

KIRSTI JÕESALU

Dynamics and tensions
of remembrance in post-Soviet Estonia:
Late socialism in the making



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LIST OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

- Article I** Jõesalu, Kirsti 2012. The Role of the Soviet Past in Post-Soviet Memory Politics: through Examples of Speeches from Estonian Presidents. – *Europe-Asia Studies*, 64 (6), 1007–1032.
- Article II** Jõesalu, Kirsti & Kõresaar, Ene 2012. Working through Mature Socialism: Private and Public in the Life Story of an Estonian Industry Manager. – *Baltic Biographies at Historical Crossroads*, ed. by Aili Aarelaid-Tart and Li Bennich-Björkman, Routledge, 68–85.
- Article III** Jõesalu, Kirsti 2016. 'We Were the Children of a Romantic Era': Nostalgia and the Non-ideological Everyday Through the Perspective of a "Silent Generation". – *Journal of Baltic Studies*. Special Issue: Baltic Socialism Remembered: Memory and Life Story since 1989, ed. by Ene Kõresaar, 47 (4), 557–577.
- Article IV** Jõesalu, Kirsti & Nugin, Raili 2012. Reproducing Identity through Remembering: Cultural Texts on the Late Soviet Time. – *Folklore. Electronic Journal of Folklore*, ed. by Art Leete, 51, 15–48.
- Article V** Jõesalu, Kirsti & Kõresaar, Ene 2013. Continuity or Discontinuity: On the Dynamics of Remembering "Mature Socialism" in Estonian Post-Soviet Remembrance Culture. – *Journal of Baltic Studies*. Special Issue: Temporality, Identity and Change: Ethnographic Insights into Estonian Fieldsites, ed. by Aet Annist, 44 (2), 177–203.

The author's contribution:

- Article II:** The author proposed the theoretical framework, collaborated with co-author on the methodological part, and wrote parts of the analysis.
- Article IV:** The author proposed the theoretical approach (Assmanns, Erll) and the research design. Fieldwork was conducted and analysis was written together.
- Article V:** This article is the outcome of common work; we suggested the research design and theoretical framework together. The analysis of biographical narratives was suggested by Ene Kõresaar, based on the method that has been described as 'biographical syncretism' (Kõresaar 2004: 22–23). Both authors conducted fieldwork and wrote parts of the analysis.

1. INTRODUCTION:

MEMORY WORK IN 21ST CENTURY ESTONIA

Just as memories constantly change and use existing and actualised resources at the moment of narrating, the present dissertation has also undergone changes. In 2005, while compiling my preliminary project, my research interests were obviously wider than what was finally written. In the initial years of my doctoral studies I was more interested in Soviet-time ideology and adaptation, particularly the question of how Soviet power was rooted and domesticated in Estonia. However, my research interest was already then limited to the mature/late socialist period (see Jõesalu 2005). Under the influence of changes that occurred on the level of social remembering – here I mean the growing importance attached to late socialism¹ in the post-Soviet memory field – also my focus shifted. My main research question became how mature/late socialism is remembered in post-Soviet Estonia and how this remembering is made on the institutional, cultural, and individual levels. My aim was to look at how the memory of late socialism was formed, and how individuals use cultural resources for representing their past. Remembering can also be regarded as an ideological practice, so in this sense I did not go very far from the initial goal of my dissertation journey (see Van Dijk 2005). The theoretical frame of the dissertation is mainly based on the ‘dynamics of memory approach’, in which the negotiation between the dominant ideology and alternative views on the past also have a crucial role (Popular Memory Group 1982; Schwartz 1996; Thomson 1994).

My dissertation is closely intertwined with two research projects of the Department of Ethnology, University of Tartu, which focus on memory practices in the 21st century Estonia. The aim of the projects was to deal with the meanings of 20th-century revolutionary events on the level of social memory. Those two projects were grants from the Estonian Science Foundation: *Places of Memory and Cultures of Remembrance* (2006–2010, Kõresaar 2007ab; Jaago & Kõresaar 2008; Rattus 2008; Grünberg 2009; Kõresaar, Kuutma, Lauk 2009), and the follow-up project *Practices of Memory: Continuities and Discontinuities of Remembering the 20th Century* (2010–2014, Esse 2016; Jaago 2010, 2011, 2014; Kõresaar 2011, 2014, 2015; Rahi-Tamm 2015). The leader of both projects was Ene Kõresaar. My dissertation is also connected to the research project *Human Time and Generational Consciousness* (project leader Raili Nugin, Tallinn University).

In the initial phase of the dissertation I examined the time of late socialism relying on Pierre Nora’s concepts of *lieu de mémoire* (site of memory, 1992) (see, for example, Jõesalu 2010). I dealt with the interpretation of the site of

¹ I will use the terms ‘mature socialism’ and ‘late socialism’/‘late Soviet period’ interchangeably through the dissertation. For more detail about the use of these different names, see subchapter 1.2.

memory and, working with respective studies, I asked in which frames late socialism can be analysed as a site of memory (Article I, Kõresaar & Jõesalu 2007). The analysis of public texts indeed revealed that the Soviet era has become a relatively fixed site of memory, but, moving to other levels of remembering, additional methodological tools had to be applied as well. Thus, I have analysed remembering on the individual and cultural levels through *memory practices* that enable a more dynamic approach than the concept of *site of memory* (see chapter 2.2.).

In the 1990s the Soviet period was predominantly conceptualised in Estonia through the mode of resistance and suffering, characterised through the metaphor of rupture.²(Krull 1996, Kõresaar 2005). Rupture signified the disruption of national independence in the course of Second World War and subsequent Soviet annexation. The rupture metaphor also served as a key to make sense of social and individual experiences of people in the second half of the 20th century. The goal of our project *Practices of Memory: Continuities and Discontinuities* (2010–2014) was to bring attention to the different parallel memory practices in society, i.e., the simultaneity of rupture and continuity in Estonian memory culture. While planning our research, we presented a hypothesis that “discontinuity and continuity are not to be understood only as consecutive but acting simultaneously and in a parallel way in a cultural whole (see Lotman 2001), one through another and vice versa, being actualised under definite circumstances” (see Article V). In the framework of the project we demonstrated the diversity of memory culture in Estonia and in the Baltics (Kõresaar 2016a), but the continuity in the way of narration and experiencing the environment through the 20th century was also underlined (Jaago 2014).

The writing process of the dissertation has been influenced on the one hand by dialogue with different scientific discourses but also larger social developments. The changes in society have certainly influenced those narratives I analyse in my dissertation as well as the way I position myself as a researcher towards these narratives. Without a doubt, the temporal distance between writing the introductory chapter and the articles has changed my perspective on some topics of the articles published earlier, but, on the other hand, I still agree with the arguments presented there.

The introduction of this dissertation has taken shape in a time when in our neighbouring country, the former “heart” of the Soviet Union, Russia, again a discourse of anti-fascism closely associated with the Second World War is being articulated and the collapse of the Soviet Union is regarded as a geopolitical catastrophe. I started work on the present overall summary at a time

² In his collection of articles *Katkestuste kultuur* (The Culture of Rupture) published in 1996, Hasso Krull examined Estonian culture through ruptures. Krull states that Estonian culture has defined itself through positive (breakaway from Baltic German cultural space) and negative (Second World War and its consequences to Estonian culture) ruptures. On the level of political rhetoric, the metaphor of rupture has not been abandoned until today. In Estonian life story research, the metaphor of rupture has been most influential in Ene Kõresaar’s monograph *Elu ideoloogiad* (Ideologies of Life) published in 2005 (Kõresaar 2005).

when Russia occupied Crimea and hostilities between conflicting sides started in eastern Ukraine. Different interpretations of the past are also included in the complicated conflicts between different parties. Molly Andrews (2013) has elaborated the issue of how history interferes with research in the example of researching and writing before, during, and after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. She points out how the changed historical situation demanded she re-examine the data she collected (2013: 217). Although a change comparable to that of the collapse of the Berlin Wall and socialism has not taken place, the past has been activated in contemporary discussions. It has, due to our living next to the changing Russia, influenced the ways how the Soviet past is seen and researched in this particular setting, and how I as a researcher living in this environment react to the present and past issues.

In the period under scrutiny in this dissertation, 2000–2010³, a change in post-Soviet Estonian memory culture has taken place. In the last decade, the period of late socialism that occupied a marginal position until then, has received a lot of attention, both on the academic level and in the texts of social memory. While on the institutional level there was still no differentiation between different Soviet periods (see Article I), on the level of social memory, changes occurred already from the second half of the 1990s (Article V, Jõesalu 2005).

It was namely the first decade of the new century when Estonian society began to actively engage with the period of late/mature socialism through different media of memory. Like in the case of several other relevant topics in Estonian memory culture, life story writers were the first to interpret the time of late/mature socialism (a similar process unfolded at the end of the 1980s, the “time of awakening” when the role of oral history and life writing became prominent, see Kõresaar & Jõesalu 2016). When examining the rise of the late socialist experiences as a topic in public discourse, special attention should be paid to life story writers who sent their stories to the campaign *The Life of Me and My Family in the ESSR and Republic of Estonia*. In these life stories the dialogue with the discourse of “rupture” that dominated in the 1990s⁴ emerged and everyday experience of late socialism became a central issue.⁵ This life story competition is the main source for interpreting autobiographical remembering in the dissertation (see chapter 3.2.). During the first decade of the 21st century in the framework of the project *Strategies and Practices of Everyday Life in Soviet Estonia*,⁶ the Estonian National Museum (ENM) circulated different questionnaires which dealt with everyday life in Soviet Estonia: *Elu nõukogude ajal* (Life during the Soviet Era I) 2000, *Töö ja tööelu Nõukogude Eestis* (Work and Work Life in Soviet Estonia) 2001, *Noorte-*

³ The dates of the period were defined based on the character of the sources. This is elaborated in detail in chapter 3. In addition to the sources, which have been created between 2000–2010, I have followed also later discussions until very recently.

⁴ On the contribution of people born in the 1920s to this discourse see Kõresaar 2005.

⁵ I deal with the discourse of rupture/discontinuity almost in every article, but this discourse is described in the greatest detail in Articles I, IV, and V.

⁶ This was a project of the Department of Ethnology of University of Tartu and ENM.

kultuurid nõukogude ajal (Youth Cultures during the Soviet era) 2003, *Toidukultuur nõukogude ajal* (Food Culture during the Soviet Era) 2002, *Turism nõukogude ajal* (Tourism during the Soviet Era) 2007, and *Noorte rõivastus nõukogude ajal* (Youth Clothing during the Soviet Era) 2008. Many thematic narratives were sent to the museum as answers to those questionnaires. Gradually the topic also gained prominence in other memory media.

Besides life story writers, museums are also important agents of interpreting late socialism. At the beginning of the 21st century first exhibitions focusing on aspects related to Soviet everyday life were opened. These exhibitions had initially a mixed reception (Article IV & V). The exhibition *Things in My Life* curated by Kai Lobjakas and Karin Paulus at the Estonian National Museum and Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design (2000–2001), which focused on Soviet-era design and everyday objects can be seen as the “first plunge” in this field.⁷ In some sense this exhibition continued the exhibition strategies of the ENM in the 1990s that had, besides more traditional topics of folklife, focused on everyday practices in the 20th century (for example, *Coffee Exhibition* 1997; *Estonian Woman in Changing Time* 1996; *Oh, Schooltime...* 1998). In the 1990s the Soviet era itself was not of interest in the museum landscape, neither in exhibition nor collecting policies, since, like elsewhere in the public space, the main attention was paid to the construction of the national narrative (see Raisma 2009), and topics regarding the Soviet era that shed light on the traumatic past were preferred (for example, the exhibitions *Stalinism in Estonia* in 1990 and *Stalinist Repressions* in 1999 at the Estonian History Museum).⁸

Everyday life in Soviet Estonia was also raised into the focus through the media: at the beginning of 2004, journalist and publisher Enno Tammer made an appeal to the public in the newspaper *Postimees*, both in the printed version and on the website, to recall life in the ESSR from the viewpoint of everyday life.⁹

⁷ In a later interview the curators of *Things in My Life* mentioned that their exhibition project also emerged from a certain opposition to the re-discovery and setting as example of the 1920s–1930s, which had dominated in the 1990s in both architecture and design, as a reaction to the domination of functionalism and nostalgic desire towards the “beautiful Estonian time” (interview with Kai Lobjakas and Karin Paulus, 16 July 2010).

⁸ Yet, it has to be mentioned that at the permanent exhibition of the ENM that was open 1994–2015 there was a living room from the period of late socialism (interior from the year 1978, see Aljas, Liiv, Raba 2015: 38). After the opening of the exhibition, art historian Mart Kalm has mentioned in the daily *Postimees* that the 1978 room provoked some discussion: “It is rumoured that some Tartu snobs had been shocked by the interior with the dark wall unit from 1978 and tasteless interior objects that had the same effect on the visitors as spitting at the face of Estonians. But, what can we do that we could not furnish our homes better at that time. [...] The ugliness of this corner is an organic part of the hard fate of Estonians and we must have courage to look in the face of history.” (Kalm 1994: 13).

⁹ “Postimees collects memories from the ESSR” (<http://www.postimees.ee/1394989/postimees-kogub-malestusi-ensvst>, from 23 of January 2004, last visited 15 August 2016). The call primarily focused on the deficit experience (“Do you remember your first pair of jeans, the first banana?”), through which Soviet everyday life was “rediscovered” in the sphere of entertainment as well.

The appeal found very fertile ground. Certainly on the one hand the wish and readiness to speak about everyday Soviet life through which dissatisfaction with the hegemonic discourse of the Soviet era was expressed. On the other hand, the fast and tempestuous development of internet media also played a part (Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt & Runnel 2004). Most of the discussions and sharing of memories about Soviet everyday life took place on the web and several volumes were put together based on these texts as well as those sent by mail (Tammer 2004, 2006). At the same time, at the beginning of 2004, the popular tabloid *SL Õhtuleht* also started to publish a weekly retro-section about the Soviet era (see Kõresaar 2011, 2012). At the time when these appeals were launched, an ironic-nostalgic programme *Old Time Things* was broadcast on Estonian TV. The author of the script was writer Mati Unt¹⁰ and the programme was introduced as a series based on archival sources, presenting the reality in the period 1960–1985, especially the artefacts of that time.¹¹ Thus, the everyday Soviet experience was thematised simultaneously in several different environments. Thereby the everyday, experience-based narrative arose next to the trauma narrative. That, in its turn, was interpreted critically by the ruling elite as nostalgia towards the Soviet era, threatening democracy (Masso 2010; Laar 2008).

1.1. Framing late socialism in Estonian memory work: between national discourse and transforming everyday life

In the present subchapter, I try to delineate changes that occurred in Estonian society in the 1990s which also influenced the meanings ascribed to the period of late socialism. I will tackle the economic and political processes that influenced everyday life in the 1990s and the reforms of the transition period. First I deal with those reforms which are reflected in the narratives collected at the beginning of the 21st century.

The movements and changes in the Soviet Union that emerged in the second half of the 1980s led to the restoration of independence of the Republic of Estonia in 1991. The Republic of Estonia, which had been occupied in 1940 and where annexation continued after the Second World War, had existed in the post-war decades only as a political utopia. Legal continuity – based on which the republic was restored – was kept alive in exile Estonian communities.

When the political utopia was realised (Vogt 2005) a great part of the population was involved in different social processes through social movements, with participation being as high as 70% from the population (Lauristin & Viha-lemm 2009: 7, see also Nugin 2015: ch. 2). In historiography and autobiographical memories, this period has also been described as an emotionally very enthralling age of new hopes that is characterised in Estonian-language auto-

¹⁰ Mati Unt (1944–2005) Estonian writer and drama director. Popular during Soviet and post-Soviet times.

¹¹ See <https://arhiiv.err.ee/seeria/vana-aja-asjad/elu/31>, last visited 15 August 2016.

biographical narratives as a “time of national unity” (Jõesalu 2003a; Kõresaar & Anepaio 2015).

The 1990s brought about numerous reforms that changed everyday life on almost every level. Actually, the reforms began already before the restoration of independence; the most vivid example is the Law on the Foundations of Property Reform that fixed the social relations in the post-Soviet era. The law was adopted on 13 June 1991.¹² So we can see that, before different political forces had agreed whether to restore politically and legally the pre-World-War-II republic or declare a new state, the restorative trend dominated in legislation.¹³ Namely, the law on the foundations of property reform aimed “to undo the injustices caused by violation of the right of ownership and to create the preconditions for the transfer to a market economy”. The injustice that needed compensation was caused by the expropriation of property by the Soviet authorities in the 1940s.¹⁴

Besides the Law on the Foundations of Property Reform that engendered problems with forced tenants (Kährik 2000: 8), the 1992 agricultural reform and land reform and the 1993 *Privatisation Law* also altered social relations (see in detail Annist 2011: 86f; Bardone 2013: 47–48; Rauba 2002; Tamm 2014). Estonian political scientist Vello Pettai, among others, has argued that some of the problems faced by the Balts in the 1990s – like problems with ‘forced tenants’ (*sundüürnikud*), with people with ‘undefined citizenship’ (*kodakondsuseta isikud*) – “were their own making to the extent that they derived from the specific choice of a ‘legal restorationist’ form of state identity” (Pettai 2007). The privatisation and ownership laws in Estonia in the early 1990s were more radical compared to most Central and East-European countries and therefore their influence on social relations was more direct, thus being one aspect that generated new inequality in society (Abrahams 1996; Alanen et al 2001; Annist 2011; Kährik 2000; Ruoppila & Kährik 2003).

With the Restoration of the Continuity of Ownership Act, a legal turn towards the pre-war republic was made, emphasising the restoration of continuity in everyday life as well, in addition to the political level. At the same time, similar processes unfolded in memory culture where namely the 1920s–

¹² <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/1032866> that in its turn was based on the regulation adopted already on 19 December 1990 “Restoration of the continuity of property ownership”.

¹³ The political and legal agreement was born during the coup d’état in August 1991, in negotiations between representatives of the parliament – Supreme Soviet – and the Estonian Congress. As a result, the Republic of Estonia that had restored its independence was declared on 20 August.

¹⁴ In his memoirs published in 2015, Mart Laar, who became prime minister in 1992, associates the property reform directly with the politics of restoration and “turning back” time. “Being dedicated to the restoration of the Republic of Estonia, it was self-evident that the Estonian Congress quickly started to deal with property issues. It was closely connected with the compensation of Soviet-era injustice and the restoration of justice. At the same time, it meant returning to the so-called Estonian period.” (Laar 2015: 286).

1930s had become the central memory site. Ene Kõresaar has characterised the processes of the late 1980s–1990s as a conflict of historical images where the Soviet image of history with class struggle at its centre was replaced with the national-normative approach according to which state independence is the aim of a nation (Kõresaar 2005: 17–20). History and the symbolic past shaped the political decisions of the transition era in Estonia that in their turn framed the position of the late socialism in post-Soviet memory culture as I have demonstrated in this dissertation.

A fundamental change of the elite due to the 1992 parliamentary elections also gave a push to leaving the Soviet experience to the background, since most ministers of the new government and the majority of *Riigikogu*, the parliament, had no connections with Soviet power structures (see Steen & Ruus 2002) and the election campaign slogan of the national-conservative party *Isamaa* “Clean the place!” was actively used for emphasising the new beginning and rupture from the Soviet time. The political elite of the early 1990s has also been described as a republic of historians (Tamm 2006: 136–138; Wulf & Grönholm 2010), which can also be associated with giving history, politics of the past, and memory-political decisions an important role in the new transforming society (Tamm 2013). Besides the regulation of ownership relations, we can see the domination of restorative politics in memory politics as a whole. In this dissertation memory politics is analysed based on two aspects: firstly, how the Soviet past is staged at Estonian museums (Article IV and V), and secondly I studied memory politics on the basis of the speeches of Estonian presidents (Article I).

Maria Todorova has written that the politics of memory, which is a work of progress in itself with no clear outcome, can be successful only if it relies on or is in agreement with (some kind of) lived experience (2014: 7). To characterise the first decade of the restoration of independence, it has been emphasised that in the first half of the 1990s social memory supported continuity and restorative politics (Kõresaar 2005). Estonian historian Marek Tamm has formulated that “the new Estonian memory politics of the end of the 1980s can be characterised mainly by two key words: repression and restoration” (2013: 653). Tamm shows that the new memory politics was formed already at the end of 1980s, and the passing of the law On the Extrajudicial Mass Repressions in Soviet Estonia During the 1940s and 1950s on 7 December 1988 by the Supreme Soviet of the ESSR should be regarded as a first political step and one of the founding documents of Estonia’s new memory politics (*ibid.*). The topic of deportation and repression became important already at the end of 1987.¹⁵

¹⁵ Other key legislative acts concerning memory politics are the Law on the Rehabilitation of the Repressed (19 February 1992), the Oath of Conscience Act 655 (8 July 1992), the Law of Preserving and Gathering the Materials of Foreign States’ Security and Intelligence Organisations (10 March 1994), and the Law of Crimes against Humanity and War Crimes (9 November 1994) (*ibid.*: 654–5). This dimension of transitional justice was immanent after the fall of Soviet Union for the many countries in East and Central Europe (Pettai & Pettai 2017).

Estonia of the 1990s was first of all shaped by the liberal ideology of market economy and the framework of nation-state. On a general level the practices described in this dissertation relate to the memory processes within the framework of the nation-state where, on the official level, often the whole Soviet period was “cut out” of different experiences, which caused conflicts on other levels of remembering because it did not consider the diversity of experiences. Memory politics focusing on rupture and resistance (or, in other words, restoration and repression) also found a way to memory institutions – in this dissertation museums as one of such institutions are studied. Until now the Museum of Occupations in Estonia has been more widely examined; it has been studied critically by several researchers, mostly in comparison with other similar museums of the Baltics and Central Europe (Burch & Zander 2008; Mark 2008¹⁶; Velmet 2011), underlining the rooting of a conception of too one-sided politics of the past in these museums. I focused on museums, which deal with everyday culture, not with political history: the Estonian National Museum in Tartu and the Estonian Museum of Applied Arts and Design in Tallinn. Through the exploration of these museums, I also analysed the level of cultural memory, as well as the levels of institutional and social memory.

Whereas the keywords of ‘repression’ and ‘restoration’ have remained dominant in memory politics until now and no shift is seen here (see Tamm 2013; Article I), from the second half of the 1990s a discrepancy between the social memory and the hegemonic conception of the past can be observed. While in her article published in 2001 Ene Kõresaar could ask why the Soviet era (especially the 1960s–1980s) are ignored in autobiographical narratives written in the 1990s (Kõresaar 2001), then, for example, in the life stories of women born in the 1940s written at the beginning of the 2000s for the life story competition *The Life of Me and My Family in the ESSR and the Republic of Estonia*, the traumatic events of the 1940s do not have such a dominant position and experiences focusing on everyday life from the period of late socialism are predominant. Thereby these life stories question the memory-political and institutional interpretation of the Soviet era as only a time of rupture and suffering.

1.2. Examining the meaning of late socialism and studying late socialism from a comparative perspective

Having discussed the factors that influenced post-Soviet memory culture and the (re)emergence of the nation-state framing it, next I would like to look at an important reference point of social memory in the 21st century. Since the turn of the millennium and especially during the last five or six years, late socialism has become one of the main reference points in post-socialist life-story writing and also in academic discourse on post-socialism. But during the writing process of the articles (especially Articles I, II, and IV) late/mature socialism

¹⁶ This is a general process in Eastern Europe (see Sarkisova & Apor 2008).

clearly remained on the background compared with studies of Stalinism and memory studies focusing on trauma. Therefore, it became necessary to add an introduction to the issue of the specific features of late/mature socialism that caused inevitable repetitions from the viewpoint of the dissertation. Both terms – mature and late socialism – have been used in the articles, hence I also explain what caused the parallel use of those concepts.

At the writing of present chapter the situation has actually been reversed; it can even be argued that late/mature socialism has become a separate field of research and topics related to late socialism have found wide distribution.¹⁷ Works on everyday life and consumption during late socialism have been published (to name just a few: Klumbyte & Sharafutdinova 2013; Ward 2009; Chernyshova 2013; Harris 2013), late Stalinism and early mature socialism have also been investigated from the generational perspective (Fürst 2010; Kelly 2007). Late socialism, or the Brezhnev era, has been also a central theme in a couple of special issues of different journals (e.g. *Slavic Review* 2015, 1; *Cahiers du Monde Russe*, 2013, 54, 1–2, see a review in Hornby 2014), and various aspects of everyday life during late socialism have been in the focus (Koleva 2012).

Another rising field of research is the cinema and television, or, in more general, media studies of late Soviet socialism (see Evans 2016; Huxtable 2014). Likewise, in historical studies attention has turned from political themes focusing on the Stalinist political elite and ideological decisions towards everyday experiences; with this “Western historiography is moving little closer to Russian (Soviet) popular memory of the period” (Hornby 2014: 329). The post-socialist East European was quite often understood in historiography as “a figure whose past trauma casts into doubt his/her capacity to function effectively as a historical actor in the future” (Boyer 2010: 19). Studies on nostalgia make up also a separate topic (e.g. Berdahl 2010; Boyer 2010; Boym 2001; Kovács 2010; Nadkarni & Shevchenko 2004; Todorova & Gille 2010; Todorova 2014). In those studies the concept of ‘nostalgia’ is used for analysing post-Soviet memory culture. Here, mostly the experiences of mature/late socialism are under scrutiny. I will deal with the issue of nostalgia in more detail in a separate subchapter of the chapter of the theoretical framework (see subchapter 2.2.2.).

1.2.1. Defining late/mature socialism

What are specific characteristics of late/mature socialism in the context of the Soviet Union and in the context of Estonia? I use the terms ‘mature socialism’ and ‘late socialism’ interchangeably in my writings. First, it is clear that the

¹⁷ In the summer of 2015 Tallinn University in co-operation with the Graduate School of Cultural Studies and Arts organised a summer school dedicated to studying the late Soviet period under the title *Late Socialism (1956–85): The Forgotten Years between Stalinism and Perestroika*.

differentiation of late socialism from earlier Soviet periods has emerged post factum, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. When it still existed, its temporal structuration was rather future-oriented (first of all, communism that was supposed to come in the (near) future¹⁸) or chronologising (five-year plans imposed on the country in 1928). Yet, from the viewpoint of memory culture studies, differentiations made from the perspective of the present are adequate, thus, I try to examine next how the 1960s–1980s have been interpreted in scholarly literature. It is possible to distinguish mature/late Soviet time from the preceding Stalinism and following Perestroika period through the description of changes in authoritative discourses.

The analytical notion of ‘mature socialism’ in my writings derives from Kharkhordin (1999) and Fürst (2010). In his book *The Collective and the Individual in Russia* published in 1999, the Russian sociologist Oleg Kharkhordin tackles the relationship between the individual/individuality and collectivity in Soviet society.¹⁹ Kharkhordin shows that individuals in Russia were conceptualised as subjects and came to understand themselves as such predominantly through rituals of public penance (Kharkhordin in Hellbeck 2001: 120). The post-1953 period is referred to as ‘mature soviet society’ by Kharkhordin (1999: ch. 7 and 8). He characterises the 1960s–1980s as a period when the authorities tried to inculcate collectivity by different means (1999: 279ff), but he also accentuates the possibility that certain informal associations could emerge within the dominant collective ideology (ibid.: 303ff).

Kharkhordin describes this period in Soviet society as an era when, on the one hand, official terminology took root in people’s cognition of life, while, on the other hand, there developed spaces of discourse that were inconceivable in the institutional sphere. He stresses the possibility of the emergence of informal collectives inside of formal collectives in mature Soviet society.

The term ‘mature socialism’ was used already in the Soviet Union (marking developed or mature society). The concept of developed or ‘mature’ socialism was established at the end of 1960s, and was meant to describe the ‘real’ socialism of the contemporary society, not the illusion of the communism. At that time it was also realised by the authorities that the idea of communism being built at 1980s would not succeed. As Shlapentokh has put it, “the leadership looked for an ideological concept that would preserve the communist phraseology, but instead of waiting for the future, would proclaim that Soviet life could be enjoyed right now” (2004, see also Thompson 1987).

Based on the works of Kharkhordin (1999) and Fürst (2010) I have used the notion of ‘mature socialism’ or ‘mature Soviet society’ in articles I, II, and V.

¹⁸ Nikita Khrushchev, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1954–1964, in his speech at 1961 promised that communism would be built by 1981, in 20 years. He made a promise that “the present generation of Soviet people will live under communism”. This promise was also incorporated into programme of CPSU.

¹⁹ Kharkhordin uses Russia and Soviet as synonyms in his book. He is speaking about Soviet society, but he tackles with the issues of individuality and collectivity specially in the Russian context.

Some researchers (e.g. Fürst 2010) prefer to use ‘mature socialism’ instead of ‘late socialism’, because they consider late socialism to be more neutral than mature socialism. According to Fürst ‘mature socialism’ is more “daring and assumptive, but as such much more expressive” (2010: 26). She sees the fragmentation and contradictory experiences of the people as one of the very hallmarks of ‘mature socialism’ (ibid.).

Fürst describes a ‘mature socialist’ person as a multi-tasker, who from one side was “embedded in and divorced from the Soviet collective at the same time” (ibid.). Especially among younger generations, fragmented, parallel, and alternative youth cultures arose. What makes the period of ‘mature socialism’ special compared to other Soviet periods is the ambivalence and diversification of experiences that defined it. From one side, ‘mature socialism’ was characterised by the routinisation of official ideologies and rituals connected to it; from another side, more and more opportunities arose to ‘escape’ from the influence of the state into physical and non-physical spaces (ibid.: 27–28.)

Secondly, using the notion of ‘late socialism’ I have drawn on the research of US-Russian anthropologist Alexei Yurchak, mainly on his influential and debated work on the last Soviet generation: *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More. The Last Soviet Generation* (2006).²⁰ Yurchak characterises the period of (starting from the mid-1950s) 1960s to the 1980s as *late socialism*, a period when, after the death of Stalin, the form of ideological presentations became increasingly normalised, and the form of discourse became standardised (2006: 14). He sees the period of late socialism as characterised by a “performative shift of authoritative discourse and the subsequent normalisation of that discourse; the post-Stalinist period between the mid-1950s and mid-1980s became thought of as a particular period with shared characteristics” (ibid.: 31).

In his introduction to the book, Yurchak problematises the binary relation of Western historiography towards the Soviet “regime”, where the public-private dichotomy has been a dominant model for analysis (2006: 4–8). He argues that, first, the whole long Soviet period (from the 1920s until the late 1980s) cannot be treated by the same criteria and, second, the analyses from outside of the Soviet Union do not consider how much people themselves conformed to the system. He underlines that we need a language that does not reduce the description of socialist reality to dichotomies of the official and unofficial (2006: 9). Yurchak’s study focuses on Russian towns; mostly the elite and adaptation of the ruling discourse, and therefore all his conclusions cannot fully be applied in the context of Estonia and other Baltic countries. In the Estonian and Baltic context in general, the occupation of 1940 and nationalism had an

²⁰ Although Yurchak himself was not present at the symposium on the late Soviet period at Tallinn University in the summer of 2015, he was still there through his work in all the papers that relied on his ideas or challenging them, mainly in the context of the centre and periphery relationship. The book published in 2006 was the first in this field that powerfully questioned the use of binary terms in studying the Soviet period and emphasised the agency of Soviet people (see a critical review in Fitzpatrick 2006).

influence besides Soviet ideology (see at this point also Fürst 2010: 19), but still I find that Yurchak's distinction of 'late socialism' is useful in the frame of current dissertation. On the other hand, it is clearly difficult to talk about a "late" period that starts in 1956 in the context of Estonia and other Baltic countries, considering the establishment of Soviet power in 1940 and re-establishment in 1944. Taking into account this temporal context, 'mature socialism' as a term is more appropriate. Yet, Yurchak's notion of 'late socialism' is more widely used in anthropological and cultural discourse, especially in the case of the territory of the former Soviet Union, and, using it as a general term for the 1960s-1980s it blends in better with the academic discourse.

Anthropologists Neringa Klumbyte and Gulnaz Sharafutdinova define the period of 1964–1985 as *late Soviet socialism*, moving the beginning of the period, differently from other authors, from Stalin's death in 1953 or Khrushchev's speech at the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956, to the time of Brezhnev's rise to power, and the end, similarly to other authors, to Gorbachev's election as general secretary of the CPSU. Thus, this periodisation is, following the logic of classical historiography, based on the periods of power of the general secretaries of the Communist Party. Klumbyte and Sharafutdinova also open up the research of late socialism in the category of morality, they argument "against the understanding of late Soviet socialism in largely orientalist idioms; namely, as backward, oppressive, irrational, and immoral. The authors included here [in the book] have opted to provincialize the west in scholarship and to recognize and acknowledge the ordinary Soviet experience" (2013: 4). After the collapse of the USSR, it was perceived in the hegemonic western discourse as an empire of evil, while at the same time people "in the post-Soviet countries turned their gaze to the past, caught up with feelings of nostalgia and longing for stability, order, and predictability" (ibid.). Klumbyte and Sharafutdinova are critical towards the prevailing binary discourse on the Soviet period in academia (see similar critiques in Yurchak 2005: 5f), but it should be admitted that by 2013, when the book was published, this picture was no longer so one-sided as the authors claim in their introduction, and their volume is one of the many contributions to this discussion.²¹

The main idea that different authors emphasise when discussing the 1960s–1980s is the complexity of Soviet society that cannot be analysed through opposing categories like loyalty/dissidence, censorship and "reading between the lines", official history and family history etc., but the trend is to look at the period of late socialism functioning as a space of various relationships where free spaces necessary for communications had a place besides official control mechanisms. As such a diverse space, late socialism has its particular position in the memory culture of the 2000s, in which various meanings are ascribed to the period.

²¹ The book should have been published in 2007, but due to difficulties in the publication processes, it took a few more years. (Personal communication at Late Soviet time symposium in Tallinn, July 2015).

As explained above the term ‘late socialism’ is mainly used for drawing borders with Stalinism. I am aware that also Stalinism is a time period which has its inner divisions and differentiation. In the context of Soviet studies, the term ‘late Stalinism’ is used for characterising the post-war years of the 1940s–early 1950s, distinguishing those years from the 1930s. In Estonia the topic of Stalinism has generally been dealt without differentiating distinct periods in it (see e.g. Tannberg 2007; Mertelsmann & Rahi-Tamm 2012; Mertelsmann 2005; Kõresaar 2004b). The term of ‘late Stalinism’ only appears in international contexts (e.g. Mertelsmann 2005). Coming back to the approach presented in the monograph by Fürst (2010), she brings out that those post-war years are recognised as a period in which both system and people struggled to find a new *modus vivendi* adequate for the post-war times (ibid.: 21). Fürst describes the period of late Stalinism as a time “characterized by many seemingly contradictory forces”, thus it was a time of repressions, but it was also a time “that allowed many spaces and spheres that ran parallel, even contrary, to official structures” (ibid.: 22). In this sense Fürst underlines similar processes taking place already during late Stalinism, just a couple of years earlier than other authors, and she does not see a breaking point in the death of Stalin or in the speech of Khrushchev delivered in 1956 (Fürst 2007: 135–53, 2010: 23).

One can agree that the developments characteristic to late socialism had their roots in late Stalinism, in the immediate post-war years, but in the context of this dissertation it is more appropriate to focus just on the term ‘late socialism/ mature socialism’.²² At the same time it has to be mentioned that in the context of Estonia, historians have also seen a certain *détente* in the years 1944–47 (Zubkova 2009), however, on everyday level the easing of tensions and “normalisation” of the situation still began after Stalin’s death, and the years 1947–53 have mostly been characterised as a time of mass repressions and violent Sovietisation (for example Tannberg 2009: 253). On the borders of the Soviet Union and Central Europe, large-scale migration took place immediately after the war that directly influenced life in the Baltic countries as tens of thousands fled to the West (see Rahi-Tamm 2011; Gatrell & Baron 2009). The post-war years in general in Estonia and the other Baltic countries were characterised by a radical change in the way of life, the restructuration of rural life through the establishment of collective farms, the resistance activities of the forest brothers, and the fight against the forest brothers that left its marks on everyday life. These are also topics that are reflected in post-Soviet autobiographical narratives, in the case of my sources in descriptions of childhood experiences (see Article III). The mass deportations of 1949 (Rahi-Tamm 2010) and the “cleansing” of 1950 among the cultural elite (Krikmann, Olesk 2003; Zubkova 2009: 217ff) have also marked biographical remembering and post-Soviet memory politics. In Estonia, the starting point of mature/late Soviet time has been set at 1956, seeing here the end of violent Sovietisation as a great part of the people deported in 1941 as well as in

²² In her introduction to the book *Stalin’s Last Generation* Juliane Fürst also admits that in her book she deals with hegemonic discourses and practices in Soviet Russia.

1949 could return to Estonia, and this has been seen as a sign of a certain liberalisation of society (see Tannberg 2008, 2010).

The 1960s–1970s mark stability in everyday life and also a certain improvement of material conditions; with industrial mass-construction of dwellings, living conditions improved, especially in cities devastated by the war, and gradually social services developed as well that in a Soviet-type society were integrated with the workplace. These changes described above were also reflected in autobiographical remembering. The years 1987–88, when events connected with the Singing Revolution/transition period started in society, can be considered as the borderline marking the end of the mature Soviet period (Lauristin & Vihalemm 1997, 2009). Gorbachev’s rise to power in 1985 does not mark any special social changes in Estonia and neither is it a memory site in autobiographical remembering (except for the temperance campaign initiated by Gorbachev on 1985–87²³ that is described through strategies of bypassing the restrictions). Different age and social groups do not see the beginning of the upheaval period similarly; members of the cultural elite tend to date the beginning of the changes to 1987 (Lauristin & Vihalemm 1997; on the generation of the 1960s see Jõesalu 2003a), but for life-story writers the upheaval took place around 1988 and 1991.²⁴

In Estonian ethnology, the metaphor of mature socialism has taken root since the turn of the millennium to describe everyday experiences in the 1960s–1980s.²⁵ The first public questionnaire that specifically focused on the experiences of the mature Soviet period, *Life During the Soviet Era I*, was compiled by ethnologist Heiki Pärdi in 2000. Pärdi (2000) defined “the mature Soviet era (1950–1990) from the standpoint of an ordinary individual” as a topic of interest for ethnologists. The late socialist period established itself as a topic at first in the research of everyday life, then in memory studies, but both directions have been connected from the beginning through common researchers and topics. Thus, the joint project of the Department of Ethnology of the University of Tartu and the Estonian National Museum *Strategies and Practices of Everyday Life in Soviet Estonia* (2002–2006) mainly – but without explicitly emphasising late socialism in the research project – focused on the 1960s–1980s while earlier decades were not forgotten either (Jääts 2002, 2004; Grauberg 2003; Jõesalu 2004; Runnel & Kõresaar 2003; Ruusmann 2006; Värvi 2006). We can conclude that since the last decade remembering late or mature socialism has become one of the main topics of memory studies in Estonia.

²³ On the influence of Gorbachev’s alcohol policy in Estonia see Arusaar-Tamming 2007.

²⁴ The monetary reform of 1992 runs through the texts of life stories as a common theme; it was a change that was perceived very personally (on the one hand, the loss of savings, on the other hand, return of goods into shops and rise of the prices).

²⁵ Besides ethnology, the topic of late socialism is of interest in Estonian art history, especially in two dissertations defended recently that focus on late socialist architectural and art narratives (Kurg 2014; Lankots 2014).

1.3. Research questions

The main research question is to look how the mature/late Soviet period is remembered in post-Soviet Estonia and how this remembering is made on the institutional, cultural and individual levels.

The central issue is remembering and the construction of memory culture concerning a specific period on different levels: (1) on the institutional level first of all represented by the speeches of presidents; (2) secondly, remembering on the cultural level is under scrutiny. I examine this primarily through museum exhibitions, but also use other written and visual media (documentaries, novels); (3) thirdly, I analyse the thematisation of late socialism in biographical narratives or on the individual level (life stories and interviews). Thereby different articles answer to more than one question; and institutional, cultural and individual levels are intertwined.

My aim is to look at how the memory of late socialism is made, and how individuals use cultural recourses for representing their past (Bruner 1990).

- Articles I and II ask the question: What is the relationship of the culture of autobiographic remembering with the politics of remembering on other levels? This question is asked in every study, but is central in Articles I and II.
- The question: What is remembered and what not of the late socialist period on the individual level? runs through the entire dissertation. Which topics are dominating, and which themes are silenced in the life stories? Especially life stories are in the focus of Articles III and II, but the question of autobiographic remembering also arises in other articles.
- How is the Soviet past depicted in categories of private and public? How is work life remembered and what is the relationship between public and private realms in autobiographic remembering? This question is analysed by the example of an autobiography of a man in article II, but the relationship is also relevant in article III and I.
- Finally, the question of generation was highlighted in my dissertation. How do different generations make sense of their Soviet past and which media do they use for that? What are the common features and differences in the memory making? This question is dwelt on in Articles IV and V, but the issue of generation as memory group is touched upon also in other articles.

In this dissertation, a wide spectrum of sources is used for analysing remembering processes on three different levels, and these sources are under separate scrutiny. The processual, dialogical, and time-complex approach to memory is very central and all the questions asked are connected to this basic assumption.

In the following text the research questions are framed with theoretical approaches – I will indicate the relevant approaches to which the articles of the dissertation are connected.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND ANALYTICAL TOOLS

Memory studies is an interdisciplinary field, including approaches from the social sciences and the humanities like literary studies, ethnology/anthropology, history, sociology, psychology, political science, and cultural studies. In Estonia, different approaches are entwined in the field of memory studies: namely studies in cultural memory, oral history, historical memory, and literary studies. As central disciplines which are active in the field of memory studies, ethnology (e.g. Anepaio 2011, 2003; Grünberg 2009, 2014; Jõesalu 2010, 2012, 2016; Kõresaar 2005, 2007, 2011, 2014), folklore studies (Jaago 2011, 2014), and literature studies (Hinrikus 2003b, 2011; Kirss 2005, 2011, Kurvet-Käosaar 2013, 2015; Laanes 2009, 2015) should be mentioned; historians (e.g. Kaljundi 2015; Rahi-Tamm 2015, 2016; Tamm 2013, 2015), philosophers (Kattago 2008, 2012), and cultural researchers (Nugin 2015) are also publishing in that field. From the perspective of memory politics, political scientists have also dealt with the question of post-Soviet memory dynamics (Pettai 2011, 2015; Pettai & Pettai 2015; Pääbo 2011, 2015; Mälksoo 2010).

In his article published in 2000, Andreas Huyssen characterised the change of time regimes in the Western civilisation, outlining the following development: “since the 1980s, it seems the focus has shifted from present futures to present pasts” (Huyssen 2000: 21). Also, Aleida Assmann underlines the change in the time regime and marks the obsession of these societies to deal with the past; she describes how the time period “since the 1770s – to the 1980s could be described as the period of the ‘Modern Time Regime’”.²⁶ At that time, the issue of the past was delegated to professionals, but in the public discourse the focus was on the future. But since the 1980s, the past has become dominating time regime in both spheres (Assmann 2013b). Assmann adds that “[t]oday we are witnessing a ‘continental shift’ in the structure of Western temporality: While the future has lost much of its luminosity, the past has more and more invaded our consciousness. This return of the past has obviously something to do with periods of excessive violence in the twentieth century and earlier times” (ibid.: 41, see also Assmann 2013a: 7–22). With the actualisation of the past, the presence of the past and the significance of historical and memory studies have grown. Thus, Assmann describes the processes that have

²⁶ Aleida Assmann suggests that the modern understanding of time was developed during 17th and 18th centuries. The term ‘history’ instead of ‘histories’, and the abstract term ‘future’ developed around that time period – c. 1770 (Assmann 2013a: 47–48, in original “Um 1770 is der neue Begriff ‘Geschichte’ entstanden, der als ein ‘Kollektivsingular’ an die Stelle der ‘geschichten’ im Plural getreten ist. Um dieselbe Zeit ist der abstrakte Begriff ‘Zukunft’ entstanden, der den Begriff des ‘Zukünftigen’ ersetzt hat.” (ibid.: 48). Aleida Assmann relies also on Reinhard Koselleck’s works in her writings, who traces the emergence of a modern experience of temporality, to the period 1750–1850, which created a new concept of history (cit in Eriksen 2016: 91).

occurred in European public culture (Habermas) over the past 30 years and that have also influenced how the Soviet past has been interpreted in Estonia.

Dominic Boyer (2006, 2010) has demonstrated that often the longing for the past or nostalgia is seen as typical of Eastern Europeans (in the case of his examples, to East Germans), yet at the same time he argues that the desire to deal with the past is also characteristic of Western Europe.²⁷ Alongside the change in the time regime, ideas about the mnemonic turn and memory boom have been evoked in a number of contexts (c.f. Assmann 2002: 27; Berliner 2005; Carrier 2002; Kõresaar 2014; Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi, Levy 2011). Yet, the mnemonic turn has not occurred simultaneously in the different disciplines and neither has it followed a single trajectory (see also Kõresaar 2014; Olick 2016).²⁸

My dissertation is a part of this wave of dealing with the past. In the following I will introduce the key approaches that frame my research on post-Soviet remembrance culture and that provide the analytical tools for analysing the image of the late socialist period in Estonian post-Soviet memory culture. The main research question is to look how this remembering is made on the institutional, cultural, and individual levels, hence the theoretical framework is also interwoven.

First, my work relates to memory in culture – under this notion, I will explore the interrelation of cultural memory and communicative memory, by showing that the borders between those two are blurred. The interrelation of communicative memory and cultural memory is also connected with the broader question of the relation between the private and public realms of memory. And one such notion where the private and public realms of memory both are involved is *lieu de mémoire*. Pierre Nora himself has given the following explanation about this notion: “A *lieu de mémoire* is any significant entity, whether material or nonmaterial in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community” (Nora 1996: xviii). In his approach Nora took into account various events and symbols from the public and private realms of the French

²⁷ However, this turn towards the past (or the focus on the past) is not set in stone either, as we can see changes of time regimes – focusing on the future – today as well, for example, in anthropological discourses related to environmental changes (e.g. Taddei 2013; Marshall & Connor 2015). Recently, Ann Rigney also spoke about the danger of focusing on too much on memory, stating that too much memory is hiding the future (Ann Rigney on Future of Memory Studies at Inaugural Conference of the Memory Studies Association, Amsterdam, 3–5 December 2016).

²⁸ Lots of studies dealing with memory in culture (Erll 2008) on the theoretical and methodological levels have been published over the last decades – I will mention just some monographs, different anthologies and studies on memory, e.g. *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies*, ed. by A. Erll & A. Nünning, 2008 (Media and Cultural Memory series by De Gruyter); *Palgrave Macmillan Memory Studies* (Series) ed. by A. Hoskins and J. Sutton; *The Collective Memory Reader* by J. K. Olick, V. Vinitzky-Seroussi & D. Levy; *Routledge International Handbook of Memory Studies*, ed. by Tota A.L. and T. Hagen, 2016; *Ashgate Research Companion to Memory Studies* by Siobhan Kattago (2015).

past and present, and tried to create a kind of polyphonic narrative on France (ibid.). Nora was interested in how the past has been reused and represented. In a similar way, my approach also represents a kind of attempt to bring together different ways of remembering the late socialist period and to show it in a coherent way, considering how the period is remembered and re-mediated on different levels. In the tradition of Pierre Nora and his co-authors, a *lieu de mémoire* could be embedded not only in a specific place/site, but it could also be revealed as a generational or cultural text, as is explored later in this chapter. Another aspect to bear in mind is that a *lieu de memoire* is not something that is set in stone, but it is also dynamic in time (Rigney 2008: 345ff). The *dynamics of memory approach* shapes the way the past and the remembering of the past is understood in various articles of the dissertation. This approach is especially influential while looking at how remembering is happening in the realm of communicative memory. This approach is introduced in the next subchapter together with the notion of ‘memory of memory’ (Olick 2007).

The relationship of the private and the public in the remembering process and memory culture is one of the crucial questions that I try to explore in different parts of this work. On the other hand, it is also important to bear in mind that the distinction of private-public was also an important organising principle of everyday life during the Soviet period, the time period that is being remembered. Operational concepts like ‘nostalgia’ and ‘generation’ are also important.

2.1. Memory in culture

According to Astrid Erll, studying memory in culture may simply mean looking at remembering and forgetting through the lens of the humanities and social sciences (Erll 2008), and ‘cultural memory’ could be seen as an umbrella term for different phenomena. I will examine the concept of ‘cultural memory’ as seen by Jan and Aleida Assmann, for whom mainly different texts of high culture are to be included. I complement their approach with studies by Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney. On the other hand, since I deal with the recent past and events that also “circulate” in the memory of communication, the aspect of communicative memory is also important to my analysis.

In cultural memory studies the approach of Jan and Aleida Assmann (*das kulturelles Gedächtnis*) is the most prominent. This approach has its roots in the interdisciplinary research group to which they belonged, ‘Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation’ (Archeology of Literary Communication), founded in the 1970s, that dealt with putting media theories and technical histories into a historical and interdisciplinary perspective. The research group developed, on the one hand, media theories (McLuhan, Havelock, Innis) and, on the other hand, poststructuralist philosophies of language (Foucault, Lacan, Derrida) (cit in Erll 2005: ch 5). In the context of cultural memory studies, it is important to underline that the approach of the group to the written text was wider than the literary text, and literature was understood as any written

tradition. Such an approach has also served as a basis of the interdisciplinarity of the concept of ‘cultural memory’ and has taken it closer to the fields of ethnology and folkloristics that focus on everyday texts. The theory of cultural memory has been applied by different disciplines like history, literature, archaeology, religious studies, media and sociology. The Assmanns have defined ‘cultural memory’ as a form of collective memory, which is shared by a number of people and that it conveys to these people a cultural identity (J. Assmann 2008: 110). Cultural memory is tied to material objectifications staged in word, image, dance etc. (Erll 2011: 28; J. Assmann 2008), and in connection to that the question of memory media also arises. The Assmanns see first of all established objectifications, traditional symbolic encoding, staged in word, image, and dance as media of cultural memory (Assmann 1992: 56).

The question about cultural memory and communicative memory is also connected with different temporalities; therefore, the Assmanns have distinguished between cultural and communicative memory. Jan and Aleida Assmann suggest that cultural memory consists of texts of “high” culture that have lasted through time and “create a framework for communication across the abyss of time” (Assmann 2008: 97, see also J. Assmann 1995, 2008; A. Assmann 1999, 2004, 2006; Erll 2011: 27ff). Cultural memory is attached to certain points that, unlike communicative memory, do not move forward with the time perspective (Welzer 2008: 283). The Assmanns also point out the importance of the long historical perspective, which, unlike the Anglo-American approach, reaches longer than the traumas of the 20th-century (Assmann 2004: 46). On the other hand, communicative memory deals with interactions in the everyday realm, Jan Assmann has underlined that this realm of memory includes history in the frame of autobiographical memory and is mediated through the media of living, embodied memory by communication in vernacular language (Assmann 2008: 117; Assmann 1992: 56). In their reflections about communicative memory and cultural memory, the Assmanns also stress that communicative memory includes the period of 80–100 years, which includes communication between three to four generations. In the frame of that perspective we can treat the remembrance of late socialism as belonging to the realm of communicative memory.

Besides differentiation between cultural memory and communicative memory, Aleida Assmann has also suggested a differentiation within cultural memory. Cultural memory can be ‘active’ (*Funktionsgedächtnis, canon*) and ‘passive’ memory (*Speichergedächtnis, archive*) (A. Assmann 1999, also in 2004: 47ff, 2006: 54 ff., 2008). According to Assmann, active memory preserves the past as present, while the institutions of passive memory preserve the past as past. In the articles, my co-authors and I discuss active memory, where the past is preserved as present (A. Assmann 2008: 98). Aleida Assmann refers to the communicative memory also as social memory (2006: 54, 2010b).

In addition to the studies of Aleida and Jan Assmann, I relied on works by Ann Rigney (2005, 2008ab, 2016) and Astrid Erll (2005, 2008, 2011) for analysing the dynamics of Estonian post-Soviet cultural memory. Rigney has emphasised the increasing significance of cultural dynamics in memory studies

and underlined the shift of focus in cultural studies “from products to processes, from a focus on cultural artifacts to an interest in the way those artifacts circulate and influence their environment” (Rigney 2008: 346). Rigney supports Hayden White’s view, which took root in the humanities since the 1970s–80s, that narration shapes our experiences; an event does not naturally take the form of a narrative, an active narrator is needed to talk about it (Rigney 2004). From Astrid Erll’s writings I would first of all like to underline her wider approach to the media of cultural memory under which she also includes contemporary literature and film, thus being more open/democratic towards the media than the Assmanns who have a background in interpreting classical culture. The first writings on cultural memory of J. & A. Assmann elaborated cultural memory in a kind of restrictive, selective, and elitist way, by including only texts connected with high culture into the realm of cultural memory, but in her later writings Aleida Assmann has broadened this view (e.g. Assmann 2008). This approach could also be explained through the division of public-private, whereas private texts belong to communicative memory, and public texts – like history books, novels, archival text – to the public realm.

Dealing with such a recent past like remembering the period of late socialism, a strict distinction between communicative memory and cultural memory is not useful. Ann Rigney, among others, recently stated that “the implicit suggestion that there is a diachronic opposition between ‘communicative’ and ‘cultural’ (in the sense of ‘mediated’) forms of memory, has not been generally accepted (Rigney 2016). She emphasises that embodied recollection and processes of mediation are seen [...] as continuously interwoven, as entangled from the beginning rather than representing two different phases in memory production (ibid.).

Besides Rigney, Erll has also problematised the Assmanns’ approach to cultural memory as too narrow. Erll claims that ‘Cultural Memory’²⁹ does therefore *not* describe all manifestations of ‘memory in culture’; rather it represents a subset of this: the societal construction of normative and formative versions of the past” (Erll 2011: 30). I agree with Erll in that in the broad anthropological sense the umbrella ‘cultural’ could be applied to both communicative memory and cultural memory (ibid.: 31). I deal with the relationship between communicative and Cultural Memory in more depth in Articles IV and V. By analysing recent texts that are dealing with late socialism, I experienced that the framework offered by Assmanns is not sufficient; texts created quite recently and dealing with the recent past – which is also communicated in the realm of communicative memory – are also part of cultural memory. Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that this strict separation of cultural memory and communicative memory is possible/thinkable only in the theoretical context, in actual memory practice, they are linked together and borrow from each other all the time (see Welzer 2008).

²⁹ While referring to Assmann’s concept of cultural memory, Erll uses capital letters (Cultural Memory) to distinguish it from more generic use of ‘cultural memory’ (Erll 2011: 27).

Going back to Aleida Assmann's writings, she underlines that the notion of 'cultural memory' has its own accent in every language and cultural space (*Kulturraum*) (Assmann 2004: 45), thus the meaning that has been attached to it in the German scientific discourse (*das kulturelle Gedächtnis*) does not necessarily coincide with that in other discourses, since developments have been different. In this frame Ann Rigney has proposed to translate Assmann's *das kulturelle Gedächtnis* into English as 'canonical memory' not as 'cultural memory' (2016: 66).

In Estonian scholarship, the usage area of the notion 'cultural memory' is most influenced by the tradition of German cultural memory both in the sense of the Assmanns and Astrid Erll (see, for example, Kõresaar 2003:10ff; Laanes 2009: 22ff; Laanes 2014; Laanes & Kaljundi 2013). Due to the close connections of Estonian cultural research with Juri Lotman's cultural semiotics, his studies on cultural memory (see Lotman 2013; on Lotman and the theory of cultural memory see Tamm 2013, 2015) are, of course, another source of inspiration.³⁰

2.2. Dynamics of memory approach and social memory studies

Another pillar of my work is connected with 'social memory studies' (Olick, Robbins 1998; Burke 1989). 'Social memory studies' refers to the study of the variety of forms through which we are shaped by the past, public and private, material and communicative, consensual and challenged (Olick & Robbins 1998: 112). As the whole enterprise of memory studies is inter- and trans-disciplinary, so is the social memory approach, described by Jeffrey Olick and Joice Robbins as centreless and transdisciplinary (Olick, Robbins 1998). The research premises of social memory go back to Halbwachs, who wrote already in 1925 that the individual is remembering only in a social environment, and that memory cannot take place in a social vacuum. Halbwachs (1992 [1925]) established memory as an object of sociological study. His work was first published in French in 1925 and post-mortem in 1950. However, Halbwachs' influence on the cultural sciences – like ethnology, history, and cultural psychology – had its departing point in the 1980s and 1990s, with translations into English (1980, 1992) and German (1980, 1992), except in France, where Halbwachs has always been part of theoretical tradition in sociology and history (Olick 2016); he is one of the authors who is referred to in different social memory studies, and whose works are still a source of inspiration.

My research has been carried out in the framework of the dynamics of memory approach (Miztal 2003). The definition of 'memory' by the dynamic

³⁰ Aleida and Jan Assmann also admit the influence of Lotman on their studies (J.Assmann 1992 and A. Assmann 1999). These contacts were first of all made through the interdisciplinary research groups of Konstanx University in which Slavists also participated (mainly Renate Lachmann, see Tamm 2013).

perspective does not reduce remembering to an instrument of elite manipulation used to control the lower classes and minority groups. It locates memory in “the space between an imposed ideology and the possibility of an alternative understanding experience” (Radstone 2000: 18). According to the dynamics of memory approach, there is no dominant version of memory; the different versions of memory are in constant development and are influencing each other. This approach helps to understand the diversity of remembering.

Social memory is understood as “organised cultural practices supplying ways of understanding the world, and providing people with beliefs and opinions which guide their actions” (Misztal 2003). The dynamics of memory approach does not assume that the group remains the same, and therefore it can accommodate changes in the group’s memory and account for its incoherence. Misztal criticises Halbwachs’s idea of memory as a too much preset entity. “... he [Halbwachs] asserts the stability of a social group’s memory because he assumes that the group’s identity, which determines the content of collective memory, is stable and hitherto well established” (ibid.: 69). As Misztal emphasises, “in contrast, the dynamics of memory approach recognises the temporal dimension of identities and argues for the need to analyse them in terms of constitutive and transforming moments” (ibid.). Thus, such an approach can also be applied to post-Soviet memory culture, as since the 1990s identities have been changing. I have tried to analyse these changes in a systematic manner, also demonstrating the changes in and the variety of approaches to the Soviet past. In the context of post-Soviet memory studies, it is also important to consider the influence of the changes in the 1990s on society as a whole, including memory culture. Methodologically speaking it is important to bear in mind that social change brings about new social and symbolic structures that overlay old ones without replacing them (Schwartz 1996).

2.1.1. Mnemonic practices and memory politics

Studying the dynamics of remembering requires a complex approach to the dimension of time, including the recognition of consistency in change. While studying the question how memories of one particular period are made, I have also looked into the dynamics in the remembering and commemoration processes. In this context, the works of US sociologist, historian, and collective memory researcher Jeffrey Olick have been significant (especially in Article I). Olick has stressed that we as researchers should concentrate more on the process of collective memory, and not treat it as an entity, and we should look at memory as a dynamical and processual phenomenon (Olick 1999, 2007, 2008). Among other authors (like Winter 2004; Sivan & Winter 1999; Wertsch 2002), Olick prefers to talk about remembering and commemorative activity. He has demonstrated that changes in commemorative practices do not mean that earlier forms of commemoration are simply overwritten or replaced by later ones. He finds that “later commemorations do not need to make explicit reference to earlier

ones to manifest this relationship, nor do subsequent commemorators need even to be aware of the earlier ones” (Olick 2007: 12). In the context of this study, Olick’s view that we must find a way to talk about “the process of social remembering in time and the varieties of retrospective practices in such a way that does not oppose individual and collective memory to each other” (ibid.: 10) is important. Proceeding from this viewpoint, in approaching the memory culture of late socialism in this dissertation, I highlight the heterogeneity of memory practices in 21st century Estonia: individual actors (for example, life story writers in this context), institutions (presidents), as well as cultural texts all contribute to the making of culture of remembering late socialism.

Relying on Bourdieu (Bourdieu 2005 [1977]), Olick uses the notion of ‘practice’, which he has developed further as ‘mnemonic practice’. What is the advantage of using mnemonic practices? Olick argues that practices help to avoid regarding memory as a static entity, since practices are always multiple, and more connected with the processes of remembering. Another influence on Olick’s approach is Mikhail Bahktin’s notion of ‘utterance’. Olick refers here to Bahktin’s emphasis on dialogue, on the fact that no utterance (or, by extension, mnemonic practice) can be understood outside of an ongoing discourse (Olick 2007: 105f). He has demonstrated that mnemonic practices are “made wholly neither in the past nor in the present but in the ongoing and reflexive interactions between them” (ibid.: 104), new practices of commemoration are based on ‘memories’ of earlier forms of commemoration. Olick calls this memory of commemoration ‘memory of memory’ (ibid.: 58). He has applied his ‘memory of commemoration’ approach to the study of the 8th May 1945 commemorations in Germany (concentrating on the speeches of German presidents), dealing with the realm of memory politics.

As an ethnologist who is also trained in history, I have been interested in memory politics from the point of view how public memory work and individual memory work are connected to each other. Research on the realm of memory politics mainly deals with thinking about the relationship between historical consciousness, political identity, and power (Bell 2008). People’s memories are shaped by interactions with other people and shared discourses, including those created by (national) elites and counter-elites (see Lebow 2006; Müller 2002). Memory politics in the Baltics are closely related to history politics or history writing (on these relations see Tamm 2013; on connections between memory and history and commemorations Pettai 2015, 2011; Onken 2009; Pääbo 2011). Memory politics in Estonia and in Eastern Europe is also closely connected with international relations and security politics (Mälksoo 2012, 2015) – the main reference point here is the (power) relations with neighbouring Russia, which also define the politics of the past. Memory politics is shaping and is shaped very much by different memory communities and by their different interpretations of the past, which in the Estonian context is mainly connected with different approaches to the Second World War (Kõre-saar 2011b; Brüggemann 2008; Brüggemann & Kasekamp 2008; Ehala 2009). In my work, the realm of memory politics becomes important when looking at

the relationship between individual and collective remembering and memory work, and how this is articulated with the available cultural resources (Wertsch 2002). The main actors here are speeches of Estonian presidents; these speeches are part of the shared discourse on the national level.

Examining memory politics as a discourse into which contributions are made both bottom-up and top-down, the metaphor of ‘nostalgia’ is a part of the politics of the past. The metaphor of ‘nostalgia’ is used in both its positive and negative tones in the context of the politics of the past. The latter usually surfaces in narratives deviating from the hegemonic/others’ descriptions of the past, and the former in the case of nostalgia that fits into the hegemonic narrative. Nostalgia is also a metaphor where the individual and the collective are closely interwoven, as is the case in the remembering process in general.

2.2.2. Nostalgia as discursive phenomena

The notion of ‘nostalgia’ has been applied in some form in all articles of the dissertation (being more marginal in Article II); thus, the metaphor of ‘nostalgia’ plays a remarkable role in the interpretation of the experiences of mature socialism. Nostalgia has become one of the main concepts for analysing post-socialist memory culture. Maria Todorova, a Bulgarian-born US historian, has elegantly paraphrased Marx, commenting on the popularity of the concept of nostalgia as follows: “a specter is haunting the world of academia: the study of post-communist nostalgia” (2010: 1). Anthropologist Dominic Boyer elaborates on nostalgia as a discursive phenomenon, and this does not mean a search for a place, a home, or a nation “but a sociotemporal yearning for different stage or quality of life. In this respect, post-socialist nostalgia is most often interpreted not literally as a desire to return to state socialism” (Boyer 2010: 18).

British social scientists and memory researchers Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering developed an idea of ‘nostalgia’ as a consequence of modernity and the sharp divergence between experience and expectation (2012: 115). Concerning the rapid changes which took place in the 1990s in Estonia and in other post-Soviet and post-socialist countries, it is understandable that in those countries there was a clear divergence between expectations and experiences, which made the way for the emergence of different kinds of nostalgias. Another characteristic of nostalgia is that the individual and the collective are closely interwoven. Examining life story writing and cultural texts focusing on the experience of late socialism, one can see how nostalgia is expressed individually in each case. It can also manifest itself in society at different times and simultaneously towards different places (on nostalgia of 1920s generation towards “Estonian time” see Kõresaar 2008). As Keightley and Pickering put it: “but the meanings it is given are dependent on a broader social narrative about past and present, change and discontinuity, temporal distance and difference, innovation and estrangement from what innovation has brought to any given contemporary period” (2012: 112).

How did I approach nostalgia in my studies? First of all, I share the understanding that “several different nostalgias are at work simultaneously on the level and within the individual and social communities. Nostalgia responds to the diversity of personal needs and (political) aims” (Kõresaar 2008: 760). My empirical studies are framed by the approaches of Svetlana Boym and Daphne Berdahl, while Kõresaar’s reflection on nostalgia in “Post-Soviet Estonian memory culture” (2008) has been influential, and I have also relied on Jeanne Wilson’s (2005) and Nadkarni and Sevchenko’s (2004) approaches. Svetlana Boym, in her study *Future of Nostalgia* (2001), has made a useful distinction between “restorative and reflective nostalgia”. ‘Restorative nostalgia’ is defined as nostalgia that recalls memories of a patriotic past and shapes a future based on those memories; it is connected with national memory that “is based on a single plot of national identity” (Boym 2001: XVIII, see also Boym 2001: 41ff). This type of nostalgia is used to ideologise and mystify the past on a national and/or social level (legitimising current projects through past examples). In the Estonian public debate, when problematising different aspects of nostalgia towards Soviet era, the critics often have in mind restorative nostalgia; they are interpreting nostalgia as a threat to Estonian statehood (e.g. Laar 2007; Masso 2010). On the other hand, restorative nostalgia was instrumentalised during the Singing Revolution also in the public realm, where the childhood memories of people born in 1920s revealed at the social memory level were a part of the national discourse. This discourse valued the pre-Second World War Republic as a kind of ideal in the process to return to independence (see Kõresaar 2008: 762; Jõesalu 2003a: 190–195). Kõresaar stated that for the older generation (born in 1920s), the restorative nostalgia expressed in life stories was also used as criticism towards present-day authorities (Kõresaar 2008: 763).

‘Reflective nostalgia’, on the other hand, is a more general longing for a past time, which also contributes to the meaning-making of the present. As Boym has put it: “reflective nostalgia dwells on the ambivalences of human longing and belonging and does not shy away from the contradictions of modernity” (2001: XVIII). Reflective nostalgia is above all connected with the realm of social and cultural memory, and is thus a useful concept for exploring nostalgia in life stories and other social memory media (Articles I, IV, V). In the Estonian context we can talk about the emergence of reflective nostalgia towards the late Soviet period since the end of the 20th century that occurred at different arenas of remembering³¹ (life-writing, commodification of nostalgia, literature, and a popular TV-show in public broadcast since 2010 about life in Soviet Estonia, called *ENSV* depicts life during the last Soviet years³²).

³¹ The popularity of music from Soviet cartoons actually peaked already in the second half of the 1990s – it was especially favoured among people born in the 1970s. In 1990s the so-called rug beating music or dwarf disco became popular in public places like cafes and shops; for example, a children’s songs record popular in the Soviet period (*Buratino’s Stories*) was also used. But a larger wave of nostalgia that emerged in different media still came some years later.

³² <http://etv.err.ee/l/meelelahutus/ensv>, last visited 17 August 2016.

A very useful approach to nostalgia in post-socialist contexts was provided by US anthropologist Daphne Berdahl (Berdahl 2010), who proposed to look at nostalgia as a kind of counter-memory to the hegemonic Western discourse about the communist past (Berdahl 2010: 55–56). Berdahl’s observations on *Ostalgie*, which began to appear in East Germany in the first half of the 1990s, are based on her fieldwork in former GDR. The transformation of society from socialist to liberal capitalist democracy has also had a profound impact on the ways in which the recent past is remembered – people gave meaning to the complicated present through nostalgia. This kind of understanding of nostalgia as counter-memory is very central in Article III through the analysis of the narrated experiences of women born during and after the Second World War.

In addition to seeing nostalgia as a form of counter-memory, one form of nostalgia can be characterised by “cynicism, irony and parody”; Berdahl demonstrated the occurrence of this kind of nostalgia in post-socialist cultural texts like the well-known movie *Good Bye, Lenin!* (2003) (2010: 131). Along the same line, it can be argued that in the nostalgia of the younger generations in Estonia the use of cynical and ironic forms of nostalgia have a certain place (see Article IV and V, Grünberg 2008), and the appearance of this type of nostalgia can also be observed in Estonian cultural texts.

2.2.3. Public-private relationship in the remembering of Soviet period

All approaches introduced so far – the cultural memory approach, the dynamics of memory approach – are asking in one or another way about the relationship of public-private in different areas of remembrance. Hereby I will elaborate on the concepts of private-public that reflect the relationship between remembering at different levels (in general, between memory politics and social remembering). Neither the private nor the public fields work separately, but are mutually entangled. This dissertation deals with different areas of remembrance and includes different actors from different fields. The presidents articulate in their speeches – which essentially are public acts – their experiences from the private realm. Museums – here representing remembering in the domain of cultural memory – being by nature also public institutions, are less institutionalised than the institution of the President of the Republic, and they collect and represent private experiences and artefacts from the Soviet era. By creating a cultural text on late socialism, most of the authors also use their private experiences and memories of their childhood and youth and mediate them through cultural media. The life story writer uses her/his personal experiences from different realms of Soviet life – official, social, private – and by describing them s/he mediates his/her experiences to the public, thereby relying on schemata available for her/him from the public field.

Memory politics and social remembering are framing every article in this dissertation. The question of public-social-private spheres in the remembering

of everyday life during late socialism is central in Article II. The question of public-private arises especially when one is analysing the everyday realm during the Soviet period, thereby focusing on work life (Articles II and III). The relationship between private and public is expressed at two levels: firstly, at the level of Soviet society of the time it was experienced, and, secondly, at the level of narrating.

The distinction between the public and the private could be seen as one of the most fundamental, yet one of the most unstable ordering principles of social life. In day-to-day life, the distinction operates as common sense and a basic reference point but, as Bailey (2002: 15) suggests, at the analytical level, it is a useful tool for describing social change. Analysing life stories sent as responses to the campaign *My Life and My Family's Life in the Estonian Socialist Soviet Republic (ESSR) and in the Republic of Estonia*, it becomes clear that work life constitutes the central part of many stories. On the public-private scale, work life in the mature socialism period may be considered to lie between two spheres, belonging to the realm of informal public or social realm (Zdravomyslova & Voronkov 2002). Work life was, at the formal level, regulated by the rules of central planning and official ideology, which regarded the working collective as a model of Soviet society but, at the informal level, it functioned as a hotbed of “pervasive clientelism and unregulated particularism” (Garcelon 1997; Zdravomyslova & Voronkov 2002). Since an individual depended on the state, the workplace was transformed into a central resource for satisfying both public and private needs. In this process, close relationships, both utilitarian and personal, existed between colleagues (Jõesalu 2004, 2006). The development of informal public in Soviet Union could be traced more broadly since the 1960s. As a part of informal public, we could see various kinds of activities taken place in public places like cafes, at cultural events, in the frame of free time activities, which were often connected to the workplace (see also Aarelaid-Tart & Kan-nike 2004).

In addition to work biographies analysed in Article II, the topic of public-private emerged very clearly in women's life stories. Female life-story writers discussed how they united duties at work and at home during late socialism (Article III), paying also attention to their family life. From gender perspective it is interesting to note that in some cases, if a male life story writer wrote about his private life, he understood it through the public, e.g. the realm of private sphere – his own family life, etc. – was left out or touched upon only passingly. Analysing the post-Soviet narratives of the past, the public-social-private division is quite clearly exposed, and the social field is mainly in the focus. Different styles of speech are also used for describing different areas of life; methodologically, Alessandro Portelli's way of applying the institutional-social-private ways of telling the past on the analysis of life stories helped to pay attention to this (Portelli 1992, 1997, see Article II, subchapter 3.3.1.)

2.3. Generational framework

In the following I am going back to Halbwachs's main idea about remembering – that remembering takes place in groups, in mnemonic communities, whereas the family, ethnic group or nation, but also generation can be regarded as the main mnemonic communities. In this dissertation the people remembering the mature Soviet period meet in the generational perspective: I have in mind remembering agents on different levels: the institutional (presidents who also use mediation of generational experience in their speeches, museums as institutions and gatherers and representers of the experiences of different generations), the level of cultural and social memory (life-story writers as representatives of generational experience). Generation is also an effective concept for studying political memory that has primarily been applied for the 1960s generation (Bude 1995; Nehring 2011; Onken 2010). Generational memory could be considered as a part of collective, social memory, while understood as a narrower formation of memory (Assmann 2004; see also Onken 2010).

Hence, I will elaborate on the way the concept of generation is used in this study. In my dissertation, I deal with narrated experiences of three different generations: I briefly touch on narratives of those born in the 1920s, but the narrated experiences of those born in the 1940s and in the 1970s are in the focus. In this context 'generation' is perceived in the self-descriptive way, not in the sociological sense. I understood generation as a kind of mnemonic community where common experiences and memories are shared. In this sense generations are made by common experiences (or socio-economic characteristics) and narrating about these experiences in public or in private context also gives a sense of belonging and self-understanding. I am not asking here what are the exact boundaries of generational belonging are (generations in genealogical sense), but I am interested in the way this self-understanding is narrated, what is specific about the Soviet-time experience of a generation, and are there specific ways how people from different generations narrate about late socialism.

Looking at the Soviet/socialist period through the lenses of generational experience has been a quite frequent practice that has prominently focused on the "last generation of late socialism" (Yurchak 2006). Yurchak concentrates on the experiences and discourses of those born between the 1950s and early 1970s who came of age between the 1970s and the mid-1980s (2006: 31). He points out that the common identity of the last generation in broader Soviet context was "formed by a shared experience of the normalised, ubiquitous, and immutable authoritative discourse of the Brezhnev's years" (ibid.: 32). Yurchak's argumentation is based on research among members of younger generation educated urbanites from Russian cities, who have also been members of *Komsomol*. In his focus are young people who were active in the cultural field, and who were also "involved in ideological institutions, rituals and discourses" (ibid.).

As another example of the generational viewpoint applied on studying mature Soviet society the study about ‘last Stalin’s generation’ (Fürst 2010) could be mentioned. Here Fürst focused on the generation born mostly in the 1930s in Russia, who came to age during late Stalinism, and whose generational location was formed by the experience of the Second World War as children or adolescents. Fürst points out that the identity of this generation did not form around any political event; she also demonstrates that neither self-identification nor age-driven conflict is strictly necessary to form a generation (2010: 18). She describes the last Stalin’s generation, as the ‘bridge generation’ who created an important link between the generation socialised before the Second World War and the later generation, which Yurchak has named the ‘last Soviet generation’. Both Yurchak as Fürst are dealing only with Russian experiences inside the Soviet Union, leaving aside experiences from the margins of the Soviet Union like the Baltic States, and also the experiences of rural people.

German historian Dorothee Wierling has also studied the post-war generation in East- German context, labelling those born in the founding years of the GDR as ‘the first generation’ (Wierling 2002). In my case – similarly to Wierling’s study – I have also considered the narrative experience of the post-war generation in Estonia, labelling them as the ‘silent generation’.

This dissertation does not try to grasp the “hegemonic generational spirit” (Niethammer 2005) in Mannheimian sense; it deals more with self-understanding at the margins of societal discourse. This means that it deals with the borderland – as Estonia in the case of the Soviet Union – and not merely with the elitist (urbanite) understanding of generational unit. In my studies, I have together with my co-authors differentiated between social groups according to their temporal horizons (Giesen 2004: 32; see Article IV and V). Generally, we have proceeded from Bernhard Giesen’s observation that

“in a common attempt to remember the past, social groups can and frequently will encounter differences of temporal horizon or differences in focusing special events as turning points of history. Events that have a key importance for the collective memory of one group may be ignored or omitted in the collective memory of others and even if both agree to attribute crucial importance to a particular event they still can greatly diverge in their interpretation of it” (Giesen 2004: 32; see Kõresaar & Jõesalu 2016a).

Conceptualising generations, one cannot ignore Karl Mannheim’s essay from the year 1927 in which Mannheim stresses that generations are products of collectively experienced historical events (Mannheim 1952). Mannheim considered generation to be based on ‘location’; thereby he stresses the potentiality of generational location more than generational actuality. According to Mannheim participating in a common historical event creates a historical and social unit. By the example of Western Europe such formative events of the 20th century are the two World Wars and the protest movements of the 1960s (see Lovell 2007; Memory Studies 2013). In the East European context we could

also name the World Wars as formative events, as well as the independence and civil wars that followed the First World War and Russian Revolution (Krylova 2011); but also, the establishment of new statehoods (cf. Wierling 2002). At the same time the impact of the 1960s has been different in every East and Central European country (the impact of the movements of the 1960s have been clearly different in Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union). Mannheim in his approach has underlined the importance of the events in the public and political sphere for the formation of generational consciousness. Other researchers (among others, Weisbrod 2007; Niethammer 2005) suggest that we should look behind this male-centred and elitist understanding of generation constructed through public events. Weisbrod suggests that generational self-generalisation could be examined in more detail and that ‘silent generations’ should be brought back into focus (2007: 31). Generational consciousness does not need necessarily be connected with a historical event; it could also be defined through everyday experiences and through narrating those experiences.

Doing research on childhood experiences of people born in the Soviet Union between 1957–77, Catriona Kelly, for example, underlines the importance of a common narrated experience, and this experience is not necessarily connected to the public sphere, rather the other way around, to the private (2007: 165–66). This kind of narrated experience could be connected e.g. with the upbringing of children, working women in the Soviet Union (see Article III) or using pills as contraception (Silies 2007).

Generational research in the context of 20th century Estonia has been quite popular. Firstly, one could mention studies of generations by Aili Aarelaid-Tart, who has examined the social memories of different Estonian cohorts in Estonia and in exile Estonian community (Aarelaid-Tart 2006). She was interested in the relationship between generational time and time connected to political events. Aarelaid-Tart has argued that people born at the same time “acquire different life ideologies through adapting to different social contexts, although their initial habitual disposition still follows them throughout their lives” (2006: 28). She characterised people born in 1920–1939 as the ‘republican generation’, but this generation was also later divided into smaller units depending on their fate during the Second World War: those who escaped become the ‘first generation in Exile’, the people who stayed in Estonia could be divided, according to Aarelaid-Tart, into ‘Estonian-inclined communists’ and ‘U-turn survivors’. (Aarelaid-Tart 2006: 29). People born in the 1940s belong to the War and post-war generation, and in the 1960s the active part of that cohort formed ‘the generation of thaw’. The cohort of the 1960s could be labelled the ‘generation of Soviet liberalisation’. The last Soviet generation, born in the 1970s, is described here as the ‘Soviet stagnation generation’. Similarly to Aarelaid-Tart’s approach, in the case of Latvia, people born in the 1920–30s are also recognised as members of the ‘republican generation’ (Bela 2009). Recently an article collection was published that tries to encompass generations in 20th century perspective and, in some sense, follows Aarelaid’s work (Nugin, Kan-

nike, Raudsepp 2016). In this book both quantitative and qualitative approaches for studying different generations of the 20th and 21st centuries are applied.

Special attention has been paid to Estonian historians from the generational perspective. Wulf and Grönholm have studied different generations of Estonian historians. They asked about the relationship of historians to the political system, to politics, and ultimately to power (Wulf, Grönholm 2010). In her recent book *Shadowlands* (2016) Meike Wulf also applies generational approach studying Estonian cultural memory during and after the Cold War. She claims that in divided societies it is helpful to find “more inclusive categories of group identification such as ‘generation’ to supersede exclusive definitions based on ethnicity and descent” (Wulf 2016: 16). She has characterised Estonian historians who were active at the time of restoration of Estonian independence in 1991, through four generational groups: the ‘war generation’ (born in the 1920s, early 1930s, experiencing loss of statehood), the ‘post-war children’ (born between late 1930s and early 1950s, the first Soviet generation), the ‘transitional generation’ (born between late 1950s and early 1960s) and the ‘freedom children’ (born in late 1960s, early 1970s) (Wulf 2016: 63, 70–71).

In his classic study, Mannheim emphasises that forming events take place at a young age – during formative years; yet, through the example of Soviet experience we may argue that also later years, not just adolescence, can be the defining decade.³³ During the active period one need not necessarily describe her/himself as belonging to a certain group, this belonging can also be ‘created’ in retrospective, through narrating earlier experiences. Describing a generation has both descriptive and creative power – naming a group a generation – describing common discursive practices e.g. – also gives them power for self-ascription (see in detail: Fürst 2010: 14–15).

It goes without saying that generations are not homogenous, that in every age cohort there are people with different life trajectories and experiences. In this dissertation, the questions which memory practices are represented among those people who have added their stories to the public collections or who make their experiences heard through other media, like publishing memoirs, or through cultural texts like films and novels or art, are central considerations.

2.3.1. The narrated experiences of different generations

Following the idea of Giesen on temporal horizons, how different social groups (like generations) are focusing on different historical events, I will show what events or non-events are meaningful for remembering the Soviet period. As emphasised earlier, I am mainly mediating narrated experiences of people born in Soviet Estonia in the 1940s and the 1970s, but also narrators born in the 1920s–30s are represented.

³³ As at the example of people of sixties ‘shest’desiatniki’ in the Soviet Union or in the case of this dissertation as exemplified in the Article III.

The First Soviet Generation or Silent Generation – born in 1940s

Due to my particular interest in late socialism, I focused, in the case of written biographies, mostly on the experiences of people born from the late 1930s until the first half of the 1950s, described by Wulf as ‘post-war children’ (2016). Those born in the 1940s have also been described as the first Soviet generation who were socialised by the Soviet school system and workplaces. Many of them were born during or immediately after the Second World War, hence the war experience occupies an important place in their stories, first of all through (family) stories and post-war difficulties (see also Aarelaid-Tart 2012). Their older family members had experienced the war, either as soldiers or civilians. Although, at the time when they grew up and were socialised, only the stories of those who fought on one side were permitted in the public discourse³⁴, in everyday conversations the war experience of both sides was articulated, i.e. on the level of experience different stories were represented in the field of social memory. In the life stories analysed in my articles, the war is often reflected on through a child’s eyes or the fates of the parents are described. The memories of forest brothers also occupy an important position. The experiences of life-story writers from this group do not always support the post-Soviet narrative of forest brothers as freedom fighters (see Article III). It can also be said that they acquired a certain perception of the conflict between the public and the private through different experiences.

On the other hand, relatively better educational opportunities were open to those born in the 1940s since secondary education was free from 1st of September 1956, and scholarships were available for further studies. The children of the 1940s could benefit from the improvement of the economic situation in the 1960s, building up their independent (working)life namely in the years of mature socialism. In many respects, they profited from the Soviet social system – kindergartens, free medical care and living space. The changes in the 1990s influenced this group in different ways: many were seriously affected by the dissolution of collective farms and sovkhozes, privatisation and selling of big enterprises, getting into the status of forced tenants. Yet, several people belonging to this generation grabbed hold of the opportunities of the 1990s and were able to transform their former Soviet experience successfully in the capitalist environment as well. The property reform law also touched this generation in many ways: they could be heirs of legal owners or find themselves among forced tenants. At the same time this generation could participate in the privatisation of living space with privatisation bonds unlike those born in the 1970s. Compared with the previous and the next generation (the 1960s and the so-called “winners’ generation”, Titma 1999), those born in the 1940s can be rather characterised as a ‘silent generation’ whose voice was less heard in the reorganisations of the 1990s and 2000s (in detail, see Article III), but from the

³⁴ Experience stories of the Great Patriotic War. Only members of the Estonian Rifle Corps, who fought as a part of Red Army, were included into public remembering. On the experiences of the Second World War, see Kõresaar 2011b.

2000s they have played an important role in creating the memory culture of late socialism, highlighting everyday discourse. In the late 1980s–early 1990s mostly the experiences of those born in the 1920s were dominant.

The Republican Generation – born in the 1920s

While the childhood of those born in the 1940s befell into the relatively tumultuous war- and afterwar years and the following life was more stable, the previous generation was born and grew up in the relatively stable 1920s–1930s, but the changes hit them in their early adulthood. Those born in the 1920s were born into the Republic of Estonia and got their education in the context of “national modernisation” (Kõresaar 2005: 28), two thirds of them in the countryside and one third in the cities (Sakkeus, Klesment, Puur 2016: 83). Compared with the previous and following generations their homes were relatively intact: in earlier generations the death of one parent before the children reached adulthood was quite common and in the case of the following generations the number of divorces grew (Sakkeus, Klesment, Puur 2016: 74). By the time of the regime change in 1940 they were still at the beginning of their independent life, some were already economically on their feet, but the life path still ahead. The 1940s – changes of the regime, occupations and war – influenced their life trajectories in the next decades. A great part of the men born in the 1920s (until the birth year 1927) fought at different fronts of the Second World War as mobilised or voluntary soldiers. Emigration to the West during the war, the changes in public space and incompatibility of some qualifications with the new society also touched this generation. After the chaotic 1940s more clear-cut Soviet decades arrived for this generation too – choices were multiple, some dedicated themselves more to work in the public sphere, some focused on life in the private sphere and hobbies.

In the life stories of this generation the experiences of the late socialism are often concluded with the sentence “it went on track” (Kõresaar 2016b: 117; Kõresaar 2001). The Soviet-time division of public-private definitely affected most of this generation, because they had experienced different regimes. In scholarly literature, this generation has also been characterised as the ‘war generation’ (Wulf 2016), ‘the generation of bitter choices’ (Hinrikus 2003b), ‘betrayed generation’ (Hinrikus, Kõresaar 2004: 25) or ‘republican generation’ (Aarelaid-Tart 2006, see also Kõresaar 2005). The childhood experiences and memories of those born in the 1920s and had mostly retired by the late 1980s, became very important in the atmosphere of the Singing Revolution. On everyday level, they were affected by the property reform, due to which many of them got back their childhood homes while others, similarly to those born in the 1940s, could become forced tenants.

This generation has also contributed a lot to the life story campaigns that began at the end of 1980ies. Thereby those who were born in the 1920s had a prominence in Estonian life story research in the 1990s and, in some extent, also later (Aarelaid 2000; Kõresaar 2004a, 2005b; Hinrikus 2003b; Raudsepp 2016). Their childhood experiences from the pre-war Republic of Estonia were

in harmony with the national narrative dominating in the first half of 1990s and this bright picture was also used later to explain social and economic reforms, as a return to the bright future (see also Kõresaar 2005). But, of course, there are people with different life experiences among those born in the 1920s (see Raudsepp 2016); some of them became part of the Soviet nomenklatura, some of them adapted to the new system, or chose their own way of life. Those different experiences are also represented in the life stories sent to the Estonian Cultural Archives. The experiences of those born in the 1920s are dealt with in Article II where the story of a man born in 1928 is analysed. In Article I, two of three Estonian presidents born in the late 1920s represent different experiences of that generation. In Article V the experiences of people born in the 1920s provide the basis for describing the place of late socialism in the 1990s memory culture (co-authored with Ene Kõresaar). They play an important role in remembering late socialism by constructing the discourse of the “culture of disruption”, “resistance” and “suffering”.

The Last Soviet Generation – born in the 1970s

Those born in the 1970s can be regarded as the last Soviet generation in the Estonian context³⁵ who had personal conscious experiences from the Soviet time. This concerns first of all the (ideological) school system, consumption (longing for western goods, scarcity of everyday products), everyday details and shared cultural texts (on the generation of cartoons see Grünberg 2009). Born in the years of late socialism, most of them got education in the Soviet system, those born at the beginning of the decade already started their work life in the late 1980s. Their coming of age coincided with great structural changes in society, and thus they went through double transition (Nugin 2015). In the new society that had opened up, there were, on the one hand, several new opportunities to shape one’s life trajectories, but, on the other hand, social structures supporting their entry into adulthood were missing (ibid.). For them the 1990s mostly meant the opening of borders in all directions and going along with the changes, unlike the older generations³⁶ who were hit by the changes – the disappearance of established structures – relatively unexpectedly.

Peeter (born in 1974) has described the experiences of different generations in the 1990s, first of all that of the young, born in the 1960s–1970s, and older, born in the 1940s–early 1950s, as follows: “Well ... naturally, to me it seemed they [parents] were not keeping up with time. That they did not understand. Right now, [2005] I think that I was of course unjust to them. In reality, their life was turned upside down” (in Nugin 2015: 88). In the everyday aspect, the stories of those born in the 1970s about getting their own home differ from the stories of those born in the 1940s, as well as from those born in the 1920s; since they were not adults in Soviet society, they mostly had to make their homes

³⁵ Cf. Yurchak’s approach to the last Soviet generation described above.

³⁶ Except those born in the 1960s, who have been called the ‘winners’ of the transformation in the Estonian context.

relying on their own resources (bank loans), which again frames their experiences in two different social formations. Their experience of the open society of the 1990s has definitely also shaped their attitude to late socialism.

Most of them interpret the period of late socialism either through personal experiences or reinterpretations of cultural texts (see Articles IV and V); yet, through some cultural texts, they also deal with earlier times (c.f. Vadi 2008; Wimberg 2002). In this dissertation, the authors of cultural texts born in the 1970s who have created new frames for the interpretation of late socialism are under special scrutiny.

3. REFLECTIONS ON MATERIAL AND SOURCES

As Alessandro Portelli has written already a quarter of century ago, “memory is not a passive depository of facts, but an active process of creation of meanings” (Portelli 1991), I will now proceed with a closer look at those who are creating these meanings and whose stories I have used here.

My interest in late socialism actually began already while writing my MA thesis, which focused on social relations in the workplace during the Soviet period (Jõesalu 2004). During 2001–2003 I interviewed 35 people on their work life during the Soviet period (born in 1921–1959, mainly worked in the cities). In 2001 I compiled a questionnaire for the correspondents’ network of Estonian National Museum³⁷ and also read the life stories at Estonian Cultural History Archive (ECHA). As I have returned to these sources for writing the articles, I consider it necessary to mention them here. Namely, these biographical narratives inspired the unfolding of the topic of this dissertation. The stories focusing on work life represented a more heterogeneous approach to the Soviet period than the hegemonic approach to this period as ‘rupture’ that dominated in the 1990s and the early 2000s (see Jõesalu 2005). For my dissertation I decided to broaden my range of sources, including other articulations of social memory in addition to biographical remembering.

Next, I will introduce the sources analysed and the ways I read them. Although each article tackles methodological issues separately in detail and introduces specific sources, I would like to give an overview of the diverse material in this subchapter – life stories, biographical interviews, published memoirs, speeches of presidents, and cultural texts – that I have used. These sources reflect the broadest possibility of arenas and agencies of articulation in remembering mature socialism.³⁸ Different sources also mark different areas of remembering and creating memories of late socialism at the political, cultural, and individual levels. The speeches of presidents respectively characterise the political, cultural texts the cultural, and life stories and other biographical texts the individual level. Most sources have been created without my direct participation – life stories, cultural texts, as well as the presidents’ speeches. However, interviews with cultural figures born in the 1970s are also a smaller but equally important part of the source material.

The notion of life-writing is suitable for describing the diversity of my sources (see Smith & Watson 2010: 3).³⁹ As an umbrella term, ‘life-writing’

³⁷ The questionnaire is available at: <http://vvv.erm.ee/et/Osale/Kaastoo/Kysimuslehed/Tooelu-ja-tootamine-Noukogude-Eestis>; (last visited 17 August 2016) there were 118 answers to the questionnaire *Work and Working Life in Soviet Estonia*.

³⁸ On arenas of articulation see Ashplant, Dawson, and Roper 2004: 17f.

³⁹ The Estonian notion is *omaelulookirjutus* (writing of one’s own life), see Kurvet-Käosaar, Hinrikus 2013; on the ethnological viewpoint of the collection of Estonian life stories see Kõresaar 2004a, Hirnikus, Kõresaar 2004; on interdisciplinary approach to oral history and life story research see Jaago, Kõresaar 2009; of the collection of life stories and memory studies see Kõresaar, Jõesalu 2016b.

encompasses different textual practices; exceeding the notion of ‘autobiography’, it refers to different types of texts that deal with somebody’s life. Thus the sources mentioned before – life stories, biographical interviews, memoirs, and cultural texts dealing with author’s past – also largely fall under the same notion. Writing about oneself can be done both within the frames of “classical” life-story writing or through memoirs and cultural texts that in their turn use different media (written, visual).

Sources from the restoration of Estonia’s independence in 1991 until 2010 are included in this study. Yet, the main focus is on materials written down, collected, published or created in 2000–2010 (Articles II–IV). Through the speeches of Lennart Meri held in 1992–2001 (Article I) and life stories written in the late 1980s–early 1990s the memory practices of the 1990s are also included in the dissertation (Article V).

I have mainly studied the life stories that have been sent to the Cultural-Historical Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum as responses to the campaign *My Life and My Family’s Life in the ESSR and in the Republic of Estonia* (2000–2001, 330 life stories, see on the context of this campaign below). On the other hand, I have also relied on the volumes of published life stories edited by Rutt Hinrikus, the initiator of the life-story campaigns (Hinrikus 2000, 2003a), some life stories sent for later competitions or between the competitions, as well as various published memoirs focusing on life in the ESSR. The authors of such memoirs mostly belong to the Soviet-time cultural and political elite whose life stories are less represented in the museum’s collections (e.g. Karm 2011; Saul 2006; Tungal 2008, 2009; Tarand 2008).

Life stories are personal stories and that must be considered *a priori* when analysing them. In dealing with life stories/biographical material, I consider important Marianne Gullestad’s position (2004) that the researcher has the right to write about other people in order to shed light on different viewpoints on a particular social issue and use these stories to analyse levels of interpretation. The researcher’s justified authority is to show the diversity of viewpoints, and approach the research process and its sides in a dialogical manner. Taking the central issue of this study as an example, it is important to tackle, through the biographical approach, these aspects of the Soviet period that would probably remain in the shadow when only official documents and texts connected with cultural memory are studied.

3.1. Sources of political and cultural memory: speeches of the presidents and cultural texts

As one of my purposes was to analyse the dynamics of memory politics, I chose for that the speeches of Presidents of the Republic of Estonia as sources. I studied the speeches (Article I) as mnemonic practices where historical experience (connected with the presidents’ private past and experiences) and historical awareness (linked with ideology) met (Peltonen 2009). I used the speeches

of three Estonian Presidents: Lennart Meri (in office 1992–2001), Arnold Rüütel (in office 2001–2006) and Toomas Hendrik Ilves (in office 2006–2016, mainly the speeches held during his first term in office 2006–2010). I made my choice from the speeches held on national holidays and at commemoration events. I scrutinised all the speeches held on 24 February – the national holiday, but also on 23 June (Victory Day); and, in the case of Rüütel and Ilves, also the speeches held on 20 August (Day of Restoration of Independence). But I also included speeches that were held on other mnemonic events like the speech Ilves gave at the opening of the conference of National Archives of Estonia or the speech Meri gave at the opening of the permanent exhibition of the Estonian National Museum in 1994. The speeches held on those national anniversaries and the anniversaries themselves create a common identity and unity with the help of emotions.

The speeches of Lennart Meri are published in three thick volumes (Meri 2001, 2005, 2007). Lennart Meri was born in 1929, into a diplomatic family; he lived with his family in Western Europe before the Second World War and was deported to Siberia in 1941. Meri studied history and ethnography at the University of Tartu, and was a writer and publicist during the Soviet era. He actively participated in the process of the re-establishment of independence in Estonia. In 1990–92 he was the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and in 1992 he was elected President of the Republic. During his term of office, memory work and dealing with past issues was very active in the public discourse; thus I went through most of his speeches held in Estonia. I marked from the speeches all the quotes that dealt with Soviet past. Altogether, Lennart Meri spoke on the topic of the Soviet past and occupation in 20 speeches held in 1994; 23 speeches in 1995, 27 in 2000, and 25 speeches in 2001.

The speeches of Arnold Rüütel were accessible on the website of former president (<https://vp2001-2006.president.ee/et/>, last accessed 15 August 2016). Rüütel, born in 1928 to a farming family, was educated at an agricultural college, and later at the Academy of Agriculture. Through work in agriculture he quickly moved to high positions, first at the Academia, then at the Central Committee of CP. Since 1983 he served as the Chairman of the Presidium of Supreme Soviet of ESSR. He was elected President in 2001.

Toomas Hendrik Ilves was born in 1953 to an exile Estonian family living in Sweden, and he was brought up and educated in the US. He worked in the US and Canada as a research assistant, teacher, and lecturer. Since 1984, he worked at Radio Free Europe in Munich. He served the re-established Republic of Estonia as Ambassador to the US, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, and as a Member of Parliament. Prior to his presidency he was a member of the European Parliament. He was elected President in 2006, after an intense campaign between him and Rüütel in which the interpretation of the Soviet past played a prominent role. His speeches were also accessible through the website (President at office www.president.ee, since October 2016 at <https://vp2006-2016.president.ee/et/>). I also made use of a book published in 2006, during the

presidential campaign, which featured essays and articles written by Ilves from 1986-2006 (Ilves 2006).

In examining the speeches, my attention was focused on the context in which the Soviet past was mentioned, the metaphors through which the period was characterised, and how this period was named (e.g., the Soviet time/period; period of occupation, Russian time/period, “period of darkness and evil”).

In addition to speeches I also used the biographies published on the official websites of the presidents as well as those in books compiled about them as sources. I also interviewed two civil servants from the Office of President – a female born in 1959, in office since 1995, and a male, born in 1974, in office since 1998. My interest was to gain background knowledge about people’s attitude and trust towards the presidents. I wanted to know whether the presidents also get different amounts of attention and what expectations people expressed through the letters they sent to the presidents. Both of my interviewees were in the service during the terms of all three presidents, and could therefore provide me with background information in a longer, comparative perspective. The interviews revealed that people trust the institution more than the actual person behind it.

In addition to the speeches of the presidents, I investigated the main memory-political discussions (like debates on condemning Communism and Nazism in Estonian Parliament, in 2001–2002), or media discussions on the meaning of the Soviet era.

Cultural texts are the second type of memory media for exploring the meaning of late socialism. Cultural texts form the cultural memory and cultural texts are cultural memory in the sense used by the Assmanns (Assmann 1992, Assmann 2006). Life-writing is also in dialogue with cultural texts. The changes that occurred in autobiographical remembering in this century relate to changes in other arenas of collective remembering like official and popular culture. The different types of texts refer to each other and influence each other, and there is a continuous circulation of motives. Inspired by the idea of James Wertsch about individual and collective memory as mediated action, which derives from mediation between individuals (agents) and cultural tools, I look at different cultural texts as texts which are part of life-writing and which are also influenced by autobiographic remembering (Wertsch 2002). In this sense, cultural texts can be used as a narrative tool in composing/writing down a person’s own past.

In choosing texts for analysis that focus on the experience of late socialism the potential of those texts to become a powerful “media of cultural memory” was the criterion of choice (Erll 2008: 390; see Article IV). Cultural texts are understood here in the broader sense, including written texts as well as exhibitions and visual media, since all these cultural texts with their generalised aesthetic formulations are always part of the general ‘cultural memory’ (Erll 2008; Assmann 2006: 207).

The main cultural texts in the context of this dissertation are exhibitions of Soviet everyday life in Estonian museums, which were on display since 2000

(in Articles IV, V). The first exhibition to name here was a design exhibition *Things in My Life. Soviet Estonian Product Design* (Asjad minu elus. Nõukogude Eesti tootedisain). The curators of the exhibition were two art historians, Kai Lobjakas and Karin Paulus. The former had just started her professional career at the Applied Art Museum and the latter was a young professional at the Academy of Arts. The exhibition was open first at the Estonian National Museum from December 2000 until February 2001, after that it was open again in April 2001 at the Applied Arts Museum in Tallinn.⁴⁰ At the exhibition, Soviet-era applied arts and design were staged; these were objects that were popular during the Soviet period and were familiar for a great part of the population during mature socialism, but which had not found their way to the museum yet. Media reports and other feedback was analysed and the two curators were also interviewed a decade later, in 2010 (see Articles IV and V). The next quite small exhibition was opened in 2004 – *Bag the Plastic! Plastic Bags Produced at the Tartu Experimental Plastic Product Factory during the 1980s* („Kile kotti!” Tartu Plastmasstoodete Katsetehase 1980. aastate kilekotid, curators Anu Järs and Kristi Kaljumägi), which showed one specific object from the Soviet era – namely plastic bags, which had, in addition to practical value, high symbolic value during mature socialism. I visited the exhibition (not with the intention to analyse it at that time); media texts and other feedback were also used.

The following exhibition was staged again at the Estonian National Museum – *We Ate and We Drank... Food Culture in Soviet Estonia* (Ise söime, ise jõime... Toidukultuur Nõukogude Eestis) – which opened in spring 2006.⁴¹ The curators of the exhibition were Reet Piiri, Terje Anepaio, and Ellen Värvi. The exhibition focused on everyday food practices during late socialism, with an emphasis on issues related to public catering (part of a canteen was staged in the exhibition room) as well to stocking up and storing foodstuffs. Also, a small private Soviet-style kitchen was rebuilt in the exhibition room, which gave rise to a lot of emotions among visitors (see also Aljas, Liiv, Raba 2015: 70; Article V; Viira 2006; Varblane 2007⁴²). I visited the exhibition many times, and I also used the guestbook of the ENM where visitors shared their emotions after their

⁴⁰ The exhibition was open until June 2001. One of the curators, Kai Lobjakas, is still working at the Museum of Applied Arts and Design, since 2013 as a director of museum. Karin Paulus has worked as architecture critic and lecturer at the Estonian Academy of Arts; at the moment she is a freelance critic.

⁴¹ The exhibition was an outcome of a joint research project of the ENM and the Department of Ethnology, University of Tartu, “Everyday strategies and practices in Soviet Estonia”.

⁴² In the cultural weekly *Sirp*, Reet Varblane, interviewing Merike Alber, director of the Museum of Applied Arts and Design at that time, introduces the slightly changed exhibition that opened in Tallinn, in December 2006. In this conversation the controversial feelings of visitors about Soviet-era everyday items and design are also discussed. The title of the text “The Soviet past is our past too” implies the difficulties in accepting the Soviet past as our (Estonian) past on the cultural and political memory levels (Varblane 2007). At the same time, Viira’s article in the tabloid *SL Õhtuleht* does not include those controversies – the focus is clearly on Soviet-era everyday practices and management skills of Estonians (Viira 2006).

visit. The same exhibition was restaged at the Estonian Museum of Applied Arts and Design, in December 2006–January 2007.

The last exhibition included in this study was opened in 2007, titled *Soviet Introduction to Life: Youth Summer Days in the ESSR* (Nõukogulik lähetus ellu – noorte suvepäevad Eesti NSVs; Anepaio, Järs, Värv 2008), dedicated to another phenomenon of mature socialism in Soviet Estonia – youth summer camps organised by Komsomol.⁴³ In this case I also visited the exhibition and studied the guestbook of the museum.

Simultaneously with the “discovery” of late socialism by Estonian museums, that period also became topical in other cultural texts. From those diverse cultural texts, we⁴⁴ chose texts created by one generation; namely authors born in the 1970s. We chose examples from different media: both visual and written texts. In Article IV one feature film, one novel and, one documentary are examined: the feature film *Touched by the Unknown* (Kohtumine tundmatuga) (2005), script by Urmas Vadi (born in 1977), directed by Jaak Kilmi (born in 1973); the documentary *Disco and Atomic War* (Disko ja tuumasõda) (2009), written and directed by Kilmi and Kiur Aarma (born in 1974); the novel *A While* (Hetk) (2009) by Jan Kaus (born in 1971). The texts were chosen to analyse the views of a generation on the late socialism period. In the case of these texts, the connection of communicative memory and cultural memory was also important, and overcoming the contradictions between these memory types was touched upon in the theoretical section of that article.

All texts deal with the Soviet era in one way or the other: *Touched by the Unknown* depicted the period of late socialism in television production⁴⁵ by focusing on Valdo Pant, a legendary figure of Estonian television. Valdo Pant was active on TV from 1966–1976; in the feature film he is depicted as the leading figure of the show *Today 25 Years Ago* (on the air 1966–70), which

⁴³ In this context I only elaborate on the exhibitions that are directly included in the analysis. In addition, reflections on Soviet art life have risen into the focus in Estonian museums. Exhibitions and programmes on the art of the ESSR have been organised, starting with the opening of KUMU art museum in Tallinn in 2006. Some of them include: *Tartu Circle and Ülo Sooster*, 2014–2015, curator Liisa Kaljula; *The Soviet Woman in Estonian art*, 2010, Katrin Kivimaa, Kädi Talvoja, but also the exhibition *The lasting past. Signs of the Soviet Time in Contemporary Art*, 2008, Anu Allas. The part of the permanent exhibition curated by Eha Komissarov, opened already in winter 2006, paid great attention to Soviet art. In early spring 2016 a new permanent exhibition dealing with the Soviet period opened: *Conflicts and Adaptations. Estonian Art of the Soviet Period (1940–1991)*, curator Anu Allas. The exhibition *Fashion and the Cold War (2012–2013)*, curated by Eha Komissarov and Berit Teeäär (see also Komissarov, Teeäär 2012; Nugin 2016), also deserves special attention. In the 1990s, the Soviet era was approached in Estonian museums mainly through the topic of repressions (for example *Stalinism and Estonia* (1990), *Stalinist Repressions* (1999), and *Soviet Propaganda* (2002) at the Estonian History Museum.

⁴⁴ The fieldwork was done together with Raili Nugin. The results are published in Article IV and also in Nugin & Jõesalu 2016; Jõesalu & Nugin 2017.

⁴⁵ The feature film was dedicated to the anniversary of Estonian Television.

dealt with the events of the Great Patriotic War⁴⁶. The feature film⁴⁷ actually depicted events and persons who were active before the birth of the authors' – Vadi and Kilmi. The authors are mixing their own experiences of watching Soviet Estonian TV as children, including, e.g. famous puppet figures Tipp and Täpp and auntie Ruth from a children's show of the 1970s–80s with TV shows and persons from earlier times. The whole story is very twisted and mingles with some aspects of reality and fantasy (see in detail Article IV). The light-hearted documentary *Disco and Atomic War* is a fusion of Cold War history with fantasy and personal memories. The Cold War is exemplified by reproducing the archival material in black and white, and includes interviews with professionals (historians, TV-professionals); in addition, the plot relies on authors' personal memories of watching Finnish Television in Tallinn as children and youngsters. Aarma and Kilmi, the authors, have also added some fictional stories to illustrate common childhood and generational understandings of that childhood in Soviet Estonia in the 1970s–80s. The novel *A While* deals with the lives of two young people who are reminiscing about their childhood during the late Soviet era in Tallinn and being a young adolescent during the 1990s. In addition to these analysed cultural texts I also examined other texts by the same authors, like Jan Kaus' novel *The World and Some* (Maailm ja mõni), which also depicted his Soviet childhood and the turbulent 1990s (Kaus 2001), other novels and short stories by Urmas Vadi (Vadi 2010), and also the documentary *Tallinn Sprats* by Kilmi and Aarma (2011).

3.2. Life stories and other biographical texts

In the following I would like to introduce the life stories used in this dissertation. I will illustrate the processes of collecting of life stories through the example of one campaign. Life stories have been actively collected in Estonia since 1989 when the Estonian Cultural Historical Archives (ECHA) of the Literary Museum published an appeal *Do You Remember Your Life Story?* in newspapers in Estonian and Russian.⁴⁸ In accordance with the then general process of “returning history” the appeal emphasised the “historical mission of collecting life stories and evaluation of the life experience of every person” (Hinrikus 2003b: 179). Nearly 200 contributions were sent as replies to the first appeal. Also, a previous memoir-collecting effort by the Estonian Heritage Society, memoirs on the radio (like the radio show *Unwritten Memoires* by Lembit Lauri), and performances of the “memory theatre” directed by Merle

⁴⁶ The ‘Great Patriotic War’ was in the Soviet Union and still in Russia understood as the war between the Soviet Union and the Third Reich, from 22 of June 1941 until 9 of May 1945. Also in Soviet Estonia the notion ‘Great Patriotic War’ was used. In post-Soviet discourse the term has been replaced with the ‘Second World War’.

⁴⁷ Urmas Vadi has also published a compendium of his plays and film scenarios, Vadi 2008.

⁴⁸ Appeals for collecting narratives of the past has a long tradition in Estonia, going back to the collection of folk tradition in the last quarter of the 19th century (see Jaago 2005).

Karusoo (Kruuspere 2002, 2010), had created favourable conditions for sending life stories to the museum collection.

The Estonian Life Stories Association was established in 1996 and started to organise life story writing campaigns (Kõresaar 2004a: 12–13; Kõresaar & Jõesalu 2016). In the mid-1990s life story collecting slowed down, but gained new momentum in 1996, when the life story writing campaign *My Destiny and the Destiny of Those Close to Me in the Labyrinths of History* was announced. In reply to this appeal, 262 stories (about 20,000 pages in total) were sent. The campaign concentrated on the domestic and family sphere and changes brought along by the revolutionary times of the 20th century. Under the topic “labyrinths of history”, to which the campaign letter referred, events related to Second World War and preceding and following the war were interpreted; the appeal specified labyrinths of history as “wars, revolutions, deportations or other kinds of violence” (Kõresaar 2004a: 15). Thus, the appeal provided limits for the life story writer of which events to consider. In autumn 1998 the next major life story campaign was announced,⁴⁹ entitled *One Hundred Lives of a Century*. A selection of the 230 collected life stories has also been published under the title *Estonian Life Histories. A Hundred Stories of the Century* (Hinrikus 2000). This collection has been quite popular among Estonian public, and it is a continuous source for students to discover life story research.

As mentioned earlier, this dissertation is based on life stories sent to ECHA in reply to the appeal of the campaign *My Life and My Family's Life in the Estonian Socialist Soviet Republic (ESSR) and in the Republic of Estonia*. The life story campaign was announced in autumn 2000, and in the autumn-winter of 2000–2001, 330 stories were contributed. I have looked through all those stories, but for closer reading I have selected 57 stories, 48 from women and 9 from men from the age group in question. As I mostly concentrated on the life stories in which late socialism was the main topic, I examined the life stories of people born between the late 1930s and early 1950s. Altogether women constituted 70% of life writers who sent their stories to the Archives (Hinrikus 2016: 231). In the age group of my interest, women dominated very clearly, which was not the case for earlier generations, especially those born in the 1920s (cf. Kõresaar 2004a: 13). Besides analysing the life stories of women born in and around the 1940s, for Article II we have selected also a story by a man, which was sent to the same campaign. So, in this sense both the male gaze and female gaze on late socialism are represented in my work.

The stories vary in their length and style, and some stories have a cover letter (like EKLA 350: 1120), in which life story writers explain their intentions for writing down their memories or just wishing good luck or happy holidays (depending of the time of writing) to the people at the Estonian Literary Museum (like EKLA 350: 1073). Most of the life stories were handwritten (while

⁴⁹ Meanwhile life stories had also been collected from representatives of a specific group, e.g. teachers. A collection of teachers' life stories – answers to the two appeals and collected during later years was published recently (Hinrikus 2015).

some are typewritten), and many of them have an explicit structure: texts have titles and subtitles.

In the life stories sent to the archives up until the 21st century, everyday life during mature socialism was presented in a marginal way, mostly just through some concluding remarks (Kõresaar 2001). Such a focus on earlier historical periods and events – like the pre-Second World War republic, Second World War, deportations – was influenced by the hegemonic national public discourse that depicted the Soviet period as occupation and “a time un-lived”. This hegemonic discourse also, in some ways, influenced the contents of the appeals and life-writing in its turn influenced hegemonic discourse (see Kõresaar & Jõesalu 2016b). With some reservations, it can be argued that a great part of the memoirs published in newly independent Estonia can be characterised as the trauma narratives of witnesses and chronicle-like or autoethnographic descriptions of the past (Kurvet-Käosaar & Hinrikus 2013: 106). Everyday narratives, especially those concerning late Soviet era, from the 1960s–80s, remained in the shadow until the first decade of the 21st century.

The life story campaign *My Life and My Family's Life in the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic (ESSR) and in the Republic of Estonia* concentrated more on the experiences on the everyday level. The appeal asked the writer to focus on Soviet everyday life: “We expect life stories that more thoroughly focus on the everyday details and the mental atmosphere of the Soviet period, the forbidden and permitted things. Recall how you lived until the year 1991? Where did you live at that time, what was the destiny of your family members at that time?”⁵⁰ Arguing for collecting life stories about the Soviet period, sociologist and life story researcher Marju Lauristin writes in the preface to the book compiled of the collected life stories: “The dispute that has just become topical in Estonian society about how to evaluate older and middle-aged generations compromising with their conscience in the period of the ESSR refers to the need to restore in memory the circumstances and human relationships in that society in as much detail as possible. It is impossible to restore the complete life experience of that time in the memoirs of any single person, in any novel or film. It is only the collective memory that can capture the eluding picture of the daily struggle of a million Estonians for their physical and moral survival.” (Lauristin 2003: 7).

Lauristin also has pointed out the risk of falling into the “haze of nostalgic memories of youth” (ibid.), seeing nostalgia as a kind of threat, which has to be fought. Life stories, where the details of everyday life of the Soviet era are described [see above the quote of Lauristin], should help to refrain from nostalgia for the Soviet period. However, Lauristin here dwells on the hegemonic discourse of resistance and rupture, interpreting nostalgia in the sense of restorative nostalgia (yet, admitting that changes are happening). At least some life story writers have interpreted the appeal as still related to the framework of resistance and rupture. One of the life story writers notices, for example, the wish to hear about resistance and difficult everyday life in the appeal (as

⁵⁰ <http://www2.kirmus.ee/elulood/uleskutsed.html>, last visited 16 August 2016

Lauristin put it – “the eluding picture of the daily struggle of a million Estonians for their physical and moral survival”), but despite that she still has departed from the prism of personal life in her writing and tried to avoid the interpretation of the Soviet period in the way that was predominant in the 1990s (woman born in 1947, EKLA f350: 1343, 55, see Article II).

Lauristin admits: “Although one of the attempts of the life story competition was to compare life in the Estonian SSR and the Republic of Estonia, the latter has mostly been dealt with quite briefly. Here probably one feels the lack of distance, the closeness that does not allow observing one’s life in the period of independent Estonia. Yet, most of the authors’ critical attitude to the problems of modern Estonia is clearly visible, and, at the same time, also the desire of many of them to maintain optimism and joy of life despite hardships” (ibid.).

One reason for not bringing the 1990s into focus could be that the appeal itself focused more on life in Soviet Estonia and then also asked about the changes brought along by the restoration of independence. The life story writers were asked to describe the 1990s merely in the context of changes: “What changes did the restitution of independence in Estonia and the following 10 years bring into your family life? What would your family have missed if we still lived in the ESSR?”⁵¹ So, at describing changes, many preferred to focus on descriptions how their life was in Soviet Estonia before everything changed.

However, from my viewpoint the changes of the 1990s are an important aspect for the life story writers, since they express it in comparison with late socialism. One reason for different reading perspectives could also be found in the temporal distance between Marju Lauristin’s reading of the life stories and mine: she did it immediately after the campaign, while I started to read them 5 years later. It is also possible that diverse discourses on the Soviet era also gave impulses to a different way of reading. Perhaps Lauristin (born in 1940) who was herself an active participant in rebuilding the newly independent republic⁵² expected other stories from the 1990s than those stories critical towards changes, which dominated among her cohort.

The last aspect to which I want to pay attention is the dialogue of life stories with other media. Written life stories sent to a public institution such as a museum or the archives, are by nature more public texts than, for example, biographical interviews. In many cases life story writers discuss some recent political event or scandal which was widely known at the time of the writing, being in this sense in active dialogue with public discourse. As example I will bring an extract from the life story written by a woman born in 1941. She is describing her childhood fears connected with the forest brothers on the island of Saaremaa, and is critical of how they are depicted in contemporary historio-

⁵¹ <http://www2.kirmus.ee/elulood/uleskutsed.html>, last visited 16 August 2016

⁵² Marju Lauristin was one of the founders of Rahvarinne (in 1988), the first large-scale independence movement in Estonia since the country’s incorporation into the USSR. In 1990 she was the Deputy Speaker of the Estonian Parliament. From 1992 to 1994 she was the Minister of Social Affairs of Estonia.

graphy. Then she continues: “It seems that everyone acknowledges his own kind: Laar wouldn’t shoot at a picture otherwise, because the current conditions don’t allow him to aim directly at the target” (woman, b. in 1941, life story submitted in 2001, KM EKLA F., 350, 1309, p 2). She then discussed the political scandal that was topical at the time of the writing – the “picture scandal” of Prime Minister Mart Laar. In winter 2001 it became evident that a couple of years earlier the Prime Minister had used a photograph of Edgar Savisaar, another well-known and controversial Estonian politician, as a target at a shooting exercise. Reading the stories some years later (I started in 2006), one could even not understand right away the discussion of such a political issue. But for the writer some particular public event or the way a public event is remembered could be an impulse for writing down her/his personal story.

Besides life stories I also conducted some biographical interviews. Together with Raili Nugin, I interviewed authors of cultural texts born in the 1970s.⁵³ We did not know the interviewees personally before (except me knowing Kai), but we shared some common experiences of a Soviet childhood. The interviews were conducted in public places (cafes), or at a researcher’s home, and dealt with the authors’ childhood, young adulthood experiences, and the context of the cultural text under study. The interviews lasted 1.5–2 hours. All interviews were transcribed.

3.3. Reading and reflections on the material

I conducted my fieldwork over a long period (starting in 2006) and in multiple locations. I have read life stories in archives, visited museums, participated at film screenings, conducted interviews, studied the speeches of presidents, and read novels. In the following I will open up the context of my fieldwork and I will reflect on the processes of the fieldwork. In a sense my fieldwork could be understood as multi-sited research, though it does not move across borders, but it follows different traits of memory at different locations – like archives, cinemas, embodied practices, commemorations – all that which makes up the site of memory of late socialism.⁵⁴

First, I would like to elaborate on the context of reading life stories, i.e., the fieldwork in the archives. The collected life stories are kept in the Estonian Cultural-Historical Archives at the Literary Museum in Tartu. The ECHA is first of all a home to collections of cultural figures and institutions, and from 1989 it is home also to life stories. However, life stories make up a marginal

⁵³ See Article IV. I also conducted a group interview for Raili Nugin’s research on generational belonging of those born in the 1970s and participated in other group interviews with Raili Nugin (Nugin 2015). Those interviews also provided background information about discursive resources that are used by people born in the 1970s for describing their Soviet-era experiences.

⁵⁴ See e.g. Balu 2013 on multi-sited fieldwork in memory studies, a classic about multi-sited ethnography is Marcus 1995.

part of this collection.⁵⁵ The archives, as memory institutions, have a certain power to shape what we remember or forget about the past (see also Tamm 2009). Aleida Assmann understands an archive as *Speichergedächtnis*, a rather passive place (potential memory) from where material is “taken” and transferred into active functional memory (the real, active memory) (Assmann 2006). The researcher thereby also has a certain role: s/he makes the choices and emphasises certain themes, also depending on which topics are accessible.

I read the life stories in many stages. Having briefly become acquainted with the collection already when writing my MThesis, I focused more specifically on the stories sent to the collection campaigns *My Life and My Family's Life in the Estonian Socialist Soviet Republic (ESSR) and in the Republic of Estonia* in 2006, returning to them again and again over the next years. I read the greater part of the life stories in the autumn of 2006, spring-summer 2008, and again in 2012–2013. From the beginning my reading was mainly focused on life story writers born in the 1930s–1950s, as I was interested in the topics of the mature socialist period and in how they were remembered. In the last period I focused only on the life stories of women born in the 1940s (see Article III). I have also read some stories sent to other campaigns.

In Estonia, fieldwork in archives has a long tradition both in ethnology and folkloristics (Hiimäe & Labi 2002). In ethnology, mainly the collections of the ENM have been used (The Correspondents' Answers; Ethnographic Archives – see Koosa & Leete 2006; object collections, on the use of questionnaires and answers see Jõesalu 2003b; Bardone 2013b), but the collections of the ECHA, especially the collection of life stories, also play a certain role. At the Department of Ethnology of the University of Tartu, life stories were popular sources from the late 1990s until the early 2000s when many theses were written based on life stories (see Reinvelt 2001; Mulla 1999; Siemer 2001; Ruusmann 2002).

Lately, in cultural-theoretical (including ethnological and folkloristic) studies on methodology, the co-effects of embodied experiences and intellectual ideas have been discussed in addition to other aspects in the context of fieldwork and writing (on the Estonian context, see Kulasalu, Päll, Rumm 2013). In the humanities, the concept of ‘embodiment’ rose into focus in the context of the performative turn (see Kaljundi 2008; Bardone 2013a). In anthropology, the senses have also been included into the fieldwork process in addition to textual and visual approaches (on sensory ethnography see Pink 2009). In Estonia, some scholars have to some extent, also relied on their bodily experiences for analysis, in addition to traditional written or oral sources (see, for example, Koppel 2015; Ermel 2012). As Mary Hanrahan has put it: “bodily processes such as perceptions and emotions are integral part to intellectual thought” (2003: online). I also understand fieldwork as an intellectual journey in which emotions and perceptions play a part. Recently, more attention has been attached to emotional aspects of fieldwork, how the experiences and emotions

⁵⁵ <http://www.kirmus.ee/est/teenused/eesti-kultuurilooline-arhiiv/> , introduction to ECHA.

of researchers influence their fieldwork, mostly in the context of participant observation or making interviews (see also Oras 2008: 29).

Working in the archives is a part of the everyday for many scholars in the field of cultural studies, but as this type of work is not always understood in terms of ethnographic fieldwork, it rarely receives the reflexivity that it merits.⁵⁶ On the basis of my experiences I can confirm that this is also fieldwork encompassing all the senses. The reading room of the ECHA is situated in the city centre of Tartu, in the so-called 'passage house' of the Literary Museum built in the period of mature socialism; the room was usually quite chilly and dim, and after sitting there for a couple of hours, I was shivering. The conditions were especially laconic before the major renovation work at the museum in 2006. At the same time, several authors described their childhood experiences in a very emotional, sometimes even naturalistic manner, at times accentuating the poverty, cold, and negligence by close relatives. Reading the descriptions of the poor conditions during the war or the postwar decades certainly had an emotional effect, especially when I tried to put myself into the child's position. In life stories written in earlier decades that described the 1920s, childhood was usually depicted in sweet-soft colours and mainly without conflicts.⁵⁷ In the descriptions of childhood and youth in the 1940s-1950s the topic of scarcity in everyday life also stood out clearly.⁵⁸ In my articles I have not dealt with the different depictions of childhood in the Republic of Estonia and the Soviet Union, but I have considered this to be an important issue in my fieldwork notes. There, I have also emphasised the descriptions of cold/feeling cold in life stories.

The feminist literary scholar Maria Tamboukou has, reflecting on her work in the archives, demonstrated the influence of the researcher's own experience on the way how she reads archival sources. By the example of her own research the category of space became significant while reading the sources and, later, while writing the analysis: being a researcher in alien cultural environment (as Greek and British in the US, in Austin), feeling herself 'out of place', she also notices these topics in the autobiographical narratives of her sources (Tamboukou 2011). On the basis of my own experience I can say how my own new motherhood influenced which topics became important in the life stories of women born in the 1940s (an other important topic was the private-public relationship, see Article III). Although a story written down on paper is the source of analysis, there is a living person behind it, with his/her own emotions and experiences, and the researcher is in interaction with this story through

⁵⁶ See Steedman 2002. About the importance of archival work in geography see Harris 2001.

⁵⁷ On the 1930s-1950s see Mulla 1999; Grauberg 2002, on childhood experiences in the 19th century see Mattheus 2010.

⁵⁸ At the conference of literary scholars „Enchanted by self+life+stories“ in 2009 a presenter raised the topic that in Estonian literature and memoir tradition childhood is always depicted in positive tones. This provoked discussion as scholars familiar with autobiographical material did not agree with this claim.

his/her own lived experiences (Andrews 2013). The researcher must be able to distinguish between his/her own emotions from the emotions of the research subjects. I hope I was able to do this in my analysis of life stories.

Besides biographical texts in the archives (and outside), I dealt with several other texts during my fieldwork. Reading the speeches of presidents was an important part of this process. The speeches of Lennart Meri have been published in three thick volumes and I read them in very different environments – academic and non-academic.⁵⁹ I mapped and studied the speeches of Rützel and Ilves through the respective websites. The whole fieldwork process – both in the archives and outside – involved a constant taking of notes: writing out passages from the speeches, summaries of and quotations from life stories, and separately mapping the connections that emerged. At the same time I also tried to map debates taking place in the public space, bookmarking different opinion articles. All these different sources and notes served as basis for writing the main texts.

Being born in the mid-1970s, I also have my own personal experience from the time of mature socialism, although it is limited to childhood and early teenage years. In a way I share experiences that are described in Article IV, yet, my experiences differed from the shared experiences of this specific group because I grew up in the countryside, where opportunities were somewhat different than in Tallinn or Tartu. Finnish television, which has been mentioned as an important discursive practice in the group we studied, certainly did not play such a remarkable role in my early childhood (see Article IV). At the same time, I share other discursive practices with the group – concerning the desire for things as well as the experience of common cultural texts.

3.3.1. Reading of sources

My reading of sources described above is influenced by different authors and approaches, including the works of Portelli (1997ab), Peltonen (2009), Kõresaar (2004a). For analysing interviews and life stories I used qualitative thematic analysis,⁶⁰ which emerged from transcribed material in the light of my research questions. My working progress could be described as detecting *leitmotifs* (Lehmann 1983 – *Leitlinien*) in narratives and analysing them according to my chosen theories of memory analysis. The German ethnologist Albrecht Lehmann speaks about leitmotif/*Leitlinien* in the context of life story research. The leitmotif is a thread of connected events, which are chosen by the narrator for the constitution of her/his life story narration.

⁵⁹ Kadriorg Park, near the President's Office, turned out to be a good place for getting acquainted with Lennart Meri's speeches and for taking notes.

⁶⁰ In sociological context known as 'code analyses' (Mayring 2003).

I developed themes/questions which were of interest to me before and after reading the sources, like the questions of the public-private relationship, everyday management during mature socialism, or what place is given to “grand narratives”, or hegemonic discourses about the Soviet past. I was also interested in the question of the motif of the “we-group” (common discursive practices, which describe, e.g. their generation as a “we-group”). But I also used open reading when the life story or interview touched upon questions that I had not posed before.

The works of Alessandro Portelli have inspired me as a researcher (Article II). Namely, Portelli has proposed a model of multilayered history-telling; we used, for reading a life story, the method of separating texts into three layers – institutional, communal, and personal (Portelli 1997, Article II). The way I have approached the texts under study has always been dialogical. For reading the life stories, the perspective of biographical syncretism was very helpful (Kõre-saar 2004a), as from this perspective the dialogical mechanism of remembering and narrating is underlined. People tell about their lives, about conflict or cooperation with others, always in dialogue with other stories and other selves as they negotiate ways of being in the world.

Dialogical reading is related to the dynamical perspective. Here the historical discourse analysis as a method is helpful. This method is used for dealing with past issues in contemporary discussions (like creating the meaning of late socialism in 21st century Estonia). Ruth Wodak has emphasised that “in investigating historical, organizational and political topics and texts, the discourse historical approach attempts to integrate a large quantity of available knowledge about the historical sources and the background of the social and political fields in which discursive ‘events’ are embedded (2001: 65). The strength of a historical discourse analysis is that it combines different fields and genres: “discourse about one theme could have its beginning in one field of action, and proceed through another one, they are overlapping, referring to each other, and in some or another way socio-functionally linked with each other” (Wodak 2001: 67). In the same vein, one mnemonic practice could have its beginning in the political genre, but the same continues through cultural texts and individual life-writings.

4. SUMMARIES OF THE ARTICLES

The dissertation includes five articles published between the years 2011–2016; these articles are presented here thematically, not chronologically. The order of articles represents how the remembering of late socialism is made on the institutional, individual, and cultural levels. The first article focuses on the question how the Soviet past is conceptualised in the official public sphere. The following three articles all ask about generational differences in remembering the Soviet past. The last, Article V, could be considered as a kind of synopsis of the question of how the site of memory of late socialism is made in Estonia in the 1990s and in the first decade of the 21st century.

The goal of the first article is to examine whether, on the memory politics level, as exemplified by presidential speeches, a distinction is made between Stalinism and late socialism. Secondly, I looked how personal and official levels are intertwined. In the second study we took under scrutiny one life-story of a man, Heino, born in 1928. The life story concentrated on his work life in Soviet Estonia, and we analysed the story of Heino through private and public categories, hence here we looked at remembering on the individual, social, and institutional levels and how it revealed itself in narration. Article III sets the focus on female narrators, bringing into focus life stories written in 2001–2002. These stories are analysed through the categories of nostalgia, generational belonging, and the public-private relationship. Article IV sets the focus again on generational experience and looks at nostalgia in memory culture through cultural texts and biographical interviews. The last article uses various social memory texts as sources and shows the dynamics and continuities in remembering the Soviet past in post-Soviet Estonian society. In the following I summarise the articles, presenting the main ideas/outcomes and theoretical framework of each article. I will also give some background information to the articles.

4.1. Article I. Jõesalu, Kirsti 2012. The Role of the Soviet Past in Post-Soviet Memory Politics: through Examples of Speeches from Estonian Presidents. – *Europe-Asia Studies*, 64 (6), 1007–1032.

The aim of this article⁶¹ was to analyse the meaning of the Soviet past in Estonian post-Soviet memory politics. The main question was whether we can detect some dynamics in the meaning given to the Soviet past from the 1990s until 2010. I looked if, on the memory politics level, a distinction is made

⁶¹ This article is an outcome of paper “Different ways of remembering the Soviet past: at the example of speeches”, presented at the PhD student conference *Changing Places, Borders, Memories* in Ljubljana, in autumn 2008. Initially, for the presentation in Ljubljana, I analysed Lennart Meri’s and Arnold Rüütel’s speeches. For the article I also included President Ilves’ speeches, and framed my analyses with theoretical insights of Jeffrey Olick and Ulla-Maija Peltonen. The writing process of that article was supported by doctoral seminars at the Department of Ethnology where we discussed each other’s texts.

between Stalinism and late socialism. I asked what meaning is given to the Soviet past, on the institutional level, and in which context the issue of the past is placed.

For that I analysed one specific type of commemorative activity – the speeches of Estonian presidents – Lennart Meri (1992–2001), Arnold Rüütel (2001–2006), and Toomas Hendrik Ilves (2006–2016). My argument was that those texts are connected to other expressions of social and cultural memory, by which I meant life-writing and cultural memory core texts.

I was interested in how the same topics move between different levels of remembering. I attempted to connect the presidents' historical experience with historical awareness, i.e. the ideological construction of the past (Peltonen 2009). I argued that the attitudes expressed in the speeches towards the Soviet era is related both to the president's life experiences and to institutional post-Soviet memory politics. So, in this sense, I treated memory as a combination of emotional (historical experience) and deliberate (historical awareness) memory, and I looked for connections between them (Peltonen 2009: 68). I concluded that similar a interdependence between historical experience and awareness existed also in the speeches. This allowed me to compare the speeches with other narratives, including life-writing. I treated the speeches as one type of mnemonic practice (see also chapter 2.2.1. on the use of 'mnemonic practice', Olick 2007).

I drew the following conclusions:

Firstly, Meri interpreted the Soviet occupation as a discontinuity on every level of society. He had also experienced rupture in personal life, having been deported with his family in 1941. Another template concerned resistance to the Soviet system. Meri was also a proponent of Estonia's return to the Western world; he thereby brought up the issue of moral responsibility of Western 'allies', who had once betrayed Estonia. The intertwining of historical experience and historical awareness was most visible within the context of creating a specific commemorative act embodied in the Badge of the Broken Cornflower.

Secondly, Rüütel interpreted and broadened the discourse of resistance. Compared to Meri, his speeches contained fewer direct references to the Soviet occupation. Rüütel focused more on the lack of social cohesion and the stratification of Estonian society (as a result of radical reforms in the 1990s). Rüütel did not specifically refer to social cohesion during the Soviet period, but this was very actively discussed in life-writing at the time of his presidency. Resistance was mainly viewed as a cultural process expressed in the preservation of the Estonian language and culture. Unlike Meri, Rüütel saw members of *nomenklatura* also as agents of resistance. Rüütel saw 1988 as the breaking point in recent history (the high point of the Singing Revolution), not in 1940 (occupation of Estonia) as Meri has done. Rüütel criticised the one-sided approach to history in post-Soviet Estonia, where Soviet experiences have mostly been stigmatised. At the same time Rüütel did not deviate from the line of thought based on resistance and nationality.

Thirdly, already during the presidential campaign, in 2006, the Soviet past became an issue: Ilves was a candidate who was clearly seen in the public as a counter-candidate to Rüütel, who also ran for second term in office. In the debates Ilves relied on the discourse of ‘rupture’ and he prolonged the period of ‘rupture’ to include the whole Soviet period. Ilves also distinguished himself very clearly from the reflective nostalgia for the times of ‘late socialism’ that was at the forefront of autobiographical memories and cultural memory at the time. In the case of Ilves, the Soviet past came up more in the context of memory work, in the frame of specific commemorative acts than in Independence Day speeches. The focus clearly lay in the criminal aspects of the Soviet past. In this sense he reintroduced Lennart Meri’s interpretation of the Soviet time as rupture. Unlike Meri and Rüütel, Ilves did not regard Estonia as a “victim” of history; he saw that the decline of democracy in the 1930s was the reason for losing independence. During the economic crisis (2008–2009) Ilves concentrated more on the issues of the present and the future. He was critical towards the discourse of victimhood, but, at the same time, he was not ready to acknowledge the everyday during the Soviet era as part of public discourse.

To sum up: on the institutional level, the templates of resistance and rupture are clearly dominating the construction of the narrative about the Soviet past. However, there are also some dynamic elements, aspects of which were stressed. We can also interpret these differences through the diverse historical experiences of the three presidents. At the same time – in other memory media – rupture and resistance are no longer dominant motives in narratives of the Soviet past.

4.2. Article II. Jõesalu, Kirsti; Kõresaar, Ene 2012. Working through Mature Socialism: Private and Public in the Life Story of an Estonian Industry Manager. – *Baltic Biographies at Historical Crossroads*, ed. by Aili Aarelaid-Tart and Li Bennich-Björkman. Routledge, 68–85.

In this article⁶² the Soviet past is studied through the categories of private and public as they come forward in a life story of a man, born in 1928. Everyday culture of the Soviet era is studied from the oral historical point of view, using Portelli’s concept of history telling (1992, 1997), which differentiates between institutional, social, and personal levels in narration. The analysis focused on how the life story narratives manifest the day-to day complexities of the Soviet era, when tension between the public and private spheres was pivotal. For our analysis we decided to concentrate on work life, since this realm of life lay between two spheres (public-private), and allowed us to demonstrate the

⁶² This chapter was written together with Ene Kõresaar. The first version was presented for a seminar in summer 2008. Working with the chapter continued for a couple of years. The book edited by Aili Aarelaid-Tart and Li Bennich-Björkman consists of eleven chapters, and every single piece takes into consideration the life in the three Baltic States during the Soviet and post-Soviet era. The current chapter also relied on the research I had done for my MA thesis, in addition to the new framework and material (Jõesalu 2004, 2006).

complexity of the Soviet everyday (see chapter 2.2.3. on the public-private relationship).

In the focus was the life story of Heino, who, for most of his work life, was employed as a mid-level industrial manager. Managers had an important position in Soviet-era societies (e.g. Verdery 2004), thus his experiences could be considered somewhat typical. The life story under scrutiny was sent as a response to life story campaign *My Life and the Life of My Family in the Estonian SSR and the Republic of Estonia* and was published in the life stories collection *Life Stories of Estonian People* (Hinrikus 2003a).

In our approach the institutional mode of history-telling corresponded to the occupation regime's voice of self-legitimisation, signified by the use of self-descriptive political phraseology, and fragments from official history. On the personal level, a storyteller draws upon first- or second-hand memories and talks about personal life and family members. The communal level is the most complex, as it may simultaneously involve a village or neighbourhood and work colleagues, but also the ethnic community if it is distinct from the institutional level from the perspective of historical awareness. In certain cases the personal and communal levels may coincide, by default, e.g. if everyday, or political, problems are classified as belonging to a certain group. Portelli has showed that in conflict situations, the three narrative layers come to the fore more clearly and intensively. The conflict may lie in a past experience, but the storyteller can also find a contradiction between the personal experience of an event and its interpretation in the society at the time of recollection, i.e. which frames of remembering are enabled in the public discourse. The last factor also played an important role in the case of Heino.

In the first part of our analysis we looked into the conflict between the public and the private as it came forward in Heino's life story, how he took advantage of it, and how he told about it in post-Soviet context. In the second part, we analysed the formal and informal relations in a Soviet factory from a post-Soviet perspective.

Our reading of Heino's life story clearly showed the dissimilarity in an individual's perception of the relationship between the Soviet (official) public sphere and the private realm in the 1940s–1950s and the 1960s–1980s. The totalitarian Stalinist era is always present in the recollections; the narrative experience of the 1960s–1980s rather implies the possibility of a detached private sphere existing in parallel to the official public realm. This phenomenon was clearly evident in the analysed life story as the total dismissal of any adult private life from the narrative. According to Heino's story, the main rules in everyday were to make use of existing free spaces, including those that the Soviet system involuntarily created by legitimising itself through vertical and horizontal networking.

Autobiographic remembering in the framework of the public-private distinction was in the focus of this article. In the context of the dissertation this article offered a male perspective on the private-public distinction, and is an

example of analysing one recollection within a broader memory studies framework.

4.3. Article III. Jõesalu, Kirsti 2016. ‘We Were the Children of a Romantic Era’: Nostalgia and the Non-ideological Everyday Through the Perspective of a ‘Silent Generation’. – *Journal of Baltic Studies*. Special Issue: Baltic Socialism Remembered: Memory and Life Story since 1989, ed. by Ene Kõre-saar, 47, (4), 557–577.

This article⁶³ concentrated on women’s experiences and the ways they speak about late socialism in their life stories. The focus was on how the remembering of Soviet past is made at the individual level. As in the previous article, the life stories used in this article originate from life story campaign *My Life and the Life of My Family in the Estonian SSR and the Republic of Estonia*. In addition to life stories, some published memoirs of the cultural elite were included.

In this article, I also asked about the generational self-understanding of women born in the 1940s. Their self-understanding was analysed in the framework of nostalgia and private-public remembering. In the centre of those particular stories were everyday experiences of late socialism.

The article is framed by approaches to nostalgia in post-socialist memory research (Berdahl 2010; Todorova 2010). The treatment of nostalgia as a kind of counter memory (Berdahl) has been a central idea. Secondly, I followed Maria Todorova’s thought that we should determine who is speaking of nostalgia; who are its agents, and we have to ask what this nostalgia expresses (Todorova 2010: 7–8). In this vein, I picked up the concept of “silent generation”, which I found was relevant for describing these narrated experiences (Weisbrod 2007; Silies 2007; Kelly 2007). The generational experience should not be connected only with (public) historical events, as generational consciousness can also be formed through everyday experience and through non-public communication. The metaphor ‘silent’ hereby refers to the fact that their experiences have not yet been disclosed to the public. I treated those born in the 1940s in Estonia as the ‘silent’ generation. During their formative years, no ‘real’ political event took place that could be interpreted as determining the emergence of generational self-consciousness. I tried to elaborate on the idea that silenced dimensions of experiences can also create cohesion within a generation, in the same way as, for example, participation in demonstrations.

For my purposes, I selected 34 life stories from women born in 1936–52 for closer reading, 22 of whom were born in the 1940s, 11 during and 11 after war. These women experienced complicated everyday conditions during their childhood, were socialised in Soviet society, and (as a rule) spent the greater part of their working lives in Soviet Estonia. In those stories, national ideology, so

⁶³ I presented the very first thoughts on this topic at a Baltic Studies conference in Kaunas, in 2009 June. The new and complete version of the article was written in 2013–2014 for a special issue of the *Journal of Baltic Studies*; the issue focused on the question of how socialism is remembered across Baltics.

prevalent in public and private discourses in the 1990s in Estonia, is less remarkable than in the life stories of the previous generations. They were more likely to bring examples that are not in accordance with the dominant national discourse. One example of this is their interpretation of the role of the partisans (forest brothers) in recent Estonian history. These women remember them not as heroic freedom fighters as they are presented in public discourse, but more as dangerous men from the woods who cast a shadow over their childhood. Those narrators emphasised that the (national) past (the past in the Estonian Republic) was, as a rule, not an issue in their families; some of them mention that the “past was silenced”.

Another characteristic topic was the domination of everyday discourse. Life story narrators described how they experienced childhood, how they coped with Soviet everyday life. In the stories, they underlined their skilful management in the situations where goods were in short supply. One could say that the period of late socialism was described through self-actualisation. The 1990s, the years of crucial reforms in Estonian society, were looked back at as the years which dramatically changed their life. In some sense, the period of late socialism was used as a mirror for reflecting the changes of the 1990s. Nostalgia for late socialism could be understood as a kind of counter-memory. Generational belonging was expressed in an explicit way: seeing themselves as people who believed into the bright future and who emphasised the importance of work and employment in their lives.

4.4. Article IV Jõesalu, Kirsti; Nugin, Raili 2012. Reproducing Identity Through Remembering: Cultural Texts on the Late Soviet Time. – *Folklore. Electronic Journal of Folklore*, ed. by Art Leete, 51, 15–48.

In this article the making of late socialism is examined on the individual and cultural levels, also asking the question how young intellectuals relate to the institutional, hegemonic version of Soviet past. Like the previous article, this article also deals with the question of nostalgia, but from a different generational perspective.

In the focus were six biographical interviews conducted with authors of four cultural texts. All the interviewees were born in the 1970s and are authors of cultural texts in which the late socialist period is in the focus. We chose cultural texts which represent four different media – an exhibition, a feature film, a novel, and a documentary – for the analysis. We argued that the fact that the authors were born within a certain timeframe (the 1970s) has influenced the way the Soviet past is understood and represented by them. We also stated that the analysed cultural texts have the potential to shape the cultural memory of this era in society in general (Erl 2008: 390 ff.). We asked how these intellectuals in their cultural texts reproduced the aspects of their identity that were shaped by their childhood in the Soviet Union.

We provided an overview of two interconnected categories in Estonian post-Soviet memory discourse: discontinuity and nostalgia. In the analysis, we showed that our informants were influenced by the discourse of discontinuity

but, mainly, by the discourse of nostalgia, and they have also added themselves to these discourses with their cultural texts. Svetlana Boym's distinction of reflective and restorative nostalgia (Boym 2001) was also an important framework for this analysis.

In the analysis, we concentrated on one theme and one cultural text at a time. Firstly, we observed what meaning is given to the objects from their childhood, that is, in which contexts things and material environments appeared in cultural texts. Here, we chose the exhibition *Things in My Life* (2000–2001) as the main object of study. In connection to material objects of the Soviet past we also touched upon the question of distance and nostalgia, as distance also creates preconditions for nostalgia (Gille 2010: 282).

Secondly, we examined the feature film *Touched by the Unknown* (2005), and looked how our informants were playing with time. We concluded that playfulness is one of the main ways they deal with the Soviet past. We traced two main ways of depicting the Soviet era among our respondents: "time standing still" and "structured time", which are also presented in the film.

The reading of the novel *A While* (2009) supported the idea that the people born in 1970s are contributing to the discourse of 'normality', and that our informants depict the period of late socialism as an exotic childhood experience. We described it as an indication of reflective nostalgia. The space and time of the recent past were depicted as lost, as the space and time which one cannot touch upon anymore – which is also characteristic of reflective nostalgia. However, our informants did not question the official discourse of depicting the Soviet era in the framework of rupture.

The last part of the article dealt with the issue of generation. Here, the documentary *Disco and Atomic War* (2009) was the main cultural text. Also, here the childhood space of our informants played an important role: a main character of the personal narrative is Õismäe, a district of apartment blocks in Tallinn. Again, we see the same motive in the interviews and cultural texts, where childhood space is very significant. In addition to the feeling of lost familiar spaces, the mutual experience of watching Finnish TV is another factor which distinguishes, according to our informants, their experiences from those of the younger generations.

4.5. Article V. Jõesalu, Kirsti; Kõresaar, Ene 2013. Continuity or Discontinuity: On the Dynamics of Remembering "Mature Socialism" in Estonian Post-Soviet Remembrance Culture. – *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Special Issue: Temporality, Identity and Change: Ethnographic Insights into Estonian Fieldsites, ed. by Aet Annist, 44 (2), 177–203.

In a sense, the last article is a kind of essence of the previous ones. Although it is not written as the last piece of this dissertation, it could also be considered as a conclusion of my research questions. Articles III and IV were written later, and study generational views in depth, but most of the topics are also touched upon here. The aim of the article was to identify the status and meaning of "mature socialism" in Estonian memory culture at the beginning of the 21st

century. Thereby we focused on media that negotiate memory in a broader sense, i.e. written autobiographies, museum exhibitions and dramas, and articles in online and printed media.

This article demonstrated the change and persistence of the meaning of “mature socialism” in post-Soviet Estonian memory culture. We formulated an integrated view of the developments that have occurred in communicative (personal) and cultural and political (institutional) remembering – we tried to bridge the gaps between different forms of memory by demonstrating how the meaning of an event develops simultaneously in several different arenas of remembering. We also showed the changing output of different (experiential) groups in the public sphere of remembering. The mnemonic processes in the 1990s are mostly reflected by the individuals born in the 1920s (analysed by Ene Kõresaar); the processes of remembering in the 21st century reflect more the narratives of individuals born in the 1940s and 1970s (analysed by me).

Firstly, we focused on the discourse of the Soviet era that dominated in the 1990s. At that time, Estonia’s national narrative of the 20th century becomes complete through the symbolic role of ‘rupture’, especially the period of Stalinism. This image of rupture was accompanied by a strong rhetoric of victimhood (see also Article I, Meri and victimhood discourse) both in public discourse and life writing. We concluded that the period of “mature socialism” was also perceived as a part of the prolonged rupture discourse in the 1990s. But since the second half of the 1990s we could hear voices which claimed that the experience of mature socialism had been suppressed by the post-Soviet nationalist discourse. At the end of the 1990s, and at the beginning of the 21st century, the conflict was more openly expressed in life writing. The narrators especially voiced their dissatisfaction with interpretation of their work experiences from the mature socialist period as unfit for the new society.

We also observed how everyday life during mature socialism gradually became a central theme in autobiographical accounts at the beginning of the 21st century. Here, we mainly concentrated on the experiences of people born in the 1940s. At the same time, we could say that the rupture discourse is also important for them, but now, in the 1990s, the radical economic and structural reforms are seen as rupture.

We also considered it very important to show how the framework for remembering mature socialism developed in cultural texts, for this we mainly looked at museum exhibitions and theatre plays. We departed from the premise that people’s scripts for experiencing are shaped by a particular period’s narrative, and cultural texts are one type of narrative that also influences personal scripts. We showed how the reception was quite modest in the beginning, but with time, during the first decade of the 21st century, the exhibitions that staged Soviet everyday life at museums became more popular. As the last theme, we touched upon the question of nostalgia among the “generation of winners” and the discourse of the “the good old Soviet time” (*nõuka* in Estonian discourse).

As a conclusion, we argued that the mnemonic processes of the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century have resulted in a situation where the anti-Soviet negative discourse of rupture and the positive discourse of normality should not be seen as mutually exclusive competing discourses. Instead, they describe the Soviet experience on different levels.

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION: LATE SOCIALISM IN ESTONIAN MEMORY CULTURE AND BEYOND

This dissertation, based on five independent articles, asks about how the remembering of one particular historical period is made, namely, the way how the period of late socialism (the 1960s–1980s) is remembered at the institutional, cultural, and individual levels in post-Soviet Estonia during the first decade of 21st century. In the following I will summarise the main discourses and counter-discourses in remembering the period of late socialism. After doing that I will discuss the dynamics of remembering late socialism.

5.1. The main results: late socialism in the making

At the institutional level, during the period under study, resistance and discontinuity/rupture remained the main templates through which the Soviet era was remembered and through which the remembering was created. In the context of my research question, it is remarkable that no difference is made at the institutional level between different periods of Soviet time: between Stalinism and late socialism. The institutional level was exemplified by the case study of the analysis of presidential speeches. I also followed discussions in public media and discussions about the past in the Estonian Parliament. From these discussions and the analysis of speeches it emerged that the Soviet period is predominantly seen as a negative memory site. Hereby we can draw a conclusion that the remembering of late socialism was embedded into the broader context of seeing the Baltic states and socialist East-European states as victims of foreign occupation.

Secondly, this dissertation discussed the making of the past on the cultural level. I dwelt on the theoretical discussion by asking how to include cultural texts that deal with the recent past as a part of cultural memory. The latter is often defined by including texts of high culture and texts that deal with non-direct experiences. In the theoretical approaches of the Assmanns, the recent past falls under the umbrella of communicative memory. For the study, I selected cultural texts that exposed material from the recent past and handled them as also having the potential to create and shape future understandings of the Soviet past. In this sense these texts reflected direct experiences, but also mediated more general experiences of that period. The diversity of media is also an essential aspect of cultural memory created in the 21st century.

At the cultural level, the making of memories of the period of late socialism was much more complex than on the institutional level. Firstly, we could observe how late socialism made its way into Estonian museums (since the beginning of the 21st century). The Soviet past entered the museums via exhibiting everyday objects and practices of that period. The next step was to

also include and highlight more ideologised everyday practices like youth camps.

At the beginning, the reaction of the public to the exhibitions was mixed: the visitors and wider cultural audience also discussed if this was an appropriate topic for the museums. Hereby two different aspects were interwoven; firstly it was new to experience, in general, the recent past at the museum, and to see usual, everyday items displayed there; the other aspect was the non-ideologised way to represent the Soviet period, whereas the main aspects which had been underlined at the public and cultural levels until the 21st century were the atrocities of the Soviet regime. However, the main reaction of the audience was acceptance and recognition of their own past, and a feeling of nostalgia.

I also observed how late socialism made its way into other cultural texts like novels and visual narratives. In this, I mainly concentrated on one generation's viewpoint (born in the 1970s) and looked how they manifested the remembering of late socialism using different cultural media. The main outcome was that the Soviet past is remembered mostly through joyful, ironic nostalgia. In their cultural texts the authors also used playful nostalgia. On the other hand, it is remarkable that among the group studied, the official discourse of discontinuity was also accepted; at least it was not questioned. It is also significant that their Soviet childhood and youth enabled them to create a distinctive identity, distinguishing them from the following generations.

It could be argued that late socialism claimed its place in post-Soviet memory culture most vividly on the individual level. Already in the interviews conducted at the end of the 1990s, narrators from the older generation were not content with the non-acceptance of Soviet-era experiences at the public level. This tendency was more clearly revealed at the beginning of the 21st century – and one way to make the Soviet-era experiences heard was to use the life story campaigns. In those life stories the experiences of late socialism were made central. In the dissertation, I also claimed that the period of the 1960s–1980s is often looked back at through nostalgia. Thereby I treated this kind of nostalgia as counter-memory – giving voice to the experiences and stories that are not recognised on other levels of remembering. Another aspect that gives way for remembering late socialism through nostalgia, is, according to my readings, the experience of the complicated 1990s that altered many lives in Estonia. Rapid structural reforms, and neoliberal politics in economy that entailed social inequality and made some kinds of competence unnecessary, contrasted the experiences of socially more stable late socialism. So, in this sense we could conclude that the experiences of the turbulent 1990s influence the way late socialism is remembered and what place is given to that period in the life stories.

From current research, it could be concluded that the meaning of late socialism in Estonian memory culture is complex: from the denial of Soviet-era experiences/past immediately after the restoration of independence, remembering has become multi-vocal during the first decade of the 21st century. We can conclude that different arenas of remembering are not opposed to each other; they all participate in the creating of late socialism as a memory place.

One point where different aspects/levels of remembering of late socialism intersect is the generational perspective. I elaborated on the perspectives of those born in the 1920s, 1940s, and 1970s. All the agents in the post-Soviet memory field in Estonia use cultural resources which are available to them while telling their own past. Yet, at the same time the hegemonic discourse continues to obscure the everyday experiences of the Soviet period.⁶⁴

5.2. Discussion

The results of this dissertation provided in previous section will be discussed against the background of mnemonic processes in Eastern and Central Europe. I will consider the following questions: How should the dynamics of remembering the Soviet past in Estonia be evaluated? Is it comparable with processes in other post-socialist countries? Which place does the era of late socialism have in this process? How do different interpretations and views relate to each other, and do they meet? Is it possible to follow a diversification in memories, and can different viewpoints be included?

From the viewpoint of social cohesion, it is important to recognise the diversity and parallel existence of experiences of the past and enable the articulation of these experiences at different levels. This dissertation elaborated on this diversity by describing different manifestations of memory about late socialism. However, including and accepting different interpretations of the past also needs time – a distance from the past events and open attitude on behalf of the hegemonic part of the society (Assmann 2013a).

Assmann in her writings brings examples from the construction of German memory culture and she emphasises the duration of memory processes. Primarily she considers memories dealing with the Second World War, including of the Holocaust. Assmann describes the process in Germany as a dynamic movement from *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* to *Vergangenheitsbewahrung*. The first term, *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, describes the active dealing with the traumatic past, which in the German context means coming to terms with the Nazi past, also in the form of historical research. The second term, *Vergangenheitsbewahrung*, refers to the state of acknowledgment of the traumatic past, securing its wrongdoings, and sacralising and perpetuating the past (Assmann 2010a: 105). We can ask also if the processes in post-socialist countries, e.g. in Estonia are compatible with that.

After the fall of communism, we have seen in Eastern and Central Europe an enormous interest of different groups in their own past, and for that reason many different memory practices have been created and (re)used. One reason

⁶⁴ A vivid example is the article by the editor-in-chief of the cultural weekly *Sirp* during the presidential campaign in 2016. He writes that he looks forward to a president without Soviet experience, although it would take 15 more years “before those who were born already in newly independent Estonia can be presidential candidates,” giving thereby special value to non-Soviet experiences (Karulin 2016).

for the ‘memory boom’ was how the Soviet/communist state controlled the past in those countries, allowing just one version of the past into the public sphere. After the regime change it was possible to give voice to experiences that were silenced during the last decades, and, in general, we can follow the intensification of memory politics in Eastern European countries since the 1990s. There is some simultaneity with memory processes in the West: the East-European ‘memory boom’ coincided with the one in the Western countries where memory work intensified in the 1990s, in connection with the passing away of the witness generation of the atrocities of the Second World War (Assmann 2013a: 158ff, see also Mark 2010: xxi).

Looking at Estonian memory culture through the lenses described by Assmann, it can be argued that Estonian society is still (broadly speaking) going through the stage of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. In the case of some difficult topics – like the participation of Estonians in war crimes during the Second World War – broader social memory has not even reached that stage (see Pettai 2013).⁶⁵ In the conflicts over the meaning of the Soviet past or including the late Soviet past in public memory in the 21st century, a certain dissonance also exists. Thus, several intellectuals and analysts are in the stage of *Vergangenheitsbewahrung* and internalisation described by Assmann, while others are still trying to voice their experiences.

The point of departure of this dissertation was that the dominant frame of meaning making about the Soviet past after the post-communist turn manifested in the discourse of rupture. That discourse focused on explaining and processing the most essential experiences, i.e., the Soviet annexation of Estonia and the Stalinist repressions that followed. During the mnemonic processes of the 1990s, the rupture discourse became a major anti-Soviet mnemonic template. The metaphor of ‘rupture’ also served as a main key to make sense of social and individual experiences of people in the second half of the 20th century. In this frame no differences were made between Stalinism and late socialism periods.

The exclusion of the era of late socialism from the public discourse as well as from the forms of expression of social memory was not only characteristic to Estonia; it can be argued that the discourse of rupture developed transnationally during the 1990s. A similar “non-time” also emerged in Latvia (Bela-Krumina 2003), Romania (Bopp-Filimonov 2014, Pohrib 2015), and, in different forms, in other Central and Eastern European countries (for example, on the representation of the Communist period in Czech school textbooks see Benthin 2004). Resurfacing of the experiences of late socialism at the level of social memory as well as the rise of this period into spotlight in academic studies has occurred simultaneously, mostly from the beginning of the 21st century.

As elaborated in the previous chapters, one of the main metaphors through which late socialism came into the focus of academic research was nostalgia. The nostalgisation of late socialism in cultural and social memory realm started

⁶⁵ Still, official reports about war crimes in the Second World War have been written (see Hiio 2006).

in Estonia somewhat later than e.g. in the former GDR. In post-Soviet and post-socialist contexts, nostalgia was analyzed at the academic level first in the context of the GDR (Berdahl, 1999, 2010) and Russia (Boym 2001). In general, the emergence of nostalgia is not synchronic in Russia, Germany, and in other post-socialist countries, including Estonia. In the Russian context, Svetlana Boym observes the rise of unreflective nostalgia already since the mid-1990s (Boym 2001: 64ff). At the same time, Daphne Berdahl made her first observations on 'Ostalgie' in the former GDR, also since the mid-1990s. She has been among the first scholars to regard nostalgia as an integral part of transition (Berdahl 2010: XVIII). Probably, as Berdahl's works have been influential in post-socialist studies, the concept of 'late nostalgia' has also been applied to the context of other post-Soviet and postsocialist countries (see chapters on nostalgia in Bulgaria and Romania in Todorova, Dimou & Troebst 2014). Still, it has to be underlined that the processes of nostalgia unfolded everywhere in a different manner and were expressed in different fields. As Todorova has put it, those post-socialist/communist countries had similar trajectories, but different memories (Todorova 2014). One area where the nostalgia came up was material culture and representations of this material culture.

A special case among post-Socialist nostalgia is 'yugonostalgia' (Bošković 2013; Petrovič 2010) or 'Titonostalgia' (Velikonja 2008, 2009). Yugonostalgia is connected to wars and traumas in Yugoslavia in the 1990s, and has therefore a different trajectory and framework in post-socialist memory culture. But yugonostalgia has also common features with other post-Socialist nostalgias (like commodification of nostalgia – staging different "socialist"-style cafes; giving symbolic value to certain items, or depictions of the era in cultural texts). What is common to yugonostalgia in former Yugoslavia and Ostalgie is that compared to other post-socialist countries, these countries both lost their state identity and, in some sense, privileged status which they had during mature socialism. In Estonia, where independence was restored in 1991, nostalgia for the Soviet era can be mostly characterised as reflective and ironic nostalgia, but as elaborated earlier, it is also used as counter-memory to the hegemonic discourse. In Estonia it also first emerged in material culture. The exhibition *Things in My life. Soviet Estonian Product Design* at the end of 2000 was among the first times where Soviet everyday life and design were staged in a museum, in the public arena. In their biographical interviews the curators stressed that, with their exhibition, they wished to counter the dominant approach to 20th century design and architectural history in post-Soviet Estonia that supported the discourse of rupture, in which pre-war Estonian objects were especially valued.

Over the past couple of years, the arenas of expressions for nostalgia have diversified. Mostly the new digital and social media have offered new arenas for common remembering and sharing memories about the common and shared past. In the case of Estonia, an example for that is the group ESSR – nostalgic Soviet Estonia (ENSV- *Nostalgiline nõukogude Eesti*) in Facebook that has

over 15,000 followers. This is also a space where different generational and national perspectives meet, and that deserves more attention by researchers.

Nostalgias of different generations are also differently located. So the older generation, born in 1920s, often expresses nostalgia for their childhood in Republic of Estonia before the Second World War; the hegemonic discourse of continuity in Estonian is also based on this nostalgia. But at the same time members of that generation could also express nostalgia towards late socialism – by showing themselves as skilful managers of their own life. The first Soviet generation, born in 1940, has been, in this case, a vivid example of nostalgia as counter-memory. They often questioned the hegemonic discourse that developed in the 1990s in which the Soviet era was interpreted within the frame of a discourse of ‘discontinuity’. Younger people, born in the 1970s, interpreted the Soviet past in their own way, often using ironic and playful motifs when recalling it. The way how they remembered and created the memory of late socialism was probably also most easily acknowledged by the public, because, at the same time, they did not question the hegemonic discourse about the restoration of independence; they just wanted to give also other voices besides the dominant negative one to the past.

Post-Soviet memory culture has proved to be a complex research subject. The making of memories of the late socialism period underwent very rapid changes exactly at the time of my research. On the one hand, it made the field of research very fascinating, but on the other hand it is complicated to take hold of any significant aspect of the phenomenon. Ann Rigney expressed the idea that consensus about the past leads to amnesia (2008: 346), and unanimity is what keeps memory sites alive. The mode of expressions of late socialism in Estonian post-Soviet memory culture has been complex and the process dynamic at many levels of remembering. I believe that multivocality and acceptance of the past also gives us a better understanding of the present.

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ARTICLES

SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Mäletamise dünaamika ja pinged nõukogudejärgses mälukultuuris: hilise nõukogude aja tähenduse loomine Eestis

Doktoritöö teemaks on mäletamise dünaamika ja erinevate pingete avamine nõukogudejärgses mälukultuuris. See avaldub näiteks 21. sajandi alguses kirja pandud elulugudes, kus kirjutaja tunneb, et kuigi üleskutse palub kirjutada nõukogudeaegsest argikogemusest, ootab muuseum – kui avalik institutsioon – siiski lugusid raskest elust sotsialismi ajal, mida tal pakkuda ei ole. Uurimistöö põhifookuses on küpse/hilise sotsialismi aja tähenduse loome erinevatel meenutamistasanditel. Mõisteid „küps sotsialism” ja „hiline sotsialism” on doktoritöö artiklites kasutatud paralleelselt ning selle all mõistetakse perioodi 1950. aastate lõpust 1980. aastate keskpaigani (vrd Yurchak 2006). Eesti kontekstis on seda perioodi kirjeldatud kui hilist nõukogude aega, populaarses käsitluses kui nõuka-aega. Eelkõige eristab hilist sotsialismi varasematest stalinismi aastatest argielu teatav stabiliseerumine, otseste repressioonide vähenemine ning ideoloogiliste esitluste standardiseerumine. Hilise sotsialismi uurijad on perioodi lõpu paigutanud 1985. aastasse, Gorbatšovi võimuletuleku aega. Eesti kontekstis võime piiri tõmmata pigem 1987. aastasse, „teise rahvusliku ärkamisaja” algusesse. Dissertatsiooni põhiküsimus on hilise sotsialismi perioodi kui mälu koha loome 21. sajandi alguse mälukultuuris.

1990. aastate mäluprotsesside tulemusena mõisteti sajandivahetuseks nõukogude perioodi Eesti mälukultuuris valdavalt kannatuse ja vastupanu võtmes. Sealjuures vaadeldi nõukogude perioodi ühe tervikuna eristamata stalinismi ja hilist sotsialismi. Mälu-uurijad on nõukogude perioodi sellist mäletamisviisi iseloomustanud katkestuse metafoori kaudu. Alates sajandivahetusest on vaade hilisele sotsialismile Eesti mälukultuuris mitmekesisitunud. Seni tagaplaanil olnud hilise sotsialismi periood sai sajandi esimesel kümnendil laialdast tähelepanu, seda nii akadeemilisel tasandil kui sotsiaalse mälu tekstides.

Dissertatsioonis keskendusingi mäletamisele ning mitmekesisitunud mälu kultuuri loomisele kolmel erineval tasandil. Küsisin, kuidas luuakse mälu kultuuri (1) institutsionaalsel tasandil, mida esindavad eelkõige Eesti presidentide kõned; (2) kultuurilisel tasandil, mida analüüsisin muuseuminäituste ja teiste kirjalike ja visuaalsete meediumide (dokumentaalfilm, romaan) põhjal; (3) individuaalsel ehk biograafilisel tasandil (elulood ja intervjuud). Kõiki tasandeid analüüsisin omavahelises dünaamilises suhtes. Allikate iseloomust tulenevalt keskendusin aastatele 2000–2010.

21. sajandi esimesse kümnendisse langes Eesti ühiskonnas aktiivne tegelemine hilise sotsialismi ajaga erinevate mälumeediumite vahendusel. Nagu mitmete teistegi Eesti mälukultuuris oluliste ja märgiliste teemade puhul, olid esmasteks hilise sotsialismi aja mõtestajateks elulookirjutajad. Iseäranis tähelepanuväärne panus hilise sotsialismi aja teema, kui olulise probleemi sõnasta-

misel oli avalikus diskursuses elulookirjutajatel, kes saatsid oma elulood 2001. aastal Eesti Kirjandusmuuseumi korraldatud eluloovõistlusele „Minu ja minu pere elu ENSV-s ja Eesti Vabariigis”. Neis elulugudes astuti dialoogi 1990. aastatel domineerinud katkestuse diskursusega ning keskseks teemaks tõusis argieluline kogemus hilisest nõukogude perioodist. Samal ajal levitas ka Eesti Rahva Muuseum (ERM) erinevaid küsimuskavasid, mis keskendusid Nõukogude Eestis elamise kogemuse argielulisele küljele – nt „Elu nõukogude ajal” (2000), „Tööelu ja töötamine Nõukogude Eestis” (2001), „Toidukultuur nõukogude ajal” (2002), „Noortekultuurid nõukogude ajal” (2003), „Turism nõukogude ajal” (2007) ja „Noorte rõivastus nõukogude ajal” (2008). Järk-järgult avanes teema ka teistes mälumeediumites.

Ka muuseumitel oli hilise sotsialismi aja mõtestajatena oluline roll. 21. sajandi alguses toimusid esimesed näitused, mille keskmes olid nõukogude argieluga seotud aspektid. Nende näituste esmane retseptsioon ühiskonnas oli vastakas: kuraatoreid kritiseeriti tavapäraste esemete muuseumikonteksti asetamise eest, sealjuures seostati argiseid nõukogudeaegseid esemeid inetu esteetikaga. Teisalt rõõmustasid muuseumikülastajad tuttavate esemetega taaskohtumise ja jagatud kogemuste taasesitamise üle (vt artiklid IV ja V). Esimeseks pääsukeks võib selles vallas pidada Kai Lobjakase ja Karin Pauluse kureeritud näitust „Asjad minu elus. Nõukogudeaegne tootedisain“, mis avati esmalt 2000. aasta lõpul Tartus ERMis ja liikus seejärel 2001. aasta kevadsuveks edasi Eesti Tarbekunsti- ja Disainimuuseumi Tallinnas. Näitus keskendus nõukogudeaegsele disainile ja argistele esemetele ning jätkas mõnes mõttes 1990. aastate ERMi näitusekäsitlust, mis oli traditsioonilisemate rahvakultuuri teemade kõrval kajastanud ka 20. sajandi argiseid praktikaid. Üldiselt aga 1990-ndatel nõukogude aeg Eestis muuseumimaastikul huvi ei pakkunud, ei näituse- ega kogumispoliitika osas, keskenduti pigem sarnaselt muule avalikule ruumile rahvusliku narratiivi ülesehitamisele (vt Raisma 2009) ning kui nõukogude ajast näitus tehti, siis eelistati teemasid traumaatilisest minevikust (näiteks Eesti Ajaloomuuseumi 1999. aasta näitus „Stalinistlikud repressioonid”).

Nii trüki- kui ka arenev internetimeedia olid samuti üheks areeniks, kus nõukogude argielu temaga 21. sajandi algul aktiivselt tegeleti. 2004. aasta alguses tegi ajakirjanik ja kirjastaja Enno Tammer üleskutse ajalehes Postimees, kutsudes üles meenutama elu ENSV-s argisest vaatepunktist⁶⁶. Üleskutse langes väga viljakasse pinda. Siin ühtisid ühelt poolt soov ja valmidus rääkida argisest nõukogude elust, mille kaudu kritiseeriti valitsevat kannatuse diskursust nõukogude aja kohta, ning teisalt internetimeedia kiire ja tormiline areng. Palju diskussioone ja nõukogude argielust mälestuste jagamisi toimus just veebikeskkonnas. Internetikommentaaridest ja kirja teel saadetud tekstidest koostati mitu erinevat kogumikku (nt Tammer 2004, 2006). Samal ajal, 2004. aasta alguses, alustas ka

⁶⁶ „Postimees kogub mälestusi ENSV-st” (<http://www.postimees.ee/1394989/postimees-kogub-maestusi-ensvst>). Üleskutse oli sõnastatud eelkõige defitsiidikogemuse keskselt („Kas mäletad oma esimest teksapaari, esimest banaani?”), mille kaudu „taasavastati“ ka meelelahutussfääris nõukogude argielu.

populaarne tabloidmeediaväljaanne SL Õhtuleht iganädalase retrorubriigiga nõukogude ajast. Neile lisaks alustas 2004. aasta jaanuaris ka ETV telekanalis Mati Undi kirjutatud iroonilis-nostalgiline saatesari „Vana aja asjad”, mida tutvustati kui arhiivimaterjalidele tuginevat sarja, mis esitab tegelikkust ajavahemikul 1960–1985, eelkõige selle aja asju⁶⁷. Nii tematiseeriti nõukogude argikogemust mitmes keskkonnas üheaegselt. Seekaudu tõusis kannatuse ja vastupanu narratiivi kõrvale ka argine, kogemuslik narratiiv, mida valitsev eliit tõlgendas kriitiliselt kui demokraatiat ohustavat nostalgiat nõukogude aja järgi.

Väitekirja **esimeses peatükis** andsin ülevaate 1990. aastate alguse reformidest, mis puudutasid argielu ning vormisid taasiseseisva riigi mälupoliitikat. Näitasin, et need protsessid avaldasid mõju sellele, milliseks arenes hilise sotsialismi mäletamine Eesti nõukogudejärgses mälukultuuris. Seejärel avasin mõiste tähendust Eestis ja teistes postsotsialistlikes riikides. Eesti etnoloogias on alates aastatuhandevahetusest hilise sotsialismi mõiste kinnistunud kirjeldamiseks argielulisi kogemusi 1960.–1980. aastatel. Esimese küsimuskava, kus kasutati „küpse nõukogude aja” mõistet ja mis keskendus just selle perioodi argielulisele kogemusele, koostas etnoloog Heiki Pärdi 2000. aastal Eesti Rahva Muuseumis.

Teoreetilises ehk teises peatükis selgitasin oma üksikuurimuste teoreetilisi lähtekohti. Minu analüüs toetus kultuurimälu ja kommunikatiivse mälu teooriatele. Jan ja Aleida Assmann (2008) mõistavad kultuurimälu kui ühte kollektiivse mälu vormi, mis kinnitab kindla grupi idenditeete. Kultuurimälu on seotud konkreetsete materiaalsete väljendustega; nende vahendajatena näevad Assmannid traditsioonilisi sümbolseid koode, mis väljenduvad kirja, pildi ja tantsu kaudu. Eelkõige peavad nad kultuurimälu kandjateks kõrgkultuuri tekste, mis on kestnud üle aja ja omavad tähendust ka väljaspool oma (loomis)aega. Siin eristavadki Assmannid erinevaid temporaalsusi, tehes vahet kultuuri- ja kommunikatiivsel mälul. Kui kultuurimälu on kinnitunud selles käsitluses kindlate ajaliste punktide külge, siis kommunikatiivne mälu on muutuv ja liikuv (Welzer 2008). Assmannid soovivad kultuurimälu juures rõhutada pikka ajaloolist perspektiivi, mis ulatub 20. sajandist märksa kaugemale. Kommunikatiivne mälu aga tegeleb Assmannide käsitluses igapäevaelu valdkonda jäävate temadega, hõlmates endas 80–100 aastast perioodi kolme generatsiooni eluajal. Antud lähenemisviisi järgi kuulub hilise sotsialismi periood kommunikatiivse mälu valdkonda.

Assmannide kultuurimälu teooriat täiendasin Ann Rigney ja Astrid Erlli käsitlustega. Ann Rigney (2016) rõhutab kultuurilise dünaamika tähenduse kasvu mälu-uuringutes ja toob esile keskendumise vajalikkuse toodetelt protsessidele, samuti kultuuriliste artefaktide asemel viisidele, kuidas artefaktid levivad ja mõjutavad oma keskkonda. Astrid Erll laiendab kultuurimälu meediumite hulka, hõlmates siia nii kaasaegse kirjanduse kui ka filmi (Erll 2008). Siin tulebki tõdeda, et tegeledes hilise sotsialismi aja mäletamisega, ei ole analüütilisel tasandil mõistlik näha kultuurimälu tekste ja kommunikatiivset

⁶⁷ Vt <https://arhiiv.err.ee/seeria/vana-aja-asjad/elu/31>.

mälu niivõrd eristatuna, vaid pigem dünaamilisena ja omavahel seotuna. Kommunikatiivse ja kultuurimälu vahelise suhte problematiseerimisega tegelesin lähemalt artiklites IV ja V.

Teise olulise samba minu teoreetilises lähenemises moodustas mälu dünaamiline käsitlus (Miztal 2003) ja sotsiaalse mälu mõiste (Olick & Robbins 1998). Mälu dünaamilise mõistmine osundab, et pole olemas üht dominantset mälu ühiskonnas, vaid erinevad mälu versioonid on pidevas arengus ja mõjutavad üksteist. Selline lähenemine aitab mõista mälu mitmekesisust ja identiteetide ajalist dimensiooni. Meenutamispunktide analüüsimisel toetusin Ameerika Ühendriikide sotsioloogi Jeffery Olicki lähenemisele, kes analüüsib mälu poliitikat meenutamispunktide kaudu (Olick 2007). Praktika mõiste laenab Olick sotsioloog Pierre Bourdieult. Siinjuures saab taaskord oluliseks mitmekordsuse ja mitmekesisuse aspekt. Olick näitab, et meenutamispunktideid ei looda mitte ainult minevikus ja olevikus, vaid oleviku ja mineviku vahel toimub pidev interaktsioon. Mälestust varasematest meenutuspraktikatest nimetab Olick „mälu mäluks” (ibid). Põhjalikumalt tutvustasin ja rakendasin Olicki lähenemist Eesti presidentide kõnede analüüsimisel (artikkel I).

Hilise sotsialismi aja kogemuste interpreteerimisel on oluline roll kanda nostalgia. Nii avasin siinse töö teoreetilises osas nostalgia metafoori kasutust postsotsialismi uuringutes. Nostalgia on vaadeldud kui moderniseerumise tagajärge, mis kerkib esile, kui ootused ja kogemused üksteisest lahknevad (Keighly & Pickering 2012). Seda võib öelda ka 1990. aastate kiirete arengute kohta Eestis ja Ida-Euroopas laiemalt. Nostalgia mõistet kasutades arvestasin, et indiviidi tasandil ja kogukondade tasandil toimivad korraga mitmed erinevad nostalgiad, mis vastavad personaalsete vajaduste ja poliitiliste eesmärkide mitmekesisusele (Kõresaar 2008). Nostalgilist suhtumist hilise sotsialismi perioodi võib mõista ka kui vastumälu (Berdahl 2010). Eesti 21. sajandi mälu-kultuuris toimib nostalgia vastumäluna nõukogude aja senise hegemoonilise käsitluse suhtes, mis ka hilise sotsialismi perioodi kirjeldas peamiselt kannatuste ja vastupanu metafooride kaudu. Analüütiliste kategooriatena nostalgia kui nähtuse uurimisel kasutasin läbivalt restauratiivse ja reflekteeriva (peegeldava) nostalgia eristust (Boym 2001). Restauratiivseks defineerib Boym nostalgiat, mis toob esile lood patriootlikust minevikust ja loob neile tuginedes ka tulevikku. Seda tüüpi nostalgiat esineb individuaalsel tasandil, kuid seda kasutatakse ka poliitilistel eesmärkidel. Eesti poliitiline eliit on nõukogude aja nostalgiat tõlgendanud ohuna Eesti riiklusele, käsitledes individuaalset nõukogude aja nostalgiat restauratiivseks (Laar 2008, Masso 2010). Enamasti on hilise sotsialismi aja / nõukogude aja nostalgia aga analüüsitav reflekteerivana. Reflekteeriva nostalgia mõiste tähistab igatsust mineviku suhtes, mis aitab olevikule tähendust luua ning on eelkõige seotud sotsiaalse mälu ja kultuurimälu tasanditega.

Hilise sotsialismi mäletajad kohtuvad siinses doktoritöös põlvkondlikus perspektiivis. Väitekirjas analüüsisin kolme erineva põlvkonna, s.o 1920., 1940. ja 1970. aastatel sündinute narratiivseid kogemusi nõukogude ajast. Põlvkonda mõistsin siin töös enesekirjeldusliku vahendina, eritledes neid mälukogukonda-

dena, kel on just neile eriomased kogemused ja mälestused. Analüüsisin, kuidas omaeluloolistes jutustustes esineb enesemõistmine põlvkonnana ja kuidas erinevad põlvkonnad nõukogude minevikust räägivad.

Lähemalt kirjeldasin põlvkondade kogemusi peatükis 2.3.1. Minu analüüsi keskmes oli 1940. aastatel sündinud põlvkonna kogemused hilisest sotsialismi ajast (vt artiklid III ja V). 1940-ndatel sündinute kogemusi analüüsisin eelkõige elulugude ja avaldatud mälestuste põhjal. Kaasasin ka 1930-ndate lõpus ja 1950-ndate alguses sündinute lood, kuna mitmed argieluga seotud kogemused olid neil aastatel sündinutel sarnased 1940-ndatel sündinutega. Kirjeldasin neid kui „esimest nõukogude põlvkonda“ ja tulenevalt nende rollist nõukogudejärgses mälupoliitikas ka kui „vaikset põlvkonda“ (vt artikkel III, Silies 2007), kelle häält 1990. aastate ümberkorraldustes polnud palju kuulda. Küll on neil olnud oluline roll hilise sotsialismi aja mälukultuuri loomes alates 2000. aastast: just selle põlvkonna esindajad on oma eluloolistes jutustustes tähtsustanud argielulist diskursust ja nii mitmekesistanud nõukogude perioodi mäletamise viisi laiemalt.

1980. aastate lõpus ja 1990. aastate alguses olid ühiskonnas esiplaanil eelkõige 1920-ndatel sündinute kogemused. Sellel kümnendil sündinuid on iseloomustatud kui „vabariigi põlvkonda“, toonitades sellega nende üleskasvamist suhteliselt stabiilsetel 1920.–1930. aastatel. Nende lapsepõlve ning noorukiea kogemustele anti oluline koht 1980. aastate lõpu laulva revolutsiooni ajal ning nende kogemusi vaatlesin lähemalt artiklites I, II ja V. Lisaks 1920-ndatel sündinute lugudele analüüsisin 1970-ndatel sündinute jutustusi, keda ma nimetasin „viimaseks nõukogude põlvkonnaks“. See põlvkond sündis hilise sotsialismi ajal ja sai sel ajal ka koolihariduse. Nende täiskasvanuks saamine langes kokku ühiskonnas toimunud murranguliste muutustega 1980. aastate lõpus ja 1990. aastate alguses. Eraldi tähelepanu all olid väitekirjas 1970-ndatel sündinud kultuuritekstide loojad ning nende käsitus hilisest sotsialismi ajast (artikkel IV).

Kolmandas peatükis avasin töös kasutatud allikaid, analüüsimeetodeid ja välitööde protsessi. Kuna väitekirjas analüüsisin mäletamist institutsionaalsel, kultuurilisel ja individuaalsel tasandil, siis esindasid ka allikad neid erinevaid tasandeid. Kasutasin allikatena biograafilisi intervjuusid, avaldatud mälestusi, kirjalikke elulugusid, Eesti presidentide kõnesid ja kultuuritekste (nagu romaanid, dokumentaalfilmid, näitused), vähemal määral ka erinevaid aramusartikleid. Ajaliselt tekkelt hõlmas töö allikaid Eesti taasiseseisvumisest kuni 2010. aastani. Lisaks 21. sajandi arengutele kaasasin väitekirja 1990. aastate mäletamispraktikaid: seda nii Lennart Meri kõnede (aastad 1992–2001, artikkel I) kui 1980-ndate lõpus – 1990-ndate esimeses pooles kirjutatud elulugude kaudu (artikkel V).

Esmalt andsin ülevaate allikatest, mis avavad poliitilise ja kultuurimälu tasandeid. Poliitilist mälu ehk institutsionaalset tasandit mälukultuuris vaatlesin Eesti presidentide kõnede kaudu. Lennart Meri kõned on avaldatud kolmes mahukas köites (Meri 2001, 2005, 2007), teiste presidentide kõned on kättesaadavad veebilehtedelt. Eelkõige keskendusin riiklikel tähtpäevadel (24. veeb-

ruar, 23. juuni) ja mälestuspäevadel peetud kõnedele. Toomas Hendrik Ilvese ja Arnold Rüütli puhul lisandusid 20. augustil peetud kõned. Pöörasin analüüsis tähelepanu sellele, mis kontekstis nõukogude minevikku kõnedes esile tuuakse, aga ka sellele, kuidas nõukogude perioodi nimetatakse (näiteks „vene aeg“, „okupatsioon“). Lisaks kõnedele vaatlesin presidentide elulugusid ametlikel kodulehtedel ja erinevates publikatsioonides.

Kultuurimälu allikatena käsitlesin kultuuritekste, mis loovad raami, mille kaudu tulevased põlvkonnad minevikku mäletavad (Erll 2008). Kultuuritekstid kasutavad sealjuures varasemaid sündmusi tänapäevase kogemuse peegeldamiseks. Kultuuritekstide valikul oli oluliseks nende keskendumine hilise sotsialismi kogemustele ning nii said peamiseks allikaliigiks näitused, eelkõige nõukogude argielule pühendatud näitused Eesti Rahva Muuseumis (ERM). Esimeseks näituseks oli ERMis „Asjad minu elus. Nõukogudeaegne tootedisain“ (2000–01). Sellele järgnesid ERMi näitused nõukogudeaegsetest kilekottidest, nõukogude toidukultuurist ja noortekultuurist. Lisaks näituste külastamistele kaasasin analüüsi näituste külalisraamatud ja ilmunud vastukaja (vt artiklid IV ja V). Teisteks analüüsitavateks kultuuritekstideks olid 1970. aastatel sündinud kultuuritegelaste teosed. Analüüsisin artiklis IV (koostöös Raili Nuginiga) Jan Kausi romaani „Hetk“ (2009), Jaak Kilmi ja Kiur Aarma dokumentaalfilmi „Disko ja tuumasõda“ (2009), Urmas Vadi (stsenarium) ja Jaak Kilmi (režissöör) filmi „Kohtumine tundmatuga“ (2005).

Peamiseks elulooliseks allikaks olid 2000. aastal välja kuulutatud elulugude kogumiskampaaniale „Minu ja minu pere elu ENSV-s ja Eesti Vabariigis“ saadetud vastused. Selle kampaania käigus laekus Eesti Elulugude Ühendusele 330 lugu. 57 elulugu, sealhulgas 48 naistelt ja 9 meestelt, olid kirjutatud 1940-ndatel sündinute poolt. Üldiselt moodustavad naised 70% elulugude kirjutajatest (Hirikus 2016), kuid mind huvitava eagrupi puhul domineerisid naised veel suuremal määral. Eraldi tähelepanu pöörasin nendest elulugudest 1940. aastatel sündinud naiste lugude analüüsimisele artiklis III. Kuid ka teistes artiklites on omaeluloolise mäletamise allikaks just sellele eluloovõistlusele saadetud lood. Lisaks 1940-ndatel sündinud naiste lugudele analüüsisin samale võistlusele saadetud 1928. aastal sündinud mehe, Heino lugu (artikkel II). Avasin dissertatsiooni elulugusid puudutavas alapeatükis ka võistluse tausta, sh seda, kuidas elulookirjutajad elulugudes ja saatekirjades polemiseerivad hegemoonilise diskursusega nõukogude ajast. Kuni selle kogumiskampaaniani keskendusid elulookirjutajad nõukogude perioodi kirjeldamisel eelkõige stalinismi aja kannatustele ja radikaalsetele ümberkorraldustele, hilise sotsialismi aja kogemust pikemalt ei tematiseeritud. Nagu ülal osundatud, mõtestati ka avalikus diskursuses nõukogude aega valdavalt kannatuse ja vastupanu metafooride kaudu. Sellele elulookampaaniale vastajad aga avaldasid rahulolematust ühekülgse nõukogude aja diskursusega ning argise kogemuse senise väljajätmisega.

Minu välitöö (vt alapeatükk 3.3.) ehk andmekogumisprotsess toimus arhiivides, muuseuminäitustel, kinosaalides, intervjuuerides ja tekstede lugedes. Elulugude lugemist arhiivis välitööna tematiseerisin põhjalikumalt ka doktoritöös. Arhiividel – nii Eesti Rahva Muuseumis kui Eesti Kirjandusmuuseumis – on

olnud oluline osa etnoloogilises ja folkloristlikus uurimistöös, kuid arhiivitöö-protsessile kui olulisele osale välitööst pole siiani väga palju tähelepanu pööratud. Mina töötasin elulugudega Eesti Kirjandusmuuseumi Eesti Kultuuriloolises Arhiivis. Peamiselt lugesin elulugusid 2006. aasta sügisel ja 2008. aasta kevadel-suvel. Lisaks elulooliste tekstide lugemisele arhiivikeskkonnas (ja väljaspool) tegelesin oma välitöödel mitmete teiste tekstidega. Üheks oluliseks osaks selles protsessis oli presidentide kõnede lugemine, aga ka erinevate nõukogude aega puudutavate meediatekstide jälgimine ja kaardistamine. Biograafilised intervjuud viisin läbi 2010. aasta suvel Tallinnas ja Tartus, enamasti avalikes kohtades (kohvikud), ühel korral ka kaasuurija kodus. Olles sündinud 1970. aastate keskel, oli mul endal samuti isiklik kogemus hilise sotsialismi ajast, mis piirneb küll vaid lapsepõlve ja varase teismeliseeaga. Nii jagasin ma osaliselt kogemusi oma intervjuueeritavatega – ma olin lugenud samu raamatuid ja näinud lapsepõlves samu filme, osalenud kohustuslikes nõukogude ühiskonna rituaalides. Teisalt muutis kasvukeskkond Eesti maa-asulas, kus polnud näiteks ligipääsu Soome televisioonile, minu kogemuse selle grupi suures osas ühiselt jagatud kogemustest erinevaks (lähemalt artiklis IV).

Minu erinevate tekstidega töötamise viisi võib kõige paremini iseloomustada juhtmotiivide (*Leitlinie*) kindlakstegemise kaudu (Lehmann 1983). Lehmann defineerib juhtmotiivi kui omavahel seotud sündmuste jada, mille jutustaja on välja valinud oma loo koherentseks esitamiseks. Tekstide analüüsimisel toetusin ka Alessandro Portelli (1992, 1997) kolmesele jaotusele, kus ta eristab ajaloost jutustamisel institutsionaalset, kogukondlikku ja isiklikku tasandit. Need tasandid avalduvad jutustuses tendentsidena ja nende tähendus avaldubki kihtide kombinatsioonis. Vastavalt sellele, millisest vaatepunktist lugu jutustatakse, vahelduvad tegelased, tegevusruumi ulatus ja grammatika. Portelli lugemisviis oli aluseks 1928. aastal sündinud Heino eluloo analüüsimisel artiklis II (vt ka Jõesalu, Kõresaar 2011). Läbivalt iseloomustas minu allikate lugemist ajalooline diskursuseanalüüs (Wodak 2001), mille tugevuseks on erinevate väljade ja žanrite kombineerimine. Üks teema võib alguse saada nt poliitilises kõnes, kuid sama teema jätkub ja järgneb nii kultuurilistes tekstides kui ka individuaalses elulookirjutuses.

Järgnevalt annan lühiülevaate dissertatsiooni aluseks olevatest artiklitest.

Artikkel I. Jõesalu, Kirsti 2012. The Role of the Soviet Past in Post-Soviet Memory Politics through Examples of Speeches from Estonian Presidents [Nõukogude mineviku roll nõukogudejärgses minevikupoliitikas: Eesti presidentide kõnede näitel.] – *Europe-Asia Studies*, 64 (6), 1007–1032.

Esimeses artiklis huvitas mind küsimus, kas nõukogude mineviku roll on alates taasiseseisvumisperioodist muutunud. Analüüsisin ühte tüüpi meenutamistegevust, nimelt Eesti presidentide Lennart Meri (1992–2001), Arnold Rüütli (2001–2006) ja Toomas Hendrik Ilvese (I ametiaeg 2006–2010) kõnesid. Vaatlesin neid tekste seotuna teiste sotsiaalse mälu ja kultuurimälu väljendustega. Analüüsisin, kuidas on seotud presidentide isiklikud kogemused nõukogude ajast ja viis, kuidas nad nõukogude minevikku oma kõnedes käsitlevad. Küsisin,

kas mälupoliitiliselt tehakse vahet erinevate nõukogude perioodide – stalinismi ja hilise sotsialismi – vahel.

Kõik kolm presidenti tõlgendasid nõukogude perioodi ühtsena, hegemoonilisena jäi domineerima nõukogude aja kohta katkestuse diskursus. Oluline oli ka vastupanu metafoor. Erinevatel presidentidel olid sealjuures erinevad rõhuasetused. Lennart Meri tõlgendas nõukogude aega kui katkestust, mis hõlmas kõiki ühiskonna tasandeid. Nõukogude perioodist rääkides kasutas ta mõisteid nagu „Nõukogude ja Vene okupatsioon“, „viiskümmend okupatsiooniaastat“, „viiskümmend aastat väljaspool Euroopat“, „läbi aastakümnete kestnud pimedus“, „Vene okupatsiooni haigeveodi“. Lisaks katkestusele oli oluliseks vastupanu metafoor. Meri nägi rolli ka lääneriikidel, kes reetsid Eesti teise maailmasõja ajal, pannes neile moraalse vastutuse võimaldada Eestil Euroopasse tagasi pöörduda. Arnold Rüütl kõnedes leidis vähem viiteid nõukogude okupatsioonile. Vastupanu nägi Rüütel peamiselt kultuurilistes tegevustes, sealjuures hõlmas ta vastupanuliikumise osalejatena ka nõukogude nomenklatuuri liikmeid. Kui Meri oli näinud ajaloo murdepunkti 1940. aasta okupatsioonis, siis Rüütel ei rõhutanud 1940. aastaid, vaid pidas oluliseks ennekõike ajavahemikku 1988–1991 ja tollast rahvuslikku liikumist. Nõukogude perioodi käsitlemisest katkestusena Rüütel samal ajal kõrvale ei kaldu. Toomas Hendrik Ilvese puhul vaatesin ainult tema esimesel ametiajal, aastatel 2006–2010, peetud kõnesid. Juba valimiskampaania ajal sai nõukogude mineviku tõlgendamine Ilvese ja Rüütli, kahe presidendikandidaadi vahel oluliseks teemaks. Oma toonastes publikatsioonides toetus Ilves katkestuse diskursusele ja eristas end väga selgelt tollasest sotsiaalses mälus levima hakanud reflekteerivast nostalgiast. Erinevalt eelmistest presidentidest tegeles ta nõukogude minevikuga pigem just konkreetsete meenutamispäevade kõnedes, mitte vabariigi aastapäeva omades. Samuti ei esitanud Ilvese kõned Eestit ajaloo ohvrina.

Põgusalt puudutasin artiklis ka põlvkondliku mäletamise vaatenurka. Meri ja Rüütel on mõlemad sündinud 1920. aastatel, seepärast vaatasin nende kogemusi nõukogude perioodist ka läbi ühte põlvkonda kuulumise prisma. Meri ja Rüütli erinevad elutrajektorid – nii teise maailmasõja eelses vabariigis kui Nõukogude Eestis – tõid siiski kaasa teatavad erinevused nõukogude perioodi tõlgendamises. Samas 1990. aastatel valdavaks olnud hegemoonilisest diskursusest sõjaeelse Eesti Vabariigi kujutamisel ei kaldunud neist kumbki kõrvale.

Artikli kohandatud versioon on avaldatud ka eestikeelsena Eesti Rahva Muuseumi aastaraamatus (Jõesalu 2012).

Artikkel II. Jõesalu, Kirsti; Kõresaar, Ene 2012. Working through Mature Socialism: Private and Public in the Life Story of an Estonian Industry Manager. [Töötamine küpse sotsialismi ajal: avalik-privaatse suhe Eesti keskastme tööstusjuhi eluloos.] – *Baltic Biographies at Historical Crossroads*, ed. by Aili Aarelaid-Tart and Li Bennich-Björkman. Routledge, 68–85.

Teise artikli aluseks oli 1928. aastal sündinud Heino elulugu, mille ta saatis eluloovõistlusele „Minu ja minu pere elu ENSV-s ja Eesti Vabariigis“. Kaastöö on avaldatud ka „Eesti rahva elulugude“ III osas (Hinrikus 2003a), kuid artikli

jaoks töötasime (koos Ene Kõresaarega) Eesti Kultuuriloolises Arhiivis asunud originaallooga keskendudes avalik-privaatse suhte analüüsimisele. Eluloo lugemisel kasutasime Portelli (1992, 1997) ajaloost jutustamise kolmest mudelit, kus muudatus keelekasutuses viitab erinevatele jutustamistasanditele (institutsionaalne, ühiskondlik ja personaalne). Heino töötas peamise osa oma tööelust keskastme tööstusjuhina. Analüüsi fookuses oli küsimus, kuidas väljendub nõukogudeaegne kompleksne argielu omaeluloolises jutustuses. Välja valitud elulugu sai iseloomustada tööbiograafiana, kuna pärast lapsepõlve privaates võttes käsitlemist oli ülejäänud elulugu seotud ühiskondliku ja institutsionaalse tasandiga. Autor sedastas isegi, et tema rollil isana ja mehena polnud tema tööbiograafias määravat osa.

Analüüsitavas eluloos ilmnes, kuivõrd erinevalt tajutakse autobiograafiliselt nõukogude ametliku avalikkuse ja privaatse sfääri (sh jutustaja enda isiku) suhteid 1940.–1950. aastatel võrreldes 1960.–1980. aastatega. Varasema, kõrgtotalitaristliku perioodi meenutustes oli ametlik-avalik sfäär alati ähvardavana olemasolev, selle sekkumine privaatsfääri ning mõju indiviidi elukäigule oli totaalne ja vältimatu. 1960.–1980. aastate narratiivne kogemus viitas aga pigem ametlik-avaliku sfääri ja privaatsfääri paralleelsusele, st eraldatud privaatsfääri võimalikkusele.

Artiklist on avaldatud ka eestikeelne versioon ajakirjas Methis (Jõesalu, Kõresaar 2011).

Artikkel III. Jõesalu, Kirsti 2016. ‘We Were the Children of a Romantic Era’: Nostalgia and the Non-ideological Everyday Through the Perspective of a ‘Silent Generation’. [„Me olime romantilise ajastu lapsed”. Nostalgia ja ideoloogiavaba argipäev „vaikse põlvkonna“ vaatenurgast.] – *Journal of Baltic Studies. Special Issue: Baltic Socialism Remembered. Memory and Life Story since 1989*, ed. by Ene Kõresaar, 47 (4), 557-577.

Kui eelmine artikkel pakkus vaadet hilisele sotsialismile 1928. aastal sündinud mehe vaatenurgast, siis kolmas dissertatsiooni kaasatud artikkel vahendas naiste ja põlvkond nooremate kogemusi. Siinses artiklis olid allikaks samuti eluloo-võistlusele „Minu ja minu pere elu ENSV-s ja Eesti Vabariigis” saadetud elulood. Seekord aga analüüsisin 1940. aastatel sündinud naiste kogemusi. Kesken-dusin küsimusele, kuidas meenutatakse hilist sotsialismi aega individuaalsel tasandil ja ka põlvkondlikus perspektiivis. Kuidas elulookirjutajad end põlvkonnana kirjeldavad?

Analüüsisin elulookirjutajate enesemõistmist taas avalik-privaatse suhte skaalal, aga ka läbi nostalgia prisma. Elulugudes oli nostalgia hilise sotsialismi suhtes mõistetav eelkõige kui vastumälu (Berdahl 2010) nõukogude aja hegemoonse lähenemisviisi suhtes. Väga sageli anti oma komplitseeritud olevikule, peamiselt 1990. aastate reformide aegsele argielule Eestis, tähendus võrdluse kaudu hilise sotsialismi aastatega. Teisalt tõstatasid elulookirjutajad ka teemasid, kus nad ei nõustunud 21. sajandi alguseks väljakujunenud Eesti ajaloo käsitletustega. Üheks niisuguseks esile kerkinud küsimuseks oli metsavendade roll teise maailmasõja järgsel ajal. Antud grupp mäletas pigem nendega seotud

hirme ja vägivallategusid, mis ei läinud kokku ametliku kangelasnarratiiviga. Üldiselt võis aga öelda, et n-ö suure ajaloo teemad jäid neis elulugudes pigem tagaplaanile.

Märkimisväärse teemana tõid elulookirjutajad esile avaliku ja privaatses sfääris ühendamisega seotud raskused. Kõik nad käisid hilise sotsialismi ajal palgatööl, st töötasid väljaspool kodu ning tööelule pühendumine, sarnaselt eelmises artiklis tõstatatule, oli oluline teema nii neis kui teistes postsotsialistlikes elulugudes. Lisaks tööelu meenutustele tõid osad elulookirjutajad välja ka tolleaegseid raskusi, millega nad era- ja tööelu ühendades kokku puutusid. Oma tööelule keskendumine eluloo kirjutamisel võimaldas neil retrospektiivselt tunnustada nii enda kui oma põlvkonna tööd. Teisalt pakkuda sellega ka vastumälu hegemoonsele käsitlusele nõukogude aja töökogemuse alavääristamisest 1990. aastatel. Põlvkonna enesekirjeldustes domineeris eelkõige enese nägemine positiivse ja tulevikku vaatava, ellu-uskuva põlvkonnana.

Artikkel IV. Jõesalu, Kirsti; Nugin, Raili 2012. Reproducing Identity Through Remembering: Cultural Texts on the Late Soviet Time. [Identiteediloomes meenutamise kaudu: kultuuritekstid hilisest sotsialismist.] – *Folklore. Electronic Journal of Folklore*, ed. by Art Leete, 51, 15–48.

Neljandas artiklis vaatasin koos kaasautor Raili Nuginiga taas põlvkondlikke meenutamispädevusi nii individuaalsel kui kultuurilisel tasandil. Samuti huvitas meid küsimus, kas intellektuaalid esitavad väljakutse institutsionaalsele minevikukäsitlusele? Artikkel põhines kuuel biograafilisel intervjuul, mis olid tehtud nelja kultuuriteksti autoriga. Meie huvikeskmes olid 1970. aastatel sündinud intellektuaalid, kes olid oma töödes vahendanud hilise sotsialismi aja kogemusi. Välja valitud kultuuritekstid esindasid nelja erinevat meediumit: analüüsisime näitust, mängufilmi, romaani ja osaliselt fiktsionaalset dokumentaalfilmi. Leidsime, et väljavalitud tekstidel on potentsiaali mõjutada hilise sotsialismi aja kultuurimälu ühiskonnas üldiselt. Esitasime küsimuse, kuidas autorite isiklikud kogemused kajastuvad nende kultuuritekstides. Artikkel asetab uuritava materjali laiemalt 2000. aastate alguse Eesti mälu- ja kultuurikonteksti. Näitasime, et meie vestluspartnerid olid seotud nii katkestuse kui ka nostalgia diskursusega ning oluliseks analüütiliseks kategooriaks oli reflekteeriv nostalgia (Boym 2001).

Alapeatükis „Asjad elus ja asjad laval” vaatlesime asjade tähendust ja rolli meie poolt intervjueritute biograafiates ning keskendusime näitusele Nõukogude Eesti tootedisainist „Asjad minu elus. Nõukogudeaegne tootedisain” (2000–2001), mille kuraatoriteks olid Kai Lobjakas ja Karin Paulus. Kuraatorid leidsid, et nende näitus andis impulsi järgnevatele nõukogude aja mitte-ideoloogilistele käsitlustele Eesti muuseumites (intervjuu toimus aastal 2010). Materiaalne keskkond tõmbas meie intervjueritute jaoks selge piiri nõukogude ja nõukogudejärgse perioodi vahele. Samuti oli materiaalne keskkond ja asjade puudus üheks põlvkondlikke kogemusi defineerivaks teemaks (vt ka Jõesalu, Nugin 2017). Teise tekstina eritlesime mängufilmi „Kohtumine tundmatuga” (2005), mille stsenaariumi autoriks oli Urmas Vadi ja režissööriks Jaak Kilmi,

analüüsides nende suhet aega. Järeldasime, et peamiselt tegeleti nõukogude aja-ga mänguliselt. Avaldus see näiteks eri aegadel eksisteerinud reaalsete isikute ühte aega toomises või nõukogude teletegelikkuse ja maavälise elu kokku viimises.

Kolmandana vaadeldud Jan Kausi romaan „Hetk“ (2009) toetas meie ideed, et 1970. aastatel sündinud intellektuaalid panustavad hilise nõukogude aja meenutamisse normaalsuse diskursuse kaudu. Hilist sotsialismi esitatakse kui eksootilist lapsepõlvkogemust, samal ajal ei esitata küsimusi katkestuse dis-kursuse kohta. Hiljutise mineviku ruumi ja aega vaadeldakse kadunud ajana, mida ei saa enam tabada ja mis on iseloomulik reflekteerivale nostalgiale. Vii-manne osa artiklist tegeles põlvkondliku enesemõistmisega, mida analüüsisime mängulise dokumentaalfilmi „Disko ja tuumasõda“ (2009, autoriteks Jaak Kilmi ja Kiur Aarma) kaudu. Taas oli olulisel kohal informantide lapsepõlve-ruum, antud juhul Tallinna tollane uuslinnaosa Õismäe. Kultuuritekstis definee-riti põlvkonda ühiste osalemiste kaudu ametlikes rituaalides, kuid väga olulisele kohale asetati Soome televisiooni vaatamine. Just hilise sotsialismi aja kogemus eristas 1970. aastatel sündinute enesepildi järgi neid noorematest põlvkonda-dest.

Artikkel V. Jõesalu, Kirsti; Kõresaar, Ene 2013. Continuity or Disconti-nuity: On the Dynamics of Remembering “Mature Socialism” in Estonian Post-Soviet Remembrance Culture. [Järjepidevus ja katkestus: „küps sotsia-lismi” meenutamise dünaamikast Eesti nõukogudejärgses mälu kultuuris.] – *Journal of Baltic Studies. Special Issue: Temporality, Identity and Change: Ethnographic Insights into Estonian Fieldsites*, ed. by Aet Annist, 44 (2), 177–203.

Artikli eesmärgiks oli kaardistada küps/hilise sotsialismi tähendust Eesti mälu-kultuuris 1990. aastatest kuni 21. sajandi esimese kümnendi lõpuni. Artiklis lõimisime arengud, mis ilmnesis erinevatel mäletamise tasanditel: nii isiklikul kui ka kultuurilisel ja poliitilisel (institutsionaalsel). Näitasime, kuidas ühe pe-rioodi, küps/hilise sotsialismi mäletamine areneb üheaegselt erinevatel mälu tasanditel.

Lisaks sellele oli meie eesmärgiks osutada, et poliitilise mälu tasandi vaadet hilisest sotsialismist osana nõukogude perioodist kui katkestusest, ei saa üle kanda teistele meenutamistasanditele. Tõime erinevaid allikaid – elulood, kultuuritekstid, meediatekstid ja institutsionaalsed dokumendid – analüüsides välja, et erinevatel kümnenditel avaldasid erinevad kogemusgrupid mõju avalik-ule meenutamistegevusele. Kui 1990. aastatel domineeris 1920-ndatel sündi-nute vaade 20. sajandi ajaloole ja kogemustele, siis 21. sajandist alates on olnud rohkem kuulda ka teistel kümnenditel sündinute kogemusi. Oma artiklis tõime esile 1940-ndatel ja 1970-ndatel sündinute kogemuse, kes mõtestasid hilise sotsialismi kogemust erinevate meediumite kaudu.

Järeldasime, et 1990. aastate alguses oli katkestuse motiiv nõukogude aja vaatlemisel valdav nii avalikus diskursuses kui ka eluloolistes allikates (siin siis 1920-ndatel sündinute elulugude näitel). Kuid juba alates 1990. aastate teisest

poolest hakkas katkestuse motiiv mõranema. Biograafilistes intervjuudes väljendati rahulolematust, et nõukogudejärgne rahvuslik diskursus oli küpse sotsialismi kogemused alla surunud. 2000. aastate alguseks tematiseeriti seda konflikti juba ka elulugudes. Näitasime, kuidas küpse sotsialismi argielu kogemused järjest enam eluloolises meenutamises keskmesse liikusid. Samuti vaatesime küpse sotsialismi loomet kultuuritekstides, keskendudes siin eelkõige Eesti Rahva Muuseumi näitustele nõukogude argielust nagu „Ise sõime, ise jõime... Toidukultuur Nõukogude Eestis” (2006), „Nõukogulik lähetus ellu – noorte suvepäevad Eesti NSVs” (2008).

Kokkuvõttes järeldasime, et negatiivset katkestuse diskursust ja argielu positiivset diskursust ei peaks vaatama kui üksteist välistavaid, vaid need diskursused kirjeldavad nõukogude aja kogemusi erinevatel tasanditel. Negatiivne katkestuse diskursus esindab avalikku sfääri ning normaalsuse diskursus kultuuritekste ja privaatsfääri.

Kokkuvõttes analüüsis väitekirj ühe ajalooperioodi – hilise sotsialismi – tähenduse kujunemist ja dünaamikat Eestis 1990. aastatest kuni 2000. aastate esimese kümnendi lõpuni. Küsisin, kuidas paigutub hilise sotsialismi tähenduse kujunemine laiemasse sotsialismi mäletamise protsessi. Väitekirja lähtekohaks oli vaatepunkt, et 1990. aastate mäluprotsesside tulemusena käsitleti nõukogudeaegseid argiseid kogemusi hegemoonse kannatuse ja vastupanu diskursuse raames. Hilist sotsialismi ei eristatud eelnevast, stalinismi perioodist. Alates 1990. aastate lõpust väljendati järjest enam rahulolematust domineeriva käsitlusega. Kõige kaalukam roll anti hilise sotsialismi argielule just elulugudes, kus see tõusis esile võrdluses keeruliste 1990-ndatega. Individuaalsel tasandil anti nostalgia kaudu tähendus keerulisele olevikule ja sellega toimetulekule. Üleminek kapitalistlikele majandussuhetele 1990. aastatel mõjutas ka meenutusi hilisest sotsialismist.

Eesti 21. sajandi mäluprotsesse laiemasse konteksti asetades tõin esile ka sarnaste protsesside eri- ja samaaegsust teistes postsotsialistlikes riikides. Nõukogude/sotsialistliku perioodi kogemuste väljajätt ei ole olnud omane ainult Eestile, vaid selline vaade domineeris ka näiteks Rumeenias ja Lätis, olles teistes Ida- ja Kesk-Euroopa riikides mõnevõrra diferentseeritum. Iseäranis selgelt avaldusid erinevused nostalgiliste protsesside ajalises arengus. Ent sarnaselt Ida-Saksamaale võib Eesti elulugudes ilmnevat nostalgiat käsitleda ka vastumäluna, mis, tõsi küll, ilmnis mõneti hiljem. Postsotsialistlikes maades on läbivalt täheldatud reflekteeriva ja iroonilise nostalgia esiletõusu.

Võib öelda, et minu väitekirja haaratud perioodil polnud senine mälurežiim enam ainuvaldav. Samas ei toimunud ka otsustavat pööret, seda eelkõige avalikul meenutamistasandil, kus jäi domineerima katkestuse diskursus. Sellele vaatamata on praeguseks kaasatud märgatavalt rohkem erinevaid nõukogudeaegseid kogemusi nõukogude ajast mäletamise kultuuri, kui oli seda 1990. aastatel. Need protsessid viitavad mälukultuuri diferentseerumisele ja demokraatiseerumisele.

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