. It was a clear contrast to the ‘fascist robbers-conquerors’. ‘Fascist invaders’ were never at home here, they had an alien origin, came from the cultural space of the landlords, who were historically opposed to Estonians, and were driven by the single-minded intent to invade and rob the Soviet people. At the same time, Red Army soldiers of Estonian origin came to liberate not the former ‘bourgeois Estonia’ but Soviet Estonia and the capital of a Soviet Republic. Anniversary journalism asserted this for decades with the symbolic example that the liberation of Tallinn as the capital of a Soviet Republic by ‘our guys’ from the Estonian Rifle Corps was saluted in Moscow on 22 September 1944 with cannon salvos.

Anniversary journalism also used veterans for the benefit of the propaganda campaigns that were running simultaneously in the Soviet Union. For example, immediately after the war the former frontline soldiers were depicted as heroes and active participants of the Soviet Union’s battle for peace. With war veterans, anniversary journalism could appeal to the fact that those people knew what war was and thus were undoubtedly honest in their striving towards peace. For example the newspaper *Õhtuleht* of 1950 wrote about a communist, agitator, factory worker, former frontline soldier and liberator of Tallinn, declaring:

We shall not allow the American imperialists to start another war, we shall work tomorrow even better than today, we shall all work for our homeland, that is, for the peace! This is how the former frontline soldiers and liberators of Tallinn, the capital of the Estonian SSR respond to the machinations of warmongers (Pölluste 1950, 1).



A. Saldre plakat

**Figure 4.** Former frontline fighter at the work front (*Noorte Hääl*, 22 Sept 1954, 1).



Similarly, war veterans were used to, for example, draw parallels between fighters of the battlefield and fighters of the work front. While in the days of the Great Patriotic War sacrifices were made in fighting the enemy, after the war parallels were drawn to 'conquering' and there were ever better work results and efficiency levels to fight for. War veterans who had heroically faced death and the enemy in war, now had to present examples of work front sacrifices to inspire ordinary citizens to achieve work victories. Throughout the Soviet period the propaganda machine also used war veterans as examples of loyal citizens and excellent workers, teachers, scholars, etc.

Former warriors were depicted as citizens who had fought with weapons for the freedom of working people and now used that freedom, won at the cost of blood and suffering, to advance the development and welfare of their homeland.

Additionally, by publishing memoirs and photographs of war veterans, anniversary journalism was able to appeal to the feelings of the former battle comrades of war heroes, and also to the feelings of their family members, loved ones, acquaintances and colleagues. Being a friend or a relative of a former warrior in newspapers could make the words of the veteran more convincing and help build a personal emotional connection to the decades-old events via such personal links to veterans. Moreover, for some people it was quite important to be able to increase their own social status by publicly demonstrating in their workplace that they personally know the hero shown on the front page. The public prestige of various organisations also benefited from being able to show that newspapers were writing about a war veteran who worked in their collective.

### **War veterans as regular repeaters of narrative**

When veterans were allowed to tell their stories via anniversary journalism in the 1960s, they nevertheless did not have full freedom in doing so. Their personal utterances of memory had to fit into the official Soviet narrative depicting the liberation of Tallinn, and the story of liberating the capital of Soviet Estonia in turn had to fit into the myth of the Great Patriotic War.

Thus, all that the veterans could do was to run with the constructed story written by the authorities and supplement it with their own memories, making it more colourful and emotional. The so-called official take on history that the governing regime had established could not permit the stories of veterans to deviate markedly from the main storyline of liberating Tallinn, nor to bring out any new facts and circumstances that could have rendered the entire official story questionable. Therefore, anniversary journalism used war veterans as 'direct

witnesses' of the events of 22 September 1944 only to confirm the official version of the events.

Soviet journalism had the role of determining the standards of behaviour, explaining to the readers how to act correctly and how to say proper things (Lauristin & Vihalemm 1993, 182). In fear of repressions, those norms were accepted and this shaped the self-control and self-censorship of the Soviet people. War veterans had lived through the repressions of Stalin and the Soviet paranoia and phobias of conspiracies and treason that were harboured by the governing regime. That set of experience and survival skills may have been one of the reasons why war veterans were careful about disclosing their memories. It can be assumed that they generally considered whether to say something at all and if yes, then what, to whom and how to do it. That principle was also in effect in daily life, just as with communicating with the press and the employees of the Communist Party's propaganda machine. With this, anniversary journalism had rendered war veterans into decades-long living examples of the Soviet phenomenon of publicly prescribing only to the official take on history, even when they knew the real truth was the direct opposite.

That phenomenon has been compared (Pipes 2005; Misiunas & Taagepera 1997) to a schizophrenic and surreal situation where the spirit and the personality split in two, suppressing the truth and dissent, cooperating with the regime in public, pretending to believe every word of the official propaganda. Orlando Figes (2010) has drawn a parallel between Soviet people and actors monitoring their performance while being painfully aware of the differences between their public and personal self (Figes 2010, 514–515). Regardless of the truth, they had to tell one and the same in public, remain true to the one and only version, and live with double standards (Merridale 2007, 204). This was expressed in what Aili Aarelaid-Tart (2001; 2002a; 2002b; 2003a; 2003b; 2006) defines as double thinking – situation where the same object was interpreted on the basis of two totally opposite normative values. As a result, people deceived and lied to the authorities, pretended to be someone else, made morally unpleasant compromises, etc., often just to survive.

On the other hand it is impossible to determine retrospectively how much of the memoirs of war veterans were subject to self-censorship and how much they corresponded to the actual memories and knowledge of the former frontline men. For example, former privates and low-ranking officers of the Red Army were effectively unable to get any information about the action plans and battle developments of larger units like battalions, divisions, or even entire armies except what was said in the memoirs of higher military officials or in official Soviet publications of war history – their low rank excluded any other sources

of information. And as there was no alternative information, it was precisely those sources that inevitably shaped the knowledge of the veterans about 'how things really were'.

We can say that the war veterans were themselves the first victims of anniversary journalism. Anniversary journalism established limits and behaviour standards on the one hand. And war veterans themselves used self-censorship, taciturnity or even silence on the other hand. When they were allowed to speak to newspapers, they generally only repeated their heroics or war memoirs. Some veterans admitted to mourning their battle comrades, family members, school-mates who fell in the war, even decades later. But apart from this, war veterans very rarely described their own psychological and physical suffering after the war. There are just a few individual occurrences where the articles include war veterans briefly admitting that decades later they still lived with a missile fragment in their leg or heard tank tracks in their sleep. For example, a repair machinist of a factory recalls in 1979:

The bullet was in my back for five days short of two years. Then Doctor Saks cut it out in Tõnismäe Hospital. It started to hurt. [...] But in '43, I was down flat in the hospital for a few months for that bullet, seeing myself getting hit again and again in my sleep. [...] Health went bad a while back, reminded me of the war again. Got a joint inflammation (Vaher 1979, 2).

The psychological and physical traumas that accompanied war veterans for decades and reminded them personally in the most direct manner of their experience in the war, were usually kept hidden by journalism when depicting World War II.

The concept of suffering was suited to the Soviet take on history and the Soviet current policy affairs only as long as it was in the past and caused by the enemy. The enemy itself could be anyone – someone aggressive from outside or someone inside connected to a conspiracy. It was important that the enemy was to be, on the 'we-them' axis, always 'them', i.e. alien. When talking about the present and 'us', the heroisation of achievements to date was used to create an image of progress that sooner or later would inevitably lead to the highest state of human society – communism. Such success and progress stories had no place for failures and suffering, especially some long-term negative phenomenon. This is what caused a characteristic feature of the Soviet regime, i.e. hiding a number of problems actually present in society, including the personal traumas of war veterans.

The role of the war veterans was to be heroes whose past actions and present stories had to inspire new generations to similar heroics. The men and women whose chests were decorated by medals and whose arms were full of flowers brought by Soviet children and youths were not supposed to show their weaknesses in public. At anniversary ceremonies and meetings where veterans participated, they demonstrated their decorations and behaved as proud victors. On those festive days, war veterans symbolised the Soviet Union being victorious and prevailing over its enemies. As the living carriers of the myth of the Great Patriotic War, war veterans were expected to behave in a dignified manner fitting for that myth. It can be assumed that even if war veterans began recalling something or lamenting the hardships of their daily lives among themselves, those stories were definitely not intended for anniversary journalism.

Over time, the silencing of the personal traumas of the former warriors in anniversary journalism started to create a rift between war veterans who had participated in the war and the new generation who had no personal war experience. One of the veterans has described that rift between generations:

I remember being hugely interested as a child, listening to the people who had been in World War I. They understood each other, talking about the misery of war, about death, reluctance to kill, and the chill before a battle. I didn't understand those stories because I didn't know war. [...] I lecture political economy to youths who apparently – like me in my youth – don't fully understand what they are being told about the war (Matin 1983, 2).

Anniversary journalism remembered war veterans, but generally kept silent about their real suffering so that the more time passed, the less those veterans were understood in society.

### **Time and changes of war veterans**

The further away in time the date of 22 September 1944 became, the more pronounced was the effect of time on both the war veterans and the way the historic events were depicted in journalism. The present becoming farther from the events of liberating Tallinn was expressed as changes both in the war veterans recounting their memoirs and in the environment surrounding them. The pictures published in newspapers showed different clothing fashions of the war veterans and their surrounding people. The sites of commemorating the anniversary had different stage sets, as new buildings were completed and their interiors were now used, just as the pictures of the current Secretaries in Chief of the Communist Party



**Figure 5.** Aging of war veterans in anniversary journalism. General Lembit Pärn in 1945, 1968 and 1972.

on the walls of those interiors changed over time. New functionaries of the Party and the authorities gave speeches at the ceremonies and addressed the veterans. Like those who gave the speeches, the contents of those speeches also changed according to the current political situation of the Soviet Union and the events of the current policy affairs there.

And in the centre of this on-going transformation, the war veterans themselves changed too – they aged. When the veterans gave up working and retired due to old age, they lost their role of work front fighters and leaders on the path to communism that anniversary journalism had assigned to them. But war veterans still had to fulfil the role of liberators of Tallinn and direct witnesses of the events of 1944 in anniversary journalism. At the same time, images of handsome brave war heroes were gradually replaced by senescent, slumped old men. It was harder and harder to believe that those old men had once been handsome, young and energetic fighters in the Estonian Rifle Corps. Anniversary journalism repeated and stressed that the Great Patriotic War was ‘our war’, i.e. the war of the Soviet nation. But the photographs of elderly war veterans as those who participated in the liberation of Tallinn conveyed the message that the Great Patriotic War was actually the war of ‘them’ – the oldsters with the medals.

In parallel with pictures of, and interviews with, the senescent war veterans, anniversary journalism started publishing admonitions and calls to remember the men and women who participated in the Great Patriotic War and the liberation of Soviet Estonia and Tallinn. Articles, speeches and addresses stressed the contribution of war veterans to the victory of the Great Patriotic War, their timeless merit in securing peace and supporting Soviet society’s path to a bright

future. While earlier the veterans had been set as examples of ideal citizens who, being former frontline fighters, continued fighting at the work front to build the homeland, decades later they were served to the youth as exemplary Soviet people who had already given their invaluable contribution in the past.

Children and youths were expected to be left with a feeling of gratitude towards those elderly people because their family, world peace and the welfare of their homeland all existed thanks to these old veterans. Soviet propaganda demonstrated the gratefulness of the subsequent generations by showing children singing at the meetings of war veterans, youths standing guard in front of monuments at wreath-laying ceremonies, and members of the Komsomol youth organisation at their events listening to war veterans' memoirs. All this was supposed to convey the message of the new generation taking over the mission from the aging generation and continuing to fight and strive towards the goals set by the Communist Party, supported by the example of the war veterans. Moving ahead in time and further away from the events of the Great Patriotic War did not mean a change of Marxist-Leninist ideas, principles and values. Time only replaced the old carriers of those ideas, principles and values with new, young carriers. This way, anniversary journalism helped prove the belief of Marxist-Leninist ideology that the progress of society would result in the abolition of class society and achievement of the peak of societal development – communism.

However, as time passed, fewer and fewer veterans were left and anniversary journalism was increasingly forced to use earlier interviews with veterans and earlier pictures of them. Anniversary journalism turned to standard descriptions and enhanced them with fragments of interviews with veterans conducted in previous years. It also reused stories and pictures of landmarks that had already been given special meaning in the context of historic events. Typical examples of this were comparative photographs of then and now, i.e. comparing the sites of the events as photographed in 1944 to pictures taken of the same sites decades later. So the more time passed, the more the memories of surviving war veterans were replaced by documents, history books, memoirs and other references. The surviving veterans were still referred to in the newspaper articles of the anniversary of liberating Tallinn, but it was done through congratulations and greetings from the authorities mediated by the newspapers. For example, a characteristic greeting from the 1980s was:

Passing years have not been able to dim the memory of the Soviet people's heroism in the Great Patriotic War. [...] Nobody has been forgotten, nothing will be forgotten. The memory of the past is necessary for us, the living, and for those succeeding us, as an example and a teaching. [...] This is why we have

no right to forget the heroes of past historic dramas. On festive days when we celebrate the liberation of our country and meet those dignified people of age, wearing their decorations and medals, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the honourable war veterans for their heroic and hard-working lives (Rüütel 1984, 1–2).

## Conclusions

Until the collapse of the Soviet empire, the events of 22 September 1944 had a significant role in Soviet propaganda. The remembering of the propaganda event was aided by all kinds of commemorative ceremonies dedicated to the anniversary, and also by regular reminders in anniversary journalism of Soviet Estonia. Anniversary journalism fitted together the narrative depicting the events of the day of liberating Tallinn and the entire Soviet take on history and the myth of the Great Patriotic War created by Soviet propaganda. The narrative conformed to the schematic narrative template of “Expulsion of Alien Enemies” that Wertsch has assigned primarily to Russians. Yet the backgrounds, actors, locations and events related to the day of liberating Tallinn that were deemed less important by the propaganda changed continually in the course of decades. Thus, anniversary journalism changed the specific narrative template of one and the same event over time. Although the template was changed, becoming more colourful and varied in certain periods, it never conflicted with the holistic story and concept of “Expulsion of Alien Enemies”.

Soviet Estonian anniversary journalism prevented the possibility of veterans talking about the events according to their actual memories. Thus the goal of anniversary journalism within the framework of the anniversary date being commemorated was not to look for historical truth with the help of war veterans. It was rather the opposite: history had been prescribed by the authorities, and war veterans just had to confirm that official version with their memoirs.

It is probable that decades more Soviet propaganda could have been able to tell the events of the liberation of Tallinn as a version that fully conformed to the Communist Party’s interests and needs, without worrying about any competitive versions at all. Over a long period of time the so-called underground take on history that resulted from the double thinking of Soviet society and competed with the official history – i.e. those stories and memories about the events of 1944 that were told secretly in a family circle or among trusted friends – would have disappeared by itself. As those memories could not be published or disseminated publicly, they would have simply become too vague over generations and practically vanished on their own in the end. Compare this to modern Estonian

families: how many people are left who can tell a story about World War I or the Estonian War of Independence of 1918–1920 based on the memories of their great-grandparents? Anniversary journalism of the totalitarian regime would have ultimately fulfilled the purpose of writing a history suitable for the Communist Party and recording it in the collective memory of the Soviet people had the Soviet Union existed as a fully closed society.

However, Soviet Estonian anniversary journalism was unable to work in isolation as, regardless of the Iron Curtain, Western radio stations were receivable practically without hindrances in Estonian territory for the entire Soviet period. The information monopoly of the Communist Party was additionally undermined by Finnish Television, which was also viewable in northern Estonia from the 1960s. And the stories of re-occupation of Estonia were still actively told in secret among many families and trusted friends in the period of 1944–1989. Those secret stories probably contributed to the Estonian opposition to the russification campaign initiated in the 1980s in which the Great Patriotic War and the war veterans were viewed generally as something related to Russians only. That attitude was also strengthened in the Brezhnev era and its characteristic on-going stress of the Russian people's special contribution in victory in World War II.

Younger generations who had been very young during the war or were born after 1945 had no personal recollection of the hardships of German occupation and the liberator fighters of the Red Army. With each passing year, new generations associated the war veterans of the Soviet Army more and more with oldsters laden with medals appearing on certain anniversaries. Moreover, war veterans appeared as a privileged caste in the nervous and emotionally tense shopping queues of the 1980s, as they had the right to get deficit items for themselves or their families without standing in line. Those elderly people were in no way reminiscent of the young, lively heroes that Soviet propaganda was displaying practically weekly in numerous TV movies about the war. The effect of these historic events being further away in time on the one hand, and alienation of the official history mediated by anniversary journalism and alienation of the surviving war veterans brought about by the double thinking and double behaviour present in Soviet Estonia on the other hand, is characterised in its own way by a riddle that was popular among kindergarten children in the 1980s: "Guess who – jingles, clatters, limps and chatters?"

But the biggest blow to the myth of the Great Patriotic War and the narrative of the events of liberating Tallinn as told by anniversary journalism was dealt by the destruction process of the Soviet Union itself. The period of innovation and elimination of 'unmapped areas of history' that started in the second half of 1980 saw the September newspapers of Soviet Estonia publishing the first stories and



facts that overturned the narrative that had reigned for decades. The more the 'disclosure' process showed the former liberators to be 'occupiers' or the 'henchmen of occupiers', the less newspapers let the former soldiers of the Red Army speak for themselves.

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## Sources of illustrations

Figure 5 – Estonian Film Archives, EFA.280.0-62736, EFA.0-80833, EFA.204.0-94389.



# The visual representation of women in the Estonian media, 1848–1940

Roosmarii Kurvits

## Introduction

The journalistic reflection of the world is a representation of reality according to certain principles that change over the course of time. In the current article, I will analyse one aspect of the representation of reality – pictures of women in Estonian newspapers and magazines from the beginning of Estonian journalism until the year 1940.

During the period analysed – between 1848 and 1940 – extensive changes took place in Estonian society: Estonians became a modern nation (with the national awakening of the 1860s–1870s), Estonian professional culture (literature, theatre, music, art) was established, traditional feudal peasant society developed towards capitalist industrialised society, and Estonia became an independent state (1918).

The position of women also changed. In the middle of the 19th century, the traditional career for Estonian women was (farm) housewife. By 1940, women's life histories were much more diverse: women were factory workers, schoolteachers, clerks, shop assistants, and also authors and actresses.

The Estonian media changed fundamentally, too. The 19th-century media were created by men of letters in order to educate the Estonian peasants – what could be called enlightening journalism. At the beginning of the 20th century this gradually developed into news journalism; magazines and newspapers differentiated from each other; the media industry emerged. Clear-cut journalistic genres took shape. The visual form of publications changed: sparsely segmented text-laden publications gradually obtained numerous salient headlines and visuals (line-art illustrations, photographs).

I presume that these social, gender and journalistic changes shaped women's media representation. The main objects of my article are the transformation of women's visual representation through time and its connections with the transformations of Estonian society, women and journalism.

## The representation of women in the media

Previous research has shown that women and men are depicted differently in journalistic content as well as in advertising.

In journalistic (i.e. editorial) content women are mainly depicted as spouses, artists/entertainers and socialites; they are depicted in lighter, entertaining contexts in a trivial manner (e.g. Miller 1975; Davis 1982; Blackwood 1983; Potter 1985; Johnson & Christ 1988; Kahn & Goldenberg 1991; Len-Ríos et al 2005). Longitudinal studies have pointed out that women's journalistic representation has changed surprisingly little compared to the actual changes of women's positions in real life during the last half a century (e.g. Stanley 2012).

In advertisements, women are often portrayed in submissive positions, as ideal housewives or decorative sex objects, thus communicating the message that woman's ultimate goal is a man (e.g. Goffman 1979; Busby & Leichty 1993; Kang 1997; Baker 2005; Plakoyiannaki et al 2008; Stankiewicz & Rosselli 2008; Mager & Helgeson 2011). Since the 1950s, changes of the women's images in advertisements "have been superficial and occurred more in terms of the *type* of stereotyping [e.g. there are more sex objects and less housewives] than in the *amount* of stereotyping," concludes Katharina Lindner (2004, 412; my emphasis).

On the basis of American material, Carolyn Kitch has claimed that a great many contemporary feminine media stereotypes originate from the magazines of the first three decades of the 20th century (Kitch 2001, 3). Until that time, 'the Cult of True Womanhood' prevailed in the (Anglo-American) public sphere and media. This ideal of true femininity was based on middle-class values, dispersed by women's magazines and novels. True Woman was a lady – pious, pure, submissive and domestic. Home was her domain, where she selflessly served her husband and raised the children. She did not seek work outside home and did not interfere in social and political issues. The social evaluation of woman was based on her ability to be a capable wife and mother (Welter 1966; Searles & Mickish 1984; List 1986, 1989; Italia 2008; Gabriel 2008). A woman's position was similar in the German cultural area. During the 1890s the slogan of three Ks was introduced summarising the womanly role in three words: *Kinder, Küche, Kirche* (Paletschek 2001).

Around the turn of the 20th century, the New Woman was introduced in the media (she was also named Girl, see Sylvester 2007). New Woman wanted to take part actively in the world, she sought education, suffrage, her own career, 'manly' liberties (including smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol); marriage was not her priority (Marks 1990; Patterson 2005).

After World War I the characteristics of New Woman were completed by one central feature – she became an (economically independent) consumer. The media depiction then increasingly bound women's femininity with consumption (Sylvester 2007; Marcellus 2006; Hirdman 1998; Greenfield & Reid 1998).

In Estonian media studies there are few articles and student papers discussing the presentation of women in the Estonian media over the two last decades. Trends found in contemporary Western media are also present in recent Estonian journalism, in editorial content (Pilvre 2011; Põldsaar 2001; Lindma 2004; Tali 2009) as well as advertising (Piilehto 2005; Raadik 2007; Kaur 2011). Women act mainly as entertainers, associates of prominent men, curiosities or trouble makers; their depiction is gendered, as they are presented through their appearance, clothes and private lives (Pilvre 2011).

We do not have any analysis of the representation of women in the Estonian media between 1848 and 1940. Neither do we have evidence of whether these trends have been universal through time or not; whether the type of the distortion present in the media's presentation of women has changed through time or not. The current article aims to fill this gap.

### **Aims of the current research**

The objective of my article is to analyse women's pictorial representation in Estonian journalism from 1848 to 1940 and reveal the development of women representation during this period.

I argue that the pictorial presentation of women in Estonian journalism did change through time. Therefore I ask following questions to interpret the changes. Who are the women presented in Estonian media pictures and how they are depicted? What kind of changes took place in the representation of women and when did these changes occur? What drove the changes? How are the changes connected to the changes in Estonian society, the role of women and the changes in Estonian journalism?

### **Material and method**

**The selection of the material.** I will explore women's pictorial representation from the first picture of a woman in *Ma-ilm ja mõnda* magazine in 1848 until 1940 when the Soviet occupation changed all the prior conventions of Estonian journalism.

Usually, analyses of pictures have followed the dividing lines within print media: editorial content versus advertising, newspapers versus magazines, news

versus entertainment, line art illustrations versus photographs. My aim is to look at print media as the ordinary reader does, browsing whole publications, absorbing all kinds of pictures of women, information and ideas about women and the attitudes of these pictures towards women. Thus I will examine print media in their entirety as hybrid discourses consisting of different subsets: newspapers and magazines, editorial content and advertising, line art illustrations and photographs. At the same time, I will not ignore the dividing lines between different subsets of media, their specific nature and different aims.

My analysis concentrates on general information newspapers that represent the mainstream of print media. During the 19th century the Estonian print media was quite small and dividing lines between magazines, newspapers, and newspaper supplements were not clearly developed. Therefore I have analysed all publications. I sampled only the biggest general dailies with their supplements since the beginning of the 20th century, and excluded magazines (e.g. women's magazines, which were introduced to Estonia during the 1920s). The analysed publications are listed at the end of the current article.

I have analysed all picture types (i.e. in editorial content as well as in advertising) regardless of their technical implementation, i.e. photographs as well as line art pictures. Previous research suggests that in the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, the pictorial conventions of line-art illustrations and photographs did not differ principally. Line-art illustrations were used as the previously invented technical possibility to reproduce images in print media, later replaced by photographs (e.g. Barnhurst & Nerone 2001, 109–177).<sup>1</sup>

The main objectives of editorial and advertising content are different, but still in both cases pictures of women connote society's attitude towards them. Advertising uses the conventions of real life and represents a fabricated world as real; this world is received by the audience as factual, natural and real (Goffman 1979, 84). In addition, at the beginning of the 20th century many readers did not discern advertising content from editorial content<sup>2</sup> (Kitch 2001, 160). Thus I followed the conception of a widened reality by complementing journalistic realism (i.e. editorial content) with 'commercial realism' (i.e. advertising).

A similar sampling method was used by Anja Hirdman (1998) who studied men's and women's visual representations in Swedish press images between 1925 and 1987. She found that visual imagery "[was] not appreciably different" between the (Swedish) quality papers, tabloids, family and women magazines (Hirdman 1998, 226, 236). There was also a clear concordance between gender image content in advertisements, news and entertainment (Hirdman 1998, 236; Kitch 2001, 158–159).

**Framing analysis.** The method used is framing analysis. In communication, the concept of ‘frame’ signifies the words, pictures, phrases and presentation styles used by the media to give information about a theme or event. Robert Entman has defined the term as follows: “To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (Entman 1993, 52). The framing analysis examines the selection of aspects of media representation and their salience. Based on these factors, typical patterns are detected which media use to construct reality. The keyword of framing analysis is *how* – how the specific themes are addressed and presented. (For a detailed review of framing analysis see D’Angelo 2002; Matthes & Kohring 2008; Matthes 2009.)

Frame could be analysed as a unitary entity or as a group of clearly defined components connected systematically in a specific way. Following the suggestions of Matthes and Kohring (2008, 263), I operationalise the frame as a pattern which consists of a combination of several elements (frame elements or frame devices) with different values.

I started the analysis from literature, in order to detect which depiction devices have been studied. Thereupon I explored Estonian material: who the pictured women are and how they are visually presented (for a more detailed analytical approach of pictorial representation of gender see Kalmus et al 2002). I then concretised the frame elements, concentrating on the elements that were significant and which changed during the period of analysis. Frame elements that were absent, occurred rarely or varied little in the current Estonian material were excluded from subsequent study (e.g. forms of familial depiction, use of hands (‘feminine touch’), body posture (bowed, erect) and licensed withdrawal, which were analysed by Goffman 1979).

The conclusive formulation of frames is based on seven frame elements: the woman’s role, her function, her aesthetisation, her location in the image area, her activity/inactivity, the direction of her gaze, and her age.

1. The first frame element, the woman’s role,<sup>3</sup> is divided into three groups: traditional roles (wife, homemaker, dependent supporter), decorative roles (pretty woman) and modern roles (the career oriented woman<sup>4</sup>, the consumer, vacationer; see also Plakoyiannaki et al 2008, 104; Wu & Chung 2011, 184–185).

2. The second frame element, the woman’s function, is divided into three groups: the woman as an independent individual (e.g. employee, curiosity, crime victim), the woman as an accessory (e.g. a wife who is depicted because of her husband), and the woman as a typical representative of a certain group, or a ‘medium’ of a certain idea (e.g. participant in a cooking course, war victim, consumer



showing the excellent effect of a moisturiser). Herein the woman herself is irrelevant as an individual, she is a part of a certain conception, a symbol of somebody or something outside herself (Hirdman 1998, 227–228; Bell & Milic 2002, 212).

3. The third frame element, the aesthetisation of the woman,<sup>5</sup> is not exactly ‘measurable,’ as we do not know how this certain portrayed woman looked in reality. But it is possible to distinguish principally if a woman is depicted aesthetically neutrally, ‘just for the record,’ or aestheticized, e.g. the woman is photographed in a pose which spotlights her physical attraction or is drawn as a ‘classic beauty,’ i.e. emphasising features which are considered beautiful (e.g. graceful arms, lush hair).

4. The fourth frame element observes the woman’s location on the image and her relative size. This element is significant for action pictures and connotes the importance/unimportance attached to the woman. The woman can be a central character; or she can be an insignificant subsidiary extra in the background (a small figure on the periphery) who assists the central figure or develops a suitable context for a visually depicted idea (Goffman 1979, 28; Bell & Milic 2002, 204–205, 212; van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2001, 96).

5. The fifth frame element is the woman’s activity/inactivity. The woman can act or she can be inactive, motionless (e.g. standing still, posing (for a portrait)). If acting, *how* the woman acts is important. She can be an initiator of action (e.g. a school teacher instructing children); or she can act in a submissive role (e.g. the (male) doctor operating, (female) nurses assisting); or she can be the object of a man’s action (e.g. a policeman checking the content of a woman’s handbag). Behavioural practices are associated with certain social meanings and women are often presented in a submissive role or objectified in media content (e.g. Goffman 1979; Baker 2005; Stankiewicz & Rosselli 2008).

6. The sixth frame element is the woman’s gaze, which creates interaction between the viewer and the image. This element is significant for portraits. The woman can look at the camera, thus communicating with the viewer, ‘demanding’ the viewer to “enter into some kind of imaginary relation with [...] her” (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996, 122). The woman can look away from the camera, ‘offering’ herself to the viewer to be looked at like a “specimen [...] in a display case” (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996, 124).

7. The seventh frame element is the woman’s age. As the pictures had quite poor technical quality, illustrators followed some simple stereotypes to express women’s ages. Young women (maidens) were slender, their skin was smooth, they had fancier clothing. Old women (matrons, grannies) were stout, their skin was wrinkled, their clothing was plain. There were also women whose age was impossible to distinguish because of the poor technical quality (mostly in the case

of photographs) or because the age-specific features were not developed by the illustrator (in case of illustrations). Thus, age was an insignificant frame element in the representation of these women.

These frame elements were combined differently and formed nine clear-cut and settled female frames: the Other Half, Neutral Face, (Innocent) War Victim, Feast-for-the-Eyes, Diva, Aid in a Man's World, Consumer, Lover and Illustration. The titles are based on the dominant features of the frames.

I also studied the technological implementation of the pictures (line art illustrations and photographs) and their genre (portrait or action scene). As the changes of these parameters did not change the essence of the way women were framed, they are not defined as frame elements.

## Findings

During the period of analysis – between 1848 and 1940 – women were rarely displayed in media pictures compared to men. On the one hand, this was caused by the contemporary social order according to which a woman's place was in the home, taking care of the household, her husband and children. On the other hand, this lack of women was caused by contemporary journalistic conventions, according to which journalism dealt mainly with the events of the public sphere, where very few women acted.

Women's framing in the Estonian press from the first picture in 1848 until 1940 changed considerably. The changes were not smooth and seamless, but rather were divided into three periods that differ from each other in the variety and nature of representations of women. The first period continued until the 1890s, the second until the end of the 1910s and the third until the end of the 1930s.

In the following subsections, the findings of the current research are structured chronologically by period. At the beginning of each period, a small review presents the corresponding era, introducing Estonian society, the women of position, journalism and media pictures. This is followed by a presentation of women's frames and frame elements. Thereafter the main trends of the current period are discussed.

### **The first period: the Other Half, the Neutral Face, and (Innocent) War Victim**

In the 19th century Estonia belonged to the Russian empire. Estonian society was a traditional peasant society. The local gentry were Baltic Germans; the great majority of Estonians were peasants. Serfdom was abolished only in 1816–1819 in Estonian territory. The agrarian reforms of the 1850s and the spread of education

contributed to the emergence of the national awakening around 1860, which led to the birth of Estonian national culture (for more details see Raun 2001, 57–80).

Estonian journalism emerged at the end of the 18th century as enlightening journalism, initiated by Baltic Germans whose main goal was to educate the peasant reader. The first publications were magazines and weekly papers. Continuous Estonian journalism was started in 1857. The number of publications increased during the 1880s, at which time around twenty publications appeared simultaneously. At the same time, newspapers became political institutions. (For more details see Høyer et al 1993, 67ff.)

The first Estonian press image was the title picture<sup>6</sup> of *Tarto maa rahwa Näddali-Leht* (1806). The first non-title picture appeared in *Marahwa Näddala-Leht* 1821, 14 September. This was the etching by O. W. Masing, supplementing his tale “Maddi Rein”.

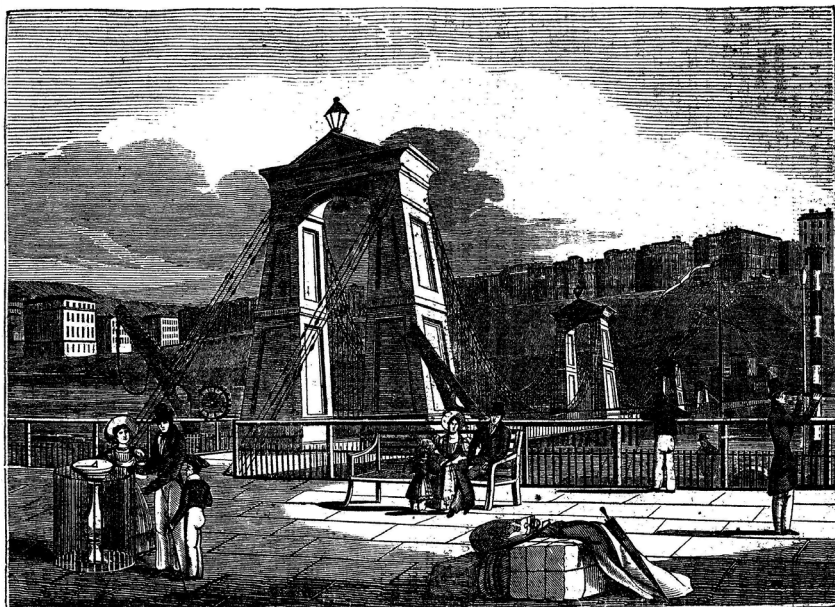
The 19th-century newspapers printed only a few pictures: some years a couple of pictures, some years five or ten, some years none (Kurvits 2010, 157–160, 188–191).<sup>7</sup> The reason was simple: the publishing of pictures was expensive, because (manually made) wood engravings were used for printing. Notwithstanding this, there were some magazines that consistently published pictures: *Ma-ilm ja mõnda* (1848–1849), *Meelejahutaja* (1879–1887) and *Linda* (1887–1905).

In the 19th century the Estonian media generally published two types of images. Firstly, ethnographic pictures which introduced Estonia and the rest of the world, e.g. famous buildings, nature, human lifestyle and costumes. Here, exotic nature was often the publishing argument, as the American Indian, Oriental and African people and nature were visually dominant. Secondly, portraits of important men were published, e.g. the heads-of-state, military men, and later also the authors, composers, inventors.

The first picture depicting woman in Estonian journalism appeared in 1848 in the magazine *Ma-ilm ja mõnda* (see Figure 1). The picture showed the cable-stayed bridge in Brighton (England) with some people in the foreground, including two families whose garments revealed them to be English middle-class people. The image was taken from the English *The Penny Magazine* and reached the Estonian reader through the German magazine *Das Pfennig-Magazin* (Peegel et al 1994, 79). Similar pictures were used several times in *Ma-ilm ja mõnda*. The main aim of people's depiction was to show the grand scale of buildings, but for Estonian peasants they also demonstrated the contemporary English and French social order and middle-class fashions.

In a similar context local woman appeared in the Estonian press for the first time. The Baltic German artist August Matthias Hagen depicted the ruins of Tartu's Dome Cathedral and added three people, including one woman (*Ma-ilm*

Uhhela, silb Brighton'i linna.



**Figure 1.** Woman as the Other Half. The first picture of women in Estonian print media: Cable-stayed bridge in Brighton (England) (*Ma-ilm ja mõnda* 1848, 57; 54% of original size).

*ja mõnda* 1849, 145). Her clothing (sunshade, fashionable bonnet, cape, and full skirt) hints that she was a (Baltic German) lady.

Until the 1890s, women were depicted in Estonian press pictures mostly in two frames: a woman as the Other Half to her husband or as the Neutral Face. In addition, there was a temporary frame – (Innocent) War Victim.

**Woman as the Other Half.** The first visual frame for women was woman as the Other Half – a wife who was presented with her husband. Thus she had a traditional role (wife) and was an accessory for her husband. She was not aestheticised, her age, exterior beauty and sex appeal were not important. The Other Half was usually anonymous or introduced through her husband.

The Other Halves were depicted in portraits and in action scenes. The two types were not used at random but according to social class: common people were presented in action scenes (see Figures 2 and 3), royal rulers and intellectuals with their wives in portraits (see Figure 4).

In action pictures, the composition was hierarchical: the woman was in a submissive position, smaller than the men, in the background. She was not idle, but active (often working and at the same time guiding and taking care of children) and her gaze was directed according to her activity.

Action scenes were anthropological pictures that showed the diversity of human society. These pictures portrayed the common people of different countries, mostly the so-called uncivilised indigenous people from other continents (e.g. Red Indians, Berbers) but Meridional and (Western) European people, too. Estonians were also presented in ethnographic pictures, mainly in the pastoral scenes of newspaper title pictures and in some independent pictures. The depiction of men and women together showed the two-gendered nature of human beings, but also a certain completeness of depiction because woman made man and home complete, she symbolised the home and the private life.

The people in the ethnographic pictures were dressed typically, were in typical surroundings and carried out their normal activities (e.g. nomadic migration, camping, eating, working). For example, the Red Indians were smoking and planning a train robbery, while a woman was bringing trees to a fire (*Sakala Lisaleht* 1880, 22 November, 2); or an elderly couple from Harju-Jaani was eating their lunch (*Walguse lisaleht* 1897, 8 April, 117).<sup>8</sup> As the exotic pictures dominated, we can conclude that the main ground for publishing anthropological pictures was the otherness of the depicted people.

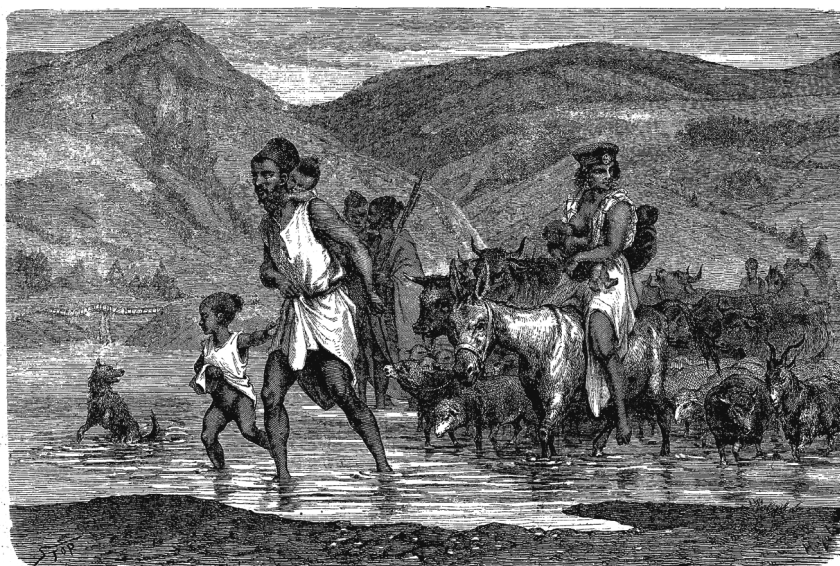
The wives of important men were depicted differently from common people's wives – as portraits without background or interior (see Figure 4). Here the wife was 'an accessory' of man, she was depicted only because of her husband's high political position. Originally only the royal rulers had Other Halves in press pictures.

The portrayal of highborn wives (and their husbands) differed from the portrayal of ordinary people in three ways. Firstly, the rulers did not act, they were passive and inanimate in *en face* portraits, showing themselves to the readers. They appeared for readers like god-sent ethereal creatures: backgroundless, 'footless', disembodied, emphasising their faces and heads. This connotes the valuation of their intellects, mental activities and decisions. This was a significant difference compared to common folks who were corporal, depicted from head to toe with their physical activity and specific environment emphasised.

Secondly, the highborn spouses 'observed' the reader, looking directly into reader's eyes. Their stare was serious, stern and demanding. Thus, they initiated communication with the reader, subjecting the reader by their glance. At the end of the 19th century, the rulers turned their glance away and looked into



**Figure 2.** Woman as the Other Half. The title picture: Estonian pastoral scene (*Eesti Postimees* 1869, 8 Oct, 149; 64% of original size).



**Figure 3.** Woman as the Other Half. Berber people migrating (*Meelejahutaja* 1882, 21 Jan, 42; 47% of original size).

undefined distance over the reader's shoulder. Now, the rulers did not demand anything, but let the readers to glance upon them.

Thirdly, the highborn wife was depicted as equal to her husband: she was in the foreground beside her husband, she was the same size as her husband and was looking straight into the eyes of the onlooker.

**Woman as a Neutral Face.** The second dominant frame of women's depiction in the 19th century was the Neutral Face – inanimate *en face* portrait of the woman looking straight into onlookers' eyes (see Figure 5). This frame was used for women who had entered the public sphere and were socially successful in a 'masculine' position or role. These were important women: royal heads-of-state (e.g. queen Victoria, the Dutch queen), female authors, composers, scientists. Here, women had modern roles, they were career oriented independent individuals.

Women who occupied positions in public life were an exception then and the media showed only these women who had been able to realise themselves professionally at the highest possible level. Thus, the majority of important women who were depicted in Estonian press pictures more than a century ago are today still well known: Estonian poetesses Lydia Koidula and Anna Haava, composer Miina Härma, or European famous women Selma Lagerlöf, Marie Curie, Sofja Kovalevskaya.

The important women were visually depicted like men in the same roles: alone, in the same pose, looking towards the reader with the similar severity and austerity. They were not aestheticised. They were ageless, as usually it was impossible to distinguish their exact age (but definitely they were not young). They were always introduced by name. Like the heads-of-state, important women (as well as men) did not act, they 'were', posing in half-length backgroundless



**Figure 4.** Woman as the Other Half. Alexander II of Russia and Empress Maria Alexandrovna (*Eesti Postimees* 1880, 19 Feb, 29; 44% of original size).



**Figure 5.** Woman as Neutral Face: Estonian poetess Lydia Koidula (*Meelejahutaja* 1885, 12 Oct, 275); Finnish teetotaler Hilda Hellmann (*Linda* 1895, 11 Aug, 485); Eleonore Dahlmanni, a director of Rakvere girls' gymnasium for 30 years (*Päewaleht* 1929, 22 Jan, 6; 59% of original size).

portraits, showing themselves as intellectual creatures. A good example of this frame is Swedish author and feminist Fredrika Bremer who was introduced and portrayed in a serial called “Important *men* in the 19th century” (*Linda* 1900, 3 October, 650–651; my emphasis).

**Woman as an (Innocent) War Victim.** The third frame has appeared in the press during wars. This was woman as an (Innocent) War Victim (see Figure 6). This is a woman-specific frame, men were never depicted as victims. Female victims were always presented as weak and vulnerable objects at the centre of the expressive scene in line art illustrations. They were fictional anonymous ordinary women, presenting the traditional role of women as the weaker gender (e.g. Armenian women throwing themselves down from rocks, preferring death to rape – *Linda* 1895, 21 July, 441).

According to military conventions, military forces fought against each other, the involvement and attacking of women showed the enemy's foulness and inhumanity. The pictures aroused strong emotions and stigmatised certain nations, as women were always assaulted by the nations presented as enemies in Estonian journalism (e.g. Circassians in the Russo–Turkish War, Turks against Armenians in 1895, Britons in the Boer War). Thus the pictures of female victims presented





Türgi Tšhefeskõid Bulgaaria naised ja tüdrukuid wangi ajades.

**Figure 6.** Woman as (Innocent) War Victim. Circassians driving Bulgarian women and girls to captivity (*Sakala Lisleht* 1878, 29 Apr, 3; 48% of original size).

the reader a clear opposition and possibility to identify with the victims, and persuaded the reader that the enemy was sneaky and brutal.

**Major trends in 19th-century media.** In the 19th century almost all pictures in the Estonian press fitted into the previously described three frames. This was the era of wives (traditional women) and a few important women (modern women). As journalism had a mainly enlightening and educational function, the pictures did not illustrate topical events, but primarily timeless popular science reviews and



**Figure 7.** Sewing machine advertisement (Sakala 1878, 29 Apr, 4; original size).

different social time was imported to Estonian journalism. Thus, different temporal rhythms of social life were presented on media pictures. Pictures showed these societies, which were socially less developed compared to Estonian society (e.g. nomadic peoples), but also more developed societies (e.g. industrialised England).

Pictures of different social times brought socially alien women into the Estonian media. Significantly, the majority of alien women were socially less developed than Estonian women. Pictures that depicted socially more developed societies presented very few women. The reason was obvious: socially more developed societies were depicted because of their level of technological, industrial and architectural development, and women were unnecessary in this case (they were sometimes added on these pictures in order to show scale and utilisation, e.g. a married couple in a car – *Eesti Postimehe Õhtused kõned* 1897, 11 December, 397).

At the end of the 1870s, the first female consumer appeared in Estonian print journalism. This was a woman in sewing machine advertisements (see Figure 7). Still we cannot classify this as a separate frame because only two or three pictures were used during the last quarter of the century.

Advertisements for sewing machines were consistently printed in several publications with three types of image being used: sewing machine alone; man sewing on machine; and most often woman sewing on machine. The woman was not a physically strong and stout peasant Other Half but a refined lady. As the single image was used in the advertisements of different sellers in the publications of different printing houses over a longer period (e.g. *Sakala* 1878, 29 April, 4;

notes which presented the wide world to Estonian peasants.

Irrespective of the level of social development, woman's role was still the same – she was first and foremost a family member: spouse, housewife and mother. In socially less developed societies, woman generally took care of the family and did household jobs. Pictures of socially more developed societies showed the middle-class woman; she was idle, for example walking with her family.

The great majority of pictures were borrowed from foreign sources and with pictures also foreign space and

*Olewik* 1884, 16 January, 4), we can assume that the picture was acquired from the manufacturer of the sewing machines (e.g. Singer or Howe). For Estonian readers this fancy dressmaker was an alien from a different society, and her image placed the sewing machine into an ambitious or even upstart context.

### **The second period: Feast-for-the-Eyes, Diva, and Aid in a Man's World**

In Estonia, the beginning of the 20th century was an era of social and cultural change, and the revolution of 1905 was a fundamental turning point. Estonian society was modernising and became more differentiated. Estonians settled down in towns, their socioeconomic power increased. This was also an era of cultural flowering and intensive societal activities. (For more details see Raun 2001, 81–95.)

At the same time, Estonian women began to exit their homes and to enter the public sphere. Their social role changed. Women became more educated, the first gymnasium for Estonian girls was established in 1906, the first female auditors (free listeners) were accepted at the University of Tartu in 1905. A large number of poetesses acted in Estonian literature. At the end of the 19th century, the first semi-professional theatre group was established, with women among the group.

For the Estonian media, this was an era of unprecedented expansion, the number of publications increased, they diversified and specialised. Many newspapers published general interest illustrated supplements, offering light pastime literature and popular reviews of culture, science and nature. This was also the onset of the era of daily newspapers and news journalism. The first publishing companies were established. The first rotary presses and typesetting machines were introduced to Estonia (see Høyer et al 1993, 99ff).

During the 1890s, cheaper zincographically processed pictures were introduced to the Estonian press and the number of pictures increased. Around the turn of the century, magazines and newspaper supplements published 20, 50, sometimes even 100 pictures per year; and by World War I 150–200 pictures per year. Newspapers published pictures at random, sometimes 50 pictures per year, sometimes not a single picture.

The content of the pictures diversified. At the turn of the century the topicality of pictures increased, there were cartoons, news pictures (e.g. Boer War), but also decorative clip art pictures (e.g. a dove with a flower). At the beginning of the 20th century, Estonian print media began to publish more Estonian pictures. These pictures generally presented Estonian societal life; we can see members of local societies and choirs, participants on housekeeping courses, society houses and schoolhouses, the construction of theatre houses, national song festivals.

The proportion of Estonian women in pictorial content also increased. New roles and depiction modes supplemented the presentation of women. Novel women appeared in journalistic pictures: women were now members of societies, they were actresses, they studied at home economics schools, entered ‘masculine’ occupational roles, looked after wounded soldiers. Some of these women were visualised within previous frames, some within new frames. I will firstly analyse how previous female frames were changed at the turn of the century and then introduce the new frames.

**Previous frames.** Woman was still presented as **the Other Half** but some significant modifications occurred in this frame. First, less important men were depicted with their wives, rather than just heads-of-state (e.g. the author Leo Tolstoy was shown with his wife – *Perekonnaleht* 1910, 385). Second, the share of local Other Halves increased as the Estonian press published many group portraits of members of Estonian societies, with their female members depicted as Other Halves (see Figure 8). Pictures of the members of societies presented real life men and women posing for motionless group portraits; for example, a brass band (men) and mixed choir (women and men) together. The captured people were serious and gazed straight into readers’ eyes. They were not aestheticised. Women were here in their traditional roles (homemakers, associates), depicted as typical representatives of Estonian societal life.

There were two features which allow us to classify these females as Other Halves: the nature of the societies and the composition of the photographs.

Women were assembled at the edges of group portraits, not in the middle. They complemented the male membership, showing Estonian societal life as versatile and diverse. Obviously, men were the first to position themselves for shooting, and women followed, adjusting themselves at the ends of rows and into the first row. Women’s position in the first row cannot be interpreted as the prioritisation of women, it was caused by anthropometric parameters and urban politeness: the shorter people were positioned in the first row in order to better showcase people in the rear rows; people in the first row were often sitting and it was considered polite for women to sit.

In addition to the pictures of mixed gender societies, there were numerous solely female group portraits, i.e. pictures of cooking and housekeeping courses (e.g. *Küüaline* 1913, 27 April, 129). In spite of the absence of men in the pictures, these women were still Other Halves because they had exited their homes in order to learn how to better fulfil their traditional commitments as homemakers.

**The Neutral Face** was used to depict modern women and now the selection of modern roles was more diverse. In addition to important women (the royal



**Figure 8.** Woman as the Other Half. Mixed choir of Keila Firefighters' Society (*Külaline* 1911, 6 Aug, 241; 67% of original size).

family, cultural figures), the Neutral Face presented emancipated, professional women, i.e. mainly the first women in men's occupations. For example, the first female parson in England (*Olewik* 1905, 23 September, 1179), the first female master of a vessel (*Perekonnaleht* 1910, 15 November, 113). Emphasis of primacy shows that these women were presented as curiosities within contemporary society. The Estonian media exhibited wonder that some women had wanted and been able to infiltrate traditional male occupations.

The visual characteristics of the Neutral Face had changed little; now the majority of Neutral Faces were depicted on photographs (not line-art illustrations) and some women had softer expressions – they even almost smiled (e.g. British queen Alexandra – *Postimehe eralisa* 1901, 47; Selma Lagerlöf – *Rahva Lõbu-Leht* 1905, No 20, 619).

During this period three new frames were introduced: the Feast-for-the Eyes, Diva and Aid in a Man's World.

**Woman as a Feast-for-the-Eyes.** During the 1890s woman as a Feast-for-the-Eyes appeared into Estonian journalism. The Feast-for-the-Eyes was an anonymous fictional young beauty, often depicted naked or half naked, often smiling, always alone or in female company, never in male company. The Feast-for-the-Eyes was the first female-specific frame, for the first time woman was neither a male



Meie aja näkineitsid.

**Figure 9.** Woman as Feast-for-the-Eyes. Mermaids of our time (*Rahva Lõbu-Leht* 1900, No 7, insert; 47% of original size).

accessory nor a copy. This was the first frame that presented woman as an aestheticised object; she had a purely decorative role and her function was to please readers' eyes. She was depicted in line-art pictures and portraits as well as action scenes. In portraits she generally looked away from the imaginary onlooker; in action scenes she was active in the middle of attention, her gaze directed according to her action.

It is significant that the first female-specific frame presented fictional woman, created according to the male gaze – the image of idealised sexy woman.

This kind of woman was depicted in two types of pictures: pin-up pictures (see Figure 9) and magazine vignettes<sup>9</sup> (see Figure 10).

The pin-up pictures were detailed line-art pictures of pretty young women reading, bathing or simply 'being' and looking at the imaginary reader. These were prim urban ladies, fashionably clad, carefully coiffured. They never rushed; they enjoyed their existence and spent their leisure time pleasantly. These were non-Estonian pictures, created apparently by Western European artists and imported to the Estonian press from foreign magazines.

The very first very few folksy Feasts-for-the-Eyes appeared during the 1880s in *Meelejahutaja* magazine (1883, No 9, column 551–552; 1886, 13 June, 173), although



**Figure 10.** Woman as Feast-for-the-Eyes. Vignette (*Linda* 1905, 14 Apr, 248; 85% of original size).

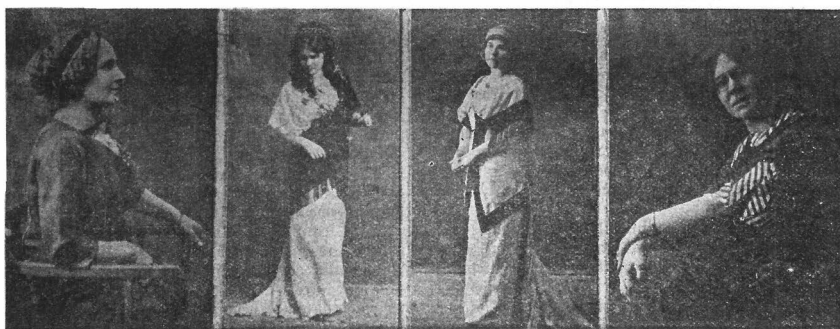
around the turn of the century this frame was used widely – the Feast-for-the-Eyes appeared consistently in several magazines. Apparently these were the first Estonian pin-up pictures. This conclusion is affirmed by the fact that this type of picture was sometimes printed separately from the text, reproduced lithographically on thicker paper and inserted as loose sheets into magazine issues.

Feasts-for-the-Eyes were the first people to be seen smiling in media pictures. They smiled in many ways: openly, slyly, contentedly, prudently, inquiringly. The smile was very significant among their characteristics. The main purpose of the Feast-for-the-Eyes was to please the reader; the smiling also made them more ‘accessible’.

Vignettes depicting female beauties were in the Art Nouveau style in *Rahva Lõbu-Leht* and *Linda* magazines. Estonian artists had created these vignettes as pieces of fine art, free artistic self-expression rather than a purposeful part of journalistic discourse. The magazines imported fine art objects into their content and used them for their own sake, i.e. to segment journalistic content, to inspire, and to provide eye candy for their readers. The streamlined, winding and graceful woman in these vignettes was an artistically treated design element, used in a similar role to verbal segmenting devices (labels, headlines) or pictures of exotic animals. Thus, in terms of journalistic content we can interpret these women as being Feasts-for-the-Eyes of those with more refined tastes.

**Woman as Diva.** At the beginning of the 20th century, beautiful young women were also depicted in a more glamorous way – as Divas (see Figure 11). The Divas very much resembled the Feasts-for-the-Eyes but they had two unique features. First, they were the real people – Estonian actresses and vocalists – introduced by their names. Second, the Divas did not take part in action scenes, but always

„Vanemuise“ näitlejad.

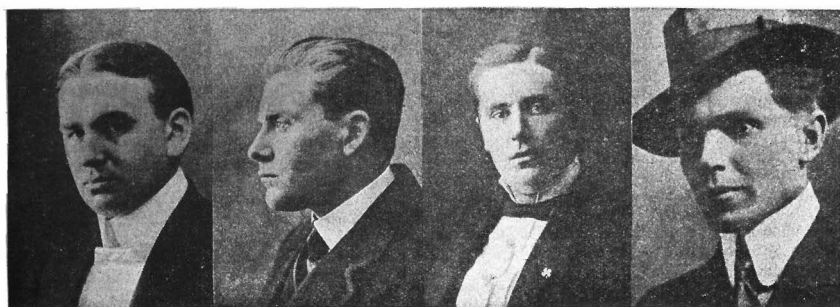


Pr. A. Martus.

Pr. A. Altleis.

Pr. E. Möller.

Reiu A. Konja.



S. Möller.

D. Mutsu.

E. Treumundt.

E. Türl.

**Figure 11.** Woman as Diva (cf man as Neutral Face). Vanemuise Theatre actresses and actors (*Külaline* 1912, 18 Feb, 51, 58; 67% of original size).

posed for half-length or full-length photo portraits in a ‘frozen’ pose. Their ‘torpor’ was very carefully staged as vivid. Especially significant features were the expressive eyes, the carefully adjusted position of the arms and graceful curvature of the neck. Divas were definitely aestheticised, not by the photographer but by themselves. In spite of their inanimate position, Divas played in order to create contact with the spectator. They seduced, sometimes even offered themselves, sometimes smiled enigmatically, looked away coyly, or looked defiantly straight into the viewer’s eyes.





Sõjaväelja haalfareel.

**Figure 12.** Woman as Aid in a Man's World. Battlefield hospital (*Walguse lisalett* 1905, 20 Dec, 781; 55% of original size).

The uniqueness of actresses and Divas emerged very well in comparison to male actors who were generally depicted neutrally, as any other important man (see Figure 11).

**Woman as Aid in a Man's World.** The third frame was woman as Aid in a Man's World, which was brought to the Estonian press by war. The first Aids were the nurses of the Russo–Japanese War (1904–1905) and then World War I. Estonian periodicals published numerous photographs of wounded soldiers and nurses, taken in hospital wards and operating rooms (see Figure 12). Here, women were depicted as typical representatives of their occupation. Initially Aids were depicted in foreign pictures, then during WWI increasingly in local pictures.

The Aid was a further development of the Other Half frame as woman performed similar ancillary and nurturing duties as in her family life. But unlike the Other Half's action, her action was not private and directed to her own family, but public and meant to serve society.

Aids were mainly anonymous ordinary women, helping men, depicted in action scene photographs or group portraits. Compositionally they were presented as secondary (in the background, at the edge of the composition). They were



*Meie aja Kleopatra.*

Tuntud madubetaltsutaja „ilus Mirka,“ kes Egiptuses Aleksandrias oma kunstile ohvrifis langes. Uhe etenduse ajal kõjalikus aiateatris hamustasivad maad oma julget perenaift nii vahest, et ta suri.

**Figure 13.** Woman as Diva. Cleopatra of our time: a snake charmer ‘Beautiful Mirka’ (*Külaline* 1910, 20 Feb, 4; 85% of original size).

a Diva, e.g. Mari Raamot, the head of girls’ farming and housekeeping school (*Külaline* 1911, 12 November, 353).

Around the turn of the century the Estonian media increasingly presented pictures of odd women. These women functioned in the media as curiosities and were framed in a variety of ways. At first this curiosity in women was mainly physical, for example “the rare pair of twin sisters Blasheks” (i.e. Siamese twins, *Walguse lisaleht* 1893, 29 December, 369), the 233 cm tall woman (*Perekonnaleht* 1906, No 23, 91), the man who lived as a woman (*Perekonnaleht* 1906, No 44, 175), or the woman who had given birth to 30 children (*Külaline* 1914, 7 June, 181). Thereupon, periodicals began to show women because of their bizarre activities. For example, the snake charmer “beautiful Mirka”, who was bitten to death by her

steady quiet amanuenses, reading letters to their (male) patients, or standing ready behind the (male) doctor. The women in this frame were not aestheticised; it was often hard to determine their age as they were small figures in the pictures and the technical quality of the photographs was poor.

**Major trends around the turn of the century.** In 19th century journalism, woman acting in the private sphere was always depicted as the Other Half, while woman acting in the public sphere was depicted as the Neutral Face. Around the turn of the century, the emergence of women’s public roles made their depiction in the Estonian press more ambivalent: the connection between the private/public sphere and the ways of presenting women visually did not have only a single value. Now, a woman acting in the private sphere could also be a Feast-for-the-Eyes, for example a woman with her daughter reading a magazine (*Rahva Lõbu-leht* 1900, No 8, insert), or a woman active in the public sphere could also be

own snakes during one of her shows (see Figure 13); or Tatyana Leontyeva, who wanted to kill Russian minister Ivan Durnovo, but instead shoot dead Charles Müller (*Perekonnaleht* 1906, No 30, 119).

Curious women were framed according their specific peculiarities. For example, the giant woman was depicted alongside an average woman, like a specimen in a zoological guide. The ‘man-woman’ and the snake charmer were Divas. The highly productive woman was an Other Half, portrayed with her husband (significantly, the caption introduced only her husband, the postal clerk Schmidt, “who was recently gifted a 30th child by his wife”).

In addition to this, suffragettes and the first feminists were depicted variously: as Neutral Faces, as Divas, and also carrying on their ordinary activities in action scene photos (e.g. “consulting simpler women”; cf. *Perekonnaleht* 1906, No 18, 70 and No 40, 158; *Külaline* 1913, 23 November, 375). It seems that media was not sure how to handle these curious women.

The beginning of the 20th century was an era of fictional Feasts-for-the-Eyes, real life Divas and Other Halves (mostly members of Estonian societies). The first two frames depicted only young and beautiful women. These frames also introduced the smile to Estonian media pictures and gradually other women also adopted this (e.g. some important women almost smiled). In short, this was an onset of a new trend – journalism began to favour the visual presentation of young and pretty women. Both frames, which promoted beauty, were imported from the magazines of socially more developed countries, but Estonians were eager to adopt and adapt the new frames.

If we compare the temporal sequence of the frames of young and beautiful ladies, we see that the fictional figure (Feast-for-the-Eyes) was introduced earlier, while the depiction of real people (actresses) followed the trend created by fiction. The type came first, the real people followed. Media pictures tell us that the (male) desire for beautiful, young and affable ladies ‘created’ these ladies in reality.

Pictures of women show how enlightening and educational content gradually declined in Estonian journalism. The share of culturally diverse pictures, presenting alien and exotic countries (and women), diminished abruptly. Instead, to present otherness, the Estonian press increasingly depicted curious (foreign) individuals and they were almost exclusively women, not men. This was a different kind of curiosity; its aim was not to widen the reader’s horizon, but to amuse them by offering an assortment of odd individuals. Thus, pictures of women show that journalism was meant to appeal to broader audiences and to entertain.

On the other hand, we can also conclude that Estonian journalism concentrated less on widening the Estonians’ horizon, but instead favoured their self-development and mental progress. Numerous pictures of Estonian societies (which

almost always included women) and national activities (mainly the construction of schools and societal houses, and national song festivals) definitely promoted Estonians' national development through societal activities and assured their self-respect.

Another new female frame was as Aid in a Man's World, introduced by nurses during times of war. This was a great change, compared to the previous period. During the wars of the 19th century, woman was depicted as passive helpless victim, although now that she was a professional person she had her own gender-specific duties in war. We can interpret this shift of framing in different ways. Was it a great emancipation of women increasing their independence? Was it the transformation of warfare – war had become total, including the whole human population? It is significant that battlefield nursing was introduced to Estonian journalistic pictures fifty years after its creation by Florence Nightingale during the Crimean War (1853–1856).

### **The third period: Consumer, Lover, and Illustration**

After World War I and the creation of the Estonian Republic (1918), Estonian society changed abruptly. Estonians had created their own state, and had to manage at all levels and in all different areas, from familiar agriculture to politics, diplomacy and science.

This brought about great changes to women, too. As urbanisation increased, Estonian women were increasingly engaged in paid employment. They gained suffrage (in 1920); they began to acquire higher educations at the University of Tartu (during the 1920s and 1930s, 27% of graduates were women – Raun 2001, 135); and they established numerous women-only organisations. During these years, the daily female-oriented consumer world emerged in Estonia. In short, we see the expansion of women's public roles.

At the same time, the Estonian media also changed. The most important features were modernisation and diversification. The press was no longer synonymous with the media as newsreels and radio broadcasting were introduced during the 1920s. In addition, the first tabloid newspapers emerged and a wide range of different magazines were established (including the first women's magazines). The journalistic content of the press modernised. The most important developments were the dominance of news journalism and the introduction of more clear-cut genres (see Harro 2001). The visual form of newspapers also modernised: a hierarchical layout was adopted and, from the second half of the 1920s, photographs were used on a daily basis (see Kurvits 2008).

The first newspaper photographer was employed around 1925, although there were only four press photographers employed between 1925 and 1940 in Estonia (Linnap 2010, 212–214). During the 1930s, an average of eight to nine pictures per issue appeared in the bigger Estonian dailies: seven photos and one or two line art picture(s) (Kurvits 2010, 228–231); i.e. approximately 3000 pictures in one daily per year. Photos were now introduced to illustrate news. At first, photos depicted special state occasions (e.g. the inauguration of a new cabinet, state visits), and then by around 1930 commonplace events (e.g. sports competitions, accidents). The most common genre was a photo portrait showing the central characters of different events; there were politicians, athletes, beauty queens, jubilarians, the deceased.

This was a new era and new women appeared in media pictures: consumers, passionate lovers, employed women. However, the previous frames of female presentation remained in use.

**Previous frames.** As previously, many **Neutral Faces** appeared in newspapers, but the variety of women depicted in this way enlarged considerably. There were women in modern and in traditional roles – professional women celebrating their occupational jubilees (e.g. the heads of schools, printing workers, actresses), sportswomen – but also women as the victims of crime and as criminals (see Figure 5). Also feminists were now unanimously framed as Neutral Faces. The majority of Neutral Faces were Estonians, depicted in photo portraits, presented by name (indicating that they were important as individuals). Their age was various, professional women were old enough to have a career to celebrate, sportswomen and crime victims were mainly young.

As before, **Other Halves** were the wives of the royal rulers and heads of state, but increasingly also of modern ‘rulers’, i.e. tycoons and movie stars. These pictures were mainly foreign, although there were also local Other Halves as newspapers constantly published pictures of Estonian golden wedding anniversary couples. The age of Other Halves was various, the older matrons dominated, but movie stars introduced hitherto unseen youthfulness in married women.

There was one significant innovation in the Other Half frame – posed photo portraits were replaced by action photographs. Married couples walked in summer resorts, attended public ceremonies, skied or skated on their winter holiday, etc. Only (Estonian) golden wedding anniversary couples remained motionless in portraits. They sat next to each other, sized equally, looking into the reader’s eyes (see Figure 14).

The **Feast-for-the-Eyes** frame acquired a new subtype during the 1920s and 1930s. Now she appeared in advertising, mainly in movie advertisements (see



**Figure 14.** Woman as the Other Half: English-Dutch oil king Henri Deterding with his wife (*Päewaleht* 1929, 31 Jan, 3); golden wedding anniversary couple the Niggols (*Päewaleht* 1925, 24 Dec, 6; 50% of original size).

Figure 15). Here, woman performed a purely decorative function, the goal of which was to attract the (male) reader's attention. In doing so, the modern Feast-for-the-Eyes had a triple function: to please, to draw attention to this particular advertisement, and to attract the reader's interest towards this particular product. In short, the goal of the modern Feast-for-the-Eyes was to turn the newspaper reader into a consumer.

The number of previous non-commercial Feasts-for-the-Eyes dropped significantly. They now appeared mainly in festive and special issues, when newspapers were more voluminous and used colour.

**Divas** were constantly present in media pictures. Modern Divas were mainly actresses (real individuals or movie characters) and beauty queens (see Figure 16). Significantly, the Divas' emotions were more uniform now, they looked very much alike and the emotional 'halftones' had disappeared, their self-representation was generally limited to alluring poses and open-hearted smiles.

Increasingly more women were depicted as **Aids in a Man's World**. There was a significant time gap in this frame as during the 1920s the Aids disappeared from newspaper pictures and reappeared during the 1930s. Now the wartime Aids (i.e. nurses) almost disappeared although the nature of the Aids' work was still same – to perform nurturing and supporting duties. Aids took care of children and adults (in orphanages, kindergartens, hospitals), worked in offices as filing



**Figure 15.** Woman as Feast-for-the-Eyes. Shoe polish advertisement (*Postimees* 1925, 11 Oct, 3); fashion drawing (*Päevaleht* 1922, 26 Aug, 8; 62% of original size).



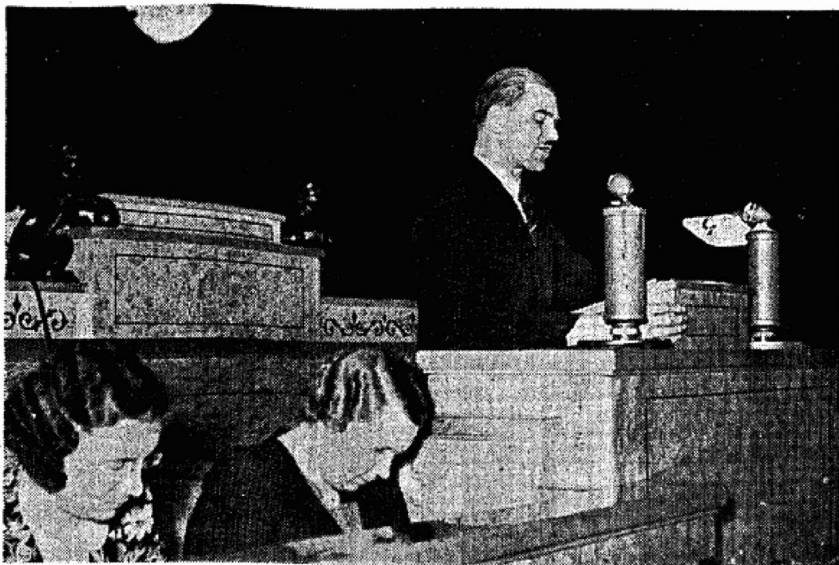
*Saksa ilustuskinganna võidab Ameerikas.*

**Figure 16.** Woman as Diva. German beauty queen Irma Hose (*Päevaleht* 1929, 13 Jan, 5; 62% of original size).

clerks or stenographers, and in factories as blue-collar workers. They were usually anonymous ordinary women, not mentioned in captions.

It is highly typical that these pictures were often taken to show something or somebody else, and that women were in these pictures as background details (e.g. Leo Sepp, Estonian Minister of Economy, presenting the current national budget to the Estonian Chamber of Deputies with two women in the foreground, making a record of his speech, Figure 17). Photographic compositions like this clearly showed the secondary role of women: they were at the edge of the image, and they were located lower. In addition the shooting angle reduced their size.

As a new feature, the Aids appeared in the numerous group portraits of the members of different Estonian associations (see Figure 18). In contrast to the previous situation, women acted on their own, without men. Their social lives were now advanced by female associations like the Estonian Defence League's women's corps, the Institute of Home Economics, the Women's Abstinence Union. In media images, the activities of these organisations were similar to those of the turn



**Majandusminister L. Sepp peab riigivolikogus eelarvekõnet**

**Figure 17.** Woman as Aid in a Man's World. L. Sepp, Estonian Minister of Economy, presenting the national budget to the Estonian Chamber of Deputies (*Päewaleht* 1939, 24 Jan, 5; 77% of original size).

of the century: they developed and promoted typical feminine features. Pictures showed, for example, the trustees of a handcraft society, participants in refresher courses for kindergarten teachers, Samaritan courses, housekeepers' courses, cold dish courses. The course topics show that women and their feminine skills were also meant to function outside the domestic sphere, in the public sphere as employees (e.g. kindergarten teacher) or volunteers (e.g. Samaritan courses immediately before WWII).

During this period, three new visual frames emerged. The more frequent were Consumer, and Lover; less frequent was Illustration.

**Woman as Consumer.** The female consumer appeared in advertisements. She was a fictional anonymous woman, depicted in the centre of line art action scenes.<sup>10</sup> Her role was modern: she was a customer, demonstrating the product and its utilisation. She listened to the radio, smoked a cigarette, browsed fabric samples together with her girlfriends, participated in dance courses, skied or simply



# Poolfada uut naisfamariitlast

Raiskodukaitse Tartumaa Ringkond rikastus arvuka samariitlasperega



**Figure 18.** Woman as Aid in a Man's World. Half a hundred new (Estonian) Samaritans (*Päewaleht* 1939, 7 Feb, 6; 70% of original size).

showed her off beside the product (be it radio lamp or shoe polish; see Figure 19). She was aestheticised, always young and beautiful, because her function was to attract the reader's attention. The Consumer was usually depicted without a man, although he was still present invisibly – the Consumer made herself beautiful (using face powder, etc.) in order to attract men. The Consumer did laundry, cleaned and cooked for her husband and children.

The Consumer of the 1920s was a completely modern female; she differed from the woman of the 19th-century sewing machine adverts, who had bought the machine in order to work, to create something herself. The modern Consumer did not work, she generally bought end-products, often for self-care (e.g. cream, soap, tooth paste) or for entertainment (e.g. radios, magazines, carnival tickets). In short, the Consumer's life was comfortable and carefree. She defined herself through her appearance; she was non-existent without fashionable clothes and goods.



**Figure 19.** Woman as Consumer. Radio set shop's advertisement (*Postimees* 1929, 10 Feb, 1; 76% of original size).



Nõudke alati maailmakuulsaid osesmateeritud kvaliteetlampe

**Figure 20.** Woman as the Other Half. Light bulb advertisement (*Postimees* 1939, 4 Jan, 3; 76% of original size).

In addition to single Consumers, adverts also depicted married female Consumers, who washed clothes, cooked, or helped their husbands put on shoes (see Figure 20). Unlike real life Other Halves, the consuming Other Halves of advertisements were aestheticised. They were young and pretty, they did their housework with elegant ease, clothed in their best garments. For example, one Other Half had put on high-heeled shoes to do the laundry (which she washed by hand, in a laundry tub; *Uus Eesti* 1939, 28 January, 3).

**Woman as Lover.** The second new frame was Lover, who appeared in adverts for movies and in photos in the movie section of newspapers. She was a fictional young and beautiful woman, depicted in the centre of line art illustration or photo (see Figure 21). She differed from the Feast-for-the-Eyes as she was always presented together with a man. They acted together in expressive silent scenes – they danced, they embraced, she looked devotedly up into his eyes. The Lover's role was to love a man and be loved by him. On the one hand, she was emotional and vulnerable, she leaned on her beloved and placed herself on lower position compared to him, she was ready to obey him. But at the same time, she did not evoke the Other Half's selfless support of her husband in his life and work, without claiming anything for herself. Rather, the Lover seemed to insist on man's attention and care.<sup>11</sup>

**Woman as Illustration.** The third new frame was woman as an Illustration. Here, women were real life 'ordinary' anonymous females who performed different traditional or modern roles, but their function was to illustrate an interesting



**Figure 21.** Woman as Lover: movie advertisements (*Päewaleht* 1925, 14 Nov, 1; *Päewaleht* 1929, 24 Jan, 1; 53% of original size).



**Figure 22.** Woman as Illustration. One-person bomb shelter in England (*Päewaleht* 1939, 14 Feb, 1; 53% of original size).

Selliseid terasest varjendeid ühe isiku jaoks õhurünnaku puhuks valmistatakse Inglismaal massilteit.

event, general topical situation or idea (see Figure 22). These pictures were usually foreign photographs, presenting action scenes. For example, an extraordinarily cold winter and the wide spread of viral diseases were illustrated with two photographs: London women selling flu protection masks (*Päewaleht* 1929, 6 February, 5), and Paris women stretching their slender legs towards a camp fire on the street (*Päewaleht* 1929, 29 January, 1). The economic collapse of post-war Germany was illustrated by Berlin women, who had started a “special outlet for family valuables” (*Päewaleht* 1922, 5 November, 3).

Women were more suitable than men for illustrating the broader concepts connected with people’s daily lives because of women’s specific feminine qualities and roles in society. Women were used as the weaker gender, requiring (male) guidance and protection; at the same time women symbolised the private life and the domestic sphere (as opposed to public sphere).

It is significant that illustrative women usually acted without men (cf. the anthropological pictures of the 19th century). If men and women were depicted together, women were subordinate to men. Men were active, women were passive: something was done for them or with them. For example, one photograph showed a London police officer checking the handbags of two ladies at the entrance to Westminster Abbey, in order to find any clues about Irish bombers

(*Postimees* 1939, 22 January, 3). The picture suggested that if policemen had to search the ladies, then the threat of terrorism might really be high in England.

**Major trends during the 1920s and 1930s.** The 1920s and 1930s were years of pretty and cheerful female consumers, lovers and entertainers, but also serious wives. Some significant trends emerge in the findings.

Pictures of women were mainly used to illustrate two discourses: news and advertising. In news, pictures of women were not connected to breaking news or hard news, but inserted as small individual titbits that presented the *Zeitgeist* of the 1920s and 1930s. In advertising, the (beautiful) woman was a universal decorative object suitable to promote everything from soap and movies to cigarettes and radio lamps.

If pictures of women were used to illustrate news, the great majority of women were anonymous; they were not introduced by name. Thus, the majority of women were not important as individuals; rather, they were used as typical representatives of their current roles or as male accessories or en masse.

Women in editorial content and in advertising differed from each other. Editorial content was dominated by entertainers, wives and silent assistants. Advertising content was ruled by carefree consumers, simple beauties and devoted lovers. Thus, real life women were depicted as entertainers and supporters of men; commercial reality depicted women as light-hearted consumers and sex objects. Newspaper as a whole (editorial content and advertising) suggested that a woman's place was first and foremost at home, where she ought to manage the household, take care of herself and her husband, and to love. If a woman came to the public sphere, she was suited to being an entertainer or subsidiary assistant.

Media images of women changed during this period. During the 1920s women were mainly depicted in advertisements, during the 1930s also in editorial content. Women of the 1920s were flighty domestic creatures whose lives were full of love and the joy of consumption; women of the 1930s were mainly entertainers and supporters of men. This shift was not caused by social developments (e.g. by national propaganda initiatives of president Konstantin Päts' authoritarian regime), but rather by the technological development of Estonian newspapers. During the 1920s the reproduction of pictures was too expensive for Estonian newspapers to use pictures widely in their editorial content. Thus women used in advertising quantitatively dominated and set the general tone for women's representation during the 1920s.

It is significant that the great majority of real life women depicted in the editorial content of Estonian newspapers were entertainers, often foreign entertainers: movie and theatre actresses, beauty queens, sportswomen, pilots, motorcyclists,

etc. Characteristically, entertainers did not have their own clear-cut frame nor did they have single-valued connection to any other visual frame; instead they were framed variously. There were Neutral Faces (e.g. sportswomen who had won competitions; a pianist who was coming on a concert tour to Estonia). There were Divas (primarily actresses, but also beauty queens). There were Lovers (mostly in movie scenes). There were women acting (e.g. scenes from theatre performances; a beauty queen laying a wreath at a monument; a figure skater skating).

There was one significant contextual difference between pictures of foreign and Estonian women. Foreign women were mainly entertainers, wives of important men, or illustrative, anonymous ordinary women, used to represent contemporary economic or political situation. Estonian women were participants in housekeeping courses, members of national societies, occupational jubilarians (school teachers, actresses and vocalists, printing workers), wives who had been married for very long time (i.e. silver or golden wedding anniversary couples). Thus, the media presented ideal Estonian woman in traditional roles: as homemaker, loyal and devoted Other Half who took part in local and national societal life. If she had paid employment, the most suitable jobs were feminine nurturing, educational tasks and routine ancillary tasks, although she might also be a talented entertainer (this was the only modern characteristic). She performed her domestic and occupational tasks faithfully and continuously for decades.

Pictures of foreign and Estonian women also differed from each other because of their genre and their location in the newspaper issue. Firstly, the majority of foreign women's pictures were scenes capturing motion, emotion and action, and also the context and characteristic milieu of action. Thus, foreign women were lively and busy – they did something. The majority of pictures of Estonian women were posed serious portraits, depicting individual women or groups of women with the characteristic tableau missing. This depiction mode tore Estonian women from the characteristic milieu and made them motionless, emotionless and homogenous. Secondly, pictures of foreign women appeared at the beginning of the newspaper issue, on the main news pages. The majority of pictures of Estonian women appeared at the end of the newspaper issue, on the local news pages. As a result, foreign women were much more salient in Estonian newspapers than Estonian women.

The reproduction method separated fictional and real women. Fictional women (i.e. women in adverts and fashion drawings) were depicted mainly in line art illustrations while real life women were depicted in photographs. Line art illustrations (and thus fictional women) were visually plain and clearly more easily 'readable', as the technical quality of photographs was quite poor, details were blurry and their contours were often redrawn in a retouching process.

## Final Discussion

The analysis has shown that there were nine frames for the presentation of women in the Estonian print media from the first picture of a woman (1848) until the Soviet occupation (1940): the Other Half, the Neutral Face, the (Innocent) War Victim, the Feast-for-the-Eyes, the Diva, Aid in a Man's World, the Consumer, the Lover and the Illustration. According to their emergence and transformations, the period analysed is divided into three parts.

The first period started in 1848 and continued until the end of the 19th century. Three visual frames were used to present women: the Other Half, the Neutral Face and the (Innocent) War Victim.

The second period started around the turn of the century and continued until World War I. During this period the (Innocent) War Victim frame disappeared, while the two other frames (the Other Half, the Neutral Face) continued to be used. At this time three new frames were introduced: the Feast-for-the-Eyes, the Diva and Aid in a Man's World.

The third period started during the 1920s and continued until the end of the 1930s. During this period all previous frames continued to be used and three new frames were introduced: the Consumer, the Lover and the Illustration.

These frames captured the most important patterns of female media representation, but there were also other kinds of presentation, which were not sufficiently widespread to form separate frames. In addition, there were some large groups of women who were depicted in different frames (e.g. curious women, entertainers).

In the following sections I will look *into* the picture frames, comparing different frame elements in order to reveal trends that were reflected by the visual presentation of women in the Estonian media.

### Driving forces of the visual representation of women

Initially, in the second half of the 19th century, Estonian periodicals showed faraway and unapproachable women to their readers: (royal) heads-of-state, exotic women and a few important women (framed as the Other Half, the Neutral Face). At the end of the 19th century, pictures began to stress feminine beauty. Estonian periodicals showed women as decorations, as source of aesthetic pleasure and inspiration (framed as the Feast-for-the-Eyes, the Diva). In the first quarter of the 20th century, everyday women and those close by appeared in media pictures, for example participants in cooking courses, nurses, office clerks (framed as the Other Half, Aid in a Man's world). During the 1920s, pictures of women were introduced to advertising content in order to sell products (woman

as Feast-for-the-Eyes, Consumer, Lover). Thus, the presentation of women in the media became commercialised; in this commercial reality all women were beautiful and their lives easy-going and joyful. During the 1930s, ordinary anonymous women were increasingly presented in editorial content (Illustration, Aid in a Man's world). These women were unimportant as individuals, they were presented as standard types, symbols or representatives of something outside themselves.

In conclusion, women's media pictures changed in the same way as other media pictures: from distant images to close images, from exotic and unseen images to daily and common images. Thus, in the 19th century, media representation of women was driven by enlightening ideas. Media pictures introduced geographically and socially faraway women, widening Estonian readers' horizons. Around the turn of the century, media representation of women was increasingly influenced by other driving forces.

First, these images began to express male ideals and fantasies. Initially, feminine beauty was not a reason to depict women. The first pictures of women in the Estonian media were not aestheticised, but simply visually recorded like men. Women were 'ageless', as the visual depiction did not include and/or stress characteristic features that enabled viewers to determine women's ages. But around the turn of the century these pictures showed women as decoration, which promoted sex appeal, beauty and youthfulness. The Feast-for-the-Eyes and the Diva were the first frames in which the feminine beauty and juvenility were integral features. The more recent Consumers and Lovers were always pretty young ladies whose images were aestheticised. In the case of Aid and Illustration, it is often difficult to detect, whether they were aestheticised or not because of the poor technical quality of the pictures. Still, younger women were strikingly often chosen to illustrate the concept or event and they were captured in visually attractive postures (e.g. freezing Parisian lady stretching her leg towards a camp fire – *Päewaleht* 1929, 28 January, 1). In short, since the end of the 19th century, the Estonian media has shown and stressed the beauty and juvenility of women; since the 1920s, media presented feminine beauty, youthfulness and taking care of oneself as one important part of femininity and of being a woman.

On the one hand, this trend shows the essence of femininity – woman is beautiful, it is possible to use her image as decoration. On the other hand, this shows the patriarchal hegemony – the dominant aesthetic decoration was chosen according to the male sexual gaze. Woman was used for decoration much more than, for example, children, beautiful landscapes, flowers or baby animals. And the idealisation and the desire for sex appeal also seeped into several other women frames.

Notwithstanding this, pictures of real life Estonian women was the one significant exception concerning juvenation and aesthetisation. In this case media preferred to present older experienced women: people celebrating personal and professional anniversaries, for example wives who had been married for 25 or 50 years. They were not aestheticised but depicted as serious Neutral Faces. Younger Estonian women were often depicted as ageless. On the one hand, the reason was technological – younger women were participants in housekeeping courses, they were small figures in group portraits, and it was often hard to detect their ages. On the other hand, younger women, gathered in group portraits, looked humble, serious and reserved; their stiff postures hinted that they accepted the situation of being recorded on photos, although they did not try to aestheticise themselves to attract any special individual attention. Thus, the trend for juvenation and aesthetisation lagged behind in pictures of real Estonian women. However, a desire for young and beautiful women was present, as we can gather from line-art pictures of young and beautiful Estonian women as fictional Consumers and Feasts-for-the-Eyes (created by Estonian artists).

Second, since the turn of the century the representation of women was driven by economic ideas and consumerism. Media pictures introduced curious women, beautiful women, ordinary women, keeping Estonian readers informed about contemporary events and developments as well as entertaining readers. Pictures of women were also introduced widely in advertising, i.e. they were used to direct readers' consumption. Thus women's visual representation reflects the transformation of Estonian journalism from an enlightening media to a news and commercialised media.

Significantly, even at the end of the analysed period, when pictures were used daily to illustrate news, pictures of women rarely reached into the core of journalistic discourse, i.e. they did not belong to hard news or breaking news. In editorial content these pictures were mainly inserted as independent individual titbits to entertain and to show trivial everyday life. Thus, the representations of women reveal the essence of journalism then – it was commercialised news journalism. News dealt with politics and economics, where very few women acted. But pictures of women (entertainers, socialites) were used to ease news content: they 'punctuated' hard news.

Third, the promotion of national ideas influenced the visual representation of women in the media. National ideas were promoted through these pictures during the national awakening (e.g. ethnographic action scenes with people in national costume); very strongly at the beginning of the 20th century (e.g. group portraits of members of Estonian societies, cooking courses); and again during the 1930s (e.g. numerous group portraits of participants in courses aimed



at women, portraits of occupational jubilarians). Thus, there were three waves of 'nationalism' connected to cultural and political developments in Estonian society.

### **Roles and functions of women**

The role of women in media pictures diversified and modernised during the period analysed. In the 19th-century pictures women were presented in both traditional roles (wives) and modern roles (royal rulers, authors). Around the turn of the century the decorative role (pretty women) was added, although there were also more women in traditional roles (e.g. participants of societal life, nurses) and modern roles (actresses). After WWI, every role group acquired new members: the traditional role (employees in 'feminine' occupations, volunteers), the decorative role (pretty advertising lady) as well as the modern role (consumer, sportswoman). It is important to note that already in the 19th century Estonian media pictures presented women in modern roles.

The absence of mothers in Estonian media images is notable. The media presented woman as the Other Half of the man, sometimes accompanied by one or two children, although her motherhood was never stressed. Children appeared in pictures randomly and rarely (e.g. in anthropological pictures which depicted faraway cultures, or in advertising). The only mother was the Virgin Mary with Infant Jesus: their picture was almost always present in periodicals at Christmas. This was a presentation of idealised motherhood.

It is possible that the absence of real life mothers was due to the fact that maternity was a natural part of women's physical lives; it was therefore considered odd to stress giving birth and taking care of children publicly. And after all, children definitely belonged to the private sphere, which was not a topic for the media then. Significantly, the Other Halves were depicted with a maximum of two children, and this reflects the standard desired by default. As Helmi Mäelo<sup>12</sup> reveals, at the turn of the century, the large 'herd of children' was understood as a sign of poverty and simple-mindedness; the wealthier and wiser people had less children (Mäelo 1959, 68–69).

If we compare the framing of women and men, frames relating to women were clearly different.

The two first female frames were the Other Half and the Neutral Face. In a way, these are opposite ways in which to depict women. The Neutral Face was a gender neutral frame used for women as well as men. The Other Half was a female-specific frame – no man was presented as an Other Half or as an associate of a woman.

The subsequent frames were also mainly female-specific: man was not an (Innocent) War Victim and he was never depicted as a Feast-for-the-Eyes or Lover.

The latest frames favoured women: men *could* be the Aid (e.g. the subordination is very clear in military parades), men *could* be the Consumer (e.g. advertising for cars or furniture), men *could* be the Diva (e.g. actor Rudolph Valentino during the 1920s), men *could* be the Illustration, presenting the conception or interesting event (e.g. Berlin cooks performing physical exercise – *Päewaleht* 1930, 14 June, 3). However, men were involved in these four frames much less than women. In conclusion, women and men were framed differently: out of the nine frames, four were female-specific, four were used mainly for women and one was gender neutral.

Thereby, the female-specific frames defined women according to the male gaze and as subsidiary people. These frames emphasised the women's decorative-ness (the Feast-for-the-Eyes, the Diva) and their ancillary role (the Other Half), showed women as sex-objects (the Lover) and as the weaker sex in need of male protection (the (Innocent) War Victim).

If we look at women's functions, it is obvious that the great majority of women were in media pictures not because of themselves, they were not important as individuals, but they performed an illustrative role: they supported somebody, they represented or symbolised something outside themselves. This holds true for the Other Half, who performed as the supplement to her husband, for the (Innocent) War Victim, whose function was to spotlight the enemy's cruelty and brutality, for Aid in a Man's World, for the Illustration and for the Feast-for-the-Eyes, whose function was to provide aesthetic experience and inspiration (in editorial content). In advertising content, this also holds true for the Consumer, for the Feast-for-the-Eyes and the Lover, whose function was to attract readers' attention to the advert, to show the product's usage, to coax readers to see the movie – in short, to turn readers into consumers.

The women in the pictures were directly or personally relevant if they had reached a high professional level, if they were crime victims or criminals. These women were equivalent to men, they were visually presented like men in these roles, i.e. framed as Neutral Faces and Divas. Notwithstanding this the activities of professional women and men were clearly different. Professional men depicted in media pictures acted in powerful social fields, mainly in politics and business. At the same time, the large majority of professional women acted in subsidiary social fields and entertainment: they were actresses, singers, beauty queens, sportswomen, clerks.

Women's illustrative qualities were also reflected by their fictionality, i.e. women in media images were often not real people but examples or aggregate images

used to communicate ideas. Some Other Halves were fictional (for example those who illustrated foreign cultures); in addition to which (Innocent) War Victims, the Feasts-for-the-Eyes, Consumers and Lovers were fictional characters. Real life women were presented in four frames: the Neutral Face, the Diva, Aid in a Man's World and Illustration.

The second-class nature of women was reflected by their anonymity, their namelessness. Only Neutral Faces (i.e. high-level professionals, the victims of crime and accidents, and criminals) and Divas were introduced by name in the captions as these women were relevant as individuals. The Aids and Illustrations (i.e. lower-level professionals, private people) usually remained nameless, they acted as an anonymous mass. Other Halves were usually nameless as they were defined through their husbands ("In Tallinn, Commander-in-chief Gen. J. Laidoner is welcomed by his wife." – *Uus Eesti* 1939, 1 February, 1). And fictional women were nameless, too ((Innocent) War Victim, Feast-for-the-Eyes, Consumer, Lover).

The location of women in image area was relevant in the case of mixed gender pictures, action scenes and group portraits. The location of women did not change significantly through time: in group portraits they were at the edges, in action pictures they were in the background or next to men (although smaller). Thus, women's locations consistently showed them as secondary.

Still, there were four frames in which women were always the centre of action and readers' attention. They used portraiture of single women (the Feast-for-the-Eyes, the Consumer) or action scenes (the (Innocent) War Victim, the Lover). Significantly, all four frames were female-specific, and at the same time introduced women not as independent subjects, but as objects of male action, or as decorations. Only the Consumer was somewhat more independent from men, she listened to the radio, read magazines, smoked. However, still the Consumer's activity was mainly addressed to the (absent) man and family, she made herself beautiful for him (cosmetics, fashionable clothes) and took care of her family (doing the laundry, cooking).

### **The genres of pictures: portraits and action scenes**

The frames were used from their introduction until 1940, none of them was totally abandoned.<sup>13</sup> However, the frames were not completely immutable through these years. The main change was connected to whether the picture was a posed portrait or an action scene. Over time, there was unidirectional transformation: instead of portraits, increasingly more action scenes were used. The 'enlivening'

of images (i.e. more scenes, less portraits) was a universal journalistic trend, not unique to pictures of women.

On the one hand, this trend was definitely connected to technological development because at first cameras were able to capture only immobile objects. On the other hand, both formats were present in Estonian journalism from the beginning, and the choice between them was not random but depended on the subject's social position. The heads-of-state, military leaders and intellectuals were depicted on half-length portraits without a background. This format spotlighted the subject's head (i.e. brain, mind) and thus stressed the intellectual nature of his or her life and work. The lower classes, physical workers, were depicted from head to toe, moving and acting in their characteristic milieu. This format pictorially spotlighted the bodily, physical nature of their life and work and their dependence on the external environment.

In the course of time, backgroundless portraits were increasingly replaced by action scenes, i.e. also the 'important' men and women began to move and act in pictures. This innovative trend was introduced to the Estonian press by editor Jakob Kõrv. At the turn of the century, he began to publish photographs that showed heads-of-state as full-blooded people, who moved and acted in the same mundane world as common people. Photographs of the Russian emperor Nicholas II, who walked, rode a horse or in a boat (e.g. Nicholas II together with German emperor Wilhelm II visiting Tallinn (*Walguse lisaleht* 1902, 26 November, 700)), seemed naturalistic, almost voyeuristic compared to contemporary customary bust portraits, depicting the stuporous and utterly polished heads-of-state 'floating in vacuum'.

If we compare these two formats – portrait and action scene – and frames of female representation, the conclusion is straightforward: the frames changed to become just like frames of male representation. Women were also increasingly depicted as acting and taking part in scenes. The latest frames to be introduced (Consumer, Lover, Illustration) were all action-only frames. Portraits were used exclusively in two frames (Neutral Face, Diva). Portrait and action scene were used in three frames (Other Half, Feast-for-the-Eyes, Aid). The Feasts-for-the-Eyes were always depicted in portraits and action pictures. Other Halves and Aids were initially depicted in (group) portraits, but since the 1920s they began increasingly to move and act. Action scenes were used exclusively in four frames ((Innocent) War Victim, Lover, Consumer, Illustration). Whereas the (Innocent) War Victim was restricted to the 19th century, the other three frames were introduced at the end of the period analysed, during the 1920s.

Until the end of the period analysed, real life Estonian women were mainly depicted in photo portraits. Thus, pictures of women show that press photography

was more narrowly spread in Estonia than in Europe. Estonian press photographers mainly recorded state events (e.g. parades, state visits) and accidents and did some photo reportage. Estonian women were not widely involved in these events and therefore their media representation was implemented using old-fashioned 'private pictures' shot by touring photographers or local photographers in studios. These photos were single and group portraits, shot *before* this happy or tragic event which brought women into the media spotlight and were meant "for display within the intimate social circle [...] in order to commemorate [...] achievements and life-turning points" (Goffman 1979, 10). It is significant that for media (i.e. public) presentation the most unrevealing and neutral photos were chosen: *en face* portraits with a severe intent gaze and without any background. Thus, Estonian women were displayed as a serious, emotionless mass. This presentation frame discerned Estonian real life women in two ways. First, commercial reality (i.e. advertising illustrations) presented diametrically different Estonians: cheerful, young and beautiful individuals who enjoyed their lives. Second, since the 1920s foreign women were increasingly depicted in action photos, displayed as distinctive individuals, lively and carefree.

### **The representation of women in Estonian media compared to Western media**

If we compare the changes in pictures of women in Estonian and in the Western print media, we can conclude that principal changes were similar and more or less simultaneous. An important dividing line came around the year 1920 in the Western as well as Estonian media. The era prior 1920 was dominated by representations of traditional women; the subsequent era was dominated by representations of modern women.

There were three most important differences separating traditional and modern woman in the Estonian as well as the Western media. Traditional woman was married, she acted at home in the private sphere and she was depicted without sex appeal. Modern woman was a 'two-job' woman (acting at home and earning her living outside home); she was an active consumer; beauty and sex appeal were an important part of her femininity. In Western media research, the traditional woman is called True Woman, the modern woman is called New Woman.

Based on Estonian press media pictures, I have named the traditional woman as the Other Half. Her name might as well be True Woman, but I searched for a more distinctive title in order to capture her most important characteristics (married, private, without sex-appeal).

As I analysed only the *visual* presentation of women, the main features of the modern woman (married, employed, sex-appeal, consumer) were not captured

in one single visual frame in the Estonian media. Presumably, the main features of the modern woman were too diverse to be depicted in one visual frame. I did not detect any picture that was able to show all four characteristics; rather, the characteristics of modern woman were divided among three frames: Other Half (she was married, sometimes had sex-appeal, sometimes was a consumer), Aid (employed), and Consumer (she was consuming and had sex-appeal). Some advertising pictures got closest to the ideal modern women, depicting a beautiful married woman who was consuming (e.g. was using her new stove to cook for her family). Significantly, this was a fictional woman, a commercialised ideal of woman. The absence of the one single frame for modern woman may hint that Estonian real life was not sufficiently modern for this kind of women. In addition the pictorial conventions of Estonian journalism were too old-fashioned to capture the modern woman's diverse nature in a single frame (the majority of Estonian women were depicted in 'backgroundless' portraits).

## Conclusions

To summarise, let us consider the wider reasons for the transformation of visual frames of female representation in the Estonian media.

The first women who were depicted visually in the Estonian media were important women and wives. Important women had entered into the public sphere and were presented in the same way as contemporary important men. Wives were ordinary women in their private sphere, presented in their traditional feminine roles supporting men and taking care of the family. This was a division of roles in traditional society: men acted in the public sphere, women acted in the private sphere. If a woman broke free from her traditional private role and took over the public (i.e. 'masculine') role, she was presented like a man. This was the equal presentation model of traditional patriarchal society. Public figures, regardless of their gender, were presented in a masculine way: they were independent, without family, their action was based on their intellect, physical beauty was not relevant. Private figures were presented as feminine: they were caregivers, assistants, their physical labour was important. A woman who acted in the private sphere was a member of a family, and thus she was not depicted as a sex object, i.e. her aesthetics or decorativeness were not emphasised.

This traditional dual portrayal was broken by social developments. Since the turn of the century, Estonian traditional peasant society was gradually dissolved and substituted by industrial society, which was based on mass production, the division of labour and the consumption of ready-made products. This kind of society was unable to exist by relying only on men's work, it needed women

outside their homes: on production lines, to do shopping, to raise and teach children while their own mothers were at work, to work in expanding service industries. At the same time, the industrial production method enabled a large number of people to have leisure time for the first time.

These changes brought women into the media in new roles: as consumers and lovers, and also as employees (but this role was clearly less prevalent compared to the first two). Now, common women entered the public sphere, and at one point they were totally different from important women. They did not abandon their traditional feminine destiny and role: the family was still their priority. Initially, paid employment was characteristic to unmarried women. Working life was an interim stage in a woman's life history – after getting married they stayed at home. Common women entered the public sphere not only to earn a living, but also to look around for a husband. Thus, common women entered the public sphere (and media pictures) with all their feminine characteristics, i.e. in addition to their supportiveness and nurturing they also brought sex appeal. And the media promoted this new attitude – women were presented as young and sexy, as entertainers.

This article, analysing women's pictorial representations in the Estonian print media from 1848 to 1940, is the first step towards a more systematic analysis that allows us to judge the changing strategies and patterns of women's representation in Estonian journalism through time. The results are not representative of the whole of Estonian journalism, as the method is qualitative. Thus, these findings will benefit from quantitative control with a sufficient amount of material. In addition, I analysed pictorial representations in magazines only until the beginning of the 20th century. It would be reasonable to study subsequent magazines and compare them with representations in newspapers and magazines.

And of course, future research is needed to study how female representation changed after 1940, when the Soviet period started: the previous democratic media system was destroyed and a totally different conception of women was adopted in the Estonian media.

## **Publications analysed**

### **Newspapers**

- *Perno Postimees* (1857–1885)
- *Tallorahwa postimees* (1857–1859)
- *Eesti Postimees* (1864–1905)
- *Sakala* (1878–1882)
- *Olewik* (1881–1905)
- *Kündja* (1882–1891)

- *Postimees* (1886–1939)
- *Päewaleht* (1905–1939)
- *Tallinna Teataja* (1910–1922)
- *Waba Maa* (1918–1938)

### Newspaper supplements

- *Walguse lisaleht* (1880–1906)
- *Eesti Postimehe Öhtused kõned* (1896–1905)
- *Postimehe ernalisa* (1898–1901)
- *Perekonnaleht* (supplement of *Päewaleht, Aeg and Koit*) (1906–1916)
- *Külaline* (supplement of *Tallinna Teataja*) (1910–1915)

### Magazines

- *Ma-ilm ja mõnda mis seal sees leida on* (1848–1849)
- *Meelejahutaja* (1878–1889)
- *Oma Maa* (1884–1891)
- *Laulu ja Mängu Leht* (1885–1897)
- *Rahwa Lõbu-leht* (1898–1906)
- *Linda* (1887–1905)

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## Notes

1 I did not explore cartoons, as cartoons use a different language compared to other media representations. Cartoons intentionally distort reality in order to comment on real life events (e.g. Morris 1993, 196). Thus, the nature of 'cartoon women' is different from other 'media women' (in the Estonian case, gag cartoons mainly presented sweethearts, wives, mothers-in-law; political cartoons presented an Estonian Maiden or Madam Estonia as the personifications of Estonia).

2 The conclusion is based on American magazine audiences.

3 The definition of roles is similar to Miller (1975, 71) but is adapted to the current Estonian material. See also Baker 2005, 18; Pilvre 2004, 56; Tarn 2001, 93.

4 Hereby, the woman's occupation is significant. A woman can be active in power structures (e.g. a head of school, politician) or she can use her specific feminine qualities in her occupation (e.g. caregiver, entertainer).

5 Mager & Helgeson (2011, 249) use the term "depiction in decorative ways" in the same sense.

6 Printed in the title of the newspaper on the front page.

7 These numbers include only editorial pictures, not advertising pictures.

8 The first media image of Lydia Koidula, the most famous Estonian poetess of the era of national awakening, also appeared in similar peasant tableau (see the Christmas title picture of *Eesti Postimees* 1867, 27 December, 409). Here she was not important as an individual, as a poet, but she performed a typical peasant woman, looking after her family. Koidula was obviously used as a convenient model – she was a daughter of the editor of *Eesti Postimees*.

9 Vignette – small, repetitively used visual decoration or section logo.

10 Sometimes, the Consumer also appeared in real life pictures, specifically some foreign news photographs showed American high-class women and movie stars living their leisure life (e.g. a five o'clock tea party in the Moorish style in Florida – *Päewaleht* 1929, 4 February, 5).

11 In addition to the *Lover and Feast-for-the-Eyes*, there were also other fictional characters in movie advertisements but none of them was so dominant to form an individual visual frame.

12 An Estonian author, journalist and social figure (1898–1978).

13 With the exception of the *(Innocent) War Victim*, which was a temporary frame used only during 19th-century wars.

### **Sources of illustrations**

Figures 2, 4, 5 (b and c), 6, 7, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 – Collection of Digitised Estonian Newspapers, <http://dea.nlib.ee>

## Index of names

Page numbers featuring illustrations marked *in italic*

- Aarelaid-Tart, A. 74, 87,  
129, 136  
Aavik, M. 105, 109  
Adson, A. 29  
Ahonon, S. 52, 59, 87  
Aker, P. 54  
Aleksius II, Patriarch of  
Moscow and All Rus-  
sia 80  
Alexander II, Russian em-  
peror 150  
Alexandra, British queen  
156  
Altleis, A. 159  
Anepaio, T. 108, 109, 136  
Ansip, A. 69  
Ant, J. 103, 106, 109, 114  
Aru, K. 185  
Assmann, A. 107, 110  
Aug, T. 40  
Bahovski, E. 105, 110  
Baker, C. N. 140, 144, 183,  
186  
Bärenklau, I. 69, 87  
Barnhurst, K. G. 142, 183  
Bell, A. 21, 23, 25, 52  
Bell, P. 144, 183  
Belousov, A. 122, 136  
Berg, E. 87  
Bhabha, H. K. 22, 52, 88  
Blackwood, R. E. 140, 183  
Blashek, J. 161  
Blashek, R. 161  
Boikov, V. 87  
Boroditsh, D. 35  
Bovin, A. 36  
Branch, M. 53  
Bremer, F. 151  
Brezhnev, L. 124, 135  
Brinkley, D. 52  
Brown, J. 183  
Brüggemann, K. 59, 87,  
106, 109, 110  
Busby, L. J. 140, 183  
Buzek, J. 110  
Cannadine, D. 11, 15  
Carey, J. W. 23, 52  
Carlson, M. 18, 52  
Christ, W. G. 140, 184  
Chubais, I. 77, 87  
Chung, A. M. 143, 186  
Closa Montero, C. 95, 110  
Comte, A. 11  
Conboy, M. 11, 15, 18, 32,  
52, 53, 54  
Curie, M. 150  
Dahlmann, E. 151  
D'Angelo, P. 143, 183  
Daradanova, M. 18, 52  
Davis, J. 140, 183  
de Brese, C. 69  
Denisov, R. 72, 87  
Deterding, H. 165  
Dimitratos, P. 185  
Doroņenkova, K. 95, 110  
Durnovo, I. 162  
Dyukov, A. 78  
Ebbrecht, T. 18, 52  
Edensor, T. 18, 22, 23, 52  
Edgerton, G. R. 11, 15  
Edy, J. A. 18, 37, 52, 97, 110  
Ehin, P. 87  
Ehmig, S. C. 44, 53  
Eilders, C. 30, 53  
Entman, R. M. 143, 183  
Erll, A. 113  
Figes, O. 124, 129, 136  
Fitzgerald, R. 24, 53  
Friedman B. 54  
Fuchs, D. 88  
Gabriel, B. 140, 183  
Garrett, P. 52  
Gi-Wook, S. 59, 87  
Goffman, E. 140, 142, 143,  
144, 180, 183, 184  
Goldenberg, E. N. 140, 184  
Gräzin, I. 114  
Greenfield, J. 141, 183  
Griffen-Foley, B. 49, 53  
Gudkov, L. 68, 77, 87  
Haava, A. 150  
Habermeier, J. 18, 53  
Hagen, A. M. 146  
Härma, M. 150  
Harro-Loit, H. (= Harro,  
H.) 11, 13, 17, 18, 21, 22,  
23, 30, 53, 54, 60, 87, 93,  
102, 110, 111, 115, 136,  
163, 184  
Helgeson, J. G. 140, 185,  
186  
Hellmann, H. 151  
Hirdman, A. 141, 142, 144,  
184  
Hitler, A. 73, 75, 99, 114,  
119, 122  
Hose, I. 166  
Høyer, S. 136, 146, 154, 184  
Hume, J. 18, 55  
Hurd, M. 54  
Ionov, I. 56  
Issakov, S. 85, 87, 185  
Istomina, E. 70, 87  
Italia, I. 140, 184

- Ivan IV, Russian tsar  
(= Ivan the Terrible) 67
- Jaagant, U. 40
- Jakobson, V. 13, 59, 60,  
84, 88
- Jansen, E. 185
- Jaworski, A. 23, 24, 53
- Jewitt, C. 144, 186
- Jõesalu, K. 108, 111
- Johnson-Cartee, K. S. 53
- Johnson, S. 140, 184
- Judt, T. 95, 111
- Jugaste, A. 36
- Kaasik, P. 94, 111
- Kagge, R. 105, 110
- Kahar, A. 40
- Kahar, E. 55, 56
- Kahn, K. F. 140, 184
- Kaljuvee, A. 39
- Kalmus, K. 35
- Kalmus, V. 68, 89, 143, 184
- Kaminsky, A. 110, 111, 112,  
113
- Kang, M.-E. 140, 184
- Kansteiner, W. 64, 88
- Karamzin, N. 69
- Kasekamp, A. 59, 87, 111,  
113
- Kaur, U. 141, 184
- Kepplinger, H. M. 18,  
44, 53
- Khrushchev, N. 68, 118
- Kibe, M. 56
- Kitch, C. 18, 21, 53, 93, 94,  
111, 115, 136, 140, 142, 184
- Kivimäe, J. 53
- Klingemann, H.-D. 88
- Kodres, M. 56
- Kohring, M. 143, 185
- Koidula, L. 26, 150, 151, 186
- Köll, A. M. 136
- Konsa, A. 159
- Kõresaar, E. 13, 21, 22, 23,  
53, 60, 87, 93, 108, 109,  
111, 112, 114, 115, 136
- Kõrv, J. 179
- Kõuts, R. 88
- Kouznetsova, N. 76, 88
- Kovalevskaya, S. 150
- Kreegipuu, T. 13, 93
- Kress, G. 144, 184
- Kründel, A. 122, 136
- Kunileid, A. 26
- Kurilo, O. 111
- Kurvits, R. 14, 139, 146,  
163, 164, 184
- Kuslapuu, E. 119
- Kuusikemaa, J. 71, 86
- Kuutma, K. 112
- Lagerlöf, S. 150, 156
- Laidoner, J. 71, 178
- Laksberg, A. 122, 136
- Landy, M. 11, 15
- Lauk, E. 112, 113, 136, 184,  
185
- Lauristin, M. 129, 136
- Le, É. 18, 53, 94, 111
- Leichty, G. 140, 183
- Len-Ríos, M. E. 140, 184
- Leontyeva, T. 162
- Lindma, H. 141, 184
- Lindner, K. 140, 184
- Lindpere, H. 111, 113, 114
- Linnap, P. 164, 184
- List, K. K. 140, 184
- Lobjakas, A. 105, 111
- Lovell, S. 22, 53
- Lumiste, J. 119
- Lund, A. B. 49, 54
- Macek, V. 184
- Mäelo, H. 176, 184
- Mager, J. 140, 184, 186
- Mälksoo, M. 96, 111
- Manoff, R. K. 54
- Marcellus, J. 141, 185
- Maria Alexandrovna, Rus-  
sian empress 150
- Marks, P. 140, 185
- Markus, A. 159
- Marx, K. 11
- Masing, O. W. 146
- Masso, A. 60, 89
- Mathioudaki, K. 185
- Matin, V. 131, 136
- Matthes, J. 143, 185
- McGrory, M. 52
- Medvedev, D. 95
- Meri, A. 76, 77, 85, 88
- Meri, L. 71
- Merridale, C. 124, 129, 136
- Mertelsmann, O. 105, 111,  
114
- Meyers, O. 49, 54
- Mickish, J. 140, 185
- Miil, M. 14, 115, 121, 124,  
136
- Mikk, J. 184
- Milic, M. 144, 183
- Miller, S. H. 140, 185, 186
- Misiunas, R. J. 111, 113,  
129, 136
- Misztal, B. A. 19, 43, 44,  
54, 75, 88, 93, 111
- Möller, E. 159
- Möller, H. 159
- Morris, D. 24, 53
- Morris, R. 185, 186
- Muižnieks, N. 110
- Müller, C. 162
- Müller, D. 110, 111, 112, 113
- Mutso, O. 159
- Muuli, P. 39
- Müür, K. 13, 93
- Neiger, M. 24, 54
- Nerone, J. 142, 183
- Nicholas II, Russian em-  
peror 179
- Niggol 165
- Nightingale, F. 163

## Index of names

- Niinemets, A. 22, 38, 111, 114  
 Nölv, I. 55  
 Nora, P. 94, 111  
 Nünning, A. 113  
 Oksanen, S. 137  
 Olick, J. 65, 88, 93, 94, 111  
 Olsson, T. 54  
 Ömblus, J. 24  
 Onken, E.-C. 95, 111  
 Orwell, G. 49  
 Pacius, F. 26  
 Paimre, M. 18, 54  
 Paju, I. 137  
 Palacios, M. 19, 54  
 Paletschek, S. 140, 185  
 Pallas, A. 13, 17  
 Pärli, M. 56, 57  
 Pärn, L. 119, 120, 132  
 Päts, K. 74, 171  
 Patterson, M. H. 140, 185  
 Paunescu, A. 110  
 Peegel, J. 146, 185  
 Peter I, Russian emperor 68, 69, 70, 85  
 Phoenix, C. 22, 54  
 Piilehto, M. 141, 185  
 Piirimäe, K. 94, 111  
 Pilvre, B. 141, 185, 186  
 Pipes, R. 129, 136  
 Plakoyiannaki, E. 140, 143, 185  
 Pöldsaar, R. 141, 185  
 Pölluste, V. 126, 136  
 Poopuu, A. 57  
 Potter, J. W. 140, 185  
 Pöttker, H. 18, 32, 54  
 Putin, V. 73, 88, 95  
 Puusemp, E. 25  
 Puusepp, E. 76, 77, 85  
 Raadik, E. 141, 185  
 Raamot, M. 161  
 Rahi, A. 104, 112  
 Rämmer, A. 59, 88  
 Raun, T. U. 146, 154, 163, 185  
 Reid, C. 141, 183  
 Reilly, B. 59, 88  
 Renan, E. 74, 75, 88  
 Richards, J. 184  
 Ridiger, A. *see* Aleksius II  
 Riggins, S. 60, 84, 88  
 Robinson, S. 98, 112  
 Rodgers, S. 184  
 Roediger, H. L. 59, 89  
 Rogers, J. 95, 112  
 Rollins, P. C. 11, 15  
 Romanov family 67  
 Rosselli, F. 140, 144, 185  
 Rüütel, A. 134, 136  
 Saks 130  
 Sanders, J. 48, 54  
 Sapper, M. 112  
 Sarv, T. 38, 39  
 Sato, K. 112, 114  
 Scherlock, T. 116  
 Scherrer, J. 95, 112  
 Schlesinger, P. 17, 54  
 Schmidt 162  
 Schokkenbroek, C. 24, 25, 54  
 Schortt, L. 107, 110  
 Schudson, M. 21, 22, 23, 32, 54  
 Searles, P. 140, 185  
 Seixas, P. 137  
 Sepp, L. 166, 167  
 Sherlock, T. 116, 137  
 Shoemaker, P. J. 30, 54  
 Smith, B. 54  
 Sneider, D. 59, 87  
 Soosaar, E. 105, 112  
 Sparkes, A. 54  
 Spurk, J. 11, 15  
 Stalin, J. 67, 68, 73, 99, 114, 118, 124, 129, 136  
 Stankiewicz, J. M. 140, 144, 185  
 Stanley, J. 140, 185  
 Suurpere, M. 57  
 Sylvester, N. 140, 141, 186  
 Taagepera, R. 111, 113, 129, 136  
 Tali, M. 141, 186  
 Tammann, A. 25, 26, 27  
 Tamm, M. 54, 108, 112  
 Tammur, H. 38  
 Tannberg, T. 111  
 Tarn, D. D. C. 186  
 Tarto, E. 38  
 Thorson, E. 184  
 Tief, O. 14, 123  
 Tileaga, C. 59, 88  
 Titma, M. 59, 88  
 Tolstoy, L. 155  
 Treumundt, C. 159  
 Trisnadi, V. 54  
 Troebst, S. 94, 95, 96, 98, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114  
 Tuch, B. 69, 88  
 Tumber, H. 54  
 Türk, E. 159  
 Türn, K. 55  
 Undusk, J. 122, 137  
 Unt, H. 26  
 Vader, A. 122, 137  
 Vaher, V. 130, 137  
 Vahtre, S. 112, 113  
 Valentino, R. 177  
 van Dijk, T. A. 21, 54  
 van Leeuwen, T. 144, 184, 186  
 Victoria, British queen 150  
 Vihalemm, P. 129, 136, 184  
 Vihalemm, T. 59, 60, 68, 84, 88, 89  
 Viķe-Freiberga, V. 95, 112  
 Vizulis, J. I. 112, 113  
 Vörk, V. 120  
 Weichsel, V. 112  
 Welter, B. 140, 186

- Wertsch, J. V. 19, 54, 59,  
89, 93, 95, 112, 113, 120,  
121, 123, 134, 137
- West, B. 18, 54
- Wezel, K. 95, 113
- Wilhelm II, German emperor 179
- Winfield, B. H. 18, 54, 55
- Winter, J. 108, 109, 113
- Wu, D. D. 143, 186
- Yoon, D. 184
- Zandberg, E. 49, 55, 98, 113
- Zelizer, B. 11, 15, 49, 55,  
93, 113
- Zerubavel, E. 12, 15, 18, 41,  
55, 59, 67, 80, 84, 89, 93,  
109, 113
- Zielonka, J. 88
- Zotos, Y. 185
- Zubok, V. M. 118, 137