

ESTONIAN RUSSOPHONE IDENTITY IN 1990

Aigerim Nurseitova (University of Tartu)

15 May, 2024 (8698 words)

Introduction

In 1990, the dominant identity discourse among Russophones in Estonia focused on rethinking their Soviet past amid an uncertain present. This is the time of reflection on how the Soviet Union affected people living in Estonia, both positively and negatively, over the past 50 years, all while Estonia was striving for independence. Once a majority, Russophones struggled to define their identity in a period of change; were they Soviet Estonians or Estonian Russophones? Many had a tough time accepting their new minority status and the re-independence of Estonia due to the socio-economic inequalities and the resurgence of nationalism that accompanied it. Nevertheless, Estonian independence viewed positively, as it was imagined as a time of positive change when Estonians and Russophones could be equals, working together for a democratic and just future.

1. Text selection and classification of sources

The data covers speeches, newspapers, school history textbooks, novels, movies, and letters to editor, and magazines (see ‘Sources’ below for the full list).

Two newspapers were selected for discourse analysis of 1990 based on their popularity among readers. *Molodezh Estonii* began publishing in 1950 under the name *Stalinskaja Molodezh. Sovetskaja Estonia* had been published since 1940. Although both newspapers were the official periodicals of the Central Committee of Communist Party of Estonia and Komsomol in Estonia prior to 1988, ‘[this] media during [1990] had virtually unlimited freedom to inform the audience about nearly all aspects of social and political life, because the political control over their content was abandoned’ (Jakobson, 2002). In the 1990s, these newspapers covered the political, cultural, and socio-economic topics that concerned the local Russophones, such as discussions on Russian-language education and culture, citizenship and language laws, and effects of the economic reforms of the 1990s on the businesses and general population’s wellbeing. *Molodezh Estonii* and *Sovetskaja Estonia* were the most circulated Russian-language daily newspapers in 1990. According to various sources, around 1990 they printed about 90-95 and 68-76.3 thousand copies annually, respectively (Ivanova, 1989; Vihalemm, 2004, p. 307). In 1990, 89 percent of adult¹ non-Estonians read *Molodezh Estonii* either occasionally or consistently, while 86 percent read *Sovetskaja Estonia* with the same frequency (Vihalemm, 2004, p. 69). Both newspapers printed issues six days per week, excluding Sundays (Vihalemm, 2004, p. 283). Using systematic random sampling for both newspapers, articles from the first available issue for each month of 1990 were selected.

The magazines *Raduga* and *Tallinn* were published less frequently and thus had a smaller readership: *Raduga* had been published monthly since 1986, with had 29 percent of non-Estonian adults among its readers, while *Tallinn* was published just six times a year since 1978, with 23 percent of non-Estonian adults reading it either occasionally or consistently (Vihalemm, 2004, p. 82; 284). In 1990, *Raduga* had a circulation of 30 thousand copies, while *Tallinn*’s circulation was 13 thousand (Vihalemm, 2004, p. 325). These magazines also catered to a more educated and culturally oriented audience. All available issues from 1990 were used for coding purposes.

¹ Above the age of 18

Speeches and letters to the editor were selected from the two newspapers mentioned above, as well as letters to the editor from the *Raduga* magazine. To increase the pool of data, speeches and letters from all available issues of *Molodezh Estonii* were coded, as the dates of the speeches and letters publication did not correspond to the first issues of each month. Later, to avoid repetition in coding, only letters and speeches from the first issue of each month in *Sovetskaja Estonia* were coded, while *Raduga*'s letters fit the earlier selection criteria, as the magazine was published only once per month. While the Estonian Russophone elite lacked clear and prominent representatives at the time, the speeches coded were based on political groups that addressed the Russophone minority. These included addresses from groups like the Communist Party in Estonia, the Estonian Supreme Soviet, the For Equal Rights movement, Virumaa, and others. Since the newspapers still maintained ties to Soviet institutions, these groups received the largest share of representation in publications. However, the letters were written by ordinary people, including those unaffiliated with the Communist Party of Estonia.

The textbook used, 'History of Estonia. XX century. Textbook for X grade of Russian language education schools,' was edited by Silvia Õispuu and published in 1992. It is a translated version of an Estonian-language textbook written in 1988 and published in 1989. Beginning in the 1989-1990 school year, Estonian schools resumed teaching Estonian history for the first time since the independence of 1918. Previously, pupils and schoolteachers in Estonia relied on Soviet history textbooks, which did not focus on Estonia separately. A team of 18 authors wrote a two-part textbook in Estonian from scratch within a year to enable this curriculum change. Russian-language schools then received an updated, translated version of the second part, which focused on the 20th century. Estonian school textbooks were included in the source selection because they helped to shape the Russophone identity over the long term and were the materials used in Russian-language school curricula. Nevertheless, it is important to note that all the textbooks used in this project are translations of textbooks originally written for Estonian-language schools. There were no separate history textbooks written for Russian-language schools in Estonia.

Due to their small audience, novels by Estonian Russophones have never gained enough attention or circulation to become bestsellers in Estonia (Repson, 2012). Therefore, the usual *Making Identity Count* project source selection criteria could not be applied in this case. Instead, the project relied on the works by well-known Estonian Russophone authors. For 1990, only one novel, written by the prominent Estonian Russophone author Jelena Skulskaja, was included. A native of Tallinn, Skulskaja is a renowned, award-winning author who has been publishing primarily in Russian language since the late 1960s. Her novel *V pereschete na bol* was published in 1991 in both Moscow and Tallinn (Pilter, n.d.). According to Skulskaja, this novel had a circulation of 50 thousand copies (Kotjuh, 2020). Estonian Russophone authors frequently published their works in Russia to reach a wider audience reach.

The report includes one bilingual (Estonian and Russian language) film released in 1990 by Tallinnfilm. It was written and produced by Peeter Simm and Dimitri Klenski and aired on national television on March 15, 1992. This 28-minute short documentary received significant criticism for attempting to capture the views of the Russophone masses of the political landscape in Estonia around 1990 (*Meie Venelased (1991)*, n.d.).

2. Raw identity categories

This report uses the same procedure for selecting aggregated categories for analysis as used in the *National Identity Reports* on Russia and the Soviet Union. This approach differs from that of the

standard *Making Identity Count* project because the codes and their raw count were not evenly distributed across genres. Instead, percentages normalized by genre were calculated, using a raw count table showing the relative prominence in each genre. Categories with average prominence below 1% were eliminated, which left us with 34 categories for further analysis. In the final calculation of valences prominence within these 34 categories, four categories lacked salient valences, reducing the total to 30 categories in the report. Tables 1 and 2 summarize the identity categories inductively recovered from the sampled texts. This section will explain the meaning of these identities in detail.

Re-assessment of the Soviet

As the Soviet Union neared the end of its political existence, Russophones began reassessing their past. This reassessment was not purely negative per se, as shown from the breakdown of categories. The categories in this section include Authoritarian/Totalitarian, Communist Party in Estonia, Soviet Army, Soviet legacy, Soviet occupation, USSR: Economy, and USSR: Leadership.

The primary criticism and disappointment were directed at the **leadership of the USSR** in Moscow, as many of its wrongdoings were exposed to the public while the country faced economic and political struggles. This category appeared with neutral and negative valences in the school textbook on Estonian history, wherein Estonians were describing and criticizing the Soviet Union's leadership and the **Communist Party in Estonia** for hindering Estonia's development.

The Estonian Communists gained support in the Soviet Union, especially in the environments close to the Comintern, and 40 Estonian Communists were illegally sent to Estonia. (Arjakas, 1992, p. 71; {1990_T_HIST_04260})

One could console oneself with the fact that the terms "sphere of influence" or "sphere of interest" probably did not mean occupation of Estonia, but merely granting special economic and political privileges to the Soviet Union. (Arjakas, 1992, p. 121; {1990_T_HIST_05370})

What role did the CP(b)E play in all this? Having ceased to exist as an independent party in the autumn of 1940, the CP(b)E was undoubtedly one of the main instruments of the central authorities in the following years, through which the Stalinist model of socialism was forcibly introduced in Estonia, and the Estonian SSR was brought into alignment with the level of development of other Soviet republics. (Roots, 1992, p. 175; {1990_T_HIST_06570})

This discussion around the pitfalls of the USSR leadership was not vastly different in newspapers, letters, and magazines, where negative valence was dominant. In 1990, the Russophone masses were not supportive of either the old or the new elites: 'Sometimes the unexpected thought comes to mind that in our country, under the guise of democracy and *glasnost*, someone is cleverly creating anarchy' (Dõkov, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_05160}). The Soviet elite and their leadership style were associated with fear and a state of uncertainty.

What was the basis for the system in which you and I lived, and practically live until today? On two whales and two principles: fear and lies. (Ivanov, 1990b; {1990_P_SOVI_00940})

All those who rejected eternal truths and universal values ended up sooner or later in the rubble of history, for in the end, the good triumphs over the evil in life. If it was the other way around, life would cease to exist. No matter how terrible and bloody Hitler,

Stalin, Ceausescu, and other tyrants were, their cause was doomed from the beginning, because they acted in contradiction with the eternal ideas of equality, brotherhood, kindness, and justice. (Pankratjev, 1990; {1990_P_SOVI_00890})

Russophones in Estonia were looking for political change. Based on the letters, it is visible that for some of them, change meant only the reform of the Communist Party in Moscow and Tallinn with an updated party program, while for others, change signified a non-communist future.

I am convinced of only one thing: the old Communist Party has exhausted itself. And unless it can so radically transform itself in the near future as to become, in essence, a new party, it will not be able to claim any prominent place in the political arena. (Kuznetsova, 1990b; {1990_P_SOVI_00445})

Doesn't it bother you that the people have become so distrustful of the Communist Party that no matter what sensible ideas they come up with, they will not believe them anymore? (Agranovskaja, 1990; {1990_MG_TALL_02550})

The CPSU, Bolshevism, and communist ideology in general have no future. I am firmly convinced of this, which is why I left the CPSU.... (Ržavin, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_05350})

Discourses on the **Soviet economy** also prominently feature negative and neutral sentiment in the magazines. In 1990, Russophones began feeling a decline in their living conditions as class inequality was rising. While some of the blame was directed at economic reforms initiated in Estonia (see economic reforms in 'Road to Independence' section), class inequality was also attributed to poor decisions by the Soviet leadership in Moscow.

At the same time, in terms of the proportion of rich people, we are not particularly far behind the States. They have 3 percent of such people; we have 2.3 percent. There are more than 100 thousand Soviet millionaires alone. And 70 percent of them have unjustly acquired wealth. (Sillaste, 1990; {1990_MG_TALL_00520})

The Soviet leadership was also seen as the main enemy guilty of occupying Estonia. While Russophones acknowledged the wrongfulness of the **Soviet occupation** in their letters to the editor and publications in magazines, they distanced themselves from the political leadership that had been cruel to all the nations in the Union.

I agree that Estonia was occupied by the Soviet military and that it was indeed an unlawful act. (Kuznetsova, 1990a; {1990_L_MOLO_02940})

There were Stalinist camps in which not only Estonians, but also representatives of other nationalities perished. (Spiridonov, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_03340})

Mr. Kelam said that during the Soviet occupation, one fourth of the Estonian people had been exterminated or exiled for settlement. These are black stains on our history, and, of course, the Stalinist terror inflicted great damage on the Estonian people. But the Russian people suffered no less from these repressions, including those who live in the Republic. (Izrajelit, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_04970})

It is not our fault; people became the tool and, at the same time, the victim of the colonizing policy of the Soviet Union. (Suhneva, 1990; {1990_MG_RADU_02260})

After all, we, like millions of sub-Soviet people, justified the occupation of his country with various dignified considerations. (Aihevald, 1990; {1990_MG_RADU_03350})

The **Soviet legacy** at the time was marked by ambiguity, as shown in the data from the textbook, newspapers, and magazines. On the one hand, the past was fraught with troubled events, on the other, people tried to find the positives among the negatives. However, positive valence gained prominence only in letters.

In the sources from those years, it was called the "harmonious development of society on the basis of a socialist planned economy". At the same time, many negative processes were constantly intensifying, which by the mid-1980s had led society into crisis. (Arjakas, 1992, p. 200-201; {1990_T_HIST_06990})

And I can understand what makes many leaders of social movements raise the issue of Estonia becoming part of the USSR. But I also urge that the reasons creating anxiety among some of my compatriots be understood and considered. (Ivanov, 1990a; {1990_P_SOVI_00123})

At that time, we dreamed of peace and freedom. We worked together, rebuilding the post-war ruins. We spoke Russian, Estonian, and, of course, German. We understood and helped each other. That is why I cannot understand why there is now a division between Russian and Estonian workers – why there are strikes? (Luti, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_00070})

The only category in this section that received primarily positive attention is the **Soviet Army**. While the institution was also criticized for harassment, its past was glorified.

Here you can find everything: protectionism, infringement of soldiers' rights, humiliation by superiors, embezzlement, arrogance ... it is the most, or at least one of the most, dysfunctional and numerous armies in the world! (V. R., 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_00300})

I served in the Soviet Army for 12 years starting in 1944. The time was hard, hungry, but I do not understand why now, in peaceful days, some young people refuse to join the army. (Nikolajev, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_00090})

Many of the Russophones had family members serve in the Soviet Army during the Second World War, and these soldiers were considered liberators, including of Estonian land. This sentiment appears in the newspapers and letters to the editor: 'Somehow it is forgotten that it was the Soviet Army that liberated the peoples of the Baltics from the brown plague' (Voronkova, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_01160}).

Road to Independence

This section contains the largest number of categories, as discourses on the future of Estonia dominated across genres. This section focuses on the following categories: the Baltic states, Class inequality, Democracy/Rule of law, Economic reforms, Estonian language and culture, Estonian politics/authorities, Ethnic division, Multiculturalism, Nationalism, Re-independence of Estonia, and Unity/Equality.

While newspapers tended to report neutrally on political developments in the **Baltic states**, the letters to the editor and magazines reflect a positive identification with the shared struggles and goals of the people in the region.

More than three hundred delegates gathered today for the first congress of citizens of the Republic of Latvia. ("Congress of Citizens of the Latvian Republic," 1990; {1990_P_SOVI_00740})

Ministries and agencies of the Republic of Lithuania are ready to discuss with the relevant agencies of the USSR the entire range of issues related to the realization of Lithuania's independence. (ETA, 1990; {1990_P_SOVI_00900})

"We will be sincerely happy if the struggle for national self-determination that you are waging culminates in the blossoming of all aspects of your life, all its spheres, from cultural to economic." (Rusõm, 1990; {1990_L_RADU_00270})

The current leadership of the republic unambiguously seeks developed market relations, which are supranational in nature. (Dmitriev & Poljakov, 1990; {1990_MG_RADU_02730})

At the same time, discourses surrounding the **re-independence of Estonia** were more diverse. In newspapers, speeches, and letters, ambiguous valence was the most prominent. This stemmed from differing views on whether Estonia should become independent and leave the Soviet Union. Remnants of positive attachment to the Soviet, as well as concerns over limitations of Russophones' rights by the Estonian authorities, prevented Russophones from collectively supporting re-independence.

Step by step, the restoration of a sovereign state - the cherished dream of the Estonian people - is underway. But the methods of adoption and the essence of the decisions made do not unite the efforts of all Estonians to build a democratic republic; instead, they increase the anxiety and uncertainty about the future for a significant part of the Estonian population. ("Statement of the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Estonian Young Communist League," 1990; {1990_S_MOLO_00770})

It is the same with the problem of sovereignty... I think it should be resolved through negotiations between organizations representing the Estonian population – not only with the Centre but also with organizations expressing the interests of the Russian-speaking population. Isn't that so? After all, there are 600 thousand of us... (Kuznetsova, 1990b; {1990_P_SOVI_00383})

I am sure that many Russian-speaking people would respect the aspirations of Estonians. Just do not make enemies of these people. (Kuznetsova, 1990b; {1990_P_SOVI_00442})

I support your struggle, because, in fact, we share a common struggle. Only, it is a little easier for you – you can invoke national and republican rights. But what about, say, a man from Yaroslavl, who cannot invoke do so because he is connected to a man from Ryazan by both blood and republican ties? (Maznõi, 1990; {1990_L_RADU_00660})

Various strata of Russophone groups, as reflected in speeches, letters, and magazines, supported some version of independence: autonomy in the Soviet Union, independence within a union of independent states, and a complete change of course from the communist past.

And Estonians need to understand that the majority of the Russian-speaking population is in favor of a sovereign Estonia, but they are afraid of breaking with the Union,

because they are connected by living, unbreakable threads with other republics, including their kin. (Rjabova, 1990; {1990_L_SOVI_00320})

The withdrawal of the Baltic republics from the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics is today's reality. However, it is not clear to me why it is necessary to restore the bourgeois Constitutions? It is reckless to consider them the most democratic, for fifty years of Soviet power is quite a lot, and they cannot be discounted. (Dubinin, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_03120})

There is nothing more just for a people than to fight for their self-determination and self-preservation. (Eliava, 1990; {1990_MG_TALL_02870})

The simplest and most correct solution: to restore the Republic of Estonia based on parliamentary democracy and market economy. (Stadnikov, 1990; {1990_MG_RADU_02530})

We do not want our name to be used to speak against the secession of Estonia and against the economic border! We trust the government of E. Savisaar! (Russskih, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_05340})

There is a prominence of negative outlooks on re-independence only in letters, where concerns centered on expected economic and political inequality that would affect blue-collar Russophones.

In my opinion, Estonia's secession from the USSR is a step into the abyss. In my opinion, the workers – Russians and Estonians – have nothing to divide. Is it not better to unite their forces and fight for the interests of Estonia, but only as part of the USSR[?] (Sementšenko, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_02670; 1990_L_MOLO_02680})

I know very well what fate is in store for me as an "emigrant," but I am surprised by the behavior of ordinary Estonians: are they sure that they will be happy in a seceded Estonia? (Vasilev, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_04020})

All you hear now is: "Expressing the will and aspiration of the Estonian people for state independence...". This has already become an obligatory formula. It is unacceptable to question it. But it can be said only based on the results of the national referendum. However, the authorities resist holding such a referendum. (Poljakov, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_05430})

In the late 1980s, a group of Estonian scientists led by Edgar Savisaar have developed and began implementing a proposal, Self-Sufficient Estonia (IME), which called for the economic independence for the Estonian SSR by loosening the centralized control of the Union and transitioning to a market economy. The proposal bolstered the independence movement, and Savisaar then became the first prime minister of Estonia in the early 1990s. Even though the Estonian economy was already in a poor condition during Soviet rule, Russophones associated rising **class inequality** with the new **economic reforms** of the **Estonian authorities**. These three categories are interrelated and have received negative valences in newspapers, letters, and magazines.

After all, we still have nothing and do not know how to join the family of European countries: neither to work as they do, nor to think ahead, nor to trade profitably... But, unfortunately, a lot of ambition, farce, slogans, speeches... (Zolotarev, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_01360})

The leaders of contemporary Estonia make no secret of the fact that they intend to repurpose the Union enterprises that employ tens of thousands of highly qualified workers and engineers, who may have to become unemployed or guest workers in their own homeland. (Zibunova et al., 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_01790})

Many experts argue that rising prices cannot stabilize the economy. Maybe the creators of IME think otherwise? (Kuznetsova, 1990a; {1990_L_MOLO_03060})

What a fuss was made about this "miracle"! Now everybody keeps quiet for some reason. Is it because the "miracle" burst like a bubble? (Rodionov, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_03980})

Even though some Russophones accepted short-term economic struggles in anticipation of long-term benefits, a sizeable portion negatively viewed the trajectory of **Estonian politics**. Their reasoning was not opposition to Estonian independence per se but rather concerns driven by a sharp **ethnic division** due to a rise in **nationalism** and class inequality. Letters demonstrated the greatest dissatisfaction with ethnic division and nationalism, while also being the only genre where class inequality was a prominent issue.

Now all the activities of the Supreme Council and the government have been politicized to the point that there has been a complete split with the Russian-speaking population. (Gorskii, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_04260})

It is necessary, and it is time to clearly define the measure of responsibility of specific individuals who deliberately conduct a campaign to create an "enemy image" (both Russian and Estonian) and foster a climate of mutual suspicion and even hatred. (Zibunova et al., 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_01750})

But I categorically refuse to understand how one nation can put itself above others, how one can disregard the other peoples inhabiting this or that republic. (Dubinin, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_03170})

Why is the solidarity of the Estonian people [...] a good thing, while the solidarity of Russian workers is very bad? Is it really about the notorious ...priority of the nation? (Zaitseva, 1990; {1990_L_SOVI_00080})

In 1990, the elites have not yet focused on the widening gap between the rich and poor but instead emphasized ethnic division within the political structures that affected them.

One of such obstacles [to decision-making], from the point of view of some deputies of the Supreme Soviet [of Estonia], is us – a group of Russian-speaking deputies, which in most cases, when solving political issues, express opinions different from the majority, moreover, fundamentally contradicting them. (Jeruškin et al., 1990; {1990_S_MOLO_01380})

Despite the negative view of nationalism and Estonian politics, Russophones did not extend these views to **Estonian language and culture**. The valences of this category are more prominent in textbooks, newspapers, letters, and magazines, all of which express positive or neutral sentiment.

Our whole class remained drawn to Estonian culture. We gave concerts for several years, sang songs in Estonian, danced Estonian folk dances, and recited poetry. Twice, we even performed in the building of the Central Committee of the Communist Party

of Estonia. I still remember those songs and poems by heart! (Lagunova, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_01210})

Letters was the only source type where Estonian language was given an ambiguous sentiment due to the emerging pressures to learn Estonian language as it was to become the state language.

Why, after living here, do we not speak Estonian? Most likely, it was taught poorly, and the requirements for pupils were minimal. Now, after the Language Act was passed, we are faced with the problem of how to master it. (Kuznetsova, 1990a; 1990_L_MOLO_03010)

In 1990, Russophone discourses communicated the desires and hopes of how independent Estonia will look like. Instead of nationalism, class inequality, and ethnic division, the values of **unity and equality, multiculturalism, democracy, and rule of law** were repeatedly aspired to through speeches, newspapers, letters, and magazines.

Let us forget our grudges of yesterday, look at each other not as enemies but as good neighbors, and build together our common home, the name of which is Estonia. (Jermoškin et al., 1990; {1990_S_MOLO_01520})

... Estonian independence is not an abstract concept written in the Constitution or in a resolution of the All-Estonian Congress, but a set of very real rights that must be secured by the Supreme Council of the Republic. Freedom of conscience, press, demonstrations, assemblies and, consequently, the constitutionally proclaimed multiparty system. Independence of the parliament in deciding Estonian political and economic issues. Democratic elections of the parliament. Transfer of state-owned enterprises to the full ownership of their employees on the principles of people's enterprise, and of land to the farmers. Welfare of the poor at no lower than the poverty line. Equality of rights for all Estonian citizens. (Gogin, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_00510})

Although we can learn from many nations, especially Canadians living in a multinational country where it is not your nationality that matters, but the fact that you are a human being, a resident of Canada. (Levin, 1990; {1990_MG_TALL_02190})

Estonian Russophone vs. Soviet Estonian

The reassessment of the Soviet past around 1990 and Estonians' aspirations for independence led Russophones to question their own identity. Discussions of these categories in were strongest in the selected magazines. Looking deeper into this duality of identity, this section includes categories like Estonia: homeland/loyalty to Estonia, Minority rights violations, Russian language and culture, the Russophone community, Soviet people and culture, traditional family values, and USSR: migration.

In Soviet times, locals used to identify Estonia as the Soviet West. Residents of Estonia were considered part of the Soviet identity. When this was challenged in 1990, Russophones could not collectively define whether they were still part of the old Soviet or part of the new Estonian national identities. **Soviet people and culture** already were under significant scrutiny, as Russophones were reassessed the positives and negatives of the Soviet era. In magazines, this category had prominent ambiguous and negative valences.

Let us stipulate at once that it is difficult to give an unambiguous answer to this question, if only for purely emotional reasons, for our future looks very unpromising if we

recognize that all of us, with only a few exceptions, are *homines sovietici*. (Nevskii, 1990; {1990_MG_RADU_00280})

At the same time, these people could not easily accept the minority status in the re-independent Estonia because of **minority rights violations** that they associated it with. This category received many negative valences in newspapers, letters, speeches, and magazines.

Is it really acceptable in a democratic society, of which we talk so much, for the fate of 40 percent of the population to be decided without its participation? (Jeromoškin et al., 1990; {1990_S_MOLO_01480})

I think that the current difficult situation was provoked in the republic. Anti-Russian, anti-migrant statements, offending, insulting people... It was said that it was an outburst of emotions, that it was understandable and forgivable. And at first, we thought so – emotions, it will pass... But no, it was a selfish calculation. (Kuznetsova, 1990b; {1990_P_SOVI_00404})

After all, it was you [Committee of Estonian Citizens], and no one else, who did everything possible to sow in the souls of thousands of Russian-speaking residents of Estonia this, as you like to put it, "concern", to split the population of the republic into two categories - Estonians and "invaders". (Bulanov, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_00850})

The resurgence of nationalism scared many, as they were afraid they would not be able to fit in the emerging Estonian national identity. These labels of migrants and invaders (*оккупанты*) were rejected as part of the discrimination against minorities. Carefully acknowledging that some Russophones and their ancestors were indeed **Soviet migrants** ('Each of us has experienced it – moving to Estonia. How does it usually happen? You come, you look around, you decide: "It's not bad here." It is decided – move' (Bereza, 1990; {1990_MG_RADU_00920})), many Russophones expressed their attachment to and **loyalty to Estonia**. In most cases, however, loyalty was expressed to the physical land rather than to the state. Estonia was where they or their children were born and raised, where they have lived for many years and established roots. This category also correlates to the Soviet Army and USSR: migration, as these people were considered to have played a significant role in rebuilding Estonia after the war.

The "fault" of migrants is that while rebuilding Narva, Kohtla-Järve, Tallinn, living at first in the worst conditions, was that they gave birth to children. (Rainu, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_03730})

For the vast majority of Russians, Estonia has become a homeland, and to leave it is to tear it from their hearts with blood and to suffer heartache all their lives. (Tšurin, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_00250})

I was born and raised in Narva, so Estonia is my homeland. It is my land, the land of my parents and, I hope, of my children. (V. R., 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_00310})

Because of the clash of Soviet and Estonian identities, the label **Russophone community** emerged in newspapers and magazines, albeit with a lot of ambiguity. 'Russophones' is, however, what people were comfortable with, as at the time, there was no political connotation to just being a speaker of the Russian language. The Russophone community was constructed around Russians in Estonia. As will be visible in later reports, the 'Russophone' label is used more often than 'Russian', as it also included even smaller ethnic Russian-language speaking groups.

Our "colony" (or, if you prefer, the Russian-speaking community) in Estonia exists and will continue to exist. It cannot be relocated to the Pskov or Novgorod regions, just as the Meskhetian Turks cannot be relocated to the Smolensk region. And this is a fact that cannot be ignored. (Zibunova et al., 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_01540})

Today, each of us Russians living here faces a moral choice. Who are we in Estonia? Who are we with? (Suhneva, 1990; {1990_MG_RADU_02220})

Correspondingly, the **Russian language and culture** demonstrate neutral valence in discourses in the cultural magazines.

One category with the most positive certainty in the letters was **traditional family values**. Despite the political and economic challenges, the traditional gender roles and the importance of family stayed unquestioned.

Again, how do you fight divorce? Introduce coupons, strengthen the unit of society. Go to the store once, and the rest of the time is family time! (Mihnenko, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_00360})

Whoever is the head of the family – husband or wife – the soul of the family is still a woman. And she, a mother, a host, a worker, should be beautiful and charming. ("Every Person Is Interesting," 1990; {1990_P_SOVI_00665})

Historical Others

While Estonia had not yet formally detached from the Soviet Union, the primary historical Others in Russophone discourses were **HO: Independence of Estonia** and **HO: Russian Empire**. Both categories gained prominence in only two sources, textbooks and magazines, and share a similar valence structure. The school textbook, written right before the restoration of independence, heavily referenced events during the 1918 independence. Discourses were neutral and positive. The 1918 independence was acknowledged as a mere fact or praised as an example of the statehood that Estonians once had.

In reality, the achievements of the Republic of Estonia during the 20 years of independence, both in the economic and cultural spheres, are quite remarkable. (Õispuu, 1992b; {1990_T_HIST_00060})

In order to modernize and change the structure of production, many new enterprises were founded in the Republic of Estonia. (Õispuu, 1992a; {1990_T_HIST_04690})

Magazines illustrated similar discourses, although the reliance on the early years of independence was less pronounced than it was in the textbook. Neutral and positive discourses were present.

The government fought against speculation and corruption to improve living standards and establish good neighborliness with other states. (Ant, 1990; {1990_MG_TALL_00570})

The growth rates can be compared to the Japanese "economic miracle" of the 50s and 60s. But at first, they could not affect the standard of living. Perhaps it was the beginning of the same economic cycle that took place in Finland in the 1960s and lifted it into the [top 20] of the world states with the highest living standards. (Valge, 1990; {1990_MG_TALL_02330})

In both genres, the Russian Empire was seen negatively. Again, stronger sentiment appeared in the textbooks than in the magazines. In textbook discourses, the Russian Empire was associated with the repressions and unlawful persecution of Estonian freedom fighters and the Russification of Estonian territories.

About 300 people were shot without trial. About 200 people were condemned to death "legally", i.e., by military courts. [...] Hundreds more workers, peasants, and intellectuals were sent to hard labor, prison, casemates, and settlement in Siberia. [...] A significant part of the political figures who came forward in 1905 fled abroad. (Karjahärm, 1992; {1990_T_HIST_01420; 1990_T_HIST_01430; 1990_T_HIST_01440})

In the magazines, the Russian Empire was criticized for imperialistic ambitions. Soviet imperialism was seen as rooted in the times of the Russian Empire.

The problem is also relevant for the Great Russians, but its solution is complicated by the fact that for many centuries the national idea for the majority of Russians has been substituted by the idea of great power (even at the Congress of People's Deputies they shouted about such power). (Stadnikov, 1990; {1990_MG_RADU_02490})

Significant Others

In this report, internal and external Others were merged under 'significant Others' to simplify the aggregation of codes. There were three important significant Others for Russophones in 1990: SO: Estonians, SO: Russia, and SO: the West. This list repeats in the later report years.

The category **SO: Estonians** appears dominantly in the following sources: textbook, newspapers, letters, and magazines. In the textbook data, Estonians are described neutrally, while the authors communicated descriptive elements pertaining to this ethnic and national group. There is also a positive valence prominence for this category, which correlates to the previously mentioned category HO: Independence of Estonia.

I would also like to draw your attention to the fact that although in the history of the Estonian people there are whole epochs that passed under the label of oppression by other nations, in the independent Republic of Estonia the attitude towards fellow citizens of other nationalities was quite neighborly and the authorities promoted the development of their culture in every way possible. (Õispuu, 1992b; {1990_T_HIST_00150})

While newspapers and magazines have also shared descriptive discourses on Estonians, newspapers have also shown a prominence of ambiguous valences. Letters also demonstrate ambiguous and positive sentiment towards this category.

In general, I have the feeling that Russians here in Estonia, due to someone's efforts, have formed an image of Estonians that is far from the truth. This is particularly characteristic for Russian [only] collectives. The situation is somewhat different in Estonian-Russian [mixed] collectives, where it would seem that in everyday communication there are more reasons for conflicts. (Bereza, 1990; {1990_MG_RADU_00780})

From afar, from the sidelines, it seems that the other community is homogeneous. But it is not. And it would be important for Russians to know what processes are taking place in the Estonian community, what moods, thoughts, and expectations are brewing in it. And vice versa... (Kuznetsova, 1990c; {1990_P_SOVI_01300})

She loved the people around her, felt Estonia as her homeland, and was heartily grateful for the benevolence of people of Estonian nationality. (A.S., 1990; {1990_L_SOVI_00580})

At the time, **Russia** was discussed in speeches, newspapers, and letters. While the elites called for cooperation with independent Russia,

The people of Estonia want to be an equal ally and good neighbor of the peoples of Russia. May our economic, social, and cultural relations develop on an equal and mutually beneficial basis. (Rüütel, 1990; {1990_S_MOLO_01040})

Newspapers and letters, however, show ambiguous valence prominence, as they were still unable to make sense of independent Russia as well.

Our intellectuals secretly dreamed of hoping for a kind Uncle Borja when handing him a souvenir truncheon, but so far, they have not been justified. And frankly speaking, they could not justify themselves: friendship is friendship, and no one in the business world is going to give anything for adherence to democracy, especially since the Russians have long received only crumbs from the sale of raw materials. (Medvedev, 1990; {1990_P_MOLO_00921})

The category of **the West** includes either multiple states in the collective West or references to the collective West itself. It has positive and ambiguous valences, dominating textbook discourses, as Western states like Finland were seen as an example of what Estonia could look like or as friendlier nations than the Soviets.

By the beginning of the 40s, the development levels of Estonia and Finland were approximately the same. And you know very well how they now live in Finland and how we live here. (Õispuu, 1992b; {1990_T_HIST_00080})

Newspapers have a more complicated view of the West, with neutral, positive, and ambiguous valences present. Letters and magazines also reflect ambiguous and neutral sentiments. Neutral valence was mainly associated with sentences from raw news pieces. Ambiguous and positive sentiments occurred because of discussions of economic cooperation with the West and following Western political and economic models in Estonia. Despite the idealization of the West at the time, Russophones were careful to avoid calling it a political or intellectual example to follow. Nevertheless, economic cooperation with the West was seen beneficial.

Perhaps, there, in the West, it is not from a good life: beets are not grown, and relations with Cuba are not the best.... Here they could help our "crankshaft", create a joint venture, invite the Scots to study, share their experience of how to get a high-quality product competitive in the world market by means of small mechanization, at the lowest costs. (Mihnenko, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_00330})

Modern weaving equipment could be bought in Italy; without it, we will not enter the foreign market with our products. (Kappo, 1990; {1990_P_MOLO_00313})

But do citizens in the West have only rights and no responsibilities? (Peetsalu, 1990; {1990_L_MOLO_03680})

3. The predominant discourse and its challengers

The dominant identity discourse in 1990 was **Rethinking the Soviet**. Throughout this year, the two versions of Russophone identity – Soviet Estonian and Estonian Russophone, as I call them – challenged one another. Due to widespread dissatisfaction with the previous Soviet system of leadership, the split was uneven. More people supported social change towards a more open and free community, and subsequently, the re-independence movement. The future of Estonia was imagined as democratic, multicultural, adhering to the rule of law, and protecting human rights, including the minority rights. Discourses of united (interethnic) efforts for such an ideal Estonia were followed by desires of equality between ethnic groups. However, these aspirations, were not met. There was also dissatisfaction with the Estonian authorities. Their leadership was associated with ethnic division, rising nationalism, and disadvantageous economic reforms. They were perceived to not have moved far from the Soviet past, when certain ethnicities or nations had limited rights and influence in decision-making, and when poor economic decisions, such as heavy industrialization at the expense of environment, were made. Discussions over minority rights violations, triggered by through introduction of the Language Law, politicians' calls for emigration to another 'homeland', and the introduction of labels such as 'migrants' and 'invaders', dominated this discursive field. While the former identity of a Soviet person was falling apart, the emerging identity of a discriminated Estonian Russophone was not appealing to adopt. 'Russophone' was a self-imposed label commonly used at the time, alongside 'Russian'. Russian language and culture then become formative for the Russophone community, though political identity had yet to be formed.

The Estonian Russophone elite of later years have not yet emerged. In 1990, this group was represented by the Communist Party of Estonia and Komsomol, as well as Russophone representatives of the Supreme Soviet in Estonia. Although these two groups might seem to share a similar worldview, they were in fact opposites. While the Communist Party in Estonia tried to reform itself and continue pursuing the values of communism and socialism, the Supreme Soviet in Estonia advocated for political and economic reform in Estonia in pursuit of independence. This divide correlates with the identity struggle Russophone masses were experiencing as well.

Russophones largely supported Estonia's re-independence, recognizing Estonians' right for self-determination, though they called for the protection of minority rights. Estonia was seen as the homeland at this point because many generations of Russophone families have already settled and been raised there. Estonians were already perceived as significant Others. While the Estonian masses and other Baltic nations were believed to have shared the political and economic struggle with Russophones under the Soviet regime, there was ambiguity in discourses concerning them, as Russophones at times felt alienated from ongoing developments in Estonia at the time. Other significant Others, Russia and the West, also appeared ambiguous, as Russophones tried to make sense of their own identity and their relationship with the Others. Nevertheless, economically, Russophones sought connections with both Russia and the West to improve their decreasing living conditions.

Conclusion

The analysis of dominant discourses in 30 categories across seven types of sources identified for the year 1990 leads to the following conclusions. In 1990, Russophones in Estonia grappled with their Soviet past amid a shifting present. Once the majority, Russophones faced uncertainty about their identity in the face of societal changes, oscillating between their Soviet Estonian past and Estonian Russophone future. Many struggled to reconcile their minority status with Estonia's reassertion of independence, citing socio-economic disparities and the resurgence of nationalism as

challenges. Nevertheless, they supported re-independence, sharing hopes for more democratic, equal, and united Estonia.

Table 1. Raw counts

Category	Total codes	Speeches	Text-books	News-papers	Novels	Movies	Let-ters	Maga-zines
USSR: leadership	164	6	51	15			34	58
Re-Independence of Estonia	139	22	10	14		2	60	31
SO: the West	132	3	15	69			21	24
HO: Independence of Estonia	121	3	90			1	4	23
SO: Estonians	111	6	33	27		4	27	14
Nationalism	110	4	28	10		2	42	24
Minority rights violation	108	9	4	16			60	19
Estonian language and culture	99	1	33	15		3	24	23
Estonian politics / authorities	97	10	6	19			37	25
Economic reforms	94	11	2	39		2	36	4
Democracy / Rule of law	76	17	13	10			30	6
Soviet legacy	74	3	20	20	4		15	12
Soviet occupation	72	7	21	4	2		17	21
USSR: economy	67	3	9	18			16	21
Baltic states	66	1	9	16			21	19
Soviet Army	63	4	3	12		2	30	12
Ethnic division	55	15	1	14			20	5
Class inequality	53	1	7	10	1	1	18	15
SO: Russia	53	8		21			11	13
HO: Russian Empire	51		25	1	2	4	3	16
Unity / Equality	51	12	2	20			17	
Estonia: homeland / Loyalty to Estonia	50	1	1	7		4	33	4
Soviet people and culture	48		12	6	5		10	15
Communist Party in Estonia	47	1	21	7			7	11
Russophone community	42	2		9		6	7	18
Russian language and culture	41		3	7		3	11	17
Multiculturalism	40	4	5	2	1	4	6	18
Authoritarian / Totalitarian	30		3		5		9	13
USSR: migration	30	1	5	1		2	7	14
Traditional family values	29		1	11	1		14	2
Totals	2213	155	433	420	21	40	647	497

Table 2. Topography of Estonian Russophone identity

	<i>Speeches</i>	<i>Text-books</i>	<i>News-papers</i>	<i>Novels</i>	<i>Movies</i>	<i>Letters</i>	<i>Magazines</i>
<i>Re-assessment of the Soviet</i>							
Authoritarian / Totalitarian							-
Communist Party in Estonia		-					
Soviet Army			+			++	
Soviet legacy		~/	~			+	~
Soviet occupation		-/				-	-/
USSR: economy			-				-/
USSR: leadership		///--	-			--~	---//
<i>Road to Independence</i>							
Baltic states			//			+	+~
Class inequality						-	
Democracy / Rule of law	++	+	+			++~	
Economic reforms			--+			--~	
Estonian language and culture		///+	+			+~	+/
Estonian politics / authorities			-			---	-/
Ethnic division	-		-			--	
Multiculturalism							~+
Nationalism		++//				---	~
Re-independence of Estonia	~+		~			~+++	+/
Unity / Equality	+		++			+	
<i>Estonian Russophone vs. Soviet Estonian</i>							
Estonia: homeland / Loyalty to Estonia						++~	
Minority rights violation	-		-			-----	~
Russian language and culture							//~
Russophone community			~				~
Soviet people and culture							~-
Traditional family values						+	
USSR: migration							~
<i>Historical Others</i>							
HO: Independence of Estonia		////++					//+
		++~					
HO: Russian Empire		--					-
<i>Significant Others</i>							
SO: Estonians		///+	//~			~+	/
SO: Russia	+		~			~	
SO: the West		+~	////+++			~	~/
			~				

Salience of categories is measured on the following scale: 1.0–2.0 (1); 2.0–3.5 (2); 3.5–5.0 (3); 5.0–7.0 (4); above 7.0 (5).

SOURCES

1. Speeches:

- 1) From *Molodezh Estonii*, 1990
- 2) From *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 1990
- 3) From *Raduga*, 1990

2. Newspapers:

- 1) *Molodezh Estonii*, 1990
- 2) *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 1990

3. School history textbook:

A. Aarelaid et al. (1992) *History of Estonia. XX century. Textbook for X grade of Russian language education schools [История Эстонии. XX век. Учебник для X класса школы с русским языком обучения]*. Edited by S. Õispuu. Translated by E. Tamberg et al. Koolibri.

4. Novel:

Jelena Skulskaja (1991) *В пересчете на боль*. ИКПА.

5. Letters:

- 1) From *Molodezh Estonii*, 1990
- 2) From *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 1990
- 3) From *Raduga*, 1990

6. Movie:

Meie venelased (1991). Tallinnfilm. Available at: <https://www.efis.ee/et/filmiligid/film/id/4042/>.

7. Magazines:

- 1) *Raduga*, 1990
- 2) *Tallinn*, 1990

References

- Agranovskaja, E. (1990). ИНТЕРВЬЮ: ЕСТЬ РАЗУМНАЯ СИЛА. *Tallinn*, 5(September-October), 96.
- Aihevald, J. (1990). Надо ли ехать в общей телеге? *Raduga*, 10(October), 54.
- Ant, J. (1990). ФАКТЫ ИСТОРИИ ПОД УГЛОМ ЗРЕНИЯ ДНЯ СЕГОДНЯШНЕГО. *Tallinn*, 1(January-February), 77.
- Arjakas, K. (1992a). Период государственной независимости Эстонии. Внутренняя политика Эстонской Республики в 1920–1940 годах. События 1 декабря 1924 года—Попытка государственного переворота. In *История Эстонии. XX век. Учебник для X класса школы с русским языком обучения*. Koolibri.
- Arjakas, K. (1992b). Период государственной независимости Эстонии. Заключение пакта о взаимопомощи между Эстонской Республикой и Союзом ССР в сентябре 1939 года. Правительство Эстонии и МРП. In *История Эстонии. XX век. Учебник для X класса школы с русским языком обучения*. Koolibri.
- Arjakas, K. (1992c). Периодизация послевоенной истории. In *История Эстонии. XX век. Учебник для X класса школы с русским языком обучения*. Koolibri.
- A.S. (1990, August 1). Строки из писем. *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 1.
- Bereza, D. (1990). Заметки человека, далекого от политики. *Raduga*, 3, 54.
- Bulanov, Ju. (1990, February 7). Кто хочет разыграть “русскую карту.” *Molodezh Estonii*, 1.
- Congress of citizens of the Latvian Republic [Конгресс граждан Латвийской Республики]. (1990, May 1). *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 3.
- Dmitriev, A., & Poljakov, D. (1990). Мы приехали из России. *Raduga*, 9, 52.
- Dõkov, I. (1990, November 22). Я - за твердую власть. *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Dubinin, V. (1990, March 30). Будущее решит референдум. *Molodezh Estonii*, 1.
- Eliava, L. (1990). АНКЕТА «ТАЛЛИННА». *Tallinn*, 5(September-October), 111.
- ETA. (1990, June 1). Lithuanian Government Resolution [Постановление правительства Литвы]. *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 2.
- Every person is interesting [“Интересен каждый человек...”]. (1990, April 1). *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 4.
- Gogin, O. (1990, January 26). Почему я стал членом демократической партии. *Molodezh Estonii*, 1.
- Gorskii, N. (1990, June 21). Такого не было.... *Molodezh Estonii*, 1.
- Ivanov, V. (1990a, January 3). Что такое “Наши интересы.” *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 2.
- Ivanov, V. (1990b, June 1). Кто сказал, что рынок—Это безработица? *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 3.
- Ivanova, S. (1989, February 15). Интерес к жизни республики. *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 2.
- Izrajelit, A. (1990, September 26). Любит ли Эстонию г-н Келам? *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Jakobson, V. (2002). The role of the Russian-Language Media in Estonian Society. In *The challenge of the Russian minority: Emerging multicultural democracy in Estonia* (pp. 207–213). Tartu University Press.
- Jermoškin, P., Aksinin, N., Zolin, N., Grigorev, P., Sovetnikov, S., Novohatski, A., Zöbin, A., Labasov, A., Sergii, K., Abdurahmanov, Z., Lebedev, V., Petinov, S., Menšikov, V., Kuznetsov, V., & Volkov, S. (1990, August 28). Обращение группы депутатов Верховного Совета к избирателям и всем жителям Эстонии. *Molodezh Estonii*, 1.
- Каппо, Ja. (1990, March 1). [Photo]. *Molodezh Estonii*, 1.

- Karjahärm, T. (1992). Эстония от рубежа XIX-XX веков до начала I мировой войны. Первая демократическая революция в Эстонии. Спад революции. In *История Эстонии. XX век. Учебник для X класса школы с русским языком обучения* (p. 21). Koolibri.
- Kotjuh, I. (2020, December 29). Елена Скульская: Боишься — не пиши, пишешь — ничего не бойся! *Новые Облака*, 1–2/2020 (83–84). <https://www.oblaka.ee/journal-new-clouds/%d0%b5%d0%bb%d0%b5%d0%bd%d0%b0-%d1%81%d0%ba%d1%83%d0%bb%d1%8c%d1%81%d0%ba%d0%b0%d1%8f-%d0%b1%d0%be%d0%b8%d1%88%d1%8c%d1%81%d1%8f-%d0%bd%d0%b5-%d0%bf%d0%b8%d1%88%d0%b8-%d0%bf%d0%b8%d1%88/>
- Kuznetsova, L. (1990a, March 29). Прощание славянки? *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Kuznetsova, N. (1990b, February 1). Что нас ожидает впереди? *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 2.
- Kuznetsova, N. (1990c, October 1). С кем и куда идти газете “Советская Эстония”? *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 2.
- Lagunova, T. (1990, February 14). Здесь мои друзья. *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Levin, M. (1990). ИНТЕРВЬЮ: ТЕАТР ПОД КОЛПАКОМ ДЕМОКРАТИИ. *Tallinn*, 4(June-August), 97.
- Luti, O. (1990, January 2). Почему? *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Maznõi, G. L. (1990). [Letter]. *Raduga*, 4, 96.
- Medvedev, G. (1990, August 1). Бензиновая лихорадка. *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Meie venelased* (1991). (n.d.). Eesti Filmi Andmebaas. Retrieved April 5, 2024, from <https://www.efis.ee/et/filmiliigid/film/id/4042/filmi-ylldinfo>
- Mihnenko, B. (1990, January 25). Шотландцам и не снилось! *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Nevskii, V. (1990). В Советском Союзе создан Homo sovieticus? *Raduga*, 1, 70.
- Nikolajev, I. (1990, January 4). Армия и неформалы. *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Õispuu, L. (1992). Период государственной независимости Эстонии. Экономика. Промышленность. In *История Эстонии. XX век. Учебник для X класса школы с русским языком обучения* (p. 100). Koolibri.
- Õispuu, S. (1992). От составителя. In *История Эстонии. XX век. Учебник для X класса школы с русским языком обучения* (p. 3). Koolibri.
- Pankratjev, V. (1990, June 1). Диалог с Марксом. *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 2.
- Peetsalu, O. (1990, April 27). Истинны ли эти истины? *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Pilter, L. (n.d.). Елена Скульская (*Jelena Skulskaja*) (I. Anvelt, Trans.). Estonian Writers' Online Dictionary. Retrieved April 5, 2024, from <https://sisu.ut.ee/ewod/s/skulskaja>
- Rainu, H. (1990, April 27). Истерия из-за тезиса. *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Repson, K. (2012, February 8). Пишущие по-русски претендуют на премию. *Rus.Postimees.ee*. <https://rus.postimees.ee/731536/pishushchie-po-russki-pretenduyut-na-premiyu>
- Rjabova, V. (1990, March 1). Поддерживаю “Ваба Ээсти.” *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 1.
- Rodionov, N. (1990, May 12). Все люди братья? *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Roots, H. (1992). Первый год советской власти в Эстонии. О советской модели политической системы. In *История Эстонии. XX век. Учебник для X класса школы с русским языком обучения*. Koolibri.
- Rusõm, I. I. (1990). О событиях в Прибалтике “Апрель.” *Raduga*, 1, 2.
- Russkihh, L., & Russkihh, P. (1990, December 12). Есть ли слуги у народа? *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Rüütel, A. (1990, June 1). Обращение к съезду народных депутатов Российской Советской Федеративной Социалистической Республики. *Molodezh Estonii*, 1.

- Ržavin, V. (1990, December 12). Есть ли слуги у народа? *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Sementšenko, A. (1990, March 29). Нам вместе жить на этой земле. *Molodezh Estonii*, 1.
- Sillaste, J. (1990). ЛУЧШЕ ЛИ БЫТЬ БЕДНЫМ И... НЕОТВЕТСТВЕННЫМ: СОБСТВЕННОСТЬ И ЧАСТНАЯ ЖИЗНЬ. *Tallinn*, 1(January-February), 75.
- Spiridonov. (1990, April 24). Будем бедными? *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Stadnikov, S. (1990). Люди, утратившие себя. *Raduga*, 8, 62.
- Statement of the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Estonian Young Communist League [Заявление бюро ЦК ЛКСМ Эстонии]. (1990, May 19). *Molodezh Estonii*, 1.
- Suhneva, M. (1990). Перед нравственным выбором. *Raduga*, 8, 60.
- Tšurin, R. (1990, January 12). Кто распускает сплетни! *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- V. R. (1990, January 20). Среди лозунгов.... *Molodezh Estonii*, 1.
- Valge, J. (1990). ЭСТОНСКАЯ РЕСПУБЛИКА: ЧЕТЫРЕ ВЗГЛЯДА НА ПРОШЛОЕ. *Tallinn*, 4(June-August), 104.
- Vasilev, S. (1990, May 12). Все люди братья? *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Vihalemm, P. (Ed.). (2004). *Meediasüsteem ja meediakasutus Eestis 1965-2004*. Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus.
- Višnjakov, S. (1990, May 12). Все люди братья? *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Voronkova, K. (1990, February 9). Кто защитит армию? *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.
- Zaitseva, L. P. (1990, January 3). Уважаемая редакция! *Sovetskaja Estonia*, 2.
- Zibunova, T., Svintsov, V., & Alet, V. (1990, February 21). Наш дом. *Molodezh Estonii*, 1.
- Zolotarev, Ju. (1990, February 14). ... И останется суровая реальность. *Molodezh Estonii*, 2.