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ARTŪRS POKŠĀNS

Upbringing in places of scarcity: reproduction of violence and inequality in Latvian residential education

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Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Institute of Cultural Research, Department of Ethnology, University of Tartu, Estonia

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INTRODUCTION

My research is dedicated to exploring violence in residential schools through the conceptual lens of structural violence (Farmer 2009). I attempt to move past the structural determinism inherent in this concept while maintaining its powerful call towards critical evaluation of the role of structural causes in creating social suffering. What interests me is the seemingly inescapable nature of the violence experienced by wretched of the earth (Fanon, Sartre, and Bhabha 2005), lumpen (Marx [1852] 2021; Bourgois and Schonberg 2009) or as is the case in my thesis, the poor in contemporary Latvia. By engaging with this question, I firmly situate myself in that part of anthropological scholarship that is dedicated to the "anthropology at home" (Jackson 1986) and represents the application of anthropological research methods towards social and cultural phenomena within one's own community.

The choice of field is not accidental: between the ages of 7 and 15 I was living and studying in a residential school. Therefore, my choice to turn towards the exploration of structural violence through the lens of residential school is as much a scholarly as personal project. In my dissertation I draw both on data from my own experience using autoethnography which is complemented by data from interviews with different actors connected to the life in the residential school throughout its history. In my analysis I have included data collected from former inhabitants of residential schools through life story interviews, semi-structured interviews with teachers and educators who are working in the few remaining residential schools in Latvia as well as government officials that supervise residential school system. Ethnographic data is complemented by desk research of historical materials, policy documents and media articles.

The field in question is the residential school system. Residential school in Latvia would usually be called *internātskola*, the name being cultural heritage from Soviet period (from Russian *школа-интернат*) and refers to an institution that fulfils the function of both a school and a dormitory which also provides the pupils with meals, clothing, and other forms of support. This type of institution is not exclusive to Latvia or the Baltic region. Residential education has been used throughout the history in many parts of the world both for educating the elites (Khan 2021; Gibson 2019), as well as part of the colonial systems in place to re-educate the native population (M. Gupta and Padel 2018; McGregor 2017). Still, despite the fact that the residential school system is complex and with deep historical roots in the territory of Latvia, it has so far not been researched by local or foreign scholars.

Due to shared historical situation the closest form of residential school to the ones existing in Latvia today can be found in neighbouring countries. Alleman (2018) has explored how the residential school system is used as a tool of social reproduction in the Northern part of Russia, and in a similar vein, Khlinovskaya-Rockhill (2010) in her exploration of childcare systems in Russia also explores the role of residential education. Most of the current literature on the residential

education is geared towards either or both of two main directions. Firstly, the research is concentrated on the role of residential education in assimilation of native populations. This has been explored both in relation to residential education in North America (Riney 1997), Soviet Union and Russia (Afanasyeva 2019) and Finland (Juutilainen et al. 2014). The other direction has been towards the culturally specific forms of residential education (Mursidi et al. 2021; Fathurrochman et al. 2021; Avihu Shoshana 2016).

I argue that the residential school system in Latvia is distinct from both direction of this scholarship, as it does not deal with elite education or assimilation of indigenous people. Residential education in Latvia is geared towards maintenance of existing power relations within society through continued application of violence and maintenance of socioeconomic inequality. The institution at the centre of my research, residential school, is therefore by necessity a constantly elusive and shifting phenomena. This makes it an interesting if complicated field of research as throughout my fieldwork I discovered that residential schools may be referred to as either "*internātskola*" (residential school), *skola ar internātu* (school with residential capacity), *attīstības centrs* (centre of development), *speciālā izglītības iestāde* (school for children with special needs) or, if one talks to state officials it is possible to learn that there are residential schools in Latvia at all. However, my research illustrates how despite being "written out" of legislation, despite numerous changes in the title of institution, the residential school persists more or less in the same manner it has been organised for most of Latvian history. The focus therefore is not only on special education or on centres of development or residential schools but rather to them all as I argue the function fulfilled by the institution and the practices found in them are virtually the same, regardless of their official titles.

Therefore, my research helps fill the gap in the current scholarship considering residential education by exploring the contribution of residential education to managing poverty and social inequality in the postsocialist situation. Postsocialism is an important angle to consider in relation to the question due to the aforementioned historical presence of the residential education. I concentrate on the place of residential schools between two separate social fields (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), those of education and social care, and how this unstable position affects its capacity to resist or continue the structural violence experienced by its pupils and their families.

Research question and objectives of research

My central research question is the reproduction of violence and inequality. I do not take their presence in human society for granted and set to explore how both phenomena are established and maintained at a microlevel. In order to approach this question, I have chosen residential schools as my field of research to develop a conceptual basis for studying the violence continuum and the social reproduction of inequality. Furthermore, my goal is not only to contribute to the exploration of the reproduction of violence and inequality but also the ways of

their contestation and subversion. My interests developed during research process, so, for example, the presence of alternatives to the reproduction appeared quite late in the writing process. I am interested in the connection between the educational institution and the living conditions of its pupils and graduates. I explore how this connection is neither accidental nor a result of the particular form of education itself. I believe that residential schools can serve as a macrocosm to represent the way socioeconomic inequality leads to the experience and practice of violence in Latvian society.

Research objectives:

1. To analyse the state of residential schools since reforms of 2017–2019 and their place in wider system of education.
2. To create a representation of the experience of residential school pupils[1].
3. To explore the various social fields that affect the everyday life in a residential school.
4. To analyse the historical development of residential school system.

Structure of the PhD thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters, introduction, and conclusion. Chapter 1 is dedicated to outlining my theoretical perspective, giving insight in the main concepts used in thesis and describing its main conceptual directions. In the next chapter I describe my research design. I elaborate on the methods I used in the field, my approach to data analysis and my own positionality within the field.

In the following chapters I discuss the results of my research. I follow analytical structure as proposed by Bourdieu (1992). I start with exploring autonomy of residential education within larger social fields and how carving out this autonomy affects the current and future state of residential school system in Latvia. I start chapter three with situating the residential school historically. Residential education has been present in the territory of contemporary Latvia from late 19th century until contemporary times. I examine how the institution that was established as a form of education for rural areas was also connected to various policies regarding the management of local populations, a development which only intensified during the interwar period where, as I illustrate in my chapter, the schools became part of the new Latvian state's attempt of creating its identity while also managing the class relations. Later I explore the change in the role of residential schooling under Soviet occupation and the new role assigned to the residential school in forging of the new Soviet man. I also trace the collapse of this dream and the subsequent reformulation of the role of residential school in years before the collapse of Soviet Union. After that I examine the way residential schools have transitioned since Latvia regained its indepen-

[1] This task unfortunately was achieved only partially due to the advent of COVID-19 pandemic as I describe in methodology section.

dence[2] and their place in system of education and social care. I also include a short description of the development of residential school system outside of Latvia, to provide general context to the processes taking place locally.

Next, I examine the positionality of the residential school in the contemporary Latvia. I describe what I see as the two main social fields that affect the everyday life within the residential school through carrying out the policy analysis of the fields of education and social care.

In chapter 4 I approach the second part of my analysis and describe the symbolic order within the field of residential school. I argue that as the residential education field has become increasingly specified, it developed specific forms of capital and related strategies and practices that are geared towards accumulation of this form of capital. The symbolic order in the field is described in several subchapters where I explore specific parts of residential education field such as the importance of upbringing, the continuation of symbolic order from wider society in relation to gender and relations between actors from different income levels.

In chapter 5 I present the final part of the analysis by reconstituting the structure of the positions within the field. I argue that the main organising principle within the field of residential education is presence of structural violence. The presence of structural violence leads to actors within field continually exerting violence towards each other as they try to secure their positions and capitals within a field which itself is constantly being threatened, reconstructed and disputed. I also explore resistance of my research participants to violence and look for alternative ways of establishing and maintaining their positions within the field.

In the final chapter I bring together the arguments and findings from the previous chapters to create a clear depiction of the current system of residential education, its complexity, issues and their causes.

[2] My gratitude goes out to the reviewer for provision of correct terminology regarding this question.

1 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Here I reflect on the current scholarly approaches to residential schools and elaborate on my own research approach. I start by reviewing the current scholarship on residential education. After that I introduce the main theoretical concepts used in my thesis. I start with the concept of structural violence as an introduction to my research problem. After that I turn to the theoretical framework of Pierre Bourdieu that serves as the basis of my conceptual approach. I complement this approach with concept of violence continuum as way to overcome what I see as lack of consideration of practical implications of everyday experiences of violence in the conceptual framework of Bourdieu. I conclude with synthesis of described concepts and an illustration of how I am applying these in analysing the phenomena of residential education.

1.1 Researching residential school

Although residential education has historically been part of education systems in different countries around the world, the institution itself has not garnered significant scholarly attention. There is some work dedicated to exploration of aspects of residential education (see Okely's (2012) essay on upper class boarding school or the work of Khlinovskaya-Rockhill (2010) on the alternative care systems in far east Russia) most of the existing scholarship can be broadly characterised under two main types of analysis: establishing connections between residential education and subjugation of indigenous people and explorations of the effects of culture-specific residential education institutions.

1.1.1 Residential education and indigenous people

While the question of the role of residential education in suppressing local native communities has gained new urgency in the recent years due to discoveries of mass burials in Canadian residential institutions (Starblanket 2020), use of residential schools as tools of assimilation has been researched and critiqued much earlier (Degagné 2007; Grant 1996; MacDonald and Hudson 2012). Throughout the 20th century the assimilation of native populations using education was implemented around the globe – in USSR (Bloch 2004), Canada (Woolford 2013), Australia (Norman-Hill 2019), Ireland (Lynch 2019) and Norway (Nergård 2019). As this scholarship is mostly dedicated to either documenting the historical injustices or critiquing the ongoing disfranchisement of the indigenous groups, the analysis is mostly focussed on questions of ethnic and cultural identity focusing on the ways how assimilation practices affect the health and social conditions of current and former inmates of these institutions and the wider community. The exclusive focus on questions of identity and ethnicity poses a risk of assuming a deterministic position linking all social maladies to ethnicity and discrimination.

Lynch's (2019) essay on the institutionalisation of children in Ireland during the end of 19th and up to mid-20th century is a telling example of the shortcomings of this approach. While the essay itself contains extended and nuanced analysis of the role different factors, including ethnicity, poverty, religion as well as local and colonial politics, most essays on residential schools and indigenous people in the volume along with introduction and concluding remarks take indigeneity as the main analytical axis. Furthermore, this approach is not useful for analysis of similar institutions which do not deal with assimilation of indigenous groups.

1.1.2 Culture-specific residential education

A large section of scholarship regarding residential education is dedicated to institutions that are specific to particular local contexts, for example, Islamic boarding school in Indonesia (Mursidi et al. 2021; Fathurrochman et al. 2021) and boarding schools in Israel (Avihu Shoshana 2016; Avi Shoshana 2007). The analysis address narrow and locally specific aspects of residential education such as improvement of the local Islamic education system (Hanafie Das, Halik, and Amaluddin 2016), the place of residential education in wider system of education (Thahir 2014) or the role of residential education in integration of immigrant communities (Ben-David and Erez-Darvish 1997; Grupper 2013). These cases are specific, and it is difficult to transfer the analysis outside the culture-specific context. These shortcomings are also present in work on residential education in socialist or former socialist countries: Mette Louise Berg's exploration of residential school in Cuba (2015) and Tuychi Rashidov's work on Soviet boarding schools in Soviet Tajikistan (Rashidov 2019).

1.1.3 Refocusing research: residential education as site of reproduction of inequality and violence

The aim of my thesis is to explore the reproduction of socioeconomic inequality and violence within Latvian society through the case of residential schools thus broadening the perspective on residential schooling and using this case to uncover broader social processes. I argue that despite the change of political regimes through the 20th century and later, residential schools have served a function of buffer not only between the family and the state but also has been a site of reproduction of economic inequality and structural violence that characterises Latvian society.

I start with exploring the concept of structural violence as developed by Paul Farmer which helps me to introduce scholarship on socioeconomic inequality and on understanding the role of violence in reproduction of inequality. I follow it up with the main part of my theoretical framework by expanding and developing the ideas introduced in the subchapter on structural violence through the scholarship of Pierre Bourdieu. This is followed by introduction of the concept "violence continuum" which I use to explain the way how under conditions of

socioeconomic inequality the individual actors themselves also become more likely to engage in violent practices. Finally, I illustrate how these concepts can be applied in context of residential education in Latvia and introduce final concepts in the outline of my theoretical chapter.

1.2 Structural violence

Farmer sets apart structural violence as "violence exerted systematically—that is, indirectly—by everyone who belongs to a certain social order [...]" (Farmer 2010, 354). The concept of structural violence allows to critically evaluate how the lives of people and societies are affected by the social structures without immediately assigning the blame to the inherent qualities or shortcomings of the individual. The approach also emphasises the role of routine social arrangements in causing profound suffering. The name 'structural' here denotes not only the societal portion of this violence but also the fact that these assumptions and practices are very often ingrained in the structures of state and are therefore perpetuated as part of the official discourse, for example, on a national as well as residential school's level. Farmer started using this concept while working as an anthropologist and physician in Haiti in order to explain how decades of global health policies and mechanisms have failed to enact meaningful change in Haiti in regard to diseases such as AIDS and tuberculosis (Farmer 2004; 2009; 1996). Later Sadler, Santos, Ruiz-Berdún, Rojas, Skoko, Gillen & Clausen (2016) have used this approach in researching experience of obstetric violence. In both cases the violence is exerted by actors that are normally perceived as caring and supportive while in reality their actions may be guided by embodied implicit biases which lead them to either deny aid to country in clear need for it or disrespect women's desires regarding their body in relation to childbirth.

The concept of structural violence was coined by Galtung (1969) who views structural violence as one of the main forces producing inequality in society. However, for my analysis the definition of Farmer has been more productive as it provides more nuance when compared to Galtung's approach where the structural violence can be reduced to idea of social injustice (De Maio and Ansell 2018). The concept of structural violence has been used to uncover the role of established structures and systems in maintaining established order through "concentrated poverty, institutionalized racism, and unequal access to medical care and education" (Johnson, Drew, and Auerswald 2020, 3). This means that the causes for either food insecurity (Johnson 2020) family homelessness (Milaney et al. 2020) or abuse within maternity care (Solnes Miltenburg et al. 2018) can be found in local society itself rather than seen as a result of outside forces or individual choices.

However, excessive reliance on explaining the social suffering through a recourse to structural causes risks creating a different kind of skewed analysis where the individual agency both regarding possibilities to enact positive

change on a system-wide level and on a subjective level becomes problematic. Akhil Gupta (2012) has developed both a poignant illustration on how poverty can be analysed as a form of structural violence while also being open and critical about the shortcomings of this theoretical approach. In his exploration of the role of state actors in (not) overcoming the persistent poverty in India, Gupta remarks that same state actions oftentimes "generates sharply divergent outcomes for clients who are in similar structural locations" (A. Gupta 2012, 24). According to the logic of structural violence this should not be the case as the structural causes engrained within the social system should at least be equal in doling out suffering.

1.3 Taking inequality for granted: Bourdieu's theoretical framework

After assessing the shortcomings of both excessive reliance on individual agency and responsibility and structurally deterministic viewpoint, I propose a theoretical framework and method of inquiry borrowed from Bourdieu. It allows to avoid concentrating only on the individual agency of the actor through taking into account the way how the social structures become embodied within our perspective on the world while also helps to avoid structural determinism by arguing that due to existence of very real structural constraints each actor experiences the world in accordance with their own position within the constraints, which grants them a considerable leeway in their interaction with other actors in the field. This allows me to see residential schools as a field, interrelated with the fields of education and welfare, endowed with its habitus, capital, fields, strategies and logic of practice. In the following sections I firstly introduce each of these concepts and their application in interpretation of my case study. It is important to note that all concepts are interrelated and therefore co-dependant in their definitions.

1.3.1 Habitus

Bourdieu defines habitus as 'system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures' (Bourdieu 1977, 72). In other words, the concept of habitus is used to underline the embodiment of societal norms to such a degree that it structures the everyday life of a person on an unconscious level. Habitus refers to the way how a person is orienting and locating themselves in the space, how do they navigate particular places, how comfortable they are with taking up the space either with their corporeal body or with their speech (Bourdieu 1977, 474). The habitus is a good starting point in understanding Bourdieu's conceptualisation of the social world. It is designed to bridge the opposition between subjective and objective perspectives on human lives. Habitus can be explained neither by referring only to the decisions of individuals nor totally dependent on external constraints. It also

can be used to explore phenomena of social inertia where despite lack of meaning for certain social practices these may be practised and continued for much longer than practically necessary. Habitus allows the researcher to acknowledge how the inculcated ideas and assumptions about the world may prevent social change from taking place and keep seemingly outdated traditions alive (Bourdieu 1977).

Habitus is developed individually in each person through the processes of primary and secondary socialisation inculcating the social structure in the agent's body but leaving space for expression of individual agency. In relation to the way habitus is acquired, Bourdieu discerns two different types of habitus, primary and secondary. Primary habitus refers to the predispositions acquired during early childhood, mainly through family. Secondary habitus is acquired through participation in places of socialisation such as schools and workplaces. The relation between both types of habitus varies and potentially is oppositional as the norms and rules on a household level differ from the ones enacted, for example, in kindergarten.

1.3.2 Capital(s)

Drawing on Marx's definition of capital, Bourdieu expands the concept to encompass not only the economic dimensions of capital but also other resources that may be available for agents and which cannot be described in strictly economic terms. Bourdieu uses several forms of capital: economic capital, social capital, cultural capital and symbolic capital. The forms of capital are themselves organised hierarchically, with economic capital maintaining a dominant position while symbolic capital should be seen as an overarching principle that regulates the operation of all other capitals and will therefore be reviewed separately later. Economic capital here refers to resources with a direct market value which can be directly sold and bought. Social capital refers to skills and influence of the particular agent that is based on their social connections and skills. Social capital is closely linked to other forms of capital as the actual value of social capital available to agent is directly related to availability of other forms of capital in the field. Bourdieu argues that to fully appreciate the significance of social capital we should recognise that similarly to other types of capital it is the result of a long-term investment of labour which translates into durable obligations which are either felt on a subjective level (friendship, gratitude) or are institutionally guaranteed (rights) (Bourdieu 1986).

Cultural capital is closely linked to education and culture of the dominant group in a society (Andre and Hilgers 2015). The embodied state of cultural capital relates to practices and knowledge that becomes inculcated in the body of the agent. This requires significant investment of time and once the state of embodiment is achieved it can no longer be easily converted into other forms of capital. The bodily character of cultural capital closely links it to habitus as both refer to embodied state of knowledge. The primary habitus mentioned above therefore also becomes part of the primary embodied cultural capital in the form

of accent and taste (Bourdieu 1986). The secondary embodied cultural capital is acquired later through education and work training and although often it is easier to convert it to economic capital, it is still dependent on recognition of the value of the capital invested in the particular body.

The objectified state of cultural capital is embodied in material objects – writing, painting, monuments, songs, etc. While overall this form of cultural capital is more easily transferable compared to embodied form. But what is transferred here is the legal right to the particular form of capital rather than then capital itself, as the capacity to appreciate and use the legally acquired capital still depends on having the necessary embodied cultural capital.

Finally, the institutionalised state of cultural capital refers to the possession of qualifications, training, and knowledge that is officially recognised. The main benefit of institutionalised form of cultural capital is its transmissibility as the embodied knowledge and skills can now be evaluated, compared and renumerated in accordance with the rules instituted by the relevant institutions.

Concepts of capital have been successfully applied in analysis of post-socialist context, for example, *blat* and nepotism have been interpreted using the concept of social capital (Rodgers et al. 2019; Ignatowski, Stopczyński, and Trębska 2019).

1.3.3 Fields

Bourdieu has defined the field as "[...] A relatively autonomous domain of activity that responds to rules of functioning and institutions that are specific to it and which define the relations among the agents" (Hilgers and Mangez 2014, 5). According to this definition most of human activities can be analysed as either being fields themselves or as being constitutive of a particular field. The total social space is constituted of myriad social fields which while each having their own internal logic also affect each other. This concept allows viewing social space as ordered and readable with the agent always being located in a specific field or fields. Here the connection to habitus is important – the habitus of a person is constituted according to the field the person is located in. As each field is constituted according to its own internal logic, to understand actions of a particular agent it is important to understand how these actions relate to other positions in the field.

Another important concept used in relation to fields is agency. For Bourdieu the field is constituted primarily through relations. A relation can be established between any two entities that are able to act. This means that within this conceptual frame agency can refer to a person as well as to an institution. The relations between agents constitute the structure of the field. This becomes important as all of the fields are homologous in the sense that they are all structured by relations of dominance (Andre and Hilgers 2015, 6).

To explain the relations of dominance within a field it is prudent to refer to the field of power. The field of power should be perceived more as a general principle of how every other field in society is constructed and not as a separate

field by itself. The main principle of how the field of power is constructed is represented in the Figure 1. The field of power is organised around the two dominant forms of capital that themselves are also in relations of domination, namely the economic (dominant) and cultural (dominated) capital. As each field is organised around specific activity, the cultural capital inescapably acquires significant role in power relations, as possession of cultural capital gives advantage in relation to other agents.

At the same time as no field can be fully autonomous, the economic capital maintains its dominant position as it is the only form of capital that can be most directly exchanged between different fields (hence without conversion which entails spending some form of capital and therefore diminish value of capital that is being converted). The agents within the field are therefore required to achieve a significant mastery of the central activity of the field but this may prevent them from access to economic capital as their knowledge/skills become too specified to be easily translatable outside the particular field. On the other hand, although acquiring enough economic capital can ensure an agent's dominant role within any particular field, the position is hardly stable unless the economic capital is converted to the specific cultural capital of the field which allows the agent mastery central activity in the field and thus acquire a dominant position.

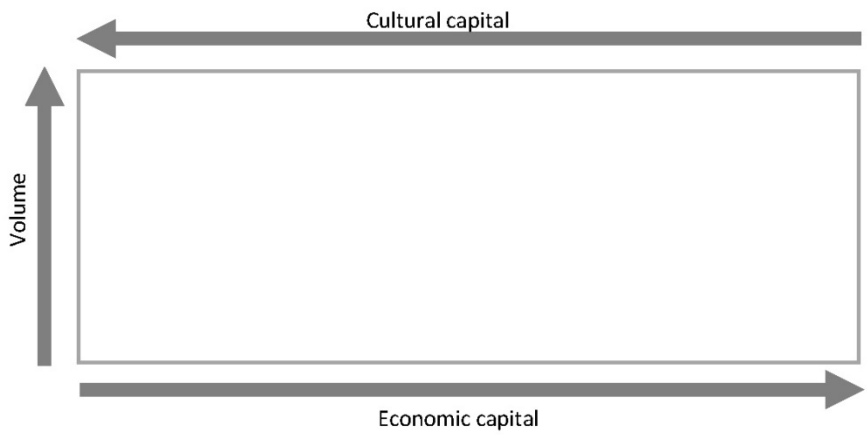

Figure 1 (adapted from Hilgers and Mangez (2014, 8)

The field of power is homologous to every social field in a society. While each separate field is constructed in accordance with the particular activity that forms its basis, the meta-field of power ensures that the main organisational principles of social fields remain the same. While the field of power ensures stability of the overall structure of fields it does not dictate the stability of any one field. As poignantly argued by (Boyer, 2003), the field theory is not only a theory of reproduction but also allows to see the movement and change within the field.

The agents inside the field are not fixed in their positions but those are fluid and contested. Agents engage in the struggle for different types of capital which may result in complete restructuring of the field or incorporation into/of another field.

1.3.4 (Logic of) Practice

The structured struggle within a field may be referred to as practice. Bourdieu used the concept of practice in opposition to that of theory. The practice refers to the action of an agent within a field. As actors engage in the struggle over the capitals, their actions are less likely to be guided by abstract rules than by their 'feel for the game' – ability to make the decision according to the conditions at the exact moment according to the conditions present. While the significance of rules is seldom openly disputed by agents, their everyday actions are likely to be carried out in accordance with what Bourdieu calls 'logic of practice' which is the opposite to 'logic of theory' which represents the rules as they are envisioned by the external actor analysing the actions of the agent.

1.3.5 Strategies

The concept of strategy for Bourdieu must be seen in accordance with the previously reviewed concepts. As explored in the previous sections, Bourdieu views agents as neither completely free nor imprisoned within larger structures. Rather agents are seen as being capable to act within the limits of their own habitus and position within the field as well a capital available. The logic of practice or action can be revealed from "strategies [which] refer to sequences of action that are ordered in relation to an end without having the objectively sought end as their origin, without the objectively sought end being explicitly posited as the end of the action" (Bourdieu 2020, 241). Strategies are simultaneously unconscious (as those depend on the inculcated knowledge and practices) and deliberate (as agents are capable of reacting to current situations). As the actions of a particular agent are simultaneously a representation of their unique position within the field as well as their creative capacity in manipulating this position, it allows to uncover the complexity of social situation and look both to the social change and inertia that opposes that change.

1.3.6 Inequality and its reproduction

According to Bourdieu, the socioeconomic inequality in any given society not only necessarily arises as the result of unequal division of capitals but also reproduces itself since agents with already accumulated capital have more resources at their disposal to perpetuate the existing division of capital and power (Bourdieu 1992). The inequality of the division of capitals is also crucial as most forms of capital, and cultural capital more than others, depend on the capital itself being scarce, thus increasing its value. Within this conceptual system, the existence of inequality is therefore linked to preserving the status quo in individual fields as much as larger field of power. As each field depends

on increased specialisation to maintain its autonomy, the need to maintain access to the field's specific cultural capital is crucial for agents to be able to maintain their power within the field and also outside it (as they draw most of the capital for exchange from inside their respective fields as well) (Hilgers and Mangez 2014).

The need to maintain the position in the field power structure when combined with the fact that acquisition of cultural capital is always time intensive further contributes to unequal distribution of capital within field and by extension also contributes to socioeconomic inequality. Still, this should not be taken as embrace of exactly the kind of deterministic structuralist prepositions that Bourdieu was trying to overcome in his theoretical approach. Both fields and agents within the fields are constantly shifting due to both structural reasons (shifts in field of power, incorporation in larger fields, emergence of new fields) as well as due to agency of agents themselves (agents using their capital to improve their position) which leads to situation where although the inequality may be oftentimes present in most societies, the experience of said inequality, which actors end up being dominated or dominant, is constantly in flux.

Finally, regarding inequality, it is important to note the role of its misrecognition plays in the theoretical framework of Bourdieu. While agents are aware of their chances and possibilities and can deftly manoeuvre the social field (indeed being aware of one's abilities and resources is crucial in what Bourdieu calls 'feel for the game' (Hilgers and Mangez 2014, 23–24), the underlying hierarchies remain invisible through process of misrecognition which prevents the agents from recognising the way how power is structured within society. In line with the argumentation concerning habitus, Bourdieu argues that the social domination becomes inscribed in the way how agents perceive the world which makes them perceive their own domination as natural through symbolic violence which I explore in the following section.

1.3.7 Symbolic capital and symbolic violence

Bourdieu perceives the social world as symbolically and socially ordered. While social structures refer to organisation according to objective positions and resources within the field, the symbolic structures refer to its organization at a level of meanings and embodied and subjective perspectives of the agents. Bourdieu claims that there necessarily exists a relation between the subjective and objective structures where the external social order constructs and maintains the internal mental order (Bourdieu 1991, 5). The concept of symbolic capital here refers to perceptions of honour, trustworthiness and other socially desirable qualities can also be perceived as a form of accumulated labour of the individual. The symbolic capital has a similar role in the field of power as other forms of capital, but it is somewhat different as it serves as basis for general social organisation of all forms of capitals. More symbolic capital at one's disposal means a better recognition within the specific field. This ascribes addi-

tional meaning to agents' actions with their capital as well as demands constant investment to maintain their symbolic capital.

Symbolic capital is closely linked to the concept of symbolic violence and refers to acceptance of one's position in the field. As the dominant agents accumulate symbolic capital their position within the field is elevated and strengthened. This creates a vested interest in maintaining the existing social structures in the field which support their position. On the other hand, agents who are entering the field from outside are less likely to possess the necessary symbolic capital and are likely to try to subvert the existing social order to improve their own positions. Symbolic violence here refers recognition and legitimization efforts of one's position as well as resistance to subversion. As Hilgers and Mangez (2014, p.11) claim, "the more legitimate an agent, the more her peers consume her products, and the more they consume her products, the more legitimate she becomes".

1.4 (Not only symbolic) violence: complementing Bourdieu's approach to violence

For Bourdieu violence is mostly discussed in instrumental sense. As argued by Von Holdt (2013) this may be the result of Bourdieu concentrating on the French case in his analysis, preventing seriously considering application of actual physical and emotional violence both by state and individual agents. Instead, Bourdieu is mostly interested in acceptance and normalisation of violence, which subsequently leads to his interest in symbolic violence. The theoretical framework of Bourdieu allows us to analyse application of violence in a macro perspective without considering operation of violence between agents on a more day to day level.

To complement Bourdieu's theoretical framework, I apply the concept of violence continuum as defined by Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004 p. 1). I introduce this concept to account for persistent inequality and struggle for the available capital in the field which leads to constant application and experience of violence. As illustrated above, agents in field may find themselves on the receiving end of forms of violence as it is ingrained in the very structures of their particular field. Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois argue that for agents living with constant experience of violence, violence becomes mundane and everyday occurrence, one of the types of relations that even may allow agents to improve their position in the field. Under conditions of structural violence, agents experience world where violence experienced is not only present but also justified (see earlier note on symbolic violence).

I emphasize the importance of the concept of violence continuum in creating environments where violence may become the defining attribute to their everyday life (see also everyday violence Scheper-Hughes, (1993)). This leads to constant state of vigilance, as described by Vigh (2011), or readiness for violence to occur at any moment. While this state can easily be analysed from the

perspective of Bourdieu, by referring to symbolic violence and the way how unequal distribution of capitals leads to perpetuation of this continuum, this approach fails to account for the actual experience of state of vigilance and its effects on one's habitus. Applying the notion of violence continuum allows to not only account for the structural causes of violent practices but also to incorporate the daily acts of violence between agents as equally constitutive in the power relations within the field.

1.5 Research theoretical approach: residential education as (contested) reproduction of socioeconomic inequality

In the following text I adapt my previously described approach to researching residential education system. I use the concepts described in this chapter to analyse the case of Latvian residential schools in order to illustrate how the combination of Bourdieu's theory and violence continuum can be used to analyse socioeconomic inequality and different types of violence within institutional context.

1.5.1 Field of education

Field of education is an autonomous field in the field of power, constructed around durable system of hierarchies, maintained and reproduced through arbitrary system of competition and recognition (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990). Arbitrary here is used in Bourdieu's sense to refer to activities that are imposed without objective goal but rather are the results of the of logic of practice. In his research of the French education system Bourdieu has illustrated the construction of the field of education around durable system of inequity, as schools operate sorting students according to arbitrary system of recognition and achievements The hierarchy extends both to each separate school ('gifted' students, 'difficult' students) and to wider school network (Bourdieu used the example of grandes écoles and 'petites écoles' in the French education system to illustrate the inequality between different educational facilities) (Bourdieu 2016).

This by extension means that the educational system is built towards exclusion as much as towards inclusion. Despite promises of education as liberation for the masses, the educational system actually reinforces and maintains the already existing social order by devaluing the institutionalised cultural capital just as soon as members of lower classes access it (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990). The role of schooling in social reproduction of inequality has been explored by Paul Willis in his ethnography "Learning to Labour—How Working-Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs" (1978). In his work Willis argues that schools can be seen as sites of social reproduction of inequality, but this function is not neutral and stable but rather a result of constant struggle between

the involved agents which however leads to a predictable outcome of working-class youth settling into working class employment.

As noted by Walker (2016), experience for youth in the 21st century is starkly different from those described by Willis as the economies of European countries have shifted towards neoliberal flexible labour market and the chances for taking working class jobs have gone down significantly. This trend is even more pronounced in post-socialist countries such as Latvia due to even more radical shift in perception of value and prestige of working-class jobs, compared to the socialist period glorification of manual labour. Furthermore, if during the socialist period the education (at least officially) was directed towards ensuring accessibility and equal opportunities to all, then in the neoliberal capitalist economy the field of education is increasingly becoming dominated by the economic field (Mangez 2008) triggering restructure of power relations within the field.

Taking this into account, I would argue that constant reforms and surface level restructuring is one of the key features of the educational field. The misrecognition of the durability of the field is one of the key components that maintain the overall stability of the field itself. The durability of underlying structure is directly linked to the fact that the educational field is homologous to the field of power and therefore the way how the agents are situated within the field is dependent on the accumulation of economic and cultural capital which, as explored above, has the propensity to reproduce itself. It is important to stay mindful however, as the durability of the underlying structure does not equal unchanged experience for the agents within the field. So, while underlying premise of educational field was that children "whose family and neighbourhood circumstances were rich in the kinds of knowledges, language, ways of being, speaking and behaving required in schools, had the social and cultural know-how necessary to succeed in education" (Thomson and Holdsworth 2003, 381) was kept, what constituted "kinds of knowledges, language, ways of being" could have changed radically and require agents to adapt to these changes.

To reiterate, the educational field is a subfield in the field of power and thus homologous in its organisation to the field of power. The underlying structure of educational field is based on unequal distribution of cultural capital which is misrecognised as stemming from personal attributes (for example, talent, aptitude). This misrecognition is present on all levels of the field including teaching staff, parents, pupils, and state officials which can later serve as justification for institutional changes in the system of education and reinforcing a claim that lack of success in the education was the result of student's lack of motivation or talent rather than the way the educational system itself was structured. Change in the field of education can also lead to keeping that change at the ideological level, for example, producing report and regulations while keeping existing hierarchical positions intact.

1.5.2 Field of welfare

While the borders and overall content of the field of education are somewhat easy to grasp intuitively, the field of welfare is more elusive. In my conceptualisation I rely heavily on Bourdieu's lecture of December 12, 1991, in combination with Deleuze's account on emerging social sector in his essay "The Rise of the Social" (Deleuze 1979). Deleuze proposes to view 'the social sector' as a historical hybrid, arising from several other domains of contemporary society. 'The social' therefore contains traces of the judicial sector, the administrative sector, the medical sector all the while maintaining itself as separate form of social phenomena and state function. Far from leading towards increased cooperation and confluence between these separate functions, the social sector rearranges the borders of other sectors. The application of concept of field here is especially fruitful as it allows to describe 'the social' in its hybridity by acknowledging the wide variety of agents involved in the constructing of the social welfare field. The field of the social brings together different actors and fields – state, municipal, civil sectors, service providers, clients and donors.

Similarly, as field of education is based on misrecognition of reproduction of socioeconomic inequality as meritocracy, the field of welfare is also dependent on misrecognition of reproduction of socioeconomic inequality as care and support. Thus, care provided by the state can become seen as a precondition of the very existence of the state. The organising principle of the field of welfare according to the theory of fields is the distribution of capital (economic, symbolic, cultural[3]) to ensure its continued participation in the field of power and preservation of established power relations. This means that structural violence may not be expressed as a direct form of oppression but also may hide under forms of support, care and nurture (Bourdieu 2014, p.358–359). If the notions of talent and aptitude were the crucial tools for maintaining the misrecognition of inequality in the field of education, in the field of social welfare this is realised through notion of deservedness.

According to Bourdieu, reproduction of relations of domination in the field of education are implemented through misrecognition. The qualities necessary to succeed there are expected to be acquired in the field itself while successful students are those who acquire these skills during primary socialisation in their families. This mechanism thus favours higher positioned agents as the skills necessary in school environment (both embodied as ways of talking and performed as recognition of art) are more likely to already be a part of their daily lives when compared to those from the less successful background (Bourdieu 1977, p. 494). In field of welfare the mechanism is similar, but the practices are different. Similarly, to the field of education, agents entitled to some capital (either economic in the form of pensions, or cultural in form of training and qualifications or symbolic in form of recognised state as a poor person) should already possess the necessary starting capital to be able to navigate the

[3] Notice here the connection to educational field!

byzantine networks of state support agencies. The complex systems of checks and balances in state support systems here emerge as legitimation practices for relations in a field that themselves are never openly discussed or challenged. I argue that this can be and is used creatively by agents in subordinate positions as knowledge of state support systems and their practical logic becomes part of the cultural capital exchanged among the people in the waiting line, on the bus and at the market. Although this seldom leads to structural change in the power relations within the field, these weapons of the weak (Scott 1985) are crucial when considering the way how agents experience and act within the social welfare field.

The field of welfare emerges as multifaceted field, closely linked to fields of education, family and administration. It is also closely linked to the field of power as it occupies a precarious position in wider social relations due to its function as the mechanism for reproduction of existing social relations through mechanisms of redistribution. The field itself however is not geared towards meaningful redistribution of capitals but rather maintenance of existing relations through providing agents with enough capital to continue to participate within the field of power. This can be circumvented to a certain degree with knowledge about the logic of practice of social welfare field (both in relation to state and private agents) serving as important cultural capital among the dominated group.

1.5.3 Field of family

The final field that overlaps within the confines of residential school is family field. Following previously the previously established definition of field as autonomous domain of activity organised in accordance with rules within the domain itself, the field of family is constituted around the maintenance and establishment of familial relations between individuals. Furthermore, as the existence of field demands some form of cultural capital that forms the basis of its autonomy, this also demands that the family field is viewed through the perspective of knowledge, practices and skills that are employed by the agents to claim their position within the particular field. Here I draw on the previously established notion of social field as family field has clear parallels with the social field in the way it is organised and how it came to be established. Similarly, to "the social" the family field has developed throughout the 20–21st centuries and by now family is firmly established as knowledge intensive phenomena, with significant scholarship being dedicated to establishing what counts as a family (Bryceson and Vuorela 2002; Fineman 2014; Peshina 2019), development of family policy (Ainsaar 2009; Ainsaar and Riisalu 2014; Berger and Carlson 2020; Cowan and Cowan 2019) and increased state control over the way how life within the family is organised (Stephenson 2008; Rockhill 2010) and simultaneously increased support to establishment and maintenance of the accepted forms of family life as well (Ainsaar 2009; Ainsaar and Riisalu 2014; Cowan and Cowan 2019).

Turning towards reproduction of relations of domination within the field of family we can establish several ways how they are realised. The struggle over the cultural capital within the family field is enacted through the aforementioned discussions of what counts of family and what practices and knowledge is necessary for the family to be recognised as not only a family but also a "good family". This serves as basis for the dominant agents within the field to gain access to additional forms of capital such as state support, social recognition and reaffirmation of their dominant position. The dominant form of family within Western world has been defined by Atkinson as: "consanguineous, heterosexual, patriarchal, monogamous, private, nuclear, male breadwinner/ female homemaker model" (Atkinson 2014, 225). All of the describing characteristics however need to be viewed as points of potential struggle rather than established categories and therefore part of the cultural arbitrary. This creates possibility for change which however is resisted by the dominant agents within the field as described above.

The change also arises due to the wide variety of agents involved within the field of family. In comparison with social field however it must be noted that the involvement of additional actors within the field of family has been a much more contentious process as unlike the social field the field of family could be argued to have been existing for a much longer period. While social field arises as hybrid from its very inception, the family field has historically been organised around the concept of kinship which leads to resistance and sometimes outright denial of introduction of additional agents within the field[4]. Kinship serves as source for the most important embodied forms of knowledge within field of family (e.g., maternal instinct (Andaya and Kotni 2022), practices related to the correct organisation of family life (e.g., role of grandparents in different societies (Mansson and Sigurðardóttir 2019) and as the final resistance against ever encroaching control of the state (Belge 2011).

Additionally, I would caution against viewing family field as simply as an arena for struggle between the individual (parents) and the state (school). While family field is indeed part of the wider field of power it is important to acknowledge that the actors vying for position within it are not only state actors but may also involve agents acting on their own interests both within the confines of the family field as much as using their position within field of family to improve their position in adjacent and overlapping fields such as the social or education field.

This definition has several advantages within the context of my research. Firstly, it allows me to consider different forms of social organisation through the lens of family, instead of fixating either on the nuclear family or any other particular form and rather recognise that the debates around the "correct form of family" are themselves part of the struggle present within the field of family.

[4] In chapter 3.1.1 I describe how the Soviet Union attempted to replace the kinship system by residential school system and how this served as one of the causes for the downfall of residential school during this time period.

Secondly, it allows me to establish a perspective from which to analyse the way how families interact with the residential school and vice versa.

1.5.4 Residential school: positioned between the fields

The contemporary Latvian residential school is a sort of an inverse version of the famous British boarding schools which fulfils the same function of maintaining the unequal distribution of different type of capitals in the society. I propose that we look at residential school as a specific site of limited social reproduction. As previously described, the change in the ideological regimes has affected the way how the educational field is structured and consequently the positions of agents within the field. Societal and economic change poses challenges for institutions like residential schools which, as is explored in more detail in subsection 3.1.1.6, during the Soviet period have been geared towards reproduction of mostly low skilled manual labour force, despite the original lofty goals and the presence of particular institutions meant for developing the talents of prodigious athletes and such. While this role was tenable during the Soviet period due to high ideological status of (male) farm and factory workers, the situation has changed after the dissolution of Soviet Union, when manual labour lost its cultural and symbolic significance.

I argue that residential schools are different from most schools due to their position of being simultaneously a school and a residential care institution. But this position makes them vulnerable as they occupy a very narrow and contested niche inhabited by other social fields such as welfare and education. The relations of residential school system within other fields have historically changed. During the Soviet period residential schools were ascribed high status and role in educating Soviet citizens which, however, did not always translate in meaningful long-term material investments (Mayofis 2016).

Furthermore, the significance of residential education relates not only to the field of education but also the field of welfare. As described below, despite Soviet ideology, wider society stayed mostly hesitant towards the idea of transferring the care of their children to state actors. This demonstrates that residential schools did not command significant cultural capital as their symbolic role was contentious, which had led to the diminished role of residential education in the later years of Soviet Union.

In practice the system of education supported residential schools by providing highly trained and motivated staff as well as helping to maintain its leading role as the premiere learning institution for both those at the top of Soviet society (Rashidov 2019) and those at the very bottom (Allemann 2018). The question of the welfare system, however, is more complicated. In USSR the welfare system was not separated from other sectors and the process described by Deleuze had not yet taken place. This meant that the welfare function of the state was realised by other sectors which affected the way the deservedness of social support was envisioned. In Soviet Latvia social care was tied to other institutions such as residential schools, reformatories, medical institutions or

places of incarceration. In order to access the capital provided by the welfare system one necessarily entered relations with other fields, such as education in the case of residential school. This meant that the notion of deservedness of support became tied to the specific cultural capital of the respective field. But as capitals are never given but always exchanged, the individuals staking their claim towards the capital provided by the residential school were expected to offer something in return. Residential school students were involved in the work of collective farms and factories, gaining most of funding and material support for running residential schools (Mayofis 2016). Residential schools become locations where cultural capital circulating in the field of educational is translated and connected to economic capital circulating in the field of socialist economics while encompassed by a larger field of power. The symbolic resources of the field of education here justify and elevate the significance of the manual labour that is extracted from pupils therefore contributing to the larger project of Soviet Union as a union of workers and farmers, where the manual and industrial labour was seen as the main guarantee of ever-brighter future as well as the moral purity of its citizens.

The dissolution of Soviet Union led to fluctuations in cultural capital of residential schools as it was closely tied to the existing field of power. Cultural capital accumulated by residential schools was no longer recognised as valuable, as it could no longer be transferred. Changes in perspective on the development of children and role of labour in the educational process meant that the symbolic basis for the existence of residential schools has vanished. It has been affected and has affected the access to economic capital. As the collective farms dissolved and factories were closed down during the transition of socialist to capitalist economy system during the 1990s, the residential school system lost its access to the resources provided by the farms and factories which made it more reliant on state funding at the exact moment when it was unlikely to be available.

In parallel to this process, the emergence of the welfare field took place during this time. But as this field was established as autonomous from other fields in the field of power, the relations between the social services and other sectors changed. If previously both the symbolic and material capitals of welfare systems were dependent on their integration in other fields, in the new structure of field of power the welfare field was envisioned as separate and the deservedness to access the capital within it came to be based on the capacity of the agents to orient themselves in this new field.

So far, I have illustrated how the theory of fields can help one to understand the residential school system within the framework of larger historical changes in Latvia. Residential schools were not passive pawns at the mercy of larger actors. They have survived until today in part because of the feel for game, strategies and practices used by the school personnel who are active and skilful participants in the field of residential education.

Summary

In this chapter I have outlined my theoretical approach. In a brief summary of current scholarship on residential education I argue that it is mostly dedicated to exploration of narrow aspects withing the particular systems of education that are difficult to generalize. This makes the observations and arguments made in this literature mostly unapplicable outside their particular local contexts and leaves a comparative perspective of residential education system unexplored. I propose to analyse the residential school position within field of power by looking at two other fields, namely, field of welfare and educational field. I propose to apply the concept of violence continuum to account for the way how the dominated groups are both victims and perpetrators of violence in institutional context while applying concepts of fields to illustrate the larger relations which structure the way how this violence is realised as well as reinforce the domination that makes it possible and necessary.

2 METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes methods and approaches used to answer my research question. As my research question is geared towards exploration of the structural causes as much as the individual agency of actors within my research field, my methods are geared towards constructing knowledge about both facets. Firstly, this necessarily requires application of multi-sited ethnography in order to explore additional potential dimensions of the research question. This, however, was not realised fully due to the presence of Covid-19 pandemic as I describe in the following subchapter. After that I introduce the main methods used in my work. I start with description of autoethnography as reflection and critical analysis of my own childhood experiences served as basis for my analytical position. After that I turn towards interviews as these served as the main corpus of data for my research. I also describe my reasoning for using life-story interviews with former residential school pupils, as these allowed me to explore both how the individuals enter the institution and how their lives develop after graduating. As my work also required the exploration of the past trajectories of not only individuals but also institutions, I further describe the analysis of the various documents, books and other written sources that were necessary in this stage. After that I describe how the data analysis was carried out and address the questions of positionality and ethics.

2.1 Multi-Sited Ethnography

The decision to apply multi-sited ethnography (MSE) to my research field is grounded both in the way of how residential schools operate in contemporary Latvia and in my own epistemological positionality. Due to the numerous media scandals in last few years (Anstrate 2019; Anstrate and Ozola-Balode 2018; Anstrate and eng.lsm.lv 2017; eng.lsm.lv 2015; Ozola-Balode, eng.lsm.lv, and De facto 2019) the institutions were often guarded in their responses to my inquiries about interviews. Furthermore, as illustrated in chapter 3.2, in the recent years the institution has gone through major changes which has created a rather fragmented field of a sometimes-diverse range of institutions being called residential schools. This meant that by only concentrating on schools that were, for example, established during Soviet period I would dismiss a significant part of institutions in Latvia. Also, the decision to only concentrate on schools that are located either in rural or urban setting would create similarly skewed representation of the research field. This also serves as an example of what is argued by Marcus (2021) to be the “fiction” of ethnographic fieldwork as bounded and limited in space. The attempts of situating the research field in a single location or community should be recognised as the choice of the ethnographer rather than reflection of the reality in the field.

It is important to recognise that it is not my intention to replace all anthropological fieldwork with MSE but rather a recognition that in cases where the

research field is connected to concepts that transcend a singular community, the researchers should be aware of the need to extend their research to several locations. So, as explored by Carney (2017), when researching race, MSE approach allows one to gain access to several different contexts that provide a nuanced perspective on the respective research question. The research of "residential school" due to the uncertain and often shifting nature of the concept itself becomes one of the prime examples that would benefit of this research.

Finally, the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic also meant that the challenges faced by residential schools were often such that there was little time the school staff could find for accommodating the needs of a PhD student. This meant that in relation to data gathering I was often at the mercy of my research participants and the data gathering was sometimes haphazard as described in the section on research sites, and in an attempt to gather enough research data for my thesis I needed to explore several research sites. Chao (2020) describes how the experience of an ethnographer during the pandemic becomes defined by the feelings of guilt, due to the impossibility to return to their families and close ones by being trapped in their fieldwork locations and the decisions one needs to make to continue their research despite of potential risks to themselves and their research participants. I believe that the feelings of guilt also extend to researchers working closer to home where they are more often connected to the concern of the research participants and their wellbeing. This becomes especially pertinent in the cases where the research field concerns any of the groups, places or communities that were disproportionately affected by the pandemic, such as the field of education as well as the field of social care. In these conditions any of my planned methods aside from interviews were made impossible as I could not justify asking my research participants to devote time to my needs in a time when they were trying to juggle the needs of their pupils, distance learning and their own personal struggles with the virus.

Turning towards my epistemological position, my decision to look at several institutions instead of a single one stemmed from two main considerations. Firstly, as I was interested in the way the structural violence contributes to the creation of violence continuum as experienced by residential school inhabitants, I was keenly aware of my need to look towards the connections and structures further than a single institution and rather explore the residential school system in both historical and spatial sense. It was clear from my preliminary research that although the locality of the institution was a significant factor in the way it is going to operate[5], this was not in itself a significant enough factor to justify choosing either an urban or rural school. Rather it became evident that the different contexts of urban/rural schools allow one to see how the violence continuum is connected to the resources available to the institution which

[5] Historical research had already indicated that while the rural schools were often connected to collective farms, the urban institutions were usually working together with factories. This meant that the resources available for each of the institutions could differ significantly.

became even more pronounced after the collapse of Soviet Union as both rural and urban schools lost their direct access to resources that were previously provided by the collective farms and factories.

Secondly, the need for MSE was grounded in my own positionality in the field. As one of the data sources for my thesis was my own experience in the residential school, the danger of losing the analytical perspective was ever-present. This meant that to avoid reproducing my own perceptions and feelings about the institutions, I needed several tools to ensure that I did not compromise the research due to my own traumatic experiences. Here the MSE approach could be applied fruitfully precisely due to the critique that is often levelled against this approach. MSE is sometimes positioned as alternative to extended fieldwork and is therefore seen as potentially critiquing the importance of deep immersion into the research field which has served as the basis for anthropological approach since its inception (Molloy, Walker, and Lakeman 2017, 8). However, in my case, where deeper immersion in the field would likely present a challenge rather than produce additional data, the opportunity to confront my own experiences with contrasting data was crucial in developing a balanced perspective. The need to immerse oneself in the research field is closely linked to the roots of the anthropological discipline where the fieldwork was usually carried out far from one's own community and steeped in assumptions about the existence of commensurable bounded "cultures". In my research however I build on the critique of this approach (Clifford and Marcus 1987) and instead of looking for the culture of residential schools I explore the different relations, practices, systems and processes that create the concept of residential school. I believe that in cases where the researcher is not only researching part of their own community but even a phenomenon that they are themselves intimate with, MSE has an important role as one of the tools to ensure that the researcher does not lose themself in their research field.

Finally, MSE allows one to avoid "naturalising" the field situation and normalising the perceptions of a particular place and/or institution (Linde-Ozola 2019). By not tying the research to a single locality it is less likely that the researcher would end up reproducing some of the more persistent discourses related to systemic violence where the abuse and violence experienced within the institution is often explained as a result of the actions of the particular institution rather than systemic causes. This puts the responsibility for reducing the violence solely on the shoulders of the institution itself which may lead to further exclusion and discrimination towards the staff and inhabitants of the institution while staying oblivious to the way how the lack of support can lead to the emergence of violent practices in the first place. By exploring the ways how the structural violence is implemented in several institutions, the structural aspects of the violence are foregrounded and can be critically analysed. This also provides the researcher with opportunity to compare the ways how the violence is resisted in different institutions which can help to not only better understand the violence itself but also to work towards potential solutions to the

experiences of structural violence by documenting and analysing not only conceptual but also practical ways of dealing with the institutional abuse.

2.2 Impact of Covid 19 on my fieldwork

The advent of global pandemic and related restrictions significantly impacted my research plans. Here I outline the main lines of impact that do not fit elsewhere in this chapter. These can be grouped around three main themes: lack of physical access, inability to work with child participants and constraining my research to only Latvian context.

2.2.1 Isolation and lockdown: fieldwork during pandemic

I started my fieldwork on the September of 2019. My field activities at the time very mostly connected to the larger research project "Strengthening Families, Communities and Relationships: An Anthropological Approach to Violence Prevention" I was a part of and included conducting interviews in one of the towns in Latvia. As the topic of my thesis was closely linked to the larger research project, I consider this a beneficial situation, as in parallel with this process I was negotiating access to several potential fieldsites both in the region and in different municipalities around the country. By January 2020 I had negotiated access in one institution where we had already conducted interviews for the research project, and I was in the process of negotiating access to another possible institution. However, due to the advent of pandemic, both institutions were shuttered, with children sent away from the schools and teachers adapting to teaching online. In these conditions which intermittently continued until the end of my fieldwork at the end of fall semester 2021 which I had planned to the physical access to the institutions became impossible. Furthermore, as the school staff was under considerable stress during this time, due to the chaotic attempts to organise support for the pupils, switch to teaching online, and surviving the pandemic itself, the decision to stop attempts to gain physical access to my participants was made by me which I saw also an ethical responsibility towards my research participants. This decision was based on the articles 5.2 to 5.4 of Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK (ASA) Ethical Guidelines which state the responsibility of the researcher to avoid undue intrusions and anticipate the potential harms of the research activities. In my case this meant recognising that during the difficulties experienced by my research participants, attempts to burden them with additional work in order to accommodate the needs of my research project were unjustified, especially if the data necessary to my research could be acquired through other methods as described in the following section.

2.2.2 "[I]t's not like there are any pupils here": doing research about (but without) children

My original research plan contained including child participants' perspective in my research through use of participatory research methods. Both in my previous academic research and my work outside academia I had already acquired experience in applying participatory methods in working with children in varied settings. Complementing this with additional preparation and research on child-friendly research I established three guiding principles towards working with adolescents as research participants. Firstly, as outlined by Ridgely among others, working with children as co-researchers can be a very illuminating as long as it is carried out in a way that is accessible and supportive to the child participant (Clark 2011; Ridgely 2012; Canosa, Graham, and Wilson 2018). What this will entail, however, depends on the age group one is working with, the setting in which the access is negotiated and the characteristics of the individual researcher. For example, while doing research in addiction rehabilitation institution, I noticed the wide age range of the adolescents I was working with. While some of the participants were below the age of 10, others were closing in on 18 – the age of adulthood in Latvia. This created tensions between group members both due to cognitive (Bonoti and Misailidi 2006) and group dynamic reasons as there were different methods preferred by differently aged children. This makes considerations of group dynamic and composition crucial in carrying out participatory research with children.

Secondly, I wished to maintain the connection between the theoretical and methodological approaches of my research. As argued by Fenge, Hodges and Cuts (2011), introduction of participatory approach is one of the ways to implement Bourdieu's General Theoretical Framework within one's methodological approach as well. By including and appreciating the social and cultural capital of young people one can ensure that the data construction during research gets closer to representing the lived experience of children and young people, by allowing them to feel safe and valued in the research process.

Finally, the participatory methods may serve as a tool of empowerment for research participants, enabling them not only to reflect on their own experience, but also to appreciate how much of this experience is potentially shared. This may lead to improved sense of community among the participants and contribute to their capacity to engage in defence of their rights in a collective manner (Thomas-Hughes 2018; Wernick, Woodford, and Kulick 2014).

However, as all of these are dependent on the researcher being able to develop a lasting rapport with the participants and the maintenance of group of participants as basis for participatory research, I ended up deciding against application of these methods during my fieldwork, as the conditions during the pandemic would have prevented me from achieving the necessary conditions for such a research project to be developed. As one of teachers in a potential fieldsite wrote to me when I enquired about their lives during the pandemic and my chances of conducting research: "You can come if you wish, but it's not like

there are any children there". While acknowledging that this might have opened up an opportunity to engage with children in their home environments, I recognised again the undue stress this would have placed both on children as well as on their families during time when most families were already struggling to adjust to the new conditions of distance learning.

2.2.3 Research at home: fieldwork during global pandemic

My original research plan included not only research in Latvia but also in all three of Baltic countries in order to introduce a comparative perspective in my thesis. During the end part of 2020 I had already established contacts with some potential gatekeepers both in Estonia and Lithuania, through the support of my supervisor as well as through my personal contacts. Preliminary research indicated that both countries also still had some form of residential education system which however diverged from Latvian system in significant ways. In preparation for my fieldwork, I had also already taken an introductory course of Estonian language to complement my working knowledge of English and Russian. However, as the pandemic lingered, the ability to cross national borders was always threatened, as well as each of the countries continued to impose different forms of lockdown, isolation and suspension of on-site teaching. It quickly became apparent that inclusion of institutions in other countries would have to be abandoned. I have still included exploration of how the residential school system developed in Estonia in the history chapter in order provide at least some regional context to my research question.

2.3 Methods

2.3.1 Autoethnography

In order to answer this question which becomes that much more pertinent in this research, I decided to include autoethnography in my methodological approach. As noted by several authors (Adams and Holman Jones 2008; Anderson 2006; Méndez 2013) autoethnography is still a contested research method with several different definitions. Still, most authors agree that its roots are connected to the representation crisis during the 1980s (Holt 2003) as part of a general push towards awareness of the embedded nature of the researcher and the impact one's presence and personal stance has on the research field. The aim of the autoethnography is to connect the personal with the cultural by placing the self within a social context (George 1998). This allows the readers to become aware not only of the data that has been gathered from the Other but also of the inner self of the author. It should be noted that the autoethnographic approach is based on the belief that the aim of the research is not to describe the lived experience as faithfully as possible but rather to concentrate on creating a meaning from it (Ellis and Bochner 2000, 270) rejecting positivist notions of objective research stance. This demands that the author not only describes the

relevant experiences but also remains critical of both the situations they decide to describe as well as the way how they are described. Reed-Danahay argue that to maintain the analytical value of this tool autoethnography needs to evaluated against three main principles:

1. The role of the autoethnographer in the narrative: is the autoethnographer an insider or an outsider of the phenomenon being described?
2. Whose voice is being heard: who is speaking, the people under investigation or the researcher?
3. Cultural displacement: some realities are being described by people who have been displaced from their natural environment due to political or social issues (Reed-Danahay 2021).

The first principle relates to the importance of clearly situating oneself in the field so as to avoid misleading the reader or misrepresenting the field. Loïc Wacquant's (2004) work "Body & Soul: Notebooks of an Apprentice Boxer" serves as a great example of how autoethnography can be used by an outsider. By describing author's own experience of learning how to box, we as readers can get both much better understanding of the empirical experience in the field, indeed the very bodily experience of learning to throw a punch, stepping back and competing while also elaborating the importance of habitus as theoretical concept in a much deeper manner than it would be possible without describing author's own body experience. On the other hand, Robert F. Murphy's (1990) "The Body Silent: The Different World of the Disabled" shows how anthropologist can expose one's own social position to analysis. This approach differs from an outsider's perspective in the same way how emic perspective differs from etic one – here the anthropologist is not learning to become part of the research field but rather learning how to take one's experiences and events that up to this point might have been part of mundane everyday life and subject it to analysis. While both approaches are equally valid, it is crucial that the author establishes her/his position and stays aware of it to avoid 'going native' on one hand and, on the other hand, does not describe one's experience as something completely unrelated to the general field of research, as both approaches result in the loss of meaning and value of the text.

This relates to the second point which reminds about the importance of clearly denoting which parts of the text are coming from the researcher and which parts the research participants are saying. This distinction is important due to two main points. First, this is an ethical concern as one should never misrepresent the data from the field and confuse personal observations and experiences with the observations and interviews from the field. While this is a problem in any qualitative research project it becomes especially pronounced in relation to autoethnography where the experiences of researcher play an even more significant role than in other methods. The second reason for maintaining clear distinction between the two relates to the analytical side of the description. As argued by Tierney "autoethnography confronts dominant forms of representation and power in an attempt to reclaim, through self-reflective response, representational spaces that have marginalized those of us at the borders"

(Tierney 1998, 66). To ensure that the author does not simply repeat old patterns of structuring the text mostly around one's own perceptions and convictions, the distinction between experiences is crucial.

Finally, the third point relates to the fact that autoethnographic research pushes the exile status of the researcher to the maximum. As noted by Reed-Danahay, "[autoethnography] involves a rewriting of the self and the social" (2021, 4). Unlike researchers who can retreat from their research field by physically removing themselves from it, this is not likely to happen in the case of autoethnography where the field also includes the memories and thoughts of the researcher her/himself. This makes the immersion in the field even more complete than participant observation and merges the self and the social to the greatest possible degree. Extracting one's own voice out from the research becomes more complex.

I would argue that in relation to the first point I would adopt an insider's perspective of the field, as my participation and entry in the field is not something that will happen during fieldwork but rather is a part of my already existing life experience. This introduces several problems to my data analysis process. First, as I am basing my analysis on my own memory, I am liable to lapses in memory, unconscious avoidance of particular experiences and quite conscious desire to avoid speaking of certain experiences. I hope to overcome this by always comparing and relating my own experience to that of my research participants so as to avoid making conclusions from an incomplete data set. Furthermore, I plan to also consult my family members and friends who also resided in the institution to cross-check facts and memories of particular events. Second problem arises from the fact that my own experience of residential school is now a decade old. This means that the experiences youth now have inside residential school could differ significantly from mine. This is especially crucial considering that this time period in our country has been one of almost constant education and out-of-family care system reforms. This I again hope to overcome by being aware of my own role and experience. This allows me to use it as a resource for observing how the system has (not) changed during this time period which can then be used to further my analysis of my research topic.

2.3.2 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used as the second main methodological tool. As noted by Bernard, semi-structured interviews are one of the best instruments in situations where researchers are unlikely to get more than one chance of interviewing their research participants (Bernard 2017, 157–58). The number of interviewees and their positions were adjusted as the research process continued due to complications with access. The participants included social workers, school staff members, NGO workers and state officials. The interviews were carried out as part of the larger research project mentioned earlier, which meant

that I was analysing interview data both from interviews I carried out myself as well as those carried out by my colleagues.

Table 1

Participant list	
School staff	13
NGO	1
State and municipal officials	6
Parents and family members	3
Total	23

Here I provide description of research participants. Interviews include conversations with state and municipal officials, individuals working in the residential school as well as former inhabitants and their relatives.

School staff: Provided data on historical and current working conditions in residential schools. The participants included teachers, educators, principals, as well as support staff (social workers, psychologists). Almost all participants were currently working in residential schools, with most having spent almost their entire careers in the field and in their current institution.

State and municipal officials[6]: This group provided the perspective of how the residential school policy was crafted on state and municipal level. This category included both officials from Ministry of Education and Science as well as local social workers and deputies. In two cases the role of local deputy overlapped with that of a school principal.

Parents and family members: These interviews provided the perspective of actors that are most directly connected to the decisions to transfer children to residential schools. This allowed me to gain a perspective on how the decisions were made, what were the perceptions of residential schools among parents. These interviews included both family members who had sent their children to the residential schools as well as ones who only mentioned residential schools

[6] I limited my research with policy analysis as I was interested mainly in political context of residential school development. There is still room to explore public debates, media scandals as well as court proceedings. I have followed the trope of policy process and references found there – statistics, reserach and legal re-definitions of the schools. In response to reviewer's comments, I would like to acknowledge that my research does not include interviews with judges or analysis of court proceedings. I did not interview judges or policeman as this was not the focus of my research which is directed towards policy and experiences of residential school inhabitants rather than their interactions with this part of state apparatus. In the same vein, my research did not include analysis of court proceedings which form a very specific form of data. Policy analysis did not reveal any impact court decisions would have had on this development of policy which confirmed my decision not to pursue this line of inquiry.

during interviews as one the support mechanisms or, more often, tools of punishment that were available for parents who were experiencing difficulties.

NGO: The research also included an interview with a local NGO worker in one of the regions where a residential school was located. This provided an important perspective on how the isolated and hidden position of residential school may prevent them from receiving support from NGOs and similar actors in order not to disrupt the local power structures.

As the reader may notice, these interviews do not include any current or former inhabitants of residential schools. This was done purposefully due to two main considerations. Firstly, the research includes two life-story interviews that are described below and were used to acquire the perspective of individuals who had already graduated from their respective residential schools.

Negotiating access

As the residential schools are often isolated through state policy as well as a form of self-preservation, the access to each institution needed to be negotiated separately and often yielded no results. None of the institutions that were contacted directly agreed to participate in the research. As an example of this, while one of the institutions had agreed to participate in our larger study project and was recommended to me as a place where I could also acquire additional data for my thesis, they simply did not respond to my attempts to contact them after I had introduced myself and my topic over email. This made me adapt my approach and contributed greatly to my decision to incorporate MSE as described above. Most interviews were therefore acquired from three separate institutions with two of these being visited by me directly. One of the institutions was first chosen as a potential field-site for our larger study project as a rural school and only upon arrival I learned that they are also a residential school. The second institution was the one mentioned before, where the interviews were carried out by my colleagues and made available to my thesis research through our joint research project. Finally, the third institution was recommended to me through personal contacts which served as an introduction to gain access in order to conduct at least a few interviews if not extended fieldwork.

Regarding other groups my approach was similar: most of the data is acquired from interviews carried out during the larger research project as the subject of residential schools appeared in these interviews, often without any prompts by the interviewer. The attempts to directly address state or municipal officials about this topic yielded little results with me finally getting a single interview with an official from the Ministry of Education and Science. Attempts to contact either municipal actors themselves or larger organisations such as The Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments fell on deaf ears. Although at least some of this can be attributed to the pandemic and its effect on state institutions, it is also an indicator on how the question of residential

schools is perceived as difficult and there is little interest from state or local actors in discussing them.

Interviewing process

Altogether I gathered 23 interviews which were on average one hour long. All the interviews were done in Latvian and all of them were recorded and later transcribed.

The interview guidelines for the research were developed as part of the research project and covered not only the topic of residential schools but also questions of larger local issues and contexts. The guidelines were adjusted according with the various contexts in which they were used. Furthermore, there were interviews that I was able to carry out on my own solely for the thesis which gave me more freedom in crafting the guidelines and asking more in-depth questions in relation to my research topic.

For all participants the interviews were started with general questions about their experience in relation to their respective field (e.g., social work, school administration), allowing the participants to get comfortable and reflect on their position. After that I moved to a block of questions about the history of the residential school system and their own experience throughout the changing landscape of residential schools. As previously mentioned, most of the school staff members had been working in the institution for an extended periods of time which meant that this block achieved two goals simultaneously. Firstly, it gave a first-hand account on how the data acquired from the literary and official sources compared to the lived experience of the research participants. Secondly, it allowed the participants to appreciate the wealth of their own experience which often contributed to participants being more forthcoming and interested following this block.

The interview guidelines also included questions about the participant's views on the larger residential school system in Latvia and their place in education and care systems locally. The interviews often ended up as a place for research participants to either recount stories about their experience which seemed to have been already crafted beforehand or as a place to air their grievances about the state and local policies. Finally, I concluded the interviews with giving participants the chance to ask any questions they might have as well as questions from my side about who else should I contact about this topic and if they could share any advice how to better approach other potential participants.

All interviews were transcribed verbatim. During the analysis process the interview data was complemented with the fieldnotes taken during the interviews to check and compare the acquired data. The transcripts or notes were not translated from Latvian, but the coding system and analysis was done in English. From transcripts only the sections that are included in the thesis have been translated and the Latvian version is included in footnotes.

Life-story interviews

The research data was complemented with two life-story interviews that I carried out with two former inhabitants of residential schools. Bela (2001), drawing on Cohen (1994), argues that one of the benefits in using the life story method is its capacity to reveal ways how the self has been constructed in relation to the social environment. The self here is constituted as a relationship between the personal and the public spheres and the life story becomes a central tool for researchers who wish to explore individual experiences set against the social milieu. As argued by Freeman (1979), the life story should be viewed not as either being only the story of the participant or the information that has been craftily acquired by a researcher but rather as a result of coproduction between the researcher and the research participant. The end result therefore is directly connected to the way how the researcher understands the information conveyed by the participant, which therefore creates the life story anew every time it is told depending on who is listening to it. Here it is therefore pertinent to consider what stories I was ready to hear and what stories my participants wished to tell me. I believe that interviews should not be seen as a means of "getting at" the life story of individual but rather as a chance for the participant to actively construct the story as they see it (Block 2017, 26–27). This allows the participant to acquire more active voice in the way how their story is going to be told which becomes especially important in the cases such as my thesis research, where the risk to diminish the experiences of other participants is constant due to the personal nature of the research. Furthermore, the life-story interviews also allowed me to gain some insight in how the participants view their experience in hindsight. Linde argues that the stories we tell of our past are often more about the way how the interviewee wishes to position themselves now instead of strictly historical account of past events (Linde 1993).

While this is significant to ensure that we remember to look at the stories critically, it also offers another potential perspective from the interview data as both participants had their own way of looking at their past experiences which lends itself to yet another perspective on the story itself.

Interviewing process

In both interviews I used the same strategy to allow the participants to dictate the pace and breadth of the initial story and following up with questions and participatory timeline only after they felt that they had told me the story as they themselves see it. I invited the participants to start where they themselves felt comfortable but in both cases the story quickly turned towards descriptions of their experiences in residential education. Both participants followed the model described by Labov and Waletzky (2003) by starting with a relatively short synopsis of the story which was followed by an expansion on key aspects and details of the story, explanation of complications and ways how these complications were solved. This allowed me to see which moments and places the

participants saw as important and the way how they framed their own positionality in relation to their experience today. In both interviews the story eventually developed into a conversation where me and the participant would compare our experiences which often prompted new stories from the participant. Once the initial story had been told I asked if the participants would agree to draw a timeline of their experiences.

My previous experience with using timelines in addiction research had shown me that they are a useful tool that allows to visualise the story in a way that is appreciated both by the participant and the researcher. Timelines are part of the participatory methodology framework that is based on the epistemological position that in research context the knowledge is generated rather than extracted which means that the interviewees are perceived as active partners rather than as passive containers of knowledge (Clark 2011, 323). I believe that this becomes especially important in situations such as life story interview where the participant in required to craft a story from experiences that they might never had previously considered jointly as a chronological story. Timelines are one of the more often used participatory methods in social work when collecting the life stories of children (Thomas and O'Kane 1998) where they also serve the purpose to help the child to acquire sense of their experiences and overcome the sense of disorientation that is often experienced by children in residential care.

This, however, may be problematic in life story research as anthropological method as, following Ricoeur (1980) I believe we should be careful not to overdetermine the story of the participant by forcing it on a chronological axis that may not be the way how the participant themselves perceive their past. For this reason, I introduced the timeline at the second part of the interview to allow the participants to already craft their stories before adjusting them to a linear time scale. I also invited the research participants to craft the timeline in the way they themselves imagined it, without strict guideline on what type of information it should contain, and which points should be in included. The application of timeline method together with the eventual evolution of both life stories into exchanges of experiences illustrate the creation of knowledge in an interview setting. Reflections of participants on the corporal punishments or the food in residential school setting often brought out my own memories about the topic which allowed me to both prompt the continuation of storytelling from the participant while also becoming aware of some of my own experiences that I had forgotten about.

Overall, the combination of life story interviews and timeline drawing proved to be a fruitful approach. Each interview was about 2h long, including the discussion about timelines, and was transcribed verbatim afterwards. After the transcription the interview text was sent to the participant to allow them to make any changes as they see fit.

2.3.3 Document collection

I also collected different types of documents that related to residential school systems such as policy documents, reports, newspaper articles and articles on internet news portals that related to the topic of residential schools. One of the richest data points for the historical analysis turned out to be methodological materials for work in residential schools that were compiled during Soviet Union period and that had been preserved in the archive of National Library of Latvia. These materials can be divided in two main categories. Most of the materials were compilations of good practice in residential school work. The other type of materials was compilations of state regulations concerning residential schools that were primarily targeted at school administrations. All of these materials were very valuable in writing the chapter on the history of residential schools.

It should however be noted that these types of materials need to be treated very carefully as they were as much ideological as practical tools for the Soviet Union. This became especially evident in the way how across several of the compilations of teacher experience the stories about the positive impact of residential schools were repeated sometimes almost word to word across stories covering different schools and time periods. The story was usually constructed as an example of student who arrives at the institution and is initially resistant and rebellious. Then, with time, the overwhelming positive pressure from their peers and teachers leads to a transformation which results in the student now excelling and becoming one of the best and most socially active students in the school. Still, by maintaining a critical perspective on the material it was possible to identify the main narratives of these books which helped me to better understand the way work and life was organised in the residential school during the Soviet Union.

The second most important textual data source was the Latvian National Digital Library. As the information about residential schools during the beginning of 20th century is still sparse, access to newspapers from the time period proved invaluable in developing an understanding of how the residential schools became a part of Latvian education and social care systems[7].

2.3.4 Field diary

The field diary helps the research to navigate the often-complex fieldwork situation (Bernard 2017). During fieldwork I kept a field diary that I used to record my feelings and perceptions of the process as it went. This was often

[7] However, although crucial during the early stages of the research, due to the necessary work involved in finding additional sources to triangulate the claims in the final version of the thesis I have not included the analysis of this material aside from one instance in the analysis of the historical development of the residential school system. Nevertheless, I plan to use the materials in future research publication on the history of residential school system in Latvia.

done while on the road to or from fieldwork sites while sitting in a bus. As described by Bernard (2017), field diary is also useful later in analysis as it provides the context for the gathered data that the research themselves may have forgotten. By staying mindful of the field diary reflections during my analysis I was able to maintain my analytical position as a researcher.

2.3.5 Data analysis

The data for analysis in the final version included authoethnographical data, primary and secondary interview transcripts, observational notes, life story interview transcripts, selected documentary sources and my field diary as a complementary material. All of the data was coded using MAXQDA software. The analysis of this material served as basis for writing chapters three to six, including chapter three which partly consists of the historical analysis of the residential school system in Latvia.

The analytical work in ethnographic research starts already with the inception of the original research problem and is present throughout the fieldwork. While the active writing-up can be identified as a separate phase of the research process, the process itself begins "in the ethnographer's ideas and hunches" (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 158) and serves as basis for the first analytical notes and descriptions found throughout fieldnotes and field diary. To this I would like to add that despite the PhD thesis research often being described as lonely and isolating (Walsh 2010; Elliot et al. 2016) as I had the opportunity to carry out my research in my home country and due to developing a strong support network of fellow PhD students, the interaction within academia also served as an important tool for inception and development of analytical strategies and positions.

My overall coding strategy was a mix of open and a priori coding (Grbich 2012) as I allowed the main topics to emerge from the data while also being aware of the central analytical concepts I had already established before starting the coding process. So, the code "structural violence" was introduced by me and through the coding process I developed my usage of this concept, treating it as a guiding principle while avoiding predetermination. This approach allowed me to stay mindful of my research perspective while not forcing data into predetermined "boxes".

In comparison, the code "upbringing" emerged from the data as one of the central categories through which my research participants themselves explained the everyday life in residential school. Once I had noticed that upbringing both as an idea and as a practice was occupying such a centrale role in the field of residential education, I was able to further develop the codes connected to the notion of upbringing.

This approach also meant that coding was done in stages, where every next stage led to addition and sometimes removal of codes to reach in-depth analysis. This meant developing an expansive system of codes and subcodes as this allowed me to finetune my analysis and draw additional relationships between

the themes and topics (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 2011). To analyse the connections between different codes I also used the inbuilt features of MAXQDA software which allowed me to visualise the way how different codes related to each other and to identify the overlapping text segments.

List of codes
abusive community
bullying
responsibility
attitude
upbringing
bureaucracy
operating procedure
definition
financing
islands of light
family
residential school experience
residential school as a centre
residential school in Latvia
present day
inequality
NGO
Soviet residential school
municipality/state
municipal residential schools
independence
skills
cooperation
consequences
teachers
educators
bad experience
social reproduction
social services
special education
strategies
structural violence
distance
transformation
vakarmācības (evening learning)

2.4 My Positionality in the Field

Due to my personal entanglement with the research field, the question of researcher's positionality is very acute. While agreeing fully with this statement does present an awkward position for myself as not only had I have to consider the way how my gender, age and social class affected my research experience, but the fact that I was researching a topic that was closely linked to my own childhood experiences meant that questions of positionality were always ever-present. I believe that my positionality therefore exists in a constant dialectic between me as a researcher and me as a former residential school inhabitant. Here I describe how these two facets of my position affected the relationships on both sides of my research experience.

Turning first towards the way how my own experience affected relationships in the field and the data I managed to acquire during my fieldwork, I believe that the effect was mostly positive. Due to my experience I was often able to demonstrate emic perspective to the stories of my interlocutors which was appreciated and created a sense of camaraderie. As illustrated by Jacobs-Huey (2002) for scholars engaging in what could be called "native" anthropology, it is often the use of language that serves as the main tool for establishing one's legitimacy in the community. By being able to immediately recognise what words such as *naktsaukle* or *vakarmācības* meant, I demonstrated the communicative competence (Duranti 1994; Hymes 1972), that allowed me to use the speech of the local community in different contexts. This of course always comes with the danger of leaving things unsaid and introducing presumptions that cloud one's analytical perspective. Therefore, I remained mindful of my actions and stories as I was aware of the danger of imposing my own perspective on the research field.

My insider's perspective however was ultimately limited as became evident during the interview with the ministry official where most of my attempts of trying to use my knowledge to establish rapport were quickly rebuffed. This, however, served as an important insight in the different discourses regarding residential schools in schools themselves and among state officials. It also illustrated by how these separated discourses serve a practical purpose of insulating the residential schools from state control by constantly maintaining unclear and shifting position. When I explained to the official that I had once myself studied in a residential school, she was quick to confirm that she knew about this school and that it was a part of the special education system. I tried to explain that she might have confused this particular school with another in the same region, but the official insisted on her views.

As described above, my insider's position was especially useful during the life story interviews where my ability to relate to the experiences of my research participants allowed me to help the participants to feel comfortable and express their perspectives as fully as possible.

Finally, my past experiences also surfaced in relation to the physical environment of residential schools. Similarly, to my research participants, I

know what residential school smells like. Being back in the environment which is connected to often troubling if not outright traumatic memories presented its own challenges which certainly affected the way how I presented myself and the data I managed to gather. This became especially evident when visiting one of the institutions that ultimately did not agree to participate in the research. While walking away from the institution I saw a group of adolescent boys playing football in a field near the school. This made me feel somewhat uncomfortable and I quickened my pace to sooner get to the bus stop further away from the school. Only later, while writing about my reflections in the bus, I realised that what I was feeling there was fear. A large group of boys in a residential school is one of the most dangerous things you can encounter when being alone. This feeling and knowledge has become so embodied in me that I acted without thinking and panicked without realising that I am 30 years old now and should no longer feel threatened by a group of boys.

Reflecting on my experiences after the conclusion of fieldwork made me aware of the long-term effects of symbolic violence in the system of education. I planned to observe it but it still influenced my own actions and decisions regarding my fieldwork. As argued by Schneider (2020) when describing her experience with sexual violence in the field, after her ordeal, her first idea was to blame herself instead of the institutional framework that had failed to protect her. This puts me in an unstable epistemological position where I already knew the field intimately before entering it, but this knowledge now needs to be revisited, prodded and poked, possibly even refuted.

As argued by Elie (2006), the cautioning against "going native", losing oneself to the viewpoint of the Other the anthropologist is supposedly researching has always been an oblique way of saying that one should preserve their own nativeness, namely, them being a Western researcher looking from the outside in (Elie 2006, 62–63). This becomes impossible once the researcher looks to the Other which they themselves simultaneously are. In this setting it becomes impossible to avoid swearing one's allegiance to one or the other world and I believe it would be harmful to deny this struggle. The phrase that I heard the most from my colleagues and advisors regarding this was that I should always remember that what is going to be evaluated in my thesis is my writing and my analytical skills and not my experience which I was assured would not and could not be evaluated or judged by anyone else. While it may be objectively true this statement does little to assuage the intense feelings of shame and guilt that accompanied most of my fieldwork and writing up phase.

Nevertheless, a researcher I had become, and this also has left important impression on the way I perceive the research field. By the time I started my doctoral research I had already worked for several years as a lecturer, researcher, and international consultant all of which affected the way I perceived the research field. Through these experiences I accumulated not only knowledge but also particular values and ideas that affected my perception of myself as well as research field. The involvement in international training settings where I was expected to perform my care experience changed my experience signifi-

cantly as up until then I had never considered myself as having spent time in institutional care but rather as someone who had studied in a particular type of school. These events therefore filled me with ambiguity. On the one hand, for the first time, my experiences were not only listened to but also valued and appreciated. On the other I constantly felt a certain unease due to my inability to create strict borders between myself and the performances I gave. This led to strong and emotional content delivery which then led to great success in these events but as time passed I became more and aware of the toll it took on my emotional and psychological wellbeing and the importance of knowing when to take the breaks. This was greatly helped and facilitated by my colleagues who not only helped me to stay supported throughout these events but also helped me to develop my skills further which led to ever increasing involvement with both international childcare organisations such as SOS Children's Villages as well as academic actors such as Strathclyde University where I eventually became part of a member of the Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures International Board further cementing my status as a care experienced researcher. This all contributed to the way how I entered field, managed my time within and the writing I have done since.

2.5 Ethical considerations

The fieldwork was approved by Ethic Committee Name: Ethics Committee for Clinical-Physiological Research, Drug and Pharmaceutical Product Clinical Investigation of Scientific Institute of Cardiology at University of Latvia Approval Code: 17-01-2019 Approval Date: 17.09.2019 as part of the research project: 'Strengthening families, communities and relationships: anthropological perspectives on violence' (lzp-2018/1-0068). Depending on the preference of the research participants either a verbal or written informed consent was negotiated.

I contacted my research participants either by using a phone or email, in both cases the participants were given the opportunity to ask any questions and negotiate the way how they would like to participate in the research. All of the interviews were recorded and transcribed. All research participants were informed about the way how their data is going to be used and informed about their rights to stop their participation at any time. In the case of life-story interviews research participants also received the transcriptions after these were concluded to allow them to read through the data one more time, to make sure there are no misunderstandings or discrepancies.

The biggest ethical challenge in relation to autoethnographic research is the risk of harming or exploiting the immediate members of the autoethnographer's community or their family members. This issue is especially pertinent in cases of retrospective autoethnography (Lapadat 2017) as I rely on my own memory to recount experiences from my past. While it is possible to negotiate consent with my research participants that I met during my fieldwork, the question

becomes much less clear in relation to actors from my past. In order to overcome this, as already outlined previously, I opted to include additional life-story interviews in my work to create an external reference point against which my own claims and experiences could be evaluated. Furthermore, I have been careful to clearly explain that the experiences I have described have been my own and are based in my memories and interpretations. Additionally, I have avoided including any descriptive details about individuals in all of my data to ensure that the anonymity of them is protected as much as possible, excluding information such as age, gender, or physical description at all places where these specifics are not pertinent to the analysis.

Summary

In this chapter I have described my methodological approach. I used multi-sited ethnography, with emphasis on both external data in the form of interviews and secondary sources as well as my own autoethnographic data. This approach was developed to answer the research question of how the violence and inequality is reproduced through looking at the relations and structures between various actors within my research field.

3 EVALUATING THE AUTONOMY OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL: HISTORICAL AND STRUCTURAL DIMENSIONS OF RESIDENTIAL EDUCATION

In this chapter I start my analysis by offering analysis of the current and past position of residential school in Latvia. I start by tracing the historical development of residential education in Latvia, which I complement with analysis of how it has developed elsewhere, to provide the contextual data. After that I turn towards exploration of the current position of residential school in Latvia. I conclude by introducing three institutions that occupy the most prominent part in my analysis.

3.1 Establishing temporal and societal position of residential schools

In this chapter I evaluate the position of residential school within the larger social field. To do so I start with the historic analysis of residential schools. As argued by Bourdieu (1992, 91), a genetic history represents "a form of structural history [...], which finds in each successive state of the structure under examination both the product of previous struggles to maintain or to transform this structure, and the principle, via the contradictions, the tensions, and the relations of force which constitute it, of subsequent transformations.". In accordance with this I explore how the contemporary field of residential education has evolved historically and trace its genesis by sketching the links between current and past structures as well as its connections outside the field of residential education. Through this I establish that residential schools have been an unstable and contested field subjected to change.

I further explore the current policy framework regarding residential education to illustrate how the unstable, borderland position of residential school is maintained in contemporary times. I argue that the instability of the residential school is maintained through its competition in the field of power with different other state institutions and ministries. Through this perspective I show how the position of residential schools is neither accidental nor deliberate but certainly arbitrary – far from being the result of qualities intrinsic in the institution or its pupils, the current state of the residential school is a product of the relations between actors and actions not always directed at residential schooling.

Here I wish to offer an alternative viewpoint on the Soviet system from the one presented by Walker (2011), who argues that during the communism institutionalization was used to exclude those groups who did not fit in with the official version of reality presented by party officials. While not disputing that this could be true under Ceausescu's regime, I would caution against applying the same approach to a wider socialist context. While isolation may have been one of the goals of Soviet alternative care system it would be erroneous to

discard the very real desire to use the institutions for transforming the individuals into useful and obedient Soviet citizens. This point is especially salient when considered within the context of residential school which was often used as a tool for assimilation and control. While the role of residential school in the dismantling of local cultures is well documented in relation to assimilation of native people (Sarv 1996; Liarskaya 2013; Allemann 2018; Konstantinov 2015), interpreting it as just as a part of Soviet repressive apparatus more alike a prison than as care facility for its inhabitants is inaccurate[8]. While not arguing against the obvious parallels among the correctional facilities and residential schools, I argue that residential schools carried out a transformation in their inhabitants and this has affected the way these institutions work today.

3.1.1 Historical context: Residential schools and societal transformations

My account on the history of residential schools does not claim to be a detailed history of Latvia but provides a focus on the socio-political embeddedness of residential schools and related institutions. This is a complicated task due to the complex history of the region. During the 20th century Latvia went through several changes of its socio-political organization. Until 1918 Latvia was part of the Russian empire, but during the last month of WW1 similarly to other countries in the region it gained independence and established a democratic state. By 1934 democracy had been replaced by an authoritarian regime which fell when the country was occupied by the Soviet Union in 1939. During WWII Latvia was also occupied by Nazi Germany for most of the war period, after which the control of USSR was re-established in 1944 until 1991 when independence from the USSR was achieved[9] (Plakans 1995).

Through these political changes new education and social care systems have been established, re-established, reformed, and dissolved which makes tracing the history of a particular type of institution much more complicated. To follow the development of residential schools in Latvia I start at the end of the 19th century when systems of mass education and social care were first established in the territory of Latvia. I look at how the establishment of schools with boarding facilities was related to the political and societal conditions and how the legacy of these institutions served as a blueprint for residential school under the rule of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the change of political regime in 1934 and popularity of eugenic nationalist perspectives prevalent in Europe allowed instrumentalizing the school system as an ideological tool with an explicit aim to sustain the social structure of the society and ensured that the

[8] The phrase "residential school is a prison for small children" has actually been used by a lawyer representing Ombudsman of Latvia to characterise residential schools in the contemporary times (Kuzmina 2018).

[9] See Plakans (1995) "The Latvians: A Short History" for a concise overview of historical developments in the territory of modern Latvia.

schools serve as places of reproduction of the unequal social relations rather than facilitate transformation.

Under Soviet occupation in 1940 history of residential schools in Latvia became connected to the Soviet ideology and practice. In the following sections I describe how political and ideological positions of the socialist state contributed to the presumably transformative role of schools and childcare facilities. To do this, I describe a history of Soviet developments parallel to those in independent Latvia at the first half of the 20th century. These two different paradigms meet in Latvian territory after Soviet occupation. Here it is important to note that I do not discuss the German occupation period in detail as there were no significant developments during this time in relation to residential schools. While I do discuss the impact of war on the alternative care and education systems, this is done mostly in relation to the changes it brought to the Soviet paradigm. After that I proceed with analysis of the Soviet system: during the 1950s the residential schools' system was established and maintained its form until the collapse of Soviet Union and re-establishment of Latvian state in 1991.

Despite the isolationist practices of Soviet Union, where opportunities for educational personnel to learn about practices outside the USSR were limited, it would be a mistake to assume that concurrent developments in other countries did not affect the social care and education systems in the USSR. Therefore, after describing the Soviet boarding school system I introduce a short overview of respective developments in the Western countries at the time. I close the chapter by discussing recent effects of neoliberal reforms and paradigms on the residential school system up until 2019 when the name 'residential school' was officially removed from the legislation which in my view starts the latest period in the history of residential school which is still ongoing.

To provide an overview over the history of Latvia I have included a graph (Figure 2) which represents the history of Latvia in relation to the events I discuss. This is meant more as a graphical guide for those unfamiliar with Latvian history rather than an exhaustive representation of local history.

The residential school in Latvia has a long history and has been affected by both local actors and processes as well as from developments outside of Latvian territory.

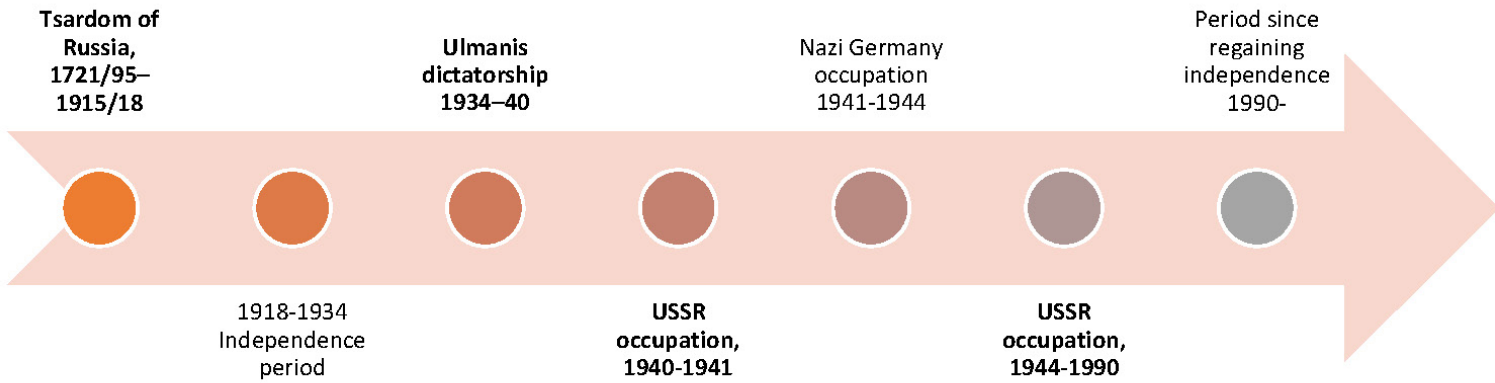

Figure 2. Graphical representation of Latvian history.

The first educational facilities in Latvian territory came with some sort of boarding facilities. Due to the influence of Lutheran denominations such as the Moravian Church, the literacy rate in Livonia and Estonia as markedly higher than in the rest of the Russian empire at the time (Raun 1979; 2017). Furthermore, as argued by Plakans (1974), the reforms of the early 19th century also led to increased access to education for the peasantry. All these developments were coupled with an increased number of opportunities for those with at least a basic education which led to the rapid development of school networks and the local population's interest in educating their children. This also meant establishment of boarding facilities as the schools were often far from places of residence of pupils. Boarding facilities differed between different schools.

Though the local population was more educated when compared to the rest of the Russian empire, the general issues plaguing the education system at the time persisted also in Baltic provinces. As argued by Kelly (Kelly 2007, 30), the education system of the Russian empire at the beginning of 20th century could best be described as chaotic: in relation to primary education there were more than 20 different types of institutions, with a varied assortment of sources for funding and supervision. Furthermore, attempts by the state to create a unified system were not always successful. So, for example, the Russification campaign of late 19th century did not achieve its aim of integrating Baltic provinces into Russian cultural space but rather helped to avoid greater integration into the German milieu which at the time was a more pressing concern for local nationalists (Raun 2002; Kasekamp 2017; Pavlenko 2011). This episode is significant as it illustrates the way how the strategies of the actors within school system are already established in attempt to maintain an autonomy from outside actors. Instead of active organized resistance to changes as enacted by state-level actors regarding form and content of education, the local school network outwardly accepted the changes while mostly maintaining the already established local ideas and approaches. I argue that this type of passive resistance in later years characterizes the residential school system and is one of the explanations for its persistent existence throughout different eras.

The fragmented and decentralised nature of the state's education policy meant that while the residential school system was well developed, its commonplace quality could vary greatly. Privately funded schools for children of educated middle class were usually well supplied both with financial resources and qualified teachers, but institutions maintained by the municipalities in rural regions often offered much less support (Kelly 2007). As described by a teacher who had worked in a school with boarding facility during the 1900s, the local municipality was very reluctant to assign any resources to the school regardless of the fact that school also served as an orphanage for children who had been "cast out from their families and given to teacher to straighten them out and correct their behaviour"[10]. During the same period, however, one can read that residential schools were also developed for children from wealthy families with

[10] Izglītības Ministrijas Mēnešraksts, Nr.2 (01.02.1927)

the explicit aim to ensure that they are separated from the lower-class children. Leaving funding of schools and boarding to the local authorities further contributed to development of a fragmented school network and different types of residential schools (*internāti*).

While both types of institutions were called residential schools at the time, it is important to note that during this period the word *internāts* had a much wider meaning than it has now and could be used to describe living facilities for schoolchildren, war prisoners, or poor elderly. *Internāts* came to mean only living facilities for children as evidenced by the surviving meaning of the word.

The development of *internāts* during this early period is characterised by a growing class disparity that coloured much of everyday life of children in the wider Russian empire. There was a convoluted system of different types of boarding schools depending on the source of funding, location, and the ethnicity of the pupils. It is a place for tensions between central and local governments, with pupils' lodgings being a contested responsibility. This tension could have had a direct impact on how the school system developed, and how many resources were at its disposal.

The next stage of development for the Latvian residential school system coincides with the period of independence from 1918 to 1940. Residential schools become part of the Latvian education system in this period. Firstly, it allowed the school system in Latvia to avoid the times of wild experimentation present at the Soviet Union during its inception. These are important to note due to the effect they will have on the Latvian educational system in later years.

Secondly, as outlined above, before the 20th century there were already different types of boarding schools in the territory of Latvia. During the independence period these, however, went through specific changes that left an impact on how the residential school system was later adopted and adjusted. This makes the residential school system a good example to explore the relationship between the structure of residential schools and the broader field of power. In the following text I describe these five main periods of development of residential schools in Latvia.

Interwar period

The next stage of the Latvian residential school system development coincides with the independence period from 1918 to 1940. Residential schools became part of the Latvian system of education. Firstly, if compared to the neighbouring Soviet Union, Latvian system seems to avoid experimentation with pedagogical approach. During revolution and in the following years, the Soviet Union went through a series of experiments regarding the way how family life and childcare was organised which left a clear mark on the systems to come (Kelly, 2007; Khlinovskaya Rockhill, 2010; Mayofis, 2016; Rashidov, 2019).

Secondly, as outlined above, there already were different types of boarding schools in the territory of Latvia before the 20th century. These went through specific changes during the independence period later having impact on how

residential schooling was later adopted and adjusted. As I argue below, the policies of Latvian state at the time represent continuation of the educational policies of the tsarist period as opposed to the radical break from the previous approaches that was being instituted across the border in the Soviet Union.

As argued by Kasekamp (2017:14) while the land reform in the Baltics succeeded in creating some of most egalitarian societies in Europe at the time and thus undermined the positions of socialists, it also led to radical re-structuring of life in the countryside. Whereas in earlier times the rural landscape was characterised by manors and nearby villages, now individual homesteads dominated the landscape. I argue that this contributed to the need for residential schools because families often lived far from the population centres and did not have easy territorial access to school infrastructure. This also contributed to the segregation of population as most families starting their individual farmsteads lacked monetary and symbolic capital to ensure that residential schools their children attended would be properly maintained and offered a high-quality service.

During World War I many schools were destroyed and there was a lack of education materials and qualified teachers. As argued by Purs (2004, p. 101), the education system faced general reconstruction, political and administrative confusion, and widespread poverty. Due to these conditions school system had low impact on the population and many families in rural regions depended on their children as labour force which meant that there were only few months in a year that they could be sent to school. The parents were often reluctant to deprive themselves of the child's labour force which complicated the instatement of school year. In these conditions developing schools with boarding facilities was also a strategic decision.

As during this time most of Latvian population lived in the rural part of the country, education of rural population was an urgent and serious political issue. Boarding provisions for the pupils were simultaneously urgent and impossible to organize. During the early years of the independence different types of living facilities at schools developed sporadically as a response to the complicated conditions in the rural regions after the war. Even providing a short period of education to a limited number of students could not be achieved as 40–65% of registered children attended the school. (Purs, 2004, p. 102). In the neighbouring USSR the education system was plagued with similar challenges including low or non-existent teacher's salaries, poor material basis and lack of support from the central government.

The situation in Latvia rapidly improved throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s when growing level of state and citizen welfare contributed to the funds available for schooling. As argued by Purs, increase of children attending schools was also directly connected to the fact that most schools offered meals and dormitories for children (Purs, 2004, p. 108). Purs (2002) also writes that an opportunity to receive free lunch was strong enough incentive throughout the whole interwar period to the extent where the state used free lunches as a tool for assimilation of minorities. Data from this period reveals that despite reforms

and novel approaches to teaching, educational ideas from the previous time still prevailed. While overall education system was geared towards inclusivity, ideas linking class and inborn mental capacity were still persistent. The teachers often had very low hopes of students, believing that "with simple, physical labour they will be able to exist" or "working in a trade they will be able to exist" (Purs, 2004, p. 111).

Considering impact of interwar system of education on development of contemporary residential schools it is important to pay attention to the social reproduction of class through structural violence. During this period ideas of eugenics and preservation of national character were encouraged in education. State took a more conservative approach and the system of education moved from a liberal towards a more practically oriented teaching. It could be related to the Great Depression which affected Latvian economy (Kasekamp 2017, 115) and led to not only economic consequences but also larger societal and cultural changes which eventually resulted in the overthrow of the democratic government by the authoritarian leader Kārlis Ulmanis. But even before the change in political organization a tendency to focus on morality of the society and common national values was present. It resulted in not only increased attention towards morality and patriotism in education but also to an official endorsement towards teaching practical agricultural skills in rural schools and call for the censoring committee of the Ministry of Education to ban books and stories that would "raise children's expectations of life unreasonably" (Purs 2004, 113).

These developments also left impact on the system of residential schooling: it reinforced gender division in the schools, increased the intensity of military training and expulsion of students who were performing poorly in order to improve the general statistics of education system. All these reforms were connected to a larger policy framework of carrying out ideological work at school. It seemed to lead to poorer quality of education which was not visible as statistics were improved by expulsion of less accomplished students. The growing perception of a threat coming from the Soviet Union resulted in a purge of teachers with actual or alleged socialist leanings. This led to acute shortage of teachers which again adversely affected the quality of the education system (Purs 2004, 116–17).

Political turmoil was accompanied with growing interest in and reliance on eugenics. Latvian psychiatry integrated the eugenic approach allowing to see mental illness as an expression of present racial and hereditary impurities. Psychoanalysis was largely ignored in this period and therefore an alternative approach that could explain the different mental composition of different people simply did not exist. As argued by Björn M. Felder one of the possible reasons behind the development of eugenics in the Baltic region at the beginning of 20th century was connecting social class to ethnicity. The main power in the society was held by Baltic German aristocracy with Latvians and Estonians developing a middle class(Felder 2013, 9). After the violent uprising in 1905 when the anti-German sentiments bubbled to the surface, identity questions of the

fledging nations became acutely important. Eugenics had less prominence in Latvia when compared to the neighbouring Estonia due to different structure of society. As Latvia had a developed class of industrial workers, Marxist ideology seemed more appropriate to voice their demands (Felder and Weindling 2013, 10). This may serve as an explanation for the rise of eugenics during the authoritarian period where the state needed an alternative ideological basis to Marxism. Applying this political context to the system of residential schools, I argue that it had become a tool that could help managing eugenic purity and segregate students from the families who are perceived to be 'impure' (for ethnic or social reasons) and prevent them from mixing with the 'pure' students. This also allowed the state to avoid the question of poverty and social inequality biologizing it as racial mixing and impurity. This also is a precursor for the linking of mental illness and social inequality which becomes a significant theme in residential schooling during Soviet system and in contemporary Latvia.

Origins of Soviet residential school system

Latvia was occupied by the Soviet Union in 1939 and again after the end of World War II. I have not included a separate consideration of residential school system preceding and during World War II as scarce information is available about the period. Following developments of residential schooling parallel the processes in the wider Soviet Union. As there is little data available on how residential schooling developed in Latvia specifically, I explore it in the context of a wider Soviet development. System of education and especially that of residential schooling experienced significant changes during the Soviet period. During the 1950s residential schooling for a brief period became the most significant form of education in the Soviet Union. To understand these changes it is important to consider the developments in Soviet Union before the 1950s.
Contemporary residential school has been shaped during the Soviet period. It consisted of various educational institutions which included schools with residential function, while some were called *internāts* although they did not have any residential function. The consolidation of these institutions under one name *internātskola* can be accounted for in Khruschev's period.

However, their history is much longer. As described by Judith Harwin, it is possible to identify three distinct periods of development of residential institutions in Soviet Union, including that of the residential school: the revolutionary period, the Stalinist period and from Khrushchev's period until the collapse (Harwin 2001, 3). Catriona Kelly (2007) argues that the establishment of Soviet residential school system can be identified in Russia after the civil war around 1920. Due to a long period of strife the number of orphaned and homeless children was high, and the nascent Soviet state needed to find a solution for this issue. Institutionalisation was seen as a preferable solution both on practical and ideological grounds. Practically, family-based care was no longer available as large parts of the population were struggling to survive. Furthermore, the First

World War and the following civil war had left many children not only homeless but also displaced. Ideologically the establishment of large, collective childcare facilities was in line with the socialist ethos and the institutions were seen as potential laboratories for raising Soviet citizens (Ewing 2002).

The ideological significance of schools and childcare facilities however did not translate to substantial material support (Kelly 2007, 202). Similarly to other revolutionary movements (Quesada 1998, 295), the Soviet state simply refused to acknowledge the toll that the revolution was taking on the population. This demonstrates another aspect of residential schools: experience of the inhabitants of the institutions was seen as secondary to the official state ideology. The gap between the official ideology and practical conditions in residential schools was also reflected in their contradictory perception among the party officials, general society and frontline workers.

While initially the orphanages operated on a liberal open-door policy, based on the belief that the children will themselves voluntary arrive at the orphanage where they would be transformed into exemplary Soviet citizens, this process was more challenging than expected. A large part of children in this period had already been accustomed to living on the streets and were reluctant to leave their lives behind especially as life in the state institutions was often just as precarious as on the streets (Kelly 2007, 205; Kucherenko 2012, 428). This led to renewed focus on disciplining children, represented with the growing influence of the work of Anton Makarenko whose dominant status in relation to out-of-family care although unstable, was ever-present in organizing childcare system and education in the Soviet Union.

Anton Makarenko (1888–1939) was one of the most influential educators whose ideas and theories affected the entire education and childcare system in the Soviet Union. Starting out as a teacher Makarenko later became director to Maxim Gorky Labour Colony from which he moved to a children's reformatory called the Dzerzhinsky Labour Commune. Both of these institutions served as exhibitions to his own style of education and child raising based in the concept of collective (Griffiths and Millei 2012; Halvorsen 2014). While the value of Makarenko's approach is disputed, the importance his work had on the residential school development is indisputable. Makarenko's approach was based on three main pillars. Firstly, strong belief of the positive effect of the collective, secondly, the malleability of child's behaviour and thirdly, the significance of physical labour in child's development (Fürst 2008, 46; Tudge 1991; Gehring, Bowers, and Wright 2005; Filonov, Bauer, and Buffa 2010).

To sum up, this period was characterised by five major developments. Firstly, education became central to the state power and was controlled if not necessarily supported. During the early stages of revolution, the education policy was still affected by Tsarist period ideas as most of the educators came from the previous system and resisted new ideas (Aslan and Öğün 2018; Kelly 2007). While in Tsarist Russia the idea of egalitarian mass education had just started taking root, this became one the core ideas for the Soviet Union. By achieving universal education, the Soviet state would simultaneously achieve an

important symbolic victory. However, as argued by Kelly, the ideological significance assigned to the system of education did not necessarily translate into practical actions of material support and investment in schools. As the education work was mostly viewed in an ideological rather than practical terms, most of the regulations and policies were created to ensure that schools were complying with the ideological requirements instead of devoting attention to material support.

I would argue that by developing the notion of education as an end-goal, the USSR could avoid assigning significant economic resources to the system of education as the very participation in the process could be presented as an honour and symbolic reward. The symbolic capital invested in the teacher profession and school could be used to justify the constant lack of material support which was both a consequence of policy and a response to actual conditions at the time. Furthermore, the investment of symbolic capital in the education system was crucial for the educators themselves as it often served as basis for their pedagogical strategies. Even more so than in other places, in those institutions which would serve as prototypes for the residential school (orphanages, schools in remote rural regions, reformatories) there was a large number of children who had become accustomed to the life on the street which often meant that the educators needed to not only ensure their academic education but also carry out the pedagogical work to convince them of the value and importance of education in the first place.

Secondly, the 'left-over principle' (Kelly 2007; Kucherenko 2012, 434–35; Webber 1999) in relation to financing of education system was established during this time. Despite the ideological significance of child welfare, it was always seen as secondary to the military-industrial complex and productive labour. This led to a policy where funds available for fields of education and welfare came from what was left after funding other priority sectors. This principle was established during the early years of the Soviet Union and intensified during Brezhnev's era. Furthermore, as argued by Shvetsov (2008) in relation to post-socialist Russia, this principle had survived transition to market economy in a modified form where the funds were channelled towards "the reproduction of the bureaucracy, with all other expenditures being funded on the leftover principle" (2008, 52). By retracing the establishment of the Soviet system of education, the place of residential schools at the very bottom of education hierarchy becomes clear. During socialist period it led to establishing direct relations with industrial sector to ensure the access to both the symbolic and material capital necessary to ensure the continued existence of the institution.

Thirdly, the experiments with self-sufficiency and independence of individual schools paved way for the expected function of residential schools as self-sustaining units where most of the resources were procured by the school itself, therefore simultaneously reducing its drain on the state budget. Additionally, it carried out a specific type of pedagogical work where the child labour was seen as fundamental to the educational process. I argue that this must be

seen as a direct consequence to the conditions in the Soviet Union during its first decades as the amount of children living on the street or in deplorable conditions was skyrocketing (Kucherenko 2012; Kelly 2007). In these conditions the fields of education and welfare overlapped. Furthermore, with the connection to productive work in factories and collective farms, schools and social care facilities benefited from the symbolic implications of carrying out not only the educational but also productive labour.

The institutions were expected to be able to care for the children even though they lacked the resources needed to do so and even in the cases where the resources were assigned they were unlikely to reach the institution due to high levels of corruption and the previously described left-over principle (Kucherenko 2012). In these conditions the creation of small farms for schools was therefore often dressed in ideological terms which allowed the staff to argue that instead of creating these arrangements due to the failure of state to provide they were presented as a part of the educational work with the aim of preparing children for productive labour.

Fourthly, child welfare in the USSR was a deeply fragmented field with various actors responsible for different parts of child's life and wellbeing (Kelly 2007, 222). Here again the stated goals did not correspond to practice. By involving several separate fields in providing welfare of children, the Soviet state hoped to achieve cooperation and ensure that this leads to a well-rounded approach towards the issue. In practice this led to disagreements and competition between different state sectors resulting in a fragmented and ineffective system.

According to a decree of the Council of People's Commissariats of June 14, 1935, the responsibility for childcare institutions was divided between four different ministries – Commissariat of Education, the Commissariat of Internal Affairs, the Commissariat of Health, and the Commissariat of Social Welfare. This division lead to an inflexible attitude where the ministries would be more interested in maintaining their own systems rather than cooperating between themselves. Since 1918 the duties were divided between 3 commissariats – Education Commissariat, Commissariat of Health and Social Welfare Commissariat, which were joined by NKVD[11] in 1921. The interest and involvement of NKVD in the child welfare is well documented (Edwards 1991; Kelly 2007; Zezina 2000; Fürst 2008) and worth exploring in itself but here I just wish to note that the inclusion of NKVD in the field of child welfare introduced yet another actor in the system which further fragmented the field and made it even harder to create a clear and coordinated response to the issues at hand. This also represents another occasion of where the solution for the lack of resources in relation to child welfare is solved through involvement of actors from other fields where the resources are more readily available. Finally, Makarenko remained a core thinker in relation to childcare facilities reinforcing ideas of the

[11] The People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, interior ministry of Soviet Union, which undertook mass executions and administered Gulag system.

significance of productive labour in the educational process and the tolerance towards applications of physical violence in educational setting.

Returning briefly to the interwar Latvia, we can observe that due to similar post-war environment in both countries, similar processes were taking place. As both countries struggled with the lack of infrastructure and manpower, schools were chronically underfunded and were forced to develop creative solutions in order to continue their operations. But while in Latvia this led to reinforcement of class divide, it was not the case in Soviet Union. This difference may serve as one of the explanations why residential schooling in Latvia eventually returned to its role in containing children from disadvantaged families.

While departure from the Tsarist child welfare system of the 1920s was still celebrated, certain developments were seen as contradictory to the ideological position of the USSR. I have already outlined the main consequences of the educational experiments of the 1920s which largely intensified and solidified during Stalin's era. The period between the 1930s to 1950ies represents, first, a departure from the 'free education' experiments of the 1920s and reinforcement of discipline in relation to children's behaviour which also meant that the ideas of child autonomy were abandoned. Secondly, the responsibility for child's conduct was increasingly shifted to the adults (Kelly 2007, 113). An increased focus on discipline and adult responsibility also translated into increased demands towards the behaviour of children. The idea that proper upbringing can transform all children into proper Soviet citizens persisted since the 1920s and became mainstay in the Soviet pedagogy. This also meant that proper upbringing counterinfluences the fault of their parents or environment. Schools were expected to carry out not only educational work but also upbringing (in Russian two terms are used: *vospitanie* and *obuchenie* respectively, upbringing and education; *audzināšana* and *izglītošana* in Latvian).

During the Stalinist period residential schools were used as the means of transforming dangerous and potentially subversive members of Soviet state and housed orphans and children from the families of the politically repressed citizens (Kelly 2007). This established a view that children in residential schools were not only socially but also politically dangerous and further strengthened the role of residential schools as ideological institutions geared towards management of social and political problems just as much as the educational ones. As the children were perceived to be innocent and only corrupted by their surrounding environment, the institutions were perceived as the best solution. The combination of harsh repercussions for failing to adhere to the Soviet ideology and the perceived innocence of children meant that educators and childcare workers avoided reporting problems to avoid risking their own health and sometimes life to prove otherwise. This led to a development of culture of silence in institutions connected to child welfare and in long term reinforced the isolated and guarded nature of these institutions. Furthermore, it also contributed towards enactment of symbolic and structural violence where structural causes for poor conditions were never addressed further decreasing the level of support available to the children in the institutions such

as the residential school. Reporting on deficiencies in the institution was likely to be done in the form of denunciation which also contributed towards reluctance to bring the problems to the attention of actors outside the institution itself (Ewing 2002, 237–239).

Khrushchev and beyond

During Khrushchev's rule the residential school system was developed and envisioned as a model for the whole Soviet education system. As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, the concept *internātskola* was created and envisioned by Nikita Khrushchev during his speech in Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956. In his speech the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union called for establishment of boarding school system that would eventually come to replace all other forms of education system in the Soviet Union. According to Kelly, during the experimentation in 1930s residential schools were established both to house children from families experiencing difficulties and children without parental supervision and also for children of party officials similarly to traditional British system elite boarding school. The institutions established after the party congress in 1956 were markedly different (Kelly 2007, 230). These institutions were established with the explicit aim of being primarily a support mechanism for "children of single parents, and of working families where childcare was a problem," (Kelly 2007, 261–62). Furthermore, to ensure the smooth transition of residential school pupils into workforce, the institutions were encouraged to foster a patronage relationship with a nearby factory or collective farm. This cooperation had a dual aim where, on the one hand, the institution would have a support system to acquire material goods which were often lacking and, on the other, pupils received vocational education by being involved in the work of farms and factories during their studies (Mayofis 2016). Ambler argues that the speech should be seen as a precursor for the education reform of 1958 with the aim of simultaneously solving the economic and social problems present in the Soviet Union (Ambler 1961, 237). Mayofis sees the establishment of residential schools' system as a part of a larger reaffirmation of "where the personal and political freedom of the Soviet man begins and ends, what are his main responsibilities towards the state, what the state is ready to provide him in exchange for these duties, etc." (Mayofis 2016).

The shift towards institutional care was seen not only as a solution to a practical problem but also an ideological strategy with the aim of ensuring that the next generations of Soviet citizens would grow up in a controlled environment which would ensure their ideological conformity. By striving to replace parents with agents of state, the Soviet authorities made several important points:

1. Parts of citizen's life that had been previously seen as private were no longer such, 2. The Soviet citizen was primary a worker and only secondarily a caretaker,
and finally,
3. Caring should be considered a learned skill which can be evaluated by state officials. The new system was a response to the ideological needs of the state rather than a practical need – by the 1950s the number of children who needed institutional care had decreased significantly. Despite this the new residential schools were perceived to be the 'correct' educational institutions for the future, at least during the 1950–1960s.

These developments coincide with development of system of residential schools in Latvia. Reviewing the homepages of most contemporary residential schools, they either have been established during the 1950s or have survived significant reorganisation during this time period. Bleiere (2013a) points out that most attention in Latvian scholarship during this time period has been given to educational reforms and the rise and fall of national communism, a short-lived attempt by local party members to gain more autonomy from the central power on the basis of these reforms. In her articles Bleiere explores local context of the reforms. Residential schools are mentioned as the main vehicles through which the renewed emphasis on integrating schools with collective farms and factories was implemented (Bleiere 2013b; 2013a). In 1956 five new residential schools were established and by 1963 there were already 33 (Bleiere 2013b, 124).

As the institutions were primarily designed to ensure the development of disciplined Soviet subjects who would later be effectively integrated into the labour force (Mayofis 2016), the institutions paid more attention to the disciplining and education while the atmosphere was characterised as emotionally sterile (Kelly 2007, 263). This may have also been the result of the tendency present in the 1960s that allowed mothers to transfer their children over to state care, often accompanied with frequent child institutionalisation due to parental neglect, lack of provision or unfitness of their families (Madison 1968, 74). In these cases children who entered the institution carried the stigma of their birth families which could further contribute to a callous attitude from the staff. Furthermore, life spent in institutional care often failed to prepare the pupils for independent living, as there was no preparation for those children who were soon to exit the institutions (Kelly 2007, 270–71).

It is important to note that despite significant material investment (Ambler 1961, 238), the plan to replace the primary and secondary education with respective residential schooling was never implemented. There are two main reasons for why it did not happen. Firstly, the approach was never embraced by parents or broader society. As argued by Liarskaya, by the mid-1980s, the societal attitude towards residential schools had started to change and the practice to remove children from their families was seen as reprehensible and outdated (Liarskaya 2013, 166). It is possible that, judging from the timing of these changes, this perception of residential schools as problematic may have

already existed but the Glasnost policy of the mid-1980s finally allowed these opinions to be voiced publicly.

Secondly, the maintenance of residential schools was prohibitively expensive. An estimate from 1989 was that each inmate cost the state around 3000 roubles a year. When this is compared to the state support paid out to single mothers at the time – 20 roubles per month – the differences in costs become evident (Kelly 2007, 269). If we consider that the "left-over principle" was still in place during this period, it is easy to see that such approaches were hard to justify under the strained budget of the Soviet state.

The Soviet residential school system never became as widespread as it was envisioned during the heyday of 1950s collectivism. Instead, by the end of the 1980s perception had shifted to viewing residential schools as a necessary evil (Liarskaya 2013, 166). This should not be perceived as a universal statement. By the 1980s the residential school system had already matured and under the name of *"Школа-интернат"* one could find a wide variety of institutions starting from elite educational facilities to residential schools for assimilation of ethnic minorities, schools for socially maladjusted students and special schools for students with mental and/or physical disabilities. Far from being a narrow and clearly defined type of institution, residential schools became diverse and immanent part of a wider field of education.

After 1991: Institution in limbo

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the position of the residential school in Latvia was dependant on economic conditions in changing political situation. Though some resistance towards institutional care for children existed in the 1980s, precarious economic situation of the re-established Latvian state made the maintenance of large institutions for housing children from impoverished backgrounds a necessity. In one of the first policy documents concerning residential schools "Decision Nr 247 of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia on Improving the Work of Special Kindergartens, Schools and Boarding Schools"[12] stipulates the requirement that every type of the residential school should establish (or more likely maintain) an auxiliary farm. As the newly established state itself underwent painful adjustments to market economy, self-sufficiency of the residential school was seen as a useful feature that would help ensure that the children in the institution would at least not go hungry.

The establishment and maintenance of residential schools was regulated by the Education Law from 1991 until 1999[13] and it stipulated that the residential schools should not only fulfil the educational role but provide social support as well, becoming a part of the long-term social care support system for those

[12] Decision Nr 247 of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia on Improving the Work of Special Kindergartens, Schools and Boarding Schools, 1992

[13] Education Law Section 17, Article 7, 1999; Education Law of Republic of Latvia Article 10, 28, 1991.

children who were admitted to residential schools from families experiencing difficulties. All this was assigned to be part of the Ministry of Education and Science mandate which, as explored below, set the residential schools on a path of dissolution as the ministry had neither the tools nor the skills to properly assess or support the social care part of residential school.

The decision Nr. 247 mentions another important decision of improvement of "special residential school*"* and related institutions. However, as there was no proper regulation concerning the residential school system until years later, this also served as a policy that would regulate all of the other different types of residential schools in Latvia. This became a pattern for conceiving residential schools in Latvian legislation where almost any future policy document concerning the organisation and operation of the residential school always described it in conjunction with special education (in Latvian case special education refers to segregated form of education for children with disabilities or special needs).

This did not represent the practice of residential school network, where some of the institutions still saw themselves as elite educational facilities and resisted the attempts to be perceived as a special education facility. Residential school hierarchy that was established during the Soviet period and arranged schools according the 'difficulty' and social status of the children residing in the institution persisted. While the hierarchical Soviet system was maintained in perceptions, the practical position of residential schools in the new system changed. Now almost all of the schools were seen as the place for 'difficult' children. This is further reinforced by the first version of General Education Law[14] stipulating that residential schools can only provide the basic level of education. This is a marked difference from Soviet period where the residential school was seen as fitting for secondary education and to ensure smooth transition into the labour force after the graduation. With the collapse of the state factories and farms there was no longer any patronage of the residential school as there used to be during the Soviet period and the graduates of secondary education were expected to participate in the labour market as competitors.

This refocusing of the role of the residential school also further cemented its new role as a site of collecting and maintaining children who had no other place to go. The residential school becoming a place for basic education had both symbolic and practical reasons and consequences. By moving it downwards in the hierarchy of education system, the symbolic capital that was available to the residential school during Soviet Union evaporated. As the institutions were no longer seen as direct entry points into prestige jobs and the future of education system, it was much easier to justify their reconstruction as part of social care rather than education system. As explored below, Latvian state had no lofty plans for children from families experiencing difficulties or orphans and the dream of Soviet Union of remaking them into exemplary citizens was gone.

[14] General Education Law, Article 29, 1999

This meant that the symbolic basis for the maintenance and support of the residential school was no longer stable and their mission – noble. Rather, by reconceptualising their pupils and their families through the new language of 'risks' and 'personal responsibilities' the residential school was no longer was associated with betterment of society and building the man of tomorrow but rather returned to the position it occupied during the war when its main function was to house a population that was too symbolically important to be allowed to suffer openly but simultaneously too complex of an issue to have an easy solution.

In the next iteration of Education Law concerning residential schools the Ministry of Education and Science remained responsible for financing the institutions but all other responsibilities, including creation, reorganisation and closure of residential schools were delegated to the municipalities. This created a unique position for residential schools among other educational facilities. On one hand, these institutions received better funding compared to other schools in the municipality but, on the other hand, due to the added social work function, conditions were often worse than in other nearby schools.

This system of funding eventually became the reason for the downfall of the residential school system in Latvia. During the late 2000s state officials started to review the residential school's role in the education system and their associated costs. The association between the residential school and the system of special education had been well established both in practice and in policy documents. This helped the Ministry of Education and Science to develop the argument of that residential schools contributed to the social segregation of students, especially those with special needs. As explored below, this did not result in an immediate action but rather led to lengthy process of reforms and restructuring ending with erasing the word *internātskola* from the legislation and preventing the institutions, formerly known as *internātskola* from having this word in their official title. Important to note, however, that the law does not prohibit the very existence of *internātskola*, but rather prohibits one from calling it as a such. A quick review of homepages of most of the more known i*nternātskola* in Latvia shows that despite renaming, institutions continue to exist.

There are just two main changes; first, the name has been changed from *internātskola* to "centre of development" or more simply the word *internāts* is no longer part of the school's name (see Figures 3–6).

Figure 1

Figure 2. Translation of school homepage logo

Figure 3

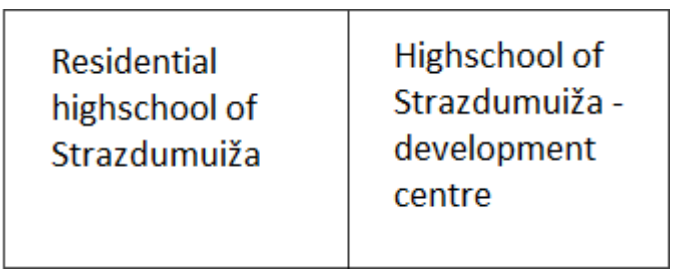

Figure 4 Translation of school homepage logo

The second change around the same period was that all the surviving residential schools are now offering a variation of what is now called “special needs education programme” and that could include special study programmes for children with various mental illnesses, disabilities or learning difficulties. This change was prompted by the change in legislation that stipulated that only special education institutions, as they are called in Latvia, would be allowed to maintain residential schools for their pupils. While in some cases this change did mean that residential schools were closed, many institutions found a way around it by starting to offer programmes for “special needs children” which meant that they would not have to be closed down and continue to admit students.

This short review of the most recent changes in operation of the residential schools is expanded in the following chapters. However, due to the way how schools and state and municipal actors are shifting the position of residential

schools in state statistics and legislation, anthropological approach is not only possible but required in order to analyse the way residential schools are operating. There are no trustworthy statistics of the number of schools in Latvia, the official titles of the institutions seldom include "residential" and there is no national unit overseeing this kind of schools. It results in the various definitions of schools, with criteria differing at various levels of bureaucracy. Furthermore, during this phase of the research it became clear that even when statistical data about residential schools was present and legislation clear, everyday operation of residential school differed, so official data was of little use for. I employed anthropological approach which focuses less on the official information presented in-depth exploration of specific cases.

Residential care in the West

The change in residential education after the collapse of Soviet Union was heavily affected by advice of foreign actors (Aidukaite 2004; Ainsaar and Riisalu 2014; Ainsaar 2009). In order to provide a broader perspective on residential schools I will review the historical development of this type of institution in Scotland. It is important to note, different types of residential education have existed and keep operating around the world (for example, most recently the residential schools of Canada have gained notoriety) and the systems and practices connected to them are often country and history specific. My choice to concentrate on Scottish example is based on several main aspects. Firstly, aside from the Latvian residential care system, this is the system I have the most experience with due to my work in the field of child rights. Since 2018 I am a member of the Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures International Board that is based in the Strathclyde University in Scotland which has helped to maintain close links to the specialists working in the field who have provided me with significant support in learning about their experience. Secondly, Scotland is currently one of the leading countries in the world in relation to realising child-rights based approach (Scottish Government 2021) although historically there have been great challenges to systems of both education and social care as explored below. Therefore, my decision to use Scottish system as an example is due to both accessibility and wealth of the information.

Similarly, to Latvia, in Scotland separate care institutions for children were first established during the 19th century. The residential schools developed from previous institutions such as reform and industrial schools (Milligan and Stevens 2006, 12). There were marked differences between both institutions where reform school leaned more towards the punishment of its inmates and industrial school strived to help the children by providing them with safe environment and skills necessary to enter labour force. As argued by Gear (1999, 10), while reformatories were provided to children who already had committed criminal acts, industrial schools were put in place for children who were perceived to be at risk of becoming criminals. While in general the institutions seem to be similar to ones existing in the Russian Empire, there is

marked difference in how the children in need of residential care were perceived, there is a markedly larger concern with unruly, dangerous and criminal children. To compare, in the Russian Empire already in the 19th century the focus was on preserving the innocence and safety of children (Kelly 2007, 28). This also meant that less attention was turned towards teaching children marketable skills when compared to the Scottish industrial schools. The agency of children was perceived differently in these two systems, with the Scottish system to a much greater extent acknowledging the capacity of a child to engage in both criminal and educational activities. It is important to note that for all means and purposes reformatory and industrial schools were often perceived as one and the same and were assigned to the same state actor, Home Office (Gear 1999, 10). By 1927 this was formalised and under the Approved Schools Act, both institutions were merged and were hereafter called Approved schools in an attempt to move past the negative connotations of reformatory schools.

The next significant development for residential schools in Scotland came after WWII representing a watershed moment in relation to both social care and education systems for children in many Western Europe countries. Due to the devastation of the war as well as the number of displaced and orphaned children, countries struggled to implement policies to deal with the situation which again led to different solutions. So, while in Germany and Austria this led to intensifying of institutionalisation for both children living in family environment and those who were living on their own (Ressler, Boothby, and Steinbock 1988, 19), for US and UK the situation was different, as children had actively participated in the war effort, which had led to financial independence of many children who were not willing to give up their freedoms (R. Shaw 2008, 24). In Scotland, as in the UK in general, another issue that catalysed the rethinking of residential care was the mass evacuation of children which led to creation of large, poorly run institutions (Holman 1995). The Children Act of 1948 in Scotland emphasised the need to reform the large institutions, but until the 1960s the progress was rather slow (Milligan and Stevens 2006, 15). 1960 led to significant changes, fuelled by 'anti-psychiatry' movement (Laing 1965) and the United Nations' adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of the Child in 1959. As one of the results of these developments and following the 1968 Social Work (Scotland) Act and the 1969 Children and Young Person's Act (for England and Wales) the Approved schools were renamed List D Residential Schools in Scotland and brought into the general child-care system (Milligan and Stevens 2006, 16). This represents a significant divergence from the Soviet model at the time where the institutions were intersectoral.

Starting from the 1970s there were calls for radical deinstitutionalisation, spearheaded by the "permanency planning" (McKay 1980) which were conceived through Bowlby's attachment theory. This was embraced by the residential sector, and during the 1980s resident institutions continued to shrink in size and different ways of providing more individualist care, such as key-working, "a system for providing individualised social care through named

persons" were introduced (Mallinson 1995). In the Soviet residential school similar role was assigned to the educators. But while the Soviet educator was seen as a symbolic parent to a whole collective of students, the keyworker was developing highly individualised relationship with each service user without attempting to assume the role of a parent. But while the Soviet educator was seen as symbolic parent to a whole collective of students, the keyworker was developing highly individualised relationship with each service user without attempting to assume the role of a parent.

The deinstitutionalisation achieved its peak during the 1980s and led to a pushback which resulted in a review of the remaining residential care institutions and reaffirmation of the role of residential care instead of its complete removal. Due to a number of high-profile scandals[15] in residential care institutions during the 1980s and the general perception of residential care as a low-quality solution, the opinion remained that institutional care should be perceived as a last resort rather than as one of the possible alternatives (Milligan and Stevens 2006, 21). This extended to the 1990s when several other reports illustrated abuse and violence directed towards children in residential care settings (T. Shaw 2007, 27–36). This last wave of deinstitutionalisation led to closures of the remaining Approved schools in Scotland which were first reformed to "List D" schools as the number of pupils continued to decrease and finally dissolved. It is important to note that there is still a large number of residential schools in Scotland which are run by the voluntary sector (Sen et al. 2007).

It is important to maintain critical perspective towards the residential education system in Scotland. Firstly, as illustrated by Willis (1978), the education system within Great Britain has historically been heavily impacted by inequalities between social classes. This can also be observed in Scotland where the education system produces similar level of social inequality when comparing educational outcomes (Riddell and Weedon 2016; Machin, Wyness, and McNally 2013). Furthermore, as outlined by Tomlinson, this may also serve as one of the explanations for the increasing role of special education where the establishment of special education serves as one of the tools to manage youth unemployment as the lack of jobs gets reconceptualised as the result of special needs from the youth rather than as a result of increasingly unjust economy (Tomlinson 1985; 2013). Still, the class divide in Scotland may be less pronounced, when compared to other parts of Great Britain (Croxford and Paterson 2006).

Summarising the main conclusions from this section on the Scottish system I would argue that there are several important implications for this thesis. Firstly, from the inception the residential school system has had different goals in Latvia and Scotland. While both systems were oriented towards preservation of the existing class order during the late 19th century, the Scottish system from its inception was tied to schools as part of the criminal justice system while in the

[15] See: Skinner (1992) review; Utting (1991) review; Levy and Kahan (1991) report.

territory of Latvia the residential schools were not part of management for children involved in criminal activities. I believe that this reflects the differing approach towards how the children were perceived as the young delinquent is an individual with their own will and agency. The orphan is seen primarily as a part of a family (even if dysfunctional), dependent on help and support from external actors such as the state. This creates a divergent path towards how the children are perceived in the following decades and where, on one hand, the agency and capacity of the child is recognised and increasingly enshrined in the legislation, and on the other, the concept of "happy childhood" (Kelly 2007, 104–8) led to perception of children as vulnerable and in need of protection and disregard for child's own agency.

Secondly, partly due to these differing conceptualisations of childhood and partly due to the more open nature of social policy and its faults, the deinstitutionalisation started much earlier in Scotland when compared to Latvia. It is interesting to see how the concept of deinstitutionalisation has travelled and transformed. While in Scotland the deinstitutionalisation process was a result of critique of the existing system, changing understanding of children's needs and realised in conjunction with the staff on the ground, in Latvia deinstitutionalisation was implemented due to recommendations from international actors, from a top-down perspective with little engagement or support from the staff members.

Thirdly, while in the Scottish system the residential schools ended up integrated in the social care system, in the Latvian case it remained a part of the education system. It is important to note that while in both cases residential schools eventually became the responsibility of local municipalities, the differing starting positions of the institutions affected how they were integrated in the municipal system.

Fourthly, there are still parallels between both systems. In Latvia, the same as in Scotland, the residential school eventually became a "last-resort" institution, where the children would be sent when no other solution could be found. Here different start positions of both institutions must be emphasised. While for Scotland the transfer to Approved school would be part of the child's journey through the social care system, in Latvia this would be done through the system of education. This directly contributes to the reproduction of inequality in the case of Latvia as the institution becomes the "last-resort" not only for social care but also for the system of education contributing to double negative connotations for residential school pupils.

Residential education in Estonia

In order to provide wider regional context to my thesis I include an exploration of residential school organization in Estonia. In contrast to Latvia, the Estonian education system still includes significant number of residential schools which are acknowledged on the homepage of Ministry of Education and Research ('Boarding School Facilities' 2014). According to available information the

Estonian state finances 700 places for students who are acquiring basic education and come from families with financial difficulties. Currently there are 56 educational institutions within Estonia with boarding capability ('EHIS – Eesti Hariduse Infosüsteem' n.d.) With institutions both in the rural as well as urban parts of the country.

The organisation of residential education is described in the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act, paragraph 39 on Boarding school facilities which states that the boarding facilities of the school are formed to support "children from families who have difficulties coping" (without clarification what this might entail)[16]. Still, similarly to the residential education in Latvia, there has been no significant scholarship that would be dedicated to researching past or current residential schools in Estonia which makes conducting any in-depth evaluation of the system, especially without interviews or other additional data, impossible. Preliminary research indicates that the system is organised differently from Latvia, as the social function of the residential education is maintained and supported instead of problematised. Nevertheless, available sources (such as Judit Strömpl's (2002) dissertation on residential education for girls or Mai Beilmann (2017) article on bullying in Estonian vocational schools) indicate that Estonian system can serve as another entry point in researching reproduction of socioeconomic inequality and violence continuum in post-socialist residential education.

3.2 Permanent transition: Residential school as unstable field

I turn towards the exploration of the way how recent policy has affected the existence and life of residential school. The historical research indicates that the residential school has been straddling different fields since its inception. It also illustrated how the different time periods and regional approaches have led to the emergence of the current form of the residential school in Latvia as an institution that more often than not reproduces social inequality, is itself in constant struggle for resources and experiences a major reform every few years.

Here I complement the historic account with policy analysis of contemporary period. When starting my research one of the first things I observed in relation to residential schools was their patchwork appearance. So, for example, while the main buildings were in a quite dilapidated state, there could be a completely renovated sports hall or a newly installed playground right next to them. While residential schools were primarily imagined as being located in rural regions, several of the largest residential schools were located in towns

[16] In practice in Estonia there are residential schools for children with special needs, vocational residential schools with focus on physical or musical education and high schools vocational schools with residential facilities as pointed out by the reviewer. However, there is no information about why or how this system is established in the aforementioned legislative act.

and cities. This feeling of residential school as existing always in-between, transitory, or oppositional was also reinforced by the varying perception and role of residential school, depending on whom I talked about it.

While I had spent most of my life convinced that a residential school is primarily an educational facility to my surprise most of the literature and experts related it to part of the social care system. While these two facets of state were not necessarily oppositional, they became antithetical once applied to the question of residential school. Furthermore, this constant confusion of the role of residential school in Latvia seemed to be actively supported by the residential school personnel as much as state and municipal actors. In this chapter I analyse this facet of the residential school system to explore the consequences of this embodiment of oppositions, concepts and practices on the operation of residential school. I argue that it is important to recognise that this in-between state of residential school should not be seen as detrimental but conducive to continued existence of residential school.

As argued by Bourdieu (1991), institutions operate in a similar manner to rites of passage where both participation in rite of passage and being part of an institution not only marks the transition between states but also establishes the belonging to the part of the community which requires said transition. So, the circumcision not only separates boys from men but also separates male participants from female participants who are not participating in the ritual. In the same manner boarding at a residential school serves to create difference between those in the institution and outside. I argue that to be able to continue to enforce the arbitrary difference onto the residents of the residential school, the school itself must also be excluded, destabilised, transitional. By maintaining the sense of exception (Agamben 2005), transition and urgency the institutions acquire what I call permanently transitional state which obfuscates how institutions such as residential schools have been part of Latvian landscape for the better part of a century.

To describe how the permanently transitory state of residential school is achieved, I trace appearance and disappearance of residential schools from the viewpoint of the state. My analysis shows how this is as much a result of the contradictions and competition between different state actors on a national and municipal level as the outcome of the strategies of actors within residential schools themselves for whom the continued existence of residential school is an important moral and economic goal.

3.2.1 State: "The issue of ordinary residential schools is not really relevant now".

I start with the state. In order to explore the positions of state actors regarding residential schools I carried out interviews with officials from two of the ministries that are most directly involved in this area, namely Ministry of Education and Science and Ministry of Welfare. As my goal was to gain insight in the policy making process regarding residential schools, I approached those

actors who are most directly connected to this process. I always inquired who else should be contacted about these questions and ended up with the list of these two officials.

There is no consolidate national position concerning residential schools. The state position is a somewhat satisfactory compromise between different state actors. As an illustration for this process, it is pertinent to mention that since 2015 Latvian state has been implementing a wide-ranging reforms under the banner of deinstitutionalization (DI). The process is organised under 'Action Plan for Implementation of Deinstitutionalisation 2015–2020' (Ministry of Welfare 2015) with the end goal being the reduction if not elimination of institutional care in Latvia. Here however it is important to note that realization of DI falls under the responsibility of Ministry of Welfare which meant that educational institutions such as residential schools, are not directly addressed in the policy planning documents. This means that the reforms that affect residential education is only tangentially connected to the DI which again illustrates the unstable and fluid position of the residential school in Latvia.

Here the policy is an ongoing process rather than event (Shore, Wright, and Però 2011), with reforms carried out partially, ongoingly or avoided altogether through prolonged processes of negotiations between different national and local actors. This certainly was the case regarding residential schools which were viewed by state officials as an uncomfortable concern. Even though it seemed that most state actors agreed that residential schools should be closed down, the justification for this decision varied. Furthermore, as the process of reforming residential schools has been ongoing, by now it has become a seemingly unsolvable problem which, as explored in the following section, is "rediscovered" and problematised by different state actors over time but does little to meaningfully change or dissolve the residential school system. The existence of residential schools is therefore seen as just one of the numerous difficulties combated by the state actors and not as a result of policies of the actors themselves.

Ministry of Education and Science

Relationship between the Ministry of Education and Science and residential schools has always been strained. Ministry officials have directly contributed to exclusion of residential schools from official statistics and created their invisibility. Public reports by the Ministry of Education and Science contain traces of this peculiar transition reflected in reporting the number of residential schools established in Latvia. In the reports up until year 2011 residential schools are only mentioned under main sections of budget administration and in a small asterisk that references a regulation concerning residential schools. From year 2012 until 2013 the report acknowledges the existence of residential schools, but its budgeting section now refers only to those providing special education. None of the state actors have collected statistics of residential schools at that period. According to official data, there could be around 55 institutions that

were called residential schools for children with special needs in 2012 and only 8 in 2013. The reason for this fluctuating number could be policy which stipulated inclusion and avoided discrimination leading remaining 51 of the institutions to drop "special" in their titles. It probably did not mean that these institutions were no longer providing special education, but they were not counted as such. From 2014 reports include information only on general number of schools without breaking them down to types. Residential school is still mentioned in the budgeting section under label of special education but from 2015 it disappears from reports. Since 2015 municipal residential schools were no longer expected to enrol orphans, children without parental supervision[17], or children from poor or disadvantaged families. This norm that was inherited from the USSR and had survived up until the 2010s. It contains one of the characteristic concepts from the USSR child welfare system "children without parental supervision" which relates both to children living on their own as well as children living in families where the parents were alcoholic, abusive or neglectful.

Since 2015 residential schools were usually mentioned once or twice in reports, mostly in relation to their imminent reform. This was corroborated in the interview with the ministry official, who claimed that, although attempts to reform residential school started already at 2012, they have had little success:

> *Actually, the first time for, well not so much an inspection, more like identification of the residential schools was in 2012. Officials from the ministry, a whole group of them were going around visiting and getting acquainted with the places, this and that. [...] Then there was the first report to the government. That one had settled somewhere and had no further effect.*
> *(Mirdza, government official)*

In reports dated from 2017 and 2019 residential school is not mentioned at all, while 2018 report mentions a municipal residential school for special education as partners in a Law on Education working group. Changes in representing residential schools in reports show attempts to omit their existence as the ministry had started the process of their closing by 2012.

Overall, the Ministry of Education and Science is aware of the problems present in its institutions but there seems to be a significant disconnection between the plans and reality:

> *The second stage in terms of regular residential schools, was around year 2015–2016, when again (I participated there as well then), we began to identify this situation again. [...] Then there was this working group. [...] the girl who was working with that at that time, had not yet gone on maternity*

[17] This concept is preserved from the USSR system and may relate to two different types of children: *beznadzornie* — children who spend time on the streets without adult control and supervision, and *besprizornie* — homeless children (Stephenson 2008, 91)

leave, and she began to complete this report. I finished it then. She went on maternity leave. We submitted it to the government, but it settled down somewhere in the government.

(Mirdza, government official)

These reports and their significance for policymaking were mentioned several times during the interview, but the reports seem to be lost or forgotten. None of the reports could be found in the state database. Despite the lack of documentation Latvian government managed to carry out comprehensive residential school reform between 2016 and 2019 which solved the issue by dissolving residential schools. My interview data and review of the of the relevant (available) documentation indicates that the main reason behind the reform was reduction of the financial strain on the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Welfare which, though involved in the process of DI, insisted that residential schools were responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science. As argued by Farmer when he critiques debates surrounding the question of tuberculosis treatment in Haiti, "in a sense, the high cure rates we achieved also show that debates over whether to treat tuberculosis or to prevent it are essentially false debates, whose costs are borne, as usual, by the poor" (Farmer 2009, 203).

Gupta (2012) argues that to explain the role of statistics in operation of the state, one should acknowledge not only the unruly narratives turned into numbers but also the reverse process where the production of statistics can serve as basis for creation of new narratives. The creation of certain number of residential schools becomes basis for justifications why those should be closed down. The question of how many residential schools actually operate in the territory Latvia becomes increasingly complicated and simplified at the same time, as the production of statistics becomes further removed from the reality. All this contributes to the manufacture of a permanently-transitory state of residential schools where the institution is simultaneously real and imagined, operational and closed down.

As described above, a round of investigations on residential schools carried out around 2012 resulted in nothing. During the political negotiations in the Parliament, the ministry met stiff resistance from municipal partners who were unwilling to shoulder the costs connected to closure of residential schools in their territory. The municipalities complained about secrecy in regard to the number and form of residential school. While the state actors mostly perceived residential schools as both a costly and risky endeavour, it was different for municipalities. The disagreements are emblematic of the wider approach to the deinstitutionalisation process where state actors insisted on closing down institutions while municipalities resisted these attempts due to lack of alternative solutions to the problems that had previously been if not solved then at least managed through the institutionalisation. The collision points between national and municipal actors therefore reveal one of the contradictory positions occupied by the residential school where it is simultaneously obsolete and

contemporary. While state actors would argue that both residential schools and problems they solved belonged to the past, the municipalities were aware that issues such as poverty have not been solved and failed to see how dissolving residential schools which were perceived as a support mechanism would help them.

During the interview the ministry official constantly shifted between acknowledging existence of state-funded residential schools and insisting that every state-funded residential school has always been a special education institution:

> *M: The concept of 'internāts' until 2018 and even today includes three categories. Until 2018 there were (if I may say so) ordinary residential schools, which were municipal general education institutions. These were the residential schools for municipal general education. Then, today we still have municipal special education institutions that provide boarding. This is a different group. And the third group that exists in Latvia are these boarding institutions which are paid, organized, and provided by municipality. Those are often not related to one specific school, but they exist. Like, there is a municipal boarding institution for students from the city Saldus [...]*
> *Q: Would this be the former Ciecere school?*
> *M: No. The former Ciecere school, which is now Kalnsēta primary school, belongs to the second group. It is a special educational institution that provides boarding as a service. So, there are three groups. There were three, now there are two. What are we talking about?*
> *(Mirdza, government official)*

In this interview I was attempting to understand how many types of residential schools there were in Latvia. The official explanation led me to asking about my former school which at least at the time of my studies had not been called a special education institution. The official however insisted that it had been a special education institution, which she reiterated when we later in interview returned to this question. I have no way of knowing whether the official indeed did not know the status of my former school or whether in the ministry every residential school had always been perceived as a special education institution regardless of the official title. This could not be true, since graduation from a special residential school would have prevented my entry into regular high school and later higher education.

The confusion was present throughout interview where at time the official explained that historically there were 15 state-funded residential schools which contradicted her earlier statements that state has always supported only special education institutions. The confusion may have been related to fact that the official was substituting for another official who was mainly responsible for questions related to residential schools. During the interview, it became clear that the official had however been working with these questions for a significant period of time. The way the officials who are working with residential schools

are themselves constantly in flux contributes to the permanently transitory state of residential schools:

> *I'm not working with residential schools directly. My job description is related to the remuneration of teachers. [...] That is my job. But why am I working here for a few years now? Because we in the department are, frankly, short a few people, and the person who worked with those issues [...] left. [...] The ministry hired another person. This girl started working and after two months she went on a maternity leave.*
> *(Mirdza, government official)*

This made her contribute to finishing the residential school report which was the guiding document for the reforms. The manner of carrying out the reform shows how the decisions made about the future of residential schools were not considered crucial for the Ministry. During the period of three years when the role of the residential school in Latvia changed significantly, there was not a single responsible official guiding the process. It was done as a side job by the official I was interviewing. The official chosen for the position was from the department that dealt with the financial aspects of the education system, and this could have affected the way how she answered my questions and what knowledge she had about residential school it also may at least partially explain the constant focus on costs and responsibilities.

Social support function of residential schools was also seen as one of the reasons for reform. As explored in chapter 3.1.1, residential school was established as an intersectional institution. The overlap between welfare and education sectors was intended to encourage cooperation but led to competing perspectives instead. After the collapse of Soviet Union this was solved by making the Ministry of Education and Science solely responsible about residential school, even though it did not have the resources or capacity to deal with the social support function of residential school. The problem was also solved by moving the responsibility for residential schools onto municipalities.

I have outlined how the Ministry of Education and Science saw residential school mostly as an obstacle and traced a process of erasing the presence of residential school from the educational system during the last decade. The manipulation of residential school definitions was paired with the public discourse of residential school as an obsolete form of education/care which was declining. A media article from 2017 claimed that there are only 15 residential schools left in Latvia and the number of students was constantly decreasing (Kuzmina 2017). Residential schools for children with special needs were omitted here. The definition of residential school had become increasingly crowded with concepts such as "school with residential capacity", "centre of development", "special residential school", "residential school for children with special needs" at that time. As we will see, this proliferation of definitions is a result of everchanging Ministry policy which resulted in a survival tactics for residential school where change of institution's name was seen as a means to

avoid detection and closing down. From the perspective of schools this was a tactic of defence, but it allowed the Ministry to remove the notion of residential school from the Education Law and cut financial support.

After the financial crisis of 2007–2009 Latvian government implemented the World Bank recommendations (World Bank 2010) for restructuring its education system. "Money follows student" principle allowed calculating respective teacher workloads in way that was primarily geared towards efficiency rather than quality of studies or needs of the local communities (Kools 2014, 59). As the system of education underwent wider structural change, the overall number of schools had been severely reduced. According to the information found on the homepage of Ministry of Education and Science, since 2009 around 180 educational institutions have been closed. This number does not include those institutions which have been either reorganised or combined with other educational facilities (The Ministry of Education and Science Republic of Latvia 2020). This process has disproportionately affected rural regions where due to internal and external immigration the number of students has changed the most significantly leading to situations where the choice of sending children to residential school was the only possible solution to provide education.

Dzintars' schooling took place after the financial crisis of 2007–2009 in times of deep austerity as explored previously. Though school bus could transport children to and from school, its availability dependent on the number of students and at a certain point it did not cover the transportation costs:

> *The thing is, we had a bus that drove us to elementary school. It was a school bus. It was a kind of private property of the school. There was a hired driver who drove the children. There was not enough of us at high school at the time and so we didn't have that bus.*
> *(Dzintars, former pupil)*

As the access to education now followed the neoliberal logic of cost/benefit ratio, the primacy of educational role of residential schools was under doubt. It became to represent social inequality based on remoteness: accessibility of education and status of a child depended on distance to reach the school and availability of transportation.

This leads to the second commonality in all three stories where the need to live in a residential school was justified by the distance between home and school. The distance was relative – 90km, 25km, 50km. All interlocutors could describe the distance in detail and remembered their parents explaining the stay at residential school.

Residential school plays an important role in constructing remoteness and rurality. From nation-building efforts in Latgale region during the 1930s to re-education of children of enemies of state during Stalinist period, and to transformation of children from disadvantaged families during the rest of Soviet period, residential school has always ensured accessibility to (re)education for children who otherwise would not have this opportunity.

I propose to interpret these claims using the concept of remoteness (Gohain 2019; Saxer and Andersson 2019). As argued by anthropologists, remoteness should be viewed not as a spatial but primarily as a social construction. Similarly, to mountainous regions described by Gohain, Latvian countryside is constructed as remote not because of its geographical distance from the centre but rather due to selective interventions from the state. As the state chose which parts of its territory needed infrastructure development, it also made a decision which parts of its territory remained remote. This is evident looking at road infrastructure in Latvian countryside. Recently Latvian government announced a major investment in building about 1000 km of new freeways in the territory of Latvia. These would connect the administrative centres of each region and ensure that the capital could be reached in no more than two hours (lsm.lv 2021). This was done despite Latvia is a country with most road accidents in the EU (World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe 2020), which, as admitted by the Chief of the Traffic Safety Department of the State Police, was largely due to poor road infrastructure. Combining this with the fact that the same report showed that Latvia is simultaneously one of the countries with the smallest proportion of fatalities occurring in urban areas (World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe 2020), it creates a clear picture of how infrastructure not only is used in maintaining the remoteness of the countryside but how it also contributes to unequal value of life between urban and rural environment.

The remoteness of Latvian countryside has become more pronounced in the last two years where the lack of internet coverage (Saxer and Andersson 2019) has led to difficulties with remote learning in the times of global pandemic (eng.lsm.lv 2021). As the state constructs remoteness, the local population living in the perpetually remote regions adjusts to the conditions and embodies the experience of remoteness. Through this the state hegemony in Gramscian sense is achieved with the state making claims and decisions about the region without the local population objecting to policies that may be detrimental to them, such as closing down a school due to arbitrary decisions by state institutions about the minimum number of students or distance from the school the home of the student.

I finally found out how many residential schools there were in Latvia on the homepage of Ombudsman's Office. This information could be found on the Latvian version of the site under section “National Preventive Mechanism”, followed by a sub-section “Supervised institutions” (tiesibsargs.lv 2020). As explained on the English version of the page, this list contained institutions “where persons are or may be deprived of their liberty”. 10 different types of institutions were listed there, ranging from residential schools to prisons. On this list one could find 115 residential schools dated April 29, 2020, which made it the second most common institution “where persons are or may be deprived of their liberty” after long-term social care and social rehabilitation institutions. If we compare it to the overall number of educational institutions in Latvia, which according to latest data was estimated at 711, we can see that

residential schools constitute around 16% of all educational institutions, despite the Ministry official responsible for residential schools stating in the interview:

> *You see, time goes by, and a person changes and people… The issue of ordinary residential schools is not really relevant now. No longer really relevant.*
>
> *(Mirdza, government official)*

Here it is important to note that Ombudsman's Office of Latvia acts to protect the rights and legal interests of a person in situations when State and municipal authorities have breached the human rights defined by the Constitution and international human rights' documents. The involvement of Ombudsman's Office in reforming residential school started around the same time as the activities of Ministry of Education and Science, around years 2015–2016. This was prompted by an inspection where the Office visited different childcare institutions around the country compiling a report that heavily criticised many aspects of the system and pointed out a practice of sending problematic children on a journey through institutions that usually ended either in a psychiatric clinic or in a residential school. This prompted the Office to take interest in residential schools and conduct a special investigation which criticised the current residential school system.

Most recent report on the living conditions in residential schools comes from the State Audit Office which published an audit report "Does a child with special needs to have an opportunity to receive an education that meets his or her abilities, needs, and the best interests of the child?" on June 14, 2021. Although children with special needs were the initial target of the audit, it showed that special education in Latvia is intimately intertwined with residential schools. According to this report, there were 123 residential schools which again exemplifies the confusion and lack of clear regulation regarding this type of institution. It is also important to note that the State Audit Office is a consultative body and does not have authority to enforce its recommendations. The conclusions of the audit were harsh. The audit identified that residential schools were used for managing social problems and the conditions in several of the institutions are still as perilous as ever. In five of the audited residential schools they found situations where up to 17 children slept in the same room, and in six cases there was insufficient number of bathrooms and toilets available.

Furthermore, the audit has identified that many allegedly closed residential schools, had been restructured or had changed their names which meant that even institutions that had been at the centre of several public scandals, such as the infamous residential school at Stikli, were still up and running. The institution in Stikli parish is emblematic to the complicated history on residential schools. The residential school in this location has been opened since 1954 (Ventspils novada pašvaldība n.d.) And the first scandal about the mistreatment of its inhabitants came in 1964. As described by Galley, the inspectors at the

time reported “a mixture of neglect, corruption, violence, embezzlement, and abuse to be going on at Stikli” (Galley 2019, 160). In 2018 media reported violence and abuse in the local children’s home and residential school (Anstrate and Ozola-Balode 2018). This scandal led to the demise of the orphanage but not the school which was reformed under the new name of “Annahites pamatskola”.

In the conclusion of the report the State Audit Office included a list of recommendations for the Ministry of Education and Science which contained a reference to the residential school system (the institution here uses the concept boarding school). I quote some of them here:

> *Restrict the activities of educational institutions in providing boarding school services to prevent the situation that social problems of families are solved with boarding schools of educational institutions. In cases when boarding is the only solution so that the child can receive an education that meets his or her abilities and needs, one shall determine what living conditions and content of the service in the boarding school of the educational institution must be provided for each age group of learners.*

As the regulation stipulates that the audit should include the opinion of the institution that is being audited, the Latvian version includes the opinion of Ministry of Education and Science. In their response the ministry officials agreed that the situation in special residential schools was, indeed, concerning and expressed their determination to work towards overcoming these issues. The response did not include any specific reference to residential schools. The only mention of a “regular” residential school was in their suggestion that the accreditation process of these institutions should be considered more carefully. Strikingly, although the ministry implicitly acknowledged the impact of the current “money follows student” model on the way how municipalities were attempting to prevent students from leaving their municipal territory, this was presented as the problematic practice from the side of the municipalities rather than identified as a shortcoming of said policy.

The critique from Ombudsman's Office did little to change the culture of the residential school system and rather contributed to the changes that were already envisioned by the Ministry of Education and Science. Similarly, the report of the State Audit Office was critical and pointed to similar problems, even though it was produced after the reforms of 2016–2019:

> *“The problems indicated in the above-mentioned audit report of the State Audit Office clearly and openly indicate the long-term unresolved problems and the correct direction of the Ministry's action in restructuring the network of the mentioned educational institutions.”*

While the Audit pointed out the problems in the system, the ministry used it as an indication that they were on the right track rather than realisation that the policy may have led to these “long-term unresolved problems”. The state

structures absorb the critique not through repudiation but rather an almost enthusiastic agreement.

Ministry of Welfare: social care in times of scarcity

As explored in the chapter on the history of residential school system, the system was originally envisioned as cross-sectoral. This means that there has always been involvement from other branches of the government, most often from the field of social care. But just as during the Soviet period this resulted in competition rather than cooperation, in contemporary times this has not materialised in investment from the Ministry of Welfare as the ministry has mostly maintained a role of outside control rather than providing support. The explanation of this state is dependent on the unstable position of the residential school within Latvia. Here it is important to explain that while educational institutions are managed by the Ministry of Education and Science, out-of-family-care institutions such as orphanages, children's houses, and similar have been managed by the Ministry of Welfare. In my interview with an official from Ministry of Welfare however, the official went to some lengths to explain why residential schools should not be seen as a form of out-of-family care.

> *It is not an out-of-family care institution. I don't know, we can come up with another name – the institution where the child resides, is required to reside. We simply stick to [the new name] or use quotation marks, but 'out-of-family care institution' is defined in the children's law [Law on the Protection of the Children's Rights]. There is a childcare facility and a residential school, no matter how we look at it, [a residential school] is not a childcare facility.*
>
> *(Uldis, government official)*

Further in the interview the official offered several additional explanations as to why residential schools should not be considered out-of-family care institutions which all went back to the core claim that the residential school should be seen primarily as an educational facility. As it was explained to me, there are several important functions the institution must be fulfilling for it to be considered a social care institution. These functions are described in the National Information System "Register of Social Service Providers" and consequently the institution would then be registered as one of the social service providers.

> *I do not know of any residential school that has ever been on the register of social service providers.*
>
> *(Uldis, government official)*

After checking the register however, I found an institution called "Aleksandrovas internātpamatskola" (Residential primary school of Aleksandrova) and another institution called "Robežnieku pamatskola" (Robežnieki primary school) which casts doubt on whether this is true. Furthermore, as previously explored, the residential school system has gone through numerous reformula-

tions and processes of restructuring which have further complicated the possibility to discern which of the institutions fulfil what kind of function. As an example, another institution on the register is the centre of social care and rehabilitation "Eleja" which provides a list of services including education. While the first two institutions are explicitly listed as educational institutions in the register "Eleja" is not. Furthermore, as the register does not contain information about the educational function of the institutions aside from their definitions, the only way to check if any of the other approximately one hundred institutions on the list that have listed children as their target group and offer accommodation provide education is to manually check information about each of the institutions which is an arduous task as many of the institutions can be reached only by phone and often only after going through layers of local officials. My previous research experience also cautions me against claiming that any institution that would provide education to its inhabitants should be suspected to be a former residential school. During my fieldwork in a state addiction rehabilitation institution for children I observed that the institution had its own educational system where the teachers would arrive at the institution and teach the pupils instead of them going to the local school. Similarly, even if a particular social rehabilitation institution would provide education, this should be perceived cautiously and on a case-by-case basis.

What this episode, however, illustrates is that the reality for institutional care for children is far more complex than perceived or imagined by state actors. As explored in section 1.5.3 the peculiar bureaucratic logic (an institution cannot be a social service provider if it is not on the register of social service providers) that governs their actions, seemingly exists only due to inertia while for residential schools, however, it mostly represents another challenge which can be scaled, circumvented or outright ignored as long as one has the necessary knowledge and skills for navigating. The residential school representatives here emerge as skilful players in the field of power rather than hapless victims of faceless structures. In these conditions the explanation of the official that the role of the Ministry is only to advise and supervise may be a tacit recognition of the impotence of state rather than a shrewd strategy by a neoliberal state actor:

> *There is a nuance to it – the competence or potential of the Ministry of Welfare to intervene to some extent as a supervisor, as a quality supervisor, as a provider of methodological guidance.*
>
> *(Uldis, government official)*

What remains unanswered, however, is the way officials who are concerned (oftentimes truthfully and passionately) about the welfare of the children in Latvia, seemingly refuse to consider that the inhabitants of residential schools may need support and guidance regardless of the institution they find themselves in. Interview data indicates that the attempt to dissolve residential school system is guided not only guided by cold calculations but it is also seen as a tool to improve the lives of children:

This is the area, maybe the grey area, where the municipality is not yet ready to decide on out-of-family care, but they have decided that the family is not really okay. As far as I know, the admission to residential school was not done against the will of the parents, it was more like 'yes, ok, so let him study there, he will be less of an obstacle, to, I don't know, drinking or something'.
(Uldis, government official)

The dismantling of the residential school system however is ultimately a failure as the underlying reasons for its creation and maintenance are not addressed because of the lack of cooperation between the different levels and actors of administration. The residential schools become a permanent fixture in Latvia as they address several areas that are left neglected by the state authorities – poverty, child neglect and uneven economic development. The hybridisation of education and social care is far from being a relic of the past and is rather a representation of the current conditions where the state is experienced as scarce, lacking, always stretched-too-thin. The lack of cooperation between ministries arises from following the same principle where the different officials are in a constant battle for funding that prevents any meaningful cooperation and instead breeds increasingly more intricate and complex systems to prevent the dismantling or reform of any particular system. Here we can see that the analysis of Shvetsov (2008) as described previously in chapter 3.1.1.4 is not directly applicable to the Latvian situation. The ministry officials are not creating the sense of scarcity due to their attempts to enrich themselves but rather due to them also experiencing the state as poor and their own situation as precarious. In these conditions both the unwillingness to assume responsibility for the residential school system and pushing for their dismantling represents an attempt to manage the perceived scarcity of the state by reducing the expenditures at the cost of social security. Furthermore, this also illustrates how something that the school staff sees as their greatest strength is seen as the greatest weakness of the residential school system from the perspective of ministry officials, namely the fusion of fields of social care and education. While on a local level the pooling of resources makes sense, on a national level it is seen as a threat to the current system by demonstrating the viability of intersectoral approach. Furthermore, the existence of residential schools also serves as inadvertent acknowledgment of the scarcity of state, therefore serving as a constant form of social critique.

I have illustrated how from the perspective of ministry officials the residential schools are at best a nuisance and at worst a threat. At the same time, as already outlined before, the continued existence of residential school points towards the need for residential schools. Therefore, in the following section I turn towards exploration of the place of residential school in the local setting and how the municipal actors maintain and support its continuation.

3.2.2 Municipalities: "They are mostly here for the social care"

While the relationship between state and residential schools has been contentious, the situation is different in relation to more local forms of state power, namely municipalities. The residential schools in this case emerge not only as a point of collision between the state and its subjects, but also as an arena of struggle for support, responsibility, and autonomy between local and national state actors. In order to explore this, I explore the contribution of municipal actors to the permanently transitory state of residential schools and its potential causes.

I believe that the approach of municipalities is based in both pragmatic and symbolic arguments which both contribute to the maintenance of their position within the field of power. The actions of municipalities represent strategies, subjective decisions made within the structural constraints of the field. Therefore, the policies and actions should not be perceived as attempts to overcome the inequality (a task which is seen as impossible) nor is it directed towards its deepening (most municipal officials would actively try to avoid creating inequality) but rather as a maintenance of the existing system in a state of constant scarcity and challenges. The transitory property of residential school here becomes a useful tool which can both be used to overcome challenges from other state actors and simultaneously can be used as justification for the often-poor quality of service within residential schools. As the logic of practice is directed towards the maintenance of existing positions within the field of power the constant uncertainty about the future of residential school is also a powerful bargaining chip not only in relations with state and the local population but also in discussions with the residential school staff as well, where both complete dissolution of the institution and improvement of working conditions is always just around the corner.

Municipality and Ministry: mutually assured animosity

From the perspective of ministry officials, municipalities were seen as main culprits for the current situation with residential schools:

> *However, the municipality of Cesvaine has closed the residential school, as all of them are municipal schools, these are municipal decisions. And often even if we see that some solutions need to be adopted, the municipality does not always listen to us, it does not always want to hear us. And they often make such decisions that benefit themselves.*
>
> *(Mirdza, government official)*

As argued by the officials, municipalities were maliciously abusing residential schools to solve their own social security problems. First of all, the presence of educational institution provided local community with workplaces: teachers, educators and other staff members that ensure the day-to-day operation of the residential school. Secondly, residential schools were often used to house

children whose conditions at home were abusive (as mentioned in the report from Audit Office "here they at least have a bed"). Both in interviews with the state officials as well as in the reports this was often seen as mostly a consequence of the policies from the Soviet period. My analysis shows that the continued operation of residential schools is based on both practical and symbolic grounds. While state actors were able to recognise (if not accept) the practical reasons for municipalities trying to protect their schools, the symbolic implications went unnoticed. Most rural regions in Latvia experience rapid and devastating depopulation (Dzenovska 2012). In these conditions the presence of school can make or break a local community. The state actors did not recognise that depopulation was not only the cause but also the result of state policies, including the "money-follows-student" principle which meant that institutions in rural and remote regions received less funding with the number of students decreasing. Depopulation is explained by state officials as either the "natural" consequence of changes under the capitalism or it is seen as stemming from the lack of hardiness and entrepreneurial spirit among the people living in the rural regions (Cimdiņa and Raubiško, 2012). This presents an interesting comparison with the interwar period where similar concerns were voiced by both state actors and general public as described in chapter 3.1.1.4. However, while during the interwar period this was seen as preventable by "not rising the expectations" of the children from the rural regions, this is no longer the case in contemporary Latvia. In both time periods we can see similar shift of the responsibility for the depopulation back on the local communities but the solutions to the problem are different. While during the interwar period the approach was to openly call for sustaining the urban/rural divide, in the contemporary times the approach is more nuanced. The depopulation is no longer directly connected to any decisions of the state but rather a consequence of individual decisions. This allows the state to construct the remoteness of certain regions all the while maintaining that it is only a response to the decisions of the local populations.

Impact of technologies and social media and economic migration of the parents are now seen as two main threats to the wellbeing of the inhabitants of the residential school. As outlined by UNICEF (2008), children of migrating parents are more vulnerable to social risks ranging from teenage pregnancy to violent behaviours. Risks for children depend on which of the parents had migrated away (Parreñas 2001; Graham and Jordan 2011) and whether the children were left in the care of grandparents (Jia and Tian 2010) and whether the migration was semi-permanent or cyclic (Smith, Lalonde, and Johnson 2004). From the viewpoint of my research participants, migration was always perceived as a problem echoing the concerns mentioned in research. Migration was mostly judged from a moral standpoint pointing out the consequences of migration on the behaviour of a child. Problems were presented as mostly dependant on the individual agency of parents without implicating either the school or larger socioeconomic forces. In one case mentioned in the interview, the teacher engaged in explaining how a certain student had become 'spoiled' due to his parents work abroad. The child has been left in care of his grand-

parents who suffered from addiction issues, but this was not identified as the main problem but entertained as an afterthought. Teacher insisted that 'IT technologies' were the problem and claimed that we were too reliant on the technology and that the elderly grandparents lacked skills to manage the situation. This example shows how the role of educator, although still important, is becoming more limited in the face of the changing conditions for the inhabitants of residential school.

Although both migration and modern technologies were often mentioned as the source for complications, this was often presented in a defeatist spirit with educators seemingly powerless to challenge it. Educators could describe different types strategies to combat common problems, such as smoking among the students, there was a sense of loss when discussing the damaging effect of free access to internet on their children.

> *As one of my children, of the 2nd grade at that time – everyone in the 'internāts' were scared because he goes onto all porn pages. And he shows them to everyone, himself being stunned by accidentally finding them: "I clicked to confirm that I am 18." Is this then supported by the state?*
>
> *(Lelde, assistant principal)*

This did not mean that the staff did not try to engage with these problems. So, in the previous example with the boy whose parents had started working abroad, the educator did end up inviting the father to school during one of his return trips back to Latvia to discuss his son's situation. In relation to problematic smartphone use most schools opted for increased control where the phones, for example, were confiscated from the children during the classes. The question of accessing pornography was harder to solve as it was closely linked to the question of sexual education for which there was no official program or guidelines in the Latvian education system. This problem extended further than just the impact of modern technologies and created another set of challenges for the educators which are described in the following chapters. It should be noted that this particular episode can be used to illustrate how the unequal relations among pupils and educators are realised through application of symbolic violence as well as resistance to it. While the staff may depict the situation as threatening to the wellbeing of the child the access to internet and ability to orient oneself in the online space, can also be viewed as children enacting their agency through the means at their disposal, especially ones, that are less likely to be controlled or restricted by the staff.

In these conditions the local municipalities were coming up with creative solutions to ensure that students were not leaving the region. These solutions could include establishing a residential school as a tool for supporting families which due to economic hardship could consider moving away.

The interlocutor works in a residential school and is a member of the local council. While state actors see residential schools as a problem, the municipality use it as a solution. Comparing the situation in the Soviet period and current

times, we can see that during the Soviet rule the state strived to act as a co-parent. State could remove children from their birth families and assign them to large scale institutions. In contemporary times the state has retreated from the position of a co-parent, without offering much alternative to large scale institutions. The welfare network was still poorly developed and the introduction of neoliberal policies such as "money-follows-student", did not account for welfare and economic inequality. It has put additional responsibility on municipalities to work towards overcoming the uneven economic development.

It allows the state to ignore both the inequalities as well as depopulation by claiming that both are dependent on individual decisions which can only be "encouraged", "supported" and "promoted". The inequality here becomes the result of the depopulation, and the municipality is seen as the main actor in preventing it by attracting the individuals through its policies and support systems. The cause and effect in practical terms is reversed here, as the main source of income for municipality was often the income tax, coming from workplaces. In these conditions the municipalities which had lost the large employers due to dissolution of Soviet Union experienced significant economic difficulties. The construction of remoteness by the state started on unequal footing with those who had fared better. The chances of attracting additional people were slim as there was neither employment nor infrastructure available for the local population.

Under these circumstances institutions such as schools become crucial places for municipalities as they provide not only employment but also serve as a powerful symbol that the locality is still part of a larger whole and that it has not become part of the emptiness (Dzenovska 2012). The school here embodies meanings that were impossible to grasp for ministry officials but were self-evident to the local community. Employment at school was not only about the renumeration but also about status and connection to both the state and locality. The school serves as one of the most important proofs that the local community both exists and will exist in the future. Residential school represents care, something that is crucial in counteracting remoteness and emptiness. So, while the ministry officials may have been correct in their assessment that residential schools were used by the municipalities in order to attract state assistance for the social support systems, they missed the point on why that was so crucial for the municipalities.

The schools, and especially the residential schools, represent an investment and commitment from the state that allows the local community to believe that the possible futures (Dzenovska 2012) are indeed possible and that there is still something to hold on to. This is one of the explanations for why the retreat of central state institutions has not resulted in dissolution of residential schools as the municipalities still recognised the crucial role they serve, being a symbol for community cohesion and maintenance.

Under these conditions residential schools serve several purposes, which again makes it difficult to pinpoint their place or function in a wider education or social support systems. On one hand, they could help with social and

economic support by alleviating the burden of childcare and allowing the family to spare funds for surviving another year. On the other hand, residential schools were a convenient place to house students that could bring down the reputation of other schools in the region. This explains why residential schools were present not only in rural regions but also in large cities such as in Riga or Jelgava where they served as a refuge for the children who had been discarded by the regular education system. Still, as there is now additional funding available for schools to accommodate children who might have been otherwise sent to the institutions, there are also cases when children could be transferred to a corrective class or assigned special support to keep them in the school.

This support, however, is often insufficient and mired in bureaucratic rules that may prevent it from being used to accommodate the needs of the residential school pupils. Here a representative of a charity organization describes the absurd situation where the residential school principal had turned to them to ask for tables for the pupil's rooms:

> *[Cooperation] with principal. [...] She also contacted us about the desks. Children do not have desks in their rooms, only in classrooms. But as they spend evenings in the rooms, she asked for the desks. We put it on our webpage, but we started receiving calls and questions – 'What are you doing?' 'They are a municipal institution!' 'They should already have those tables!' In the end, she asked for this information to be removed. And as we know that they need the desks, if we get some, we send [them to] her. But [if it was done] publicly, she would be admonished. 'How do you imagine asking for this, you have your budget?!' But that budget, how much is it? If I get some folders through charity I give them to schools. Those folders [cost] 4 euros a piece and I have 3 bags with them. They are so excited, the teachers just snatch them up.*
>
> *(Daiga, NGO)*

It backfired as it made the dire situation of the residential school public. This case becomes one of the clearest examples of how the socioeconomic inequality and domination is preserved through the use of symbolic violence, as the principal of the school and the NGO worker both implicitly accepted the rules as just and right even if in this occasion the established order results in residential school not receiving neither the necessary equipment nor the acknowledgment that they are struggling. From the perspective of municipal officials, however, this is also a complex situation as described above – admitting the issues within the institution runs the risks of additional scrutiny from state officials who historically have rarely been supportive of residential schools. It is also important to reflect on the way this is impacted by the location of the residential school within the educational field. While lack of tables may be perceived as problematic in any context, it acquires special meaning in the context of education. The inability of the municipality to provide them would further strengthen the impression of school as failing and therefore threaten also the image of school as guarantee of future which was discussed

previously. The result, however, is predictable as the ones losing in this situation are the ones who are less likely to be able to object, namely the pupils who would still have to manage without the tables. The way the situation is alleviated is based on strategies of NGO worker and the principal where the situation is therefore never acknowledged but still improved through occasional donations done secretly.

In general, conditions in state and municipal residential schools were often dire. When reflecting on this situation, I realised that there were also no tables in my own residential school room, but rooms were too small to place tables anyway as they were stuffed to the limit with beds. As these schools needed support from the municipal budget but there was no special position for funding residential schools or at least their "residential" part, this often led to the institutions being underfunded. The quality of infrastructure was dependant on the school's administration's capacity to attract the EU funding for renovations which was not always easy due to the complicated nature of the EU funding schemes. Furthermore, these schemes often were only meant for renovating particular sections of a school or particular buildings, such as the gym. The institution could have a newly built gym with quality bathrooms and right next to it there would be the dormitories where toilets and showers had not been renovated for decades. The existence of EU funding, however, could also indirectly contribute to the dilapidated state of residential schools as the dependence on them (Gkintidis 2014) means that the school administration is expected to be proactive in attracting the EU funding and therefore they should not expect any investment from centralised state institutions. This is exacerbated by the presence of symbolic violence as in the case described previously. In this situation the funding allotted to the institution by the state or municipality is clearly lacking. This, however, cannot be and is not acknowledged publicly as the need to maintain the position in the field of power prevents acknowledgement of the issues present in the institution. This may also prevent the school officials from applying for EU funding for said tables, as there is seemingly no reason for them to do so. This leaves them with only the option to receive the tables as donations either by local or international NGOs which however reaffirms the position of the residential school as part of the welfare system rather than education and confirms the dominated position of both the institution and its inhabitants. This reminded me of a similar process I observed during my MA thesis research where I was researching a youth addiction rehabilitation facility. This institution was directly supported by a foreign charity institution without whom the institution could not imagine a continued operation. This, however, also meant that most of the renovation and maintenance of the buildings was financed by the charity instead of the respective state systems. The officials from the respective ministry would arrive to inspect the state of the institution, they would not see any dire problems that would need immediate assistance as those were solved by the staff themselves and the help of the foreign charity organisation. In the same manner the infrastructure of residential schools was simultaneously significantly improved due

to access to the EU funding and constantly on the verge of collapse as there is no meaningful long-term investment from the state or municipal actors.

How to account for institution that is simultaneously seen as symbolically crucial and materially dilapidated? I argue that in the case of residential school it is precisely its high symbolic value that prevents it from receiving the support it needs. The importance of existence of residential school within a community cannot be overstated. It is simultaneously a workplace, a care facility, a symbol of state care and significance of the locality. But this weight of significance may prevent the local actors from recognising the precarity of the institution and its inhabitants.

The residential school is based on a well-established and maintained illusion which may be tacitly recognised by the local actors but would never be voiced or recognised openly. The permanently transitory state here is expressed in the way the significance of residential school can never be fully recognised, as it would also require the recognition of the conditions that precipitated its existence, namely the economic and social inequality. Residential education in its current form is only necessary as long as children need refuge from their home environment or from wider education system that does not accept them. The mere existence of this institution, however, does little to overcome the existence of inequality itself, which means that simply by association the conditions within the institution are also going to be coloured by the lack of material and symbolic capital that already colours the lives of its pupils. The residential school maintains its place within Latvian care and education system as confluence of both education and social care while not being recognised as either. Due to its crucial and therefore unrecognised role in maintaining the communities within Latvian countryside or its role as a 'storehouse' for children who for varying reasons cannot participate in the wider education system, the continued existence of residential school is dependent on maintaining a state of invisible proximity.

3.2.3 Residential school personnel: Working on the margins

Residential school staff were often deeply invested in the institution, and it would be a mistake to assume that the "mixture of neglect, corruption, violence, embezzlement, and abuse" that was found in residential schools was the result of unengaged and bored staff members. Rather, the same way as ministry officials were convinced that their actions were directed towards the best interests of the child, residential school staff believed in their mission to improve the lives of their pupils and their families, and sometimes even the lives of the community. However, working conditions in residential schools were often challenging. As the material conditions deteriorated and the reputation of the school plummeted, the cases assigned to residential school became increasingly complicated, which led to the staff members becoming wary of outside scrutiny.

Furthermore, due to the restructuring of both education and economic system of Latvia there were no more opportunities for cooperation with factories and collective farms and the desire to move away from communalism meant that there was no space for previously practised community outreach activities. All this led to the institution itself also becoming more isolated when compared to the Soviet period.

> *I started working in the residential school in 1977, and it has been 43 years now. And this is my first and only place of employment. I am, so to say, a residential school veteran.*
>
> *(Velga, teacher, former educator)*

While for most teachers changing their places of employment or working in several institutions simultaneously is a standard practice, residential school teachers repeatedly had worked in the same institution for their entire career and mostly were not employed by any other school. As described in chapter 6, work at a residential school often meant that the teachers took upon also the roles of educators and vice versa and therefore were already working the maximum number of hours which meant that there was no need or possibility to find another place of employment. This was compounded by the practice of providing living space for residential school staff which meant that one of the results of seemingly better working conditions for residential school staff was the isolation of not only students but also teachers from the wider field of education.

Isolation, however, could not fully prevent the numerous reforms which have been described in the previous chapters. This made working at a residential school a risky proposition as the ongoing attempts to reorganise or close down the institutions left their mark on not only the children but also staff members:

> *And for the last two years now, the new head of the municipality has been fighting hard for the existence of these residential schools. Together with the school principal [fighting] for their existence. I consider them necessary. Maybe people in the ministry have no idea how the children, the parents still live in the countryside... And we need these residential schools, no matter what's their name, to have the support for these children here.*
>
> *(Velga, teacher, former educator)*

The employment at the residential school has become precarious which further complicates the everyday lives of the staff members. In these conditions it is not surprising that in two of the institutions analysed in this research the principals were also members of the local municipal governments where they could lobby and support their institutions. Others apply a different set of strategies in order to cope with the sense of precarity. Some of the staff talked about reducing their teaching loads and looking towards other possibilities of employment which could weaken the isolation of residential school. But for most the solution

seemed to be to immerse themselves even deeper in their work in the residential school, which represented simultaneously a hope that by continuing their work they can prove its worth and a stoic refusal to accept the situation.

While ministry officials maintained that residential schools were just places of employment for the local municipality and contributed to lack of quality in education, the research shows that although the role of residential schools as places of employment is undeniable and there are indeed cases where the schools employed members of the same family, the situation was more nuanced than presented by the Ministry.

> *Of course, when they were fully funded by the state for a long time, there were already, so to speak, 'family businesses', and the teachers, surely (how can I put it) – well, what they were, they were.*
>
> *(Mirdza, government official)*

While in two of the schools I visited the employees indeed were related to each other, from the perspective of the staff members this was not seen as a problem but a mark of quality. The concept "family of teachers" (*skolotāju ģimene*) had a positive connotation and was usually positively perceived in Latvian society. This was often common in residential schools, where during my fieldwork I interviewed a couple who were both working in a nearby residential school and during my own schoolyears there were also "families of teachers" in the residential school I attended. Relatives could also be employed in other positions as the school auxiliary staff which was the practice criticised by the ministry official. This points towards the significance of residential school as an employment opportunity which is closely linked to the overall situation in rural regions regarding the employment.

> *And the way how the country was reorganised. Now all this is reasonable, there is a belief that there are too many people in the countryside after the breaking up of the collective farms. But what should these rural people do? They used to have jobs there. You had to either go to workshops or to a farm or to work in the field. And you know that you will have a job. Whether there are 5 or 15 people, everyone will have something to do. But now it's different. It is now private property. And everyone is calculating – ah, today I need [workers], and so I will find those unemployed, negotiate so that they come and either remove stones from the field or something else. But tomorrow, I don't need them anymore. [If] I don't need – [they can] go home or wherever. But this person [then] becomes unnecessary. And so they migrate away.*
>
> *(Melita, parent of student)*

This lamentation came largely unprompted during an interview with an interlocutor from a rural region and demonstrated the precarity in contemporary Latvia. In the past the state had been the main employer, employment was simultaneously guaranteed and a source of pride. As explored by Pilbrow (2010), among others, the transition to market economy has not been without

sacrifices. The shift to conditions where the employment needed to be competed for was incomprehensible and offensive. As the transition is also linked to renewal of national independence, source of much pride in Latvian society, the participants often lacked the space to voice their pain, as critiquing the transition to market economy was perceived as a critique of transition to independence.

Here it is important to remark that this reflection was professed by one of my own relatives I interviewed for this research. As this perspective is incompatible with the current perspective on the independence and its consequences, this may not be ever revealed outside a deep personal relationship so as not to risk receiving judgement from others. But while the ideological perspectives are established, the local communities remain in a permanent state of transition where their skills are devalued and their perspective of themselves as necessary members of the society is cast in doubt. In these conditions institutions such as residential schools may persist as spaces where the values of the previous time are still preserved, which leads to reproduction of workplace where "whether there are 5 or 15 people, everyone will have something to do". This allows the staff members to both maintain their own self-perspective as morally righteous people while serving as a form of indirect resistance to the neoliberal ideology and economics.

This desire and capacity to maintain the forms of working from the Soviet period become one of the building blocks from the side of the institution itself that maintains its dual position as being located simultaneously in past and present. The motivations, strategies and rationalisations to maintain the current state are based in a closely intertwined mix of Soviet period and contemporary times where the decision whether or keep a plumber on staff is based on perception of whether the plumber has already been working in the institution before, the need to maintain good relations with the local community where the plumber comes from, the need to cut expenses as required by the ministries or The State Audit Office, the fact that there indeed is no other plumber in the nearest town and the considerations of how much it would cost to call an emergency plumber if any of the pipes which have not been replaced since the school was built, would burst. The position of residential school here becomes a question of morality as the administration is struggling to reconcile the different paradigms of different eras.

3.3 "Individualise, Medicalise, Institutionalise"

While the approach used during the Soviet period could be summarised as "Reveal, Admonish, Excommunicate" (Kharkhordin (1997, 53), now it has transformed into "Individualise, Medicalise, Institutionalise".

3.3.1 Individualisation

The current social support system in Latvian education is firmly based on the assumption that problems experienced by the pupils must be viewed as isolated cases. This is most vividly represented in assignment of support staff to educational institutions. As noted before, educational facilities often lacked the resources to have full time support staff and the specialists travel between the institutions:

> *[...] it's just, I don't know, some kind of a mission to get a good social pedagogue. We have one for the whole school, the school has 1000 students.*
> *(Aiva, social pedagogue)*

The quote comes from an interview with a specialist from a regular school proving that even an institution with a large number of students was able to attract only one specialist whose overwork led to burnout and eventually to further decrease in number of the available specialists. The scarcity of support staff is the result of neoliberal reforms in Latvian education system as the public spending on education had increasingly become point of contention. This influenced funding available for support systems within education, which, as I argue, itself constitute a form of structural violence towards impoverished communities removing much needed support mechanisms. As argued by Mader (2015), seeing poverty and inequality as financial problems these become individual problems solved when individuals gain access to capital. The question of poverty is seldom discussed in public space and is not seen as a factor legitimizing the need for support mechanisms in education. Poverty is considered a problem of each individual family rather than societal issue, and students were often individually blamed for poverty related problems disregarding larger socioeconomic impact on their causality. Explanations based in biomedicine and especially psychiatry are offering an opportunity to comfortably individualize structurally caused problems.

3.3.2 Medicalisation

I borrow the concept of medicalisation from Peter Conrad who describes it as a process of "defining behaviour as a medical problem or illness and mandating or licensing the medical profession to provide some type of treatment for it" (Conrad 1975). This approach allows him to explore how hyperkinesis (which has been reconceptualised as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in medical science) was 'discovered' to be the cause for behavioural problems in children. Conrad developed his definition over the years arguing that a crucial part of medicalisation is defining behaviour in medical rather than social or judicial terms. In residential school setting we can observe how medicalisation is applied using the Pedagogical Medical Commission (PMC). In Latvia there are two levels of PMC – municipal and state PMCs (MPMC and SPMC). The functions of both forms of PMC are the same and described here as:

- Recommending parents (guardians, custody court, if the child is placed in a foster family) the most appropriate educational program for the student on the basis of the pedagogical and psychological and medical research materials based of written permission of guardians to assess student's health status, ability and level of development,
- Giving opinions on most appropriate general education or special education program for students (under age 21) according to assessed health status, abilities and level of development;
- Providing opinions on the necessity to home education for students with long-term illnesses, and assessing the resolution of family doctor or medical commission and student's abilities;
- Dealing with disputes related to applications made by local government commissions, parents (guardians, custody court, if the child is placed in a foster family) or a local government officer's commission. (National Centre for Education Republic of Latvia 2020)

The competence between SPMC and MPMC is divided according to age of children: MPMC deals with preschool children and first four grades while SPMC works with older children. As per Regulation No. 709 October 16, 2012, to initiate the process for receiving special education and accordingly to receive support for their children, parents are required to request an assessment of their child by the pedagogical medical commission.

Prior to the commission, children must be evaluated by a psychologist, a speech therapist, and an education specialist. Additionally, health examination must be carried out according to the specific needs of the particular child, which may include consultations with psychiatrists, surgeons, ophthalmologists, or otorhinolaryngologists. The list of diagnosis that may lead to the PMC is extensive and includes close to 200 different somatic and mental conditions. The type and severity of the conditions is wide ranging, starting from constipation and anxiety all the way to tuberculosis and schizophrenia. At the same time the list does not include certain illnesses that may require special care and support such as cancer or sexually transmissive diseases. The commission formulates recommendations regarding the appropriate curriculum for the student, although the final decision regarding the educational institution, according to the legislation lies with the parents. Based on the identified specific special education needs, there are nine different special education programs. Seven of these programs (for learners with visual impairments, hearing impairments, language impairments, physical disabilities, mental health disorders, learning disabilities, and long-term illnesses), incorporate elements of the mainstream education curriculum. However, the methods of instruction, provided support, and additional services differ from mainstream programs. These programmes among those working in the field are referred to as the "codes" that are assigned for each programme, such as in the following interview:

> *But at the moment, one-third of our children have [special] needs, they need support in form of teaching materials, that is visual aids, that's the code five-*

six. Those who are removed from their classes are the code five-eight and they are taught by one, by two, by three, well, depending on the needs of the particular class.

(Velga, teacher, former educator)

The habit of assigning children to different educational programs has an unintended consequence of children becoming defined by a code. Throughout interviews with both residential school employees and specialists from other educational facilities and related institutions the habit of using the code to describe the students was widespread:

Well, we must coexist, if there is one in the school. Also, those special programs, one is a learning disability, and the other is a mental retardation. The 58. Well, for short, program 56., 58.

(Indra, school principal, municipal deputy)

Furthermore, NGOs have long been accusing the PMCs of assigning the codes for reasons that were far from medical. For example, every third child from a Roma community has been assigned one or another code which has prompted NGOs to suspect that the diagnoses were assigned in a haphazard manner (Krieviņš 2019). One of the possible reasons for overdiagnosis among Roma children could be avoidance of trouble, such as suspicions of Roma discrimination at school. Diagnosing Roma children with a code allowed either to explain problems a school encountered with Roma students within a medical framework or to get a justification for the transfer of a child to a different facility which often was been residential school. Here, as noted by Conrad, it is important recognise the capacity of different actors to appropriate the process of medicalisation for their own purposes and agendas.

But there are also some… like, here they actually aren't that bad. It sometimes seems to me that a whole bunch of them has a code just because they haven't been behaving the way they should in another school, and then they are given some code with visual aids or so, so that they have to be transferred. This is just my personal view though.

(Velga, teacher, former educator)

The reason to assign a code to a child can be differently motivated: cultural differences, learning difficulties, complicated situation at home. Furthermore, as the number of residential schools is decreasing in recent years and the rest are transformed into residential school for children with disabilities which meant having a code, the decision for the transfer to residential school instead of studying in a regular school may be determined by availability of support in each institution.

Medicalisation can also serve as a tool for depolitisation of deviant behaviour. Conrad uses an example from the Soviet Union where dissent was defined as mental illness which allowed Soviet officials to not only confine the

dissidents in mental hospitals but also to discredit their claims as manic ideation or schizophrenia. Returning to the example of unruly behaviour, here it helps to avoid problematic questions about how the environmental factors of school system contribute to the incapability of the child to follow the rules. The diagnosis of ADHD serves multiple purposes – it allows the school to maintain that the cause of problems lies in the individual child rather than school system itself. For parents it offers a clear solution to often complicated situation as reasons behind child's behavioural problems could be numerous and not always easily solvable. Furthermore, recasting the problematic behaviour as a disease may help the children to no longer perceive themselves as morally bad, but rather as sick, which may lessen the stigma and guilt connected to their misbehaviour.

> *We recently had a very vivid example, a child who had been in one small rural school for 4 years, studying with very good grades and commendations. And then suddenly he was sent to the infamous 'medped' commission[18]. The maybe the mother had some kind of [mental] retardation, maybe she didn't understand this, I don't know. She said that no one even asked her for anything, did not explain anything, they just sent her [to municipality] there were already some kind of signed documents, supposedly there was that code (code here relates to the diagnosis assigned to the child). The child had the code that is neither this nor that, he really isn't in any school. And in the 5th grade he has already been sent to.., you know there is such a infamous school in Riga – Jugla residential school. They throw that kind of unwanted children there.*
>
> *(Gundega, principal)*

The residential school employees here were aware of how residential school fitted within larger education system of Latvia while also staying critical of this position. They did not openly critique the system itself (although with exceptions) but employees rejected the system and its approach in its entirety. This was one of the reasons which encouraged this institution to adopt many progressive policies, including inclusive education, that other schools resisted.

3.3.3 Institutionalisation

The institutionalisation is most directly connected to the residential school especially due to the recent reforms with the aim of promoting DI policy in Latvia. I argue that the DI policy in Latvia also follows the logic of 'individualise, medicalise, institutionalise'. By defining DI through primarily medical perspective the state glosses over more complicated social implications of closing down large-scale residential institutions. While for state officials the integration of children with disabilities into a regular school was a preferential solution, as described in the overview of DI it was a more complicated decision

[18] Pedagogical Medical Commission (PMC)

for parents. As discussed in previous chapters, the parent's decision to send their child to a residential school could often be motivated by several factors, many of which did not have any direct connection to the mental or physical health of the child.

Employees and former inmates of residential schools maintained that despite its shortcomings, residential school served as alternative to negligent or dangerous home environment. Furthermore, DI does not necessarily mean an increase of number of specialists available in regular schools which may further complicate the decision to keep the child in the regular or residential school. Initiative for transferring a child to residential school comes from parents, who may see it as the best possible solution. As argued by one of the research participants above, the diagnosis may be assigned mistakenly. Disputing the decision of PMCs was a complicated process which could draw additional attention towards the family and which was perceived as a threat:

> *The fact that a child at such an age says that he is the boss and solves everything himself is the first signal that no one is helping him at home. If he comes to you and says "I just walked around the streets of [town] all night and went home at 4:30 because I don't like that my mother is drunk" – this is the second signal. And the third is that he himself remains like a child who is no longer interested in anything. Then the smoking starts and, let's be honest, stealing as well, because nightlife is drawing him in deeper and deeper, after that comes the police with all the consequences, and then he says, "I am done for."*
>
> *(Gundega, principal)*

This quote shows that employees of residential school can be aware of the social causes that directed a particular child towards delinquency. Staff could recognise the cause of the problem but tools for solving it were limited. Furthermore, the lack of engagement in studies, unwillingness to respect the authority of institutions and staff, unusual degree of independence could well be used to assign a student with a medical diagnosis which could prevent him from integrating in his class and did not guarantee help needed. Despite the claims of the Ministry of Education and Science for the opposite, residential school remained a part of Latvian education system (see chapter 3.2.1.).

The quote above comes from an interview with administration and support staff in a small rural residential school which was established after the fall of Soviet Union. As this institution is funded by the municipality, the state could not require it to be closed or reformed into a residential school for children with special needs. In recent years this residential school has also been expanding its programs as the number of children with different issues and diagnosis has soared. The school has also opened a special support program for children from the Roma community. The school administration did not believe in segregated education for children with special needs and advocated for inclusive education. Boarding facilities, willingness to accept children who have been rejected by other institutions and inclusive education makes the institution very attractive

for parents despite its not being among elite educational facilities in the country. Keeping this approach was a challenge as most of the educators regardless of their working experience had not been prepared to work with children with special needs:

> *However, I still think that those segregated schools ('palīgskolas') – well, now we [in Latvia] don't have any segregated schools, all we have are residential schools and special residential schools – if it is so difficult for them [children with mental illnesses] and they really can't learn, then it would be easier for them if they were all in their [residential school for special education], all together, where there are also others who cannot learn, and they are taught something more practical. For us [regular residential school] the practical part is only as much as the educator can teach [the child].*
>
> *(Velga, teacher, former educator)*

This contrasting viewpoint was voiced by the employees from a residential school which had been established during the Soviet period and had enjoyed a high status in the education system. This sets it apart from two other schools where attitude towards inclusive education was much more positive. This illustrates that the residential schools were at least partially dependent also on their historical heritage.

Analysis and summary

In this chapter I explored the historical development of residential schooling in Latvia. I concentrated mostly on local developments while also including the international context where it was necessary to do so.

Since the very beginning of the creation of state education and social support systems residential schools have continuously adapted to requirements from the state and its ideological position. The local school network outwardly accepted the change while maintaining its core ideas and approaches. I argue that this type of passive resistance in later years characterizes the residential school system and is one of the explanations for their persistent existence throughout different periods. I have also illustrated how since the inception of school system in the territory of contemporary Latvia residential school came to be connected to several opposing phenomena. While schools were generally seen as a tool for enlightenment for population and residential school was integral part in this work, residential school often was populated by children who were from poor rural families and thus became a symbol of poverty and social concern.

Research into the education system of interwar independent Latvia period is still scarce. As noted by Aldis Purs in his article on the development national identity in the school system in the interwar Latvia "there is little academic work on schools and teachers in the years of independence from 1918 to 1940" (Purs 2004, 98). By 2020 the situation has not significantly improved (Purs'

article has not garnered any significant attention despite being one of the few publications about the period).

During the Soviet period residential schooling showed tensions between individual actions and broader social conditions exposing a dialectical relationship between individuals and state policies and experience of living on the margins of different fields constantly shifting their position. The institutions that were established with the aim of housing children that were considered to be socially and politically problematic and potentially dangerous, therefore already laying groundwork for the future system of the residential school. Additionally, the residential school system was established as a primarily ideological response to the crisis rather than a practical solution for their residents. It led to an organisational culture where the cause for the failures of state institution were seen as being caused by either the workers of the institution or its inhabitants rather than broader structural causes. The exploration of how the responsibility and blame has been distributed throughout the history of residential schools allows us to follow the embeddedness of structural violence in daily life of internātskola and the practices that maintain its invisibility.

Addressing the next time period, I illustrated how the Stalinist policies led to the situation where the adults, especially the ones working in the institutions, were seen as responsible for the deficiencies not only regarding the children's education and conduct but also their ideological stance, their motivation to openly discuss and report the difficulties they experienced in their work with children diminished.

I also explored how in USSR an increased attention towards the moral and ideological stance of the pupils was seen as constitutive of both a development of upstanding citizen and success in the educational part of the school experience. The conflation of moral, ideological, and educational performance of the child, however, inadvertently further reinforced the practice that the children who were not behaving according to the Soviet standards were disciplined at the expense of their education therefore further reinforcing the notion of the unruly child who is also failing in their studies. This then serves as a justification for creation of separate facilities for 'problem children' as even though they are perceived to be malleable with enough support from the adults, they are nevertheless a threat to other student's achievements. Both the state and the institutions themselves facilitated the creation of separate facilities for children with learning or behavioural difficulties. The state officials and employees of the institutions had a clear incentive to work towards the segregation of children as this can serve as an environment where those elements who are potentially threatening to the state ideology can be hidden from the public view while for the employees of the institutions this helped distancing from ideologically compromised children by moving them to special care facilities.

Finally, turning towards the developments since the 1991, I described how the residential school system struggled in the larger education system of now independent Latvia and how its position was mostly connected to its social rather than educational role. While this manoeuvring allowed residential

schools to survive numerous waves of reforms it ultimately was not successful in carving out a stable position as either an educational facilities or care facilities. I also explored how the reliance of residential schools on the state farms and factories led to significant struggles during the early years of independence and how this contributed towards the refocusing of residential education towards serving as place of convalescence rather than transformation as illustrated by the continued removal of their educative function by reducing residential schools from high schools to grade schools as well as through the changing position they occupied towards the special education. I then turned towards the most recent developments exploring the decision to remove the words "residential school" from the policy documents and showed how the heralded closure of the residential school in Latvia was a semantic exercise from the side of the state with the aim of hiding the residential school from public view while simultaneously justifying their inevitable existence.

I also explored the logic and actions of different agents connected to the residential education and argued that residential school is located both in the field of welfare as well as educational field. This creates an unstable position that is realised through what I have called "permanently transitory" state of the residential school. The autonomy of residential school arises from its unique position between the fields as agents both within the school itself and outside it are constantly switching between the roles of the residential school within wider sectors of education and welfare in order to maintain their own positions in the field of power. As the ministry officials claim that residential schools no longer exist in the territory of Latvia, the municipalities are potentially investing more capital in the residential school system than ever before. I have illustrated how this seemingly paradox is rather a result of different strategies applied by agents connected to the residential school. This creates the perception that although everyone has the best interests of the pupils in their mind, they oftentimes end up enduring the most unpleasant consequences which illustrates how the causes for suffering experienced by the dominated group in society can be traced to individual agents, ranging from a principal who attempts to maintain the school as a place of employment to a ministry which needs to meet its goals stated in the plan of deinstitutionalisation. Finally, I illustrate how the perspective has shifted since the socialist system and describe the importance of the medical perspective in the current residential school system as well as the persistent presence of institutions within this field.

4 SETTING THE STAGE

This variety and confusion around what constituted a residential school was also reflected during my fieldwork. In my thesis I will primarily draw upon data from five different institutions as described in the chapter on methodology. Here I concentrate on describing the 3 schools which I had visited or lived in. The description here serves methodological as much as conceptual rationale. From methodological perspective, this provides some parts of the "thick description" by introducing some of the main agents of my research, namely, its central institutions. From conceptual perspective this chapter allows me to critically evaluate the notion of "residential school" and illustrate how the field is constituted of agents of varying size, social impact and capital. Furthermore, by tracing the trajectories of each institution I illustrate the way both social change and reproduction takes place in relation to residential school.

Still, despite the differences between the institutions, they also share some important characteristics such as the schedule. All three institutions were very rigid in their approach towards the organization of daily life and very loose with filling in the structured timeslots. All institutions organised their daily schedule similarly – all children were waking up at the same time, went to meals at the same time. When classes ended, students usually had a free afternoon, which could be used to either participate in afterschool activities or to entertainment. This was followed by afternoon snack and the official *vakarmācības* when the students under the supervision of educators were expected to do their homework. After they were done with the homework (which was checked by the educator) they again had some free time which lasted until dinnertime followed by to washing and heading to bedrooms. The shedule was similar only difference occurred with availability of facilities and opportunities in vicinity of each school. Classes filled the most significant part of daily schedule. This changed during the weekends when students mostly had free time without much other structure aside from the mealtimes which stayed fixed. There were clear rules according to which the students were expected to act and freedom for educators to organise the time in-between mealtimes and lessons.

4.1 Residential school "Flower": persistent existence

This is the school where I spent my childhood. The school itself was established during the first independence period but it was reformed into a residential school during the Khrushchev's era. The school has two main buildings dividing students according to age groups – first of the buildings housed grades 1–4 and the second – grades 5–9. Auxiliary space was located in both buildings where, for example, gym would be in one of the buildings and library – in the other. Residential facility was connected to the second building and aside from visiting the library, most pupils, once they reached grade 5, did not have any

reason to leave the second building which housed all important facilities such as dining hall.

I studied in this institution from grade two to grade nine, approximately from age 8 until 16. I was there during the late 1990s and early 2000s, so I avoided the period when the school experienced the most drastic changes. Still, studying during this time gave me an insight in the transitional phase of residential school when we still had an auxiliary farm, but its utility was debated and seemed existing due to inertia rather than as an improvement of the economic situation or tool in our upbringing. This was also the period when the significance of manual labour decreased in this institution. During most of my years students were expected to clean their own rooms, classrooms, common areas of the school and to work in the kitchen. By the time I was graduating, students were no longer expected to work in the kitchen as this task was taken over by a private company.

Another aspect of everyday life in the residential school that changed was contribution to upbringing. As my residential school had been established during the Soviet period, it used then common two educator system, where each separate class was nurtured by two educators, preferably male and female teachers. This changed after Latvia regained independence and since then similarly aged children from several classes (e.g., class 1,2 and 3) were brought together in a single group during evenings. This allowed reducing costs of supervising children in their free time and prevented school dropouts.

During my stay the residential school was still providing material support to its inhabitants in the form of free clothing and meals. The clothing mainly came in the form of second-hand donations by international aid agencies that was distributed to the children in need. Some parts of the past residential school glory had survived, as one of the more bizarre classes that was made available was ballroom dancing which usually culminated in a grand festive competition at the end of the study year where parents could come and support their children in a large congregation hall of the school.

Some pupils came from relatively affluent families, marking a transition period towards further ghettoization of residential schools, but most students represented struggling families. It was still a regular school and did not accept children with special needs, even if there were two separate classes for children with different learning disabilities.

4.2 Residential school “Dawn”: glorious past, uncertain future

This school does not have previous history of being a regular school as it was established as a residential school during the 1950s. It was one of the most exemplary residential schools in the country during the Soviet period and was often used as an example of operational quality of a residential school. This also meant that significant funds were invested in this institution leading to the development of a sprawling complex with facilities for different extracurricular

activities, large auxiliary farm, and strong community outreach within the framework of socialist ideology. This was accomplished while accommodating children with very different backgrounds which presented its own set of challenges. While during the first few decades the residential school could proudly present a substitute 'mother' and 'father' for each class, during later years the institution became increasingly female dominated as number of male employees decreased:

> *Q: [...] I understand that there were two educators in one class, yes?*
> *V: Yes, one man and one woman, to be precise. In high school there was only one [educator] left – either a man or a woman. They were independent, no need to supervise them.*
> *Q: And it continued throughout the Soviet period, or did it change? [...]*
> *V: I don't know, gradually it began to lose its… either salary or something, but at some point, there were less and less of men.*
> *S: I kind of understand, the salaries are not that high, the work also gets on one's nerves.*
> *V: Yes, and you can't stand it at all.*
> *Q: Yes, I also heard this in a previous interview that there was tradition for one man, one woman [educating one class] and then the men just disappeared.*
> *V: Yes, for some ten years there were probably about seven men.*
> *(Solveiga and Valters, teachers, former educators)*

As described in the methodological sources from the Soviet period the educators were imagined to be the closest support persons to the pupils assuming the role of mother and father within the walls of the institution. Here one can observe reimagination of family in the residential school with the educators explicitly assuming symbolic parental roles. Older teachers who had experienced the Soviet system mostly spoke of it fondly, arguing that this approach allowed to create a close and lasting relationship with children.

> *This also needs to be said: educators worked in pairs at each class. We had it like this. Two educators – switching every other day [...] At least to me it seems that those educators had a very warm relationship with their students compared to a regular school.*
> *(Velga, teacher, former educator)*
> *[...] we used to have two educators for one class and then it was so that [one shift was] from seven in the morning to ten in the evening for two days. [...] Basically, you're in that school, as they say, up to your ears. And even when you come home you still have to think about the problems experienced by some student and such. Basically, you know everything about those kids. Everything.*
> *(Solveiga, teacher, former educator)*

Due to both practical and symbolic significance of educators and the high status of the institution during Soviet period, in one of the residential schools I researched the practice to work in pairs was also maintained for quite a long

time after the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, due to the changing nature of education and diminishing funding this was eventually reformed and during my visits the school no longer had this type of system. I had a single educator in my class and there was a separate educator for supervising children during the evenings. Furthermore, as most of the teachers were employed in all three capacities (teacher, class educator, evening educator), this meant that educators ended up with the same number of hours as described in the interview excerpt above. These overlapping roles increased the strain on teachers, but also presented an opportunity for the children to develop relationships with different educators than the those assigned to their class. While I had a rather strained relationship with my class educator, I could have a much better relationship with other educators in my residential school.

The fact that the institution was becoming increasingly women dominated was seen as a significant drawback by the educators as one of the goals for residential school was to ensure that single-parent families (which were and are mostly all single mother families) would also receive an education based on heterosexual family model and prevent them from creating single-parent families in their own future lives.

Due to the lack of funding most facilities needed to be closed and with the DI process the further existence of the school was threatened. A small number of students also contributed to the decline. It was not only caused due to the change of the status of residential schools but also reflected larger demographic changes and effects of falling birth-rate in Latvian society:

> *For example, there is [a town Y], where we had several trips. Some terrible outcomes were predicted there, like, how will it be now, how will it be. There are [towns Y] residential high school and [towns Y] high school as well. About hundred meters away from each other. And both, so to speak, empty at that moment. Currently, there is a [regular] school instead of [towns Y] residential high school. It still exists. It still has a boarding. The number of children in the school, in the year we reformed it, decreased by 20 or even less.*
>
> *(Mirdza, government official)*

The ministry official in the interview saw it as completely self-evident that in a situation where two schools in the same town competed for a low number of students, it was the residential school that had to be closed. Firstly, ministry disregarded the fact that demographic changes after the fall of USSR contributed to lower number of students. The economic transition period had severe impact on the former Soviet bloc – fertility rate dropped all across the Eastern Europe, reaching its lowest point during the 1990s and early 2000s (Kohler, Billari, and Ortega 2002). The reasons for this drop are extensively researched (Thornton and Philipov 2009; Billingsley 2010; Scheiring et al. 2020; Kohler, Billari, and Ortega 2002) and here I wish to point out that there was very little residential school employees could have done to attract more pupils.

Secondly, the ministry also disregarded the fact that their decision about the residential school compounded by the general sense of insecurity and concern that pervaded the local community:

> *I will tell you how it was. They said that all high school classes will get closed. At that time, when my 9th grade was graduating. I remember one mom, whenever she saw me, she asked whether we plan to open 10th grade. It was expected that five or six children would come. But if [they hear] all the time: no, someone told me it will get closed, they will be gone. And based on these rumours, the 10th grade was very small at that time. But, well, who will come study for one year just [for the class] to be closed down after that?*
>
> *(Solveiga, teacher, former educator)*

This interview was conducted after several waves of reforms which progressively reduced school funding and affected the quality of teaching and their upbringing function.

The perception of residential school in society changed. The teachers I interviewed talked fondly about the time when there were a lot of extra-curricular activities and the school was regarded as one of the strongest residential schools in the country even after the collapse of the USSR. It had a separate program for students who studied STEM sciences. The Ministry of Education and Science stipulated that once such programs opened in neighbouring school, the residential school was forced to shut their program down. The school was expected to accommodate an ever-growing number of children with different learning or mental difficulties which further reduced its reputation for excellence in the region and made to change its focus.

While the ministry formally granted autonomy to institutions of education, it was different from the perspective of the residential school staff. They felt that work was overregulated, and state's presence was often experienced as overbearing. By reducing the amount of funding available for, for example, extracurricular activities, the ministry has a very clear and powerful instrument to shape the everyday life in the institution.

By the time I carried out my research, the institution had become a mere shadow of what it once was. It had been transformed from a high school to a primary school, its general position in education system had changed from competitive education facility to a place for undesirable students. It was no longer funded by the state but by the municipality. Research participants there more so than in any other school reminisced about history of their school and unfavourably compared the current educational system with the previous one. This also meant a more pronounced appreciation of methodologies from the earlier years, such as segregation of students with learning difficulties and/or mental illness, focus on integration of physical labour in upbringing process and significance of upbringing strategies carried out by the school. There were also new practices adopted, such as a child-care service supervising children in the

school until late evening. Parents also saw this as a valuable support as it ensured that the child was safe and fed during the afternoon and evening.

4.3 Residential school "Path": Establishing alternative roads

This residential school was markedly different from the other two. It was located in a different region and as a residential school was established very recently, after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Its operation and the practices of the staff has been formed within the Latvian education system. As this residential school had never experienced the glory days of the USSR, its goals here were much more down-to-earth and their approach for caring was already shaped in an environment where residential school function has been relegated to lower end of the education system clients.

The different starting point of the institution also meant that there was a different approach to school upbringing. As far as I know, this institution had never adopted the 2-educator system but used their own approach: separate educators for each class and a residential school educator caring for children accommodated in the residential school after the study day had concluded.

Due to awareness of their precarious position, as the residential schools were being reformed and closed throughout the period I did my research, the school administration had also invested significant effort to ensure that the children studying in the institution would receive the support they needed. In the interview they were proud to announce that they had both a psychologist and social pedagogue onboard which, especially in rural regions, is still rather an exception than a rule.

Finally, this institution was also different since it was not located in regional centre but rather in a small rural village. This contributed to better knowledge and care for its inhabitants. Due to the central role of upbringing in everyday life in residential school all of the employees showed great care and interest in their pupils. The staff seemed to take the most pride in not only having a relationship with their pupils inside the institution but also outside its walls:

> *Honestly, I'll tell you right away that there are teachers and maybe other [staff] working at school, and we all see those kids every day except Saturday and Sunday. And even [in those days], we often notice them, often on the streets, where their moms don't even know [what is going on]. We know where they are. Because we all live in [nearest town]. Because we indeed see those children every day, every hour, every break. And we actually sometimes feel very upset that the social service thinks – they are the ones who can talk to the child and ask them [some questions]. How do you think, who knows this child best and, in fact, also the family [...], because through the child we see and understand, what is happening in the family? We also feel that if [the children] trust us, then they trust explicitly us, not the social worker.*
>
> *(Gundega, principal)*

Here the staff member makes a claim that was often repeated during interviews – teachers perceived themselves as trusted partners of the families experiencing difficulties. Due to the generally progressive outlook of the institution and their regionally well-known struggle for quality education and inclusive education, the residential school staff were perceived as less threatening than other state agents. This also demonstrates the potential for the residential school to serve as sort of a bridge between the family and the state.

The rural location, however, also came with its challenges as this made the institution threatened by ongoing restructuring of school network. It had been financed by the municipality and thus protected from state involvement to a greater degree than other schools. Indeed, from the perspective of Ministry of Education and Science this institution does not exist or at least does not exist as residential school.

4.4 Residential schools as vehicles and victims of change

By remaining in the borderlands residential schools could ensure their continued existence creatively exploiting the structurally weak state and adjusting their position to make sure they fit in national regulations. As residential school gets overwhelmed with functions it has not been designed for while constantly being under requirements to cut costs, its functions are reduced to a bare minimum which leads to lack of engagement with the inhabitants of the residential school which often has the result of reproducing the social relations that led to the arrival of children to the institution in the first place.

> *And those children with mental disorders are placed in a residential school, there has been a time when it is just awful. We also have addicts, and they are quite old. Well, as the last resort, trying to save them, [they] put them in a residential school. They are 18 years old; they are placed in the eighth grade or something. They have all sorts of connections there, with whom they smoke, drink and such. Oh, and then the mental imbalance as well. The educator accompanies them to the medical centre, where the special medicine is. If he hasn't taken his medicine at home, then he arrives on Monday and he is already strung up. Actually, it's crazy.*
>
> *(Solveiga, teacher, former educator)*

The excerpt above characterises an institution which according to officials has now been reformed and therefore problems could be expected to subside. However, as we can see from the example the problems persist even after the enactment of proposed changes. I argue that this represents a way where state intervention is based on perpetuation of social inequality which leads to perpetuation of structural violence towards children in residential school setting. The structural violence in this case is related to the way how children with addiction problems cannot receive the support they need, or how the support that is available to the children with mental illnesses is insufficient. These issues

would most likely be explained by lack of funding or other structural causes which themselves would not be seen as the direct responsibility of any one actor but rather assigned to larger vaguely defined discourses such as economics or demographics. In this situation active resistance to these discourses is problematic as it may perpetuate the prevailing notions of individual responsibility and development while failing to see how these issues relate to very visible and concrete examples of economic inequality.

As can be seen from the example of the third institution, the borderlands can serve not only as place where inequalities are reproduced but also where they can be resisted. Following Butler (2020) I argue that the staff of residential school in this case engages in politics of nonviolence by carrying out a constant critique of norms that perpetuate the structural violence which has come do characterise the residential school experience. Furthermore, by maintaining its existence the residential school has the potential to serve as a constant force of nonviolence in the lives of some of the most vulnerable members of Latvian society, by offering both an alternative to the prevailing discourses about the supremacy of individualism and capitalism and a point from which to start exacting a political resistance to the violence embedded in the unequal access to education. I believe that this allows us to see how to ensure that even those lives which are not seen as worthy of safeguarding receive this help despite the logics of governance that routinely discards them (Butler 2020, 62). The structural violence in this situation is particularly complicated as there is often no direct way how children who end up in a residential school setting would be threatened or disadvantaged. In response to the constantly shifting position of residential school the state has also seemingly adopted a schizoid position where on the one hand residential school has to be closed down as it is detrimental to the wellbeing on the child and, on the other, it needed to be preserved to ensure accessibility of education for all. Similarly, residential school needed to be reformed due to the number of complaints that had been received about the institution in the past and simultaneously it needed to be preserved only for that part of the population which was the least likely to ever be able to voice their opposition to the potential abuse as residential school is becoming primarily a place for children with disabilities.

There is a difference between residential school at the Soviet period and contemporary one. During the Soviet period the institution commanded considerable symbolic resources which were dutifully applied to convince potential young offenders of their erroneous behaviour, but this is no longer possible today as residential school in most cases no longer commands respect from its inmates or wider society. Without recourse to grand discourses about the importance of the collective and the importance of striving towards communism the school personnel had much fewer tools at hand to convince misbehaving pupils, further contributing to heavy-handed responses and enforcement of discipline. As the prevailing discourse of education had shifted from collective struggle towards general enlightenment and to a highly individualised approach to studies with emphasis on excellence, the previous tools were not only

inadequate but sometimes even directly opposed to the way how education system was organised in contemporary Latvia. This created a mismatch between imagined and lived reality contributing to use of officially unsanctioned violence. This is well illustrated by recounting the decline in cooperation and exchange among different residential school during last 30 years:

> *Q: And you mentioned that there was a close relationship with [a different residential school] in Soviet times. Is there still some cooperation between residential schools?*
> *V: No, there is nothing anymore. For a long time now. In the past, joint parties were common.*
> *Q: And when did it end?*
> *V: I mean, with the beginning of independent [Latvia].*
> *S: When I started in the 90ies, I don't think there were any.*
> *V: Yes, then there were some problems or, as they say, they were saving money. Everyone was having problems when that independence began.*
> *(Solveiga and Valters, teachers, former educators)*

These previously cooperating institutions were located in the same geographical region. During the independence period the institutions lost most of their funding and were trying to simply weather the drastic changes. Once the situation stabilised, cooperation was no longer desired for different reasons: as the education system shifted towards principle where "money followed the student" (Jankova et al. 2017), the institutions found themselves in a competition for students. The competition that characterises the current education system is encouraged and supported not only among students but institutions as well. As the focus shifts from support to excellence, residential schools were in an awkward position where competition with other regular schools was neither possible nor necessary (at least in relation to academic achievements) which affected the number of students that chose residential school as a form of education. During my study years many of my classmates were coming from relatively affluent families who chose a residential school for proximity to their homes; today residential school almost exclusively houses pupils who are either experiencing difficulties fitting in at the education system or who, due to complications experienced in their home environment needed to be accommodated in a residential school.

Summary

In this chapter I have sketched a general description of the residential schools which served as the main field sites for my research. The data was also complimented by interviews, conversations, and observations outside of these institutions both by my colleagues and myself as outlined in the methodology chapter. By describing the field sites, I have tried to give the reader an insight into residential schools and their operation. Furthermore, I have also tried to show how the historical position of each of the institutions contributes to their current

situation and how the general positionality of residential school helps us to critically evaluate the current education policy in Latvia. In the following chapter I turn towards analysis of one of the central concepts in residential school setting: upbringing and the professionals who are carrying out this task.

5 THE SYMBOLIC ORDER OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL: OBJECTIVELY SUBJECTIVE STRUCTURE-AGENT RELATIONS

In this chapter I analyse the relations among agents in the field of residential school and its overlap with social fields. I start the chapter by presenting two different cases from Latvian media which concern institutions that are closely linked to residential school system in Latvia and illustrate the overall experience for children experiencing different types of difficulties in Latvia. Following this I explore the organization of everyday relations in the institution by looking at upbringing which I see as a central tool in pedagogical operation of residential school. After that I explore the different types of inequalities experienced and practiced outside the institution.

5.1 Looking for help, finding violence: the case of "Kalna svētību kopiena"

During the summer of 2020. Latvian media started publishing reports about alleged child abuse in the "Kalna svētību kopiena" (Mountain Blessing Community) in Latvia. During inspection that was prompted by complaint, the State Inspectorate for Protection of Children's Rights discovered that in the community children worked in the fields up to the point of exhaustion and were subjected to emotional and physical violence. During the next few weeks, media kept describing different forms of violence in the community which ostensibly housed individuals with addiction issues, including adolescents. The leader of the community, a catholic priest, held a press conference where he dismissed the accusations and insisted that in most cases the complaints were based on distorted information. He emphasised the importance of physical labour and discipline in the operation of the community. The media frenzy continued for several weeks with opposing viewpoints being voiced which either condemned or supported the leader of the community. Eventually a prosecution was opened by the state police which was concluded in March 2021. The investigation concluded that several episodes of emotional and physical violence were identified which were penalized with a fine of up to 700 EUR. The final decision, however, was left to the local municipality and has never been made public. It is important to note that this event did not lead to closing down of the community which has never been registered as an official institution providing rehabilitation services for children with addictions and therefore is not regulated by the state.

First, it is important to note how the children ended up in the community. As pointed out by both sides, no viable support system for children who were suffering from addiction was available in Latvia. State supported social addiction rehabilitation institutions were closed down during 2010s after a string of

scandals associated with treating children there. One consultation centre named "Adolescent resource centre" with low operating capacity was available and until 2021 was based only in Riga. Since August 2021 it has opened several additional facilities in other regional centres therefore improving the accessibility of the service. Support was also available in the state psychiatric clinic "Ģintermuiža" but here the support was limited to medical therapy and required that the child was already diagnosed with addiction. Although Ministry of Welfare claimed that support for children with addictions was also available locally from social workers, child psychiatrists and narcologists, their availability and quality of support was poor. As addiction rehabilitation is a lengthy process, there was a possibility that child's parents were not able to invest the time and resources necessary, especially if the family was poor. This prompted parents to look for alternative solutions such as those provided by the Mountain Blessing Community. The community housed children with addiction problems not only from families but also from NGOs such as SOS Children's Villages Latvia. Even organisations with a comparatively large resource pool and a commitment to implementing a child-centred approach were choosing this type of service.

Secondly, healing used in the Mountain Blessing Community shows how violence used in education and care facilities is justified by viewing children as "small adults" and believing that violence is an educational tool. Despite the research arguing against children being perceived as adults (Landrigan and Garg 2004; Larcher 2017), the community leader perceived them as adults who received the same type of treatment as the adult inhabitants of the community.

As I have written in Chapter 3.1.1.5, the forefathers of Soviet childcare system believed in the educational value of violence. This approach professes the value of tough-love approach towards childcare and emphasises the value of physical labour and often rough treatment of children in the institution, illustrated by the community leader's comment on accusations concerning the availability of drinking water while working on the field: "So what if some small weakling has not grabbed the water, where is the scandal?"

Thirdly, the weak response from the state institutions towards the problem exemplifies unwillingness of state institutions to recognise the severity of situation. An unlicensed institution without any supervision for several years had carried out service for often disadvantaged children. The lack of response from state in such cases legitimises the violence on a national level. This is also evidenced by the way Latvia is still one of the last countries in Europe that has failed to sign or ratify the UN Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and more recently has avoided signing The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. These decisions reflect an indifferent attitude towards the use of violence in institutional or family context from the state which further enables approaches such as the one applied in the Mountain Blessing Community.

Through the example of Mountain Blessing Community I have tried to illustrate what I believe is a continuum of violence for disadvantaged children in Latvia. Who should be blamed in the situation where children were sent to

receive help in an institution that was never designed to offer this type of service and predictably ended up doing it badly? Do we blame the state for the lack of regulation and support systems which leads to the establishment and continued existence of these institutions? Or do we blame the parents who choose to take their children to the Community even if they were aware of the approaches used by its leader? Or do we blame the institution for attempting to help the children in their care by applying methods that are clearly unsuitable for children? I argue that the basis for all of these events and practices is the symbolic violence which renders these processes invisible. By making it seem mundane, business-as-usual, violence acquires both a sense of inevitability and boredom. The familiarity of violence renders one immune to the suffering caused by it and prevents reflection on where and how the violence is enacted.

5.2 Globalised inequality: local experiences of everyday violence

During 2018 state inspections reported gross violations at Children's Psychoneurological Hospital "Ainaži": forced-feeding, lengthy bed fixation periods, sexual violence among inmates and lack of documentation that would explain why some of the patients were hospitalised at the first place (Latvijas Republikas tiesībsargs 2018). During further inspections it was discovered that a certain patient has lived in the institution for almost nine years, during which they experienced violence and neglect and eventually also provided unpaid labour to the institution (Ozola-Balode, eng.lsm.lv, and De facto 2019). The latest development in this case was in May 2020 when the State Police announced that they have indicted two persons on the grounds of cruelty towards and violence against a minor. The institution has continued to operate and as pointed out by the state's ombudsman, none of children or their primary carers have called for prosecution of the perpetrators. The staff justified their actions by pointing out the lack of manpower and funding while also claiming that the inmates were exaggerating their claims.

During the same time, a German NGO *Wellenbrecher e.V. Jugendhilfe* provided German children a special service taking them to Latvia where highly qualified specialists would help them overcome their social and psychological challenges (Wellenbrecher n.d.). While the institution at Ainaži explained their treatment practice with lack of support and specialists, *Wellenbrecher e.V. Jugendhilfe* could extend their operation in Latvia while employing the same Latvian specialists that could be lacking from Ainaži.

I use this example to illustrate that the lack of quality services that might prevent the experiences of violence for children in Latvia is not the result of lack of services or specialists per se. Violence is not experienced the same way by everyone but rather affects specific parts of global community. While violence is experienced as a mundane everyday occurrence for troubled children in Ainaži, it can simultaneously be seen as a deeply problematic practice and

urgently addressed in the case of children from Germany who may be receiving a high-quality rehabilitation service potentially in the same municipality that is unable to provide any other support for children living in its territory aside from sending them to institutions such as Ainaži or a residential school. The inequality present in this situation serves to further the symbolic violence as the children and specialists learn who is or is not worthy of help and investment. Although I would be cautious about making direct links between this situation and the concept of medical tourism (Lunt, Horsfall, and Hanefeld 2015), so as not to perpetuate the medicalisation discourse described in subchapter 4.1., making a careful comparison could still be valuable. As described by Turner (2007), the introduction of medical tourism risks taking resources away from the local healthcare system both in material sense and in relation to personnel. But this is only part of the problem, as in the case of *Wellenbrecher e.V. Jugendhilfe* what is also implicitly promoted is the healing character of the environment and nature itself. As argued by Buzinde and Yarnal (2012) this represents a particular therapeutic landscape (Gesler 1996), where the place the service is available at is marketed as a "healthy place" (Smyth 2005) where the values and morality of the troubled person can be restored. While having less direct impact when compared with the material implications, this still illustrates another angle to the way the violence experienced by children in Latvia may go unrecognised by international and local actors due to assumptions of the healing effects of "pristine nature", "simple living" and similar phrases. An especially complex form of structural violence can therefore be observed and should be recognised, where the domination that arises from applications of violence and serves to justify a setting where children can be abused can be explained through recourses to larger discourses about both lack of specialists (despite their existence) and the belief that simple rural life may be the solution for the issues experienced by young people (in a way relating back to the notions of "not raising children's expectations of life unreasonably").

Both of the vignettes described here are provided to sketch a wider context in which the experiences of children living in residential schools need to be considered. Neither Mountain Blessing Community nor "Ainaži" are residential schools themselves. They do, however, allow us to understand how the experience outside the residential school walls may often closely mirror the violent experiences within it. Furthermore, these examples allow us to consider how the violence within particular institution is connected to larger questions of health and social inequalities in a regional context and to consider the ways the violence can become accepted to a degree where it no longer problematised but rather defended as the correct course of action.

In the following chapter I describe what one of my research participants poignantly called "small islands of light" – places, people and relationships that serve as alternatives to violence, sometimes being directly oppositional to violent practices and sometimes simply showing the nonviolent alternative which helps to remind that violence should not be perceived as usual or commonplace.

5.3 Upbringing

The word *audzināšana* in Latvian is a multifaceted concept which represents a complex process parallel and is connected to the education. *Audzināšana* as a concept is a translation of German word *Erziehung* (Langenscheidt Editorial Team 2017) and is closely linked to the Russian word *воспитания.*

As English lacks an exact counterpart, I have translated it as 'upbringing'. Upbringing was one of the persistent themes throughout the interviews. From the perspective of residential school employees, positive upbringing was one of the main benefits of this type of institution, often in contrast with the "lack of upbringing" at home. Residential school was presented as an alternative to family, providing both material and emotional support:

> *Yes, well, it [upbringing] also addresses relationships, how they are formed. Well, at home they [parents] are not explaining this [...] Here they talk about all the social norms and everyday life, also there is this fellowship, all this friendship and the forming of a collective. [...] We think it's funny, as sometimes they come up and say: "Oh, teacher, I wanted to return to school so much." "To study?" "No, not to study, to talk with friends, to hang out." Those who are here since year one, they get used to each other, and they feel very good. Because it is calm here, no one will hit them. Okay, a teacher might yell or something...*
>
> *(Solveiga, teacher, former educator)*

Despite the perceived significance of the role of educator it was also one of the least clearly defined aspects of residential school system. Even though upbringing is a core practice of residential schools, it is not regulated or supervised by the state. Most of the staff members were confused when I asked how the work of upbringing was organised. Similarly, to upbringing skills which were perceived dependent upon the character of a parent, caring for children in the institution was not seen differently and therefore was not formally regulated or monitored.

> *Well, no, no one has written a book for it. Each school had to develop an upbringing work program. At another school it might have been called differently. And it was written in the program what that educator had to do. They wake the children up, make sure that they eat, that they tidy their rooms.*
>
> *(Velga, teacher, former educator)*

As can be seen in the quote above, the educator mostly describes upbringing as distinct tasks that could be clearly defined by the formal program of the school and the educator made sure the children followed the discipline as it was laid out. Later in the interview the participant complained that many younger generation educators did not even know what it meant to be an educator as they could not imagine working from seven in the morning until ten in the evening.

The critique here is directed to the work ethic of younger colleagues instead of commenting on their skills and this is a significant observation. As the main task of residential school from its beginning was to transform its pupils in a practical, but more importantly, in a moral sense, the upbringing work should be perceived as a moral endeavour rather than as an educational one.

The residential school became a moral enterprise and its employees had to serve as an example for the children. This position became much harder to sustain with the dissolution of Soviet Union as the special place occupied by residential schools was no longer justifiable. No longer having the resources (both economic and symbolic) dedicated to the moral transformation of the pupils, residential school started to lose its purpose and had to find a new place in the education/care system of Latvia. This position is located lower in the social hierarchy than it was before causing lack of dedication and investment from the staff, especially those who never experienced residential school as an elite learning institution. This could lead to disagreements between members of staff as described above, as the educators who have started their work already in a completely different institution no longer wished to invest the same amount of work and effort as was expected from the workers in the old system. Lack of symbolic resources, long working hours, and often inadequate pay meant that in most cases residential school had transformed from a coveted place of work for young professionals to a much less desirable one. This has not translated into less intense work experience, as described above, and the amount and complexity of work has only increased. Many of the specialists working in residential schools were either working part time or have been working there for a long time or were part of extended kin and friendship networks of other residential school employees.

Residential school is presented as a place where the child not only learns to become a productive and useful member of society but also a "a calm place" where children have a greater opportunity of experiencing a joyous and happy childhood. Despite the declared goal and belief among staff, this was not necessarily the case for children. As described by Solheim (2009), during the last decades of Soviet power, the conditions for children living in alternative care institutions were often deplorable and caused concern in the party officials (Solheim 2009, 69). The situation has also been challenging in the years following the collapse of Soviet Union (Gavrilovici 2009, 61). During one of the exploratory visits to a potential participant institution I heard shouting from a classroom when leaving the office of the principle. From what I could make out, the teacher in the class was furious at a student and screaming at the top of her lungs: "Who do you think you are? You are nothing!" As in the statement of the teacher quoted above, yelling was still better than a family environment where the child could be physically harmed. According to data from quantitative surveys, adults in Latvia sometimes resort to violence simply due to lack of knowledge about alternatives (UoL Department of Anthropology, 2021). This extends from parents all the way to educators and other professionals working with children, where lack of conflict management skills lead to

participation in and reproduction of violence continuum as a result of social inertia due to embodied perceptions (habitus) about the roles of children and adults and the hierarchy in this relationship.

Involvement of staff in upbringing is seen as the key difference between regular schools and residential schools as in a regular settings educators have less opportunity to influence everyday life of the students outside of classroom. When children spend most of their week and sometimes many weeks in a residential school, the importance of upbringing acquires an even greater role. The dual roles of residential school teachers also serve as an example to the division. While during classes educators presented themselves and were perceived as primarily teachers of their subject, during *vakarmācības* [evening classes], mealtimes and the rest of the day, they were seen as a nurturers or supervisors of a particular group of students.

Although in the past the professions of supervisor and teacher had been separated, in current times these roles overlap due to the low pay and decreased norms for workload (this will be further explored in the chapter on the transformations of upbringing at school). The dual role becomes apparent during *vakarmācības*. *Vakarmācības* could be translated as "evening-learning" and describes a time period between afternoon and dinner when the pupils of residential school are gathered together, most often in the classroom of the educator who is supervising the process of doing homework for the next day of studies. As there are usually too many children for one educator to supervise, there are usually several groups of students who are studying in parallel throughout the school building. Evening-learning is seen as a useful method to ensure that the students complete their homework as the group setting is believed to facilitate learning. Furthermore, each pupil must show their finished homework to the supervising educator before leaving the classroom. As most of the educators are simultaneously teachers, this means that students can receive additional teaching consultation during the evening-learning, assuming the respective teacher can be found around the building:

> *While attending residential school it is possible to go to such things as consultations outside the normal working hours of the school. Because usually ordinary schools are already empty at five in the evening, the school is empty. There are no teachers there. Nothing happens there. In boarding schools, educators and subject teachers perform evening-learning [...] from five to seven in the evening. Then it is possible to go to one of the teachers either for consultation, or just to talk about how to do something better and retake some tests.*
>
> *(Dzintars)*

Evening-learning also has its upbringing aspect which helps to imbue students with respect for clear structure, timeframes, and honesty. As most things in residential school, it starts and ends the same time every day, one is expected to spend this time in the classroom even if the homework is finished. Although students are working in the same room and very often doing the same tasks,

they are expected to work independently. The actual process of evening-learning was highly dependent on particular educators and there was often considerable leeway in how it was organized from evening to evening. In my own experience it was important who was on watch. So, in the evenings with teacher of physical education students were given access to gym and sport games which otherwise would not be accessible. Some of the teachers were more interested in spending time with students even after the end of evening-learning which also contributed to differences in upbringing experience. Interest of educators in quality of students work also varied. While some of the teachers would thoroughly check homework and refer students to the respective teachers for further consultations when that was possible, others were mostly concerned with the pupils not picking on each other and not being overly loud.

> *If I knew that the Latvian language teacher was working in the next class-room, we sent the children to each other. Well, you know, evening-learning. During the evening-learning, they could go to another teacher and ask something if the particular subject teacher was at school.*
>
> *(Velga, teacher, former educator)*

The differing attitudes towards evening-learning therefore serve as an example of different types of upbringing illustrating the constant difference between the lived and imagined practice.

Lack of centralised and official guidance in the questions relating to up-bringing also led to complications when addressing ambivalent topics, such as sexual education where there was a lack of state-wide guidelines. While in accordance with current legislation topics of sexual health were integrated under several school subjects this has not resulted in a greater understanding of the topic among school children. Due to the everyday life organisation in residential schools, teacher's and students' knowledge and skills related to the sexual behaviour acquire a special urgency:

> *Oh, yeah, and of course that's the way it is, it's quite intimate, I don't know how it went for guys, but the fact that I experimented sexually this is also a fact. Maybe, not maybe, but the experiments were not like, as they say there was no sexual intercourse, nothing like that, but the fact that it was explored and experimented emotionally and physically with opposite sex, well, that did also happen.*
>
> *(Antra, former pupil)*

As illustrated by the last quote, the questions related to the sexual education were seen as complicated not only because of the unclear state guidelines but also due to the lack of capacity of teachers and educators to discuss these questions. In this situation some of the schools outsourced to local NGOs working in the field of sexual and reproductive health. This, however, meant that the sexual education was discussed in a few lectures/meetings with the NGO speakers instead of becoming something that could be discussed with the

educators which the pupils could trust and who are accessible throughout in long term:

> *It was so that when the girls started menstr- girl things, then, when something happened for a particular girl, then the educator, then it was very humanely. Then it was normally explained and that conversation, it wasn't like, everything was all right. But I don't remember sexual education as such.*
>
> *(Antra)*

As previously mentioned, the upbringing habits of educators could sometimes reinforce inequalities between pupils. During my years in residential school inequality was established between internātnieki [boarders] and mājinieki [house children] , and the residential school was increasingly becoming the end point for students who are not able to attend other educational institutions. Since then, situation has changed and now upbringing could include equal treatment of inhabitants of residential schools while emphasizing their difference compared to pupils from regular schools.

One of the more striking examples on how the difference of residential school pupils was emphasised was described to one of my colleagues. In this instance the pupils from 'social risk families', pupils for residential school, children from families of ethnic minorities and children from poor families had been invited to a summer camp annually organized by an NGO which let them earn some pocket money and have in entertainment not provided by their families:

> *The idea was to take them to Cēsis Correctional Facility for Juveniles. So they went to Cēsis and they were not allowed in, of course, and maybe that was good. So, they just talked there. For a little while with their teacher or who was there. Because you cannot get it in. Because someone unofficially said that in general it is very good there. There has been a case. It was from another school's experience. They were allowed inside. They liked it so much. [...] I don't know how it is there anymore, but well. Showed the place to them. They (the pupils) looked at the building with horror.*
>
> *(Indra, school principal, municipal deputy)*

The interviewed activist carefully explained that it was not done to scare the students as that was not allowed, but rather just to "show" them. And as they were not allowed to enter, they took a picture with the children with the correctional facility in the background, had a pizza and headed back.

This event, on one hand, shows that the children were already viewed as potential criminals but, on the other, displays the persistence of Soviet methodological approaches. As described in the methodological guidelines of the Soviet education system, the idea of public displays and demonstrations was a useful and necessary tool for moral transformation of residential school pupils. The pupils were going on excursions and visits to factories, collective farms, local monuments, and battle sites from World War 2. But where this visit

differed was that the camp leader already had conviction that without an intervention, the children would have a greater chance to end up in the correctional facility. As I did not get a chance to interview any of the pupils who participated in this visit, I am not able to evaluate their responses directly but as reported by the teacher it seems that it left a strong impression on the pupils, mostly in the form of fear. While the pedagogical value of this approach is debatable, it certainly serves as one of the more overt examples of the way social reproduction was enacted in residential schools.

In her work on psychiatry in post-Soviet Latvia, Skultans observed that her participants used a particular verb to describe the way how they perceived themselves – *sabojāts* which she translates as "damaged". This adverb was used to describe both individual cases and to make observations about Latvians as a whole, "Mēs esam sabojāta tauta ('We are a damaged nation')" (Skultans 2007, 35). Skultans argues that this concept can lead to a certain type of agency where the community identifying itself as 'damaged' uses it as a resource for making a claim to shared humanity and dignity.

While I agree with this observation and later use it to analyse the way residential school graduates perceive themselves, I would like to assert that attempts such as the visit to correctional facility reveal that there is more nuance to this concept of "damaged people". I argue that such activity reveals that residential school inhabitants were perceived to be damaged by the staff even before they assumed this identity themselves.

Following Khlinovskaya-Rockhill (2010), there was not a sharp break in the perception of residential school inhabitants with the socialist period, the difference lied in the way this "damage" was perceived. As described above, upbringing was no longer seen as a tool that would reconstruct residential school inhabitants to a repaired condition. Lack of both material and symbolic resources and an onslaught of issues that the current system lacked tools to manage created a situation where transformation and upbringing were replaced by containment and supervision.

> *L: (ruefully)The educator becomes the custodian.*
> *S: And then it's different, yes. With your own [pupils], you already know everything, and suddenly a new problem child arrives, it is very difficult to manage them, establish some borders, sometimes even impossible. And that again sets off others: how come he is allowed to misbehave, but I am not?*
> *(Solveiga and Valters, teachers, former educators)*

While I agree that the work of residential school both under the Soviet system and now was based on application of symbolic violence to create a particular habitus in its inhabitants (Rockhill 2010), research also shows that since independence there has been a clear and important shift in the way the work of upbringing was carried out in residential schools. If previously the justification of symbolic violence was the needs of the collective and Soviet state, what forms the basis for the current upbringing in residential schools when the value

of the collective or Soviet ideology are no longer feasible? What does it mean that the upbringing can no longer be based on creative labour, and, furthermore, due to the changing socioeconomic conditions using children as labour force is no longer possible at all? It would be a mistake to discard changes arising from the dismantling of Soviet system and not to explore the implications they had on the everyday life of residential school and its inhabitants. Especially so because at the same time, the previous system was never far away. As I demonstrated in in this chapter, the heritage of previous times was ever-present in the residential school, due to presence of employees trained under previous system and the lack of viable alternatives.

The old and new systems of upbringing coexist within residential school. During the Soviet period, the educators were the key contacts for children and other specialists with whom the pupils could consult were not available. In contemporary times this has changed as most schools have access to social pedagogues and/or psychologists, even if in a limited capacity:

> *Well, we have a psychologist who works very few hours. Well, for those who really need it. The support staff is there, but there should be much more. A social pedagogue who comes once a week. Yes, she works with those kids. They are happy to come. Well, she takes them from their lessons, works with them individually, yes. Yes, that should be more. And a psychologist. Also very good. A psychologist is driving from [nearest town]. Well, also very [good]. She [tries] as much as she can. She comes once a month for a day.*
>
> *(Indra, school principal, municipal deputy)*

While both educators and pupils themselves recognised the value of these services, similarly as in the case of sexual education, the need for support was more or less constant but the resources were meagre, and so the work often fell upon the educators regardless of their capacity to deal with such issues. This serves as a particularly telling example of the impossible position of residential school. On one hand, there was no specialised education or support for teachers who worked in this field. On the other hand, due to the lack of funding and inadequate wages those specialists who are supposed to be working with issues previously delt by educators were not available.

The general system of residential school therefore was maintained as a shifting balance between educating and upbringing where the main role in maintaining this balance fell to educators more than anyone else. Due to the changing socioeconomic conditions and political landscape the end goal of residential school therefore shifted from transformation to containment.

In staff interviews the role of educators (*audzinātāji*) was constantly emphasised as the key element in ensuring the positive upbringing of a child. The central role of educator is also confirmed in life story interviews. Research participants spoke passionately about their educators, but their experience was sometimes different from that of the educators, and they may have been seen as the primary threat rather than support person. The educator becomes a central

person in the life of residential school inhabitants but this may be either a positive or a negative experience depending on the methods and approach used by the educators. Violence often ingrains itself in the everyday life of residential school. While in the 2nd life story interview the participant maintained that residential school was a positive experience for him, the first participant was more hesitant. On one hand, she recognised that much of the violence within residential school was unwarranted and damaging. On the other hand, she was also aware of the positive aspects of her experience including her relationship with the educator that she described as dangerous and physically violent. The ambivalent attitude towards violence in upbringing at school is maintained throughout most of school staff and life story interviews. Research participants may condemn the violence in home environment to justify the use of violence in school echoing the argument used by the educators discussed in previous section. Later in the interview the educator interviewed revealed that he himself had also lived in a residential school and justified physical punishment he had received there:

> *Well it's society, children also are changing. Also in ordinary schools. There is nothing you can do about it. I also got hit with a jump rope on my back, but you see, it hasn't stopped me from growing up to be a normal human. And I don't hate any [of my former] teachers, I can only say the best about my school years.*
>
> *(Valters, teacher, former educator)*

It is important to note that neither physical nor emotional violence has ever been officially condoned or supported in the upbringing process. Analysis of methodological materials from Soviet period showed a clear concern with the prevalence of physical punishment in childcare and cautioned against applying such methods in residential school setting. However, the life-story interview data from the participant who had studied during the Soviet period shows that students often experienced violence from their educators and teachers.

> *From later classes I certainly remember everything that has to do with something, those moments, like not getting up in the morning, one of the teachers comes in and just turns the bed upside down or in the gym if the teacher does not like something and they just pull you down from the gym wall by your leg, or there is something else they don't like and they simply hit your legs with a fly swatter – that was normal, it was an everyday occurrence, nothing out of the ordinary.*
>
> *(Antra)*

The story of this interlocutor certainly resonates with my own experience and I could intuitively understand what she meant by a teacher being 'dangerous'. While most of my teachers were never physically violent and I cannot recall any personal harm, I vividly remember an episode where an educator in charge for the evening came into our room to find one of my classmates somewhat

theatrically hitting his head against the closet door trying to demonstrate how tough he was. Without saying a word, the teacher approached the teenager, grabbed him by his neck and slammed him with a full force into the closet door. After this she asked whether he had had enough and when she received a confirmation, unceremoniously left the room. Such episodes undermine the trust between educators and children creating awareness that the adults who may have been described as 'mother' and 'father' by themselves were never perceived this way by the children and were rather seen as a potential threat.

I do not claim that violence was a major part of upbringing system in residential schools but point out that violence was perceived as one of the tools that could be used by an educator and not a practice that should be prevented. Violence was never licenced, as noted by research participants, schools were becoming stricter regarding violence against children:

> *V: You cannot check his pockets, nothing. In the past we could. Once around the Christmas months, we took the lighters away. I put them in a special box. That is not allowed anymore. And we are not allowed to check their pockets. We are all equal: children and teachers.*
> *S: And the kids know this very well: you can't do that, you can't do this.*
> *V: It's gone too far. We will dig ourselves in a hole if this continues.*
> *(Solveiga and Valters, teachers, former educators)*

Suspicious and critical attitude towards child rights informed approach was one of the connection points that brought together educators and biological parents. The distrust towards child rights informed approach, however, was often the only thing that parents and educators agreed upon. For most part it seemed that the educators had persistent and clear distrust towards parents, suspecting them of neglecting children and blaming parenting skills when experiencing problems with children. Distrust was occasionally justified by critiquing what educators saw as "lack of discipline and upbringing". This was often connected to the corrupting influences of liberalism and child's rights from the perspective of educators. Bourgois (Philippe Bourgois 1996) argues that denigration of parents serves as one of the first catalysts for disobedience from disadvantaged pupils. The habit of school staff to see parents as the root of the problem was noticed by the inhabitants of residential school and often deepened the trauma of being raised outside their biological family. As argued by Bourgois, it is impossible for the child to obey teachers and embrace the life in the school while it disrespected and looked down upon one's parents (Philippe Bourgois 1996, 252). The resistance of the child often becomes just another confirmation of suspicions about the lack of good upbringing at home. This illustrates that not only pupils but also educators experience their position in the residential school as tenuous and threatened. Recourse to violent attempts of re-educating the pupils can be analysed as an example of weapons of the weak as discussed in the chapter 1.5.2, as although the practices of the teachers may lead to the result of achieving at least a resemblance of order in their classroom, it does nothing

to alleviate the cause of the issue against which the educator may still feel powerless. The encounter between the educator and pupils is realised within the continuum of violence where both sides keep probing each for weakness to maintain or establish their dominant position even if only for the 40 min of study lesson.

Another example of the complicated position of educators of residential schools concerns independence/autonomy (*patstāvība*). Independence here means an essentialist concept which is used to describe the capacity of the pupils to survive on their own outside the institution and was one of the core topics that emerged from my conversations with my research participants. It acquired an additional urgency in the last decade due to the processes of deinstitutionalisation. Opinions on whether or not residential schools and educators helped the children achieve independence often differed among research participants. Former residential school pupils largely agreed that residential school allowed them to acquire much higher degree of independence when compared to their peers. This sometimes was disputed in educator interviews where it was agreed that state institutions produced socially inept children who were accustomed to being cared for and lacked skills to live on their own:

> *But the boarding school has one huge advantage – it is that it teaches independence. How to be very independent. Yes, during the week there are teachers, educators who are responsible for us, also the those as we call them, commanders or nannies, who also look after us so that we do not make trouble, but still, it creates independence.*
> *(Dzintars)*
> *V: Yes, well they are accustomed to taking, school is giving everything, gives everything to us [pupils].*
> *S: Yeah, in a way, yeah, that's the downside. They think they deserve everything for nothing.*
>
> *(Solveiga and Valters, teachers, former educators)*

For educators, this 'downfall in independence' seemed to coincide with the dissolution of Soviet Union and the introduction of child rights-based approach[19]. Most schools stopped using children as workforce in kitchens and as free labour for cleaning school premises parallel to withdrawal of resources to maintain the school. As described by Bloch (2005), resistance to change in residential schools in Russia could also be explained by implicit opposition to the neoliberalism. Similar critique could be observed among my research participants:

> *S: For us [work in] kitchen ended when the private sector companies entered in school. Because the children helped us to peel the potatoes and set the tables and wash the dishes.*

[19] The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was ratified by Latvia in 1992 which introduced the child rights-based approach in Latvia which entails using the child rights as defined by the Convention as basis for working with children.

Q: Yes, that was what we did.
S: And when the private sector appeared, what can a child do there?
(Solveiga, teacher, former educator)

The "emphasis on the moral and educative value of physical labour" (Fitzpatrick 1979, 7) has survived from the Soviet period in many fields. Value of physical labour can be found in addiction rehabilitation (Zigon 2011) and education where physical labour was valorised and seen as constitutive in developing a strong and independent individuals. Here, however, it should be pointed out, that in life story interviews this was also reminisced in a positive manner repeating the arguments that were made by the educators:

> *And then there is the moment which is the biggest plus [benefit], when you are forcibly prepared for the big life. [...] From time to time [educators] came to see how you live. If they didn't like your room, you were told what to do. And you had to do it. The common areas were all cleaned by the janitor, but we needed to clean our own rooms ourselves. Wash the floor, wash everything, all by yourself. That was the moment that teaches you to live on your own. [...] And I think that's quite right and quite cool.*
>
> *(Dzintars)*

The value and importance of these tasks was highly dependent on the approach of the educator organising student's work. Reflecting on my own experience one of the most infuriating experiences during my school years was the perceived injustice when our educator suggested that the classroom should be cleaned by those children who were also boarding in the school. While the practice of cleaning the classroom by itself may have added positive value, it can quickly be tarnished if the responsible educator uses it to reinforce the already often painful division between *internātnieki* and *mājinieki* which I have already touched up on and will explore in more detail below.

As previously described, independence and resilience are central to the way how the upbringing is realised in the residential school setting. Here I critically evaluate the notion of independence through analytical framework of resilience. I illustrate how the notions of independence are a form of misrecognition of how the discipline and order is imposed within the walls of residential school. This also represents a particular case of social inertia as the practices and tools for developing the independence in the pupils are preserved from Soviet period while both the needs of the pupils and the justifications for applying the practices have changed.

During the last few decades resilience has become a central concept in physical sciences (Norris et al. 2008), climate research (Barrios 2016), communication studies (Houston and Buzzanell 2018), psychology and social work (Gilligan 1999). Due to its wide application the concept remains vaguely defined but in relation to social work and pedagogy it is used to describe the ability to cope after a trauma/stressor (Howard, Dryden, and Johnson 1999) and, as argued by Lou, Taylor, and Di Folco (2018), is defined as a set of individual

features that may offer coping/protection in facing adversity (Hoge, Austin, and Pollack 2007). As argued by Barrios, when discussing the concept of resilience in relation to disaster research, one of the potential consequences of using the concept of resilience is the fact that there is no need to ask why the communities needed to become resilient in the first place. Similarly, in relation to residential education the imagined notion of independence glosses over the questions of from whom this independence needs to be wrestled away and what is the end result of acquiring it. There is a risk that by concentrating on the ways to improve children's resilience we accept their vulnerability as the norm. Presumed lack of independence often translates to lack of resources and skills to overcome traumatic past experiences. As I argue later in this chapter, this can lead to employment of such disciplining tools as visits to juvenile correctional facilities. Furthermore, as argued by Howard, Dryden, and Johnson (1999: 317), the concept of resilience is often imbued with normative values that reflect middle class concerns about the development of children and their future goals. This also often represents the way child independence is framed and imagined within the context of residential school which further contributes to the lack of connection between educators' imaginations of their pupils' lives and expectations of students themselves.

As Bourgois (2003) argues, even if the adolescents managed to change their lives and enter the workforce this often did not result in a positive long-term outcome as the mismatch between the previous life experiences and practices and the new life challenges proved too much to bear. Similarly to how young Puerto Ricans felt indignation for office work as it was considered feminine, the perceived offenses of residential school children due to their different understanding of interpersonal relationships could often lead to conflicts and inability to fit in with what could be considered a comfortable white-collar career. One of my research participants who seemed to be on the right track with his education and career (he had graduated from residential school and acquired additional skills in photography and editing) ended up not finishing his studies and working in a lower position in a public transportation company instead:

> *Unfortunately, I had to leave [university]. I had problems in couple of classes that unfortunately I couldn't pull off. No matter how hard I tried and tried, it was not as easy as I thought. And after two and a half years I unfortunately had to leave the studies. And also, at that moment the real life had begun and other expenses and needs appeared.*
>
> *(Dzintars)*

Despite the interlocutor admitting that drop-out from the university was not something he had planned or hoped for, this did not affect his belief that residential school had provided him with good skills for independent living. He had acquired skills that allowed him to make friends and establish contacts quickly and the learning process helped him establish a group of friends and be elected in the student's council of his university. But while at residential school

these skills were useful to survive through complicated inter-student relationships which often were a greater challenge than success in studies, this was not the case in university which possibly led to the interruption in the study process.

This also points at another possible shortcoming of resilience model where misinterpreted success at boarding school could hide issues becoming evident in other contexts. The student who seemed to be independent/resilient could nevertheless be experiencing traumatic events in and out of residential school which manifest later in life even if during the school years these seem to be dealt with well. What makes a residential school pupil independent/resilient? If the child is no longer seeking help when being bullied and has some friends does it count as resilience? According to my experience, after I had achieved more or less stable status within the residential school and had a few friends in my own class and school, it did not change the fact that during some classes I had no other choice as to hold it together while my classmates sitting behind me were using my neck to play a tic-tac-toe.

The status quo in populations and societies which usually are characterised as resilient or the opposite is very often connected to conditions which are deeply affected by structural and actual violence. Violence is no longer problematised due to the shift in focus from a larger issue towards an individual response to it. It is important to acknowledge that for the person surviving conditions that lead to development of resilience/independence, it remains their life and attempts to reformulate it as something that needs to be survived rather than lived can lead to resistance and aggression as described above. I had not considered my residential school experience as problematic or stigmatized until a university professor after learning about my past made an off-hand comment about it and presented me as an example of a person who may not have been able to acquire university education in past. The comment was made in a spur of a moment and had probably been forgotten by everyone else, but it has left a deep enough impression that I remember it five years later.

This also leads to my final critique of resilience model as it glosses over the fact that resilience regarding past trauma and stigma is a phantom concept. During my experience working with children from different alternative care settings, including residential schools, this has come up repeatedly: recounting how things were going well, how the individual had been convinced that nobody cared about their past or current situation, but the passing (Goffman 1986) is always tenuous and either a comment, a practice or a smell can quickly break down the wall of presumed resilience.

For former inhabitants of residential school, it was mostly the sense of discipline and order that was reflected on as the main heritage of their residential school years. During one of the life-story interviews the interlocutor reflected on how students were expected to perfectly make their beds in morning which made me reflect on how this practice becomes embodied and taken-for-granted up to this day with making our beds perfect unless we consciously choose not to do so. The focus on discipline is long remembered by students and often used as a proof of developing student independence.

Conversations with my interlocutors reveal that educators themselves are aware of the need to engage with the pupils at an emotional level but they are also aware of the emotional costs this entails. This can be related to the way residential education is realised in Scotland as described in subchapter 2.2. The lack of emotional engagement from specialists in Latvia when compared to Scotland is not the result of lack of ability or desire to engage with their pupils but rather due to lack of support system that makes this type of relationship possible. Without proper support this leads to burnouts or protective lack of engagement as the employees were trying to protect themselves from the possible overwork situations.

> *Q: Mhm may I ask, why aren't you an educator anymore?*
> *S: It's hard. It's hard. Family circumstances, in order to not be in the residential school during the evening shift, so I could also [be at] home. It was also possible to go back, but no. Because children are also different and, you know, it is hard. It is better that I teach my lessons and have peace, unlike when you have to listen: your [students] did that, or yours did that. This class is difficult. As the 9th graders, they should already be sensible, but well… It's hard.*
>
> *(Solveiga, teacher, former educator)*

In this interview with a couple who both had worked at the local residential school, the woman admitted that she no longer worked as an educator due to the complexity of work and the emotional toll. The hardness that was mentioned several times reflected the experience of the educator who served as the key employee dealing with the emotional needs of students, had her teaching load, was subjugated to the requirements of school administration and also her family duties back at home.

5.4 Boys on the right, girls on the left: The gendered divisions of residential school

Gender is another important division organising life of students in residential school and as such is also deeply intertwined with relations of domination and violence continuum. Here I explore how gendered justifications are used to justify and explain both violence and inequality as experienced and practiced in residential school. The symbolic violence of gender that makes young men expect and practice physical violence and makes young women learn to perceive their own body as dangerous and simultaneously an object of consumption is present in the relations between the pupils as much as it is part of the hidden curriculum of the upbringing. When the residential schools were established, gender segregation was not explicitly intended. Most of the lessons were organized regardless of gender, room cleaning and kitchen work also did not differ among genders. However, wider societal gender relations manifested themselves in residential schools and its hidden curriculum (Margolis 2001)

where the students learnt the appropriate gender roles and relations. Policy of the institution was to keep girls and boys separate in different living quarters, provide different training in the housekeeping and require different expectations and exercises at physical education.

> *We had four floors; the first floor was like a lobby. There was a cafe, dentistry, medical centre, canteen. Then the second floor was the boys' floor. The third and fourth were for girls and young children.*
>
> *(Dzintars)*

> *Younger girls like to walk close to older boys. But that is everyday stuff.*
>
> *(Indra, school principal, municipal deputy)*

Children enter residential school at least vaguely familiar with the traditional gender roles. While gender differentiation becomes more pronounced and important with older children, younger children understood and followed it. Crossing of gender lines was usually treated as exception, e.g., when a boy decided to join girls for cooking class instead of woodworking or when a boy decided to participate in a sewing club. It would be treated as exceptional and thus not threatening the symbolic division. Gender is often realised as a self-fulfilling prophecy in a residential school: educators perceive boys as prone to violence and girls as prone to promiscuity, especially, in regard to sexuality. This coincides with the perception of problems in their pupils' family: fathers are typically seen as a violent offender while young single mothers are perceived as morally corrupt. Explaining these problems with gender reinforces the unequal relationship between boys and girls and leads to violence and single motherhood:

> *Working in my profession, I know what happens behind the scenes, I know the truth, where every second or third woman has suffered sexual violence from her father, brother, her neighbour, some drunk uncle, raped in some party in her youth and discarded. Do you know about that? Something? Is anyone talking about it publicly? Is the press talking about it? Nothing is said about it? It is hidden, nobody says anything, so that no one would know. Neither the mother nor the father knows about it. What are the usual cases... Well, it is the father usually, the man, the one who raped the boy or girl, the exploiter, or the grandfather.*
>
> *(Gerda, psychologist)*

According to official data, 86.8% of teachers in Latvia are female (Central Statistical Bureau 2020). This was felt as especially acute problem in the institutions that were established in the Soviet period and have had a higher percentage of male employees. Lack of male teachers was considered especially problematic in sex education:

> *And most importantly, that pretty much those questions, because, of course, say, for boys it is hard to talk about their problems with the teacher, a woman. Not everyone always has a father to talk to. For others there are no fathers to ask anything at all.*
>
> *(Lauma, principal)*

While the inability to talk with a female teacher about these issues may indeed often be the case, the assumption that this may be any different with one's father may be overly optimistic. As many of the parents grew up under a socialist system which did not provide them with neither the knowledge nor the skills to discuss questions related to sexuality (Gradskova, Kondakov, and Shevtsova 2020), their capacity to help their children in these situations was not great. This led the pupils to seek the information they need either on internet or to hope that their school was getting help from one of the NGOs working with sex education.

During my study period I encountered scenes where a teacher reprimanded a girl student about her choice of clothing or promiscuous behaviour, while a boy-student could physically grope another student and it did not to provoke any response from the teacher. The control of female sexuality was enforced in this institutional setting but it failed to prevent male perpetrator from committing an assault, silently enabling it.

Fighting or beatings were seldom directed towards girls and were less common among girls. While ability to fight served as an important skill and marker of status across genders in a residential school, boys demonstrated it as a part of their masculinity but it was regarded as an exception for girls. Fights among boys were often naturalised.

The desire for body modifications according to latest fashion was present across gender lines and both boys and girls spent considerable time and other resources to ensure that their looks were up to date.

> *The second practice that served as a tool for distinction was wearing earrings. While earrings themselves were relatively inexpensive, the procedure to get one's ears pierced was posing a problem for the less affluent girls. And in the same manner as with hair dyeing, they solved the problem by learning how to carry out the procedure themselves with heated needle and a (less than) steady hand. This sometimes resulted in an inflammation (red, swollen earlobe, sometimes with pus present) which again served as point of distinction among the girls.*
>
> *(Autoethnography)*

Through taking care of their bodies boys and girls expressed their opposition towards the rules of residential school. Self-harm was more common in girls while destruction of school property was more often done by boys. From my own experience I can remember many instances where destruction of doors, closets, windows and even houseplants brought a sense of joy and accomplishment during the most boring and/or frustrating days. This was often not done

openly but in a form of hidden protest that allowed us to feel our agency in residential school, as well as to receive respect from other students, while avoiding punishment for our actions. Our rebellion was discovered when one day an educator came to inspect our room and the door handle remained in her hand. She demanded an explanation and my roommate dutifully explained that this was a result of a battle between us and pupils from another room and was their fault. This backfired, as one of the other students pointed at our habit to break things resulting in the door handle mishap and disclosed our other 'achievements' about which we had boasted earlier. The educator angrily stormed into our room and demanded that my roommate answer for all the damage she had just heard about. She opened our closet and the doors fell out. She tried to take houseplants out from the corners of window aisle which led to them falling out of their pots (my roommate readily admitted that this was a result of us not watering them instead of admitting that we were deliberately pulling them out). Finally, she opened a window to inspect where we had (allegedly) ripped out the rubber seal. As she was leaving, a ventilation hatch fell out as we used the duct behind it to hide important things (this thankfully went unnoticed as she had left the room by then). During all this catastrophe I was quite luckily not only out of residential school but even out of town, so on my return in the evening I only felt the tension between the educator and my roommate. He later told me his tale of woe, which was topped off with him leaving the room to check if the educator had left and asking another pupil about our plus sized educator "hey, is the fat-one still here?" And in response she emerged from a nearby room saying, "oh yes, I am still here!"

What are we to make of this type of resistance? While it is clear that this type of resistance is connected to masculinity, it has also been empathically proven that expressions of violence are not related to biological difference between male and female bodies but rather depend on the cultural context (Bribiescas 2008; Tiger 1993; Cornwall and Lindisfarne 2016). In the same manner, the propensity of girls to resist the existing order through modification and mutilation of their bodies is also far removed from biology (Bordo 2021; Lovejoy 2001). Both can manifest among pupils regardless of their gender or sex.

Gendered nature of these practices leads to several implications which further supports the symbolic order of a residential school. Once we view destruction and self-harm as weapons of the weak (Scott 2008) in the context of symbolic violence, it becomes possible to see the act of residential school pupils as not the result of their gender and age but rather a lack of other meaningful ways to voice their opposition:

> *Well, we call the ambulance, call 113. But I have also brough them to hospital myself. Once there was a girl who had taken some medication. And the educator was shocked – what to do? Well, called me. Because I am a bit more cold-blooded. She was scared. And we really called the ambulance, the*

ambulance would take the child away. Well, no, everything ended well. That was nothing.

(Indra, school principal, municipal deputy)

This strategy is applied as a coping mechanism for staff who may lack the mental and physical resources to engage with the situation. Simultaneously it disregards that students may lack the necessary knowledge or capacities to deal with the situations without directing violence towards other or themselves. It contributes to continuation of symbolic violence among pupils and further reinforces the gendered forms of destructive violence instead of contesting it. Deep-seated inequalities are still present and directly influence experience of violence in childcare.

5.5 Places and people: Where is home for residential school inhabitants?

This chapter explores what constituted 'home' for research participants and how it contributes to their residential school experience. 'It all starts at home' was a common phrase repeated by the staff of residential schools. They saw pupils as 'damaged' (Skultans 2007) and their care therefore was directed towards managing this damaged state. For children themselves, however, the idea of home is more complex as it becomes hard to pinpoint where exactly is home – is it the institution, the place where they live with their parents or something else entirely?

It also depends on the family. However, they cannot bring him home every night. It is exactly this rejection. Let's be honest: even the worst family is better, except for one with violence in the physical sense, where children are beaten and young children are neglected, who do not have a chance of surviving as their parents are drunk and [the children] simply cannot protect themselves.

(Gundega, principal)

This quote illustrates often-contradictory view on the families of residential school pupils. When the child enters the residential school, these preconceptions are already there which often leads to either internalisation of this feeling of being damaged which is sometimes accompanied with angry rejection of the system that demands acknowledgement of their damaged state. It makes coming home difficult.

Antra had studied during the Soviet period; the author lived there around the millennia, while Dzintars entered residential school during 2010s. Each of these periods represents a period with different schooling system. In all three stories the arrival in residential school is related to some kind of crisis within the lives of pupils and can serve as illustration of how residential school locates itself within both welfare and educational fields. Dzintars arrived at residential school

due to economic hardship experienced by his family. Antra described a family life which was challenging due to domestic violence and in author's case the crisis was somewhere between these two: alcohol abuse problems in the family, close proximity of the next economic crisis and a prospect of free school supplies for children allowed to make that choice. For the author the transfer to residential school was framed as an opportunity:

> *At the time it was explained to us that as my sister was excelling in physical education, we should start studying in town to make sure she has access to additional support for her talent. What was less clear, was why I also needed to go with her as my physical achievements were virtually non-existent. Still, this was what my parents told me, and I believed them at the time.*
>
> *(Autoethnography)*

So it was for Antra:

> *I was about 4–5 years old, I was taken to a music conductor and found to have absolute pitch. [...] And I was taken to Z [prestigious Latvian vocational school for musicians]. But in that year, there was no building in Z, the accommodation building was under repair, because Z also was a residential school. Therefore, there was no admission that year for those who need an overnight stay. [...] And then there was the idea that they would go to [another residential school for musicians] and then maybe move to Z. But of course, once I got there, I stayed there.*
>
> *(Antra)*

All interlocutors started to make their own choices regarding their stays at residential school and avoided extended periods of staying within the residential school when they grew older and acquired more agency. This goes directly against the observation of a ministry official who suggested that residential school should only be maintained for children who are older, while the younger children should always be able to return to home at the end of the day to be with their families. In her view younger children needed family environment while older children were presumed to prefer socialisation with peers and spend longer periods of time away from their families. The perspective from the top does not always consider the experiences of those affected by their decision. Heading home or staying in residential school was often based on reasons unrelated to family environment or socialisation. Home may have been the only environment the child have known up until going to residential school and it is no longer the same. When residential school experience is as traumatic as the one at home, the child may look towards other spaces. While staff told me of several cases when children ended up on the streets, it was assumed that children were avoiding home, not the institution. For me and my interlocutors the homes were found elsewhere, away from residential school or family home. As argued by Power and Mee, the experience of home although mostly connected to physical location or relations of production should also be

considered from the perspective of care (Power and Mee 2020). This allows us to overcome the fixed concept of home (house) as opposed to the other space such as street (Panter-Brick 2002). By concentrating on seeing home as the place where relations of care are enacted, it becomes possible to see that in the case of residential school pupils' home is a multi-sited entity which often may not include the place where their parents lived or residential school.

When relationships of care are not available in either of these places, where can the child overcome loneliness and gain a sense of security? This question may seem irrelevant in the case of Dzintars, who, as we saw, did receive the most of support and talked both about residential school and his parent's house as his home. But also, in Dzintars' case the space external to residential school or place of his origin becomes imbued with many of the qualities that are usually assigned to home environment:

> *Then every Monday afternoon after the school, I was a little late for evening learning. I had already told the educator that I would be a little late that I had to be there. Then was the first round [at the youth centre]. Then there were those two-hour evening lessons. Then we ate dinner and then I went out from about seven to eight. I went for the second round for a bit. We were basically the ones who stayed last, because for visitors it shuts down at nine, I think. But we walked away around 21.30. Sometimes because we just didn't have a choice, because until the last moment we sat there, worked, hustled, thought how to get it all done.*
>
> *(Dzintars)*

Dzintars describes his experience in his town's youth centre here. Throughout the interview he talked about it fondly and considered it one of the formative experiences in his life, both because of the skills he acquired there and the sense of belonging and appreciation he experienced. Pennartz (1999, 105) argues that there are five main factors that participants of his research most associated with home: "communicating with each other; being accessible to one another; being relaxed after having finished work; being able to do what one wants to do; and being occupied, absence of boredom". These conditions were not met at home and residential school, but Dzintars found them in the youth centre which provided him with a space where he was listened to, able to express himself and where he could relax, which was more challenging in residential school due to his experience of being bullied.

I do not to claim it is impossible to feel at home in a residential school or at home. Rather, through the exploration of alternative spaces occupied by residential school pupils it becomes possible to see how children themselves enact upon their agency and resist the often-violent experiences in their families and/or in institutional setting.

> *Oh, also, I kind of lived with my grandfather's sister in [...], and on holidays I went to my mother's family. But since my grandfather's sister was in respectable years and she was not ready to take me home every day, they still chose*

the residential school. And then on weekends I went to her, and on holidays to my parents. Not to my parents, to my mom and foster father.

(Antra)

In Antra's case the home was provided by an extended family member rather than her parents. For Antra parental residence and residential school associated with difficulties as she experienced domestic violence from an early age and when she was transferred to residential school the situation did not improve. Though she was no longer abused physically by her parents, residential school staff was still often violent towards pupils which again prevented Antra experiencing sense of security and care. In contrast to Dzintars, Antra did not speak fondly about her residential school and home experience but rather turned towards her grandfather's sister as the key carer in her life while also talking about isolated cases of care in residential school by reflecting on educators and teachers she remembers positively.

As argued by Massey, "in context of 'a place called home' both the geography (proximity, time space distanciation, etc.) and the content of the social relations themselves (full of the implications of sexism, or of the power relations of colonialism present or past, or of the relations of capital accumulation) must be taken into account" (Massey 2013, 167). In Antra's case what made her grandfather's sister's apartment a home was not only the act of returning there on weekends but rather social relations that took place there and helped her to counteract geographical and power-related distance that characterised her experience in her parent's home and residential school.

As shown by the earlier quote from an interview with residential school staff, residential school very often not only did not counteract violence found at pupils' home but legitimised it through supporting the importance of home-based care. This situation becomes especially perilous in cases such as Antra's and my own where the projected independence and strength of pupil together with comparatively 'liveable' conditions back at home could prevent residential school staff from intervening when there were other pupils clearly in need of more help. This also shows the downside of child's capacity for homemaking outside of parental home or residential school: the need to look for alternative space to call home was overlooked completely.

Finally, what was home for me? I did not enjoy extracurricular activities and was either too scared or too angry to participate in any of organised activities for a long time. I did not have extended family where I could look for alternative care environment. The place my parents lived at was often unsafe and lacked a caring relationship. My home was made from visits to my friends' homes and bus rides.

Children in residential school were divided into those living in the school and going home after the studies. Though there was quite a stable division between *internātnieki* and *mājinieki* in some cases this line could be crossed. I was one of the few children in residential school who not only crossed the line between both groups but was even able to sometimes visit my friends during

afternoons. This did set me apart from other children staying in residential school and I have never heard of anyone else visiting their friends at home. I was just happy to spend time with my friends. As explored by Haddow, Taylor and Schwannauer (2021) in their review article on positive peer relationships in alternative care, ability to establish friendships during stay in alternative care institutions such as residential schools, can have several measurable positive effects on adolescent life both in the institution and after it.

In my case the alternative positive relationships were formed through friendships outside the residential school allowing me to avoid constant presence in the 'abusive community' of residential school and develop relationships that were based on trust and care for each other. While navigating constant sectarian warfare of the residential school during afternoons, I had the alternative to sometimes leave all of that behind and visit a friend to play videogames. One of the possible explanations for my privileged status could be the fact that I entered residential school a year later which meant that while most of my peers had already figured out how to persist in the abusive community of residential school, draw the battlelines and establish positions I arrived without all this knowledge which at the same time made my position deeply unstable. It often made me the target of ridicule and bullying while also allowed me to craft relationships without falling back to the established antagonisms between *internātnieki* and *mājinieki*. Additionally, I never really fit in with the usual assumption about the *internātnieki* – I read too much, and I fought too little. All of this gave me the opportunity to build resources which would later help me to last through all my years in residential school.

The second space which I see as constituting home for me during my residential school years were busses. As argued by Inglis in his research on driving in post war France, "[driving] makes it possible to be simultaneously at home and further and further away from home" (Inglis 2004, 211). While Inglis makes this statement about driving a personal car, I believe that this statement also applies to the public transportation. Despite the everchanging experience of using a public transport (different seat, other commuters, different bus) there was always a certain comfort in stepping onto a bus, looking for a seat, (hopefully) finding one and for around two hours not having to think neither of whether my parents are sober, nor about whether I will get physically attacked or humiliated by my peers. Two hours of simply reading a book on a bus is still one of the most comforting experiences I can think of to this day.

Ortar argues that practices taken during using public transport such as reading, listening to music or watching movies is an attempt by passengers to avoid thinking about themselves as passengers and avoiding being in the present moment (Ortar 2016, 281). I wish to argue that the choice to engage with additional medium during a bus ride should be perceived as part of the experience and can contribute to feelings of comfort and safety in relation to the travel experience. My experience also illuminates the ways individuals from remote regions can exert agency on their isolation and creatively resist feelings of distance and isolation. While it could certainly be argued that my engage-

ment with non-human actors (Bennett 2010) such as books and busses and the subsequent homemaking is the result of loneliness and isolation, it also represents an active choice to craft a liveable space. For me and Dzintars the public space became our home. As the private space becomes associated with lack of security and sense of threat, we both found public spaces being somewhat regulated and safer than a room in residential school or in my case also home back in my village. Similarly, a bus to friend's home was always transitory which led to development of a particular relationship with other human and nonhuman actors within the space. This makes an individual aware of the constant need to renew their relationship to things and people and in the end may not help to overcome the lack of trust and care that pushed them towards the alternative space in the first place.

Summary

In this chapter I have analysed the relations between agents in residential school and how they are part of larger social fields. I started with an exploration of media and societal response towards moments where the everyday violence that is experienced by poor and disadvantaged children lifted a lid of silence and became a part of the public discourse. After that I turned towards exploring the everyday relations in the residential school through looking at upbringing, gender relations and the concept of home. Through these subchapters I traced the way how the relations of residential school inhabitants, both children and staff, are coloured by persistent inequalities and struggles connected to them, from material deprivation to gendered violence to lack of safe spaces. All these contributes to creating an environment where the possibilities for actors to change their positions are few and far between while the existing power structures are constantly recreated and remade. However, this can and is sometimes counteracted such as through the way the children apply their agency and carve out safe spaces wherever they can. While this may not change the larger structural systems it may make the space liveable, something that is going to be explored in the end of next chapter as well, to show the potential avenues for support and change within the relations in residential school.

6 RECONSTITUTING THE STRUCTURE OF POSITIONS: THE VIOLENCE CONTINUUM OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

In this chapter I bring together the conceptual tools and empirical observations from the previous chapters and turn towards the exploration of the everyday experiences and practices of violence. This allows me to consider the role of individual agents in residential schools as well as to explore the capacity of violence to become a self-sustaining mechanism through continued experiences of inequality and subsequent violence. After that I explore the ways how, under conditions where the experience of violence is so pervasive to become the main structuring phenomena, the agents reconstruct their sociality through the concept of "abusive community". I conclude this chapter by also exploring the ways the alternatives to violence and inequality may be produced within the institution itself.

6.1 Continuum of violence: living in state of vigilance

How can one write about violence? Even worse, how can one write about violence, that is not remote, exotic, or strange, but rather known, experienced, and sometimes still felt? As Swedenburg writes: "Two unavoidable risks confront me when I discuss the dangers of the "field" of Palestine. The first is that a sensational or heroic aura might, without justification, become attached to me because I have worked in treacherous, frontline fieldsites. [...] The other peril is that a researcher can sometimes be tainted with the dangerous images associated with his or her informants. [...]" (Swedenburg 1995, 25). While working with alternative care in Latvia does not carry similar political risks as doing research in Palestine, this cautions against making the thesis about oneself (especially so in the cases of autoethnographic research). How can one write avoiding sensibilization of violence, without glorifying themselves and without apologising for their experience or the actions that transpired? (I take a break. I walk, do some physical exercise and once I feel the emotions settling down, I return to writing. Feelings of shame and insecurity stay just enough below surface for me to restart writing.)

At the same time, I am reminded of the importance of testimony. Binford argues that in order to ensure that the moral force of the testimonial is maintained and its truth valued, it is important to be told by the witness themselves (Binford 2004, 421). Still, it would be a gross omission if I did not acknowledge that this subchapter was the hardest to write. (I rewrite the sentence more times than necessary. What am I afraid of?) In this chapter I describe the continuum of violence (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004, 1–28) which has characterised my everyday life and that of Dzintars, Antra, and other children inhabiting the margins of state support systems, as described by my interlocutors.

The chapter is organised around the different contexts of experiencing violence, starting with the most intimate and expanding towards larger frames and showing connections between the decision made by a teacher to force a child to wear shoes that obviously did not fit him. (Is this a good enough example? Am I successfully explaining the suffering Antra experienced or am I avoiding describing it?) And the missing paperwork in Ministry of Education and Science. Building on the material from the previous chapters I hope to avoid exploitation of social suffering, rightly criticised by (Kleinman and Kleinman 1996) among others, and instead pose both as a witness and a storyteller offering the readers an experience of being a child in a residential school since the early 1980s until today. (Migraine comes and goes while I am writing. I wonder is my pain a way to distract me from writing or from remembering?)

6.1.1 Peers

As illustrated by research both from academia (Due et al., 2005; Šmigelskas et al., 2018) and international organisations (OECD, 2016), the levels of violence experienced by children in Latvia is quite high. PISA report by OECD is particularly illuminating as it shows that Latvia has the highest level of bullying amongst European countries participating in the research (OECD, 2016, p. 136). When correlated with schools of different socio-economic profiles, one can see that the difference in the Latvian case is lower than the OECD average (OECD, 2016). This illustrates that bullying in Latvia is experienced by students in different schools and that the socio-economic profile of the institution is not the deciding factor in experiencing bullying. In addition, as adolescents who are socially isolated or suffer from domestic violence experience bullying more often (Faris & Felmlee, 2014; Wolke & Skew, 2011), the odds of potential residential school inhabitants in regular school do not seem great. This issue also came up during my research where participants were especially aware of economic inequalities among the students and the potential effect poverty could have on peer relationships.

Violence among peers, though mentioned throughout interviews, was seldom addressed by my interlocutors. When discussing bullying with the school staff, they mostly expressed shock and surprise about the level of violence they had observed themselves. The staff presents violence using familiar frames: children are perceived as unconsciously predisposed to violent actions (this is often explained using truisms such as ‘children are cruel’) while claiming that “there are no bad children”, and their behaviour is often misunderstood. Some of the employees also justified the actions of children by pointing at educative role of violence believing that bullying helped children in their growth into adulthood:

> *Well, yes, let's call it mobbing or whatever. It happens for some children in class. It is that kind of a problem that. Maybe not walloping, but also*

sometimes the attitude. I'm not talking about bad kids, but moments. But someone who is... Or who has difficulties studying. The rest are very good. [...] Children often come and complain about walloping – someone hit me! They are calling me names! But who's calling you names? Well, then don't react to that name! They go and look for trouble. [...] It's everywhere I feel like it's happening. For all times. I mean, I was called names in school all my life, but I stand alive in front of you. Well, and so? Well, nothing. (laughs) Well, about name calling? I understand that it should not happen. It offends the person, but. Well, they go and complain, yes.

(Indra, school principal, municipal deputy)

In this lengthy quote we can identify all frames listed above as well as victim blaming and claim that the bullying is done by a minority of children and is not widespread. The choice of words by the interlocutor to describe the physical violence among children is important. She uses *iedunkāšana* (walloping) which is not a commonly used word and mostly has been used in literary fiction. One of the strategies employed by the staff was to recast violent acts of their pupils using language which minimizes the impact of the offence. Once Indra describes a child complaining about being attacked, she uses different word, as the child is more likely to recognise the attacker as a puncher instead of walloper. This quote also illustrates normalization of peer-to-peer violence where person can become bullied because of having difficulties with studies, because of their own or parental social status or because of their gender/sexuality.

These explanations were often used to explain and normalise the actions of the bully and lead to situations where the bully was no longer reprimanded:

This is going to happen in every school, somebody is going to be bullying someone else. It has been going on for years and will keep going. Unfortunately, this will not change, no matter how sad it may be. But there was one moment when, like, all the little ones, the big ones bullied, chased, and threw snowballs at them, and everything else, then I had a realisation that at that point, when I was going to be their age, I wouldn't do it. I didn't like it.

(Dzintars)

Here Dzintars, who admitted to having experienced bullying himself during his residential school years, seemed to show resignation towards presence of bullying in school. At the same time, we can see how he acknowledges the violent nature of the practice and decides not to continue it himself.

The naturalisation of bullying runs the risk of equalising it between instances and institutions. By claiming that bullying is something that had always happened between children and in every school, it becomes possible to overlook the fact that not all bullying is the same and that not all institutions are dealing with it similarly. While the staff would mostly talk about more innocuous part of bullying such as walloping or calling someone names, they avoid talking about more violent actions:

> *I was a witness to two of the older boys who were picking on one of the younger ones. At one point they picked him up by his legs and dipped him headfirst into a bucket of dirty water that had been used for washing the floor. While I did not participate myself, I remember myself watching this and laughing about the situation despite of the younger boy's quite visible distress.*
>
> *(Autoethnography)*

(Should I put this example in? A familiar wave of shame washes over me. Sure, I could not do anything at that moment, but I was laughing, so I not only did not do anything I sort of legitimized the event. I should've stopped them.)

As argued by Sekol (2016) and Mazzone (2018), bullying in residential care is more akin to bullying in prison rather than bullying at school. This arises from two primary reasons. Firstly, unlike children who experience bullying in school, children in residential school often do not have the chance to experience a safe and protected environment (see previous section). Secondly, in residential context, "baroning" or habit "in which goods are given to the prisoner by another person who later demands a high repayment" can also be observed (Sekol and Farrington 2009, 16). It is important to note that the goods exchanged may constitute different kinds of capital and are not always physical items. Researchers argue that it is important to recognise that bullying is often a means to acquire social standing and material goods rather than enjoy victim's suffering (Volk, Dane, and Marini 2014).

Actions such as I described above were not uncommon during my time in residential school and I remember many instances of witnessing violence among peers and being on the receiving end of said violence. I remember being punched, kicked, smothered, drawn on and being forced to fight. Not all violence experienced in residential school was physical:

> *A: Well, when it comes to such cases of violence, of course we had it, I have also been on both sides of boycotting, I have been – I have boycotted and I have been boycotted. [Silent]*
> *Q: Boycotting?*
> *A: Boycott? Either when there is a reason, or someone has said something wrong, or something has been taken, or it seemed that something has been taken, or the power level is not so high that you can keep up with that particular pack with a leader.*
>
> *(Antra)*

The stories of my interlocutors as well as my own experience makes me hesitant to embrace the position of staff in proclaiming that bullying was the same everywhere. Mismatch in perspectives is closely linked to what Mazzone describes as anti-grassing culture, where children are strongly opposed to reporting cases of violence to staff members (Mazzone, Nocentini, and Menesini 2018, 19). Almost none of the violent experiences I lived through during my

years in residential school ever reached any of the staff members, including the ones whom I saw as trustworthy. Reluctance to engage with staff members may be related to previous experiences where reporting has not led to any positive result or where the staff members themselves had shown violent responses. Such instances prevent children from reporting and lack of engagement from staff members may still result in additional abuse due to severe responses against snitching in residential school context. (Like, how am I even supposed to be reporting what happened? Hi, my roommates tried to smother me with a mattress, and they laughed when they did it. The sheer disbelief I am experiencing just writing this sentence reminds me of how helpless a child may feel in a situation that is so incomprehensibly violent and impossible to voice.) Another aspect that may create reluctance among pupils to report their experiences may be the habit of the staff to cooperate with the violent children. For example, night-nannies[20] employed older boys to come and discipline younger ones in my residential school. This not only diminished the belief that an adult could help in solving the bullying but legitimised bullying under the banner 'keeping the peace'.

It is also important to recognise the high symbolic value that is assigned to physical violence. Bourgois in his exploration of drug trade in East Harlem observed that for one of his research participants, Caesar, the ability to enact violence on others worked as a form of cultural capital and the capacity for violence became a valued skill (Philippe Bourgois 2004, 303). While not disputing the thesis of violence as a capital, I wish to argue that in a residential school certain capacity for enacting and experiencing violence became not only beneficial but also necessary. Bourgois argues that conditions where the violence is endemic and constant create "culture of terror" (Taussig 1984) where violence is no longer viewed as problematic but becomes glorified and exaggerated, preventing one from a critical analysis of the process.

My motivation when looking on as the younger pupil was being humiliated by my peers and Antra's motivation for engaging in boycotting of her peers cannot be simply explained by "kids are cruel" or a need to survive in complicated circumstances. Rather it needs to be viewed in relation to larger frames of violence that structure everyday life in residential school and contribute to the creation of continuum of violence where the resort to violent response is neither the best nor the worst choice but at that moment it is the only one response. In contrast to environment where violence is an exception, residential school is often a place where the lack of violence constitutes the exception. As theorised by Antra in the quote below, this early exposure to violence may lead to heightened sensitivity towards violence and later in life can also turn in desire to help others. (Is this necessary to say? Or is this just me trying to convince myself that I am good, that am not the person that I believe I was back then?)

[20] Staff members that are responsible for checking up on children during night-time.

What I think is, that when I just go through my classmates, either its tolerance and love or, as they say, the understanding of the elderly, [compassion] towards animals, towards the weakest, there is still kind of a, such a heightened focus and if someone needs help you can count on residential school child, I think.

(Antra)

This shows a potential solution to deal with violent experiences which come at a significant cost to oneself. Research shows that childhood maltreatment, including persistent bullying may lead to heightened sensitivity to threats which can leave a persistent impact on the individual's capacity to develop social relations later in life (McCrory et al. 2011; Hein and Monk 2017; Asmussen et al. 2020). Lack of social skills can later translate in disadvantaged position when entering the labour market.

In Bourdieu's account on schools as places for reproduction of social inequality, one of the main purposes of segregated education system was to ensure the maintenance of social capital within the same class. In Latvian case the residential school is an inverse version of elite boarding school. Instead of acquiring useful social contacts and know-how about maintaining them, residential school offers pupils opportunity to embody their inequality: social contacts they make and social skills they learn are less likely to help and more likely to hinder their capacity to improve their chances in capitalist economy which some will be forced to enter as soon as they are leaving the residential school. While graduating from a prestigious educational institution can help one enter the next level of education and increase the chance of employment, adolescents from a residential school are more likely to be rejected, and the feelings of rejection may lead to desire to resist the system which has been resisting accepting them. This can be counteracted by, for example, extracurricular activities such as sports or photography courses in Dzintars' case.

When Bourgois' research participants where asked how they ended up on the streets, most of them referred to their peers as the main influence (Philippe Bourgois 2003, 194). Residential school peer group is instrumental in making the decision to either leave the education system behind and embrace alternative ways of career-building, or to continue regardless of obstacles. The capacity of an individual to embrace abusive community of residential school and the speed with which the new skills and cultural capital of violence has been acquired are also significant. This creates a paradoxical situation where not fitting in the school may be a likelier marker of success in future as lack of engagement may help to avoid internalising violence habitus:

In principle, terribly wealthy no. But there were those who were richer. This could be felt, first of all, through the chance to study to get Category B [driver's licence]. There were those who studied, who studied hard to really save money and get through it faster. And there were those where you could really see that they were fooling around, and they did it in a way that was quite expensive. *(Dzintars)*

Q: What was the relationship between students [in Soviet period]?
I: It wasn't so noticeable then – you are a peasant, you are a townsman, dressed in this... The form was the same for everyone. I believe that now children are divided – he is from a rich family, he is from a poor one, dressed one way or another. I think that is the case.
Q: Did your children also say something about something happening in class or school?
I: I have not heard of mine, but I have heard of a girl in [local town] that she is from a poor family, she has been teased and so.
(Indra, school principal, municipal deputy)

The issue of economic inequality in interviews was mostly reflected upon as a result of capitalism and the socialist period is reminisced about as the time when everyone was equal or, as put nicely by an interlocutor: "it was not so noticeable then", implying that though inequalities did also exist during the Soviet period, they were harder to notice and less likely to create conflicts. This was also evident when comparing life-story materials. Both me and Dzintars would recall instances of feeling either ostracised due to the economic situation in our families or franticly trying to fit in by gaining access to high status goods while this never appeared in Antra's story.

I remember feelings of injustice and economic inequality between children staying in residential school and the ones going home which for the most part was also a divide across income level of our families. This was especially felt whenever the next class-trip came up. During my childhood school trips were already often partially paid for by the parents which often meant that me and other children who lived in residential school were either not able to participate or could do so without having any pocket money. Symbolically important part of the trip was a stop at some large mall. During the early 2000s these were not common outside large cities and the opportunity to acquire goods there was rare and highly coveted. It was quite early when I realised that I cannot go on these trips because they just made me feel inferior to my classmates more often than not. I had to wait in the bus while other kids went shopping or hang around them while not buying anything for myself. This feeling of lack was over-powering enough for me to decide not to go on any trips at all and soon enough I stopped informing my parents about the trips coming.

The lack of participation in trips from *internātnieki* did not slip the attention of our educator who came up with a plan that our classmates could donate the money to take one of us on a free trip. Money was collected by the educator who then proceeded to call a vote for which of us would have it. Our names were written on blackboard and the teacher drew little stripes next to our names while *mājinieki* casted the vote. I won that vote pretty handily. But I never went on the trip. I remember sitting there and feeling indescribable indignation towards the process which in my mind was not a good-will donation but rather an insult to all of the children whose name was on the board. It was clear to me that everyone would like to go but only one could and the choice was a popularity contest. The feelings of injustice reached their highest point once I

had been declared the lucky winner and it was no secret that I was going to win which contributed to my frustration.

Once it was announced that I was the chosen *internātnieks,* I explained that I am not going on the trip not because my parents would not have enough money but because I had something else to do. I do not remember the made-up reason I had given, but I remember the look on my educator's face. I am not sure if she understood but it was quite clear that she knew I was lying. Nevertheless, she accepted my decision, the prize went to the next contestant (a relatively poor girl who was a home child) and I could sit there and feel my class solidarity about twenty years before I knew what a class solidarity even was. This type of voting for the most deserving *internātnieks* was never done again. (Well, I am not crying, so that is progress, I guess. The shame and anger are again washing over and I think how I would like to think I am now ok with what happened during those years. I am not.)

What are we to make of this episode? Although it certainly seems enticing for me to just claim that this shows my revolutionary spirit and early Marxist inclinations, this would be a very lopsided analysis of the event. Instead of protesting against the whole affair and pointing out its absurdity, I chose to resist it by refusing to participate. Furthermore, it should be noted that my decision was also affected by the two conditions mentioned earlier – one, my parents never even knew of my choice not to go on fieldtrips and therefore this might have been hard to explain to them; secondly, my original opposition to fieldtrips was motivated by sense of inequality due to lack of pocket money which was not solved by this act of charity.

I believe that it shows how economic inequality can convert into symbolic violence. As argued by Branson (1993, 26), gifts, loyalty and piety can be constructed as forms of violence towards the receiving party, the same way charity may serve to maintain the unspoken order of relations in residential school. Not everyone is equal, and the primacy of wealth is not disputed by this act. Rather, through the act of charity the teacher was affirming this difference instead of redressing it. The situation was made somehow worse with posing the question of who is the most deserving of the chance? Deserving how?

As Bourdieu argues, "by doing away with giving explicitly to everyone what it implicitly demands of everyone, the educational system demands of everyone alike that they have what it does not give" (Bourdieu 2018, 80). Most of my residential school peers lacked the necessary cultural and social capital to be able to fit in with *mājinieki*. This again was not redressed by this action. The act was supporting only those students who already had shown that they were able to transcend their background and at least somewhat fit in with *mājinieki*. In this way the act of charity not only reinforced the existing socio-economic inequalities but also signalled the rest of the *internātnieki* that if only they would try some more, they could someday receive the help educators thought they needed.

Concluding the example of the fieldtrip I wish to add one additional detail on the differences between fieldtrips during the Soviet and independence periods.

While discussing our experiences with Antra, our conversation unexpectedly ended up at talking about the fieldtrips and food associated with them:

> *Suddenly it clicked for me about those sausage sandwiches that we also had in residential school when we went to perform in orphanages, now. I somehow remember, I don't remember that orphanage, but one of its educators or someone else, I do not remember. Or the manager [said it], when children had dinner after our performance and games and that teacher said [threateningly, to the children] "One sausage! I said one!" This seems to me to be one such a residential school [thing] that characterizes residential school in general. "One sausage, I told you! One."*
>
> *(Antra)*

While during the Soviet period the experience of soggy sausage sandwiches was shared by all of the children living in residential school, it became another marker of difference in the independence period where most *mājinieki* would have their prepared lunches while *internātnieki* stood in line for the school provided cheese and sausage sandwiches. While the residential school during Soviet period represented a certain solidarity, even if it was solidarity in misery, the contemporary residential school failed this task and *internātnieki,* but no longer *mājinieki,* still experienced the same socialist period misery.

This points at inequality as a decisive factor for bullying and whether or not it stopped. As explored previously, due to lack of support staff and risks to school reputation, there was a sizable chance that a bullied child might enter the circle of violence ending up in a residential school for children with special needs instead of receiving help needed regardless of the socio-economic profile of the original institution.

I have explored how the peer-relationship and bullying affects everyday life of students in a residential school. I have argued that the high level of violence present in residential school creates a culture of violence where enacting violence is no longer condemned but rather praised. I have further illustrated how symbolic violence among peers reproduces structures of inequality which legitimise and naturalise violence experienced by the residential school inhabitants. Finally, I argue that symbolic violence also leads residential school inhabitants to develop a different habitus that helps them to survive in residential school and complicates their future or makes their residential school lives more complicated while potentially helping them to acquire the necessary social and cultural capital which may lead to further educational opportunities and improved chances in the labour market.

6.1.2 Staff

As illustrated by research (Yoon and Bauman 2014; Colpin, Bauman, and Menesini 2021), teachers play a crucial part of violence prevention in schools. As also explored previously, the methods and approaches used by staff often fostered rather than dismantled the culture of terror that often pervaded

residential schools. In the following text I explore the role of the staff in maintaining symbolic violence or resisting it.

Residential school staff could sometimes exert physical violence in the form of upbringing (see subchapter 5.3 Upbringing). By staff I refer to educators, support staff such as night-nannies, nurses, and administration. While it is important to note that similarly as with the pupils of residential school, not every employee was violent, being violent was not likely to create much trouble. In the same way even though direct physical violence could not have been the main tool for managing students, there was little chance that the employees who resorted to violence were punished:

> *Q: You also had the standings [stāvēšanas]?*
> *A: Yes, we did, of course, yes.*
> *Q: Sounds like it's a universal method.*
> *A: I think it's a universal method borrowed from the army. That it has to do with Soviet times and things like that. Although if you read "Battle at Knipska"*[21] *and some other works, you know, maybe it used to be such a method – of course, with rulers, all this beating it's all [stops abruptly] it's all normal, squats.*
> *Q: Squats? We didn't have squats.*
> *A: So, you didn't? We had squats.*
> *Q: Like, a certain number, or?*
> *A: Yes-yes-yes, yesterday another girl wrote in that chat, [smiling] either that she has well-trained legs and generally muscles and a sixpack so that, yes, you will be allowed to go to bed after 100 squats, or 150 squats, or 50, I don't remember, but they weren't 10 it was more.*
>
> *(Antra)*

"The standings" were a method used by night nannies where the student was made to stand outside in the hallway, in nightwear, which for boys usually meant their underwear, facing the wall until they were allowed to return to their room. This method was used by nannies as a method to ensure that children were if not asleep but at least quiet during night-time. The "standings" could be complemented with other methods if the offender did not seem sufficiently regretful. During my early years of residential school I remember an episode where my roommates were chatting and laughing before falling asleep. This attracted the attention of night-nanny who barged into the room, took two of the older boys and made them to go outside to the hallway and stand until they "calmed down". The method proved to be ineffective as the boys simply continued to talk and laugh while standing in the hallway. The night-nanny solved this by climbing down from the fourth floor where we were sleeping, going outside, getting some birch rods (I know all this because she loudly explained what she was going to do beforehand) and spanked both boys on their naked thighs. One of them screamed and pleaded for mercy, the other stayed

[21] [21] A novel describing life in residential school during the 19th century Latvia.

quiet. Both were sent back into the room afterwards and the boy who did not scream at all certainly earned a lot of respect that night.

Now it is again important to emphasise that there were only two night-nannies in my years of residential school who seemed to enjoy hurting children. This extended to walking around with a flyswatter for hitting children with and using a flashlight to shine light on the faces of children in the bed to check whether they are sleeping. Ones that came after those were often actually nice. But none of the violent ones were punished or fired. I remember years later seeing one of them in residential school where she was working as a seamstress.

It happened almost 20 years ago and I never heard any stories about violence from staff at Dzintars' residential school which gives hope that these practices have disappeared. This is thrown in doubt by recent year media reports, exploring abuse in different alternative care institutions across Latvia, including residential schools (eng.lsm.lv 2015; Savitska, Petrova, and Kuzņecovs 2019; Anstrate and eng.lsm.lv 2017). The entrenched nature of violence in Latvian alternative care system does not seem to have subsided despite ongoing process of deinstitutionalisation. While the discussions about the responsibility for residential schools and its inhabitants, which positions are to be funded and by whom, raged, the inhabitants of residential school continued to suffer. Uncertainty about the future directly affected operation of residential school and impacted the number of students and amount of funding available. This further impacts the quality of support and education and raises questions about efficiency. In these conditions both residential school employees and inhabitants were living, getting education, teaching, caring and upbringing. In conditions where funding is often lacking and dire there is less chance that a night-nanny will be fired for 'disciplining' two boys, both of which already had a certain reputation in our residential school.

> *Q: Was there a situation where the teacher went too far? Did you have an idea what to do, where to go?*
> *A: [repeats the question] Of course not. Where will you go then? But no, there was no idea to go somewhere, it was normal. Nobody has asked me such a question at all, but it is interesting. Really no and I didn't even tell at home because [thinking]*
> *Q: At that time, there was not even a place to go*
> *A: [thoughtfully] yes. Not at all. That's right. And to whom would I complain, exactly about what?*
> *Q: School principal, management*
> *A: Of course not.*
>
> *(Antra)*

Although Antra went to residential school during the Soviet period, the sentiment expressed in this quote is familiar to any residential school inhabitant. I never reported any of my bullies to the staff, the children would also never report the actions of abusive staff members to administration or even such actions of their own parents. At this point in the interview Antra looked

sincerely taken aback by the question as if it had never dawned on her that she would have had the right to report the actions of abusive staff members. The idea seemed to bewilder her, even as a possibility. Symbolic violence often prevents the pupils from reporting the abuse as it is often perceived as justified in one way or the other. But here it is important to maintain a critical approach and not to slide back into the resilience discourse and argue that the solution for these situations is an increased resilience which could empower them and lead to increase in reporting. (I am still blaming myself while writing this. And I am still scared that writing this down will somehow lead to punishment for myself.).

Still, as described above, the situation is changing in at least some institutions. Although the educators may still express regret at no longer being able to use physical force for disciplining the children, they are also aware of the possible repercussions and are less likely to openly engage in such behaviour. Birching or pulling a child's ear is no longer practiced and there certainly has been an improvement when comparing mine and Dzintars' experience:

> *I like that we had a class, it wasn't quite in our class, I remember how the teacher [name] once said something, it became a habit for her, it was such a cool saying from her. There was one guy who was cursing a lot, very angrily, and what did the teachers usually do when someone curses? Send them to the principal and so on. And [teacher's name] solved it very, very beautifully, she said, just like in the cartoon Shrek – Better out than in. And that guy just broke out in laughter. He didn't expect it. She put him in his place quite beautifully with just a funny sentence which he did not even have to be offended by.*
>
> *(Dzintars)*

This story demonstrates several important points regarding the way how the methods of upbringing may be realised in the face of an unruly pupil without resorting to violence. Firstly, it exemplifies an alternative to violence response to a distraught child by a skilled teacher. Despite often-meagre amount of funds available to a residential school, it would be mistaken to say that residential school failed to attract well-educated and talented professionals. The second important point is about offence. The choice of words here is important as it shows that the presumed violent relationship is still present in residential school where the staff and children are violent to each other and among themselves. In this situation the pupil didn't lose face and was not humiliated by the teacher which allowed him to exit the situation without much risk to his standing among his peers. Thirdly, Dzintars still viewed this exchange in the terms of combat between the teacher and pupil as evidenced by him saying that the pupil was put in his place by the actions the teacher.

In interviews with staff from other institutions the question of physical violence from the staff did not appear at all. It is important to acknowledge the limitations of my research where due to the lack of participant observation in the institutions themselves, the situation is hard to evaluate. Furthermore, as I

have previously argued, not all of the staff members in the institution would use physical violence as a method of teaching or education, and the likelihood that these practices would be done openly is even smaller. After all, the incident I described earlier took place in the dorms and during night. As argued by Feldman, "secrecy is an assertion of identity and of symbolic capital. Pushed to the margins, subaltern groups construct their own margins as fragile insulations from the "centre" (Feldman 1991, 11). It is therefore important to remember that the choice of residential school staff and/or pupils to engage in violence covert or otherwise is not only based on fear but rather also constitutes a part of the local cultural capital where knowledge about the violence is something that needs to be held close and not exposed to the outsiders as it forms the basis for the community as described in section 6.2.

At the same time, as argued by Green, it is important to recognise the role of silencing in enforcing the control. The research confirms that living in a state of terror is not only a psychological state affecting an individual but also a social state that shapes the collective (Green 2004, 189–90). Potential for violence increases exponentially as the secrecy of the institution shields the potential wrongdoers from the gaze of responsible institutions while lack of symbolic and material resources that prevent the institution from finding alternative ways of operating. These conditions show the dark side of interdependency (Butler 2020), as the pupils, the staff, the family and, as mentioned later, maybe even the whole local town, are engaged in relations of interdependence towards residential school but instead of it serving as a basis for equality and non-violence it may become grounds for equality in relations of violence where individual harms the other although they recognise that this may also lead to their own suffering.

With focusing on often-shocking cases of physical violence it is sometimes easy to miss violence enacted through other means. Use of raised voice, threats and verbal abuse can often be left without any attention, where an educator explains that yelling is better than physical abuse. This demonstrates the hierarchal nature of violence where at first the child might be warned about behaviour, then threatened and asked to stop after and, if behaviour has not improved, physical violence may follow. While physical violence is exceptional, emotional and verbal abuse could be present at all stages of this process. Kleinman's concept of everyday violence is defined as such: "Violence [...] is crucial to cultural processes of routinization, legitimation, essentialism, normalization, and simplification through which the social world orders the flow of experience within and between body-selves" (Kleinman 2000, 238). In this definition violence is no longer seen as something that is external to social life of communities but one of the constitutive processes of organising social life. Therefore, I argue that residential school should not be perceived as external and pathological in relation to the Latvian society but rather as one of the points where the socially unspoken but accepted order comes to the surface due to its invisible and precarious state.

> *The nicknames were, of course, harsh, like "Urine", like "Cookie", or "Licehead," and all of those nicknames also exactly corresponded to the person that they described. For myself, I was spared of nicknames because very quickly I became, now it could probably be called bellicose, now I became very much like on my own.*
>
> *(Antra)*

The nicknames here represent the way the everyday violence is not only enacted on the children but also how the children themselves learn to internalise it to a point where the nickname "Urine" is considered to be an apt description of a classmate even long after the studies have concluded. Antra wonders that she may have been spared from harsher treatment from teachers due to her quick adaptation to the environment which led her to assume a harsh and aggressive personality. This shows how pupils may adopt the culture of terror in residential school when instead of engaging in physical violence the child might develop an aggressive and brash attitude which make them less likely a target of violence due to their capacity for verbal violence.

The attitude of the staff and pupils towards each other needs to be considered in the context of everyday violence even aside from the physical and verbal violence.

> *And I also teach math to those children where the whole class has visual aids. And they sometimes say for themselves: we are such dummies. I tell them: no, don't say that about yourself, you will have to take the exam just like everyone else, only you have these visual aids. And it is very interesting. We have ten [students] in one class, where we all have those visual aids. And in the second class, four [students] with these visual aids are integrated. How do you think they use those visual aids, those four? No way in hell are they using them! Because they think: well, why should I take some visual aids here? They do not use [them]. They [in the class where everyone uses aids] all use them nicely, because they are all like that. But the four who are in another class inside, well, they're reluctant.*
>
> *(Velga, teacher, former educator)*

The internalised feelings of worthlessness for the students here were achieved through a habitus of self-denigration. The use of visual aids was introduced in the study process with the aim of supporting students who were experiencing difficulties during the study process. However, as illustrated by the interview quote, the aids constituted only a part of a successful integrated approach in education. While the introduction of visual aids helped to ensure that the practical side of inclusivity was achieved, this did not help overcome prejudice towards children with learning difficulties. In this institution all staff members that I interviewed were in one or another way opposed to inclusive education which may indicate one more cause for the reluctance of children as well. In this way the symbolic violence where the children are arranged on the scale according to their capacity is not disputed by the inclusive approach but rather

reaffirmed, as the aids are perceived as a marker of disability rather than as a tool for learning.

6.1.3 Between a rock and a hard place: domestic and familial violence

Everything that has been described until now may raise a question as to why pupils are sent to the residential school in the first place. Therefore, here I will turn towards the violence experienced outside of residential school walls. I illustrate how experiences of structural and/or domestic violence are conceptualised as either a crisis or opportunity by research participants which leads to the decision to admit the children to residential school. I trace how these conceptualisations prevent critical reflection on the experienced violence and instead become a justification for the violence within the residential school. Further I explore the ways the structural violence in the form of inefficient or non-existent support services perpetuates the violence experienced by children both in a domestic setting and in the institution.

"There was such a small crisis": residential school as a refuge

Entry to residential school was presented as a solution to family crisis situations. In the case of Dzintars sudden economic difficulties forced his family to send their child to residential school:

> *It was the moment when I finished [village] primary school. And so the [residential] school was 5 kilometres from home and in the worst-case scenario one can walk that. In any weather, at any time. And then the next nearest high school was in [place Y]. And it was a rather [economically] difficult moment in the family. Same with the car. It was a bit exclusive [inaccessible]. We got out of it all good, as there was such a small crisis. And we realized that I would have to go to [place Y] residential school.*
>
> *(Dzintars)*

Older siblings of Dzintars both studied in a different regional school without boarding facilities, as during their school years the family had not encountered financial difficulties. Although Dzintars did not describe the financial complications of his family in detail, judging from the time period I can assume that the complications were connected to financial crisis of 2009 which severely affected the livelihood of many families in Latvia.

In my own case there was no crisis but rather, as explained before, it was seen as an opportunity. Much like Antra's case described below, that could be based on economic desperation. Me and my sister started our residential schooling in the late nineties which was still a very precarious time in Latvian countryside as the collective farms and employment opportunities previously present there were long gone and work migration to the EU had not yet started. There were no social workers or other support mechanisms in our village. Our

brother was already in a residential school for children with special needs and it must have also influenced our parent's decision. Furthermore, my parents were suffering from alcohol abuse, this may also have been an attempt to protect us from living with addicted persons. At the time most of the families in the village were living such lives and it was often perceived as natural rather than a problematic condition.

Our home life was often fraught with sense of caution and alertness as we learned early on that our parents could not always be trusted with most things ranging from regularly going to work and ending with finding a bathroom in a time of need. As explored by Järvinen (2013), there is comparatively little qualitative research done regarding children who live with alcoholic parents. The research that has been done indicates that there is little support for children in attempts to maintain the normalcy of family life (Werner and Malterud 2016), and that the relationship with parents suffering from substance abuse occupies a large part of children's life even if they are living separate (Wangensteen, Bramness, and Halsa 2019). Both of these observations are supported by my own childhood experience. Attempts to maintain normalcy in our case were, for example, making sure that the fire does not go out in the local heat plant. I remember myself and my sister both in our early teens, stumbling through the night to make sure that fire is still going in the plant as we were scared that our father could lose his job. In these situations we never asked or received help from the village community, we never told about it to anyone in residential school (Taylor and Kroll 2004).

Finally, for Antra, as outlined before, residential school was presented as an opportunity that would not be available to her if she had stayed at home. It masks the fact that at the time Antra's family was going through its own set of challenges including domestic violence:

> *And, vot, there it is, it overlapped yes, because it [experience of violence] was in residential school, not just residential school, I also had it in the family, my father was violent towards my mother and my mother was very young and my mother also became violent over time because at the beginning she defended herself and then she carried that [the violence] to the next, to the weakest, and I do the same, the difference is that I am aware of it and I try to analyse and talk about it.*
>
> *(Antra)*

Antra's case presents a typical imagined family of a child from residential school, the reason the institution was originally established. However, as the motivation and need for residential school in this case was framed as related to opportunities rather than needs, there was never any state intervention in the everyday life of her family, at least it wasn't mentioned by Antra. Violence endured and as Antra herself claims, was inherited (Cappell and Heiner 1990; Kalmuss 1984). It is important to note that this should not be perceived as a set trajectory. Social bonds outside the violent relationship help to overcome

previously learned behaviours (Lackey 2003). After all, despite the rueful acknowledgment of her own violence by Antra, during the interview it became clear that her attempts to avoid repeating the mistakes of her parents have at least partially been successful. Though there were signs of different kinds of violence experienced by my interlocutors, this was not emphasised in their stories, replacing violence with notions of crisis and opportunities. This is more evident in the cases of myself and Antra as both of us suffered from some form of domestic violence while the situation is more complex for Dzintars where there was no clear perpetrator in the complications experienced by his family.

I argue that in all our cases the stated reasons for seeking help obscure the lack of a wider support network in the local community. There was nobody to whom I could go and ask for help with my parents' alcoholism, there was nobody that could have helped Antra escape the abuse of her parents, and there were no local support mechanisms to support a family struggling to make ends meet for Dzintars. In this situation the decisions of our parents to transfer us to residential school could be seen as decisions made in the grey zone (Levi 2004) where violence experienced by children is inescapable and the choices need to be made accordingly. I emphasise that residential school did not serve as a shelter from the familial violence but rather as introduction to a different variety of it, namely, institutional violence, which at times was even more oppressive than the abuse endured at home.

Living with violence: violence at home and village

From the perspective of residential school staff, knowledge about the causes and reasons of a child entering residential school often remained invisible, which allowed perpetuating the existing narratives about the irresponsible parent.

Residential school often served a social function where the staff is closely involved in the lives of their pupils. Residential school acts as a stopgap measure that may prevent the abuse of children in a short term but is less likely to solve the long-term problems that lead to the child abuse. The project's research data showed that domestic violence may be much more prevalent in Latvian society than indicated by larger sociological surveys. While residential school staff often tried to solve the problems of their pupils to the best of their ability, lack of cooperation between the state and municipal institutions often made efforts difficult and could lead to either no action or towards 'footballing' the problem:

> *At the moment it is very difficult for us with families – when we see bruising, we start to investigate what's there. We cannot investigate this anymore either. It is being investigated by the social workers; we are turning to them. It is forbidden to cooperate in [place] region, I am dumbstruck. We are not supposed to know where they are going at all and so on. They grab children from families.*
>
> *(Lelde, assistant principal)*

In this municipality the cooperation between different institutions was often poor and depending on the participant the offending party may have been either the social service, or the Orphan's and Custody court[22,] or schools themselves. Regardless, in the situation where cooperation between institutions is fraught with distrust, a significant risk exists for even grievous cases to slip by the attention of the respective institutions.

> *Because her, say, the father of her children is her father's brother. It's again such a terribly perverted situation for the girl. As it was, he is also very old. There is also violence here. He takes all the money from her. And I say, why do you allow it? She says to whom will I complain then, what can I say against men. If he saw birth control pills, he destroyed them, because every child is again a source of money, income. And two children are normal, but two are completely, well, with a history of mental development issues.*
>
> *(Kitija, GP)*

This quote comes from an interview with a general practitioner in the same region as one of the residential schools and shows the complexity of cases. Such cases usually stay at local level, where the community may be aware of the problem but there was little done for solving it. This case was especially complicated as the individual as described by the GP was not likely to seek help from the state institutions. Furthermore, the woman was married to her father's brother who was Roma, and this carried stigma which prevented the community from involvement and could affect the decision of state institutions to act. The most likely solution in this case would to be an intervention by social services who would 'save the children' by removing them from the family. This was not changing the everyday experience of violence for the woman and the remaining children as the social services often worked in a rather haphazard manner:

> *We have a case with 4 children when [social services] call and, imagine, almost like with Siberia, when people were deported – one was not at home, the other 3 are taken to an orphanage. It is good that the 4th had gone to the countryside with his grandmother, was not sent to this crisis centre and was happy with his grandmother at that time, because the social services were not going there.*
>
> *(Gundega, principal)*

Local knowledge of how social problems were solved sows distrust in residential school staff about cooperating with other state services. The lack of cooperation is explored in detail in following chapters but here I note that lack of cooperation simultaneously stems from and contributes to the isolation of residential school as the staff is performing a dual role of being both a parent to their pupils and a state institution that controls them. Khlinovskaya-Rockhill' in

[22] ,An Orphan's and Custody Court is a guardianship and trusteeship institution established by a municipality or local government of a republic city.

her research of institutions in Russia claims that the state maintains the role of co-parent which leads the state to remove children from their families often (Rockhill 2010). The situation is inverse here. The state is actively trying to extract itself from childcare setting which however is complicated by structural problems such as poverty. Parents often still perceive the institution as a co-parent even as this role is no longer tenable under the current socioeconomic conditions:

> *Q: So they live in school all year round?*
> *G: Yes, almost. Well, during the important holidays they are sent to their institutions [families, orphanages], but these are just a few positions [occasions], the important holidays – summer, Christmas, Easter, in such moments. But on small [regular] Saturdays, Sundays they are there. The most difficult thing – it was unrealistic to set in motion the participation of the parents in children's life, development, to see that despite the fact that the child is in a difficult situation, they can still work with them, create tasks, goals to work on. All responsibility is shifted to the institution where the child is located. This is perhaps the most difficult.*
>
> *(Gerda, psychologist)*

Here a psychologist who worked in residential school for children with special needs in Eastern part of Latvia expressed her dissatisfaction with the way child's life was organised in residential school setting. She complains about children being left in the care of residential school staff for sometimes months at a time as parents and other state institutions abused the residential school services. This abuse was at the core of one the recent scandals in relation to residential schools and served as an important step in their transformation to current hidden form of their existence.

During last few years the Ombudsman's Office of the Republic of Latvia had carried out several inspections in different out-of-family care institutions in Latvia discovering that several state social care institutions for children or orphanages transported their children to residential schools where they stayed for extended periods of time while the institutions received the funding for care of those children (Anstrate 2019). This was harshly criticised but seems to be continuing, as both types of institutions, orphanages and boarding schools, were well versed in hiding their operation from state inspections. Parents also abused the system, and it was even harder to control and therefore often slipped the attention of state inspections. All of this was often painful for the pupils of residential school for whom meeting their parents was a highlight of the week or sometimes a semester:

> *So, I went there [to residential school]. All the children had gone for lunch. I have to wait for that time. They will only be let out after eating and I can't get there faster than just by my bus to [place]. I stand on the side and look forward to seeing my child. Here they come in a line from class. They are bringing them out in a nice, orderly line. [name] sees that I am there on the*

side, woosh, out of line, to me. All done, no longer need to eat or drink anything, we're going home, we're going home.

(Melita, parent of student)

About the waiting what I said previously and leaving and so on. I was really looking forward to mom. Very. And I don't remember my mom at school. I remember she was there for the 8th grade graduation; she wasn't in one of the graduations. She wasn't at meetings, she wasn't at events, other kids had [their parents there], I didn't, it was so terrible. Well that still makes me cry and so on. Well, she screwed me over.

(Antra)

Pupils noticed not only staying at school during weekends but also the absence of parents from school events. This is exacerbated by the fact that most of school events were often organized as presentations to parents to show off the achievements and skills of the pupils. This is often painful for children of residential school as their parents were either unwilling or unable to participate in these events. This again can contribute to children acting out as this was often more likely to force the parents to appear in school than achievements which in turn may lead to punishment in both domestic and institutional setting.

6.2 "Abusive community"

As illustrated, entry in the residential school is the result of a complex set of conditions that simultaneously contested and maintained the notions of remoteness and periphery. Here I turn towards the way violence becomes the unifying experience for residential school inhabitants and how it leads to formation of a new type of relationship. For all of us entry into residential school required quick adaptation to new conditions:

Back then the first month was terribly difficult. Now I'm not so introverted anymore, but at the time I was pretty introverted, let's say so. Living with a stranger in the same room was quite a bit, a bit unusual for me. High school was also tough. I experienced quite a lot of what bullying is, on myself.

(Dzintars)

Although all three of us could recall how certain educators helped us to get through the residential school and our toughest moments, the entrance moment still stands out as a rather lonely affair. For most part the child arriving at residential school for the first time is left on one's own with his peers and their social skills are quickly put to test.

I remember how on the first day at school I was standing next to one of my future classmates, when someone asked him about me – 'who's that idiot?'

> *and at that moment it was clear to me that I am probably not going to enjoy staying there very much.*
>
> *(Autoethnography)*

This event made me feel horribly insecure. As time passed, I learned that calling someone an 'idiot' was just a figure of speech and a test to see the reaction. I propose to describe the environment at residential school as 'abusive community'. As most of the children have had experienced abusive treatment in their lives, it was considered a norm and reproduced similar relationships. This formed an initiation into the group where capacity of the individual to both receive and dish out physical, emotional, or other type of violence was seen as a valuable skill rather than as a problematic behaviour, at least among the pupils. This often led to a development of a particular kind of personality which one of my research participants conceptualised as "human-residential school".

> *I think it has affected me a lot because it has also affected my relationship with my child and in general my relationship with people and my daughter's godfather, who is also a child from residential school, said he doesn't know anyone who is as much of a human-residential-school as me.*
>
> *(Antra)*

Here Antra completely dismantles the border between herself and her experience claiming the identity of a person who is at the same time the embodiment of her experience in the institution. Biehl (2005) has explored how the subjectivity of an individual under extreme case of institutionalisation may become intersected with the identity of the institution or its parts. But while in Biehl's work Catarina becomes integrated with medication called Akineton and claims her new identity as Catkine, Antra develops a relationship with her past and claims to no longer be just human but a hybrid, human+residential school.

In my and Antra's case, we learned to develop abrasive personalities to avoid bullying which had a permanent impact on our relationship building skills in later life. As outlined by researchers concentrating on ACE research (Asmussen et al. 2020), the impact of adverse experiences during childhood and adolescence contributes to potential emotional and social issues later in life.

Dzintars had a different experience. Due to the intervention of his class educator, he received additional support both practically (separate living space) and psychologically when his problems were acknowledged by the educator. This had a positive impact on his future in residential school. While in my and Antra's case it could be argued that we both experienced neglect from our educators, Dzintars avoided it which may at least partly explain his different feelings about residential school and social relationships in general. As outlined by research (H. A. Turner et al. 2019; Vachon et al. 2015), neglect often leads to experiencing abuse also from peers and other caregivers. This was also confirmed in my research where both myself and Antra kept experiencing

violence either from peers or the staff until we finished our studies while Dzintars had a more positive experience.

> *Because I remember that when high school was coming to an end, we all started to grow up and understand and even found contacts with people who, say, in the 10th grade, they bullied me, made fun of me and so on, I knew how to forgive, and already in the 12th grade, we sat together in the evenings, laughed, even watched movies, sometimes we studied together.*
>
> *(Dzintars)*

Here I have described how the entry to residential school requires acculturation in a new environment which although often violent is still a community. Furthermore, this community gets constructed precisely around the experiences of adversity and violence which leaves significant impact on how the future of the pupils is shaped. I have illustrated how the violence present in the institution is not directly the result of "bad children" nor is there some innate issues in the residential school itself as shown by the experience of Dzintars. Rather we can see how the violence is the result of lack resources and trained personnel, where the lack of supervision, support and engagement may lead to experiences of violence becoming the basis for forming a community. This community however is then always coloured by presence of violence as its reproduction becomes basis for the existence of community itself. In the following sub-chapter I explore the various factors and resources that help to change this trajectory and overcome the violent experiences.

6.3 Small islands of light

> *Well, there are some small islands of light in residential school. (Antra)*

It would be a mistake to claim that residential school represents only unhappiness or suffering. After all, as explored above, the experience of home for residential school inhabitants may be found through or in connection to residential school. While in relation to those experiences we see how residential school experience indirectly contributes to positive experiences, here I wish to explore ways how it was achieved in a more direct manner.

There was a marked difference between interlocutors in the way of describing their experience. While Dzintars was positive and Antra was more critical, my own experience was ambiguous. Each of us used a different model of coping: Dzintars was almost militantly positive, Antra mostly regretted it and my own autobiographical writing was dominated by anger. Models of coping significantly affected our narratives of residential school, but I believe that it is still possible to critically analyse them. It is crucial to include this part of our stories as it allows us to move past the narrative of hopelessness which may perpetuate the stigma of residential school in Latvia as an institution that is equivocally problematic and has no redeeming qualities. I have classified the

positive memories of the participants in two main sections: relationships of care and agency enabling practices.

6.3.1 Relationships of care

The importance of caring relationships within residential school has already been illustrated in previous chapters mostly through examples of their absence. There were always educators, teachers, kitchen staff members or cleaners who created meaningful and supportive relations with the pupils. These relationships become especially significant for residential school students due to their scarcity. They served as a resource that could help to overcome the everyday violence of the institution. The capacity of institutions to dehumanize their inhabitants is well documented (Pugh 2004; Hagan and Rymond-Richmond 2008; Bleiker et al. 2013). Residential school can still make its inhabitants feel as if their humanity is questioned or disregarded which is even more pronounced in the cases of children with disabilities. The feeling of dehumanization is also one of the consequences of the persistent culture of violence which leads the pupils to perceive themselves as less important or human than other children. In these conditions the presence of an educator, cook or another student, who can counter the dehumanization is invaluable. By introducing the notions of care, sympathy and respect in the residential school environment the experiences describe how the nonviolence can be realised in institutional setting by establishing alternative narratives and effects to the ones that contribute to the creation of vulnerability and abuse.

> *And when my aunt came to pick me up in 6 days, I had to study on Saturdays back then, she came to pick me up. She also came sometimes during the week, and she brought it to me, I remember there was a blackcurrant jam in the jar, one had a jam and then there was a box of cookies. And then there was [excited] madness, home-made, such goodness! Well, I just had her, well yes, I was a real residential school child, 100%, as much as a child can be a residential school child. Well, well I wasn't a complete orphan and I had home and on Saturdays, Sundays I went to [grandfather's sister's flat]*
>
> *(Antra)*

I have kept the focus on homemaking which may include home-made cookies, tea made in community centre and the special way you learn to lean your head during a long bus ride in order to avoid bumping it against the glass. By making home in places of their own choosing residential school pupils enact their agency in conditions where it is often curtailed, bordered, and disputed. Home for residential school pupils is a persistently multi-sited concept which can invoke both dread and feelings of warmth. In the following text I turn towards the ways how care and warmth may also be realised within the walls of residential school itself.

Educators and teachers

As already explored in the chapter on upbringing, the educators were often the main support system available to pupils at residential school. This depended on the emotional investment of the educators and in cases when they were caring and sensitive, relationship with the educators became one of the most important and positive experiences for residential school pupils. As teachers often classified their pupils into "good kids" and "bad kids", the pupils used the same classification for teachers:

> *The good teachers, to be [a good teacher] in that environment and to show mercy, these really stood out among others. Because they were almost from another world, they didn't shout, you could understand them, and everything could be worked out.*
>
> *(Antra)*

The good educators responded with kindness and respect to the pupil's needs. From the perspective of pupils, it was never expected that educators would replace parents, as was believed by the residential school staff. It was expected that the educators would provide the warmth and kindness pupils often lacked in the institutional setting. The relationship was not seen as supplanting the relations between parents and children but rather as a different one where the educator could be trusted with stories and experiences that parent could not. Importance of biological parents has been maintained throughout the change of regimes. While in the Soviet system the assumption was that the educator should somewhat supplanted the parent, the dominant role of parent was not disputed. In contemporary times the advent of family-centred care emphasises the importance of birth parents and by now it is argued to be irreplaceable which leads to increased efforts towards deinstitutionalisation. The concept of residential school educator here becomes unwieldy as it does not fit within that existing paradigm of childcare relations. In Latvian case, however, we can see that in both situations the recourse to the primacy of birth parents is often the result of inability to perceive the child as an equal participant in the care process who might have their own perception and preference in relation to decisions related to their care.

However, due to their alternative position in relation to child, the educator can serve as someone who enhances and improves the participation of the child in the decision making about their care experience. This becomes especially clear in the cases where the educator is described as a mediator between the institutional requirements and the needs of the pupils:

> *Q: You mentioned that there was no kitchenet for pupils at your time.*
> *D: There was no kitchenet. I had my own toaster or a kettle. [...]*
> *Q: Were pupils allowed to have these?*

> *D: Officially no. Unofficially, yes. The educators knew about it. But when the big inspections came, [the educators] knew, who had toasters and kettles. We were informed and we hid it all quite nicely.*
>
> *(Dzintars)*

This quote illustrates the qualities of "good educator" – awareness of both institutional requirements and the needs of the pupils and ability to deftly navigate both. The ownership and use of toasters and kettle may have been forbidden for numerous reasons, starting from fire safety and ending with their symbolic meaning (where the need for pupils to make their own food would indicate insufficient meals from the school). It did not help the fact that the pupils may have felt the need to cook for other reasons than hunger such as creation of home environment and expression of their own agency. In this situation the educators recognised that by allowing the use of cooking equipment they were preventing unnecessary risks from the pupils while also enhancing their independence (see chapter on upbringing).

The character of "good educator" cannot be reduced to one single quality as I also remember the geography teacher who was well regarded among students though she was perceived to be a much harsher in her character than some of the other educators. But her harshness was always followed by actions and attitudes that one could not help but feel were honest. This made the pupils feel appreciated and created a relationship of respect between the teacher and the pupils as even if the kindness was not felt, the feeling of respect and equal footing is also important in developing a good relationship between students and the educator.

On the other hand, the biology teacher was well known throughout the school as one of the kindest teachers in the institution. Importantly, it seemed that her kindness seemed to exist without preconditions and did not have to be earned which set her apart from other teachers. One of my fondest memories from residential school is the evening when she offered to play some game with us. Here it is important to explain that during my studies, biology as a subject was taught to students who were already adolescents. Therefore, we did not meet this teacher until we were already in our mid-teens. By this point, no teachers were playing games with students anymore as this was only done with younger students. This made our experience that much more special and although I do not remember the specifics of the game itself (it had something to do with vegetables and impressions), I remember the joy of playing game together with other pupils and the teacher. The experience not only humanised the teacher but also served as an important realisation that although we were becoming older, we were still allowed to play. The introduction of a simple party game therefore becomes a formative moment for the pupils as it can help to transcend both the usual relations between students and teachers as well. Offer to play such a game from a student may have been met with a ridicule as it would have undermined the carefully crafted impression of us as "hard" individuals, who are aware of their position in the residential school hierarchy

and have no time for childish games. But as the game was introduced by the educator whose adult status could not be disputed, it gave the opportunity for pupils to participate. Furthermore, as the kind nature of the teacher was well-known, there was no suspicion of ulterior motives from their side, and it was easier for pupils to agree to participate. The game was also not geared towards competition but rather participation which again neutralised animosity between the pupils and if even for a moment allowed pupils of different social status in the residential school setting to simply play a game.

However, I wish to especially emphasise the significance of kindness of the teacher here. As argued by Page (2020), kindness allows individuals to enact their agency in settings where they could be otherwise confused about the morally good course of action. This becomes especially important in the grey zone (Levi 2004) of residential school and serves as a basis for a different kind of relationship. If we look at kindness as "resolving to be kind to others in whatever circumstances I might meet them" (Page 2020, 3), we can see the importance it acquires in residential school. By resolving to accept all pupils regardless of their mis/deeds, the teacher succeeds in creating an environment where one is not weighed down by their real or self-perceived "damage" and is recognised as someone worthy of kind and respectful attitude. In his article Page ends up critiquing exercise of kindness as insufficient basis for ethical life, as kindness lacks the commitment to action that is crucial in Page's view to combat the systemic evils encountered in the everyday life. While not disputing the importance of social change in the residential school setting, it is the passive nature of kindness that allows it to enhance the relationships. As the residential school pupils keep experiencing their everyday life as overregulated and geared towards changing almost everything about them, the kindness of a teacher may serve both as an acknowledgment of pupils' struggle and an acceptance of their failures.

In a similar way to how the teacher diffused the tense situation with a student in the story of Dzintars (see section 6.4.2. "Staff") the kindness of my former teacher disarms the students and prevents further acts of violence through acceptance rather than combat against practices and structures that led to the emergence of the violent person. Rather it becomes one of the ways to enable the "radical equality" (Butler 2020, 62) which Butler sees as inextricable from the commitment to the nonviolence. While kindness of a teacher may be perceived as operating only on a personal level and therefore unable to enact social change, such a viewpoint misses the impact the importance of the position of the teacher as illustrated by Antra:

> *We had a history teacher who also ran in Magnet23 and who introduced us to tourism, we had some hiking, it was like a fresh breath [of air], it was just wonderful, very good memories that I don't know if I, well, I don't know if I would get elsewhere. Because those hikes, they did not take place often but*

[23] Oldest and largest orienteering competition in Latvia

> *they were like, well, with tents, and there somehow, we felt like humans. That's probably why it seems like a breath of fresh air.*
>
> *(Antra)*

Hiking here acquires a completely different meaning precisely because of the kindness of the teacher rather than because of the activity itself. The presence and engagement of the teacher could be the basis for a different type of experience where all the students and teachers were contributing to the same goal and experiencing the challenges and achievements as shared. Events such as hikes, games or talent shows may help to overcome the "biopolitical forms of racism and war logics" (Butler, 2020, p. 62), by demonstrating the commensurability of lives and experiences.

Following Butler, I argue that violence is always closely linked to inequality which is often the result and cause for violence. In institutional context the presence of violence leads to increased atomization and tribalisation of institution's inhabitants. Events that are geared towards replacing the violent practices with alternative strategies can serve as spaces from which a new and different type of relationship may arise. The equality that arises either from kindness or from other approaches also allows to overcome the sense of favouritism which often contributes to the sense of inequality in residential school context. Favouritism undermines the sense of equality and solidarity and can often lead to peer violence or as described by Antra, create a feeling of resentment:

> *First of all, she [the teacher] clearly had her favourites and non-favourites. And I was in a non-favourite, of course, and those non-favourites hanged tough.*
>
> *(Antra)*

The good teachers were mostly able to avoid creating sense of division by treating all of the students more or less equally. As the biology teacher was well known as being a kind person this was not seen as a form of favouritism but rather accepted as something that is part of her character and appreciated.
Another result of the kindness was improved grades. While I only have knowledge about myself and those around me, I never heard about anyone struggling with biology as study subject. As the relationship between students and the teacher was established based on mutual kindness and consideration, this also contributed to better educational achievements than in the cases where the relationship was acrimonious.

For educators who managed to establish close relations with the pupils the relationship sometimes developed to a point where the educator would still be friends with their now adult students as described by one of the participants:

> *I have such very dear, close first pupils that I had then. I nurtured them when they were very young and then I also nurtured them during the last years of high school. They are, of course, now fifty years old, but we had such an*

> *affectionate relationship. I have participated in all the most important events of their lives: weddings and birthday celebrations. We call each other and meet up. They call me and ask me how I am doing.*
>
> *(Velga, teacher, former educator)*

From my own experience I kept visiting my biology teacher for years after finishing my studies in residential school. During the visits I would tell of my experiences in high school and after that at the university while learning about how things were going in the residential school. (I wonder why I stopped visiting. I haven't seen my old teacher in years, and I am not sure why. I am quite sure that it is my fault.)

For Dzintars as already touched upon in the upbringing chapter, it was the educator of his class with whom he developed the closest relationship and who helped him to adjust during his first years in the institution. The educator closely followed his entrance in the residential school life and seeing that Dzintars was experiencing bullying, offered to arrange for him to live in a separate dorm room as a form of support:

> *It was arranged by my class educator. A superb person. She realized that it was very, very difficult for me to fit in, I did not feel in my own skin at all. She said: "It will be more difficult for you to fit in the collective in this way". My response was that "I understand that it will be more difficult for me to fit in the collective, but it will at least be easier for me to adjust to the residential school".*
>
> *(Dzintars)*

The relationship of care is possible in the residential school setting and has been experienced by research participants in different roles and settings. If realised in this way, the relationship may resist the violence of the institution and home environment and become one of the most important resources for the pupil and educator themselves.

Cooks, janitors, librarians, and nurses: the "other" staff members

Due to the widely defined functions of residential schools, there are often a large number of staff members who are not directly involved in teaching or upbringing duties. There are positions that could be found in any other school such as librarian and positions that are unlikely to exist outside a residential school setting such as seamstress, night nanny or the person responsible for distribution of clothing and bed linens. Due to nature of residential school there often was a relationship between the pupils and these workers who in other institutions could have stayed invisible. Antra initially used the concept that became the name of this chapter when describing her experiences with these 'other staff members':

Well yes there are some small islands of light in residential school. What might be the norm in another place, but as a child from residential school, I really appreciated, some superb dentist, or a cleaner, or a school cook then they were in general. [It] was like the sun and the highest point of goodness.
(Antra)

Our experiences in residential school allows me to expand the discussion on how the experience of children in residential school is shaped not only by teaching and administrative staff but to also turn towards the role a school cook may have in ensuring a safe and caring environment for the pupils. In a fascinating exploration of school meals in Portugal, Truninger and Teixeira illustrate the involvement of kitchen staff in ensuring the success of school's attempt to change the eating habits of their pupils (Truninger and Teixeira 2016). But this also reflects how the custodial and support staff is often viewed in educational research with their importance being considered only in relation to their immediate function within the institution. In residential school we can observe that cooks are not only responsible for the food preparation, but they also establish and maintain relationships with the pupils at a personal level. These moments may serve as a highlight of a day in the life in residential school pupil when the mealtime is excitedly expected due to a chance to chat with their friend in the kitchen not only because of the food intake. Furthermore, the engaged attitude from the kitchen staff transformed the experience of working in the kitchen from a dull chore to an interesting exercise which can lead to interest in developing skills that may be useful to the pupil for the rest of their life.

For myself, the fondest memories I have of residential school are connected to the library and the librarian working there. The librarian was a middle-aged woman who was not teaching any subjects. The library was in the highest floor of the old school building and to my delight it was filled with books but empty of children. The relative safety of library in conjunction with my reading habits meant that I spent a lot of my time there especially during the first few years in the institution. The librarian noticed my joy about the books which led to us developing a friendship that I maintained throughout all my school years. The library provided me with a hobby that I greatly enjoyed and a safe space as well as a person who appreciated and encouraged me to pursue reading. Having an individual room was crucial for Dzintars for his entrance in the residential school. For me library fulfilled a similar function. While it did not initially help me to develop lasting relationships with my peers it provided a space where I could feel safe and comfortable until I had acquired the necessary skills and attitudes to participate in the abusive community of residential school. I was reminded of the importance of the library during one of the conferences when starting my PhD research as I was listening to another researcher from a poor background describing her experience of library as a safe space (Wexelbaum 2016) and how it created a lifelong fondness for library space. Our shared experience, as well as significant amount of research (see Wexelbaum 2016 for

an overview of the current research) illustrates that the role of library in providing safe and caring environment merits a further exploration.

6.3.2 Family events

The notion of family is often contentious in residential school context. Either due to the envisioning of residential school during the Soviet period or due to the complicated relationship between parents and educators, the concept of family was always present and always questioned in the Soviet period literature on residential schools. Indeed, in one of the books on Soviet residential school, analysed during desktop research, the word "family" was mentioned 24 times and for the most part it was used in a negative connotation.

Still, family oftentimes had a positive connotation in interviews and the occasions where residential school staff managed to create good relationships or organized events were welcomed by interlocutors. This serves as another example of how the staff was always careful to not try to replace the families their pupils come from. I propose to view residential school not as an alternative but rather extended family. The institution here served as a place of belonging and support both for children who had experience of supportive family environment at home and those who unfortunately did not:

> *Then, if he is in residential school, they have to build that relationship with their peers all day long. Of course, they also have moments when it seems difficult being some other kid all the time. And some can't get along, and then the educator tries to help them become friends. Everyone should be friendly, like a family.*
>
> *(Velga, teacher, former educator)*

It is important to note that although this is described as an ideal model of residential school, it is often far from practical. The moments of family relationships were special also due to their exclusivity rather than them being an everyday occurrence. The complications in creating a family environment were also connected to the fact that a portion of residential school pupils lived on its premises and others did not:

> *And there are classes where there is a class educator, and they take no part in work of the residential part of the school. As the classes end, they send the children off to someone else. But we also have separate activities for just the groups of children residing in the school, not the whole class groups – each group has some separate events.*
>
> *(Velga, teacher, former educator)*

From the perspective of residential school inhabitants one of the reasons why events such as winter ball or celebrations of pupils' birthdays were remembered fondly was that they offered a chance to establish relationships not only with

students from your own class or residential school group but also with other students.

> *We, too, now that was really cool, we had birthdays. Organised by the school. Every, 4 times a year, [calculates how many months] Or two months however it works out, or 3 times a year, I don't remember. But once in every few months there were birthdays. And it was an awesome event. We had, in the big dining room, tables for those who had birthdays, they had their own tables, those who were born, not by class, but by birthdays. Those born there in September, October, they had one table and then there was the birthday celebration, and we sang together.*
>
> *(Antra)*

Events that helped residential school pupils to develop closer links to other pupils were also appreciated. This shows how the relative isolation of residential school that is described in the previous chapters extends not only outward but also inward where each class, evening-learning group, or dormitory room may become isolated microcosm of relationships. These events helped to break the singular units of residential school life and could contribute to reducing risks of entrenched unequal and abusive relationships.

Large sporting events also were mentioned. Most of the schools I have visited (including the ones I did not gain access to) had invested their funds in either building or renovating their gyms. While the renovations were often treated with suspicion locally, their potential positive impact on the pupils is undeniable.

> *Of course, there were also some school sports events and everything else. I remember we had a floorball competition between the senior classes. There were teams formed. Then it was played between classes. And then there were the local teams that had formed there. And they were just going at it.*
>
> *(Dzintars)*

Sporting events are helpful to not only build connections within residential school but also with the wider community around it. Here again the role of infrastructure needs to be emphasised. Sports infrastructure can become one of the reasons for greater integration of residential school in the local community which can then serve to lessen the stigma attached to residential school and its inhabitants. Here local principle explained how the local volleyball court was built in cooperation between the local landowners, NGOs, and the residential school.

> *It's a court, like a normal volleyball court. We went to the store for ice cream. And in the store there is our guy, the main helper Artis, he says what's going on here, why nobody told me, how can it be. Immediately arrived with a tractor. Of course, we dug a little with shovels, but I think if we had dug with only shovels, then [...] Dug out about 60 centimetres, dug the whole area. Made a hill, where we can ski in the winter.. Slide down from the hill.*

> *Of course, we got the sand, and PE teacher donated the plastic sheet that was set under the sand at the bottom, we brought the dirt, that dirt… The 500EUR we got we couldn't even buy that dirt with it.*
>
> *(Lauma, principal)*

In this situation residential school and its inhabitants is seen as a place for investment in the community. Later in the interview the principal told that after the court was built there was a grand opening with games with visitors from neighbouring communities. This shows how residential school may serve as the central axis along which the local community may realise its needs and work towards solving them.

Finally, both festive and sporting events also help to break down the barrier between the staff and the pupils.

> *And I also remember cross country running. "Educator, will you run with us?" "Yes, I can run cross country with you girls, easily."*
>
> *(Velga, teacher, former educator)*

Shared participation in the events helps to develop a closer relationship between the students and the staff as it allows the suspension of usual roles and relations. Running a cross country race together with an educator allows to also bring a more equal relationships in contrast to everyday life of residential school. Joint participation in sporting events, however, puts everyone's body on display and allows the judgement to be exercised reciprocally. Seeing their educators sweating, gasping for breath, and stumbling, in the same way as they are and sometimes even more so, the shared humanity of educators and pupils is affirmed through shared bodily experience. Sports offer the chance for somewhat equal participation instead of maintaining the order where educators are organising the events and the pupils only participating. This also therefore could extend to events such as the winter ball, for example, where the equal participation relies much more on the co-involvement of both the staff and the pupils than in shared bodily experience which is much harder to achieve in this context for several reasons.

As festive events unlike sporting events are closely linked to consumption of alcohol, the educators would be even more careful and watchful than usually in order to prevent alcohol use and to manage the consequences if it happens. Furthermore, dancing, unlike running or playing soccer was closely linked to romantic relationships which again meant that joint dancing between the pupils and staff was much less likely to happen especially when the pupils were getting older. Still, in my own experience, I remember that for school events sometimes a pupil was asked to DJ[24], which was seen as a great honour, but which also contributed to rising the prestige of the event not because of collaboration but also due to change of music.

[24] Plays recorded music for an audience.

6.3.3 Residential school as a centre

Several of the institutions were built symbolically and physically close to the centre of the region, fulfilling not only the educational and social functions but also positioning themselves as the cultural centre of the community. In two of the institutions members of the staff were also deputies in the local municipalities which again underscores the potential significance of residential school on the local level. The involvement in local politics allowed staff members to ensure that residential school not only continued to exist but sometimes to also acquire additional resources for the institution.

> *The principal invited me to that project as a social pedagogue. That project lasted a couple of years and after the project ended, I realized that we were one of the rural schools. Although the best and strongest, but also the largest in our region and also the best. And principal fought and won the [position of] social pedagogue.*
>
> *(Zaiga, social pedagogue)*

The principal in this case was also a deputy in the municipality which gave her both additional knowledge and symbolic resources to ensure that the institution received the support that it needed. In the other institution the staff has been actively participating in projects funded by local and state level actors in order to improve the quality of life for not only its inhabitants but also the wider community. The activities included local folk group, travel, organization of public events and creating community spaces for outdoor sports. School also actively tried to participate in international and nationwide projects that were geared towards improving the quality of education and cooperation with different NGOs in order to gain access to, for example, lecturers who could teach sex education.

> *Safe place. Well yes, well we, as I said, are a cultural centre and we are carrying out social functions as well. We have a boarding facility where, well, about 26 students live. If so. Preschool children also remain in boarding. In the school together with preschool we have about 63, yes, about that much. [Students] come from large families. From poor families. Although the poor also receive some support [from municipality], I think.*
>
> *(Indra, school principal, municipal deputy)*

Residential school staff here not only admits partially functioning as a part of local social support system, but they also take pride in it. In comparison, the fact that residential schools also fulfil the social care function was often emphasised as the main problem by policymakers when discussing the DI and residential school.

And for the municipality, of course, it was an opportunity to realise its functions, to provide social support to families, because [if] the child is placed in a residential school, the municipality no longer must take care of anything.

(Mirdza, government official)

While here the Ministry of Education and Science official emphasises the economic implications of residential schools, she also points towards what she sees as the impossibility of educational facility that also solves the social support function. Residential school staff and policymakers are not necessarily opposed concerning residential schools but rather use two completely different approaches. While the state officials tried to carry out reforms with the aim to ensure purification (Latour 1993) of the institutions, residential school staff are perceiving their dual function as their main strength that allows them to engage the local community on different levels and maintain their position as alternative to the general social support system. This creates a disconnect between the ministry and school staff. The school staff proudly described moments where the parents had come to seek advice from them instead of social services. The staff members pointed towards their position as a bridge between state and the individual. If the family experiencing some kind of difficulty turned to social services for help, they risked getting their children removed from the family. While in practice the eagerness of social services to remove children from families has decreased during the last few years due to the deinstitutionalisation, this threat seems to vary from municipality to municipality and is closely linked to the working culture and resources available to the social service. As described in the chapter on violence as experienced in the family (see section 6.4.3 Family) in this municipality the practice of removing children from their families was still often applied, sometimes in a rather haphazard manner.

In these conditions the residential school staff may become a trusted support system for the parents as the staff do have access to resources and connections that may help the family to overcome their situation, but they lacked the capacity (and often willingness) to involve other state or municipal actors in solving the situation. This positionality of residential school has dual impact. On the one hand, this creates a support system for the family that can cover cases that would otherwise simply go unnoticed. On the other hand, it further prevents residential school from integration into wider social care system and contributes to its complicated relationship to social service. The positive role of residential school here emerges not as a result of successful cooperation between institutions but rather dependant on the continued isolation and separation from the municipal social care system.

As explored in the chapter on history of residential schools (see subchapter 3.5. Residential care in the West) this isolation, however, is as much a result of the current policies and approaches as the consequence of the historical situation where instead of integrating residential schools in the social care system as was the case in Scotland, the institutions were kept as a part of the education

system on a policy level and as a part of social care system on a practical level. The examples show how this isolation can also lead to positive outcomes in the cases where the exceptional role of residential school may lead to it becoming a cultural and/or social centre of the region and also a trusted support system for the parents of the pupils.

6.3.4 Learning to labour

As described earlier in Chapter 3, the relationship between residential school pupils and labour is complicated. Although participation in production was one of the cornerstones of residential school system as it was envisioned in the 1950s, this has changed significantly and nowadays pupils are only expected to care for their own rooms instead of participating in farming or kitchen work. This has not prevented the pupils of residential school from appreciating the significance of labour, including paid work. In this chapter I compare Antra's and Dzintars' stories to explore the change in perception of labour in the 1980s and the 2010s. For both the inclusion in economic relations was important and constituted a positive experience.

Antra: work education in Soviet Union

I start the exploration of the positive role of work in the lives of my research participants with the case of Antra. As she grew up during in the Soviet period, her experience differs significantly from the experiences of myself or Dzintars in relation to the work during her education:

> *I was a Soviet-era kid and we had Timur squads[25]. Well, since we were Timurites we really went there to those locals, old people and helped them to split firewood there and carry it. [...] We had a cattle shed with cattle, then we had a garden, in autumn we collected acorns and chestnuts and they were... Either for our pigs or they were taken to the zoo, I don't remember, but we worked intensively there. Some guys there, I think one classmate even earned a moped.*
>
> *(Antra)*

Soviet residential school was imagined as a strong basis for developing labour skills and youth organisations such as Timurites, Pioneers or Komsomol organized these opportunities. Students were expected to acknowledge the value of labour and ideology of workers and farmers' state, but pupils themselves were mostly interested in earning some extra money. Even when labour was meant to represent a commitment towards an ideological cause, children could participate in the governmental system of rewards and privileges. This, how-

[25] The Timurite movement youth volunteering movement in the Soviet Union where children helped old men and women with their everyday chores (Kasamara and Sorokina 2015).

ever, should not be perceived as only residential school pupil's characterising practice. Despite much of the scholarship concentrating on how earning money is related to dire circumstances and survival (Dembo et al. 1993; Winarno and Robfi'ah 2020), this creates a skewed picture of the reasoning of the adolescents themselves. While I explore the question of child labour in detail later in the text, here I wish to already illustrate how the possibility to earn additional funds may be viewed positively by adolescents themselves.

For Antra here the chance to earn some money was not related to questions of survival or need to support habits such as smoking (Chen et al. 2013) but as a symbolic and practical value given by having one's "own" money. In both Antra's and Dzintars' stories incidentally the final achievement of being able to earn was acquiring a moped. It provided young person with both the freedom of movement as well as a powerful symbol of their capacity to earn. The money during Soviet and contemporary times symbolised freedom and a chance to extract oneself from their conditions. Residential school was no longer a prison if the distance to home (see subchapter 6.1.) could now be traversed by one's own moped. Additional funds also allowed one to substitute the meals in the residential school with possibly less healthy snacks. In my own experience this was one of the greatest things from getting pocket money. I received it from my parents at some periods when financial situation at home allowed it. I did not have a chance of buying a moped, but a chance to buy snacks in the nearby shop had a material and symbolic value.

The other aspect that made work important was that it was used as a resource for coping with residential school conditions. Work could be ideologically important (such as helping the elderly with their daily chores or improving the quality of city's greenery) or practical (earning). There was also the third kind of work students were expected to do as part of their daily routines, such as cleaning the school building and their own rooms as well as working in the kitchen. While in the latter case the relations were often hierarchical with educators directing the work of the pupils but not participating in it themselves, the work outside residential school contributed to more egalitarian relations with everyone striving towards similar goals. This created a space for alternative relations between the school staff and pupils and put them on a somewhat equal level which was seldom experienced at school. Furthermore, here the pupils could apply skills they had learned at home and receive praise for doing so. While for the most part residential school would be experienced as transformative and controlling, in relation to work the skills in, for example, gardening, would be appreciated and enhanced.

Dzintars: Entrepreneurship in contemporary Latvia

There was a marked difference in how labour was organised after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Child labour was no longer acceptable, earning opportunities were gone and by the time Dzintars entered residential school, the concept "work education' was not used. Pupils were still expected to clean their own

rooms but nothing more. This meant that Dzintars could not earn additional funds:

> *Because you have your own budget for a week. Meals are provided, which include breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack and dinner. But let's be real, at seven o'clock in the evening to eat dinner, it's too early and you still want to eat around eight or nine. So you have your budget, you have brought something from home, you have some money and you go to the store and buy something. Then you learn to survive and understand what you can do with that money, how much you can afford. God forbid, if bad habits appear, such as it happened for me. They appeared in the second semester of 10th grade, I started smoking. Then I had to plan a budget and cigarettes.*
>
> *(Dzintars)*

Having additional money was not only necessary due to physiological needs as described here by Dzintars but also due to the symbolic value it had. Here I illustrate the role of work in everyday life of residential school pupil and how opportunities for acquiring the necessary private funds allow us to see the changes in residential school system and evaluate them.

For Dzintars the opportunity to earn money was closely linked to his family which during his years in residential school was going through "a very, very painful moment". To get the things he needed, Dzintars had to spend his summer holidays working:

> *In summer mom and dad went to forest to gather mushrooms, berries. I offered such an option – in the morning you go to pick mushrooms, berries, I get up at the same time, eat breakfast, pick up goods and haul ass to the highway to trade. [...] And then there was the moment that you get up in the summer. You have free time. You have those three free months when you don't have to study. You get up at seven in the morning. Quickly eat breakfast and haul ass 7.5 kilometres to the highway with mushrooms, berries on the shoulders, on the handlebars. You get there, sit on the side of the road and you don't know what you will have that day.*
>
> *(Dzintars)*

Dzintars mentions this as a proud memory and a testament to his own capacity and independence. Further in the interview he described how his family managed to earn enough money and buy a used car. By the end of the summer, he had earned enough to be able to buy a portable gaming console and a moped. In both Dzintars' and Antra's cases earning one's own money was viewed as a point of strength and independence extending the ethos of residential school even though the methods of how the money was acquired were different:

> *[...] My mother was also making handicrafts. It is possible, of course, to buy handicraft tutorials online, devil knows what kind of things you need for that, all the things you can do. And mom had found one beautiful design – called a bird's wing. [...] And then there was the moment that it costs 10 euros, it is a guide in all those languages. [...] Brother bought it. Sent all the files and my*

> *mom and I talked about trying to sell copies online. I traded them for a five-a-piece. [...] Of course, it is quite illegal, severe copyright infringement, but all kinds of things happen.*
>
> *(Dzintars)*

Dzintars describes here his entrepreneurship and attempts to help his family with additional funds. This points to yet another important facet of everyday life for many children in residential school. Despite the lamentations of educators about the contrary, many of their pupils already had experience with paid labour by the time they entered residential school. This throws in doubt the claim of residential school educators that work education at school was the only way for the pupils to "learn how to work". Dzintars not only describes how he participated in helping his mother to earn some additional funds but also his initiative and skills in making the most out of a single purchase.

By engaging in different work Antra and Dzintars experienced not only positive relationships with others but also earned an additional income which in Dzintar's case was also used for supporting his family. The practical importance of renumeration goes hand-in-hand with the lack of interest in the more symbolic rewards for residential school pupils. This also illuminates the complicated issue of child labour more broadly. As poignantly described by Williams, while it had been somewhat easy to define what were the worst forms of labour for children, it was much more complicated to evaluate what were the good forms (Williams 2016, 28). This becomes especially pertinent in the cases where the child might be living in poverty where working may no longer be a choice for the children or their families.

Despite strong cultural resistance against employment of children, there is significant amount of data showing how ability to participate in labour force does not adversely affect school performance (Santos 2005, 230) and nor does necessarily imply a breach of child's rights (Ennew, Myers, and Plateau 2005, 51). These discussions often lack the voice of children. As exemplified by Antra's and Dzintars' experience, work itself was not necessarily degrading or challenging nor did it affect their capacity to participate in education. The question in this situation is less about whether or not children should work (which they often are doing anyway) but rather how the work is organised, whether or not they are able to participate to an extent that is appropriate for their skills, age, and capacities and in what way is their work rewarded. While neither my interlocutors nor myself felt offended by the requirement that we should clean our own rooms in residential school, the situation differed significantly once the work was either felt as being improperly compensated or when the work made a student feel unequal to other students.

Concluding the subchapter on the positive experiences of residential school it is important to recognise that although in my thesis they are presented as exceptional, this is a reflection of residential school experience rather than description of its design or goal. Neither the educators, nor any other school staff nor pupils themselves are consciously trying to make the experience of

residential school bad. The positive experiences described here indicate that several of the problems that are afflicting residential school may be the result of lack of appropriate funding and staff rather than intrinsic problems with residential school as a form social care for children. This was also echoed by my interlocutors who often reflected on the lack of funding and support.

> *V: Mostly because of lack of funds. [...] They kept saying: this will be reduced, that will be reduced. The Soviet [system's] sort of changed.*
> *S: Yes, we still had to do all those things, but there were more complications with funding. We used to take kids to theatres, to tours, to wherever. Usually there were buses, everything for free. Ok, you had to pay for the tickets yourself, but it wasn't that expensive then.*
> *(Solveiga and Valters, teachers, former educators)*

This does not mean that it is only a lack of funding that creates the abusive community of residential school. While the lack of funds directly affected the tools available to the school staff, their agency is also hampered by lack of support from wider social care and education systems. The funding issues therefore should be seen a result of wider policy decisions regarding residential schools where they are often relegated to the lowest position in both education and social care systems as explored in the following chapter. In this situation the work of passionate educators, tactically gifted principals and caring school cooks often improved the conditions in the residential school.

Summary

In this section I demonstrated how the unequal power relations and patterns of abuse very often extended outside of the walls of residential school. Parental violence may often be only part of the larger continuum of violence (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004) for the child. The different sections in this chapter explore how residential school pupils experience violence which seems exceptional from the outside but is ingrained in routine everyday experience. I follow the approach outlined by Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois who argue we should recognise how "[e]veryday violence encompasses the implicit, legitimate, and routinized forms of violence inherent in particular social, economic, and political formations" (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004, 21). Following on from the previous chapter which established ways how larger social fields impact the everyday life of residential school, I illustrated the way how different types of violence are realised and practiced, and how the children learn to recognise it as a constitutive social force in their daily lives. I then explored the way how the violence may serve as basis for creation and maintenance of particular social formation that I call abusive community where the shared experience of insecurity and vigilance becomes a basis for sociality which however is always fragile and complicated. Finally, I turned towards exploration of the ways how violence is contested and counteracted within residential

school setting, contributing to creating alternative community and relations that may serve as a blueprint for creating a different type of community within institutional context.

CONCLUSION

I started out this research in 2019 with the main aim being exploration of inequalities and structural violence present in the residential school system. I believed that doing so will allow me to not only write a long overdue critical evaluation of residential school system in Latvia but by allowing 'the field' to talk back, also arrive at some reflections on the ideas of violence and inequalities as they are conceptualised within anthropological thought. To this end, I developed my theoretical perspective, implemented methodology, carried out fieldwork and wrote up my results. This process therefore took all the way from the ivory tower of high conceptual schemes to the low and narrow streets of deep personal experiences. In the conclusion I reflect on this journey reiterate the main claims I have made through this dissertation, illustrate how I arrived to these conclusions as well as show the future paths for research of this topic.

I start with my conceptual framework. I had planned to concentrate on the concept of structural violence as my central axis around which I built my approach. However, early in my research I realised that structural violence is woefully inadequate concept for describing my own experience in residential school and it is not successful in encompassing the experience and stories of my research participants. A different conceptual framework was necessary which I developed on the basis of the violence continuum and Bourdieu's theory of practice. As previously established, violence continuum arises if agents are forced to live in constant state of domination and socioeconomic inequality which normalises the presence of relations of dominance, including different forms of violence in the everyday life of the agents. Here I elaborate how I apply this concept in analysis of the residential school situation in the 21st century Latvia.

I believe that the extension of violence continuum inside the walls of residential school is the result of three main processes. Firstly, as described previously, the establishment of the welfare sector leaves the residential school in a precarious position where its position within wider field of power is threatened. This creates the preconditions for establishment of violent relations as the lack of (or restructuring of) capitals within the field creates increased competition and normalises open relations of dominance that the institution no longer has the capacity to obscure.

Secondly, wider socioeconomic changes trigger the establishment of violence continuum outside the walls of residential education. The 1990s marked a shift to the neoliberal model of governance with a refocus from re-educating children into Soviet collective to their management with emphasis on self-care and self-responsibility. As the new welfare field was established and new support mechanisms were introduced, the role of residential school became one of illusion and misrecognition but in a different fashion. By using residential school as support mechanism for families experiencing difficulties, the municipalities could achieve two goals: the illusion of keeping the family together was

maintained while children could actually be kept safe and (relatively) well-off within an institution. As the introduction of the neoliberal model demanded that citizens themselves take an increased role in their own wellbeing, the residential school also helped to maintain the misrecognition of the lack of agency available to the local agents. The existence of residential school would become rebranded as just another "choice" for parents which improved the future prospects of their children even if the accessibility to residential education remained tenuous and mostly reserved for those experiencing great difficulties.

Due to the cataclysmic changes in relation to modes of production, market relations and societal structures, all of the involved actors – adults and children, state and society, school and parents, were convinced that residential school must be maintained as sort of a safe haven that protects children from conditions back at home. However, due to the clash of different fields and power relations, the residential school becomes a conflicted field of struggle itself with different types of education systems, governmentalities and childcare practices colliding without a clear resolution. This happens due to the unstable position of residential school in social and education policy.

Thirdly, the actions of agents in reaction to structural constraints and changes must be included in the analysis. As already argued at the end of previous section, the agents maintain their active role. And so, the meagre economic capital of families whose children are sent to residential school is transformed into state funded bus tickets and school supplies which serves both a survival strategy providing food and safety for their children and a strategy in Bourdieusian sense leading to acquisition of cultural capital under structural constraints. School personnel attempted to transfer the cultural capital in the form of knowledge and skills through education. These efforts sometimes were at conflict with and often denigrated that previously acquired knowledge and skills that still helped pupils to survive up until coming to residential school and continued doing so. These tensions inadvertently contributed to violence and struggle in the institution.

Finally, social, and symbolic capital acquired within family becomes devalued when children leave their families and home for extended periods of time. Access to earlier systems of support is disrupted and their position in community destabilised. Attachments which were important and useful earlier, now became pointless and sometimes counterproductive with school inculcating new rules and the stakes of the game. In these conditions the institution becomes another place where violence continuum is maintained. Violence continuum is produced by the educators and re-socialization specialists in various direct and indirect forms and sometimes disguised under charity. This in conjunction the use of physical and emotional violence as legitimate tools both by staff and pupils contributes to constant presence of violence within the institution coupled with an acutely felt sense of lack of capital which exacerbates and furthers the sense of injustice and consequent applications of violence.

These processes do not unfold in a vacuum and despite being well hidden can still be explored through careful and critical analysis. In my dissertation I

have illustrated the importance and applicability of anthropological analysis in researching longitudinal phenomena which is ever-present in policy planning process while constantly avoiding it and obfuscating itself. By deploying the case study approach and maintaining my focus on relationships and the framing of the residential school I have tried to show a way forward not only for exploring institutions who do not want to be explored but also for exploring memories than are equally if not more resistant to analysis. I believe that it is exactly in relation to methodology that my thesis has the most potential for future research as although I have successfully applied autoethnographic method to analyse past events while combining it with life story interviews, I believe one can and should go further. I wonder how a fully participatory autoethnography would look like, one where the memories of multiple participants are fused together and not only create mirrors within which to reflect the personal experience of the researcher but create a rich landscape making inputs from all participants visible. How would my thesis look like if my sister would also be involved in writing in the role of a co-author, nor mere consultant? This is something that I hope to be able to explore in my future research.

Returning now to my original research question of how do residential schools (un)reproduce inequalities and structural violence within Latvian society? I have argued that residential schools from their onset are established as permanently-transitory sites where their inhabitants are subjected to different kinds of violence not only because they are within a constant state of liminality but because this violence permeates their lives to such a degree that an alternative is no longer possible. Violence becomes the central organising principle of the residential school around which the work of the educators, the relationships of students and the policy of the state evolves. The transitory nature of residential schools becomes both a necessity and a prerequisite for continued application of symbolic violence which ensures that more things change, more they stay the same, unless the underlying structure of symbolic violence itself is disputed and disrupted. Extending this argument to a wider societal and conceptual level, this approach allows us to see how large seemingly impossibly violent structures such as police brutality, modern slavery or treatment of refugees on Latvian-Belorussian border, can be reframed as necessary and ‘educative’ process.

Finally, my research also shows that despite the entrenched and powerful nature of violence continuum it can be disrupted. The small islands of lights can be extended and in the same way how the previously described residential school “Path”, could establish a radically different type of residential school by refusing to accept the rules of the game in the first place. It is possible to dismantle and combat the continuums of violence elsewhere when the relevant actors decide to change the rules of the game. This may include strategic decisions (the principal of “Path” was a municipality representative) but the aim must no longer be maintaining the existing power? relations but transforming them. In future research it is therefore necessary to pay additional attention on how local communities avoid perpetuating violence continuum, how the ever-

present aversion to violence is used a source for successful counterstrategies and how significant can a silly game with some pupils in a hallway become just for this purpose. The focus on anthropology of good (Robbins 2013) therefore must be maintained to demonstrate anthropology's capacity to move past the suffering slot to resist the reproduction of suffering.

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SUMMARY

Throughout Latvian history residential schools have repeatedly been used to manage the presence of inequalities within wider society. While the descriptions and forms of the institution has changed over time (residential school for rural children; residential schools for children with disabilities; Soviet model residential schools) in my thesis I explore how all these forms relate back to the core part of residential education being the management of inequality through presence of violence. Residential school has been part of Latvian education and social support systems for better part of Latvian history and has managed to survive several changes in historical and ideological situation. Despite this the institution has not garnered significant scholarly attention neither locally nor abroad. This is peculiar as the long and complex history of residential education points towards it as potential rich point for sociological analysis. Furthermore, as the residential education usually provides not only education but accommodation for its pupils it makes it very useful point of departure for researching the relations arising in the point of collision between state institutions and families.

The aim of this thesis is to analyse the way how socioeconomic inequality is connected to different types of violence in a residential education context. I approached this question from the conceptual framework of viewing residential school as being enmeshed in several social fields and power relations. I applied multisited ethnographic approach in order to explore the various ways how residential education is realised in the local context through researching both the actual structure and relations within the institution as well as its historical situation and wider policies that connect to this field. In this research I have asked the question: what are the ways how the structural violence and socioeconomic inequality becomes daily experience within residential education and what this allows us to understand about these processes in wider Latvian society?

The study reveals that the residential school exists in a constant state of flux which is the result of both the actions of supervising actors and the decisions made by the staff members of the institution itself. The unstable position of residential education arises as a response to everchanging social conditions where the only constant is the presence of relationships of domination. The study demonstrates how these relationships contribute and maintain existence of constant reproduction of violence both on an individual and structural level to argue that in order to perceive the way how violence becomes mundane and accepted both subjective and objective perspectives and actions need to be considered. As this research revealed, it is neither the violence which creates the inequality nor vice versa but rather both exists in a symbiotic relationship where the presence of one demand and creates the presence of the other.

SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Üleskasvatus nappuse tingimustes: Vägivalla ja ebavõrdsuse taastootmine Läti institutsionaalses hariduses

Ajaloo jooksul on Lätis kasutatud internaatkoole laiemalt ühiskonnas valitseva ebavõrdsuse leevendamiseks. Kuigi selle institutsiooni tegevuspõhimõtted ja vormid on aja jooksul muutunud (internaatkool kui haridusasutus maapiirkonna lastele, puuetega lastele õppimisvõimalusi pakkuv internaatkool, nõukogude mudeli internaatkool), uurin oma doktoritöös, kuidas kõik need vormid on seotud internaatkooliharidusega põhiolemusega – see on ebavõrdsuse haldamine struktuurse vägivalla toel. Internaatkool on olnud läbi aegade osa Läti haridus- ja sotsiaalsetest tugisüsteemidest ning suutnud üle elada mitu ühiskondlikku ja ideoloogilist muutust. Sellest hoolimata ei ole see institutsioon kohalikul ega ka rahvusvahelisel tasandil märkimisväärset teaduslikku tähelepanu pälvinud. See on kummaline, sest tänu internaatkooliharidusele pikale ja keerulisele ajaloole võiks see olla potentsiaalselt huviäratav teema sotsioloogilise analüüsi läbiviimiseks. Kuna internaatkooliharidus pakub õpilastele üldjuhul mitte ainult haridust, vaid ka majutust, kujutab see endast mitmekülgset ja sisukat lähtekohta riiklike institutsioonide ja perekondade kokkupuutepunktis tekkivate suhete uurimiseks.

Minu doktoritöö eesmärk on analüüsida, kuidas sotsiaal-majanduslik ebavõrdsus on seotud mitmesuguste vägivalla avaldumisvormidega internaatkooliharidusele kontekstis. Käsitlesin seda küsimust kontseptuaalse raamistiku abil, milles vaatlesin internaatkooli kui mitme sotsiaalse valdkonna ja võimusuhete põimumist. Rakendasin mitmekülgset etnograafilist lähenemist (poolstruktureeritud ja eluloolised intervjuud, autoetnograafia, institutsionaalsed kirjalikud allikad ja varasemad käsitlused), et uurida eri viise, kuidas internaatkooliharidus kohalikus kontekstis realiseerub, uurides nii institutsiooni tegelikku struktuuri ja suhteid kui ka selle ajaloolist konteksti ja valdkonnaga seotud laiemat poliitikat. Selles uurimuses esitasin küsimuse: „Kuidas struktuurne vägivald ja sotsiaal-majanduslik ebavõrdsus muutuvad igapäevakogemuseks internaatkooliharidus ja mida saab selle kaudu järeldada nende protsesside kohta Läti ühiskonnas laiemalt?“

Uurimusest selgub, et internaatkool muutub pidevalt, mis tuleneb nii järelevalvet teostavate isikute tegevusest kui ka asutuse enda töötajate otsustest. Internaatkooliharidus ebakindel muutlikkus on tingitud pidevalt teisenevast ühiskondlikust positsioonist ja hoiakutest, kus domineerimissuhete olemasolu on ainsaks konstandiks. Minu väitekiri näitab, kuidas need suhted soodustavad vägivalla pidevat taastootmist nii individuaalsel kui struktuursel tasandil. Oma uurimistöö tulemusena jõudsin järeldusele, et selle protsessi mõistmiseks, kuidas vägivald muutub igapäevaseks ja aktsepteeritavaks, tuleb arvesse võtta nii subjektiivseid kui ka objektiivseid vaatenurki ja tegevusi. Tehtud analüüsist selgub, et see ei ole vägivald, mis tekitab ebavõrdsust, ega ka vastupidi, vaid mõlemad eksisteerivad sümbiootilises seoses, kus ühe olemasolu kutsub esile ka teise olemasolu.

CURRICULUM VITAE

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EDUCATION

University of Tartu — 2018–present
PhD Ethnology
Thesis: *Upbringing in places of scarcity: reproduction of violence and inequality in Latvian residential education*

University of Latvia — 2016
M.A. Anthropology
Thesis: *Addiction as a type of capital: Youth Addiction Rehabilitation Institution in the Postsocialist space*

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Researcher — 2023
Ministry of Welfare, Latvia
Ways to improve out-of-family care system

Researcher, University of Latvia — 2022–2023
Faculty of Humanities
Alone but connected? Digital (in)equalities in care work and generational relationships among older people living alone (EQualCare)

Researcher — 2019
Ministry of Health, Latvia
Research on the prevalence of process addictions (gambling, social media, gaming addiction) in Latvia and the connected risk factors

Researcher, University of Latvia — 2018–2021
Faculty of Humanities
Strengthening families, communities and relationships: anthropological perspectives on violence

Researcher 2017
Ministry of Welfare, Latvia
Research on the international practice of cross-sectoral support systems for persons with disability

PUBLICATIONS

Published in peer-reviewed journals

1. **Pokšāns, Artūrs, Kārlis Lakševics, and Kristians Zalāns.** 2023. 'Ethical Citizenship and Contested Notions of Aging During the COVID-19 State of Emergency in Latvia'. *Anthropologica* 65 (1). https://cas-sca.journals.uvic.ca/index.php/anthropologica/article/view/1068.
2. **Lakševics, Kārlis, Artūrs Pokšāns, and Kristians Zalāns.** 2018. 'Falling through the Cracks: Critical Review of the Deinstitutionalisation Process in a Post-Socialist State'. *Scottish Journal of Residential Child Care* 17 (4).
3. **Leontowitsch, Miranda, Aivita Putnina, Marcus Andersson, Charlotta Niemistö, Rafaela Werny, Hanna Sjögren, Ilze Mileiko, Artūrs Pokšāns et al.** 2023. 'Participatory Action Research on Webs of Caring in the Digital Age across Four European Countries'. *Quality in Ageing and Older Adults* ahead-of-print (ahead-of-print). https://doi.org/10.1108/QAOA-03-2023-0020.

Submitted manuscripts

4. **Pokšāns, A.** "Post-Socialist Residential School and the Continuum of Violence" *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics* (accepted for publishing), **2023.**
5. **Pokšāns, A., Lakševics, K.** "Navigating fragmented infrastructures of care: children's sense of home in residential education", **2023**. (Awaiting editor decision)

Manuscripts in preparation

6. **Pokšāns, A., Neikena, M.** "Digitalization of everyday life: infrastructures of dignity among Latvian elderly"
7. **Putniņa, A., Pokšāns, A., Mileiko, I.** "(Lack of) Kindness: Experiences of Digitalization among Latvian Older People"

Prepare for Leaving Care: Young People with Care Experience Training Care Professionals. (2020) CYC-Online

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Lecturer, University of Latvia 2018–present (as lecturer) 2016–2018 (as university teacher)

BA level courses:

- Research practice
- Research practice I
- Research Ethics
- Fieldwork Practice of Anthropology
- Classical Anthropological Theories
- Fieldwork Practice of Anthropology
- Anthropology of Moralities
- Anthropology of The Body and Medicine
- Internet, Netiquette and The Legal Regulation
- Anthropology of Religion and Ritual
- Anthropology of Sexuality and Gender

MA level courses:

- Introduction in Science and Technology studies
- Transformation of Borders (Assistant)
- Fieldwork Practice of Anthropology II (Assistant)

Thesis supervised, University of Latvia 2017–present

7 BA thesis

TRAINING EXPERIENCE

Co-lead trainer 2022

SOS Children's Villages International

Applying Safe Behaviours: Preventing and Responding to Peer Violence Amongst Children Without or At Risk of Losing Parental Care

Co-lead trainer 2020–2022

SOS Children's Villages International

Safe Places, Thriving Children – Embedding Trauma-Informed Practices into Alternative Care Settings

Co-lead trainer and consultant 2017–2018

SOS Children's Villages International

Leaving Care – A Child Protection System that Works for Professionals and Young People

HONOURS & AWARDS

Rector's recognition for the MA thesis "Addiction as a type of capital: Addiction Rehabilitation Institution in the Postsocialist space" 2016

Rector's recognition for the BA thesis "Vocation: Importance of Calling for Males Working in Early Childhood Education" 2014

PRESENTATIONS AND PANELS

Presentations

1. **Neikena, M., Pokšāns, A.** "Experiencing ageing as fearful: Digitalization of elderly life in Latvia" *The Phenomenology of Chronic Illness and Ageing,* Södertörns 2022.
2. **Pokšāns, A.** "Autoethnographical healing: anthropological methods for living the aftermath of violence" *Towards a non-violent anthropology,* Riga 2021.
3. **Pokšāns, A.** "Between the self and theory: anthropological approaches to youth participation in NGO work" *79th International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia*, Riga 2021.
4. **Pokšāns, A.** "There Are No Girls on the Internet: fixed gender identity and cyberbullying" *Gender Studies 2019 Conference: On Violence*, Helsinki 2019.

Panels organised

5. **Hamilton, G., Putnina, A., Pokšāns, A.** "Unlevel playing fields: detecting and solving academic violence" *EASA2022: Transformation, Hope and the Commons*, Belfast 2022.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

International Advisory Board member 2018–2023
Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures

Member 2022–present
European Association of Social Anthropologists

ELULOOKIRJELDUS

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HARIDUS

Tartu Ülikool — 2018 kuni praeguseni
PhD etnoloogia
Doktoritöö: *Kasvatus puudust kannatavates paikades: vägivalla ja ebavõrdsuse taastootmine Läti internaatkooliharidustes*

Läti Ülikool — 2016
MA Antropoloogia
Magistritöö: *Sõltuvus kui kapitali liik: noorte rehabilitatsiooniasutus postsotsialistlikus ruumis*

TEADUSTÖÖ KOGEMUSED

Teadur — 2023
Aivita Putniņa, Artūrs Pokšāns, SOS Lasteküla
Sotsiaalministeerium, Läti
Võimalused perevälise hooldussüsteemi parandamiseks

Teadur, — 2022–2023
Läti Ülikool, Humanitaarteaduste teaduskond, Antropoloogia osakond
Üksi, kuid ühendatud? Digitaalne (eba)võrdsus hooldustöös ja põlvkondadevahelised suhted üksi elavate eakate inimeste seas (EQualCare)

Teadur — 2019
Aivita Putniņa, Artūrs Pokšāns, Māris Brants
Tervishoiuministeerium, Läti
Uuringud protsessisõltuvuse (hasartmängusõltuvus, sotsiaalmeedia, mängusõltuvus) levimuse kohta Lätis ja sellega seotud riskitegurite kohta

Teadur 2018–2021
Läti Ülikool Humanitaarteaduste teaduskond, Antropoloogia osakond
Perede, kogukondade ja suhete tugevdamine: antropoloogilised vaatenurgad vägivallale

Teadur 2017
"Baltijas konsultācijas", "Agile&CO"
Sotsiaalministeerium, Läti
Uuringud puuetega inimeste valdkondadevaheliste tugisüsteemide rahvusvahelise praktika kohta

PUBLIKATSIOONID

Eelretsenseeritud publikatsioonid erialastes ajakirjades

1. **Pokšāns, Artūrs, Kārlis Lakševics, and Kristians Zalāns.** 2023. 'Ethical Citizenship and Contested Notions of Aging During the COVID-19 State of Emergency in Latvia'. *Anthropologica* 65 (1). https://cas-sca.journals.uvic.ca/index.php/anthropologica/article/view/1068
2. **Lakševics, Kārlis, Artūrs Pokšāns, and Kristians Zalāns.** 2018. 'Falling through the Cracks: Critical Review of the Deinstitutionalisation Process in a Post-Socialist State'. *Scottish Journal of Residential Child Care* 17 (4).
3. **Leontowitsch, Miranda, Aivita Putnina, Marcus Andersson, Charlotta Niemistö, Rafaela Werny, Hanna Sjögren, Ilze Mileiko, Artūrs Pokšāns et al.** 2023. 'Participatory Action Research on Webs of Caring in the Digital Age across Four European Countries'. *Quality in Ageing and Older Adults* ahead-of-print (ahead-of-print). https://doi.org/10.1108/QAOA-03-2023-0020

4. **Pokšāns, Artūrs.** 2023**.** „Post-Socialist Residential School and the Continuum of Violence" *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics* (avaldamiseks vastu võetud).

Retsenseerimisel käsikiri

5. **Pokšāns, Artūrs., Lakševics, Kārlis.** „Navigating fragmented infrastructures of care: children's sense of home in residential education", **2023**. *Youth*. (ootab toimetuse otsust)

Ettevalmistamisel olevad käsikirjad

6. **Pokšāns, A., Neikena, M.** „Digitalization of everyday life: infrastructures of dignity among Latvian elderly“
7. **Putniņa, A., Pokšāns, A., Mileiko, I.** „(Lack of) Kindness: Experiences of Digitalization among Latvian Older People“

Prepare for Leaving Care: Young People with Care Experience Training Care Professionals. (2020) CYC-Online

ÕPETAMISE KOGEMUS

Lektor, Läti Ülikool 2018 kuni praeguseni (lektorina) 2016–2018 (ülikooli õppejõuna)

BA-taseme kursused:

- Uurimispraktika
- Uurimispraktika I
- Teadusuuringute eetika
- Antropoloogia välitöö praktika
- Klassikalise antropoloogia teooriad
- Antropoloogia välitöö praktika
- Moraali antropoloogia
- Keha ja meditsiini antropoloogia
- Internet, netikett ja õigusnormid
- Religiooni ja rituaalide antropoloogia
- Seksuaalsuse ja soo antropoloogia

MA-taseme kursused:

- Sissejuhatus loodus- ja tehnoloogiaõppesse
- Piiride ümberkujundamine (assistent)
- Antropoloogia välipraktika II (assistent)

Juhendatud lõputööd, Läti Ülikool 2017 kuni praeguseni
7 bakalaureusetööd

KOOLITUSKOGEMUS

Koolituse kaaskorraldaja 2022
SOS Children's Villages International
Turvalise käitumise rakendamine: eakaaslaste vägivalla ennetamine ja sellele reageerimine vanemliku hoolitsuseta või vanemliku hoolitsuse kaotamise ohus olevate laste seas

Koolituse kaaskorraldaja 2020–2022
SOS Children's Villages International
Turvalised kohad, laste vaimne kasv – traumateadlike tavade juurutamine alternatiivsetesse hooldussüsteemidesse

Koolituse kaaskorraldaja ja konsultant 2017–2018
SOS Children's Villages International
Hooldusasutusest lahkumine – lastekaitsesüsteem, mis töötab spetsialistide ja noorte jaoks

AUTASUD JA AUHINNAD

Läti Ülikooli rektori tunnustus magistritööle „Sõltuvus kui kapitali liik: sõltuvuse rehabilitatsiooniasutus postsotsialistlikus ruumis“. 2016

Läti Ülikooli rektori tunnustus bakalaureusetööle „Kutsumus: meeste kutsumise tähtsus alushariduse andmisesse“ 2014

ETTEKANDED JA PANEELARUTELUD

Ettekanded

1. **Neikena, M., Pokšāns, A.** „Vananemine kui hirmuäratav kogemus: Eakate elu digiteerimine Lätis“ (“Experiencing ageing as fearful: Digitalization of elderly life in Latvia”). Konverents *Kroonilise haiguse ja vananemise fenomenoloogia,* Södertörns Universitet 2022.
2. **Pokšāns, A.** „Autoetnograafiline tervenemine: antropoloogilised meetodid vägivalla tagajärgedega elamiseks“ (“Autoethnographical healing: anthropological methods for living the aftermath of violence”). Konverents *Vägivallavaba antropoloogia suunas,* Läti Ülikool 2021.
3. **Pokšāns, A.** „Enda ja teooria vahel: antropoloogilised lähenemised noorte osalemisele vabaühenduste töös“ (“Between the self and theory: anthropological approaches to youth participation in NGO work”). Läti Ülikooli 79. rahvusvaheline teaduskonverents, Riia 2021.
4. **Pokšāns, A.** „Internetis ei ole tüdrukuid: fikseeritud sooline identiteet ja küberkiusamine“ (“There Are No Girls on the Internet: fixed gender identity and cyberbullying”). Konverents *Soolised uuringud 2019 Koverents: vägivallast*, Helsinki Ülikool 2019.

Korraldatud paneelarutelud

5. **Hamilton, G., Putnina, A., Pokšāns, A.** *„Ebavõrdsed mänguväljad: akadeemilise vägivalla avastamine ja lahendamine*“ *EASA2022: ümberkujundamine, lootus ja ühised jooned*, Belfast 2022.

ERIALASED LIIKMESUSED

Rahvusvahelise nõuandekogu liige Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures	2018–2023
Liige European Association of Social Anthropologists	2022 kuni praeguseni

DISSERTATIONES ETHNOLOGIAE UNIVERSITATIS TARTUENSIS

1. **Ene Kõresaar**. Memory and history in Estonian Post-Soviet life. Stories private and public, individual and collective from the perspective of biographical syncretism. Tartu, 2004, 299 p.
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