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HOME AND BELONGING FOR THE INGRIAN DIASPORA IN TIMES OF DISPLACEMENT

Narratives From Rootedness in Ingria to Homemaking in
New Places

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ABSTRACT

Maria Roivas: Home and Belonging for the Ingrian Diaspora in Times of Displacement: Narratives From Rootedness in Ingria to Homemaking in New Places

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This thesis explores the meanings of home and sense of belonging for Ingrians during and after times of war and displacement through their written materials. The history of Ingrians has often been linked to the Great Terror, persecution, and displacement during Stalin's rule in the USSR, after which they have lived in a diaspora. I answer the questions of how and what kind of societal changes and events have influenced Ingrians' sense of belonging, meaning of home and homemaking practices, and how Ingrians have narrated these notions in their written materials.

This research builds on previous research about displacement caused by conflict but brings specific attention to the dynamics of a stateless diaspora and poses questions related to belonging and homemaking from an Ingrian and Soviet perspective. I combine sociological and anthropological perspectives of home and belonging, focusing on rootedness, longing and meaningfulness of a place but simultaneously understanding that humans can feel like they belong and are at-home in more than one location. Thus, this research takes the middle ground between the sedantrist and anti-sedantrist approaches of home and belonging. Both concepts are multidimensional and include both individual and collective, as well as cultural and societal aspects.

I used narrative and oral history methods, specifically analysis of narratives and thematic content analysis, to make sense of Ingrians' memories. At root, through these materials, one can see what people found worth remembering, telling, and preserving from their lives and what meanings they have given to those events and notions. I understand these memories and narratives simultaneously as socially constructed and shared and, drawing from existential anthropology, as subjective and differing from each other.

Based on Ingrians' writings, I argue that their narrations of home and belonging are multi-faceted and ever-changing and that their narratives tend to follow a similar pattern. I demonstrate how Ingrians narrate societal changes, such as collectivisation, Great Terror, and 101-kilometre rule, to have affected their homes and sense of belonging. These were systemic and structural barriers that existed and challenged where they could live and feel at-home. I also present three main narratives of home and belonging that I call rootedness in Ingria and Finland, endless roaming, and the forward-looking practices of home and belonging. These three main narratives construct a storyline from a peaceful beginning in Ingria to an uncertain time filled with fear and insecurity, and eventually to relatively secure final destinations for the Ingrian diaspora.

Keywords: Ingrians, Ingrian Finns, Home, Homemaking, Belonging, Diaspora, Displacement, Analysis of Narratives, Oral History

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin Originality Check service.

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My whole life has been defined by a strong sense of rootlessness or being rooted in two or more places simultaneously. Three of my four grandparents had to leave their homes when they were children because of war, and my mother moved to Finland as an Ingrian returnee in 1993. Especially, the story and life of my grandfather, who was an Ingrian, has left its mark on me. He was sent to exile in Yakutia as a child and could never return to his home in Ingria, other than for a brief visit. Like many Ingrians, he eventually found his new home in Petrozavodsk, Soviet Karelia (later the Republic of Karelia).

Russia's full-scale attack on Ukraine on 24th of February 2022 made me think about my background even more, and the situation took a toll on the progress of my thesis. It was painful to read news and stories about expulsions, torture, and displacement of people, more or less created by the same forces that led to my grandfather's fate. Similar stories filled my screen when reading about Ingrians' experiences in their letters and memoirs.

After all, I was able to finish my master's thesis. I am extremely grateful to my thesis supervisor Bruno Lefort for all his support, comments, and ideas that certainly improved this thesis. My sincerest gratitude also goes to the examiner of this thesis, Anitta Kynsilehto, for valuable and constructive feedback. Also, special thanks to Alekski Mainio and my other colleagues at the National Archives of Finland for the possibility to carry out my internship in an important and interesting research project. It gave me a ground and possibility to do archival research, write this thesis, and discuss the topic with other researchers. I also had the chance to meet up with two experts on Ingria and Ingrians, Toivo Flink and Anni Reuter, during this thesis process. Gratefulness is the word I would use to describe the feeling I have after these opportunities and all the thought-provoking discussions. I also had the pleasure of sharing my thesis process with my fellow students, more importantly friends, at Tampere University, who supported me in overcoming the obstacles I had.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank my parents for breaking the silence, and always letting me know about my family's past. Also, my grandmother was always just a phone call away in Petrozavodsk. Most of all, I thank my grandfather Nikolai Kokkonen, мой любимый дедушка, for surviving. Even after everything he had been through, he was the funniest, kindest, and warmest grandfather I could have ever wished for. Without him, this master's thesis would have never been written.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CPSU	The Communist Party of the Soviet Union
GPU	State Political Directorate [Russian: <i>Государственное политическое управление (ГПУ)</i>], the Intelligence Service/Secret Police
GULAG	Chief Administration of the Camps [Russian: <i>Главное управление исправительно-трудовых лагерей (ГУЛАГ)</i>], forced labour camp and prison system
KIA	Collection of Literature and Cultural History at SKS [Finnish: <i>Kirjallisuuden ja kulttuurihistorian kokoelma</i>]
NEP	New Economic Policy [Russian: <i>Новая экономическая политика</i>] (1921–1928) allowing limited market activity
NKVD	The People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs [Russian: <i>Народный комиссариат внутренних дел</i>], soviet secret police in 1934–1946
SKS	Finnish Literature Society [Finnish: <i>Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seura</i>]
USSR	The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics / The Soviet Union
WWII	The World War II

GLOSSARY

ämmä	Ingrian Finnish word for a grandmother
dacha	seasonal or year-round second home, “a summer cottage” in Russia
dekulakisation	expropriation of kulaks

five-year plan	centralised economic plans in the USSR
glasnost'	Gorbachev's policy of political opening in the late 1980s
gulag	the network of forced labour camps in the Soviet Union, recognised as a major instrument for political repression
khrushchevka	concrete-panelled or brick three- to five-storied apartment buildings in the USSR, developed during the early 1960s during Khrushchev's rule
kolkhoz	collective farm
kulak	communist term for a peasant with a higher income
militsiya	name of the police forces in the Soviet Union
rehabilitation	political and social restoration of persons who had been repressed and criminally prosecuted without due basis in the Soviet Union
perestroika	Gorbachev's policy of restructuring economy in the late 1980s
propiska	a residency permit and a migration-recording tool in the Soviet Union introduced in the 1930s
selsoviet	rural council; "a village council" [Finnish: <i>kyläneuvosto</i>]
sovkhoz	state-owned farm

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

I have transliterated common names as they are usually written, such as Yezhov instead of Ezhov. The names of many localities have changed overtime. I focus on the time period of those events and how the individuals themselves have called those villages, cities, and areas. For example, I use Leningrad when discussing the historical period of what is called St. Petersburg today. Additionally, Ingrians have often preferred using the Finnish versions of names of their villages or towns, for example Hatsina instead of Gatchina.

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1 INTRODUCTION

*“They say Ingria no longer exists,
Let them say what they will.
Ingria exists in you and me,
Like Atlantis, deep beneath the sea...
It remains, because we still live.*

*From all the windows in all lands,
you can only see the homeland.”*

Armas Hiiri (1988) ¹

This thesis explores the meanings of home and sense of belonging for Ingrians during and after times of war and displacement through their personal memoirs, diaries, scrapbooks, and letters. I use narrative methods to make sense of their traces and memories. Until recently, a silence has reigned over the Ingrians’ memory throughout the history of Finland. They have often been excluded, forgotten and silenced. In recent years, there has been growing interest in the history of the Ingrians and the role of Finnish state and its policies targeted towards them. The Finnish Literature Society (SKS) and the National Archives of Finland have conducted research projects that have extensively collected materials of Ingrians. In collaboration with Lea and Santeri Pakkanen, the Finnish National Museum organised an exhibition called “Ingrians – The Forgotten Finns” in 2020. The memoir books published by them² and Reijo Rautajoki³ were publicly discussed. Recent media coverage and discussions about Ingrians reflect “a growing awareness of silenced, forgotten and absent histories, as well as memories” (Savolainen, 2021, p. 910).

Ingrian Finns are a group of people who moved from Savonia and the Karelian isthmus to Ingria in the 17th century during Swedish rule over Finland. Ingria used to be a multi-ethnic and -religious area in what today would be the area around St. Petersburg (Figure 1). Ingrian Finns were the largest Finnish-speaking group in the Soviet Union, lived as peasants in the countryside and were mostly Evangelical-Lutheran (Reuter, 2020, p. 45). According to an estimation by SKS (2021a), approximately 138,000 Ingrian Finns lived in the USSR in 1926.

¹ Armas Hiiri, in full Armas (Oleg) Mishin, was an Ingrian writer, poet and translator. The original poem in Finnish is in Appendix A.

² Pakkanen, L. & Pakkanen, S. (2020). *Se tapahtui meille: Isän ja tyttären matka inkerinsuomalaisuuteen*. Gummerus.

³ Rautajoki, R. (2022). *Inkeriläinen äitini: Pelon täyttämä elämä*. Into Kustannus.

Figure: The historical location of Ingria. Note. By the National Museum of Finland, 2020, *Ingrians – The Forgotten Finns* [exhibition catalogue], retrieved from <https://www.kansallismuseo.fi/uploads/Ingrians-booklet-ENGLISH-20-02-05.pdf>



The history of Ingrians relates to the Great Terror in the USSR. The persecution⁴ of Ingrians began in late 1920s and was first connected to the collectivisation of the farms and the planned economy policies and included arbitrary imprisonments, violence and deportations. Between 1936 and 1938, Ingria was almost completely emptied of the Finnish-speaking groups. The largest deportations occurred in those years when the USSR planned to “secure its borders” and deport everyone who is “politically unreliable citizen”. Before the Second World War, 45,000-60,000 Ingrians had been deported and imprisoned in the USSR, and thousands also sought refuge in Finland, Estonia, and other European countries. (SKS, 2021a.) In 1942 alone, approximately 30,000 Ingrian Finns were deported from under the Siege of Leningrad to different parts of Siberia (Reuter, 2020a, p. 44). In combination of these policies, almost all Ingrians experienced displacement. Leonid Gildi (2007), an Ingrian professor, estimates that one third of the people died on their journey to Siberia. Some researchers have called this a genocide of the Ingrian nation (see Suni, 2000; Reuter, 2023).

Since the Great Terror and the Second World War, the Ingrians have lived in a diaspora, scattered around the Soviet Union and its neighbouring countries. By diaspora, I mean a group of people whose members live outside of their home of origin and who still consider themselves as members of that

⁴ In English, I prefer using the term persecution to describe the events that took place during Stalin’s terror. However, I recognise that in the Soviet/Russian context, repression is the most often used term, and Finns have been categorised as “a repressed nation” in the USSR.

group (Morawska, 2011, p. 1030). Ingrians did not have the official right to return to their homes in Ingria until the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953. Even after this, most of Ingrians were never able to return. As Reuter (2020a) shows in her article, many Ingrians feel that they have lost their mother tongue, culture, and home because of deportations, discrimination, and terror and thus, have assimilated into other groups: Russians, Estonians, and Finns (p. 53). In 1990, when the dissolution of the Soviet Union drew nearer, the President of Finland Mauno Koivisto stated on television that Ingrians should be considered Finnish returnees. This led to approximately 30,000-35,000 people moving to Finland (Jormanainen, 2015) at the beginning of the 1990s. In 1993, Ingrians were rehabilitated as a repressed nation in Russia (Gildi, 2007) and were no longer considered the enemy of the nation.

For a long time, it has been the families who have told the history of Ingrians instead of school classes or history books (Reuter, 2021, p. 206). Consequently, the analysis on narratives written by Ingrian individuals continues being important to understand their experiences and the past. Narratives can give us information that we would not normally have because official information about wars and conflicts rarely considers individual experiences memories and narrations of these events (Peltonen, 2017). Home is also often ignored by researchers because it is outside the researcher's gaze (Watson, 2019), but through these narratives one can explore the meanings Ingrians have given to it. In addition to the experience of the Ingrians, this research also gives a view to the history of state repression by Finland and the USSR alike. This brings the attention to the question of, how do people negotiate the meaning of home in the context of fearing displacement in various locations? What becomes a home for people who are forcibly sent away from their home(land)? Where do people feel like they belong after such experiences and are they able to build a new home when life becomes more stable? In sum, the thesis sets to explore the following research questions:

1. *How and what kind of societal changes and historical events have influenced Ingrians' sense of belonging, meaning of home and homemaking practices?*
2. *How Ingrians have narrated notions of home and belonging in their written materials?*

While most of the previous research on Ingrians focuses on returning migration to Finland in the 1990s and the history and technicalities about the terror and deportations, I explore the various meanings people have given to home and belonging in their personal materials. I am interested in what becomes a home for the people who are forcibly sent away from their home, and whose community is shattered and how they have struggled to find a sense of belonging in new places. I trace the ways in which Ingrian individuals and Ingrians as a diasporic community, have narrated their memories of

deportations, exile, being a refugee and homelessness, and how these memories change their meanings and constructions of home, belonging and identity.

This research draws from peace and conflict studies, diaspora studies, and sociological and anthropological theories related to home, displacement and belonging (see Malkki 1995; Jansen & Löfving 2009; Hage 2010 & 2021; Kingumets, 2022). Trying to understand the circumstances of a particular group, always illuminates something new to the wider understandings of these notions. Common-sense ideas of roots, home and territory are “built into everyday language and also into scholarly work”, but they are so obvious that they are elusive objects of study (Malkki, 1992, p. 26). Here, home does not only mean a physical place, but can be defined by “various cultural, moral, social, and environmental characteristics”, and be represented by narratives and memories (Repič, 2016, p. 92). The experiences and meanings Ingrians give to home differ since some of them were deported to Siberia, and some of them sought refuge, for example, in Finland, Estonia, Sweden, which is why I also explore their sense of belonging in various places. Based on Jansen and Löfving’s (2009) book that is exploring the anthropological perspectives on homemaking, belonging can mean geographical and social belonging but also the forward-looking practices of belonging to a certain place (p. 2). Some might always long for Ingria; some might build their lives somewhere else and possibly end up finding a new home where they create their sense of home and belonging through homemaking practices.

I begin by presenting the historical background and previous research of Ingrians and Ingria as an area. In Chapter 3, I move on to discuss the theoretical frame and contributions related to diaspora, home and belonging, and draw on literature from sociological and anthropological perspectives. Chapter 4 outlines the methods of the thesis; archival and historical research in the context of peace and conflict studies and generally, in social sciences. I present narrative methods and more precisely, the analysis of narratives as a method. Chapter 5 presents the research materials: personal letters, memoirs and scrapbooks written by Ingrians followed by analysis in Chapter 6. First, I explore how the societal changes have affected Ingrians’ meanings of home and sense of belonging, and second, I follow three core narratives of home and belonging: rootedness in Ingria or Finland, endless roaming and the forward-looking practices of home and belonging. Ultimately, the thesis shows how the narratives regarding home and belonging are multifaceted and overlapping but also, include similar patterns and formulations. I argue how those concepts should be understood as everchanging notions for Ingrian individuals and diasporic communities.

2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ON INGRIANS AND INGRIA

In this section of the thesis, I examine the historical background of what is Ingria and who are Ingrians leaning on previous historical research.

Majority of the research of Ingrians has been in the field of history. To date, the scholars in social sciences have tended to focus on returning migration of Ingrians. They have focused on questions related to Ingrian returnees' identity, assimilation and integration (see Davydova, 2009; Miettinen, 2004; Huttunen, 2002). Also, much of research on Russian-speaking migrants in Finland is often about Ingrians, as many of those migrants have at least Ingrian roots (see Tanner & Söderling, 2014; Davydova, 2009). What happened to Ingrians before the 1990s remains widely unresearched in social sciences, but partially in history too. Anni Reuter (2020a; 2020b; 2021; 2023) has used sociological and oral history perspectives in her research on Ingrians and shown, how they were deported, dispersed but, how they also resisted. This thesis builds on this earlier research with a contribution from social sciences to address the period before the 1990s, showing how these perspectives can bring a new light on the historical events.

In *Ingrians and Neighbours: Focus on the eastern Baltic region* edited by Markku Teinonen and Timo Virtanen (1999), Russian, Estonian and Finnish scholars explore Ingrians' lives from an ethnological perspective and show in various chapters different perspectives related to language, identity and culture. Also, Anni Reuter's above mentioned research on deportations and exile helped me understand the versatility of Ingrian experiences. Olga Davydova's (2009) doctoral dissertation focuses on various forms of ethnicities, transnational space, and the diaspora of Ingrian returnees. She explores how people with a Finnish background wanting to "return to Finland" speak about their Finnishness. Helena Miettinen (2004) adopts a sociopsychological perspective on Ingrian returnees' self-identification and shows how many of them have an uncertain identity caused by living as a minority between two cultures. For his part, Toivo Flink (2010) traced from a historical perspective how the evacuated Ingrians in Finland were returned to the USSR during the years 1944 to 1955, and the motivations of the Finnish state behind this.

Next, I first explore the contestations around the categories of Ingrian, Ingrian Finn and Finn, and how they have been addressed in previous research. After that, I will present the background of Ingria and Ingrians' history roughly dividing it into three different periods: time before the formation of the USSR, time during Stalin's rule and the Great Terror, and the period between Stalin's death and

returning migration to Finland. I also explore how Ingrians' identity and belonging changed in those times.

2.1 The Identity Question: Ingrians, Ingrian Finns or Finns?

In contemporary debates and research, both Ingrian (*inkeriläinen*) and Ingrian Finn (*inkerinsuomalainen*) are established terms to define this group of people and are often understood as synonyms. In Russia, and previously in the Soviet Union, they have been referred to as Finns. Some people prefer using *Inkerin suomalainen* (Finn of Ingria). These different concepts and definitions have been contested by scholars and those who belong to these groups. Also, the Finnishness of the Ingrians is something that has been disputed in the Finnish society (Prindiville & Hjelm, 2018). The identification of Ingrians is not a simple question, and the considerations of their 'Finnishness' have significantly changed throughout time (Miettinen, 2004), generations (Teinonen & Virtanen, 1999), and places.

Previous research shows that the question of Ingrian identity question is complex and contested between and within individuals and generations. In interviews of Ingrians, Markku Teinonen (1999) documents a woman born in 1926 stating the following: "I suppose we are Ingrians. We speak Finnish, but we've never lived in Finland. Of course, our ancestors are in Finland. They must have come here a long time ago. We don't know where we came from, where our family began". Another woman born in 1929 said, "There used to be lots of Finns, now there are less. They have all become half-Russian, they've all grown up among Russians". Yet another woman born in 1927 stated, "Listen! Before the war, we knew nothing about Ingria. We were simply Finns". (Teinonen, 1999, pp. 106–111.) These accounts showcase different understandings of these terms and identities even amongst the people belonging to the same generation. Räsänen (1999) also demonstrates how returning migrants in Finland found themselves with no group identity or with identity problems in the 1990s as in Finland many were seen as too Russian, but in Russia they were seen as too Finnish (pp. 16–17).

Ingrian is also a term that some scholars understand to include all the Finno-Ugric people living in Ingria. Therefore, some researchers have felt that the distinction is needed and prefer to use the term Ingrian Finn to describe solely those people who arrived in Ingria during the 17th century. Overall, it is difficult to make distinctions between the groups who were living in the area. The area was Fennicised during that time, some Votes and Izhorians integrated with the Finnish population and adopted

Lutheranism even though some of them never had direct connections to Finland (Savijärvi & Savijärvi, 1999, p. 27).

Additionally, people who arrived in Ingria in the 17th century most likely did not consider themselves Finns, as Finland as an independent state did not exist back then. Räsänen (1999) highlights that only during the national awakening in Finland from the mid-19th century and whereupon Finland's increased influence on Ingrian-Finns through schooling system began, the revival of the Lutheran church as well as culture and arts, Ingrians started identifying as Finns (p. 11). Before this, Ingrians belonged to two groups, *äyrämöiset* (people who moved from the Karelian isthmus) and *savakot* (people who moved from Savonia).

A question remains about the power relations and who defines whom. Teinonen (1999) summarises that Ingrians often relate to the terms Finn or Ingrian, but Finns in Finland call them Ingrian Finns to distinguish between the “Finnish Finns” and “Ingrian Finns” (p. 110). Thus, the term Ingrian Finn has emerged primarily from the Finnish Finns' point of view (Salonsaari, 2018, p. 13), and some Ingrians do not find it as a word that represents them the best (Takalo & Juote, 1995, p. 11). On the other hand, there are mentions that also Ingrian has been a term first used by the Finnish nationalists in the 19th century (Savolainen, 2022, pp. 191–192). The scholars need to consider this problematic nature of defining Ingrians. Who is defining whom and what kind of power relations have played a role in it?

Many Ingrians in the Soviet society were considered Finns, and that is also how they often identified themselves too. As *finn* or *finka* was the nationality written in their official documents, it was often connected to their identity and a reason to argue for their Finnishness (Miettinen, 2004, p. 432). As an example, my grandfather, who was born in 1936, did not even know of the terms Ingrian or Ingrian Finn until he heard about them in the 1980s by the atmosphere brought by glasnost and perestroika and from the discussions that followed. Throughout his life, he considered himself to just be a Finn. Miettinen (2004) sees that this need for a strong identification as Finnish has been caused by an uncertain ethnic identity when living as an oppressed minority between the two cultures (pp. 420–424). On the contrary, Teinonen (1999) brings up a valid point that especially after the Second World War, the term Finn also carried a stigma as they were seen as politically unreliable in the Soviet society (p. 111). Therefore, some individuals felt the need to differentiate themselves from Finns, too.

I understand identity in its temporal and spatial context (Räsänen, 1999, p. 13) meaning that it is constantly changing in different times and places and within individuals and groups. It is also “mobile and processual, partly self-construction, partly categorisation by others, partly a condition, a status, a label, a shield ...” (Malkki, 1992, p. 37). I also see identity as a matter that is built in relation to something. For example, in relation to Russians, Ingrians might emphasise their Finnishness, but in relation to Finns, they might emphasize their Ingrianness, and like in Teinonen’s interview sample, some their Russianness. Living in the Soviet Union and Russia in the 20th century has had an effect on people, their language skills, and culture. The identification and its intensity also depend on whether one went to a Finnish- or Russian-speaking school, what has been the language spoken at home, and what have been the cultural customs and beliefs around you at the time. Generally speaking, identity is a complex notion for many minority groups around the world.

Religion has played a significant role for Ingrians and their identity formation and given some hope during the terror and displacement. Miettinen (2003) shows how the church was an influential organisation in Ingria and supported teaching of the Finnish language and culture in the area (p. 17). Religion also differentiated Ingrians from Russians that were mostly Orthodox (Takalo & Juote, 1995, p. 17). Some Ingrians saw the Orthodox church as a threat to their Finnishness (Miettinen, 2003, p. 17). Religion can also be seen as resistance to the prevailing conditions during the Soviet rule. For example, the Lutheran cross and Finnish texts in gravestones have been described as silent but persistent resistance by Huttunen (2002, p. 221). Despite the anti-religious pressure, people would come together to worship and secretly practise religion (Teinonen, 1999, p. 115) in Ingria, but also in exile. However, there are differences between generations and the Soviet rule had its effect on people’s faith. For example, Reuter (2021) brings up how older generations have more religious, biblical and mythical descriptions of the events during the war, but how the younger generations found explanations more often in research and published memoirs rather than in the bible (pp. 204–205).

Often the leading narrative in research and public discussions is that the Ingrians are “Finnish-speaking and evangelic-Lutheran people who used to live in Ingria and have been through a lot” (Miettinen, 2003, p. 21). While this definition describes many Ingrians well, it does not represent all the people who consider themselves Ingrians or Ingrian Finns. That Ingrians were evangelic-Lutheran peasants is often exaggerated because there were also and non-religious Ingrians and Ingrians who supported the communist regime and were communists (Heikkinen, 2003, p. 166). In the following chapters, I pay attention to this multiplicity and remain cautious of simple reproduction of the leading narrative.

While it should not be forgotten that most Ingrians were religious, and rusticity played a considerable role in people's lives, through this narrow categorisation, information becomes lost and ignored.

On this account, I take seriously the contestations around the dominant definitions, and it is important to respect the identifications people have used of themselves in the research materials. However, when not writing about individuals' personal identifications and when there is no need to differentiate between Votes and Izhorians and those individuals who moved to Ingria in the 17th century, I prefer to use the term Ingrian. With this decision, I want to respect Ingrians as a group that is not defined only through the Finnish Finns' lens. Ingrian was also the term that was used by most in my research materials. I understand that in reality, there are as many identities and identifications as there are people. Identities are always changing, one person can have multiple identities simultaneously, and they can change within time.

Next, I turn to the history and key events in Ingria. I also describe how these historical changes and events affected Ingrians' possibilities for their belonging in Ingria. I begin by briefly going through the time from the Treaty of Stolbovo in 1617 to the formation of the USSR in 1918.

2.2 Time Before the Formation of the Soviet Union (1617-1918)

Throughout the history of Ingria, the people living in Ingria have been "pawns in a game of power politics" (Teinonen & Virtanen, 1999, p. 18) as the area has been geopolitically significant for both Russia and Sweden. It has been described as a contested area between the East and West (Martikainen, 2014, p. 5). The history of what is today understood as Ingria began when Sweden gained the area called Ingermanland in the 16th century and refused Russia's entry into the Baltic Sea (Flink, 2016, p. 76). Due to the constant battles in the area, Ingria was almost uninhabited by the end of the 16th century (Kalinitchev, 2016). In the Peace Treaty of Stolbovo in 1617, after the Ingrian War, Ingria was appointed to Sweden, after which Lutheran Finnish-speaking people, whom we today understand as Ingrian Finns began moving to Ingria from Savonian and Karelian isthmus (Flink 2016, p. 76; Miettinen, 2004, p. 17) by the Swedish government's persuasion (Teinonen & Virtanen, 1999, p. 18). In the beginning of the 18th century, Peter the Great conquered Ingria, and Sweden officially ceded Ingria to Russia (Martikainen, 2014, p. 11). Through this, Russia gained access to the Baltic Sea and founded St. Petersburg in 1703.

The historical area of Ingria should be understood as a multicultural place of various ethnicities. Orthodox Izhorians and Votes were among the first ones living in the area (Räsänen, 1999, p. 11). At the time of the Peace Treaty of Stolbovo, a considerable amount of the original population of Ingria left their homes voluntarily or were forced to leave the region (Savijärvi & Savijärvi, 1999, p. 27). In the 18th century, various ethnic groups like Karelians, Estonians and Germans, as well as Russian, began arriving to the area mostly to the growing city of St. Petersburg. Kalinitchev (2016) describes how in over 100 years Russians became the clear majority in Ingria, which created pressure on other groups. While, in the 1670s, around half of the population of Ingria was Finnish-speaking, by the mid-18th century there were as many Russian than Finnish speakers. By the end of the 19th century, there were over 40 nationalities living in St. Petersburg, for example, Polish, Jewish, and Latvian people, besides those groups that already lived there. (Kalinitchev, 2016). Russians, Finns and Germans remained the largest groups.

The city of St. Petersburg split Ingria into Northern and Southern Ingria. Even though various nationalities lived in Ingria, the northern part remained with a Finnish majority for a long time as it was relatively easy to cross the border to Finland, and there were many transnational encounters (Kalinitchev, 2016). Yet, there was a notable Finnish influence in whole of Ingria (Teinonen, 1999, pp. 104–105). The proximity of the Finnish border had an effect on the identity question, traditions and dialects of people living in different parts, some closer to Finland and some to Estonia.

In 1861, a reform abolished serfdom in the entire Russian Empire and the living conditions of Ingrians began to improve. The area became wealthier, vibrant cultural and civic activity flourished, that created grounds for the awakening of national consciousness of Ingrians (Martikainen, 2014, pp. 11–12). Martikainen (2014) mentions that this was the beginning of schooling system, education and press in Finnish language in Ingria and various singing and sports activities (p. 12). Simultaneously, national romanticism gained ground in many parts of Europe. However, this period did not last for long as in 1890–1910 the efforts for Russification of the area began, the Finnish schooling system became hard-pressed, and the role of Russian language in the area grew (Martikainen, 2014, p. 12).

Overall, Ingria has been an area with various nationalities, languages and cultures for a long time, and the diversity grew when St. Petersburg was founded in the area. Finnish was the dominant language spoken in the area, but Russification policies in the area put pressure on Votes, Izhorians and Ingrian Finns. These changes had an effect on Ingrians' identity as they turned from a majority into a minority during this time period.

2.3 Time Between the Formation of the Soviet Union and Stalin's Death (1918-1953)

In this part, I briefly present the period from around the October Revolution in 1918 to Stalin's death in 1953 through the perspective of Ingrians' daily lives. I first focus on the Tartu Peace Treaty between the Republic of Estonia and Soviet Russia, after which I explain how collectivisation, the massive agricultural reform implemented by the USSR, influenced Ingrians' lives. From there I move to the Great Terror and deportations of Ingrians. The policies of the USSR, especially in the years of Stalinism between 1929-1953, brought crucial changes for Ingrians' possibilities to belong in the Soviet society and have a home in Ingria. During Stalin's Terror the total population of Ingrians was expelled (Reuter, 2023). I also pay specific attention to the evacuations of 63,000 Ingrians to Finland. This period ends with Stalin's death in 1953, which brought some improvements for majority of Ingrians. The period from the forming of the USSR until the death of Stalin in 1953 was a time that scattered Ingrians into a diaspora.

When Finland gained its independence in 1917, the border between Ingria and Finland turned into a national border (Finnish Literature Society, 2021a). Between the years 1918 and 1920, around 8000 Ingrians, mostly women and children, had fled to Finland as refugees because of the Russian Civil War and rebellions, but most of them were hopeful that the situation would improve and returned. (Takalo & Juote, 1995, p. 19; Flink, 2016, pp. 82–83.) The ones who stayed in Finland represented a demand to the Finnish government that Ingria should be unified with Finland, and if that was not possible, then at least Northern Ingria should be unified. Ingrians did not have a possibility to raise their own voice in the negotiations of the Tartu Peace Treaty and trusted that Finland would support their demands on the autonomy. (Flink, 2016, p. 83.) Overall, there were demands that the Ingrian land should be united with Finland, and many Ingrians had fought against Bolsheviks as part of the Finnish Heimosodat⁵, which brought tensions in the area between the local populations and Bolsheviks.

In the memoirs used as research materials, the results of the Tartu Peace Treaty in 1920 were often mentioned to have ended the last hopes for independence of Ingria. The area remained as part of the Soviet Russia except for the eleven villages that became part of Estonia (Finnish Literature Society,

⁵ Heimosodat (*tribal wars*) were an attempt to gain areas in Ingria, Karelia and Estonia and fulfil the Finnish nationalist dream about the "Greater Finland". The Revolt of the Ingrian Finns, that took place during the Russian Civil War was part of these wars, and its aim was to integrate the Republic of North Ingria into Finland. (See Silvennoinen & Roselius, 2019; Haapanen, 2014.)

2021a). The treaty was a way for the USSR to achieve territorial gains, and for Finland to keep its territorial sovereignty and independence. Finland did not demand any territorial claims regarding Ingria as the USSR saw it as an internal question and issue (Flink, 2020, p. 28). Finland saw the question of Ingria as a minor issue in the wider context of the negotiations to keep Finnish independence. Finland also handed over the contested region of the Republic of North Ingria to the Soviet Russia (Finnish Literature Society, 2021a). The Tartu Peace Treaty was signed on 14th of October 1920, and there was a notification on Ingria's and Eastern Karelia's autonomy stating that the Finns in the Soviet Russia already have all the rights and advantages that the Russian law allocates to national minorities (Flink, 2016, p. 83). Ingrians were promised a cultural autonomy and that they could use Finnish language in their daily lives, but this result brought an end to Ingrian hopes for independence or unification with Finland.

The New Economic Policy (NEP) implemented in USSR in 1921-1928 brought some relief for many Ingrians in the times of uncertainty. The goal was to develop the economic situation after the difficult period of 'war communism'. NEP enabled small private entrepreneurship, which meant that people could farm and cultivate their fields and sell parts of it themselves. However, some party members of the CPSU saw that these policies do not fit with the communist ideology, so a couple of years after Lenin's death, the USSR ceased these policies. (Finnish Literature Society, 2021a.) Simultaneously, Bolshevik Nationality Policy (Soviet Policy on Nationalities 1920-1930) called *korenizatsiya* was an example of an early policy of the right of nations' self-determination. During this short period, the schooling system in Finnish bloomed, and Ingrians got their national districts (*rajony*) and *selsoviets*.

This brief period of hope ended by the end of 1920s when the years of Stalinism (1929-1953) brought about brutal social, cultural, and economic transformations regardless of human cost (Fitzpatrick, 1999, p. 2). There were allegations of "a hostile capitalist atmosphere" in Ingria and the proximity of "the bourgeois Finland" was seen as a threat (Sunı, 2000, p. 80). Ingrians became scapegoats for Bolsheviks in the area, and they saw that their minority nationality was accompanied by harmful nationalism. Kulaks, wealthier peasants, were imprisoned with trumped-up charges, properties of families were confiscated, and families were deported without personal documents and freedom of movement (Martikainen, 2014, pp. 13–14.) The Soviet government had decided that the peasants who did well economically had to be exterminated as a class (Martikainen, 2014, p 17). The persecution and expulsions were first, based on Ingrians' social class as kulak and later, on ethnic background as Finnish (Gildi, 2007; Reuter, 2020b). Before the rule of Stalin, Ingrians were perceived as socially respected peasants, but during the Stalinist persecution they became stigmatized kulaks, and "exiles,

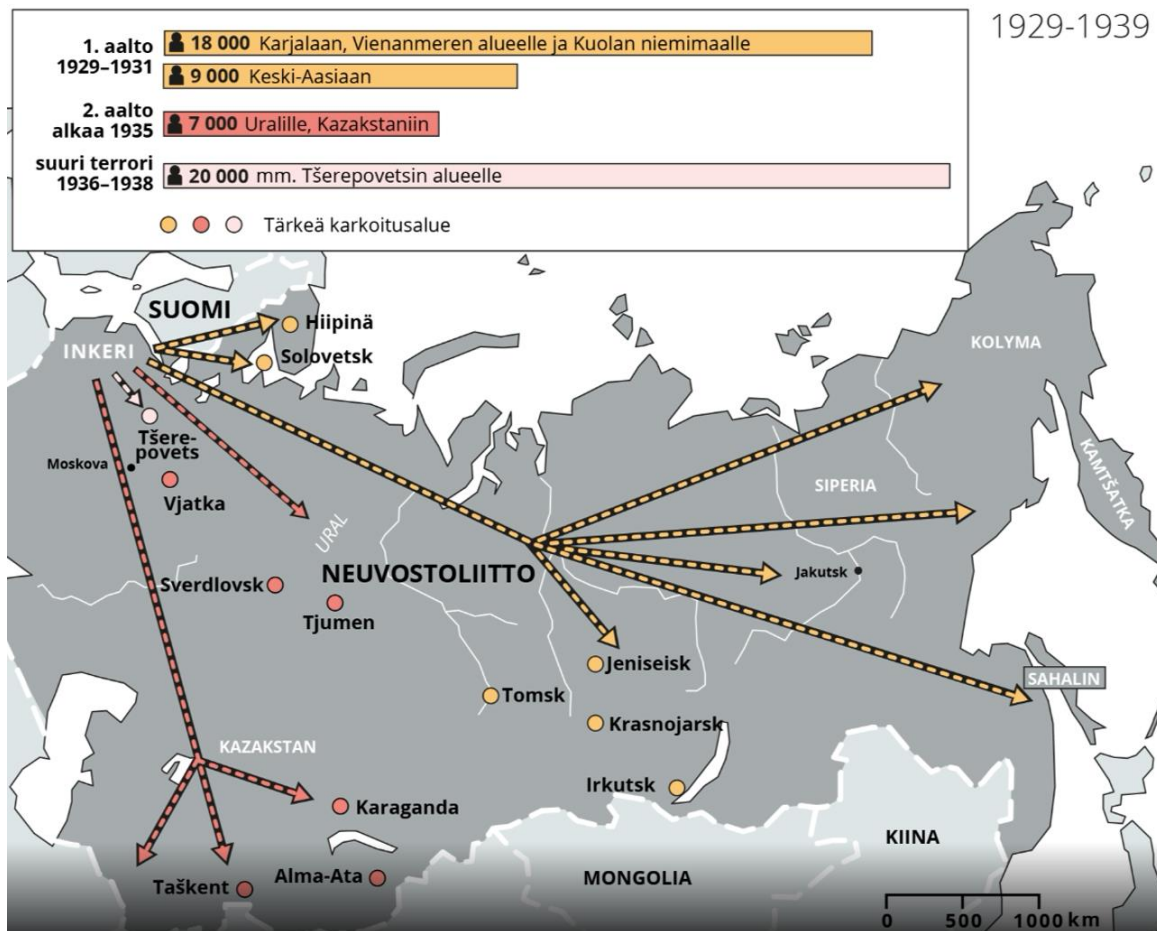
refugees, prisoners, runaways, orphans, and servants” (Reuter, 2021, p. 200). Through these policies and expulsions, people found themselves as “social aliens” in the new Soviet society (Fitzpatrick, 1999, p. 2). Paradoxically, Stalinism produced strong national identities for various groups, such as the Finnish identity for the Ingrians. The imprisonments, executions and deportations forced people to face the meaningfulness of their identity. (Huttunen, 2002, p. 253.)

The forced collectivisation during the Stalin era began in 1929 (Fitzpatrick, 1994) and was another shifting point in Ingrians’ lives. This was part of the genocide policy of Stalin’s government that began with the collectivisation of farms and forced resettlement of peasants (Zadneprovskaya, 1999, p. 86). Collectivisation was part of the first economic Five-Year Plan in 1929—1932 and it also included massive investment in heavy industry and sacrificing living standards by the general population (Fitzpatrick, 1999, p. 4). Collectivisation was also a time of massive social dislocation when people had to change their occupations and places of residence as well as values and habits (Ibid., p. 2). Leningrad Oblast and thus, Ingria was one of the first areas where the collectivisation in the Soviet Union began (Martikainen, 2014, p. 23). In Ingrians’ daily lives it was violence coming from above that brought scarcity into their daily lives (Huttunen, 2002, p. 216). First collectivisation was somewhat voluntary and most Ingrians resisted the collectivisation because it would have meant giving away the family farms, animals and tools with no compensation (Reuter, 2021, p. 194). The wealthiest, however, were already imprisoned, sent to forced labour camps or executed (Martikainen, 2014, p. 23).

The totalitarian Soviet Union of the 1930s was preparing itself for a total war and tried to destroy the “unwanted” elements, even those that were completely imagined, including Ingrians (Vihavainen, 2000a, p. 17). Stalin’s intention was to control all the political, social, intellectual and family life through “a totalitarian and centralized system that also seized family properties, farms, and homes” (Reuter, 2021, p. 189). During Stalin’s era, as much as finding a certain book or a single letter in house searches could have been against the rules and leading to an arrest (Reuter, 2021, pp. 192–193). Detainments, disappearances and executed family members were some of the repeated topics in the narratives of Ingrians in Huttunen’s (2002) research .

In previous research, scholars have described how Ingrians were displaced from Ingria through “three waves” of deportations between 1929 and 1939, which the map below shows. The localities marked with a dot indicate the important regions of exile places. However, recent research shows that there

were more occasions of deportations than three, and some individuals experienced it more than once (Reuter, 2023).



Note. By Hanna Ruusulampi. SKS. CC BY 4.0, Finnish Literature Society – Ingrians: Soviet-Ingria, retrieved on 19th of January 2023 from <https://inkerilaiset.finlit.fi/1000-vuotta-inkerin-historiaa/neuvosto-inkeri>

While understanding that this categorisation into three waves simplifies what actually happened, it is still useful to introduce them as they depict the forced deportations well. The first wave occurred in 1929–1931 through collectivisation, dekulakization, and “freeing the border area of anti-Soviet elements” (Suni, 2000, p. 84). Around 27,000 people were deported to forced labour in Soviet Karelian forests, mines in the Kola Peninsula and cotton fields in Central Asia (SKS, 2021a). The second wave took place between when the People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD) decided as of 25.3.1935 “To clean up the border zone of Leningrad district and Karelia of kulak and anti-Soviet elements” which led to forced deportations of 22,000 people (Zadneprovskaya, 1999, p. 86) between the years 1935–1936. Suni (2000, p. 85) estimates that approximately 26,000–27,000 people were sent to Arkhangelsk, Novgorod and Vologda areas. The peak of terror, and thus, the third wave of deportations, took place in 1937, but in reality, occurred throughout the years 1936–1938. This era has various names: the Year of ’37, the Great Purge, the Great Terror or Yezhovshchina

(period of Yezhov). Yezhov was the director of the interior ministry NKVD during the height of the terror (Martikainen, 2014, p. 27), but the decision of deportations was signed by Stalin (Suni, 2000, p. 85). The Finnish villages were emptied of Ingrians through mass imprisonments, deportations and executions (Reuter, 2019, p. 134). Approximately 20,000 Ingrians were deported (SKS, 2021a) and many were executed (Suni, 2000, p. 86). The Great Terror was the last straw for Ingrians' everyday life in Ingria.

Simultaneously, the abolition of Finnish school institutions and cultural activities affected the daily life of Ingrians in Ingria since 1937 (Flink, 2010, p. 31). The intention of the Soviet policies was to create a united Soviet population through language, and these policies happened to all cultural, linguistic and ethnic minorities in the USSR. The role of Finnish language in Ingrians' lives diminished when the language in education and work changed. Propagated communism and atheism in the Soviet schools and Finnish and Lutheran traditions at home led to a double life between private and public spheres (Reuter, 2021, p. 201). During this period, the role of religion in the society changed which affected Ingrians' possibilities to practice their religion.

During the Second World War, in 1942, the last Ingrians, around 30,000 of them, were evacuated, but simultaneously deported from the Siege of Leningrad to Siberia in cattle wagons (Martikainen, 2014, p. 24). Although the Ingrian deportees suffered from exclusion, hunger, illnesses, forced labour and poor living conditions in Siberia, and most of the historical research focuses on this, Reuter (2020a) emphasises that there were also positive stories about their daily lives and childhood in exile in contrast with the hunger and the wartime in the siege. There is a significant difference between individuals' life histories and the collective narrative of Ingrians as individual stories include positive encounters and memories contrasting the shared narrative of the tragic past of forced deportations, terror, and cleansing of Ingrians. However, it is noteworthy that the people who have been able to tell these stories have been the ones who survived and not those who lost their lives. (Reuter, 2020a.)

During the Second World War, approximately 63,000 Ingrians were evacuated with the help of Finnish officials to Finland by the end of 1944. Around 44,000 of the evacuees were Lutheran Ingrian Finns, 20 000 Orthodox Izhorians and 800 Orthodox Votes (Flink, 2016, p. 85), and 80 % were women and children under 15 years old (Flink, 2010, p. 11). The official reasons for these evacuations were the German war hostilities but also labour shortages in Finland since most of the men were at war (Ibid., p. 122). Additionally, Nazi Germany resettled over 2000 Ingrians from the Leningrad District to Germany in 1943 (Zadneprovskaya, 1999, p. 86). Very little research has been conducted

on what happened to those people who were resettled to Germany. After the Second World War, around 8000 Ingrians stayed in Finland (Flink, 2016, p. 85), and around half of them moved to Sweden at some point (Räsänen, 1999, p. 11).

The legal status of those who stayed in Finland was questionable for a long time as Ingrians did not have a right to own properties, hold certain work positions, or start a business. They did not have a right to move abroad other than to the Soviet Union. (Flink, 2016, pp. 86–87.) According to Flink (2010), other factors that influenced their willingness to leave were religion, as those who followed Orthodox religion returned more likely (pp. 164–165). Also, age, the relationships between Ingrians and their Finnish hosts, family background and losses and gains related to that as well as the local atmosphere in the new place of residence all played a role in decision-making (Ibid.).

However, Finland returned most of the evacuees, 55,000 of them, back to the Soviet Union: some left voluntarily and some by force (Takalo & Juote, 1995, p. 13; Flink, 2010, p. 11). The political process of return was based on flimsy knowledge as public discussion about the returns was under a heavy censorship. The situation has been described as unclear and chaotic, and the returns were carried out by individuals' consideration. (Flink, 2010, pp. 151–154.) Flink (2010) divides those who were returned to the Soviet Union into three groups: to those who were willing to leave as soon as possible, to those who did not want to return in any circumstances and to those who were doubtful (p. 164). The Soviet officials had promised that Ingrians could return to their home villages, which persuaded some people to return (Takalo & Juote, 1995, p. 13). In reality, those who returned were scattered in various places in the Soviet Union with no right to return to their previous places of residence in Ingria (Flink, 2016, pp. 86–87). These returns were a politically sensitive and charged topic and there was silence around them in Finland. According to Flink (2010) it has taken two generations, the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the returning migration of Ingrians, to have a possibility to research what happened (pp. 11–12). However, what needs to be remembered is that these evacuations, with all the injustices related to them, saved tens of thousands of lives, yet they did not save Ingrians from long-lasting deep-rooted fear (Flink, 2010, p. 277).

In conclusion, the period from the forming of the USSR until the death of Stalin in 1953 was a time that scattered Ingrians into a diaspora. It can be described as destructive, bringing fear and uncertainty for Ingrians as a collective but also with some hope in individuals' narratives. The era was determined by Russification policies, forced deportations, deaths, fear and hunger leading to having to hide your identity, customs, language and religion. This time led to a double life between the private and public

sphere. The war was over, but Ingrians had become a scattered diaspora, some had to hide their identities, and they had lost their homes.

2.4 Period Between Stalin's Death and Return Migration to Finland (1953-1990s)

The key words for the post-war period are dislocation and displacement (Bourke, 2001, p. 191). Ingrians were scattered around the Soviet Union and mostly its neighbouring countries, Finland, Estonia and Sweden. Some stayed in their exile places. However, many settled especially in Petrozavodsk and other places in the Soviet Karelia as the Soviet authorities had granted Ingrians a permission to move to the Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic in the years 1949-1950 (Davydova, 2003, p. 178).

Many tried to return to Ingria after the war, but they were not allowed to go back. For example, many Reuter's (2021, p. 199) family members tried to return, but none of them succeeded. Only few families were able to return as the Supreme Soviet of the USSR had passed an order on 26.11.1948: "To settle the repressed forever and to forbid them to return from exile" (Zadneprovskaya, 1999, p. 87). After the Great Terror and Stalin's death, mostly Russians and Ukrainians lived in the area where Ingrians used to live along with wider Russification policies (Takalo & Juote, 1995, p. 25). For those who could return and see the villages again, it was often a traumatic experience, as Teinonen (1999) documents: "The villages they had left behind were Finnish, but the villages to which they returned have been taken over by Russians" (p. 101). To return, many Ingrians had to hide their Finnish identity and avoid speaking Finnish (Ibid.). Even though there was a strong will to return for many Ingrians, it was difficult to return to a place that was torn apart by war and inhabited by new residents. Ingria was not the same as it used to be in their memories.

The years in exile and continuous moving led to shame and a period of silence because people were afraid of the recurrence of the events (Takalo & Juote, 1995, p. 50). Preserving the Finnish language was difficult because using the language in some areas could have been dangerous since Finnishness was often connected to the "fascist Finland" that was a German ally in the Second World War (Flink, 2016, pp. 90–91). The Finns were seen as politically unreliable and even enemies (Teinonen, 1999, p. 101), and the wounds of the war between the Soviet Union and Finland were still fresh. In reality, Ingrians had fought on both sides in German and Finnish armies as well as in the Soviet army during the war (SKS, 2021b).

The forced deportations and persecution of Ingrians affected their identity and social progress, as many Finns were not allowed or did not dare to educate themselves in the USSR (Davydova, 2003, p. 178). However, Reuter (2021) reminds that history, language and traditions, despite the totalitarian efforts, continued to live in the private memories of individuals and families (p. 189). Teinonen (1999) states that by the 1960s, the attitudes became more positive and the prejudice towards Finns in the USSR began fading (p. 102).

Glasnost and perestroika in the 1980s were time of the national awakening for Ingrians. The period was simultaneously a time of uncertainty and endless opportunities. Most of the fates of the relatives were discovered only during perestroika (Huttunen, 2002, pp. 216–217). The collective suffering is often brought up in discussions about Ingrians, but Reuter (2021) demonstrates how family histories also included success stories about the possibilities too, for example, being able to acquire higher education and professions valued in Soviet society. Only in the 1990s, Ingrians were rehabilitated, and no longer considered enemies of the nation. In those times, it was estimated that there were 20,000 Ingrians living in East Karelia, 24,000 in and around St. Petersburg, 17,000 in Estonia, 4000 in Finland and 4000 in Sweden (Räsänen, 1999, p. 9). The number of Ingrians was less than half of what it was before the Second World War.

Return migration to Finland began in the 1990s when Mauno Koivisto, the president of Finland, stated on television on 10th of April in 1990 that Ingrians should be considered Finnish, and they should have the right to move to Finland. One could get the status of a returning migrant if either of their parents or both grandparents on that side were ethnically Finnish. Izhorians and Votes, even those who has been evacuated to Finland during the Second World War, were not given a permission to return. (Flink, 2016, pp. 87–88.) By 2003, around 30,000 Ingrian returnees had arrived in Finland and around 20,000 people were still awaiting return (Davydova, 2003, p. 175). The myth behind the return migration is that with that decision Finland paid back their “debt of honour” and false promises to Ingrians. In her recently published doctoral dissertation Häikiö (2022) suggests that Koivisto made this decision of remigration to keep peaceful relations between Finland and the Soviet Union as there were still desires for Ingria’s cultural autonomy and Koivisto was not willing to take the risk to weaken the relationship between two countries. It would have been seen as meddling with the internal affairs of the Soviet Union. Thus, the recent research shows that the true motivation was not about the debt.

In conclusion, the period after Stalin's death gave Ingrians new possibilities to continue with their lives in new locations, mostly in Soviet Karelia, Finland, Estonia, Sweden, or for some, in their exile places. The period of terror had its effect on Ingrians' identity, culture, and sense of belonging, as for a long time they were considered enemies of the nation. Also, whether in Finland or in the Soviet Union, they did not have proper civil rights regarding work and education, and most of them were not able to return to their homeland in Ingria. Perestroika and glasnost were time for a national awakening of Ingrians and gave them a possibility to learn about their history and culture and being able to speak about events that were silenced for decades. A lot got destroyed during the Great Terror, but some customs, language and religion also passed on from one generation to another in the private sphere. Glasnost and perestroika also gave a ground for Ingrians being able to vivify their identity.

In this chapter, I presented the main events and turning points for Ingrians' from the Treaty of Stolbovo to the returning migration in the 1990s. Ingria has always been a multi-ethnic and -cultural area, but for centuries, it was dominantly Finnic-speaking. By the end of 19th century, Ingrians became a pressured minority. The formation of the USSR changed their daily lives, first, through forced collectivisation and second, through Stalin's terror. It led to Ingrians' displacement, silencing, and becoming of diaspora. Their identity and sense of belonging became challenged, and homes were lost. Stalin's death in 1953 meant an end to the persecution and during perestroika, Ingrians were able to discuss publicly what happened between the 1920s and 1950s and it was time of their national awakening. It gave possibilities for the revival of their identity even though they were scattered in a diaspora. Through this section, I gave the ground for understanding the narratives of war and displacement in Ingrians' written materials.

Now that I have concluded the turning points and main events of the Ingrians' history, I continue with the theoretical framework of this master's thesis.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Researching Displaced Communities in Peace and Conflict Research

One of the principle questions in peace and conflict research is what happens to individuals and communities during and after a war. Conflict-induced displacement and having to leave one's home forcibly are global, widespread and a multi-layered phenomena that have been researched in peace and conflict studies ever since the 1980s (Krause & Segadlo, 2021). By displacement, I do not solely mean moving across space, but "transformations in the political, social and economic practices through which people are related to place" (Kelly, 2009, p. 26). It does not necessarily mean moving at all but can involve feelings of insecurity while political and economic conditions are changing around them (Ibid., p. 37). In other words, in addition to spatial movement – displacement – there is also cultural and political displacement when surroundings transform dramatically and rapidly (Buchanan, 2017, p. 98). These questions related to forced migration and exile have also been researched in refugee studies since the beginning of the 1980s (Refugee Studies Centre, N.d.) as well as in the displacement and forced migrations studies (Adey et al., 2020), and the themes have been researched in other fields of social sciences (see Malkki, 1992; 1995). The topics of losing one's home and challenged belonging have been researched from multidisciplinary perspectives, and I continue to do so in this master's thesis while simultaneously drawing from peace and conflict studies.

This research adds to the research gap in peace and conflict studies, as the large majority of research on displacement and forced migration conducted between 1980–2020 addressed the African and Asian continent (Krause & Segadlo, 2021, pp. 276–277). The reason behind is connected to the long-lasting conflicts in those parts of the world. Yet, this research brings attention to an area that has not been thoroughly researched. The Ingrian case builds on this previous research about displacement but brings attention to the specific dynamics of a stateless diaspora in and outside of the USSR and poses a question of belonging and homemaking in relation to a specific minority group.

In this research, I focus on the fundamental question of memories of conflict, war and displacement. Additionally, I explore how the wider political and societal context have affected Ingrians' identification, sense of belonging and meaning of home. How is identity generated and maintained in the situations of being displaced and moved by war and conflict and how does it affect sense of belonging? In the 20th century, Ingrians' lives have been largely defined by displacement and being on the move. Thus, it is in my interest to explore their narrations of home and belonging during this period.

What does home mean for those who have been forcibly displaced from the physical place called home? How does war change these notions for individuals, but also communities? What also interests me in this research is how, besides people's movement across space, the places also shift along the movements (Gregorič Bon & Repič, 2016, p. 1).

For people who have been affected by displacement and live in a diaspora, the issues connected to home, belonging and identity are constantly contested (Brah, 1996, p. 2). War is something that fractures home that is often taken for granted (Loipponen, 2010, p. 146) and after war, people's "place in the world" is often challenged (Jansen & Löfving, 2009, p. 1). In peace and conflict studies home is understood as one aspect of the "local", but it has been rarely considered in research (Watson, 2019). I plan to pay attention to this aspect and what happened to displaced Ingrians, what have they written about displacement and war, how they have narrated their sense of belonging in these turbulent times and constructed meanings for home and homeland that they have lost in one or more ways.

In this chapter, I present the theoretical perspectives. I draw on in three interconnected concepts of diaspora, home and belonging. First, I briefly present the various theorisations of diaspora and how the concept is relevant as a background context for studying Ingrians. Second, I introduce the sociological and anthropological perspectives on home and belonging that this thesis draws on. I discuss the concept of home and how it has been approached in previous research before finally, turning my focus onto the concept of belonging and how displacement affects it.

3.2 Theoretical Perspectives on Diaspora and the Ingrian Diaspora

By 'diaspora', is often meant an ethno-national group whose members live outside of their home country and who still consider themselves as members of that group of origin (Morawska, 2011, p. 1030) and continue to be concerned about the developments "back home" (Karabegović & Orjuela, 2021, p. 1). The basis of diasporic communities is that they have lost home as a place in some way (Savolainen, 2015, p. 76) and that it is difficult to return (Kalra, Kaur & Hutnyk, 2005, p. 10). Ingrian diaspora differs from the common definition of a diaspora because they have never had an independent state, which is why it is useful to refer to the concept of 'stateless diaspora' when focusing on Ingrians. As our world is often understood and constructed through the idea of nation-states, studies of diasporas sometimes lack recognising stateless diasporic groups (Eliassi, 2018, p. 121). Stateless diasporas often see themselves as a group that is lacking a homeland, or they see their homelands as

being stolen or taken away by other groups (Ibid.). Ingrians have not had a state to call a homeland despite their wishes for autonomy, independence or unification with Finland in some points of history.

The concept of diaspora has been used to describe the historical experiences of the Jewish and Armenian people (Safran, 1991; Kalra et al., 2005; Kläger & Stierstorfer, 2015), and the mass movement of Africans via slavery (Kalra et al., 2005; Safran, 1991). One of the prominent theorists of diaspora, William Safran (1991), presents certain characteristics of diaspora. The people or their ancestors must have been dispersed from a specific origin to two or more other regions and that they retain a collective memory, vision or myth about that original homeland (Ibid.). This traditional way of understanding diaspora is known as the conventional paradigm, where diasporas are understood as communities dispersed from a certain place of origin to different locations (Kläger & Stierstorfer, 2015, pp. 1–2). Kläger and Stierstorfer (2015) describe how the individuals of diasporic communities often feel alienated and are linked by the hope of returning home (pp. 1-2). Another common understanding in this way of theorising diaspora is its association with loss, exile, or some sort of suffering, and an inability to return (Kalra et al., 2005, pp. 9–10). These early discussions of diaspora were firmly rooted in the concept of a ‘homeland’ (Brubaker, 2005, p. 2).

The expansion of the concept of diaspora arose in the 1980s (Cohen, 2022, p. 189) with paradigm shift of the ‘spatial turn’ in the social sciences. Since then, diaspora has been often interpreted more dynamically, and it is no longer focusing on the idea of a return to just one geographical place called home (Kläger & Stierstorfer, 2015, pp. 2–3). The term has been used to define, for example, labour migrants who have ties to their homeland (Brubaker, 2005, p. 2). For example, Brah (1996, p. 16) proposes that diaspora, as a concept, should criticise the discourses of fixed origins while taking the “homing desire” into account. By this, she means that people want to belong somewhere, and have a place to call home, but it is not necessarily a homeland that is located in a fixed geographical place. She also points out that not all diasporas sustain an ideology of return. This wider understanding of diaspora challenges the ideal of a homogenous nation (Kalra et al., 2005, p. 31).

James Clifford (1994) suggests that diaspora should be understood as a diverse and multi-local concept. He describes this through the metaphor of ‘roots’ and ‘routes’. Roots involve intimate linkages to identity and between people and place (Malkki, 1992 p. 24). The metaphor refers to questions where you are, where have you come from, what are the routes by which you have got somewhere and do you have roots in a particular place (Kalra et al., 2005, p. 29). This understanding is more dynamic and not connected to a certain fixed territory or nation-state which fits this research, as I am

also interested in Ingrians' homemaking practices in places outside of Ingria that could be called home.

The expansion of the concept has been criticised. Rogers Brubaker (2005) notes how the concept of diaspora has proliferated, and its meaning has been stretched in many directions. If everyone who is dispersed in space becomes diasporic, then no one distinctively is so. He brings up the paradox that if the concept becomes universalised and a term to describe all kinds of movement and dispersion across space, it can mean the disappearance of understanding of diaspora as it is. (p. 3.) Some kind of criteria would be needed to make the distinction for example, between forcibly displaced and labour migrants.

In this research, I use Robin Cohen's (2022) recent definition of a diaspora based on four basic features: 1. members of a defined group have been dispersed to various destinations 2. they construct a shared identity 3. they still somewhat orient themselves to an original 'home', and 4. they show an affinity with other members of the group dispersed to other places. This classification is useful to understand the Ingrian diaspora. They have been forcibly dispersed from Ingria in waves to various locations, and this dispersion is part of their collective identity and Ingrians' leading narrative. They also share a collective identity, orient themselves in Ingria, but also understand that home and the place is no longer same as in their memories. Even though, in the more dynamic understanding of diaspora, and in Cohen's definition, diaspora is not always born as a result of force and it can mean various migrant groups, the Ingrian diaspora is an example that was born through traumatic forced deportations and geographical dispersal of the group to the furthest peripheries of the Soviet Union (Reuter, 2020b). Kalra et al. (2005) mention how forced exile is essential to the heightened sense of longing (p. 10).

A distinction between the perceived 'homeland' and 'ancestral land' is needed. Many relate to Ingria as their home and land of origin, but Finland is also playing a role as their ancestral land. Thus, there is not necessarily just one homeland that one identifies with. Nostalgia for an ancestral homeland, whether for some Ingrians it is Ingria or Finland, is often built on "a romantic myth where a pure and homogeneous idea of home lies frozen in memory, free from change and contestation" (Amato, 2015, p. 428). Homeland plays a significant role in the lives of the members of the diaspora in both symbolic and normative sense (Morawska, 2011, p. 1030). When using this distinction, it provides a better tool for analysis because, for many Ingrians, homeland and ancestral land do not mean the same geographical location.

Moreover, Hertlein (2015) explains how diaspora setting often includes a common ground for its members where people have shared experiences that contribute to the sense of belonging. This is not necessarily based on a ‘shared heritage’ but can also be connected to common challenges they have faced. (p. 411.) In Ingrians’ case, for example, the displacement and Stalin’s terror. Simultaneously, “consciousness which provides an awareness of difference” (Kalra et al., 2005, p. 30), means that for example Ingrians in the 20th century have grown up understanding that they differ from the desired Soviet citizen with their ways of living, cultural norms, language, etc. This challenges diasporic subject’s sense of identity (Ibid.) and notions of home and belonging.

All in all, the concept of diaspora provides a useful framework for studying the trajectories, displacement and challenged notions of home and belonging for a scattered group in this research. With the concept of diaspora, I trace shared meanings and narratives of the group who share the idea about their origin and displacement. I define Ingrians as a diaspora with a lost homeland and as having been born out of violent waves of displacement, and finally as a diaspora that can find and build a new home somewhere else. This supports the existing theorisations of diasporas being dynamic and diverse and adds to the analytical understanding of nostalgia for home(land) while simultaneously looking into the future.

3.3 Theoretical Perspectives on Home

As Kingumets (2022) notes in her ethnographic research on the Russian-speaking population in the Estonian-Russian border-town Narva, when people describe their being in the world, home is a crucial part of these stories (p. 72). Building on this insight, I understand home as a multidimensional concept that includes both individual and collective aspects, and can be a physical place, an abstract memory, or even a feeling. It can also be “a mythic place of desire in the diasporic imagination” (Brah, 1996, pp. 191–192). Vilkkö (2010, p. 12) argues that home has been typically considered a secondary research question in social sciences and has been treated as an undefinable, sentimental, and charged concept (p. 12). It has been common to give home normative, ideal and simplified meanings, and to romanticise it (Ibid.). Such accounts rely heavily on the distinction between public and private that feminist scholarship has criticised and accordingly, in this thesis I take home “seriously” through relying on perspectives that resist narrow definitions. Home as a space of agency, belonging and resistance has been ignored in the neoliberal ideas of peace because it is considered something private (Watson, 2019, p. 3). However, I also agree with Svetlana Boym’s (1994) argument that the divide

between public and private is not as relevant for Russian cultural history because the private sphere was never as fully cultivated in Russia than in “the West” (pp. 73-93), but it does not diminish the importance and validity of home as a space.

Avtar Brah (1996) asks “when does a place of residence become ‘home’?” (p.1). From an individual’s perspective, home is always something more than just a house, as Voutira (2011, p. 1), notes in the context of a post-Soviet Greek diaspora. One can have a house but not necessarily a home and vice versa. In popular imaginaries, there is a certain emotional identification of home that is connected to qualities such as familiarity, shelter, protection and feeling of belonging (Kingumets, 2022; Voutira, 2011; Jansen & Löfving, 2009). For a place to be home, it has to be a space open for opportunities and hope (Hage, 2010, p. 419) and a place that can serve as a base for developing future – both near and distant – where people are certain enough about their place in the surrounding social structures to make plans (Jansen & Löfving, 2009, pp. 3–17; Löfving, 2009, p. 150). For many, home is a space of possibilities (Kingumets, 2022). In peace and conflict studies, home has been described as a place of meaning and a site of resistance (Watson, 2019).

Yet, Kingumets (2022) reminds how home can also be a site of discomfort, insecurity and loneliness (p. 20). The popular qualities associated to home are something that people tend to seek in their lives, but they do not always become fulfilled. Especially, in the cases of living in an authoritarian political regime, homes can become dangerous and even lethal places of violence and destruction (Eliassi, 2018, pp. 118–119). Thus, the wider societal context is crucial when thinking about what home is and can be for individuals and communities. As I document in chapter 5.2, the societal changes in the USSR brought fear into Ingrians’ homes.

From a temporal aspect, home appears as an ever-changing notion. In a study of the meaning of home for Bedouin women, Allasad Alhuzail (2018) describes home as “a multidimensional institution, in terms of time, place and social relations” that is influenced by conceptions from past and present (p. 712). Therefore, home is easily represented as a “timeless entity in an unchanging context of origin”, but it should be understood including the temporal, socio-economic, political and cultural dimensions (Jansen & Löfving, 2009, pp. 14–15). Especially in the context where people become forcibly displaced, the home in the memories is likely to radically differ from what it has become. As I trace in chapter 5.3, many of those who have not been able to return, imagine their homeland to have remained as the day they left. To them, the past still exists in the present (Hage, 2010, p. 427). However, the lost home has also been left at another time, not just in another place (Jansen & Löfving, 2009, p. 15).

These theorisations show how people's imaginations and memories of home are crucial for their sense of belonging and identity. People want to remember their homes as they used to be as it can bring comfort and familiarity.

Accordingly, my thesis shows Ingria not only as a fixed area on a map but following Gregorič Bon and Repič's characterisation (2016), as *a process* that is always redefined and relocated in connection to the changes in that local context, such as social, political, and historical spheres of life (p. 2). Ingria changed radically in different time periods from Swedish to Russian and Soviet rule as I showed in chapter 2, influencing how people perceive the place, and whether and how it feels like home. I see home as a contextual and fluid concept. Some might always long for that one specific place, but it is possible to construct a new home somewhere else, and for several notions of home to coexist. As Eliassi (2018) documents, dislocation and experiences of otherness, not belonging, can strengthen the homing desire which makes individuals long for social inclusion and feelings of home (pp. 118–119). But how to understand home as a place where one is rooted and simultaneously criticising the nationalistic ideas of home?

3.3.1 Sedantrist and Anti-Sedantrist Approaches to Home: Taking the Middle Ground

Relying on long-term ethnographic work on the question of home in the Balkans, Stef Jansen (2009) delineates between sedantrist and anti-sedantrist approaches. According to sedantrist logic, "human beings are seen not only as being collectively rooted in a particular place but also as deriving their meaningfulness, or their 'culture', from this very rootedness" (Jansen & Löfving, 2009, p. 14). Thus, echoing Liisa Malkki's pioneering work on displacement and diasporas (1992), Jansen (2009) shows how "sedantrism naturalises the link between people and place" (p. 43). In this approach, the place defines where a person belongs (Voutira, 2011, p. 286), and the place called home is connected to the nation-state, the place where one is 'rooted' (Brah, 1996, p. 4). Having a sedantrist assumption about attachment to a place, can lead us to look into it as an inner condition of the displaced instead of looking into the wider socio-political context (Malkki, 1992, p. 33).

Sedantrism in the Ingrian context would mean an automatic connection and rootedness to the physical land of Ingria or alternatively to Finland because of the ancestral connections. This view, however, reproduces easy essentialisms and nationalist ideas of home (Jansen & Löfving, 2009, p. 3). As such sedantrist and autochthonous accounts can be a powerful ideological devices that create excluding

practices and discourses against people who are not viewed as belonging to the same group (Eliassi, 2018, p. 118). They are based on a belief that certain people are more entitled to inhabit certain places. Anti-sedantrist or rootless approaches, on the other hand, do not see a meaningful connection between a place, identity and belonging. Home can be found in various places and people are not necessarily rooted anywhere. While anti-sedantrist approach suggests that refugees can find home in various locations, and territorial rooting is connected to the nationalist ideas of belonging to a certain place, it can also be seen as naïve by those who have been violently expelled from ‘their’ places, as Jansen (2009, p. 44) points out.

A middle ground between these approaches stands for places and persons that can transform while being attached to “a culturally defined home locality” (Jansen, 2009, p. 44). Thus, territorial rooting of identification can neither be taken as self-evident or ignored. Brah (1996) shares a similar understanding of home in her research that focuses on debates of around diasporas, nationalism and locations in different discourses, practices and contexts. She describes home as a “site of everyday lived experiences” including those feelings of rootedness that come from mundane daily practices and surrounding networks of family and friends. Home, in this context, emerges as a place of intimacy, also during those moments of alienation from the wider society. (p. 4.) This perspective supports this thesis’ argument of how a certain area and identity can be interlinked in the context of Ingrians while also understanding that places and identities are everchanging in nature.

Following Jansen and Löfving (2009), I see the sedantrist and anti-sedantrist approaches as empirically important because they both appear in the research materials and help me answer the research question of how Ingrians narrate home in their personal materials. Geographical place matters but is not deterministic and this conceptualisation also includes the possibility of building a new home elsewhere. In the following chapters, I show how meaning-making related to home and belonging are complex phenomena where longing for a concrete land but at the same time finding a new home coexist. I suggest that home is a transformative and everchanging place both physically and symbolically given the various meanings and perspectives both individually and communally.

3.3.2 Homemaking and Its Practices

Another useful theoretical perspective for understanding Ingrians’ meanings of home is the dynamic process of homemaking. Jansen and Löfving (2009, p. 2) describe it as a struggle for home. Instead of social and geographical belonging, attention must also be paid towards “the forward-looking

practises of attachment to and detachment from place” (Ibid.). The practices that can help people in creating place to be more home-like can be, for example, recreating one’s everyday routines, finding a job, concretely building a home, being able to plan one’s future etc. Thus, home is also a place of struggle to create possibility (Jansen & Löfving, 2009, p. 17). These practices and processes are related to the aspiration of the emotional aspects of security and comfort. Some practices, ways of living, might be the same as in the original home, but some not. In the process of homemaking, relationships to places and persons are produced (Jansen, 2009, p. 45). Home is not only a certain place, but it is about the people with whom we ‘feel-at-home’ with (Jansen & Löfving, 2009, p. 7). The experiences of homemaking also vary on a person’s gender, class and stage in the life course (Jansen 2009, 51). For example, in Ingrians’ case, feeling at home in Finland was easier for the younger generations than older.

Irrespective of whether people plan to stay or return to the homes they left, they have the need to feel at home in new places (Kingumets, 2022, p. 76), and work towards this feeling. Equivalently, Ghassan Hage (2010) has theorised about the blocks of homely feeling that could be understood as practices of homemaking. He describes how these blocks provide four key feelings: security, familiarity, community, and a sense of possibility or hope meaning that people try to create a home as a space from where one can create opportunities for “a better life”, where one can develop certain capacities and skills and have an opportunity for personal growth (pp. 418–419). He describes how these homely structures are more an aspiration and an ideal goal than an existing reality and something that motivate people to try and move on with their lives in tough situations. This can also be described through the concept of emplacement, which is the opposite of displacement. Emplacement includes capacities or incapacities to “work, live, rest and aspire in the place you happen to be located” (Jansen & Löfving 2009, p. 13). Also, Avtar Brah (1996) introduces the concept of ‘homing desire’ to describe this phenomenon and differentiate between the will to return to a homeland and the need to feel at home in any place (pp. 16, 180).

In this research, I am interested in homemaking and its practices after a war and loss of home for Ingrians. While Kingumets (2022) emphasises how homes are related to the wider societal context and power structures (p. 72), I also see homemaking intertwining with larger political and societal processes. For Ingrians, the wider political sphere played a crucial role in where they could settle and whether they were able to plan their future, which I discuss more in chapter 5.2. While homemaking during and after life-changing events can be difficult, people still tend to find ways and new meanings in life (Stepputat, 2009, p. 174) even though remaking of home can be a lifelong project physically

but also emotionally for people who have lost their homes in war (Loipponen, 2010, p. 146). I ask, what have Ingrians done in their temporary and more-permanent living places to remind them of home but also to look to the future? What kind of practices have been important to make them feel at-home?

3.4 Sense of Belonging for a Displaced Community

Researching Ingrians' sense of belonging in relation to displacement is worthwhile as I argue that it has been challenged and threatened in different times and places by states, other groups and Ingrians themselves. Losing home, becoming forcibly displaced and living away from one's homeland can complicate and make people question their notion of belonging (Kalra et al., 2005; Eliassi, 2018). Like home, belonging is also a contextual and fluid feeling and concept that can mean different things for individuals and communities. In her research, Kingumets (2022) shows how individuals are the best experts to tell where they belong and feel at home, but in "a politicized world where histories and political agreements matter – albeit always being issues for negotiation and remaking – belonging and having the right to home on one's own terms does not seem to be a feasible option" (p. 20).

Yuval-Davis (2006) outlines an analytical framework for studying belonging and describes belonging as naturalised and something that becomes comprehensible and politicised only when its threatened (p. 197). Belonging can be analysed both as a personal, emotional attachment, feeling of being "at home" in a place ('place-belongingness') and as a discursive resource that constructs, claims, justifies, or resist forms of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion ('politics of belonging') (Ibid.). In this research, I focus on the former notion even though I pay attention to the wider political and societal context in formulating individuals' place-belongingness.

As with the sedantrist approach of home, the concept of belonging has also been connected to nationalistic ideas. One belongs to a place because their community "owns" the territory and has been settled in a certain place for generations or even centuries (Kalra et al., 2005, p. 29). Kalra et al. (2005) argue how belonging should rather be a question of the "multivocality of belongings" (p. 29) and Yuval-Davis (2006) strives for an understanding of belonging as a dynamic process (p. 199). One can feel that they come from a certain place, but simultaneously belong to another place. Sense of belonging also changes throughout people's lifespans. Belonging can take a multidimensional form in which a person can feel that they have "a range of place-based identities" (Eliassi, 2018, pp. 118).

Kingumets (2022) demonstrates how emplacement slightly differs from belonging. She sees that belonging relates to the processes of creating connections and meaning while emplacement “captures better the structural lines of power underneath and around the process of relating to a new place” (pp. 76–77). I pay attention to both of these: how changing social relations and connections due to displacement and mobility have affected Ingrians sense of belonging but also, how the structural factors and political decisions have affected Ingrians’ belonging in various locations. Emplacement as well as belonging are connected to both, new places in which people live and those places that are left behind.

One can feel belonging to a group in addition to a place. Thus, Ingrians’ shared identity is related to their sense of belonging. Belonging underpins the social solidarity amongst the group (Eliassi, 2018, p. 118). Through the notion of belonging, one can pay attention to the importance of social relations and shared collective identity instead of specific place. When Ingrians became a diaspora, the importance of shared identity possibly grew. On the other hand, if certain qualities related to familiarity or social relations, are taken away from a place, does one feel like they belong there?

In this chapter, I presented the main theoretical perspectives of this research. I argued why researching displaced communities, (stateless) diasporas and the notions of home and belonging matter, and how these questions have been handled in previous discussions. Diaspora studies as a wider framework helps me to pay attention to the shared meanings and narratives of Ingrians and how living in a stateless diaspora have affected their notions of home and belonging. I also showed why I have decided to take the middle ground between sedantrist and anti-sedantrist approaches of home and belonging as I want to avoid essentialism while also understanding how the anti-sedantrist approach can be seen as naïve in the eyes of violently displaced individuals and groups. To conclude, I understand both notions as fluid and ever-changing which will be the starting point of the analysis as I describe in chapters 4.3 and 5.1. Now that I have presented the main theoretical perspectives and concepts of this research, I turn to describe how I used narrative research methods to analyse Ingrians’ oral history – their memoirs, letters and other autobiographical texts.

4 RESEARCH PROCESS: NARRATIVE ANALYSIS ON INGRIANS' ORAL HISTORY

4.1 Positionality as a Researcher with an Ingrian Background and Ethical Considerations

Without my family history, I would not have touched upon a research topic. My grandfather's life as an Ingrian and a Finn in the Soviet Union and later, in Russia, has always drawn my interest and curiosity. Once I began my internship in a research project unravelling the Finnish fates in the Soviet Union at the National Archives of Finland, I got the opportunity to write my thesis on them (or us).



My grandfather, Nikolai Kokkonen, was born in Hittola village, Toksovo, Ingria in 1938. His family got trapped in the Siege of Leningrad when he was three years old. From there, he was evacuated, but simultaneously deported to Zhedai (today called Chapayevo), in Yakutia. Throughout my life, I have heard unbelievable stories of his family's journey. My grandfather was first starving during the siege and then in Yakutia, which is why he stayed small and skinny for his entire life and always challenged me into eating competitions when I was a picky eater as a child. When he was taken through 'the Road of Life'⁶, the German soldiers bombed the trucks in which the people were being evacuated.

⁶ The Road of Life (in Russian: *Дорога Жизни*) was a route across Lake Ladoga to and from Leningrad during the siege through which it was possible to evacuate people and carry supplies.

On their refugee journey to Yakutia, he and his older brothers fled a burning cattle wagon by crawling on the heads of people. When the deportees travelled along the Lena-river, which had already begun to freeze, their hopper barge that was full of people began to drown. A Lithuanian man called Volodya saved my grandfather, who had just turned four years old. My grandfather's family, along with other Finnish, German, Polish and Lithuanian deportees, were left in the cold, and they had to build their living spaces from scratch. He always emphasised his eternal gratitude towards Yakuts, who helped them survive in the Siberian cold and permafrost. In the picture on the left is my grandfather's family: his parents Antti and Maria Kokkonen, brothers Viljo and Reino, and himself in the front, in Yakutia. From what I have heard, they were standing in the grass for the picture because they did not have shoes for the summer. In the school photograph on the right, is my grandfather with other Ingrian boys in Yakutia.



As a child, I remember laughing at his “funny” Finnish accent because Russian was the language we usually spoke with each other. I did not understand why my granddad, who lives in Russia, knows Finnish so well, and why does it sound unusual as some words were slightly out-of-date, and, for example, he said *rosmo* instead of *rosvo* (thief in Finnish). I also wondered why he was always so ecstatic when he heard me speaking Finnish and why he smelled our clothes to get more in touch with Finland. Above is a picture of me and my grandfather in Petrozavodsk, Republic of Karelia. He tried to get the return migrant status to move to Finland, but unfortunately, became terminally ill before

being able to move. When he passed away, I was 12 years old, and wondered why he had a Lutheran funeral ceremony, differing from the rest of my relatives in Russia, and why my grandmother had decided to get him a Finnish-styled gravestone. Even today, it stands out from the rest in the graveyard.

These stories and contradictions between him and what I observed to be “normal” in Russia always stayed with me. My grandfather was rehabilitated by the Russian state only in 1996, the same year I was born. Since he was three years old, and for the most part of his life, he was considered an enemy of the nation without him knowing. In my adult years, I began to think about my past and realised what being an Ingrian, or Ingrian Finnish, means, and how it is also part of my family history. Yet, I have never felt connectedness to the dominant narrative of who Ingrians are as my family, including my grandfather, were never religious, which is often brought up as one of the most crucial part of Ingrian identity. This brought my attention to critically examine different identities and narratives in the research materials as my perception of who Ingrians were and are and who they can be is wider than the dominant understanding.

While doing this research, I had to face my preconceptions about Ingrians and be open to change what I knew beforehand. For example, I did not understand the complexity of the identity question and the contestations between the terms when I began my thesis process. In the end, it turned out to be one of the biggest reflections of this research. I was also worried that my background would dictate the analysis process. However, we ourselves, with our personal biases and backgrounds, are always affecting “the processes of constructing and deconstructing views of the world” (Jackson & Piette, 2015, p. 4). I paid attention to my biases and preconceptions throughout the thesis process, wrote about them in my thesis diary, but also saw them as an asset because they led me to this research topic in the first place.

During this process, I also understood why the notions of home and belonging resonated with me. I am a person who simultaneously does and does not feel at home both in Finland and Russia. When I cross the border to the Russian Karelia and climb the stairs to the fifth floor of a *khrushchevka*⁷ in the city centre of Petrozavodsk, I become filled with nostalgia and homeliness, but when walking around the streets, I feel like an outsider, always dressing up differently and having a slight Finnish accent

⁷ *Khrushchevkas* were designed as temporary housing to solve the USSR’s housing crisis in the 1960s. People continue to live in these buildings today.

when speaking Russian. In Finland, I miss the sense of communality and warmth I feel in Russia, and sometimes feel like I do not belong there either. I see my background as an advantage in this research because from the beginning I could connect with what I know about my family's past, and I had a strong motivation to study it.

I got more familiar with the longer-term history of Ingrians, and the various trajectories and fates there were. Even though a lot of the events described in memoirs were sad and painful to read, I could see Ingrians' humour in them. It was something that they needed to survive those tough moments in life. At times, it was emotionally challenging to read Ingrians' stories of war and terror, especially when Russia began its war on Ukraine in the middle of my thesis process. I spent moments being deeply touched by the stories, but also laughing at their jokes and the descriptions of the events.

Throughout the process, I ran into multiple ethical obstacles. First, I struggled whether it is right to dig into other people's past. Some of the descriptions and memories were intimate and at times, I felt like I was not supposed to read them, especially the letters between family members. However, all these documents have been donated knowing that they can be used for research purposes. Regarding memoirs, they have been written to be published and with the motivation that other people would read them and learn about their lives.

Second, I pondered over the anonymization and pseudonymization question. Eventually, I decided to refer to actual names of individuals because that is a common practice when using SKS's archival materials. When requesting for SKS' opinion regarding the question, one project worker replied to me that their principle is that as much as people have a right to be forgotten, they also have a right to be remembered. I decided to follow these official guidelines and recommendations. Following this idea, I also think that the donators and writers of the materials have a right to be visible, especially when in the past they have often been silenced. It would have been problematic to hide their names and identities once again. Also, it would have made it unnecessarily complicated to refer to the letters and memoirs. The donators of the materials have often been the relatives of or the same people who have written the letters and other materials, so it would have been unavoidable to completely anonymise the writers. However, I did not include any personal information, such as detailed addresses of individuals in the quotes in this research. Regarding the citations, I wrote the shortened versions in footnotes and the detailed ones in a separate section in references under "Archival Sources" at the end of the thesis.

Third, I struggled with translation. Most of the materials I am analysing have been written in Finnish, and more specifically, in the Ingrian Finnish dialect, but there are also materials in English, Russian and Swedish that I have used. A considerable part of the materials included mixed language: some words and sentences were written in Russian, and they included Soviet vocabulary that few Finns would understand. Thus, my language knowledge of Russian helped tremendously. The translations from Finnish and Russian to English are mine, except for one memoir that was already translated into English. What I struggled with is that in translation, there is always information and meaning that gets lost or changes. Since the Ingrian Finnish dialect is rich and has a vast vocabulary that even differs from the standard Finnish language, there are expressions and word choices that are lost in translation. This is a clear limitation of my research. Yet, for those who are interested in the original materials, the archive is open for researchers and visitors.

To conclude, without my background, I would have never written this thesis. When reading previous studies on Ingrians, I noticed that the majority of researchers, such as Toivo Flink, Anni Reuter, Helena Miettinen, and Leonid Suni, have an Ingrian background themselves. Ingrians are clearly a minority group that, for now, has mostly interested those researchers who have a personal ties and background to the topic. It is no wonder that I repeat the same pattern and want to uncover what happened to them and how they have narrated their past. Besides my positionality, I faced ethical issues related to digging people's personal materials, the anonymity question, and information and meaning getting lost in translation.

4.2 Analysing Memories: Making Sense of Ingrians' Individual and Collective Traces

My research process was a journey of exploration. The familiarisation with the research materials began when I did my internship at the National Archives in autumn 2021. First, I went through two folders called "Inkerin arkisto I and II" that included documents, photographs and newspaper clippings from Ingrian associations from 1917 to 1944. There were also materials related to displaced Ingrians and the refugee work done in Finland. Examining these materials taught me about the wider history, the association work of Ingrians and led me to other types of materials. When visiting the Finnish Literature Society (SKS) and diving into their archives and collections of Ingrians' personal materials, I realised that those are the materials I want to work with. I went through materials donated to SKS's archiving and cultural memory organisation project called *Ingria and Ingrians – recording histories, preserving memories* that took place between 2018 and 2020. When examining various

materials ranging from notes, letters, memoirs, drafts, photographs to objects like hymn books and bibles, event posters and song booklets, I began noticing certain repeating themes. I made a decision to focus on those parts of memoirs and letters that discussed the topics of home(land) and sense of belonging. However, I must emphasise that the writers have not specifically answered questions related to the themes of home and belonging in their materials. I am working with what they have decided to generally write about their lives. The answers could have been different if they had been asked about these themes and notions specifically. I understand the limitation this research holds.

By limiting the materials to memoirs and letters and narrowing down the topic I ended up with 19 letters, 12 memoirs or other types of autobiographical texts, the length being from one or two pages to hundreds of pages. I also analyse two scrapbooks that include drawings and memories written in a story-form as well as one diary and a couple of filled questionnaires for research conducted earlier by Toivo Flink. I pondered whether I should just focus on one type of material, but since these personal collections are often the only thing left of Ingrians and they bring different perspectives to the research questions, I decided to include them all.

Archives always emphasise some forms of memory over others (Moore, Salter, Stanley & Tamboukou, 2017, p. 1). Decisions have always been made on what, whom to include and whom to forget. There are also archives and memories - traces of people - that disappear completely. My materials strongly depend on those who have donated something from their personal collections. It is always limited, but it is what is left of those people and their families. For instance, those Ingrians who arrived in Finland either as evacuees in the 1940s and were not deported back to the Soviet Union or those Ingrians who moved to Finland as part of the returning migration in the 1990s are more emphasised in my research than the individuals of the wider diaspora because the materials have been collected for a project taking place in Finland. There are also donations from Sweden. This collection of materials does not represent those who stayed in their exile places or generally in the Soviet Union and later Russia. It can be that the connectedness to Finland and Finnish identity is emphasised more in these materials than the wider diaspora would. Also, these memoirs are survival stories of those who stayed alive and not of those tens of thousands of Ingrians who passed away during the war and Stalin's terror.

These written materials can be understood as part of oral history which is interested in knowledge that is based on people's memories. Through oral history, one can research historical events through the perspectives of individual experiencers (Pöysä, n.d.) and make sense of what remains of people

and events of the past (Moore et al., 2017, p. 4). Savolainen and Taavetti (2022) bring up how Finnish oral history differs from the international research traditions. For example, the research materials that are considered being part of oral history are more diverse and the perspectives are multi-disciplinary. Internationally, oral history is commonly understood as part of historical research traditions, and as one can notice from the term oral history, it has been focusing on orally told stories and histories. (p. 12.) In Finnish, oral history is *muistitietotutkimus*, which would be roughly translated as memory knowledge research. In this research, I understand oral history in its wider definition including written materials and incorporating multi-disciplinary ways of doing research.

I paid attention to how letters differ from memoirs and autobiographical texts that have been written later in time. The constructions of events differ depending on the temporal context and the motivations of individuals. Letters often focus on the events that have taken place recently in individuals' lives, and thus, include narratives of the present unlike memoirs that tend to look into the past. Regarding letters, I also paid attention to the self-censorship as it was a society where public expression of an individual memory was forbidden (Merridale, 1999, p. 61). In letters, there are numerous mentions of how individuals wish they could write more. Even after the Great Terror, it was forbidden to discuss what happened for decades which must have affected what people wrote and left out. I recognise there are also silences in the materials, especially in the letters. In memoirs, people have often had more distance to the past and been able to reconstruct their memories in connection to their present. In memoirs, memories are also active and "forging its pasts to serve present interests" (Radstone & Schwarz, 2010, p. 3), which for Ingrians could be wanting to be heard and tell their version of what happened. Thus, the memoirs might give more light on the events especially in those cases where the memoirs have been written outside of the Soviet Union and Russia.

Regarding silences, I also consider that witnesses and survivors may not be able to express their memories of terror, as there is a "gap of language where all narrativity falls short in the act and translation of limit event" (Gómez-Barris & Gray, 2010, p. 2). In the research materials, people have written that they do not have words to describe certain events. However, by explaining these indescribable emotions and memories, they show how a certain event holds a specific and emotional meaning for an individual. For example, Ulla Antfolk describes meeting her relatives in Russia after being separated from them for decades:

"I cannot explain the emotions that arose. We cried and cried. Was I part of these people that Stalin wanted to eradicate? These people who suffered enormously during their exile ... I cannot explain the feelings I experienced after meeting with my relatives. No words have been invented that can describe those strong

*emotions. We all cried, and I cried almost the whole way back home. Everything was in chaos. Why is it so painful to be confronted with roots? I hadn't lived with them ... It was as if everything that made me a balanced person was swept away. Here I stood now, not knowing who I was."*⁸

Many Ingrians have written histories and stories of their parents and other family members. Memoirs include narrations of their parents' or other family members' lives and fates in exile. It could be that the older generation had this more deeply rooted fear which led to stronger self-censorship, and regarding the fates, those who passed away could not tell their own stories which is why someone else had to do it. In her research about war, death and remembrance in the Soviet Russia, Merridale (1999) describes how stories of arrests, disappearances, lost parents and orphans were kept alive as family secrets, private narratives inside the homes and through whispers (p. 63). Then, these stories travelled from one generation to another and sometimes the offspring had courage to write about it.

Life and family narratives build Ingrians' history and 'collective memory' of the past (Reuter, 2021, p. 207). The concept of collective memory was coined together by Maurice Halbwachs in 1924 through which he describes how individual memory has social and collective dimensions (Apfelbaum, 2010, p. 77). Apfelbaum (2010) describes how at the heart of Halbwachs' thought is the idea that all human activity is socially determined or constructed and that these interactions are vital for us to understand who we are, who we become, and how we process our lives and remember our experiences (p. 85). For Halbwachs, even the most personal and intimate experiences result from a dynamic social process since they have been experienced in a certain sociohistorical environment (Ibid.). Collective memory can also be understood as "a set of social representations concerning the past" (Jedlowski, 2001, p. 33) and "...acquiring a group's memories and thereby identifying with its collective past is part of the process of acquiring any social identity" (Zerubavel, 2003, p. 3).

I also pay attention to the nature of memories as I cannot always consider them to be objective or true. In his research on Stalin-era autobiographical texts, Jochen Hellbeck (2001) points out that no matter how confessional and intimate an autobiographical text claims to be, it cannot answer to the question of a person's experience (p. 345). Individuals might have forgotten things or remember them wrong (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara, 2008, pp. 213–214). However, there are contestations around this, as Jens Brockmeier (2015) proposes a narrative model to explain people's remembering and brings up how experience and narrative are also always intertwined. Binary thinking about something

⁸ SKS KIA. Ulla Antfolk's archive. Summary of the manuscript of the memoirs "Fleeing from Stalin's Shadow". 2018.

being entirely factual or complete fiction is also problematic (Moore et al., 2017, p. 21). I understand that autobiographical texts are not always the truth of what happened, but they are narrations of experiences, memories and reconstructions of people's lives. It is about self-understandings of history and narrating lives in a storied form that includes traces of one's past. Narrative research aims to study something local, personal, and subjective and thus, challenges the divide between fact and fiction and questions how knowledge is produced. It also takes notice of positionality in all knowledge production that I also touched on in chapter 4.1.

At root, through these materials, I discover what people find worth remembering, telling, and preserving from their lives. Narratives and stories are a way for people to give a meaning to their life events (Hirsjärvi et al., 2008, p. 213). The narratives of Ingrians highlight how they remember and understand their lifespans, what they believe happened, and what meanings they have given. I see these memoirs as a way in which Ingrians have told their stories and created meaning out of the chaos that was their experience of the Second World War and Stalin's Terror. Memoirs can be part of memory work for individuals. People remember their lives through storytelling and memories are just as much about the present than they are about the past (Bruner, 2001, p. 29). Memoirs include decisions on what to include, what to leave unmentioned and which events to include for others to learn about. Even though memoirs were constructed at another time, often later in life, the past and the present are not entirely separate entities (Zerubavel, 2003, p. 37). The narrator is here and now, writing the autobiographical text, describing the process and transformation of the protagonist from the past to the protagonist of today, eventually becoming one person with a shared consciousness (Bruner, 2001, pp. 27–28).

There is also a relationship between the writer and me as a reader and a researcher. Gudmundsdottir (1996) describes this process in relation to interviews, but it can be applied here too as there is the writer telling the tale and the reader who the story is being told to. I, as a reader, make observations of the texts in which Ingrians have decided what to write. The stories have been written in another time, and I interpret those meanings at another moment and in a different environment. My preconceptions and positionality influence how I read people's stories. In a way, it is a conversation between the writer and the reader, even though I am only asking questions and seeking answers in my head. Interpreting the materials involve drawing upon the structures around me as a researcher (Gudmundsdottir, 1996, p. 303). In the end, much remains untold in this thesis, and I made active decisions on what to include and what to ignore. I went through texts where individuals narrated their lives, I

reconstructed those meanings, but one can never be sure about the accuracy of these “transformations” (Ibid.) and interpretations. What researchers actually write, is only the tip of the iceberg.

The challenge of narrative research is that there is never a singular story and that there are always multiple realities. I pay attention to this even though through categorisations, the reality and variety always becomes simplified. Here, I also draw from Jackson and Piette’s (2015) ideas on existential anthropology that seeks “to capture the human presence in its manifold and elusive models of engagement” (p. 19). Instead of just focusing on the collective, I look into the nuanced layers of being a human to portray the multi-layered nature of human existence. Jackson and Piette (2015) describe how existential anthropology is aware that people do not live in stable states and with fixed identities but that they live “experimentally”, always on the move, between different narratives, worldviews and modes of being (pp. 9–10). It seeks to explore the continuity of human life, from birth to death and from situation to situation instead of just human beings right there and right now (p. 19). In this research I pay attention to individual stories and differences while also understanding the social and shared aspects of memories and narratives.

By socially constructed narratives and memories, I mean that they are produced through interactions with others and are socially situated. There is a relationship between subjectivity and collective experience, and both of them need to be taken into account. Most Ingrians share a common identity but there are also experiences and memories that cannot be classified and instead, they are multi-layered. Autobiographies are not only constructions of self but also the surrounding culture (Bruner, 2001, p. 35). Through these texts, people localise themselves in a cultural world (Brockmeier, 2015, p. ix), and memories are built in connection to oneself but also to the surroundings changing throughout time (Hellbeck, 2001, p. 345). Stories are not only manifestations of the experiences of an individual, but they are created in their social environment, and interlinked with other stories and narratives (Hyvärinen, n.d.). I focus on written narratives as collective while also taking the multidimensional aspect of human existence into account.

4.3 Phases of Analysis with the Analysis of Narratives and Thematic Content Analysis

Throughout the thesis process, I have conducted various layers and phases of analysis. The whole research process, including data collection, interpretation and writing, is a meaning-making process (Gudmundsdottir, 1996, p. 295), which is about trying to make sense of the materials. First, I dug into

the wide range of materials with no preconceived ideas, but once the themes of home and belonging began repeating, I found myself drawn into these questions. I went back to theory and realised that I could work with those concepts and themes. The first phase of analysis took already place when collecting the materials and deciding on the focus on and which materials to include. After the material collection, I divided the analysis process into two phases: first, focusing on the individual level and different trajectories, and second, on a collective level with recurring patterns.

The second layer of my analysis included going through the individual storylines and plots and getting to know each case individually to understand the narrations of each individual. The memoirs were often organised in a similar way, but the individuals' trajectories had various departure and arrival spots in different times and places. Even though, the stories were based on separate events, I considered them as a whole to deepen my understanding and seeing the narrative (Polkinghorne, 1995, pp. 5–7). Polkinghorne (1995) uses a phrase narrative configuration to describe a process in which life events are drawn together and constructed as a “temporally organized whole” meaning that narratives are organized and form a plot. I summarised each individual's trajectories and plots to find these ‘core stories’ like Virkkala (2016) has done in her research. I present them at the beginning of Chapter 5 in detail. This phase of creating the core stories faded out information but made me understand the research materials more holistically. It was an intermediate stage of my analysis, as Virkkala describes (p. 46). Through these two first steps, I gained a better overall picture of what I am dealing with.

The research materials consisted of individual plots with various events, but I noticed that they included similar patterns and storylines. In the third phase of the analysis, I focused on finding these recurring themes, patterns and narratives. People who identify with the same group may describe their lives in the same narrative form, and through these narrations individuals give meanings to the shared events and themes (Fleisher Feldman, 2001, p. 143). There were similar turning points in lifespans, and they narrated their identification related to shared events of the group, such as, forced deportations, time in exile, and the destruction of culture and language. Even though not all individuals experienced the same events, most wrote about at least a family members to whom these things happened, and thus, they positioned themselves in the shared narrative through their close ones. This is an example of narratives also portray the community, culture, and society as a whole, and that the narratives of Ingrians are at least partially shared.

The common patterns are the basis on which I started building the categorisation of the analysis chapter. Polkinghorne (1995) divides narrative analysis methods into the analysis of narratives and narrative analysis (pp. 5–6). This distinction is described in the following way:

“Two types of narrative inquiry: (a) analysis of narratives, that is studies whose data consists of narratives or stories, but whose analysis produces paradigmatic typologies or categories; and (b) narrative analysis, that is, studies whose data consists of actions, events, and happenings, but whose analysis produces stories.”

The method I use in this research is the former, the analysis of narratives, with the assistance of thematic content analysis. Through the analysis of narratives, I could focus on the meanings the writers had given to home and belonging and create themes and categorisations related these concepts. I also gained inspiration from narrative analysis when dividing the second part of the analysis into three different narratives that in a way create a plot to follow.

In this categorisation or thematization phase, I reduced sentences, paragraphs and mentions of home and belonging to more concrete categories and themes, such as “longing for Ingria”, “thinking of returning”, “feeling of not belonging”. I colour coded these different categories and themes and made mind maps on what to include and where. Through this layer of analysis, I could notice repeating patterns, categorisations, themes, but also differences between narratives. I also focused on so-called turning points in memoirs and autobiographical materials which were events that had been described to have crucially changed individuals’ life spans. Through this phase, I was able to create the division of the analysis chapter, which I present in next.

5 MULTIFACETED NARRATIONS OF HOME AND BELONGING

5.1 Introduction to Analysis: Main Characters and Core Thematic Categories

Here, I present the key findings of the research materials and the general structure and division of the analysis chapter. I examined a variety of people, places and events. I begin by presenting the seven “main characters” of my thesis and their rough trajectories in a table form below to make it easier to follow their stories. There are autobiographical texts and letters from other people as well, but these individuals’ stories are followed more thoroughly and there are more quotations from their materials.

Main Characters

<p style="text-align: center;">Ulla Antfolk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Born in Ingria in 1936 ▪ Became an orphan and a refugee when she was five years old ▪ Was evacuated to Finland with her aunt during the WWII ▪ Was adopted by a Finnish couple in Finland ▪ Hid in Finland to avoid being returned to the USSR after the WWII ▪ Found her new home in Sweden 	<p style="text-align: center;">Tellervo Korkka</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Born in Lempaala, Ingria in 1930 ▪ Stayed in various locations on her refugee journey: Vologda, Kingisepp, Klooga, Finland ... ▪ Was returned to the USSR from Finland in 1944, and was deported to Yaroslavl ▪ Lived in Soviet Karelia and Estonia for some time ▪ Altogether, 18 places of residence
<p style="text-align: center;">Armas Laurentti</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Born in Hatsina, Ingria in 1929 ▪ Spent weeks in refugee and quarantine camps in Estonia and Finland ▪ Was evacuated to Finland in 1943, and stayed there ▪ In Finland, he worked as a carpenter and started a family ▪ Was granted the Finnish citizenship in 1978 ▪ Died in Finland in 2020 	<p style="text-align: center;">Mirjam Sykijäinen and Niina Malkki</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ They are siblings ▪ Mirjam born in Skuoritsa, Ingria in 1936 and Niina in 1941 ▪ Escaped the WWII to Estonia and were evacuated to Finland in 1943 ▪ Were returned to the USSR, and deported to the Novgorod area ▪ Lived in Estonia, but were again deported, this time, to Kemi in the Soviet Karelia ▪ During perestroika, they participated in organisation work and sang in Inkere-choir

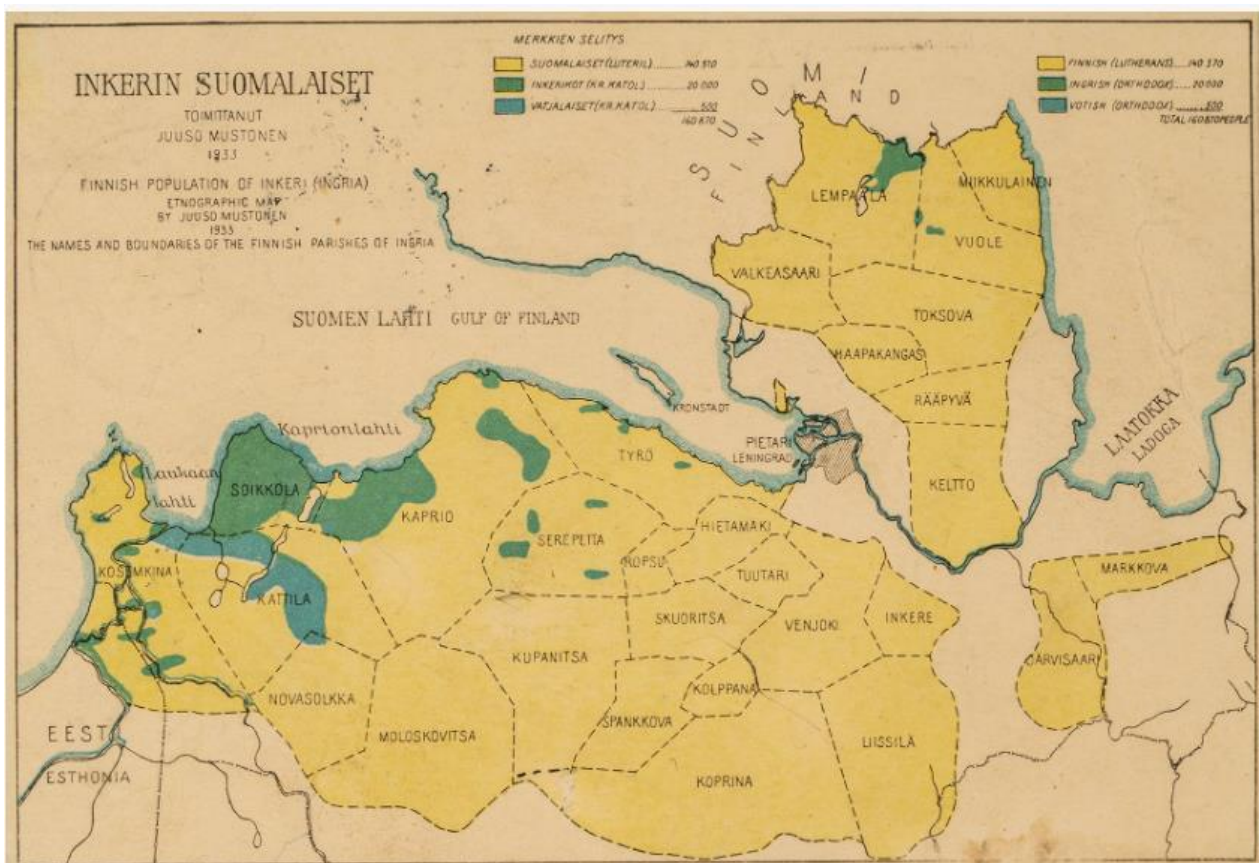
Matti Matinpoika Kähäri	Viljo Kähäri
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Born in Mustila village, Lempaala, Ingria in 1907 ▪ Had nine children, one of them being Väinö Kähäri who was born in 1929 ▪ Were deported to the Novgorod area in 1936 after which they moved to a kolkhoz in Mga in Leningrad Oblast ▪ When Germany occupied Ingria, the family escaped to Tartu, Estonia in 1942 and Finland in 1943 ▪ In 1945, the family escaped from Finland to Sweden ▪ Died in Sweden in 1977 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Born in Lempaala, Ingria in 1909 ▪ Matti Kähäri's brother ▪ Was deported from Ingria in 1935 ▪ Died in 1988

In the analysis phase, I first looked into each 'case' and investigated their trajectories of which I show six examples in the table above. Altogether, the research materials have been written or donated by approximately 26 people. The individuals were born between 1897 and 1950, but most of those people who had written their memoirs were born between 1920s-1940s. The materials have been written by people who suffered from conflict-induced displacement and war first-hand. Deportations and evacuations were often a shared experience between women, children, and the elderly, because men were often imprisoned or in the army (Reuter, 2020, p. 46), which most likely is the reason why there are not so many donated memoirs or texts written by men. Those written by men, are often focusing on their childhood experiences during the war, such as in Armas Laurentti's and Väinö Kähäri's cases. This master's thesis also looks into how those who were children during the Second World War look back to their experiences amid war and displacement.

The group of people I am researching includes diverse trajectories. Out of all individuals, only one was not born in Ingria but instead in the Soviet Karelia. The map below shows the parishes in Ingria 1933 which can help to locate main characters' birth places and other localities in Ingria that are mentioned in the quotations. Hatsina is located in the middle of Skuoritsa, Venjoki and Kolppana. Most people ended up in Finland either in the 1940s through evacuations or in the 1990s when the returning migration began. There were also at least four individuals who ended up in Sweden, one who ended up back in Ingria and one of whom there was no information after living in exile in

Kazakhstan. The trajectories varied in their length and the amount of places, too. For example, Tellervo Korkka mentioned 18 different places of residence altogether and Armas Laurentti was evacuated straight from Ingria to Finland without other places of residence other than short periods at refugee and quarantine camps. Out of those who were in Finland during the Second World War, five were deported back to the Soviet Union, and the rest hid and stayed in Finland or fled to Sweden. Liidia Petäjä's unusual trajectory includes time in Nazi Germany during the Second World War. What connects most of the individuals is that they either found their so-called final destinations in Sweden or they returned to Finland from Estonia or Russia in the beginning of 1990s as part of the returning migration.

Figure: A map with names of Ingrian parishes from 1933. The yellow areas were dominantly Finnish (Lutheran). SKS archives, Kuortti family archive. Map drawn by Juuso Mustonen in 1933, retrieved from <https://inkerilaiset.finlit.fi/inkerinmaan-historia/inkerikot-ja-vatjalaiset>

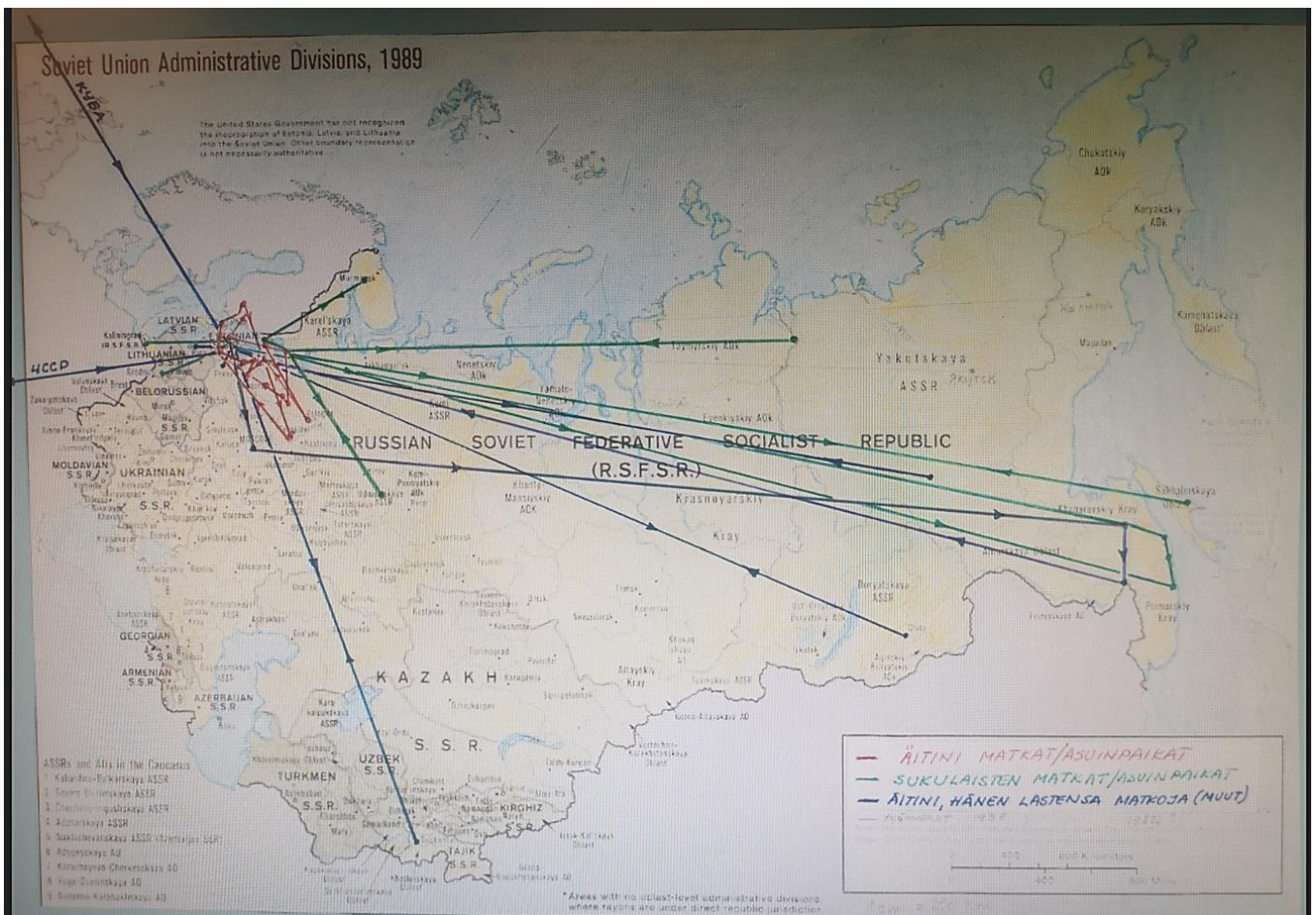


Below is an example of the trajectories of Tellervo's⁹ family that she has drawn on a map. In red, one

⁹ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka's archive. "Here are things that come to my mind" -scrapbook.

can see Tellervo's own trajectory and in green and blue different relatives' trajectories and places of residence. There were differences in what happened to each family member as Ingrians were shattered in a diaspora. Tellervo Korkka brings up a conversation when, after the war, she had the chance to sit together in the same barrack with her relatives who had a differing fate:

“In the evenings, we shared our life stories – we about our own adventures in Finland and Estonia and they about their life in Udmurtia. We were praising our lives in Finland and Estonia to which the cousins remarked that, ‘Why did you come back then?’. We became silent and had nothing to say. They told about their journey through ‘the Road of Life’ to Udmurtia.”¹⁰



Most people wrote how they had been kept in labour and prison camps, detention centres, prisons, quarantine camps, etc. in various locations and countries besides their exile places and other places of residence. Living under “someone else’s roof”, sharing their living space with other nationalities and families was common. People stayed temporarily in, for example, Chelyabinsk in Russia, Kazakhstan, Klooga in Estonia, Hanko, Miehikkälä and Lohja in Finland, Tartu prison camp in Estonia

¹⁰ Ibid.

and Willeroode in Germany. They describe having shared their living spaces, whether in barracks, classrooms, or same houses, with, for example, Russians, Ukrainians, Germans, Karelians, Latvians and Estonians.

This group of people I am researching represents the Ingrian diaspora relatively well even though attention must, once again, be paid to the fact that, eventually, most of these individuals ended up in Finland or Sweden. There is a lack of materials from those who stayed in “the post-Soviet space”. Either way, this research is widening the common narrative of Ingrians and pays attention to different trajectories and fates of individuals. For example, not everyone had those experiences of deportations to Siberia and Central Asia even though they are part of Ingrians’ collective memory and, I would argue, a cultural trauma for the Ingrian diaspora.

In the memoirs, writers interestingly portrayed changes in their thoughts and values and perceptions of the surrounding societies and war. For example, in Tellervo’s memorial scrapbook ¹¹, one can see how her thinking changes from admiring Germans and Mannerheim to the post-war shame and guilt in Finland. During her years in Finland her thoughts around war changed, and she began pondering whether Germans were so good after all. She also started questioning her belonging and longed for her home and family in the Soviet Union.

There are two clear ways in which people call themselves in the written materials: either as Ingrians (*inkeriläinen*) or Finns (*suomalainen*). Only one person exclusively uses the term Ingrian Finn (*inkerinsuomalainen*). This confirms my decision of sticking with Ingrian as the word to describe these individuals. This emphasis is likely due to the generation to which most writers belong as Miettinen (2004) discovered from those who moved to Finland in the 1990s that they often considered themselves Finns and calling them Ingrians or Ingrian Finns was described to feel like someone was stealing their Finnish identity (p. 432). The alienation from the term Ingrian took place during the Soviet times, but the group I am researching mostly belong to an older generation and have preferred the term Ingrian in their written materials. In the quotations, I directly translate the terms as there were some exceptions too.

¹¹ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. Memorial scrapbook about life in Finland in the beginning of the 1940s illustrated by Tellervo Korkka.

The persons in this research mostly belong to the *exiled and marginalised generation* and *return and cold coexistence generation* as was put together by Teinonen (1999). The former generation can remember the effects of collectivisation, ethnic cleansing, exile and difficulties awaiting them on their return. The ones belonging to the latter, have constructed their identities on different grounds, as some of them were born outside of Ingria or were very young during those events. Only few of them had personal experiences of the old rural Ingrian culture, and most of the traditions and identity consist of what their parents had told them. Between these two generations, the roles of religion, language and culture changed during the Soviet rule. (pp. 118–123.)

In these written texts, Ingrians have constructed their identities, and created bonds, but also boundaries, with other groups. There are some antagonistic descriptions, especially of Russians and Germans. For example, Armas brings up tensions, and even physical fights, that occurred between Finns and Russians in Ingria. There are also mentions from various individuals of how Russians called them Chukhnas¹². There were also descriptions about “clean and tidy” Finns and “dirty and careless” Russians. This stereotype of Russians and keeping a distance to it was a way to reinforce their Finnishness. There were also mentions of “mean and animal-like” German soldiers who stole Ingrians’ properties and animals. Yet, there was also space for self-criticism. For example, Viljo Kähäri writes:

*“My father spent a lot of time with Russians, worked with and was in many other kinds of situations with them. When discussing questions regarding nationality with our neighbours, he usually said “you can always get along with Russians, but with us, the stubborn ones, it can often be difficult”.”*¹³

Most people describe how sharing their living space and daily lives with other nationalities was never a problem. For example, there was a description of living on the same island with Russians, Tatars, Karelians, Ukrainians and Finns, and understanding how all of them had been deported from their original homes. Most of the critique is directed towards the governmental officials, kolkhoz or sovkhos chairmen, the soldiers of the Red or the German Army, and Finnish communists instead of “the ordinary people”. Ingrians write how all of these groups suffered from the wider societal issues, displacement, and poverty. Niina and Mirjam¹⁴ also write how distrust and negative attitudes towards

¹² Чухна (Chukhna), is a derogatory word for Finnic peoples like Finns, Estonians, Karelians and Ingrians. Today, it is considered an ethnic slur.

¹³ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. Viljo Kähäri’s memoir manuscript.

¹⁴ SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union (“Our family story”).

Ingrians came from the rulers instead of the ordinary people with whom, regardless of their nationality, there were no issues.

Some Ingrians differentiated themselves from Finns even though there were connections and similarities. Especially those who were evacuated to Finland during the Second World War, mentioned differences in the ways in which farm work was done, celebrations, daily lives and also, language. For example, *mämmi*¹⁵ was something completely new to Ingrians when they arrived in Finland. Armas Laurentti¹⁶ writes that when he arrived at the quarantine camp in Finland, the local officials had difficulties with Ingrian names. They did not know how to pronounce or write some of the surnames as they included letters that were missing in the Finnish language. He recalls that this was a reason why many Ingrians changed their surnames when arriving in Finland. These examples show how Ingrians brought up differences between the “Finnish Finns” and themselves. Generally, in Russia, Ingrians identified as Finns, and they were stated as Finns in their passports, *propiskas* and other official documents. The nationality marked in their passport also played a role in their identity construction (Miettinen, 2004, p. 412). Some differences emerged once arriving in Finland meanwhile in Ingria the focus had been on the similarities and connections with Finland.

After perceiving the individual stories and trajectories and constructing a general picture of the group, I dug deeper to investigate the recurring patterns while paying attention to the temporal, societal and cultural dimensions (Jansen & Löfving, 2009, pp. 14–15) as well as the contradicting narratives even within an individual. I noticed how Ingrians constructed their life stories and narratives in relation to their societal surroundings, and that were these turning points that were described to have “changed everything”. There were shared descriptions about the same societal events and changes that affected Ingrians’ daily lives and being in this world. The first part of my analysis focuses on these societal factors that either positively or negatively affected the meanings Ingrians gave to their home and belonging. I explore how societal changes, political decisions and amendments to law produced displacement and were narrated as having affected Ingrians’ belonging and homemaking possibilities.

In the second part of the analysis, I focus on three core thematic narratives related to home and belonging that I observed. Fundamentally, questions of home and belonging are related to memories of war and displacement that are researched in peace and conflict studies. In the memoirs, writers narrate

¹⁵ Mämmi is a traditional Finnish dessert eaten around the Easter season.

¹⁶ SKS KIA. Armas Laurentti’s archive. ”Arska’s memoirs” -memoir script.

their diasporic experiences throughout their lifespans. Often, they begin their stories in a Finnish-speaking community and village in Ingria. Then comes the destruction and terror, and there is either a possibility to evacuate to Finland and/or forced exile. Most of the memoirs end in a new place, the so-called final destination. The longing for Ingria often stayed, but there were also possibilities to construct a stable life someplace else. This structure was repeated in most of the memoirs which is why I understand these memoirs as shared and social map-like structures (Zerubavel, 2003, pp. 1–2), that begin and end in a somewhat similar way. It is a way in which Ingrians as a community remember their past. These memoirs reinforce Zerubavel's (2003) argument that some recollections are remembered and commonly shared by the entire group, and that people tend to follow these *social norms of remembrance*; norms of what should be remembered (pp. 2–5). Some memoirs focus more on certain events than others as the trajectories varied, but on a general level, most of them followed a similar structure and plot.

The first core thematic narrative focuses on *rootedness* in Ingria and the ancestral land Finland. First of all, Ingrians' memoirs often begin in Ingria. There are narrations of connectedness to Finland, but also contradictions. The second narrative focuses on what I call *endless roaming*. Ingrians narrate their struggles of being homeless and on this endless journey searching for safety and comfort in their lives. The third, and the final, core narrative is about finding, constructing, or building a new home elsewhere. The focus is on the *forward-looking practices* of home and belonging. These places may be temporary home-like residences in exile or more permanent locations later in life. I explore how Ingrians narrated these new places and how they constructed their belonging in those places.

Evidently, these three narratives that construct a storyline from a beginning in Ingria to an end in often another destination, are simplified core narratives and they can overlap. They are narrations of home and belonging in different times and places. For example, one person might simultaneously feel rootedness in Ingria but still highlight their experience of building a new home somewhere else. These notions also changed within individuals through time. For example, a considerable part of Matti Kähäri's memoirs¹⁷ focuses on the journey searching for home, but he also described rootedness to certain places. To conclude, these categories do not cross each other out, but are the main narratives through which Ingrians collectively formed a story about their lives.

¹⁷ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. "Matti Matinpoika Kähäri's memoirs", Matti Kähäri's memoir manuscript.

5.2 The Impacts of Societal Changes and Events on Home and Belonging

In this part of the analysis, I look into Ingrians' narrations of certain events and societal changes and how they were narrated as the turning points in Ingrians' lives. As I showed in the theoretical framework of this thesis, political and societal factors affect people's possibilities of homemaking and sense of belonging. Home is not only a private matter, but it is inscribed in societal structures – through, for example, laws, institutions and everyday life arrangements (Kingumets, 2022, pp. 72–73). Belonging is also controlled by political decision-making and the surrounding societal structures. Having to leave your home and becoming displaced, is not “simply a physical movement across space but also involves transformations in the political, social and economic practises through which people are related to place” (Kelly, 2009, p. 26). The physical aspects of home and a place do not always change, but what happens around those places influences the meanings that individuals give to home and belonging.

I distinguish the Bolsheviks' rise to power, the collectivisation, the beginning of the Second World War and the Great Terror that led to Ingrians' displacement and persecution, and the 101-kilometre rule as events that have been narrated having negatively impacted Ingrians' homemaking possibilities and sense of belonging. These changes brought uncertainty, feelings of outsidership and not being accepted by the surrounding society. On the contrary, Stalin's death and perestroika were narrated as changes that enabled new possibilities for homemaking and (re-)created a sense of belonging. These events were described as having brought hope of returning to Ingria and enabling a secure feeling in a place from which one could start rebuilding their lives. Evacuation time in Finland and later, return to the USSR were narrated in a contradictory way. I present these changes and events more or less in a chronological order, even though collectivisation and Stalin's terror overlapped. I follow the structure that also many memoirs had, beginning from the Bolsheviks' rise to power and ending in perestroika and the collapse of the USSR.

5.2.1 Bolsheviks' Rise to Power and Collectivisation

The social, economic and political changes following the Russian Revolution in 1917 influenced Ingrians lives in many ways and raised questions of Ingria's possible autonomy or unification with Finland. The centre of the revolution and the civil war took place in St. Petersburg, locating between northern and southern Ingria and its effects were seen and felt concretely. Ingrians narrated

Bolsheviks' rise to power as a hardship and Viljo¹⁸ writes that especially those who lived close to the Finnish border suffered from it. Houses and villages became empty as some people moved to Finland as refugees, one being his father, and innocent people were arrested and imprisoned, his mother being one of them. Like Viljo, Niina and Mirjam also narrate the revolution and Bolsheviks' rise to power as the arrival of fear, imprisonments and restrictions:

*“The events of 1917 revolutionised the whole life. The fear came, and the deportations and imprisonments began. The church and the state were divided. There were restrictions on church life, and later on, it was completely banned. Private property became people’s property ... The farms were redistributed, and the farm products were forcibly taken away. ... Ingrian newspapers were banned. 1917-1921 were the years of war communism.”*¹⁹

Instead of only being a political and a social revolution, it revolutionised individuals' everyday lives. The events affected the sense of security for Ingrians, as they began fearing imprisonment and displacement. Church activities, being able to practice one's religion and farm work were crucial for Ingrians' daily lives, and this was a time when practically Ingrians' way of life was banned. During this early Soviet period, the private experiences of everyday life began to be in conflict with the ideal collective and public nature of the Soviet everyday life (Kiaer & Naiman, 2006, p. 1) which also affected people's sense of belonging and safety.

As Niina and Mirjam describe, through collectivisation, what once was considered private became shared and controlled. Collectivisation and forming of kolkhozes and sovkhoses took place in the 1930s and it was an effort to “bring a backward, peasant-based population up to speed” and modernise the population in the Soviet Union through control on their private lives (Kiaer & Naiman, 2005, pp. 4–5). It has been narrated as having destroyed Ingrians' way of life as it ended many Ingrians' freedom of choice. In the drawing below, Tellervo²⁰ memorises the time of forming the kolkhozes. She depicts how her aunt's expulsion to Murmansk Oblast and having to leave her smaller child to his godparents. There are also other people boarding the cattle wagons and beginning their journeys to exile. The time of collectivisation was also a time of deportations.

¹⁸ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. Viljo Kähäri's memoir manuscript. Typed out by his daughter Aili Salmela.

¹⁹ SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union (“Our family story”). Written by Niina Malkki and Mirjam Sykijäinen.

²⁰ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka's archive. “Here are things that come to my mind” -scrapbook. The text below the drawing: “*The time of forming the kolkhozes. Aunt Lyyti's expulsion to Hiipinä (Murmansk Oblast). She is handing out smaller children to godparents. My mother is taking the little boy.*”



Anna Junus wrote about her experiences of collectivisation to her son Paavo Junus in a letter sent on 27th of October 1933:

“Dear son, I am very pleased to write to you about the situation at home. I wanted to write to you a thousand times but did not have the courage to do it. Now my heart is pounding with happiness and longing. Our lives are tiring now. We only have one cow and do not know for how long. Last year we bought feed for animals with 1000 Roubles. Now we do not have hope to do that. Where to buy from when all the people are in kolkhozes? We do not have a place to buy from, and there is nothing to sell. If you do not have a cow, you are in trouble. I know it is not joyful to read this letter, but you will know how we poor ones are living and how they have taken almost everything from us. Only the main room and sauna are left for us ... Well, in this way, we must continue our lives. There have been many meetings and about two years ago they accused us of being kulaks. It was such a storm; I was only hoping not to lose my mind.”²¹

²¹ SKS KIA. Junus family archive. A letter from Anna Junus to Paavo Junus on 27th of October 1933.

Anna describes how she did not have courage to write before and how, due to collectivisation their lives had become challenging. The situation with farming and cattle is described as difficult and one needs to find new ways of survival. She also writes about the accusations of being a kulak and describes it as something that challenged her mental health. Being accused of being a kulak created pressure and challenged Ingrians' sense of belonging as they were stigmatised in the Soviet society. It created antagonism between groups, but also within groups. However, it gave a ground for Ingrians to emphasise their Finnishness and resist at least in the private sphere. Later, in 1934, Anna moved to Finland and in 1948, escaped to Sweden. Her son Paavo had already been in Finland since 1920.

Most of the memoirs bring up reluctance and even resistance to join kolkhozes. Ingrians opposed collectivisation because farming was crucial for being able to cope economically and survive (Reuter, 2019, p. 151) but people tried to find other jobs than farming. There were also other ways to resist and not join the kolkhozes. Viljo²² describes that if there were single men or women still living at home with their parents, they officially became different "households" by moving into a backyard building. This way, each household could keep a cow and have more land for farming. Through this arrangement and rule bending, Ingrians opposed the collectivisation at least for some time. In 1930, the first mass deportation from their village Mustila, in Lempaala Parish, took place, and Viljo joined the kolkhoz reluctantly in 1931. Viljo's brother Matti describes how it was the collective fear that led to the majority of village joining the kolkhoz:

*"We were invited to a selsoviet meeting. There was an unfamiliar speaker, who requested us to form a kolkhoz and join it in masses. 'You won't be taken anywhere from kolkhoz'. Horses and tools need to be collectivised. You may keep one cow – the rest must be collectivised. All the farms and fields are shared ... Because people were afraid to be deported, around 80 % of the village joined."*²³

In Aino Meronen's life, collectivisation occurred when she was five years old:

*"For Aino's father, this (collectivisation) was a tough spot, and he refused to join the kolkhoz and found a job elsewhere. This was a reason to be on the blacklist to which unwanted citizens ended up in. One night, armed men picked up Aadam, who was only wearing nightwear, from home and took him to a car. The same night, 25 men and a woman were taken away from our village."*²⁴

²² SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. Viljo Kähäri's memoir manuscript. Typed out by his daughter Aili Salmela.

²³ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. Matti Kähäri's memoir manuscript.

²⁴ SKS KIA. Aino Meronen's archive. "My Ingrian Finnish mother's family story" -biography. Written by Aino's daughter Niina Parkkinen.

As shown above, those Ingrians refusing to join kolkhozes became even more “unwanted” in the Soviet society which led to more forced deportations, imprisonments and disappearances.

Many joined kolkhozes and sovkhoses out of fear as they thought it was the last and only possibility in which they could stay in their home villages instead of being deported. For some, it was a strategy to stay in Ingria. Even though one had to change their way of living, they could stay in a place that they considered their homeland. In reality, Matti, as well as countless others, were ultimately deported or evacuated from Ingria, regardless of their position. When he was condemned as kulak by the selsoviet, he contemplated the issue and the options he had:

“That evening I went through my whole life. I weighed all the possibilities. Bite a finger – it hurts, bite another, it also hurts. To leave your home – you would need money. There is nothing to sell, only one cow and a couple of sacks of potatoes. Now that I don’t have civil rights, they could even ‘collectivise’ the only cow I own without giving a devil’s shit. I also have such a big family. Five children. The oldest is 6 years old, and the youngest is only three months. All of us are kulaks, all of us must leave.”²⁵

These early Soviet economic policies brought a change into Ingrians’ lives and homes. Moving to the centralised state planning created food shortages, hardship, discomfort and inconvenience (Fitzpatrick, 1999, p. 2) for many groups in the in the USSR. Suni (2000) argues that, through collectivisation Ingrian peasants lost their homeland (p. 84). This becomes apparent in Ingrians’ narrations. I argue that Ingrians already became symbolically displaced when these vast societal, economic and political changes occurred, even though some still lived in their homeland. Displacement does not always require movement and just the feeling of insecurity, whilst staying still is enough to feel displaced (Kelly, 2009, p. 37). Even though many Ingrians complied with the collectivisation eventually, it was not enough to stay in their homeland. Bolsheviks’ rise to power and collectivisation was narrated having changed their way of living, brought uncertainty, scarcity and fear into their lives. Their homes were narrated as “forever changed” in comparison with the previous descriptions of their lives in Ingria during times of peace. The Second World War and the Great Terror led to new vast changes and brought more troubles which I turn to next.

5.2.2 Disruption by the Great Terror and the WWII

The 1930s, and especially the year 1938, brought changes that continued disrupting the daily lives of Ingrians. Russian language became the official language in schools, the schooling systems of national

²⁵ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. Matti Kähäri’s memoir manuscript.

minorities and cultural institutions like theatres and newspapers were closed down (Vihavainen, 2000b, p. 36). The Bolshevik ideology was officially atheist (Merridale, 1999, p. 67), which first, put pressure on practicing religion and later, was completely banned. Paradoxically, Ingrian nationalism grew because of Stalinism (Huttunen, 2002, p. 253), and the importance of Lutheran religion, Finnish language, and Ingrian/Finnish identity became stronger than before, but in these times, they were practiced secretly inside the walls of their homes.

During Stalin's reign, being a peasant, religious and Finnish had become counterculture in the Soviet Union. In the memoirs and letters, one can see how Ingrians resisted these changes that took place during Stalin's rule. Reuter (2019) conceptualises Ingrians' actions as silent resistance because it existed, but it was often non-public due to the fear of being punished (p. 134). Yet, what happened in the private sphere, people's homes, is relevant. In those spaces, families made decisions on what language to speak and teach to their children, which practices to follow in their everyday life and how to preserve religion and Ingrianness, whatever it meant for each individual. Ingrians describe having kept and hid Bibles and hymn books, celebrated Christmas, put up decorations and Christmas trees, spoken Finnish secretly inside their homes and listened to the Finnish radio. Niina and Mirjam describe the role of religion in their lives and how Ingrians collectively hid their Christmas celebrations from the surrounding society and party officials in their home village:

“Our parents were religious. It was self-evident. In tough times, religion was the only consolation. Religious celebrations like Christmas, Easter, Whitsun and Midsummer were always celebrated even though it was forbidden. Father told us that in the 1930s, you could not have a Christmas tree at home. You would get a punishment for it. ‘Komsomols’ went from one house to another, checking if there were any decorated Christmas trees. In the village, there was this secret practice. A boy was running from house to house in front of the Komsomols, letting people know that they were coming. Then, the Christmas trees were secretly hidden in the cowsheds.”²⁶

Some describe how as children they were confused about the contradictions between what happened in their homes and what was accepted by the surrounding society. Väinö brings up the inconsistencies he noticed in the perceptions of communism and Lenin:

“I think it was May Day when the schoolchildren were sent to march around the village and sing songs praising communism and the great teacher Lenin ... Some had red flags, they were singing in Finnish and shouting slogans too ... I had big questions in my head because things were so contradictory ... In church, we were praising God that is in heaven, and my father and mother were singing hymns at

²⁶ SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union (“Our family story”). Written by Niina Malkki and Mirjam Sykijäinen.

*home in the evenings ... I asked, "who is greater God or Lenin?", "Dear son, God is the greatest, Lenin is nothing compared to God, nothing", answered mum."*²⁷

What happened inside Ingrians' homes was not discussed outside. For example, he writes:

"Only at home, behind locked doors, with your family, you could be at peace. Also, the windows were blacked out ... We had to be like we did not see or hear anything that was happening around us. In that way, they let you be. People were horrified of the constant threat and fear of imprisonment. Father and mother forbid us to talk about anything that we talked about inside our home."

Aino Meronen narrates how she was also told not to speak about what happens inside their home:

*"We children could not understand why our parents told us not to tell others what happens inside our home. I remember that during Christmas the windows were covered by blankets, so that people couldn't see the candlelight from our house ... Mother had smuggled a hymn book from Finland, that I secretly touched and admired, but I didn't have the courage to ask my parents about the book. We were kept away from the religion even though there were Lutheran values in our upbringing."*²⁸

These two examples from Väinö and Aino's lives show how there were differences in the upbringing. Väinö was taught about the religion, and he observed the contradictions more clearly, and Aino mentions how she noticed the Lutheran values in their upbringing, but how their parents kept the children away from religion. Sometimes the practices were kept hidden from children even inside their homes. Both brought up the silence and having to hide what happened inside their homes. Niina and Mirjam also write how their parents hid things from them. The examples show how some parents practised religion secretly from their children out of fear. However, even in the middle of the secrecy, they describe moments where they could not keep silent:

*"We thought that all the persecution, moving from one place to another and hardships were just part of our lives, and it was supposed to be like that. We did not know of life other than that. Our parents never told us anything at home and never complained. They were afraid. But sometimes they couldn't keep it to themselves, and they voiced their opinions. These moments were imprinted into our memories. For some reason, we knew we were not supposed to tell anyone or anywhere what happened inside our home, what was said or done. It would have been dangerous."*²⁹

²⁷ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. "Pieni matkamies vaan", Väinö Kähäri's memoir manuscript.

²⁸ SKS KIA. Aino Meronen's archive. "My Ingrian Finnish mother's family story" -biography. Written by Aino's daughter Niina Parkkinen.

²⁹ SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union ("Our family story"). Written by Niina Malkki and Mirjam Sykijäinen.

Mirjam and Niina also describe how, during their exile time in Karelia, their parents went to their American Finnish³⁰ neighbours' house to secretly listen to religious services and news from Finland on Sundays. Their parents never told what they heard on the radio, as it was dangerous. Hiding religious practices from one's children is most likely related to Merridale's (1999) description of how the enforced abandonment of religion was a major social catastrophe in the Soviet Union. She notes how it was simultaneously a time of widespread violence and persecution. (p. 66.) Most likely, the parents were not willing to pass practices and customs that could have led to their children experiencing similar persecution due to their customs and beliefs. In some situation it was better to keep silent. Ingrians' homes were simultaneously places of resistance, where religion, celebrations and Finnish language were practiced, but also places of fear and silence, where things were kept private and hidden in the 1930s.

I argue that what happens inside individuals' minds, remembering and thinking instead of forgetting and ignoring, is also a way of resistance. Matti remembers an Ingrian saying, "*Think, but be silent!*". He got this advice numerous times in his life and tried to follow it. Even though from the outside one would not necessarily notice anything, they would still remember who they are and where they came from. When resistance was practiced publicly, Matti describes an instance where things did not end well:

*"When I was going to vote in the (selsoviet) elections, my neighbour warned me not to make any extra markings on the ballot. 'Is it that dangerous?', I asked. 'For sure', he responded. Not that far away from here, one Ingrian boy wrote 'Fuck you, horseshit!' in the ballot's corner, put it in the envelope and closed it with glue. Then he went to a neighbouring village and came back home the next day. There was a person from the GPU already waiting for him. He took all the documents away from him and said, 'you are imprisoned'."*³¹

When Ingrians broke the silence outside the walls of their homes, they got punished, whether it was detention at school for speaking Finnish or imprisonment. The fear of punishment kept most Ingrians silent. In such times, what happened behind closed doors was resistance to what was happening on a societal level. There were instances where parents practiced religion and prayed quietly in the bedrooms, but there were also things that the children noticed and knew they could tell no one. Many children also learnt the Finnish language despite the restrictions on the schooling system. These contradictions between the surrounding society and what happened at home influenced Ingrian children's

³⁰ Due to the Great Repression in the USA in the 1930s, about 6 500 American Finns moved to the Soviet Union, mostly to Soviet Karelia, many of whom were decimated in the purges (See Takala, 2021; Golubev & Takala, 2014).

³¹ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. Matti Kähäri's memoir manuscript.

identity construction, as well as their sense of belonging. The schooling system and the Soviet society were trying to create a shared identity, an idealised Soviet person who was expected to “love work and his/her motherland, have a high sense of public duty, sacrifice individual desires for the benefit of the collective, be fearless, intolerant towards the enemies of communism, loyal to the state, and devoted to the cause of building communism” (Sharafutdinova, 2019, p. 173). What happened inside Ingrians’ homes was the opposite as there was explicit critique towards communism and the Soviet state, or out of fear, there was silence around who they were. Barely anyone wrote positively about the policies in the USSR during Stalin’s reign.

During Stalin’s reign, Ingrians forcibly moved away from their homeland by the decisions that the government made, including the three waves of deportations. Reuter (2022) brings up how experiences of deportations and terror were commonly shared in the USSR, but it could not be openly spoken about. She emphasises how the silence was only broken with whispers amongst the trusted people. There were also letters written between family members where one could read about the reality between the lines. (p. 79.) The beginning of the forced deportations is often narrated as disappearances of neighbours and family members. Matti describes how it all began when in late winter of 1931, six families were taken away from his village and deported to Murmansk Oblast. He also writes how his uncle and family friends were deported to Kazakhstan, which often meant death:

*“One night, the GPU imprisoned men of our family friends. Families got a command to get ready for a journey ... Wouldn’t there have been a graveyard closer than on the steppes of Kazakhstan? Most died in a few months. Poor uncle. You did not have luck to share life with your family. And now, once you are older, you have been collectivised from a possibility of dying in the same place with them.”*³²

Even though the deportations should be understood as forced displacement and most individuals did not have an active role in deciding where to live, memoirs prove that they at least considered different options. Often times Ingrians have been depicted as victims with no agency, but there was strong resistance (Reuter, 2019, p. 157) and people weighed different options even though usually there were no other possibilities. Viljo writes about his deportation day from Ingria:

*“The gloomy caravan left towards the church. Pappila had become a less pleasant place. Many times, we had travelled the same road to a Christmas church at dawn, in completely different mood than now ... We passed the graveyard with gloomy thoughts. Many of us would have probably preferred to be there than in this group.”*³³

³² SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. Matti Kähäri’s memoir manuscript.

³³ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. Viljo Kähäri’s memoir manuscript. Typed out by his daughter Aili Salmela.

What once used to be a joyful road to the village centre had become “the gloomy caravan” to a place unknown. The deportation brought even suicidal thoughts, and as Viljo supposes, many would have rather been in the soil of their homeland than in the group being deported. The emotional ties to the soil are symbolically important and can act as evidence of loyalty to a certain land and people who die elsewhere are often transported back to their “homelands” as Malkki argues (1992, pp. 26–27). When being in other places, people also write how they missed their relatives buried elsewhere.

Ingrians write widely about Stalin in their memoirs, and their struggles are often personified in him. His rule was narrated as the root cause of their displacement, deportations and suffering. Thus, the narrations about the USSR depend on the ruler and time period. Some Ingrians describe the time under Lenin’s rule as considerably peaceful, at least when comparing to Stalin. In the following quotation, Viljo brings up a concrete example of how life changed between Lenin and Stalin’s rule:

*“I remember when in 1924 or 1925 there was a (Russian) border guard lieutenant living in our house with his family. Once, when the lieutenant came back from his round, he enthusiastically told my father about his experience. He had met Finnish border guards with whom they tried to have a conversation, but they did not understand each other, so they exchanged cigarettes as a symbol of friendship. The lieutenant was from Arkhangelsk, very friendly, fair-minded and honest person working for the Soviet army. It would have never come to his mind to betray his country and nation. Four or five years after, this encounter would have been a horrible crime. A Russian border guard trying to have a conversation with a border guard from a capitalist country. Here you could notice the difference between the Lenin’s system and the harsh system of Stalin.”*³⁴

The Soviet Union’s perceptions of Finland as capitalist and fascist enemy increased as the Second World War, and the Winter War³⁵ as part of it, was approaching. The Second World War began in 1939, and in summer 1941, it became a reality in Ingria too. Ingrians narrate their memories of German soldiers arriving and occupying their villages and homes. Tellervo writes:

*“I will never forget that day. On 22nd of June 1941, the Great War began. Germans poured in like a flash and were at the gates of Leningrad. We had been convinced that the enemy would not get close to Leningrad. ... On 11th of September 1941, they occupied our village.”*³⁶

³⁴ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. Viljo Kähäri’s memoir manuscript. Typed out by his daughter Aili Salmela.

³⁵ The Winter War (1939-1940) or in Russian the Soviet-Finnish War (Советско-финляндская война), was a war between the Soviet Union and Finland that began three months after the outbreak of WWII.

³⁶ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. Memorial scrapbook about life in Finland in the beginning of the 1940s.

Niina and Mirjam³⁷ write that in September 1941 they shared their home with German soldiers and narrate it as a time period defined by hunger, difficulties and fear. Many were forced to leave their homes as Liidia Petäjä writes:

*“I was almost three years old when the Second World War began. Already in September 1941, our home area was occupied by the Germans. Constant bombing, hunger and death were surrounding us. The Germans occupied our house too and forced us out of there, threatening us by death. We became homeless. We were wandering long distances, lived in our relatives’ homes from one village to another, only hunger followed us.”*³⁸

To conclude, the Second World War and the Great Terror were narrated as time of uncertainty, fear and forced deportations. These changes first, symbolically, and second, concretely and physically moved Ingrians away from their homeland and changed their home villages into unrecognisable places where one could not practice their religion or go to a Finnish-speaking school. Crucial building blocks of Ingrians’ identity were destroyed or had to be hidden, and the last straw was when they had to leave their homes and homeland through series of mass deportations, which led to them becoming a diaspora.

5.2.3 Evacuation Time in Finland and Returns to the Soviet Union

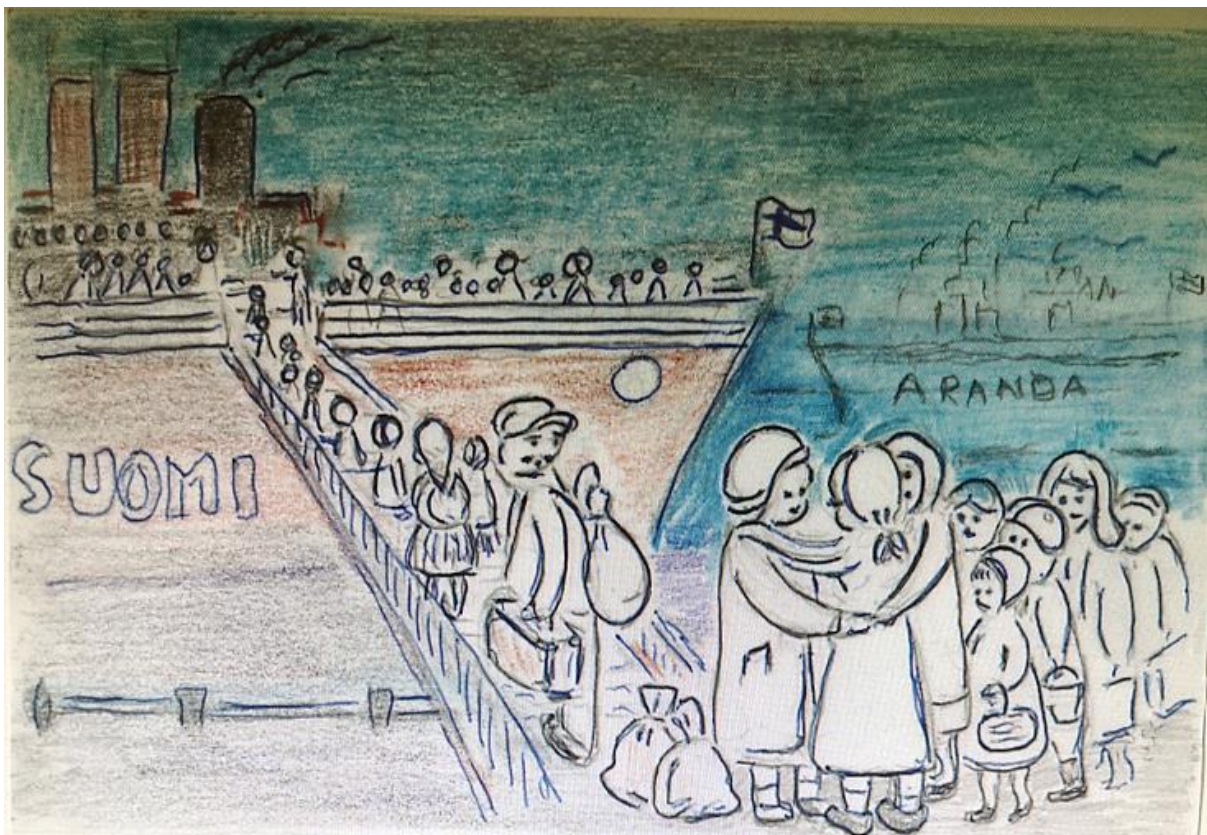
In this part, I examine how the evacuation time in Finland and the returns to the USSR were narrated in Ingrians’ materials. Most Ingrians who lived in German-occupied territory during the Second World War, were evacuated to Finland in 1943–1944. The evacuations were narrated as something that enabled Ingrians to construct a new home, or at least get a new “chance at life”, and some narrated arrival in Finland as a return to their ancestral land. The narrations portray hope and excitement, and for many, happy childhood memories in Finland. However, Ingrians’ sense of belonging is narrated in a complex and multi-layered way as it was contested in Finland. People missed Ingria and their family members living on the other side of the border which led to thoughts about returning to Ingria. Ingrians felt connectedness to Finland, their ancestral land, but they simultaneously noticed differences, and narrated Ingria as their “true homeland”. When the war ended, the fear did not step aside because the possible (forced) returns to the USSR became evident. Ingrians staying in Finland had to decide whether to hide, escape to Sweden or return.

³⁷ SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union (“Our family story”). Written by Niina Malkki and Mirjam Sykijäinen.

³⁸ SKS KIA. Rappu family archive. Liidia Petäjä’s memoir script.

Upon leaving, the adults were worrying about the luggage, but instead, Armas and other children wondered what Finland was like. Everyone had some kind of perception of Finland, but many of them were quite vague. In Armas' mind, Finland was different from Ingria:

*“We little boys did not worry about how to get all of our luggage to the harbour. Rather, we were wondering what Finland was like as a country. We all had our ideas about Finland that were mostly based on what the men who returned from the Winter War had told us. My preconception was based on workers in our kolkhoz who used to work in Finland ... They told many stories about Finland, but one thing was clear; Finland is much hillier than our area ... Another peculiar thing they told us about was a rocking chair. We had never seen a thing like that in any of our houses.”*³⁹



There are multiple descriptions of the journey to Finland. For children, it was often an exciting time going on a ship and travelling to a new country. However, their memories also include seasickness, uncertainty, and fearing of mines in the Baltic Sea. There was also a mention about a Russian military submarine. For Tellervo, the journey began with seeing the ships called Suomi and Aranda and unexpectedly meeting a long-lost relative in the queue as one can see in the drawing above and read in a quotation below.

“There were all kinds of ships: small and big ones. We went to a ship called Aranda, and it was leaving in an hour ... Mother shouted, and Iita startled and

³⁹ SKS KIA. Armas Laurentti's archive. "Arska's memoirs" -memoir script.

dropped her passport. There was Uncle Antti on the stairs to the ship and he turned around ... Mother said, it has been two years, where have you been? We are going to Finland, now there is no time to talk, let's meet in Finland.”⁴⁰

Armas writes about the day of departure: *“Finally came the day when we refugees shook the Paldiski’s⁴¹ dust from our feet, probably for the rest of our lives even though back then we did not know that we would never return.”* He describes the fear and uncertainty during the journey:

“Refugees became restless. The journey to Helsinki was supposed to last six hours, but now we had been on the sea for seven hours, and all we could see around us was water. The travellers started pressuring the crew; what does this mean? Where are you taking us? An hour ago, we were supposed to be in Helsinki, but we only see water with no shore in sight. The crew told us, whether or not it is true, that there had been a sighting of a Russian submarine, and now the course was towards Hanko instead.”⁴²

Even with the stormy weather, the prolonged journey, and the Russian submarine, Ingrians arrived at quarantine camps in Finland. Especially for Armas, the weeks in the camp were fun and exciting times. He played with his new friends, broke the quarantine rules and visited the cinema. However, Ingrians’ time in the quarantine camps also included feelings of being an outsider and not being good enough, which I elaborate more in chapter 5.4.2 *Persistent Feeling of Outsiderness*. Families were often sent to work to the countryside or factories. They were seen as important work force as most men in Finland were on the frontline. On the countryside, Ingrians stayed with Finnish families. The welcoming and living conditions are narrated in various ways. Tellervo describes their negative experience when arriving in Nastola, Finland:

“We were sent to Nastola. We travelled by train and were the only ones getting off the train at that station. There was no-one to ask for help. We looked around and saw a car next to a fence where an old man and young man were. They were murmuring: these women are only good for clearing out shit.”⁴³

The Finnish hosts had clearly awaited other type of workforce. Tellervo and her family stayed at their house in Nastola for one night and were sent back to the quarantine camp. In the end, they were able to find a place to stay at in Hyvinkää where one family wanted to help people who had suffered from

⁴⁰ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. Memorial scrapbook about life in Finland in the beginning of the 1940s.

⁴¹ Paldiski is a town and a port in Estonia through which many Ingrians were moved to Finland.

⁴² SKS KIA. Armas Laurentti’s archive. ”Arska’s memoirs” -memoir script.

⁴³ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. Memorial scrapbook about life in Finland in the beginning of the 1940s.

war. They got their own house and were expected to help in the greenhouse and garden. She narrates their arrival:

*“On top of the hill, the most beautiful view unfolded. ... Sirkka (host) said, ‘Now let’s go to your own house’. We took our luggage and followed Sirkka to a small red cottage. Everything was ready. Kitchen cabin, bedroom. Long red and white curtains surrounding the windows. A big table in the middle of the floor, next to it a wooden sofa ... The cabinets were full of dishes, all made of glass. Grandma gave half of it away so that we would not break them. ... We went upstairs. There was a chamber for girls and Sirkka looked at me and Viola. Two beds were already made up. ... We were speechless, we could have imagined nothing like this.”*⁴⁴

There, Tellervo had mostly happy and positive childhood memories. Yet for Armas, the welcoming at their new place of residence was not the warmest one:

*“The beginning of a new life ... We were standing in a huge room not knowing what to do before the housewife came and showed us the bedroom. It was in the attic. It was a cold, dark, low and narrow junk attic ... You had to go there crawling so that you would keep your head intact ... Even though the house was huge and impressive, they couldn’t find us another place to sleep than the cold attic ... Or was it so that they wanted to humiliate us this way. The first impression was everything but positive.”*⁴⁵

Most families with whom Ingrians stayed with were interested in Ingrians’ experiences in the Soviet Union. Tellervo’s host sisters were interested to hear what the war had been like, and after they had learnt that Tellervo and her sister had lost all their clothes, the host sisters gave them theirs. They joked that the Soviet Union had cut the Finnish Maiden’s⁴⁶ skirt and that now they at least got Karelia back. According to another Tellervo’s story, some Finns from the city visited the countryside during midsummer. When Tellervo and Viola joined them for rowing, they wanted to hear stories about the war and how they ended up in Finland. People in whose house Armas and his family lived in were also interested in the circumstances of Russia, but the relations between Armas’ family and the host family were not as warm. There was constant silence that Armas describes as awkward, and they also ate around different tables. The housewife asked Armas and his family about their living circumstances in Russia. His mother complimented the living conditions in Russia and then criticised the Germans. The housewife did not like the answer as she had a different perception of how Germans acted in the occupied territories.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ SKS KIA. Armas Laurentti’s archive. ”Arska’s memoirs” -memoir script.

⁴⁶ Finnish Maiden is the national personification of Finland, and it often refers to the shape of Finland on a map. Karelia, that was occupied by the Soviet Union, is in this joke understood as the skirt of the Finnish Maiden.

“The conversation that started well turned around and got visibly colder. When mother was blaming the Germans, they probably did not even believe what she was saying about them. Probably they were more sympathetic towards the Germans than we had imagined. Mother noticed that she went too far in her criticism, but she couldn’t take back her words. It shouldn’t have been said because it hurt the house owners even though it shouldn’t have because mother only told the truth.”⁴⁷

Those Ingrians who were evacuated to Finland tried to build their new lives, but many were connected to Ingria and the USSR through their family members and not knowing about their fates. Tellervo’s grandma was curious to listen to the Soviet radio while being in Finland to find out how the situation developed back home. Tellervo also describes how they had hoped that Finland would win the Continuation War⁴⁸ and “liberate” Karelia and Ingria:

“Mannerheim. Who is he? All great leaders have moustaches. Grandma only tells good things about him. He is a great and mighty warlord who stands on the shores of the Lake Ladoga and will liberate Karelia. We agreed back then with grandma that it would be the way in which we could return to our own lands in Lempaala (Ingria). Our journey to Finland had lasted 2 years. Now we could go back to where our family members were left.”⁴⁹

Tellervo and her grandma hoped that when Finland would win the war, they could return to Ingria and meet their family members again. Other families longed for Ingria and were awaiting the war to finish and then return or at least somehow meet their lost relatives.

Eventually, the war broke the idyllic and peaceful childhood that they had built in Finland once Finnish towns and villages began being bombed by the Soviet Union. Tellervo reminisces:

*“26th of February 1944. With the bombings, our idyllic peace had been broken. Yet again, we were fearing for the uninvited guests every evening. We had our outdoor clothes ready in case we needed to go outside or into the cellar. It was quiet for two weeks, then it got dark, and we started hearing odd booms. Liisa ran to our house, stopped at the door, stomped her foot, and screamed and wailed: “R**sä⁵⁰ will never get to Finland”.⁵¹*

⁴⁷ SKS KIA. Armas Laurentti’s archive. ”Arska’s memoirs” -memoir script.

⁴⁸ The Continuation War (1941-1944) was a war fought by Finland and Nazi Germany against the Soviet Union. It took place 15 months after the end of the Winter War.

⁴⁹ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. Memorial scrapbook about life in Finland in the beginning of the 1940s.

⁵⁰ A term used of a Russian person that is considered derogatory.

⁵¹ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. Memorial scrapbook about life in Finland in the beginning of the 1940s.

Tellervo describes how the end of the war affected the atmosphere in Finland, and also the attitudes towards Ingrians. The arrival of Karelian refugees made it so that there was no longer interest in helping Ingrians as much. Many people felt the need to empty their living spaces for new refugees.

“Karelia has been lost, but the Finnish independence stayed. ... Half a million people were left without their homes. People wandered with heavy minds. War guilt and heavy war reparations oppressed people’s minds. Will the nation ever recover from this? ... When the Karelian refugees started arriving, Sirkka (Finnish host) somehow distanced herself from us and became more silent.”

There was bitterness after the war. It is narrated that what Finns used to be proud of had turned against them. Yet according to Tellervo, the most important thing, Finnish independence, stayed.

Throughout the years Ingrians stayed in Finland, they were not free. The Finnish State Police (Valpo) was questioning and watching them. From the beginning, the quarantine camps were guarded and surrounded by fences. People were ordered to certain work positions and their wishes were rarely fulfilled. Ingrians also needed Valpo’s permission to move around the country. (Reuter, 2022, p. 89.) Even though surveillance was not as life-defining as in the Soviet Union, one could describe Ingrians as the second-class citizens in Finland. They did not have the same rights as Finns, and many describe difficulties in belonging to a place where they did not have the same rights as the rest.

Then, the time came when Ingrians got the information about the returns. After the war, Ingrians worried about the Soviet-led Allied Control Commission (in Finnish liittoutuneiden valvontakomissio) that was making sure that the terms of the armistice were followed in Finland. One of the requirements was that all Soviet citizens, most of whom were Ingrians, should be returned to the Soviet Union. Tellervo and her family were afraid that they would find them as their intention was to stay in Finland. Returns were a political decision that has been narrated as a turning point in Ingrians’ narratives and the reasonings for returns were diverse. Forced returns are descriptive examples of how homemaking and mobility are “conditioned by specific power structures and how people experience and respond to institutional ordering of their everyday homemaking and meaningful dwelling in the world” (Kingumets, 2022, p. 71). Because of the decision of returning Ingrians to the Soviet Union, Ingrians were no longer able to safely build and continue their lives in Finland. The atmosphere was relatively accepting of Ingrians when they were evacuated to Finland, but a couple years later, due to pressure from the USSR, many of them were forcibly returned. Niina and Mirjam write how their family got the news:

“Mirjam was 8 years old and reminisces that one day father came home and talked with their mother for a long time. Mother cried heavily. Then they said that

*we must return to the Soviet Union. Mother suggested that we escape to Sweden. Dad didn't agree as he saw it being impossible with four small children, the oldest being 8 and the youngest only 6 months old. Dad had been told that if he and his family do not leave voluntarily, he would be separated from the family, taken to Siberia in handcuffs and be imprisoned for 25 years.”*⁵²

Ulla narrates how the returns to the Soviet Union took place in her life:

*“Autumn came, and we started in second grade at the school in Munkkiniemi (Helsinki). Then came the fateful day in 1945 with letters from the police. All Ingrians must be returned to the Soviet Union, orphans too. Minister Virolainen⁵³ negotiated with Stalin that children who were adopted should stay. But Stalin did not give in. Orders were orders and they must be followed. I became a refugee for the second time, at eight years old... The police searched for Ingrians everywhere. People were even taken at night wherever they were found. Stalin's orders must be obeyed.”*⁵⁴

Niina and Mirjam's father saw it is better to return voluntarily than to be later returned with force and be imprisoned. With the political decision of returning Ingrians, Ulla became a refugee again because she had to hide from the governmental officials. The negotiations between two countries led to Ingrians once again having to either hide or submit to the demands. These examples demonstrate how Stalin's orders were narrated as having influenced individuals' lives all the way in Finland. This also explains why Ulla's memoirs are called “Fleeing from Stalin's Shadow”. The shadow followed her wherever she went. All in all, 55,000 people were returned back to the Soviet Union (Flink, 2010, p. 11) including most of the memoir writers except for Armas and Ulla. Tellervo writes how her family made the decision to return:

*“The decision to leave from Finland. December 1944.
As time drags on, things get more complicated. Viola and I went to school the way we used to before. Christmas was coming, as well as a break from school. But my mind was shaken about returning to the Soviet Union. The fear grew the more I was digging into the past. My mother had been teaching religion to children, taking part in church chores, there was the abduction of my father, the escape. We had voluntarily come to a country that was at war against the Soviet Union, our former homeland. It can lead to an imprisonment. Can we trust the Soviet Union's promises, forgiving our sins – amnesty?*

Also, there were all kinds of rumours that if you do not leave voluntarily, you will

⁵² SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union (“Our family story”). Written by Niina Malkki and Mirjam Sykijäinen.

⁵³ Johannes Virolainen was the department head in the Ministry of the Interior and took part in negotiations about the returns to the Soviet Union. Later on, in 1964-1966, he was the prime minister of Finland.

⁵⁴ SKS KIA. Ulla Antfolk's archive. Summary of the manuscript of the memoir “Fleeing from Stalin's Shadow”. 2018.

be taken with force. They will search all the hiding places and the informer will be paid 25.000 Finnish marks. However, we had not agreed to leave Finland yet.

The decision was made at the last minute when aunt Iita came to say the final goodbye. They had agreed to return to the Soviet Union. We drank tea. Aunt Iita took her goddaughter Viola into her arms, squeezed and said, “we will meet again”. Viola hanged around her neck, cried, and shouted, “don’t leave us, don’t leave us”. We were all crying. What made us change our mind – fear, love or a call for help? Don’t leave us. Mother said: we will leave together with you, put our names in the book of departers from Salo.”⁵⁵

What Ingrians considered being their home and where they felt like they truly belonged in influenced their decisions. Tellervo describes these mixed feelings in the quotation above. Her family was longing to return and meet their relatives as they did not know what had happened to their family members in the Soviet Union. However, they appreciated safety in Finland.

It has been often described that the returns were done by force, and in most situations, Ingrians were pressured to do so, but the reasonings above show how Ingrians had an agency in the returns. Krause and Segadlo (2021) highlight that the decision to leave one’s home or other place of residence is rarely just a passive act of survival but rather, it is often an active choice made by individuals. Some people escaped to Sweden, some tried to hide from the officials in Finland, and some returned because they thought they could return to their homes and see their family members after years in Finland. It should be understood that Ingrians also played a role in their own destiny. Even in tough situations and pressure coming from above, Ingrians discussed different options and tried to find a best option for themselves and their families. They describe their active role while simultaneously being affected by the surrounding societies and political decision-making. Of course, uncertainty, fear and persecution affected these decisions and Ingrians have been victims of these conditions, but at least in their materials, Ingrians describe how they have played a role in these decisions concerning their lives.

The day of return is narrated as controversial. There are descriptions of how they were welcomed back to the USSR with smiles on the border guards’ faces, but simultaneously descriptions of how their luggage was confiscated and some books and things were taken away. Below is Tellervo’s⁵⁶ illustration of the return journey. She describes the arrival in the Soviet Union in the following way:

⁵⁵ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. Memorial scrapbook about life in Finland in the beginning of the 1940s.

⁵⁶ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. “Here are things that come to my mind” -scrapbook.

“The train stopped. We had crossed the Finnish border ... Soldiers boarded the train, greeted us politely, smiling and said, ‘Welcome to your homeland!’”⁵⁷



Soon enough, Ingrians noticed that they had passed their home regions. Niina and Mirjam describe the reaction on the train:

“The train didn’t stop and continued towards the south. That is when people realised, they are not taken to their home villages as they had been promised. All the promises were lies. People started crying and shouting.”⁵⁸

The evacuation time in Finland stayed in Ingrians’ memories. When Tellervo was 73 years old, she wrote that from their time in Finland she kept a Bible, some schoolbooks, a book written by Aleksis

⁵⁷ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. Memorial scrapbook about life in Finland in the beginning of the 1940s.

⁵⁸ SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union (“Our family story”). Written by Niina Malkki and Mirjam Sykijäinen.

Kivi that was gifted to her by her teacher, a song booklet and four photographs. Through these items, she remembered her time in Finland. The vast majority of her memorial scrapbook focuses on her time in Finland, which confirms the significance of that time period. Also, Armas' memoirs mostly focus on his childhood in Finland.

5.2.4 101-Kilometre Rule, Section 38 and Rare Instance of Return

The death of Stalin, in 1953, brought hope about returning to Ingria, which led to many attempting to do so. Aino Malkki narrates how she remembers the experience of her family:

“Stalin died in 1953. There was a change in power and Malenkov was the new leader in 1953-1955. Mother had heard somewhere that you can now move to Ingria. She went to different offices to which she was advised to go to and gained a permission to travel. Father did not want to ... Mom took two cows and left for our land. She told that she had planted potatoes in the ground and that the crop was good. I had never asked how she managed without knowing the Russian language. In August, me and father also came home to Muttala.”⁵⁹

However, Ingrians, along with other “undesirable” groups like criminals and political dissidents, were subject to a 101-kilometre rule (or “the 101st kilometre”) in the USSR, which denied residence permission within a 100-kilometre radius of major cities, including the surroundings of Leningrad – the area where Ingrians used to live (Reuter, 2021, p. 205). It was a political system that affected people's rights and controlled their movement. In this part, I examine how the 101-kilometre rule and section 38, that was marked in many Ingrians' propiskas and passports, was narrated having affected where they could live. The rule kept Ingrians away from their homeland. Väinö Kähäri describes how it affected his family:

“The order was clear and simple: you need to move 100 kilometres away from the border and you cannot live closer than 100 kilometres from Leningrad. This was a general rule for the deportees ... In practice, it meant that we were completely chased out of our homeland, Ingria to the far end of Russia. There is space in Ural or Siberia, you were allowed to go there. ‘Have a nice trip’, they said to my father when they gave him a passport.”⁶⁰

Legal practices play a considerable role in defining where people do or do not belong, and where they can or cannot move to (Kelly, 2009, p. 27). These rules and restrictions unambiguously affected where Ingrians could or could not live and whether they have the same rights as other citizens in the USSR. Ingrians did not have an opportunity to decide on their own terms where they wanted to live or

⁵⁹ SKS KIA. Berklund family archive. Aino Malkki's memoir manuscript.

⁶⁰ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. ”Pieni matkamies vaan”, Väinö Kähäri's memoir manuscript.

whether they could live in a place where they felt like they belonged. Political decisions and legal practises continued affecting their possibilities even after the WWII as Ingrians were still seen as the enemy of the nation in the societal structures and legal practices.

Tellervo describes how this rule affected their life when they lived in Estonia in 1948 after leaving Finland and their temporary place of residence in Yaroslavl:

*“In Estonia, in autumn, everything got complicated. We were asked to go to the selsoviet. There, the officials told us to show our passports, crossed the check-in stamp, added a marking about the section 38 and said, “You need to leave Estonia”. We were considering our decision at home and mother said that we won’t wait for another command, we must leave ... It was ordered to those Finns who had come from Finland and had left their ordered posts without permission to live in Leningrad Oblast or the Baltic states. We were classified as the enemy of the nation and anti-state opponents of kolkhozes.”*⁶¹

Niina and Mirjam describe the situation of their parents in a similar way:

*“Our parents got their permanent passports in 1947. We do not know how and where that happened. There was a section 38 in them. It meant distrust and losing your civil rights. It was forbidden to live in big cities, also in our home region, to study in a university or any higher educational institution, and there were also other restrictions regarding work. It was obligated to sell all the houses and buildings so that Ingrian Finns would never get a chance to return to their homeland. They had been deported for eternity, also their children and grandchildren.”*⁶²

Ingrians narrate these legal practises as distrust and antagonism coming from the state. In addition to affecting their possibilities of residing in a place, it also affected how they were treated and where they felt like they belonged in. Hage (2010) mentions how home is often understood as a place that is governed by what people consider being “their law” (p. 418). In Ingrians’ case, someone else was dictating where they could live or work, and they had no say in the legal practices and political decision-making that surrounded them.

The return to home(land) is ideally seen as “the culmination of the trials and tribulations in exile” (Malkki, 1992, p. 36) for a diaspora and one defining characteristic of a diaspora is related to the difficulty of return (Kalra et al., 2005, p. 10). Many Ingrians longed for Ingria and were waiting for a possibility to return, but there was often no possibility of going back home and rebuild it in a broader

⁶¹ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. “Here are things that come to my mind” -scrapbook.

⁶² SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union (“Our family story”). Written by Niina Malkki and Mirjam Sykijäinen.

sense. Returning was a rare instance for Ingrians. Many people tried to and fought to return, but it often turned out to be impossible, and those who returned were considered as illegal returnees (Reuter, 2021).

Those who could move back to their original houses describe how the familiar social surroundings that had created home had disappeared. The changes had made it so that it did not feel like home anymore. Some Ingrians describe that returning actually broke their rootedness there. Return was not always a happy event like they had pictured in their minds. Ulla⁶³ writes how they had to start their lives all over again with empty hands and how the churches were in ruins, there were no Finnish schools, and the gravestones of Ingrians had been used in road constructions. Aino Malkki⁶⁴ describes how they returned to their home village, but not to their own house as Russians were living there: *“What my father must have felt like walking past a house he had built with his own hands, and now Russians were living there? I cannot remember when we gained a permission to move to our own house”*.

Even though some were able to return to Ingria, getting one’s house back was another challenge, and many Ingrians had to either give up or deal with the Soviet authorities to get their houses back. These legal procedures have been narrated as fights for their homes. Mirjam and Niina describe how their family had decided to keep their house as they were hoping and awaiting a change for the better:

*“Many gave up on the possibility to someday return to our homeland and sold their houses at a ridiculously low price that was fixed by the rulers. Father was also indecisive about whether we should sell the house. Our mother was firm and did not let him do that. She had said that the times could change and one day there will be a possibility to return home. She was right.”*⁶⁵

They describe how they moved back to their home:

“We were able to return to our own home. The small room was about 12 square meters, there were eight of us living there. In the summer, we slept in the attic, somehow our parents had organised us a sleeping place there. In the bigger room, there was a Russian family of four people living there. We were living pretty well. The parents of the Russian family were understanding, and they were even helping us in writing applications and requests to the officials so that we could get our house back. Many families who returned could not live in their homes, as the new residents did not let them come anywhere near the house.

⁶³ SKS KIA. Ulla Antfolk’s archive. Summary of the manuscript of the memoir “Fleeing from Stalin’s Shadow”. 2018.

⁶⁴ SKS KIA. Berklund family archive. Aino Malkki’s memoir manuscript.

⁶⁵ SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union (“Our family story”). Written by Niina Malkki and Mirjam Sykijäinen.

Families settled themselves into their own saunas or their relatives' homes. Then they started fighting the governmental officials to get their homes back, but often it did not work out and they had to build a new house."

They lived together with the Russian family for 1,5 years, after which they built their own house and moved away. They describe having kept good relations with each other. This is an illustrative example of everyday relations between two groups that the government was trying to portray as enemies. The living spaces and homes were often shared between different nationalities and most of the descriptions in all the research materials are if not positive then at least neutral. However, like Niina and Mirjam write, many new residents did not want to let Ingrians back to their homes, as they already considered those places as their property and home. This was described as a painful thing to grasp. The legal battles also created tensions between some Ingrians and Russians. The legal proceedings often lasted for years, and many found it difficult to even talk about the events because they revived bitter memories: after all, they were now strangers in their own home regions (Teinonen, 1999, p. 102).

Mirjam and Niina write how even though the section 38 was lifted, and they could move back to their home, life was difficult, even more so than in the exile place where they stayed in. *"The poverty and misery continued ..."*. The symbolic and emotional parts of home that they used to have, no longer existed. They describe how the restrictions and negative attitude towards Ingrians continued, and how they faced difficulties in work life and studies in the Soviet Union. They also describe how the deportations and persecution continued affecting the new generations of Ingrians. Later on, most of the children lived and worked in Leningrad, and their home in Ingria turned into a dacha that they visited on weekends and holidays. The importance of self-sufficiency and the symbolic meaning of that specific building as home continued even though they did not live there anymore.

5.2.5 Perestroika and National Awakening of Ingrians in the 1980s

In the 1980s, time came when the CPSU, and Mikhail Gorbachev as its general secretary, initiated glasnost and perestroika. It was a time of national awakening for various groups in the Soviet Union, including Ingrians and these reforms have been narrated as crucial for Ingrians' sense of belonging. Niina and Mirjam describe how they remember those times:

"By the end of the 1980s, interesting things began to happen. Perestroika came. It was the beginning of the uprising of the Ingrian nation. Inkeri-liitto⁶⁶ was formed. On Shrove Tuesday in 1989, the first celebration was held in Ala-Purskova

⁶⁶ Inkeri-liitto was an Ingrian association in the Soviet Union. The association work revived during perestroika. Currently, there is an association with a similar name in Finland.

*alongside the river Inkere. The founders of Inkeri-liitto rose an Ingrian flag for the first time. It was not registered back then, and there was no permission from the officials. It was a brave decision. We didn't even know that Ingria had its own flag ... The celebration was miraculous. In midsummer in 1989, after decades, there was a summer celebration in Keltto. According to the militsiya's count, there were over 5000 people. People came from all over the vast Soviet Union. Also, from Finland and Sweden. The celebration was astonishing and interesting, and the feeling was up the roof."*⁶⁷

The siblings took part in a choir that sang in Finnish, they sowed national costumes, and participated in Ingrian association meetings and events. They explain how often times they saw the elderly getting tears in their eyes as they had not heard Finnish songs publicly sung in decades. Sometimes they asked: "Are you not afraid that you will be taken to Siberia?", showing that especially in older generations, the fear remained. However, Niina and Mirjam, belonging to a younger generation at the time, write:

*"We did not feel fear. Instead, we were proud to be part of Ingria's Finns and that we can sing the songs of our ancestors in our mother tongue."*⁶⁸

Liidia Petäjä explains how glasnost and perestroika changed the atmosphere in Estonia too:

*"Glasnost and perestroika that began in 1985 in the Soviet Union led to big changes, especially in Estonia. First, rose the Popular Front of Estonia and the people's forum was organised. There were talks about Ingrians, about the lives of a small Finnish-speaking nation. A question arose: who are we and where do we belong? At home, we always spoke Finnish, we listened to the Finnish radio, we knew about contemporary events in other parts of the world. After 50 years of silence, we finally spoke our mother tongue in public. It felt incredible."*⁶⁹

Liidia shows how, during perestroika, questions that had been silenced could finally be raised and there were discussions about Ingrians' belonging. Only during perestroika, they felt like they could show who they were, and the role of Finnish language was narrated as important. Especially, the younger generations got the chance to feel like they finally belong and emphasise their Ingrian identities, after decades of not necessarily knowing who they were. Now, there was a possibility to show those parts of your identity that used to be hidden and silenced. Below, are three photographs from my family album, that have been taken during an Ingrian summer celebration in Tuutari, in the beginning of the 1990s. Buses came from all over the USSR and neighbouring countries and people

⁶⁷ SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union ("Our family story"). Written by Niina Malkki and Mirjam Sykijäinen.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ SKS KIA. Rappu family archive. Liidia Petäjä's memoir script.

were still trying to find their long-lost family members. In the third picture, are my mother and Tatjana Kokkonen (today Kokkonen-Roivas) on the right and her friend Kyllike Kolga (today Ladva).



Perestroika has been narrated as the turning point for Ingrians in the USSR, even though it was impossible to bring back many of the destroyed and lost memories and practices. Toivo Flink and Santeri Pakkanen edited an issue about Ingrians for a literary journal called *Punalippu* in 1987 (Lahtonen, 2015). For the first time in 50 years, there was something publicly written about the fates of Finns in the USSR. However, some kind of control and surveillance in the society stayed. For example, Flink

and Pakkanen were called to a reprimand by the party officials (Ibid.) and Liidia writes how the Soviet officials were interested in Ingrians' association work and were questioning the workers in Estonia. They were not scared anymore because perestroika had freed the atmosphere.

In this part of the analysis, I showed how societal and political changes were narrated having affected Ingrians' homes and sense of belonging, and how instead of only being private notions they were dictated and manipulated by political decision-making of the surrounding societies. I paid attention to how collectivisation, a vast political and economic change, turned Ingrians' way of life around and symbolically displaced them despite the resistance and how war and Stalin's terror forced Ingrians to hide their religion, language and customs to be practiced inside the walls of their homes, and how Ingrians became forcibly displaced and thus, a diaspora. I also showed how legal practices, including the 101-kilometre rule, dictated where Ingrians could settle and feel like they belonged in. I also showed contradicting narrations of Ingrians' evacuation time in Finland and possible returns to the Soviet Union, and how Ingrians simultaneously narrated Finland as their ancestral land but Ingria as their true homeland. Also, perestroika gave ground for Ingrians' renewed sense of belonging and national awakening in the Soviet Union. During all these times, Ingrians narrate having kept their agency.

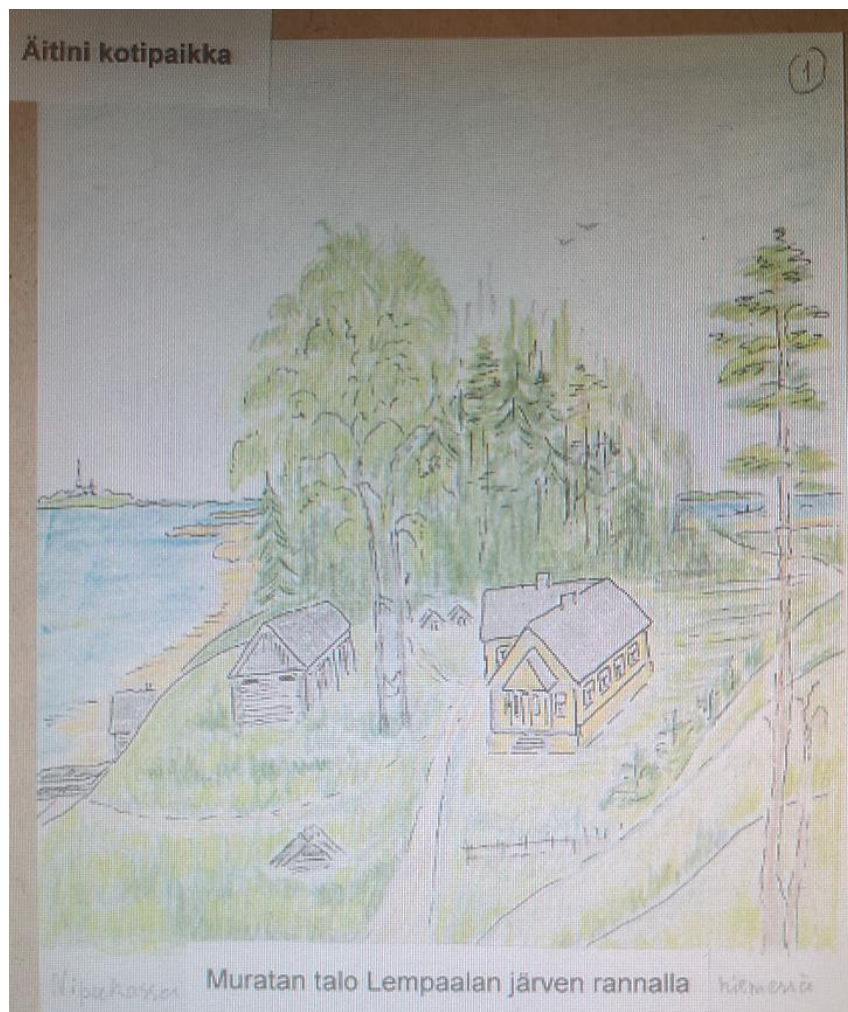
5.3 Narratives of Rootedness in Ingria and Finland

In the second part of the analysis, I turn to the three core narratives of home and belonging that were often formed in a similar pattern in Ingrians' memoirs. The first one is about rootedness in Ingria and the ancestral land Finland. I begin by exploring the nostalgic reminiscences about Ingria, then, I turn to self-sufficiency as a way of living and the meaning of domestic animals for Ingrians' homemaking and sense of belonging. Finally, I explore how Ingrians narrate their rootedness to Finland in comparison to Ingria.

5.3.1 Nostalgia for Ingria and the Contested Desire to Return

The memoirs often begin with a description of idyllic home and peaceful everyday life in one's home village in pre-war Ingria. The house, its colour, different rooms, yard, its surroundings, day-to-day chores and food are narrated thoroughly. Even those individuals who left Ingria at a young age bring up rootedness in Ingria and call it their homeland but for younger generations, the meaning of Ingria

as homeland is more symbolic than concrete. Pre-war Ingria is narrated as the place of origin and through that, they articulate their identities. “Where communities locate their beginnings tells us quite a lot about how they perceive themselves” (Zerubavel, 2003, p. 101). The narratives in the beginning of the memoirs are often sedentary as they underline rootedness in one place, in Ingria. They write how their ancestors lived there for centuries, and many describe it as the place where they truly belong. People’s identity is partially constructed by the idea of who we descend from (Zerubavel, 2003, pp. 62–63), so Ingria’s role as the place of origin played a crucial role for Ingrians’ identity construction and where they feel like they belong.



Tellervo’s illustration⁷⁰ above shows how she remembers her mother’s house in Nipukka, Lempeala. The yellow building is surrounded by trees and water and looks idyllic and peaceful. Most childhood memories, including playing with other children in the neighbourhood before the disruption of war are described in a similar way like in Väinö’s narration:

“I was born in Mustila village in Lempeala, Northern Ingria, as the oldest child of a peasant family. Mustila was located 10 km east from where the Finnish

⁷⁰ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. “Here are things that come to my mind” -scrapbook.

border was back then ... My earliest memories are about games and playing with the neighbours of whom most were my cousins. On festive days, the relatives were invited to our home, or we were at our neighbours' ... My grandfather had built the house in the beginning of 20th Century ... It was a peaceful time, people believed in God and future, you got along with hard work.”⁷¹

Based on the memoirs, I argue that home in Ingria was not only about the place, but mostly about the everyday things and chores that constructed Ingrians' daily lives. The annual cycle and everyday life were determined by religious celebrations, and Sunday was a rest day from farm work and a day on which they went to church. The meaning of home is not only connected to the geographical location or to a certain house. For example, Ingrians emphasised the importance of living in a place where they feel like they belong in and which they can share it with their family. Being surrounded by the Ingrian community and culture was narrated as a crucial factor that created feelings of homeliness and belonging in addition to being able to practice one's daily life. These factors are also what Hage (2010) found out in his research. He sees home as an imagined space where one possesses *maximal communicative power*. By this he means, that one is living in a space where they recognise the people as “their own” and that home is also about shared symbolic forms, values and, most importantly, language. (pp. 418–419.) Rootedness in Ingrians' case too, was not only about the place, but also about the possibility of expressing oneself and their identity in their day-to-day lives.

The events related to the private life sphere were also narrated having affected Ingrians' perceptions of home. Ulla⁷² writes how her home was shattered because of her mother's death, and Viljo⁷³ describes how his brother was shot on the street without questioning and how after that, their home was filled with uncertainty and fear. When Viljo's mother was released from prison, he narrates it as an event that made “everything better” in his life. He writes about his mother's second imprisonment:

“I stayed to play with my neighbours for a longer time than expected. This usually happened to boys that age. I came back home timid, feeling guilty and thinking that I would be scolded for being late. But mother wasn't there to scold me, but Emo (later on becoming Viljo's foster mother) explained sadly that they had taken my mother again. It was one of the hardest setbacks in my life so far. I was condemning myself: why didn't I come back home early? Maybe mother would have said something important to me.”

These descriptions of losing one's family members in the private sphere of life, bring my attention to the question of what makes home homely in the end. For Viljo, family members created safety and

⁷¹ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. ”Pieni matkamies vaan”, Väinö Kähäri's memoir manuscript.

⁷² SKS KIA. Ulla Antfolk's archive. Summary of the manuscript of the memoir “Fleeing from Stalin's Shadow”. 2018.

⁷³ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. Viljo Kähäri's memoir manuscript. Typed out by his daughter Aili Salmela.

protection, which are important qualities of what makes home homely. The imprisonment of his mother was so difficult that he crossed the border to visit his father in Finland. These examples of Ulla and Viljo show the importance of close people in creating security and familiarity. Places are produced and conceptualised through social and spatial relations (Gregorič Bon & Repič 2016, p. 1) and home can change depending on what happens in the social settings. For example, the fates of family member' and relatives during the persecution of Ingrians were narrated as factors that led to shattered homes on both individual and collective level.

Even though the living conditions in Ingria weakened, the majority tried to stay as they considered it their homeland. Viljo describes the situation in 1935 why he thinks so many had decided to stay:

*“Everyone had a hunch that the troubles were on the way. For people living close to the border, one of the toughest things in their lives was to be forcibly displaced. Even though life had been a struggle for multiple years, everyone was attached to their lives in the harsh countryside. We understood the good sides of our homeland. It was relatively close to the great Leningrad, which is why our ancestors had lived there for many generations, even when there have been troubles.”*⁷⁴

He writes how they felt attached to their lives despite the struggles, and considered it a place in which they belonged in. He, as many other writers, consider being rooted to Ingria through the previous generations, following the sedantrist idea of belonging to a place because the community has been settled in a certain place through centuries (Kalra et al., 2005, p. 29). When narrating their rootedness to Ingria, there are no mentions of “the ancestral land Finland” other than related to its proximity and influence.

Eventually, almost every Ingrian had to leave their home and become displaced. Matti narrates how he said goodbye to his home in Ingria:

“Life and home had been poor for decades, but we were about to leave to conditions even worse than this ... While others were still pottering around the house, I wanted to see my birth home entirely for the last time. I walked around the buildings and stopped at the roots of an old rowan. This tree held history. It was my grandmother’s rowan. When my grandparents moved to this spot when they were young, they both planted a tree. My grandfather planted a bird cherry and my grandmother a rowan ... Rowan’s stump pushed strong sprouts up in the air, and from them, this beautiful tree had grown ... I bet grandmother had smiled and laughed, grieved and cried under this tree, she probably had kneeled down believing that the hope wouldn’t bring her down ... Now that I look at the rowan from the south, I can see them all, like a string of pearls from right to left,

⁷⁴ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. Viljo Kähäri’s memoir manuscript. Typed out by his daughter Aili Salmela.

grandfather, grandmother, father, mother. All of them had built this home. I had inherited this and hoped to raise my children in this spot. But that did not happen.

With no crime, or debt of even one kopek, I am chased away to an unknown destiny ... Now there was a gentle wind that made the branches move a bit. I felt like my mother would have gently stroked my hair, just like when I was a child. About a month later, I found out that my mother had died in Kazakhstan and been buried in Syr Darya's grass steppes on that exact day.”⁷⁵

He sees the tree symbolising his family and brings up literal rootedness to the land and soil. Through this narration, he naturalises the link between territory, home and his identity (Malkki, 1992, p. 27) and emphasises the over generational aspect of living in the same land.

Recollections of home in Ingria were nostalgic when Ingrians narrated their lives in other places and it is common to consider lost territories original, authentic and unaffected (Jansen & Löfving, 2009, p. 6). Thus, nostalgia is often about longing for a place that no longer exists or only exists in people's memories. Already in 1933, after leaving Ingria, Antti Hämäläinen wrote to Paavo Junus from Finland:

“Before leaving this world, I want to visit Skuoritsa, ... , visit the church and other dear places. – I haven't seen you, brother, in five or six years! It would be so nice to meet you. Maybe there would be a chance next summer ... Often I feel like life is not worth living at all. The nicest time was when we were in Ingria. There weren't many worries back then. You would meet brothers with whom your troubles seemed to fade away.”⁷⁶

He remembers Ingria as a place with no worries and as a place where one can spend time with their close ones. He describes the time spent in Ingria as “the nicest time” in his life. The idealisation of homeland and reminiscing about lost home is often a coping mechanism with “alienation, loneliness, hostility and imperfect integration” in new places of residence (Cohen, 2022, p. 6). This letter also shows how nostalgia is about longing for home that no longer exists because the situation in Ingria in 1933, with the collectivisation and other policies for example, targeting religion, was not the same as when Antti had left home.

Ingria drastically changed during the 20th century: first, with the Bolsheviks' rise to power and collectivisation, then with the war and terror, and lastly when trying to return, there were “other” people living in villages and houses that they considered theirs. The vast societal changes irretrievably

⁷⁵ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. “Matti Matinpoika Kähäri's memoirs”, Matti Kähäri's memoir manuscript.

⁷⁶ SKS KIA. Junus family archive. A letter from Antti Hämäläinen to Paavo Junus on 27th of October 1933.

altered the place and whether it felt like home, as I described in the first part of the analysis. In her research on post-communist nostalgia, Svetlana Boym (2001) describes nostalgia as not only a longing for a lost time and lost home, but also for friends who once inhabited it and who are now dispersed all over the world (p. IX). Ingria too, was not what it used to be with everyone scattered around. Nostalgia presupposes a highly romanticised past of when everything is good and from which things have gone downhill (Zerubavel, 2003, pp. 16–17) which also Mikko Kesseli’s poem about longing for home and wanting to return to Ingria, sent to his parents in 1944, shows:

*“I left my home to wander
around the world. I would
never forget that moment.*

*My dear parents, only now I
understand how dear home
and life is there.*

*I did not know, could not
even imagine how longing
and pain would crush my
chest.*

*If I got the possibility to
return home, it would bring
me so much happiness.”⁷⁷*

One can take refuge in the memories in the past not to encounter the present (Hage, 2010, p. 417) in the new places of residence. It can be painful to think about what once was, but simultaneously memories can bring nostalgic feelings and warmth. Nostalgia and missing home are not always “homesickness” in a negative way, as Hage (2010) argues. He suggests that homesickness is a state where the person becomes passive and cannot deploy themselves in the new environment and that nostalgia is something different (pp. 416–417). Homesickness in Hage’s definition was not the case for Ingrians as they continued being active in difficult circumstances and new places of residence while being nostalgic about Ingria as I describe in chapter 5.5.

Ingrians also write about memories that were not only nostalgic and happy. When Tellervo and her family gathered at an assembly camp⁷⁸ prior to their return to the USSR, they were asked to watch a film about the Battle of Stalingrad which was the bloodiest battle of the entire WWII. Ninety-nine per cent of Stalingrad was destroyed and out of 500,000 inhabitants only 1,500 remained (Bourke, 2001, p. 126). Watching it reminded her of home in Ligovo and the arrival of the German soldiers. She remembers how the soldiers kicked them out of their kolkhoz cellar to the outside cold. Tellervo was afraid that her home would be just as broken and destroyed as what she saw in the film. She began wondering whether they had made the right decision to return. She writes how she would have

⁷⁷ SKS KIA. Kesseli family archive. A letter from Mikko Kesseli to Liisa Kesseli on 21st of March 1944. Original poem in Finnish in Appendix B.

⁷⁸ A camp in which Ingrians gathered upon their return to the USSR. In Finnish “kokoontumisleiri”.

rather lived outdoors, even in a dugout, in Finland, than in a broken and war-torn place. Tellervo began questioning the return and had a realisation that the home is most likely not same as in her memories. Having heard about the realities of his home village after the Winter War also affected Matti Kähäri's decision to return:

*“In spring 1940, when the Winter War was already over, I went to Leningrad and ran into some old neighbouring villagers. They told me how everything had been cleansed and destroyed. Even if they would let us back to live there, there wouldn't be anything to start from.”*⁷⁹

He went to see his home later on. The walls and the roof were up, but the well was destroyed and there were mines surrounding the house. He describes disappointment when seeing almost all buildings in the village and the surrounding nature destroyed. Barely anything was growing and in the vast forests that used to provide them with food – mushrooms and berries – the trees were now cut down. He wrote to his brother Viljo on 20th of May in 1943, how he does not want to return to the same village:

*“I do not want to permanently live in our home village. I have gotten such an ugly picture of it. On the way from Vaskela to Mustila, I could not see even one house ... There were just fields with 2-3 meter tall willowherb. The lands of the village were blood red because of that.”*⁸⁰

Once seeing the destroyed homes, villages and nature, some Ingrians had second thoughts about returning. I note that nostalgia is not necessarily the same as the desire to return. Ingrians can simultaneously have nostalgic memories of Ingria and wanting to return to the past, but also realising that it is not necessarily a place to return to in the present. Jansen and Löfving (2009) bring up a question of whether we should talk about the myth of home instead of return (p. 15) as the temporal dimension is crucial to people's experiences of home. Some Ingrians narrate how they would not return to the place that went through so many changes. Thus, the myth of home would be more descriptive. The Great Terror created a loss of home for most Ingrians. Home was not only left behind in another place but in another time, so it was lost both spatially and temporally. Jansen (2009) argues how people are often trying to find a “cool ground” rather than return per se (p. 45). They would be willing to return if there was a possibility to reconstruct one's daily life. This was often the case for Ingrians after the war and displacement based on their materials.

⁷⁹ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. Matti Kähäri's memoir manuscript.

⁸⁰ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. A letter from Matti Kähäri to Viljo Kähäri on 20th of May 1943.

I argue that many Ingrians did not want to return unless they thought they could live a somewhat similar life than before the war. They held to the nostalgic memories of what home used to be and understood their homes and villages in Ingria as their places of rootedness and origin. However, there were no mentions of what Ingria would be in the future and people seemed to have lost hope of Ingria as a place with future. For many, it was a lost homeland, but not a potential location for remigration as also Miettinen (2004, p. 424) found out in her research. This change from home to a lost homeland with nostalgic memories affirms the idea of how Ingria was not just a fixed point on a geographical map, but its meaning was constantly redefined in different time periods, contexts and settings.

5.3.2 Self-Sufficiency as Ingrians' Way of Life

Domestic animals, agricultural work, and living off of one's own land were constantly brought up in the memoirs and letters. Most Ingrians identified as peasants and the descriptions indicate how they lived for the most part self-sufficiently. Domestic animals provided Ingrians with chores, routines and food, vast forests were filled with berries and mushrooms, and Ingrians farmed potatoes and other vegetables. In the materials, Ingrians described thoroughly what happened in different seasons, when something needed to be planted and harvested, and what were the best ways to grow various plants. Their daily lives were strongly determined by the annual cycle and farm work. This is another reason why collectivisation was narrated as such a destructing force to Ingrians' daily lives and homes. In an immediate sense, it meant removal of peasants' livestock by the state (Fitzpatrick, 1994).

During the war and destruction, especially cows, were described as crucial for survival. Ingrians write how they were able to survive and not die of hunger because of the animals and living off of one's own land during the Siege of Leningrad and wartime. This is a shared narrative amongst many Ingrians, and something that I heard from my grandfather. He and his family were able to live through the siege because they lived on the outskirts of the city, and they had a cow that provided them with food and initially saved them. Some of his relatives, who lived in the city, died of hunger during the siege like countless others. The siege led to one million deaths due starvation and shells and those who survived were brutalised in other ways (Bourke, 2001, pp. 123–124).

Cattle were also described as the most valued property also emotionally. They had names and personalities and were considered as part of the family and daily activities. For example, Väinö writes: *“It was easy to recognise our cow even from a distance because it had a white head, but apart from*

that, it was completely black. Its name was Raija”⁸¹. He also remembers his father saying, “Raija-cow is our best friend, it gives us milk, it is worth more than gold”. Viljo narrates how spending time with cattle on fields in the summers was like living in “a kingdom of peace”. Below is Tellervo’s drawing⁸² of their “provider cow Reivi”.



In the narrations, lives only started to normalise once people could be self-sufficient in their exile and other temporary places of residence. When arriving in a new place, buying a cow and planting potatoes were often the first two steps on their way to a more stable everyday. For example, Niina and Mirjam⁸³ describe how getting a cow and becoming more self-sufficient through farming brought stability, security and a possibility to construct their lives and homes. When their family returned to Ingria in the 1950s, the first thing they did was plant potatoes and build a shed for cows and sheep. Matti writes about his life in a kolkhoz called Estonski in Mga, and describes how getting a cow brought hope for the future:

*“Now I was no longer distressed ... I got stamps and a residence permit in me and my wives’ passports. When I showed the propiskas in the kolkhoz’s office, they gave me a paper with which I could pick up a cow. Already the next day I walked a beautiful cow called Mustikki to home. Life started to look more promising.”*⁸⁴

⁸¹ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. ”Pieni matkamies vaan”, Väinö Kähäri’s memoir manuscript.

⁸² SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. “Here are things that come to my mind” -scrapbook.

⁸³ SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union (“Our family story”). Written by Niina Malkki and Mirjam Sykijäinen

⁸⁴ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. Matti Kähäri’s memoir manuscript.

When one was able to follow a similar lifestyle to home, places became more home-like. I argue that self-sufficiency was a crucial part of homemaking for Ingrians regardless of the exact place and location. When writing about their lives in exile and temporary places of residence, Ingrians bring up their connectedness to the nature, and the important role of the cycle of the year that consists of harvests and planting. These findings reinforce Hage's (2010) idea of the essential relation between home and food and how home-building involves feelings of familiarity, security, community, and a sense of possibility or hope. He writes how familiarity is about "the creation of a space where one possesses a maximal practical know-how: knowing what everything is for and when it ought to be used" (p. 418). Being self-sufficient and building similar routines and patterns of daily life in new places of residence reminded Ingrians of their practices and day-to-day lives back home and brought a sense of security, familiarity and hope. Also, belonging can be understood as part of the practices of homemaking in new locations. Through self-sufficiency, Ingrians were able to normalise their lives during and after societal changes and disruptions and connect with their roots and origin no matter the location.

5.3.3 Finland as the Ancestral Homeland?

Ingrians' narrations of Finland as the ancestral homeland are contradictory even within a lifespan of one person. Finland is first and foremost, narrated as a place that they had a close connection with culturally, linguistically, and religiously. Also, because their ancestors were from areas that were later considered part of Finland, many Ingrians felt connectedness to it through that. They narrated this "indescribable" and "unexplainable" belonging to Finland even though they had never visited the place. Zerubavel (2003) argues that because humans are social, they can experience some historical events of the same group as if they were part of their personal past (p. 3). Many identified with this collective past and understanding that their ancestors were from Finland. Yet, Finland was described different from Ingria. In this part, I explore what kind of meanings Ingrians give to Finland in their materials: has it been narrated as their ancestral homeland or not and how was it narrated in comparison to Ingria?

When thinking back to their childhood in Ingria, Niina and Mirjam's remember their father telling them that no-one in their village believed Finland had attacked the USSR and everything that was told to them about the Winter War was just Soviet propaganda. Even though they lived in the Soviet Union, they felt connectedness to Finland and tended to trust the Finnish side. Yet, most of the Ingrians' narrations about Finland are related to their evacuation time in Finland: arrival, staying and then

possibly returning to the USSR. When Tellervo Korkka was about to arrive in Finland in 1943, she recalls how her grandmother (*ämmä*) suddenly began blabbering in Russian:

“It was announced that we were soon arriving in Hanko. Other people ascended to the deck of the ship. Ämmä took us to the front of the ship and described the beauty of the nature ... Here and there were large and small islands, others rocky and others green with red houses, boats on the shores, and the Finnish flags waving in the gentle breeze. The sunset was indescribably beautiful, and ämmä started blabbering in Russian “Хорошо в краю родном”⁸⁵. “Ämmä, say it in Finnish”, and ämmä answered: “Remember girls, ämmä stayed in Russia, to sweet Finland it is mummo⁸⁶ who will arrive.” Since then, we always called her mummo.”⁸⁷

This quotation shows an interesting contradiction where Tellervo’s grandmother is blabbering in Russian, but then changes her preferred term for a grandmother from *ämmä* to *mummo*. This confirms how the Ingrian identities were hybrid and complex. She knew two languages: Finnish and Russian, but also the Ingrian Finnish dialect that she wanted to “forget” now that they arrived in Finland. She wanted to arrive in Finland as a Finnish grandmother instead of an Ingrian *ämmä*, but she was still saying how it is good to be in the homeland in Russian. In other instances, too, Tellervo narrates Finland as the ancestral land of her family and how moving there was a dream come true. However, it turned out to be not what they had expected. Initially, she was disappointed finding herself in a quarantine camp in what was supposed to be her homeland even though, she writes how, in the end, it turned out not to be “so bad”.

In the memoirs, Finns were described to “civilise” Ingrians in these quarantine camps. Despite Ingrians’ Lutheran religion back home, they were taught songs, hymns, prayers and some were baptised. If it is one’s ancestral land, and they have been following the same religion and spoken the same language in Ingria, why does one need civilising? Tellervo also remembers a poem (Appendix C) including symbolism about Finland being Ingria’s mother and Ingria being Finland’s “sorrowful child” and hopes that Finland would recognise Ingria as its own. This affirms the wider conception of Finland and Ingria’s interconnectedness, and Finland’s role as the ancestral land that should take care of its child, “smaller Finland” that is called Ingria.

⁸⁵ In English: “It is good to be in the homeland”.

⁸⁶ Mummo means grandmother in Finnish. Tellervo explains how they started calling their grandmother mummo in Finland as previously they called her *ämmä*, which is a grandmother in Ingrian Finnish dialect.

⁸⁷ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. Memorial scrapbook about life in Finland in the beginning of the 1940s.

Longing for their families left in the USSR and wondering what happened to them, challenged Ingrians' relatedness to Finland. They describe how there was suddenly a border keeping them separate from each other and they were now at war with each other. The thought that by crossing the border, they had become enemies with their own family members, was narrated being difficult to grasp. Tellervo writes:

*“In the quarantine camp in Lohja, there was time to think about the future and what it may bring, and what could happen to those who are not here with us. Ernest-boy – had been taken to war just before it started. We are now in Finland ... Will we fight against our family? It was sad. ... We were also wondering what had happened to our other relatives who stayed in Russia. Germany is tightening its grip and encircling the city, the railways to the east are broken, and refugees are moving towards the west ...”*⁸⁸

Finland was narrated as a foreign land where one did not necessarily feel comfortable in the beginning. Armas describes his feelings in Finland:

*“From my perspective, I felt extremely orphaned sitting and growing up in a foreign land. I did not know how to do anything for myself, I always had to wait and see what others are doing”*⁸⁹.

He had noticed that some things were done differently and was cautious and tended to follow others. Even though Finland was considered the ancestral land by many, there are descriptions of outsider-ness and uncertainty. Only in Ulla's teenage years, she mentions having a glimpse of belonging in Finland and feeling safe. Even though it was safer in Finland than in the USSR, she describes how the Stalin's shadow partially remained and fear was a constant companion for decades to come.

*“I accompanied her (Grandma Teresia) to Helsinki for the first time, seven years after my ‘disappearance’. It was fun to meet my friends. We had all changed. I was eight when I disappeared, and now fifteen years. It was the weeks before the 1952 Olympic Games. I was so happy these weeks, thought that I could now feel safe in Finland, but Stalin's shadow remained over my life. My adoptive parents had been asked many times about my fate. They said I was in Sweden. From there, Stalin could not claim back Ingrians. The authorities kept an eye on the family, anyway.”*⁹⁰

When Ingrians had managed built their lives in Finland in the 1940s, many had to either escape to Sweden like Ulla, or return to the USSR. Tellervo explains how she said goodbye to her classmates and teacher before returning and brings up the importance of remembering her Finnishness:

⁸⁸ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka's archive. Memorial scrapbook about life in Finland in the beginning of the 1940s.

⁸⁹ SKS KIA. Armas Laurentti's archive. "Arska's memoirs" -memoir script.

⁹⁰ SKS KIA. Ulla Antfolk's archive. Summary of the manuscript of the memoir "Fleeing from Stalin's Shadow". 2018.

*“December 1944: Saying goodbyes at school: We couldn’t get it out of our mouths to say that we were leaving Finland, and that we came to school for the last time to say our goodbyes. It made the whole class quiet ... I got sad. Why is everyone quiet? Then the teacher started speaking. She took a small book and gave it to me. It was a book by Aleksis Kivi. She gave it to me and said, ‘remember to be Finnish’. I tried to swallow my tears.”*⁹¹

Niina and Mirjam write: *“We never denied our roots, we always considered ourselves Finnish.”* However, when the returning migration to Finland in the 1990s began, they describe having had difficulties with the Finnish officials who were suspicious because they had moved from Russia. Despite people’s identity, the state officials treated them differently and affected their sense of belonging. There were issues in finding a place to live and with language for many Ingrians. Aino Meronen⁹² brings up how Ingrians were not welcomed in Finland, how they were called names and having felt a need to prove that she is just as good as the “Finnish Finns”. Often Ingrians, like Niina and Mirjam, conclude the story of their family and the memoirs with the arrival in their ancestral land Finland with compliments despite having faced difficulties:

*“We are very grateful to President Koivisto and the people of Finland that for the rest of our lives we can live in a free land, in peace and security, in our ancestral land, where we can hear and speak our mother tongue that we always so much missed.”*⁹³

Many Ingrians consider Finland as their ancestral land, but the lack of knowledge about Ingrians in Finland led to experiences of discrimination and outsidersness. Ingrians’ sense of belonging was challenged when arriving in Finland in the 1940s and 1990s, and some write having longed for Ingria and other places of residence like Estonia and Soviet Karelia. Once the evacuations or the return migration to Finland took place, Ingrians began highlighting Finland as the land where their ancestral roots are. These notions were rare before their personal experiences in Finland. To conclude, the childhood rootedness was often narrated in Ingria, but the sense of belonging, even though challenged, could often be found in more than one location during one’s lifespan. I would describe this as multi-rootedness where one can re-root oneself. These findings go along with the middle ground between the sedantrist and anti-sedantrist approaches where one can feel rootedness and connectedness to more than one place, but where certain places and origins still matter for individuals and communities.

⁹¹ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. Memorial scrapbook about life in Finland in the beginning of the 1940s.

⁹² SKS KIA. Aino Meronen’s archive. “My Ingrian Finnish mother’s family story” -biography. Written by Aino’s daughter Niina Parkkinen.

⁹³ SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union (“Our family story”). Written by Niina Malkki and Mirjam Sykijäinen.

5.4 Narratives of Endless Roaming

A considerable part of the memoirs focus on displacement: being on the move or being forced from one place to another. This time period in-between the peaceful life in Ingria and a new secure permanent place of residence is narrated as uncertain and fearful. As this period of roaming was temporary, even though it was narrated as having felt endless, people refused “to put down roots in a place to which one did not belong” (Malkki, 1992, p. 35). In this part of the analysis, I focus on narrations of how individuals constructed their sense of belonging and what thoughts they had about their home during this time of in-betweenness? First, I focus on the narrations of refugee journeys and the descriptions of fear, uncertainty, but also hope during this time of roaming that seemed endless, and second, the narrations of persistent and more deep-rooted feeling of being an outsider regardless of place.

5.4.1 Refugee Journeys: Narratives of Uncertainty, Fear and Hope

The deportation journeys often began with a knock on the door. There are mentions of either a fellow Ingrian kolkhoz member, a Finnish communist, or someone from the GPU entering the door and letting them know about their deportation or imprisonment. Viljo writes about his experience:

“On 4th of April in 1935, the bad hunches became a reality. At 2 o’clock in the middle of the night, they knocked on our door. When my mother asked who is there, they answered in Finnish that there are many of us, and that we have something important to tell you, open the door ... A handsome lieutenant walked around the floor back and forth and it seemed like he did not enjoy his task. Then he read my name and date of birth out loud from his small piece of paper and asked if I was the same person. When he got an answer, he turned serious and told me I have been ordered to be moved to another place of residence. Dress up and leave with us ... I had a foreboding feeling that I would not return ... This time, we were going towards such depths of fate that no power in the world could have saved us, just like it did not save the ones who were taken before. Back then, I did not realise how much easier my deportation was as I did not have a family or children. It is difficult to imagine how those parents who had to take their children to that suffering felt.”⁹⁴

Viljo tried to think positively that at least he did not have a family or children to take care of. It was a different case for Viljo’s brother, Matti⁹⁵, who explains his long and difficult journey with family of multiple small children and a pregnant wife in his memoirs. On January 1st in 1942, he and his family

⁹⁴ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. Viljo Kähäri’s memoir manuscript. Typed out by his daughter Aili Salmela.

⁹⁵ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. “Matti Matinpoika Kähäri’s memoirs”, Matti Kähäri’s memoir manuscript.

left their temporary exile place and began the journey to the unknown on a sledge in the cold. They moved from one place to another and stayed in each place from one night to some months. The child was born in the middle of moving from one place to another. They shared their living quarters with, for example, Finns, Estonians and Latvians. At one point, there were 6 families, 25 people, living in the same room.

Liidia Petäjä⁹⁶ describes how they became homeless when the German soldiers pushed them away from their home. They wandered long distances, lived at their relatives' homes in different villages. In 1942, they ended up in Germany for more than a year, working as forced labour on the farm and wearing badges saying OST⁹⁷. Similar story of German soldiers arriving and leading to their refugee journey was described by Niina and Mirjam:

*“... the Germans took our family from the village to Krasnoye Selo. The camp in Hatsina was full ... Mirjam remembers how Krasnoye Selo was bombarded hard. The journey from Estonia to Hanko took a full day and night, and it was also bombed even though the ship was under a Red Cross flag and there were people on the deck. A mine sank between two ships. The ship got into an area full of sea mines. People felt sick, were throwing up, the smell was horrible.”*⁹⁸

The refugee journeys are described as a time when feelings of uncertainty and fear were central. For example, Albert Säkki writes in his diary:

*“15th of September 1941, in Ylempi Toima
I have already been away from home for 52 days – I do not know what is left of my home or how my close ones are doing or where they are. I have slept and laid on the bare floor every single night.”*⁹⁹

In 1936, Maria Kähäri describes the horrors in a letter she sent from her exile place in Kazakhstan to Ingria:

“Oh, how much of our nation has died here ... There would be a lot to write from this life, but I am afraid. It is better not to write about it. I know that you Viljo will understand. They have brought so many people here; it makes no sense. Everything is crushing down like we have never seen. Goodbye for now, I hope to

⁹⁶ SKS KIA. Rappu family archive. Liidia Petäjä's memoir script.

⁹⁷ OST badges described Eastern workers (“Ostarbeiter”) who were used as forced labour in Nazi Germany.

⁹⁸ SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union (“Our family story”). Written by Niina Malkki and Mirjam Sykijäinen.

⁹⁹ SKS KIA. Säkki family archive. Albert Säkki's diaries 1941-1942.

*see you once more still alive. If we will not meet each other in this life, there is heaven where we will be together once again.”*¹⁰⁰

She lets her family members know how the life in exile is surrounded by death. In another letter, she writes how she wishes that there would be a time when one could openly write about their experiences. Besides uncertainty and fear, there were also some narrations of hope through also when thinking about the future and also religion brought comfort in difficult times. Under the circumstances during the Great Terror and the WWII, hope was necessary for Ingrians' their survival. When arriving in Finland, Matti wrote a letter to his brother Viljo from a quarantine camp in Finland describing how now, after all the difficulties, he had hope for a better future at least for his children:

*“When you left home, I only had two sons and two daughters. Now I have five sons and three daughters, 8 children altogether ... The youngest one was born in Estonia on 29th of April and already on 1st of May we left on a journey. You can imagine our fate when you picture our journey to the unknown in cold (about 40 degrees)... All of us were tired, hungry, and cold. In this situation, no-one remembered my sons, but only wait when they grow up. There is a big gap between my childhood and their childhood. It is time to wait for better times.”*¹⁰¹

These refugee and deportation journeys played a crucial role in Ingrians' lives and were considered worth telling. The journeys involved many interesting encounters, but also hardships, hunger, and fear. Regarding home, it was uncertain for many where they would end up in. Ingrians describe having lived one day at a time. Many wondered what the situation was like in Ingria. The fear and uncertainty often continued despite the surrounding society, and it was described as something that was engraved in individuals bodies and minds. Violence lives on even when time passes, and it affects the home-making efforts of individuals and communities (Jansen & Löfving, 2009, p. 11) in new places. This period also challenged Ingrians' sense of belonging as they were considered the enemies of the nation and were tossed from one place to another even though moving from one place to another was considered normal by some in the younger generations. They thought that life was just supposed to be like that for Ingrians and being on the move became normalised.

5.4.2 Persistent Feeling of Outsiderness

What started as being alienated in the Soviet society often continued in other places of residence too. Eliassi (2018) describes how statelessness as a lived experience “adds a further dimension to their

¹⁰⁰ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. A letter from Maria (Maikki) Semjonova Kähäri to Viljo Kähäri on 22nd of November 1936.

¹⁰¹ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. A letter from Matti Kähäri to Viljo Kähäri on 20th of May 1943.

sense of alienation, aloneness and political otherness” as well as is a form of political homelessness that is based on a territorial account of belonging (pp. 117–122). These dimensions acquired a larger role when living in a diaspora and not sharing the homeland with fellow Ingrians. What affects the possibility of making a home is also related to power relations and unequal social relations (Jansen & Löfving, 2009, p. 3). For Ingrians, it was challenging to find one’s place when they felt like they did not belong and were not treated like the rest. Some people described a constant feeling of being an outsider and always differing from the rest. Armas describes the arrival in their evacuation place in Finland:

“The reception at Kurikka station differed from what we had been told. There was supposed to be someone greeting us, but we couldn’t see anyone. Only a confused station master rushing from his room when the train stopped at the station ... When morning came, people started coming to the station and once they found out who we were and why we had stayed overnight at the station, the word spread like a wildfire. So, the gawkers arrived. Out of curiosity, they wanted to see what kind of ragbags had arrived during the night. After travelling in a cattle wagon for a long time, we looked even more shabby than usually ... The beer drinkers gaped at us, so we left and went outside ... When no-one came to pick us up, we thought we are not welcome at all. Why would they otherwise humiliate us in this way?”¹⁰²



Being left at the railway station alone for the night and people staring made him feel like they did not belong even though upon their arrival in Finland, they had the feeling of returning to an ancestral homeland. Armas and Tellervo had similar experiences in the quarantine camp in Finland. Above is

¹⁰² SKS KIA. Armas Laurentti’s archive. ”Arska’s memoirs” -memoir script.

a drawing of Tellervo's memory when they got back to the quarantine camp in Lohja. She describes her feelings when they were not wanted as a workforce on a Finnish family farm:

"We got back to Lohja (quarantine camp) to stare at the ceiling. I was so ashamed, felt miserable. We were not good enough. Aunt Iita and Eedit's bunk beds were empty. Apparently, they were good enough because they did not come back ... Our thoughts were circling. It would have been better to stay in Estonia."

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These experiences made people question their worthiness. The feeling of being an outsider in Finland grew when they felt like they were not good enough and wanted compared to those who found a workplace faster. Armas describes having felt forgotten and not accepted when he was waiting for a new place to live in the quarantine camp:

"Time passed and there were less and fewer people, but we were still there at the camp, because no-one wanted us around ... There was this small group left who felt that we have been forgotten or that no-one accepts us in their homes." ¹⁰⁴

Malkki siblings had to start their lives all over again seven times within eleven and a half years; five times in the Soviet Union, twice in Finland, and they also were staying in a detention centre in Klooga, Estonia and in a quarantine camp in Hanko, Finland. When returning to Ingria after Stalin's death in 1955, they describe feelings of not belonging there either after what had happened to the place and the surrounding society:

"Immediately, we got the feeling that we were not welcome there. We were outsiders there. People were suspicious of us, even repulsive. The new residents who had been drafted from central Russia were now the hosts. They lived in our villages and houses. It hurt us deeply, we were sad. Our origins and roots are here. We lived here for hundreds of years. In public, we were afraid to speak our mother tongue so that we wouldn't hear humiliation, cursing and name-calling like чухна (Chukhna), fascists, get out of here, get lost to where you came from."

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Mirjam narrates another experience of being an outsider and differing from the rest when they lived in Mantsinsaari, in the Soviet Karelia, in 1952, and went to collect her passport:

"She remembers how they went with six other young people, all from different nationalities, to pick up their passports from militsiya in Pitkäranta. She was called in last. In the hallway, the others were admiring their first passports. However, everyone was wondering why Mirjam had the section 38 written there"

¹⁰³ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka's archive. Memorial scrapbook about life in Finland in the beginning of the 1940s.

¹⁰⁴ SKS KIA. Armas Laurentti's archive. "Arska's memoirs" -memoir script.

¹⁰⁵ SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union ("Our family story"). Written by Niina Malkki and Mirjam Sykijäinen.

*when the others did not have it, not even her cousin. Mirjam got so ashamed ...
When Mirjam got home, our father was shocked and angry when he saw the
horrible stamp on his daughter's passport. He retorted that not even children are
pitied in this country. Even they are stigmatised as the enemy of the nation.*"¹⁰⁶

Differing from the rest brought shame. Ingrians were openly stigmatised as different from the ideal Soviet citizen. As the enemy of the nation, one belonged to the lowest hierarchies of the Soviet system (Miettinen, 2004, p. 413) and this alienation through the consciousness of socialist ideology narrowed people's scope of their everyday sphere (Kiaer & Naiman, 2005, p. 7). Often, citizenship is the key route to people's inclusion and belonging (Hovil, 2016, p. 27), but in Ingrians' case they were citizens with a special marking in the Soviet Union and for decades without a citizenship in Finland. The feeling of being an outsider everywhere they went was especially the case for Ulla, who became a refugee multiple times in her life, and who was left in an orphanage in Finland. She describes feeling not good enough in the orphanage when other children were taken by their new adoptive parents:

*"Then children began disappearing from the orphanage. Some orphans were
adopted and given new homes. I thought many times that nobody wants me. I'm
not good enough. Although they are well cared for, all children probably long for
a home and parents."*¹⁰⁷

Later on, Ulla was placed in another place of residence in Ostrobothnia to hide from the officials who were returning Ingrians to the Soviet Union. There she describes having felt insecure and lonely when she was yet again left in a new place, all alone. She narrates her life at the foster parents filled with silence and fear in general as she had to hide who she was and where she had come from.

*"Grandma Teresia was with me a few days at the new foster parents. Then she
vanished, and I was left behind. Her disappearance was a new shock. I cried and
cried. I can still cry at the memory of the fear, insecurity, and loneliness I felt.
There I was now with strangers and a language I did not know. No one
understood me, and I didn't understand them. I just cried, was alone and scared.*

...

*The atmosphere in the home in Purmo (at foster parents') was different. I had to
behave like an adult. "Don't cry, don't bring friends home. Don't talk about the
home and the parents in Helsinki". No one should know where I came from and
who I really was. I had no one to talk about all the problematic experiences
throughout my childhood. Fear was my constant companion: the Russians will
find me."*

As a child, Ulla tried to be like the rest and fit in. However, as a teenager, she began to wonder who she really was:

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ SKS KIA. Ulla Antfolk's archive. Summary of the manuscript of the memoir "Fleeing from Stalin's Shadow". 2018.

“As a child, one does not think much about descent and family. The important thing is to fit in and be like the other kids. Now I had begun to wonder about my origin. Who am I? I knew my parents were dead and that I have a brother, two years older, and an aunt and a grandmother. I had met them once in Helsinki. Now they were in the Soviet Union. How could I find out? After all, I was still afraid of my safety. I cried often and felt lonely and different.”

The sense of belonging to a place or group often underpins the shared collective identity and social solidarity (Eliassi, 2018, p. 118). Strong sense of belonging to an Ingrian diaspora, a shared community, must have affected the longing for something they had lost. These narratives of persistent feeling of not belonging, even after a long time, are commonly shared. The feeling is related to being taken away from one’s homeland and shattered to different locations. Ingria is narrated as a lost place where there was a possibility to share the space with people who you felt similarity with. Deportations and constant moves led to rootlessness (Reuter, 2022, p. 85), outsidership and endless roaming amongst Ingrians. Even though there were new homes found later in life, which I turn to next, their lives were narrated as disrupted and fragmented by the displacement and war.

5.5 Narratives of Homemaking and the Forward-Looking Practices

In this last part of the analysis, I focus on the forward-looking practices and strategies of homemaking in Ingrians’ narrations. I examine how they narrate their new places of residence when living in a diaspora while differentiating between exile places and more permanent places of residence. When in exile, the longing for Ingria is narrated as stronger than when one had built a more fulfilling life in a more temporary place. First, I look into the narrations of exile and evacuation places as temporary home-like places. Despite the difficult circumstances, Ingrians attempted to get back to what was “normal” to them in those times and locations. In the second part, I focus on Ingrians’ narrations of reaching the final destination, often in Finland or Sweden. I call these permanent places as the final destinations because they were the places in which Ingrians’ memoirs ended. In these places, one tended to become less oriented to the home they had lost and more focused on where their children and grandchildren could build a future (Loizos, 2009, p. 66). Even though, as Miettinen (2004) notes, the return migration to Finland is often a happy ending on an individual level, the Ingrians as a community gained nothing because the idyllic past had been broken forever (p. 415).

5.5.1 Exile and Evacuation Places as Temporary Home-Like Places

As time passed, Ingrians began calling other places of residence homes too, or at least something home-like from which they could continue with their daily lives and plan their future. To survive, Ingrians tried to create as much homeliness as possible in new locations. Some of these temporary home-like places reminded them of their homes in Ingria. In the narrations, it was a replacement home, but never home in the same sense as in Ingria because something crucial was missing. Also, Reuter (2020a) discovers that exile places were not described as homes as such, but they became “home-like” when everyday life stabilised over the years. In Ingrians’ narratives, the distinction between a place being an actual home and home-like is needed.

Based on the materials, it was easier to look forward and feel at-home when the location was closer to Ingria. For example, people describe Karelia and Estonia more warmly than Siberia or Kazakhstan. Especially the places in Karelia were described with words like familiar and secure, except for one exile place that used to be a gulag camp. It was described as horrible and depressing. Also, the city of Petrozavodsk in Karelia that was the hub of Finnish-speaking communities, was described positively. Those places that were closer to Ingria reminded them of home because of the familiar nature and climate. For example, in Kazakhstan, Ingrians were more likely to suffer from the climate and the living conditions that they were not used to.

Hage (2010) describes how home making is not only about building a house or space, but about the things that make you feel familiarity, comfort and “homely”. Thus, home-building or homemaking is about building the feeling of being “at home”. (p. 417.) Irrespective of whether people plan to stay or return to the homes they left, people have the need to feel at home in new places (Kingumets, 2022, p. 76). Ingrians tried to make most out of their temporary places of residence too. In his diary, Albert Säkki describes how they celebrated Christmas with other Ingrians while they were in the Soviet army barracks:

*“24th of December 1941
Today it is the dearest Christmas Eve. We worked for 9 hours – got to leave 2 hours earlier than usually ... We are sitting together with the boys ... We are reminiscing previous Christmases, Christmas Eve, food, church and the atmosphere in general. We have two Christmas trees in our room with decorations, boys bought them – dear Christmas Eve spirit is still here. Some boys are singing Christmas songs from a song booklet that is here with us ... I also have a small branch from a Christmas tree hanging on top of my bed.”*¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ SKS KIA. Säkki family archive. Albert Säkki’s diaries, 1941–1942.

They were reminiscing about the time in Ingria and wanted to follow similar traditions than at home. Väinö¹⁰⁹, Matti's son, describes how his father literally built and constructed their exile place into a new home, starting from floor and moving towards walls and roof and constructing furniture. This was a process of a literal homemaking that made them feel more at-home. Ingrians also kept various artefacts, for example, Bibles, hymn books, photographs, and sewing machines to remind them of home. Through these artefacts, Ingrians got nostalgic feelings that are affective building blocks of homely feelings, and engage migrants in home-building (Hage, 2010, p. 420) in new locations.



Tellervo describes feeling at home in their cottage during the evacuation time in Finland. When they arrived, they were surprised how everything was made ready and cosy for them. Above, in her drawing¹¹⁰, is the kitchen and living room area. During their evacuation time, Tellervo and her grandmother had dreamt of building their new home in Finland once the war would have ended. When it was time to return to the USSR, she reminisces:

*“We climbed the curled up branches of a pine. You could see far away from there, all the way to the spot where we were dreaming of building our own home with grandmother. Now all those dreams had been shattered. Dreams, dreams, where is your sweetness, dreams and wishes gone, only bitterness left.”*¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. ”Pieni matkamies vaan”, Väinö Kähäri’s memoir manuscript.

¹¹⁰ SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka’s archive. Memorial scrapbook about life in Finland in the beginning of the 1940s.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

Like I described in chapter 5.3.2, when one could provide for their family, life seemed stabilise. Self-sufficiency was often crucial for Ingrians' survival, but it also reminded them of home when living in exile places and other temporary places of residence. The description of a good life and certainty was often related to the sufficiency of food and possibilities to do work, which are also factors related to home. Niina and Mirjam describe their temporary home-like place on an island called Mantsinsaari, in an area in Karelia that used to be part of Finland before the Winter War:

*“The new appointed place of our residence was in Mantsinsaari. ... We arrived there at the end of December in 1949. ... Our family was appointed to a house in the southern part of the island that reminded us of the house left in our home region. The house was bright, warm, spacious, it had a log wall without tapestries, two rooms, big oven. Under the same roof, there was also a heated cowshed. We also had our own sauna. The house and sauna were on the outskirts of a forest. When we arrived at the house, we remember that the first thing was that our father went to the forest and brought back a Christmas tree. We decorated it with beautiful decorations made of glass and celebrated Christmas. Even later on, those decorations were our pride.”*¹¹²

They describe how it reminded them of their home in Ingria. These temporary living places are narrated as reminders of home but were not necessarily considered actual homes. I argue, based on the materials, that home can be temporary and ever-changing. Even those places where one lives for just a few months or years can become home, but it does not mean the longing for the “original” home ends. One can have multiple homes in a lifetime. Some might be more important and closer to heart than others especially if one feels rootedness to a certain place, but it does not rule out other possibilities for home. Even those uncertain accommodations can be understood as homes even though they are places of discomfort and insecurity (Kingumets, 2022, p. 20).

These exile places and temporary places of residence in Ingrians' lifespans were considered temporary, and they longed for something more permanent. Descriptions of these temporary places included uncertainty, hunger and fear, unlike the more permanent places that were described in the memoirs later. Consequently, I distinguish between temporary and long-term homes and their narrations. Temporary homes included hardships and more negative connotations, while permanent homes were described as a place of certainty and with a possibility of building a career, raise your family, and provide a better life to your children. Permanent places included feelings of safety, familiarity, certainty and stability. Yet, the forward-looking practices and homemaking took place in these temporary living places too. I explore these permanent places, the final destinations, next.

¹¹² SKS KIA. Malkki family archive. Answers to questions for Ingrians who had returned to the Soviet Union (“Our family story”). Written by Niina Malkki and Mirjam Sykijäinen.

5.5.2 Reaching the Final Destination

The question I had in my mind at the beginning of this research journey was whether it is truly possible to build a new home outside of Ingria when living in a diaspora. Finding a place that was really described as a new home and “replacing” the home in Ingria was a topic that was missing in most of the memoirs. Memoirs often ended upon arrival in Finland or Sweden, but what happened after that? Does it mean that they arrived at their final destination that was considered home or is something left unsaid as it has been researched how difficult the integration process especially in Finland has been? Most of the memoirs focus on the memories of Ingria, exile, and the journey that seemed endless. There were some mentions of building a new home which is the focus of this part of the analysis. Arrival in these places was often narrated as the end of their journey, uncertainty and endless roaming. I focus on places that Ingrians narrate as their final destinations and places where they describe having the “cool ground” from which to rebuild their lives and live a fulfilling life in a diaspora.

Armas divides his memoirs into three different parts, and he describes the arrival in Finland as the final part of his life. Finland was the destination in which he lived until his death. He narrates his “new homeland” in the following way:

*“I absolutely wanted to see the ship’s arrival in the harbour of my new homeland. The sun was still on the horizon when the ship was docked at the pier. That is how I knew the third phase of Arska’s life had begun, even though I did not know what it would be like back then.”*¹¹³

In these final destinations, Ingrians could focus on the forward-looking practices in their lives. I understand these practices as daily contributions for peace. In peace and conflict studies, peace is mainly associated with return to the places of origin (Krause & Segadlo, 2021, p. 291), but as this was not the case for most Ingrians and other stateless diasporas, I understand reaching these final destinations as something that gave individuals a possibility to work for stability and safety and create peace in their everyday surroundings. They narrated their lives in these new locations as peaceful; they were able to build their lives, spend time with their families, and hope for a better future in Finland or Sweden. For example, Liidia Petäjä¹¹⁴ ended up in Finland and she explains how she is now retired and enjoying the silence and beauty of Finland with her husband. This represents “a happy ending” in Finland after all the uncertainties and troubles. Many of those who ended up in Finland describe how they are living happily and are able to focus on the future, even of the future generations, instead

¹¹³ SKS KIA. Armas Laurentti’s archive. ”Arska’s memoirs” -memoir script.

¹¹⁴ SKS KIA. Rappu family archive. Liidia Petäjä’s memoir script.

of thinking about return. Even though, in some materials there were mentions that some older Ingrians returned to Russia, the younger generations tended to enjoy their lives in Finland.

In these final destinations, Ingrians have created and struggled for home, which is part of the process of homemaking (Jansen & Löfving, 2009, pp. 2, 17). Instead of social and geographical belonging, Ingrians paid attention to “the forward-looking practises of attachment to and detachment from place” (Jansen & Löfving, 2009, p. 2). By this I mean that belonging should not always be localised in a certain place because it can affect one’s possibilities to build a home in another place. In these final destinations, Ingrians felt like they could make decisions, have various possibilities and play an active role in their lives. These factors are not only attached to Ingria but also to the new places of residence.

It could be useful to look into homemaking and belonging through the perspective of hope. Through the dimension of hope, the notion of home becomes future-oriented (Kingumets, 2022, p. 74). War and political disruption give rise to demands for new homes and through homemaking practices, one can have the aspiration that life will continue and that things will move forward and get better (Ibid.). In these final destinations, there was more space for hope than in the permanent exile and evacuation places. Nostalgia for the lost home can also enable a memory and help construct past, present, as well as the future (Hage, 2010, pp. 416–417). People can ponder what one wants from the future, what are the ways in which you feel comfortable and at-home in your new place of residence. Without nostalgia and memories, one would not necessarily understand what makes them feel set, comfortable and homely.

Ulla compares her life to her family members and describes how she had the best life out of everyone in her family. She was grateful for ending up in Finland, and later in Sweden, unlike most of her relatives who stayed in the Soviet Union and later in Russia. She was able to build a more secure life, and the house resembled more of the attributes that are often connected to home: safety and possibilities to build one’s life. In the memoirs, she describes how she and her husband moved to a new home in Sweden:

*“We started planning our home. We bought a house with a plot, obtained drawing, and searched for builders. Life smiled again. I had told Allan over the years that something was going to happen. This good life we have together will not last. But he didn’t believe in my warning ... We moved into the new home the day before Christmas Eve. What joy it was for us. Allan said several times: ‘How fun to put your feet under your own table’ ”.*¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ SKS KIA. Ulla Antfolk’s archive. Summary of the manuscript of the memoir “Fleeing from Stalin’s Shadow”. 2018.

Having happy memories and finding a new safe place of residence does not diminish Ulla's experiences of loneliness and outsidership. Despite having built a steady and happy life with her husband, the feeling that it would not last, and uncertainty stayed. In her memoirs, she describes how soon after moving to the new home, her husband passed away. Having suffered a lot of misfortune, she narrates having had an endless fear that something horrible would happen any given moment. Individuals aimed to feel secure, but after so many setbacks, it was narrated as challenging even in these final destinations.

Väinö Kähäri begins his memoirs with: *"These are my personal experiences of what happened in my immediate surroundings. They are tragic pictures forever imprinted on my mind. But also, warm and beautiful memories before the war"*¹¹⁶. Ulla concludes her memoirs in an illustrative way and speaks for the rest of the writers too: *"It looks like my life has gone downhill. But there has been joy and love from time to time"*¹¹⁷. Even though the memoirs and letters focus on the misfortune, they also include happy childhood memories, first loves, starting a family and so on. It cannot be forgotten that throughout people's lifespans, even during conflict and war, there were also events that brought joy. Although most of the emphasis in Ingrians' memoirs is put on wartimes and vast societal changes and their effects on their daily lives, the ordinary life with its joys and happy moments existed too.

Many Ingrians reached the final destination in more stable and secure circumstances but longed for Ingria and the uncertainty often remained. Hage (2021) describes these different ways of being as "fragmented" or "multiple subjecthood" (p. 184). Some individuals may be yearning to migrate while another yearns to stay home. Also, one can simultaneously feel at home but continue to feel insecure. For example, Ulla describes her diasporic feelings of rootlessness and not belonging despite finding her new forever home in Sweden and being grateful for her life:

*"I have been like a plant that has been uprooted and transplanted. Each uprooting and transplantation damage the roots. It takes time to form new roots. During each storm, the plant is damaged and needs time to recover. Many times, during my life, I have felt like the singer: 'misunderstood and hurt; I move among the circle of friends'. But now at the end of life, I am grateful for all I have received."*¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ SKS KIA. Kähäri family archive. "Pieni matkamies vaan", Väinö Kähäri's memoir manuscript.

¹¹⁷ SKS KIA. Ulla Antfolk's archive. Summary of the manuscript of the memoir "Fleeing from Stalin's Shadow". 2018.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

As Ulla writes, Ingrians' lives in general could be described through similar metaphors, with uprootings, transplantations, but also resurrections of the roots in new locations. Roots are narrated as damaged but simultaneously as something that can recover. The roots may have damages for the rest of their lives, but it does not stop the flowers or trees from blooming someplace else. Ingrians' stories and letters included contested sense of belonging in various locations, and symbolically as well as literally damaged homes brought by conflict, war and displacement, but also narrations of recovering and gratefulness.

6 CONCLUSIONS

Ingria, that has been vanished from the maps of today, continues to exist in the memories and traces of those people that I researched. This master's thesis explored what kind of meanings the Ingrian diaspora have given to home and belonging during and after the war in their written materials. The focus was on their narrations of nostalgia for Ingria, having to leave one's home, becoming displaced and part of a diaspora, but also on the forward-looking practices in their new places of residence outside of Ingria. I demonstrated how societal changes and political decisions in the USSR and Finland alike affected their identity, sense of belonging and the meanings they gave to home. I showed how peace and conflict studies, as a multidisciplinary field, can draw from anthropological, sociological and oral history perspectives on home and belonging to bring light on different dimensions of forced displacement and stateless diasporas. With the contribution of these perspectives, I explored how a forcibly displaced group, in this case the Ingrian diaspora, has used homemaking practices to create a sense of belonging in times of conflict, displacement and war. I also showed how the narratives related to the notions of home and belonging changed and evolved with time.

I analysed narratives of individuals located in different places and surrounded by manifold societal structures. There were women and men, living in small villages Muttala and Purskova and cities like Leningrad and Helsinki. I showed various narrations about their homes and sense of belonging, but also the wider societal structures surrounding them. Ingrians narrated home and belonging as complex and multifaceted notions that were ever-changing in nature and symbolically and concretely affected by conflict and war. Home was described either as a permanent or temporary place and one could have more than one home throughout the lifespan. Even those places where Ingrians lived for just a few months could become home-like, but it did not mean that there was no longing for the origins in Ingria. Belonging was something that transcended the national borders for Ingrians, but it was also challenged by the surrounding societies and Ingrians themselves. However, as I showed in the analysis, belonging can be found in multiple places, too. Ultimately, in the analysis, I showed the multiplicity of attachments that Ingrians narrated to places during the times of war, displacement, and living in a diaspora.

This study underlined how wider political and societal structures and historical changes affected Ingrians' experiences of home, homemaking, as well as the sense of belonging. These historical events and societal structures were often narrated as turning points in Ingrians' lives. The sense of

belonging does not only come from within, but there are systemic and structural barriers that exist and influence it, and the same goes for individuals' possibilities for homemaking in certain places. Political decisions affected where Ingrians could live, especially during the Stalin's reign, and in the 1990s with the political decision of beginning the returning migration to Finland.

Ingrians' narrations of their collective past often followed a similar pattern. The memoirs often began in the nostalgic home in Ingria, where everything was peaceful. They narrated *rootedness* to that place from which their identity also derived. Regarding rootedness, the importance of self-sufficiency as a way of life and Finland's ambivalent role as ancestral land but simultaneously as something different from Ingria were brought up. Second, the disturbance of collectivisation, the WWII and the Great Terror led to Ingrians living in a diaspora which was narrated as *endless roaming*. The deportations, refugee journeys, and uncertainty were described as something that felt everlasting, and they also narrated a sense of outsidership during that time, regardless of place. Finally, I noticed the narrative of *homemaking* and *forward-looking practices*. Ingrians brought up these practices in which they tried to create a home elsewhere. Many narrated exile and evacuation places as temporary home-like places, and the memoirs often ended in reaching the final destination outside of Ingria. In those places, home was understood as a place of hope from which Ingrians could envision a future for themselves and the future generations.

By showing these multifaceted narrations, I intended to break the simplistic and romanticised understandings of home and belonging. Deriving from theory, the memoirs often began with sedantrist narrations about home and belonging in Ingria, but war, displacement and persecution forced them to abandon their homes and ways of life. When finding another rather secure place to build one's home, they began narrating it in a way that supports taking the middle ground between sedantrist and anti-sedantrist approaches. Thus, from rootedness in Ingria, and refugee journey that seemed endless, many eventually described processes of re-rooting and recovering. I use the term multi-rootedness to describe the simultaneous attachment to more than one location.

For Ingrians, home was also a place of memories and nostalgia for Ingria, but the nostalgic longing did not prevent individuals from being able to form a new home somewhere else. Today, Ingria holds a symbolic meaning rather than geographical. Through these memories, one can reunite and remember one's past, but the notion of home is ever-changing. It could be located in various places at different times. One could also have multiple homes in one's lifetime, of which some were narrated as closer to heart than others. Home was also narrated as a place of resistance and a place where one

could construct their identity and be themselves when the surrounding society did not allow it. Yet, homes were also narrated as places of uncertainty and insecurity. The surrounding societies and legal and political factors affected Ingrians' sense of home and belonging.

These findings cannot be extrapolated to all Ingrians since the materials were not representing the whole diaspora, but rather emphasised those who ended up in Finland or Sweden. Also, these are stories and memories of those who survived. What continues to lack in research is what happened to those who stayed in their exile places and how they would have narrated these same notions. Also, there is barely any research on those Ingrians who were in Germany in the 1940s. It would also be interesting to see what differences it would bring to the conclusions of this research if one researched Ingrians who had different kinds of trajectories. Another perspective I could have focused on more, is the gender-aspect of Ingrians' narratives and the wider feminist discussion about public vs private as what happened inside homes. Displacement was often a shared experience of women and children, and I noticed some differences in memoirs regarding the forward-looking practices, where men described the constructions and concrete place-making more and women tended to focus on the emotional aspects of security and comfort. This could be a question of further research. Additionally, I began wondering whether there are some distinctive features of Ingrians in comparison to other ethnic minorities and diasporic communities originating from the USSR. This could be another potential question for future research.

The public discussions, wider and multidisciplinary research and representation regarding multiple ways of Ingrians' suffering, are only now beginning in Finland. Quite on the contrary, there is still an atmosphere where Ingrians cannot be part of the public discourse in Russia. While writing my master's thesis, the exhibition *Ingrians – the Forgotten Finns* that put together by Lea Pakkanen, Santeri Pakkanen and Meeri Koutaniemi, was supposed to travel to the State Russian Museum and Exhibition Centre ROSPHOTO, in St. Petersburg, but it was cancelled. The museum sent a message that some texts in the exhibition should be "smoothened". They wanted to delete mentions of Stalin, genocides committed by the Soviet Union, perestroika, returning migration to Finland, and the deportations would have been formulated as "resettlements". Thus, their version would have been an "alternative historiography" of what happened to Ingrians in the Soviet Union. (Riihinen, 2021.) The Russian state's remembrance of the WWII and the Great Terror is not only a part of history when the silencing around Ingrians and what happened to them still continues in Russia.

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APPENDIX A: ORIGINAL POEM BY ARMAS HIIRI (MISHIN), 1988

*Sanovat, ettei Inkeriä ole enää olemassa,
Sanokoot mitä sanovat.
Inkeri on minussa ja sinussa,
Atlantiksen lailla meren syvyyksissä.*

...
*Se säilyy, koska me elämme.
Kaikkien maiden ikkunoista näkyy vain
kotimaa.*

APPENDIX B: ORIGINAL POEM BY MIKKO KESSELI, 1944

Source: SKS KIA. Kesseli family archive. A letter from Mikko Kesseli to Liisa Kesseli on 21st of March 1944. Letter 1464:25:1.

*Muistoksi äitilleni!

Kun läksin kodistani
maailmaa kulkemaan
Se hetki mielestäni
En unhoita milloinkaan
En lähtissään viel tietänyt
En voinut aatella
Kun ikävä ja tuska
tääl rintaa ahdistaa.
Mun rakkaat vanhempani*

*nyt vast mä ymmärsin
Kuin kallis ompi koti
ja siellä elämä.
Jos viel sen onnen saisin
Et kotiin palaisin
Suuremman onnen paljon
mä siellä antaisin.
Äitini opetukset
Ne muistuu mieleheihin
ja kalliit äitin sanat
jotka kylvän sydämiin.*

APPENDIX C: POEM IN TELLERVO KORKKA'S SCRAPBOOK

Source: SKS KIA. Tellervo Korkka's archive: "Here are things that come to my mind" -scrapbook.

*Vain yksi nöyrä, harras toivomus on Inkerillä Suomi-äitiin nähden: ettei se
luopuis surunlapsestaan, ei unohtaisi sitä rajan tähden, ei luuta luustaan, liha
lihastaan se kieltäisi, ei luotaan kauas työntäis, vaan lähentäis ja pitäis omanaan
ja lapsenoikeudet sille myöntäis.*