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TRAVELLING ACROSS ESTONIAN-FINNISH BORDERS
AND ITS TRANSNATIONAL DIMENSIONS.

An ethnographical perspective of Estonians living in Finland

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Social Anthropology
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This thesis is an ethnographic study of travelling across Estonian-Finnish borders, most widely positioned in the field of migration, mobility and border-crossing practises. The subjects of travelling are the Estonians who live permanently in Finland for the purpose of work, studies or other reasons and travel regularly to Estonia in order to facilitate lasting transnational connections. Thus, I treat travelling in this study as a necessity, which is a different approach compared to travel as leisure or self-exploration which are part of many other contemporary discourses on travel.

Recent critical literature talks against the mystified perception of travel, a product of colonialism, and argues that travel should instead be viewed through its practical manifestations in people's daily lives. People's daily practises again, including travelling and border-crossing are culturally, politically, ideologically and economically bounded. For grasping better the travel in a deeply contextualised way I have firstly drawn out geographical, cultural, linguistic, political and economic connections between Estonia and Finland in historical perspective. Subsequently, I concentrate on the period of the communist régime in Estonian history and discuss the practical issues related to travelling abroad in Soviet Estonia. The latter approach is especially useful in my attempt to demystify the travel and border-crossing behind the "Iron Curtain".

The methodological approach to the study is the combination of ethnography and auto-ethnography. The ethnography is based on thematic interviews with travellers, experts on travelling, and observations in the travel settings. Autoethnographic narrations are present, because I have been an active traveller in the Estonian-Finnish borderlands and my own experiences shape considerably the interpretations of the whole phenomenon as presented herein.

The Estonian-Finnish border-crossing practises are specifically defined, because the travelling takes place overseas, and usually the means of transportation used is a passenger ferry, which is a central element in the studied ethnographies. The special characteristics of the overseas connections lead the following in-depth argumentations about the meanings and practises of journey today and in the past focussing on the time-distance relations, space-place-nonplace connections, travel functionality, and handling transitions in transnational spaces.

Finally I show one possible way how to understand the individual's agency in the everyday-life applications of a travel, which are overwhelmingly moulded by state policies and economic forces. I argue that if the world is organised in global projects then as a parallel there are existent the personal life projects that people try to realise in the best way within the given macro conditions. The manifestations of a travel thus are the negotiations between the global and personal projects.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Me as a traveller in the Estonian-Finnish borderlands

From my diary (May 2006):

Friday evening. Almost four hours ago I started my trip from Hervanta: took a bus to the centre of Tampere, had a short walk to the railway station and spent close to two hours on the train. Straight after I'm on the way to the Viking Line terminal in Helsinki, which is in 20 minutes walking distance. Close to the harbour some people are coming across pushing trolleys loaded with boxes of beer, cider and vodka. No rush from their side, they are relaxed, coming back from holidays. I am in a hurry. Hoping that when reaching the terminal, the check-in queue wouldn't be too long. When check-in done, I'm heading for the waiting area. I hope there are some seats free and not too much noise for spending the waiting time. Looking around, even without listening, to which languages are spoken, I can easily recognise, where the people are from and what are their trip intentions. The fact of how much and what kind of luggage people have, how are they dressed and how they act, tells a lot about their motivations for a trip. There are many Estonian and Russian young men in the age range 20-30 years. Both Estonians and Russians wear casual clothes, often tracksuits and sneakers, and almost no luggage. Most of those young men are crop-headed. There is something in their facial features that for an Estonian indubitably tell the difference between the Estonian or Slavic origin. In addition, Russian men can be easily identified by their habit to wear thick necklaces that often look like golden dog collars and Russian women wear far too heavy a makeup for the Estonian taste. Some of them are drunk, quite loud and their language is not very educated. I guess they work in construction. There are also younger and older Estonian and Russian men and women with no luggage, who are quite calm and silent. Most of them travel alone, without family. Many of them seem to know other people in the terminal: they greet and have some conversation. And then there are the Finns, mostly people from the age of 45 and up, who carry more luggage. They probably spend the weekend in Tallinn. I notice also some Finnish youngsters, in groups of four or so. Finnish people travel more as couples, families or in bigger tourist groups. And again – something in their being, clothing style and facial features tells about their Finnish origin. Quite long before the passport control opens and boarding time starts, people start queuing up. In general people pass the passport control quickly, with no complications. When passport control is passed, there is another smaller waiting area that becomes full of people before the gates to the ferry open. Once gates are opened, people start hurrying, pushing other people, to be among the first ones who reach the ferry and thus to be able to choose easily the desired area in the ferry. Those who have very little luggage have an advantage in moving quicker. Reaching the ferry, there are three basic directions: some people take the way to the sitting-area, the others to the bars, and the third group of people go directly to the cabins. The small sitting-area becomes full of Estonians and Russians, especially women. Finns are the ones who take the cabins or go directly to the bars. Finnish people spend their time in bars, cafeterias, on the dancing floor and in the tax-free shops. There are also Estonians and Russians who go to eat and drink in the bar, but looking around in the sitting-area, the people who unwrap their own food, read some newspapers, watch TV or have a nap, are the "ours" mostly. The ways how the three and half hour ferry-trip will be spent are quite different. When the ferry reaches the sea territory of Estonia and the Estonian mobile operators

will be in coverage, many Estonians and Russians start taking phone calls. When there is about half an hour left to the arrival time, people start gathering in front of the ferry doors, first ones the “ours” without any luggage. 15 minutes before the doors open, the lobby is totally crowded, no room to breath. People stick close to each other not to give any chance to others to come in between. When the doors are finally opened, people push and pull the suitcases, step on each other’s toes, swear. In the corridor to the terminal it looks like running a crowded marathon. The purpose is to be as soon as possible in the passport control again, because when it is passed, there is Tallinn – for many of the people home, family, children; for others a destination to go through reaching home; for the third part a holiday resort.

What I have just related cannot be called a single story, as I have not done it once, but many times with the same sequence of elements. The details vary from story to story, but the basic storyline remains the same. Since the time I have been living in Finland, in Tampere, these scenes compound to be a quintessential part of my travels to Estonia and back to Finland and have thus obtained a notable place in my whole life-story.

My first experience with a passenger ferry was in spring 1997 at the age of 17, just before my graduation from high-school, when my class from an Estonian province had a school-trip to Stockholm. It was a 2-day-cruise type of a trip, we spent the whole evening and night in the ship enjoying its entertainments and after sleeping in the cabins arrived in Stockholm the next morning. After spending a day touring the city of Stockholm, we took again the ship and arrived back home the next morning. It was a significant trip in many ways: my last school-trip, first trip on a passenger ship, and the first time in my life abroad. Indeed, it was a first trip abroad for many of my classmates, since even though Estonia had gained independence again and travelling across the border had been possible for several years already few families actually could afford it. Me and my friends were curious about everything: the entertainment opportunities in this huge ship, shops and clubs; how does it feel to spend a night in a cabin, which is situated beneath water-level; to stay outside on the deck feeling the waves and the strength of wind; staying in the darkness, when the huge ship itself is gleaming in lights. In the lobby there was a sea-map marking our route from Tallinn to Stockholm and there was a light blinking, showing our location. I remember also the excitement when dancing in the night-club with my friends and the foreign men approaching us, young women. Once in Stockholm, it appeared as a big beautiful and busy city. And the impression of its multicultural atmosphere was overwhelming, so different from that of home, where black people would be something extraordinary to behold. When on our way back home, a

storm on the sea arose, so that the ship was tossing so much that the bottles and glasses in the bar fell off to the floor and it was impossible to walk keeping straight. We were afraid of becoming sea-sick, and loaded by the memories of the catastrophe with M/S Estonia passenger ship in September 28, 1994¹, I believe each one of us had in mind, What if it happens again?

The next time I went abroad, was again by passenger ferry in spring 1999. I and my friend Ellen, the students of tourism management, were selected to go and make our internship in a hotel in Jyväskylä, in Finland. Our trip went through Tallinn to Helsinki by passenger ferry. It was a warm and sunny April day, so that we could spend lot of time sitting outside on the deck. Though, the strongest memories I have from the customs on the Finnish side. As Estonia was not part of the European Union that time yet, the control over the movement between the Estonian and Finnish borders was quite strict. For Estonians it was possible to enter Finland only as a tourist for limited time, unless on some special reason, which required detailed documents. The officials in the customs were allowed to ask detailed questions about a ship-passenger's stay in Finland. Although, provided with a letter of invitation and several documents from the supervisor of our internship, our Finnish was very poor, and we had difficulties in explaining our reasons for travel to Finland. We were asked to open our suitcases in front of other passengers, to search for documents to show to the officials. Since our explanations did not seem credible in spite of showing the documents written in Finnish, we were then escorted to a special office to find out our actual motivations. The friends of my parents, Estonians living in Helsinki had come to pick us up from the harbour. While we were escorted, they saw us and interfered. They took over the responsibility to explain the reasons, why we were in Finland and so it did not take too long till we were released to stay in Finland.

A few years later I was accepted as an exchange student in Tampere University and I entered Finland again. It was in January 2004, by passenger ferry. This time I had a temporary residence-permit in my passport, so I did not encounter any obstacles from the Finnish customs. I do not remember many details about the trip itself, I assume, because I was full of excitement thinking about starting my studies and life in Finland.

¹ The catastrophe happened near Utö island on the Tallinn-Stockholm line and is known as the biggest in peace-time history of Estonia; 852 people sank, mainly the citizens of Sweden, Estonia and Finland. The investigation about the reasons for the catastrophe is still ongoing.

Now I have been living in Finland for four and half years, the longest time of being away from here is a four-month-stay for a study-exchange in Canada. In this period I have been travelling between Finland and Estonia many times, irregularly, but every single time using a passenger ferry. All together it must be over 20 times that I have made the trip this way from Tampere to somewhere in Estonia. The reasons have been meeting my family, friends or for more official matters.

Why one is dependent on the passenger ferry, while travelling between Estonia and Finland, is connected to the very fact that there is no land-border between the two countries, but the Gulf of Finland has to be crossed. (Fig. 1 and 2) The Gulf can be, in principle, crossed over by air transportation like helicopters² or planes, but due to the high costs of these travel-methods, the regular travellers, unless businessmen rely almost invariably on the ferry-connections. However, even if the passenger ferry and events connected to being a passenger in the ferry seem to be the most typical for travelling between Estonia and Finland there are usually other means of transportation and other sequences of events that are part of Estonians' travels between the two countries. Namely, many of the regular passengers, and here I mean mostly the Estonians who have come to work or study in Finland, do not travel exactly to Tallinn or Helsinki, the two cities that are connected by ferries, but need to travel further, to other destinations. This involves other means of transportation like cars, buses, trains and intercity transportation to the travelling process, which all make the trip longer in distance, more time-consuming and particularly designed.

Let me give you a brief example. For instance, when I leave from Tampere that is situated about 160 km north of Helsinki to visit my parents, who live about 100 km distance from Tallinn, the whole distance straight overseas make about 350 km in total (see Fig.2). The whole sequence of events in time until January 2008³ would have looked like this:

² There used to be a regular helicopter connection operated by Copterline Oy between Helsinki and Tallinn in earlier years, but after the accident on August 10th, 2005 when the copter fell into the sea because of a technical failure, with 14 passengers on board, and none survived, the business went down. Not long after the line was closed. After a few years' break Copterline Oy opened the Helsinki-Tallinn copter-line again in April 2008.

³ Since January 2008 Estonia has been a full member of the Schengen Treaty, which means that there is no passport control anymore for anybody on the Finnish-Estonian border, as also on the borders of any countries that are part of the Treaty zone. Therefore, presently the sequence of events while travelling between Estonia and Finland does differ in this aspect, but in terms of time-saving the change is insignificant.

08.20 Leaving my home in Hervanta on foot to catch a bus to the Tampere railway station in downtown Tampere
09.00 Train leaves from Tampere
10.50 Arrival at Helsinki railway station
11.15 I'm in a ferry terminal; have to go through the queues to check-in, waiting for the passport control and boarding
12.30 Ferry leaves from Helsinki
15.45 Arrival time to Tallinn Harbour
16.10 I've gone through the wait-push-pull-run marathon and passport control for getting out from the ferry and terminal
16.20 I'm out from the harbour area and taking a tram to the Tallinn Bus Terminal
16.35 I'm in the bus terminal
17.25 Bus leaves from Tallinn
18.45 Leaving the bus 9 km from my parent's place, a family member has come to pick me up and give a ride home
19.00 I'll be at home, at my parents' place

That makes exactly 10 hours and 40 minutes for the average trip from Tampere to my parents' place in Estonia. During summer season one can shorten this trip to 8 hours when taking a quick ferry with less capacity that covers the distance between Helsinki and Tallinn in one and a half hours only. It is only in the last couple of years that the Estonian and Finnish ferry companies have started to offer the possibility of travelling by catamarans that operate throughout the year and cover the distance in 2 hours.

When living my everyday life in Tampere and keeping connection with my family and friends in Estonia by emails, phone and Skype-calls, and being updated with the life in Estonia through the use of online news on daily-bases, I often tend to forget about the distance that separates me from Estonia and my beloved ones. Cognitively my life there in Estonia is just a hair's breadth away. But as soon as I think of taking-up a visit to Estonia, the distance starts to feel real; it stretches out and becomes an obstacle. Influenced by my cognitive imagination of distance, travel itself becomes a matter of comprehensive negotiation: *Are the time, money and energy spent on travelling worth what the trip and the stay in Estonia reciprocate for me practically and emotionally?*

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and becoming citizens of an independent country, which opened its borders for the rest of the world, Estonians have often shown an interest in going to work or moving to Finland. In the last 4 years that Estonia has been a member of the European Union and a part of the free labour movement project in the EU, Estonians have actively used their newly appeared chances to find jobs in Finland. This in turn results in very regular commuting between the countries: weekly, fortnightly or monthly commuting is widespread.

Thinking about my own experiences as a rather irregular traveller and looking at the practises of other people, some of who travel the same distance weekly (and sometimes it seems to me, without any complaint nor hesitation), I have been often wondering, *How do other people reason their travels? Do we after all experience the same inner negotiations? How do they perceive their travels? And finally, as a travellers' community, sharing to certain extent a similar experience but having different life-stories, does travelling to Estonia represent the same for all of us?* These are the questions that have guided me to write this study and the following is an attempt to open-up those questions by creating a dialogue between my own ethnography as a transnational traveller in Estonian-Finnish borderlands and those of the other Estonians in Finland, that were shared with me during the interviews I conducted with them.

1.2. Concepts and definitions

The wider framework where I position my study relates to the phenomena of mobility, border-crossing and migration. Some of the people in whose travelling experience I am interested in live in Finland for the purpose of work. In socio-economic terms people's movement between two nation states for the purpose of work is understood as 'labour migration' and in the European Union in particular as 'labour mobility'. However, since not all my interviewees live in Finland because of work purposes, I will thereafter avoid from using the terms of migration and mobility connected to the word *labour*.

The terms 'migration' and 'mobility' are often used intermingled and understood as synonyms. Yet when paying closer attention to the connotations of these terms in the literature one can notice that the principal difference between the terms exists. As Bryceson and Vuorela (2003, pp. 7-8) have explained, 'migration' tends to be associated

with people who are economically or politically deprived, and ‘mobility’, on the other hand, refers frequently to transnational elites; thus the first being a marker of the imposed status and the latter of a choice. Since I do not have means to differentiate extensively on the bases of class in this thesis, I will neither make such a substantial distinction between ‘mobility’ and ‘migration’, but I will rather treat the terms as synonyms, which both express the practises of moving between and living in different geographical and social spaces.

‘Border-crossing’ is generally understood in terms of crossing state borders. It is an accurate term, since the state borders are actually crossed in the process of travelling from Finland to Estonia and back. However, it must be noticed that due to various reasons, (crossing the sea, instead of the land border; renouncing the passport check in customs etc.) the border-crossing in the Estonian-Finnish context might not be perceived by the migrants as border-crossing in its strict sense; therefore the suitability of the term must be considered carefully each time depending on the exact context.

The central concepts for this thesis are ‘travel’ and ‘travelling’. Other terms that can be sometimes used, depending on the context, are ‘commuting’, ‘trip’, ‘journey’ and ‘movement’. It is important to understand the difference in the concepts of ‘travelling’ and ‘commuting’ here, as otherwise this can be a source for further confusion. I have distinguished those concepts in a cognitive rather than phenomenological way. ‘Travelling’ is associated rather with longer distance, irregularity, infrequency, multiple types of transportation means, visiting unknown or unexplored places. ‘Commuting’, on the other hand, symbolises rather regularity, frequency, one type of transportation means, routine. Most importantly, if ‘commuting’ usually happens daily to go to work then travelling here does not take place every day and it has often connections with leisure. ‘Commuting’ is usually seen as happening within a single state, but the latest developments in the EU are going more and more in the direction that ‘commuting’ can easily take place over state borders on a daily basis within the EU. In this respect, the EU has been often seen as one supra-state economic unit (Gruber 2000) and the citizens of this supra-state are supposed to experience universalised opportunities, rights and obligations within the European Economic Area.

From the interviews that I have conducted it mostly turns out that the elements of ‘travelling’ and ‘commuting’ are often intermingled, overlapping and the pure concepts according to my definitions can be hardly used. Namely, Estonians that travel between

Finland and Estonia do it relatively often, but not according to an exact schedule; they use different means of transportation; for many people the movement from one country to another resembles a routine; going to Estonia or Finland associates with familiar, but at the same time arriving to one or the other country often evokes strong emotions that are not characteristic for ‘commuting’. Thus, for the sake of clarity and simplicity I have decided to stick with the term of ‘travelling’ (or ‘journey’, ‘travel’ or ‘trip’, all seen as synonyms in this context), but if in some particular cases the features of ‘commuting’ dominate and it is important for the study, I refer to this term as well. At this point it is worth mentioning that the people’s own term for travelling is ‘going to Estonia’, they hardly ever use terms such as ‘travelling’ or ‘commuting’ in this context, and thus, according to Zavella (2005) and other (particularly feminist) anthropologists it would be methodologically the most correct to study the people on their own terms. However, as the ‘going to Estonia’ only represents one direction of the travels, whereas for the way from Estonia to Finland the term ‘returning’ is mostly used, the use of people’s own terms would become too clumsy within this study. Thus, I decided to be content with ‘travelling’.

The central terms in this thesis related to overseas travelling are ‘passenger ship’, ‘passenger ferry’ or just ‘ferry’. In earlier times the larger sea vessels that carried people were called simply ‘passenger ships’. Therefore ‘passenger ship’ is also the term I refer to with regards to the vessels that carried passengers on the Helsinki-Tallinn route until 1990. Since 1990 there is quite a wide range of different sea vessels with different functionality operating between Helsinki and Tallinn. Many of the companies have invested in multi-functionality. Therefore there are sitting areas; entertainment and consumption facilities such as bars, restaurants, casinos, shops, saunas etc.; cabins and also large decks for carrying cars, buses and cargo all integrated in one sea-going vessel. This type of sea-going vessel is mostly referred to as a ‘passenger ferry’, whereby ‘ferry’ refers to the existence of huge car decks. As such vessels are normally large and quite slow passengers usually call them ‘large ferries’ or ‘slow ferries’. In addition, there are also the smaller fast-speed vessels that have less variety in entertainment facilities, do not have cabins, and may or may not have car decks and cargo transportation facilities integrated. In official terminology they are referred to as ‘catamarans’, but people call them simply ‘fast-ferries’ or ‘small ferries’. In general in this thesis there is a need for a general term that would be consistent and easily comprehensible. Thus I decided to use

the terms ‘passenger ferry’ or ‘ferry’ for any kind of sea transportation on the Helsinki-Tallinn route from 1990 onwards. Only sometimes the specification between ‘slow ferry’ and ‘fast ferry’ is contextually important and then the specific names are used.

Another important concept for this study is ‘transnationalism’. ‘Transnationalism’ gets easily confused with ‘internationalism’ and therefore further explanation is needed. While ‘international’ would refer to the contacts and cooperation between two or more different countries, cultures etc. and the outcome of this relation usually contains elements of both parts, but the stress is not put on surplus value. ‘Transnationalism’ again emphasises the processes and outcomes that go together and *beyond* the contacts of people located in different countries and cultures. In other words, where transnationalism happens there is always some extra value that does not need to have anything to do with the original cultural manifestations. I argue that Estonians who live in Finland tend to maintain strong connections with family and friends in Estonia and the implementations of their transnationalism are manifested in their practises of travelling.

1.3. Purpose statement

Travel, an inseparable part of mobility, migration and border-crossing, has found very little attention in the studies done in the field. While concentrating on the various problems mentioned in this chapter under the section 1.5., the concept of travel and its implementations on the life of individuals, communities and even states has been simply overlooked. It seems that travel has three major connotations, one of which could be called fictional, relating to travel writing (travelogues) and the others are associated with elite and leisure that refer to the fields of tourism management, business and marketing. In common knowledge travel is mostly associated with leisure (spending holidays abroad, exploring unknown places) or international business (business-trips). However, travel is much more than that and the motivations for travelling are various, just to mention few: visiting and taking care of family members; passing through the distances that are located far-away from each other e.g. from home to work; refuge, pilgrimage etc. Many forms of travelling imply spending a lot of time for getting from one place to another; complicated ways of being able to travel; and big part of travelling is not a matter of people’s free will.

I believe that it is exactly the preconceived misconception of these three connotations of travel – fictional, elite and leisure – that have discouraged social scientists from delving into the rich opportunities of discovering and rethinking the practises and meanings of travel. Taking travel seriously and exploring the various levels of the phenomena would enable to understand better the ways how travel and its outcomes are connected to particular histories and politics as any other social phenomenon.

This study that will focus on people's travelling experiences in an Estonian-Finnish context is an attempt to draw more attention to travel that becomes an inevitable part of people's everyday life once they leave their home country and stay abroad. The fact that Estonia has been part of the Soviet history and régime that for Estonians is part of a shared social memory, and for many people still an individual memory, gives an opportunity to see the perception and changing practises of travel retrospectively. Concentrating on people's travelling practises enables us to better understand the complex nature of travel related to migration, mobility and border-crossing. This is especially important in a situation where the discussions related to migration focus predominantly around the socio-economic interpretations of the phenomenon. Even though the study only represents the Estonian-Finnish practises, I believe that I will be able to point out aspects and offer interpretations that can be useful in wider context when talking about migration, mobility, border-crossing and travelling.

1.4. Research statement and questions

My study is about Estonian-Finnish border-crossing and its transnational dimensions. For exploring those phenomena and their manifestations in this particular geographical location under specific cultural, political, historical and economic conditions I concentrate on the regular practises of travelling and border-crossing of Estonian migrants in Finland. Firstly, I explore what characterizes people's travelling practises between Finland and Estonia now and what have been the changes compared to the time when they started travelling. Secondly, I try to find out about people's perceptions and attitudes towards the travelling across Finnish-Estonian borderlands, with a special emphasis on the perception of distance and time. Thirdly, I am interested in ideological, political, economic and cultural borders people have met and overcome while

travelling. And finally, I look at the ways, how people explain their reasons for living multi-sited lives that contain extensive travelling. My aim is to understand these themes through my personal ethnography and the ethnographies present in the interviews that I have conducted with Estonians living in Finland and which all concentrate extensively around the practise of ferry-trips, which is a leading means of transportation between the neighbour countries of Estonia and Finland.

Instead of just concentrating on people's recent journeys, I will also look at the practises of Estonian-Finnish border-crossing through the practise of passenger ferry trips in a historical perspective, uncovering the characteristics and meanings of travelling across the "Iron Curtain" during the communist régime. I believe that this approach opens up the complexity of journeys and travelling; helps to overcome the tendency of under emphasising alternative explanations for the economic ones in transnational migration; and finally helps to demystify the journey, especially with regards to politically restricted travelling characteristic to communist régime.

In addition to purely learning about the transnationalism through the Estonian-Finnish border-crossing practises, happening in the very specific settings, my thesis also serves a wider purpose. I argue that travelling in general has to be seen in the context of transnationalism and transnational migration as a complex socio-cultural, economic and political phenomenon that has a certain influence on people's life trajectories. I intend to draw attention to the circumstance that journey itself as an invariable part of people's movement across countries has in most part of today's writing on global flows left out. It is often unrealized that travelling or commuting does occupy a lot of time in people's everyday lives and thus we do not have any reason to assume that it has no significance on really structuring people's lives. I intend to draw more attention to the importance of practises and meanings of journey in transnational migration and show one possible way, how to relate the concept of travel with today's theorisation on globalisation and transnationalism.

1.5. Literature review

Travelling is the realm of life that relates closely to the notions of mobility, migration and border-crossings. All these phenomena that cannot be called modern at all are the areas of everyday life in all parts of the world that have arose of interest to

scholars, policy makers, human rights activists etc. This phenomenon has just been in the last two decades and the peak of the interest does not seem to have arrived yet. There is a whole body of scholarly research done in these areas, most of it addressing the problems that the spread of these phenomena create for the individuals, communities and states affected by the fact that people do not stay put.

A big part of the literature on migration and mobility concentrates around the push and pull factors of the sending and receiving countries, in other words, the motivations for migration; another kind of literature addresses the topics of integration and acculturation; multiculturalism and diversity; socio-economic, political and cultural influences of migration of the countries of immigrants' origin and destination. Some studies have been concerned with the moral rights and responsibilities, the legacy and human rights problems all closely related to the realm of mobility and migration. However, most of the studies on the mentioned fields are not particularly useful with regard to my study.

Earlier literature on migration and mobility often takes either state-to-state or state-individual approach, which is a very Western-centric worldview, without taking into account that in practice the relationships between the variables and their impacts have more dimensions. Various combinations between state, individual and family, the latter one being a basic organising unit in many cultures on contrary to the Western individualistic approach, are possible. With this regard the studies that address transnationalism and its various applications have opened up a whole set of new discourses that enable us to comprehend better the complexity of social relations.

Appadurai (1996), Hannerz (1996), Kearney (1996) and Castells (1996) have done major work in introducing the range and nature of global connections in a post-modern world which are the preconditions for transnationalism, however, their macro-views of the world leave many questions unanswered, once one takes the bottom-up approach and explores people's everyday-life practises in any specific geographical setting. With this regard Ong (2000 and 2006) who studies transnationalism through an ethnographic perspective and narrows her findings down to specifically located geographical connections in South and East Asia is more successful in explaining the applications of transnationalism. She advocates the idea that transnationalism does not happen randomly but is an outcome of a set of targeted actions steered by powerful political and economic forces. Her approach is especially useful to remember, because

she does not limit the occurrences of transnationalism to capitalist states and neoliberalism only, but stresses that it can also be a part of the programs of authoritarian and communist régimes. Tsing (2000, 2006) has also offered mind-broadening ethnographic accounts for understanding global connections. She sees the world as organised into global projects (Tsing 2000) and uses the metaphor of friction (Tsing 2006) for explaining, why global projects have limits and why the whole world is not equally in motion, but the cultural, political, and economic distinctions still exist.

Bryceson and Vuorela (2003) again offer a different theoretical approach to global connections compared to the aforementioned ones. They argue that for learning about global connections in the best way, we should not look at them as shaped primarily by political and economic forces and study their manifestations, but we could instead concentrate on family networks. They see family as a basic organising unit for an individual's life-arrangements in many cultures, which makes it probable that transnationalism can be most effectively comprehended by tracing frontiering and relativizing family networks around the globe, and by looking how they function.

In many studies migration is referred to as an extraordinary event, an outcome of a situation where people have no agency over decision to stay put in their countries of origin. Here Olwig (2003) has offered an alternative approach, based on her research on Caribbean migrants' family networks that reach from Caribbean islands to North America and Europe. She states that the migrants themselves might perceive their migration history as part of a desirable livelihood project where they act as designers and implementers of those projects. The same possibility becomes evident from the study of David and Waters (2004) where they have concluded on the example of Chinese immigrants in Vancouver that immigration and splitting-up families can be an application of the best lived lives. I will consider these points seriously in this thesis too.

Finally, within all the studies on transnationalism and global connections, also Levitt's contribution (2000 and 2001) to my study is important. She has powerfully advocated the idea that migrants' and their families' daily practises both at home and in host-countries are an extremely valuable source for understanding transnationalism with regards to the transformations that become possible in different spheres of life here and there. Leavitt (2000) has also suggested that within other daily practises the border-crossing practises should have more attention paid to, which is exactly apropos to my own study.

Travel and the practises of travel, as I argued before, have been discussed mainly as part of the leisure-travel discourse (e.g. Cohen 1979, Urry 2000 and 2003) being closely related to the consumption (Urry 2000) and the Giddens' (1999) condition of high modernity discourses, but have found very little direct attention in the realm of migration and mobility studies. In anthropological writing both Kaplan (1996) and Clifford (1997) have addressed the phenomenon of travelling and its impact on defining dominant understandings about natural and unnatural cultural practises, by asking, *Why staying put has been seen as a natural, and travelling and displacement as an unnatural condition, if the human history can be seen as full of events of travelling and displacement?* Kaplan (1996) argues that seeing travel and displacement, terms that in her view should be seen in juxtaposition rather than in opposition, as an unnatural condition causes mystification around those phenomena, which is the product of colonial practises. Thus, Kaplan strongly advocates the need for demystification of those phenomena, which can only be done by exploring personal and individualised histories of travel and displacement. When I discuss in this thesis the Estonians' border-crossing practises in the Estonian-Finnish borderlands, one of my major intentions is also demystification, in the way that I try to disprove the common opinion spread both among the "Westerners" and the younger generations of Estonians who do not have the Soviet experience as if the life in the Soviet Union was literally lived behind the "Iron Curtain" and travelling abroad was impossible.

As much as the travel and displacement relate to transnationalism and global connections, including the bridge-making between local and global, they are also the subjects of the discourses on place and space. There is a long list of theorists writing on place and space, especially in a postmodernist vein, but in my own writing I have found the biggest support from the thinking of human geographers and particularly feminist geographers. The most important foundations for my understanding of the relationship between places and spaces come from the writings of Massey (1993, 1994, 2005). If in the earlier literature place was usually perceived as fixed and space as fluid, then Massey has shown that places too can be contested, fluid and uncertain as spaces are. Massey also argues that places and spaces are both the results of socio-spatial practises, which makes it possible that in their nature both are overlapping, intersecting and changing. (Massey 2005) This is especially important to remember in my study when I discuss the practise of border-crossing, and particularly ferry-trips.

Ferry-trips have quite a significant part in Estonian-Finnish border-crossing practises, but ferries or ships in a broader sense have not gained any attention in postmodern writing on places and spaces, whereas airports and metros have. In particular, airport terminals and metros have been seen as connected to the concept of non-place. Augé (1995a, 1995b and 2002), for instance treats airport terminals and metros as non-places because of the speed and anonymity of interactions taking place in those settings. Therefore, I find it also useful to discuss, what would be the possibilities of passenger ferries to be theoretically related to the concept of non-place.

The central themes in my thesis are distance and time. Hereby Massey's (2005) contribution on distance and time is important, but Katz's (2004) observations on time-space expansion in Howa village in Sudan that counterbalances the Harvey's (1989) time-space compression conception are still of utmost significance. Furthermore, I believe that different people in different geographical locations under various cultural, political and economic conditions perceive time and distance in various relatively personalised ways rather than that there are universal trends. This is an aspect I will take a closer look at in my study.

Finally, to return to the importance of the literature of feminist geographers to my thinking about travelling practises, I need to acknowledge also the influence of McDowell's (1999) texts. Even though I finally decided that the gender aspect itself does not appear, at least in my ethnographies, to be shaping the travel in the Estonian-Finnish borderlands so powerfully that I could primarily concentrate on that, her writing is especially important for me in teaching me to recognise multiplicity and difference in travelling practises.

1.6. Positioning audiences and myself

While writing this thesis I have asked several questions from myself: *Who am I in this story? How does my experience count? How am I similar to/different from the other Estonians in Finland and what does it say about the similarity/difference of our travelling experiences? How have my interviewees perceived me and my role and them and their role in this research? What do they expect from this research? Whose interests do I represent with this study? What are the possible consequences and effects of this study?*

During my interviews with the Estonians in Finland I experienced a lot of sympathy and willingness in sharing their experiences with me. I figured that many of my interviewees could easily identify with me being an Estonian in Finland, white, ethnic Estonian, coming from the lower middle-class and having a shared memory about communist history. I would like to avoid the term 'insider' here because of its anthropologically disputed meaning (Gupta and Ferguson 1997, Abu-Lughod 1995). Namely, I take seriously the suggestions to question the possibilities of a researcher to actually be a real 'insider' in a group of interest, because the position of a researcher itself is always, mostly with regards to her/his power position, in a logical as well as in a practical conflict with the term of 'insider'. I am a researcher and I have my research agenda that excludes the opportunity that my informants could be equal with me in terms of having pre-knowledge about the research, influencing interpretations and implementing power over the text. This is especially important to memorise when a researcher has a very personal relationship to the research subject in order to avoid that my own voice would begin dominating over the opinions of my informants. However, in spite of this conceptual proposition that I cannot be a real 'insider', I mostly experienced that people treated me as somebody who shares their experience, somebody who should understand in a word to the wise way.

I also need to reckon in that I have had very strong prejudices related to ferry trips and the special atmosphere there. These reasons, too personal and too many prejudices, have made me want to drop this topic several times. However, in the course of doing my research and writing this thesis I have personally gone through a positive transformation: I have become very confident about the necessity of writing about this topic; I have broken my stereotypes, overcome prejudices and changed my attitudes. While the travel before was associated for myself with mostly negative feelings such as a routine, boredom, stress, loss of time, and changing emotions I have noticed that during the course of conducting my research and especially through getting to know the experiences of other Estonians I have broadened my mind and changed my own attitudes to those that are considerably more complex and positive.

In consequence, I hope that this study will interest the social scientists, scholars and students, reading and writing about migration, transnationalism, mobility and border-crossing. This work does not attempt in any way to represent the transportation companies' interests or needs, neither is it written at the demand of any public office.

2. Historical and socio-economic context for Estonian-Finnish overseas connections

Free movement, meaning visa-free and undocumented border-crossing and unlimited stay abroad, between Estonia and Finland is a relatively new opportunity for the people interested in travelling between the two countries. During the Soviet period the entrance to the North and West was strongly controlled, and the front-line of Estonia resembled a non-accessible fortress for most of the Estonian population. The coastline and ports were part of a military area, and ordinary people were forbidden to enter those. After World War II the overseas passenger transportation between Tallinn and Helsinki was re-established in 1965 and only one Soviet passenger ship was operating between the two countries. It was at the end of 1980s when finally passenger ferry companies were allowed and in 1990 the first commercial line was opened. Thus, as a field of business, the modern sea transportation is very new in Estonia, although the history of maritime goes far back, and Estonians are used to thinking of themselves as a maritime nation.

Access to the sea and foreign countries have been historically very much interrelated to people living in Estonia. Because of foreign invaders in earlier periods, and especially due to the defence praxis of the Soviet Union in recent history, we have not been able to take access to the sea for granted; but access or its denial have been related to the dominant ideology and political régime. Frontline, sea and free access are thus not things in themselves, but historically situated and loaded with symbolical meanings over time.

2.1. Opportunities for Estonian-Finnish overseas connections

2.1.1. Overseas connections and sea transportation during Soviet times

The very first regular ship connection for passengers from Estonia to abroad date back to 1638 when Estonia was part of the Kingdom of Sweden and there was established an overseas mail transportation that delivered also passengers. Regular passenger ships between Finland and Estonia between the ports of Helsinki and Tallinn started to operate in 1837. The Helsinki-Tallinn line was one link on the Turku-Helsinki-Tallinn-St. Petersburg route. Since both, Estonia and Finland were part of the Russian Empire at that time, the connection would not have been counted as international. (Ellermaa 2005, pp.

76 and 98) In the early years there were around 5 000 passengers yearly and the trip, depending on the weather, took up to 6 hours.

The ships had different classes and the first class ticket offered quite luxurious travelling conditions: a cabin with shower or bathroom conveniences (Blomgren et al 2005, p. 34). Blomgren et al (2005, p. 38) also describe that the traffic was seasonal with the busiest times in summer and traffic reductions in winter time, when the sea was completely frozen. In the beginning of the 20th century some ships were already able to take around 500 passengers.

An important period in Estonian sea transportation history are the years 1918-1940, when Estonia was independent for the first time. Trips by passenger ships between Helsinki and Tallinn were quite popular then. For instance, in 1936-1937 there were 75 thousand outgoing passengers who passed through the passenger pavilion in Tallinn, 65% of those were Estonians (Ellermaa 2005, p. 147).

At the end of 1939 when the Soviet Union had annexed the Republic of Estonia and the world was enmeshed in World War II, regular passenger transportation between Helsinki and Tallinn stopped (Ellermaa 2005, p. 150). The years prior, during and after World War II actually mainly show population decrease in Estonia through constant emigration. The estimates show that compared with 1934 the population of Estonia decreased roughly 9% by 1941⁴ (Ellermaa 2005, p. 160). Among the people who left Estonia were many Baltic Germans, Swedish and ethnic Estonians themselves. Most of the people escaped by boats from Soviet rule and World War II. The period between August and October 1944 is known in Estonian history as The Great Exodus (Kumer-Haukanõmm 2006) marking the extensive flight from Soviet rule, most often to Sweden, but also to other Western countries. Once again, escaping took place mainly by boat over the Baltic Sea.

For the next 25 years Estonia had almost no connection with the Western world. Sea-gate was closed and it became part of the “Iron Curtain”. Visiting Finland was possible only through St. Petersburg and Karelia and it was very few occasions that people travelled that way (Fig. 4). As many people say, it became slowly a utopian dream to imagine that they could ever visit the Western world again. Many Estonians had some

⁴ According to 1934 census the Estonian population was 1.13 million and in 1941 only 1 million.

family in the West but keeping the connection alive by mails was complicated and even perilous, since any kind of dispatch from and to the West was carefully observed.

The passenger transportation between Tallinn and Helsinki was again re-established in 1965 and only one Soviet ship, Vanemuine (later Tallinn and Georg Ots), started to operate between the two countries (Tallink homepage). From the Helsinki side Wellamo was operating. The capacity of the ships was not more than 250 passengers. (Ellermaa 2005, pp. 167-168) The number of passengers yearly did not reach more than 100 000⁵. Travelling between the Soviet Republic of Estonia and Finland was not everybody's right, but rather a rare privilege mostly for people related to Finnish-Soviet sport and cultural friendship connections. The people who travelled, were normally offered the opportunity by their organisations or employment institutions (e.g. collective farm, factory) and they needed a visa, for which they were carefully examined. For those, who had some family living in the West or whose relatives were not considered reliable⁶ in the eyes of Soviet authorities, travelling to Finland was foreclosed. Whereat, most of the passengers were the Finnish citizens, who could only travel to Tallinn or were escorted directly to other Soviet cities (e.g. Moscow), but other places in Estonia were not allowed for them to visit. International tourism appeared as an active interest for the Soviet Union for the first time in the 1970s. Until that time in Tallinn or elsewhere in Estonia there was no infrastructure for incoming tourism. The first hotel in Tallinn that was appropriate for foreign tourists was built in 1963. It was called Tallinn and only in 1972 was the hotel Viru, Estonia's first skyscraper, built.

In 1980, when Moscow hosted the summer Olympic games the sailing regatta was held in Tallinn and the passenger ship Tallinn was replaced by the brand-new Georg Ots⁷ (Fig. 3), which remained the only passenger ship on the Helsinki-Tallinn route for the whole decade. In connection with the Olympic games Tallinn also got its second skyscraper hotel, Olümpia, in 1980. Thus, in the 1980s there were already considerably better conditions in Tallinn for the incoming tourists than had been in the past. The 1980s brought also more facility for Estonians for travelling to Finland. When in the 1970s there

⁵ Information from an expert interview with a manager of a sea transportation company, a former captain of a passenger ferry.

⁶ Meaning that they were condemned by the Soviet authorities as traitors, which often also entailed life-long or temporary deportation. The reasons for that were plentiful, one of the most frequent ones fighting in the German army during the World War II.

⁷ Named after the 20th century famous Estonian opera singer Georg Ots (1920-1975)

were on average about 100 000 passengers (the great majority Finnish) annually on the Tallinn-Helsinki line, by the mid 1980s the number was doubled.

Compared to the earlier trend of offering stratified cabin service for different passenger classes, in the mid 20th century the trend changed to decrease cabin facilities and increase leisure facilities instead. Passenger ships started to have saunas and swimming pools, playrooms for children, night clubs and plentiful entertainment. (Blomgern et al 2005, p. 142) In the Baltic Sea travelling history, 24-hour cruises became popular at the end of the 1980s. Cruises were meant to offer fun and plenty of opportunities for consumption such as tax-free shopping. Companies found cruises as an attractive environment for holding seminars and meetings (Blomgern et al 2005, p. 179). However, it took still some years until cruises between Helsinki and Tallinn became extremely popular.

2.1.2. Commercialising overseas connections

At the end of 1980s when the Soviet Union was about to collapse, the control over the state borders and people's free movement weakened and there were more and more passengers travelling between Helsinki and Tallinn. In this freer atmosphere some private enterprise was allowed and the Estonian-Finnish joint shipping enterprise Tallink was established as the first private company, which started to operate on the Baltic Sea the Helsinki-Tallinn line.

None of the ships so far in the story had any car decks since there was no practical need for them. Finnish travellers could not pass the Tallinn borders and Estonians had neither financial nor spatial means to use the car for travelling in Finland. In the beginning of 1990 Tallink's passenger ferry Tallink was added to the Helsinki-Tallinn line. This ferry could carry 1 090 passengers and 150 cars, being the first ship with a car deck on-line (Ellermaa 2005, p. 173). In the same year the regular passenger ferry traffic between Tallinn and Stockholm was re-established.

The traffic was increasing so quickly that already in summer 1990 the Estonian-Finnish enterprise Helta started the high-speed vessel service by Sinilind and later Luik. Passenger transportation was clearly a profitable and quickly growing field in the shipping business. Thus every year brought new companies and ships, companies arose, merged and disappeared, ships were constantly bought and sold to new owners.

It is remarkable that in the beginning of the private sea transportation business it was impossible to estimate for any specialist, what could be the actual number of passengers who would be interested in their service and, accordingly, how wide would be the market for different companies and vessels that could offer successfully their services. The economy in Estonia was changing so quickly that when in 1994 the ferry companies themselves proposed that the maximum number of passengers will soon be reached then in 2000 the estimations got already tripled⁸.

Herewith it is interesting that the fast ferry companies do not consider themselves to be competing with slow ferry companies for the market, but rather with air companies. Their advantage compared with the latter was a considerably lower price level, when at the same time the time spent for the whole trip (terminal processing + trip) was comparable. Sometimes the fast ferry companies like to think of themselves also in terms of offering a kind of sea tram transportation. Their intense schedule resembles regular trams serving many cities. In this context helicopter transportation offered by Copterline in 2000-2005 challenged fast ferry companies the most. Copterline was able to bring the passenger from one capital to the other in 18 minutes and operated with two helicopters 28 flights per day. In 2004 the company carried 75 000 passengers and for the end of 2005 the estimations were about 90 000 (Copterline web page and Toomet 2005).

The passenger sea traffic between Finland and Estonia has been growing rapidly. While in 1989 there were 223 000 (Ellermaa 2005, p. 173), by the end of 1991 already 4.5 times more, close to 1 million (Ellermaa 2005, p. 178), and in 2005 close to 6 million passengers travelling between Helsinki and Tallinn (Port of Tallinn webpage) by sea. At the same time the number of travellers seemed to reach the peak in 2005, because the figure in 2007 had dropped to 5.8 million again. (Statistics Estonia 2008, see Table 1) Most of the ferries depart from the Old City Harbour in Tallinn, which is the historical harbour of Tallinn and the whole of Estonia.

2.1.3. Today's overseas connections

Have a look at the WebMarine ferry ticket online sale system (WebMarine web page). Today there are 6 ferry companies with 11 different passenger ferries operating on

⁸ Information from an expert interview with a manager of a sea transportation company, a former captain of a passenger ferry.

the Helsinki-Tallinn route. In summer season, when all fast speed sea vessels also operate, there are all together 46 trips daily, half starting from Tallinn, half from Helsinki. Ferries depart between 07:30 and 23:55 o'clock, the latest arriving in Tallinn at 02:00, the shortest travelling time is 1 hour and 30 minutes and the longest 3 hours and 30 minutes. (Fig. 6) Linda Line sail 6, Nordic Jetline 12, Tallink 14, Viking Line 4, Eckerö Line 2 and Superseacat OÜ 8 trips daily. Linda Line operates Jaanika and Merilin; Nordic Jetline – Nordic Jet and Baltic Jet; Tallink – Star, Superstar and Baltic Princess; Viking Line – Viking XPRS; Eckerö Line – Nordlandia and Superseacat OÜ – Superseacat III and Superseacat IV. Companies all together serve on average 15 000 passengers daily.

The ferry business is and has been highly seasonal and passenger profile varies much between weekdays. Between May and September, which counts as tourism season in the Baltic Sea region, ferry companies serve many tourists, the numbers peak typically in July and August (Table 1). On Friday and Sunday evenings, the Estonian workers in Finland are the majority. In earlier times on Friday and Sunday evenings it was mostly the Finnish weekend tourists who predominated. On weekdays, the business classes on fast-speed vessels serve business travellers mainly. Many of the public holidays, principally Christmas, Easter, Midsummer and Mayday increase the number of Estonian passengers considerably.

In the 1990s most of the ferry-passengers were Finnish citizens and among them so called “weekend tourists” or “vodka tourists” dominated. “Weekend tourism” means an entertainment trip with one or two nights stay in Tallinn. This often involves extensive use of services provided by hotels, restaurants, bars, shopping centres etc. “Vodka tourism”, common in the 1990s, was a particular way for Finnish citizens to benefit from tax free commerce on board and in terminal shops, which enabled them to buy many products, especially alcohol and tobacco, at a very cheap price for them. According to one of the expert interviews I made, 50% of the ferry companies’ profits, which operate with slow ferries with multiple entertainment facilities, were based on tax-free shopping and on-ferry services in 1990s, whereas fast ferry companies profit at least 75% from the ticket sales, which, in turn, determines higher ticket prices. Ferry companies report that the ban on tax-free commerce halted the so-far rapid increase of Finnish customers. Since 2005 the number of Finnish passengers was already dropping, mostly, because the level of the prices in Estonia has been increasing all the time and thus it is becoming less and less economical for the Finns to spend a weekend in Estonia and travel to Estonia just

for cheap services. Nowadays it is more and more the Estonian citizens and regular customers who travel.

In the last couple of years ferry companies have invested actively in a new ferry conception, a larger type of catamarans that cover the distance between Helsinki and Tallinn in 2 hours and are not dependent on weather conditions. The concept of this kind of sea vessel follows better the needs of today's regular passengers: speed, reliability and a huge capacity of car decks that assures the opportunity to travel by car between the final destination on one side of the sea and the point of origin on the other. Thus, the changes in the strategy of the ferry companies show that the importance of cruise tourism that was prevalent for over 15 years on the Helsinki-Tallink line is now clearly minimising.

2.2. Motivations for regular travelling between Estonia and Finland

2.2.1. Cultural and linguistic similarities as motivators

People in other parts of the world generally have little knowledge about Estonia. When I or any other Estonians have been asked, where is Estonia situated on the world map and what is it like, we normally start explaining following one of two storylines: We say that Estonia used to be part of the Soviet Union, being one of the most western of its republics by location and culture; or we identify that Estonia is situated next to Finland (or if this still feels too fake, we name the location in the European North, next to Scandinavia) and that our Estonian culture and language are similar to that of Finland. These two approaches usually evoke quite distinct understandings about what Estonia is like as a country, one symbolising regression and mystery, another a technologically well-off welfare state, as I have reckoned, and it is difficult to expand the understanding about Estonia over the stereotypical features once one of the two storylines has been used.

Estonia and Finland are, geographically speaking, neighbour countries, however most of the time during the last 800 years the interactions between the two geographical regions have been controlled and mediated by Swedish and Russian rulers. It is only the period of 1918-1938, when Estonia and Finland were both independent countries, and the years from the end of 1980s onwards, that Estonia and Finland can communicate as equal partners without being controlled by a superior power. Yet more intensified cultural contacts between the Estonian and Finnish cultural elite started to develop in the 19th

century. It was the time when nationalism gained its popularity in Europe in general and Estonian and Finnish cultural elites, inspired by nationalistic ideologies, started to promote their countries' social and cultural identity that is known as the national awakening. In this process Estonian-Finnish common linguistic and cultural traits were stressed for the first time and this can be seen as the beginning of the creation of an Estonian-Finnish common cultural identity that has continued throughout the following centuries. Korhonen (2007, p. 9-12) has discussed the Estonian-Finnish media discourse and concluded that even though Estonian-Finnish cultural, and later on also political and economic relations, common interests and cooperation have been promoted at different times, usually initiated from the Estonian side, the character of the relationships has not always been straightforward, friendly and enthusiastic. On the surface there is the rhetoric of friendly and supportive little and big brother, first representing Estonia and the latter one Finland, but when looking closer, the relationships become much more diversified and complex.

The geographical location could have caused the fact that Estonians and Finnish both use Finno-Ugric languages, Estonian and Finnish. These two Finno-Ugric languages, belonging to the Finno-Permic branch are the only languages among its type that are the official languages of independent countries and they are the most spoken Finno-Permic languages. Finnish is spoken as a mother tongue by about 6 million people in Finland and abroad and Estonian by 1 million people. Hereby, it is important to notice that Finno-Ugric languages are the languages of their own type and they are not at all similar to Slavic or Germanic languages spoken in Russia or Scandinavia as is commonly thought. The Estonian and Finnish languages have a big amount of vocabulary with a common origin, similar structure of sentences, similar case system and many other similarities that all make it considerably easy for Estonians or Finns to learn each-other's language or even to be able to understand the content of the conversation by careful listening without actively learning the other language. During Soviet times it was a common practise in the northern parts of Estonia, where there was enough broadcast coverage, because of the closeness to Finland, to watch Finnish TV-channels. These TV channels functioned as a window, not so much perceived as to Finland particularly, but to the West and the outside world, that gave for Estonians an idea of how does life look like outside there, on the other side of the "Iron Curtain". In addition, through the practise of following Finnish TV-programs Northern-Estonians often also obtained a passive

knowledge of the Finnish language, which appeared as an advantage for many of those who later took it up to do business or emigrate to Finland. Because of the uniqueness of Finno-Ugric languages, they are considered difficult languages to learn at an adult-age. Compared with other immigrant groups for whom the language issue appears as one of the biggest obstacles to integrate successfully in Finnish society (Huttunen 2002, Liebkind et al 2004), Estonians in Finland are the ones to whom language is the minor problem.

In addition to the linguistic relatedness, Estonians are relatively similar to the Finnish by their culture, as already mentioned, and genotype, especially comparing with other immigrant groups in Finland. In fact, my personal experience is that I am usually (at least until I do not uncover my difference from a native Finnish by making mistakes in pronunciation or grammar) treated as a Finn in everyday situations in Finland, which is not the case for many other foreigners in Finland. At the beginning and mid 1990s, when there were many people from the former Soviet Union immigrating to Finland and Estonians were not distinguished among the others as more culturally similar to Finnish, the attitudes of Finnish people towards Estonians were fairly negative, which is not usually the case today. (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al 2002 and 2003) At this point it is worthwhile to discern, the way how Korhonen (2007, p. 13) has noted, that while Estonians were curiously reading the signs and messages about the life behind the “Iron Curtain” during Soviet times, then in Finland the memories about the “brotherhood nation” only at 80 km distance started to disappear as a result of missing contacts and information. For example, in Finnish school books the Estonian independent history and earlier cultural contacts with Finland were omitted and Estonia was referred to without being distinguishable from the rest of the Soviet Union. Until the 1970s the contacts with Estonians basically did not exist. The contacts, mostly oriented to organising common cultural and sport events, were in the beginning established by the Estonian department of the Finnish-Soviet Union Association. From the beginning of 1980s Tuglas Association started to organise cultural exchanges between Finland and Soviet Estonia. And even then it was still a very small part of the Finnish people who visited Soviet Estonia and established contacts with Estonians. Therefore it is understandable why Estonians were often identified as Russians and were the subject of suspicious and negative attitudes at the beginning of 1990s in Finland as many Estonians have reflected in their stories.

It seems that the dramatic societal change and economic success that Estonia has experienced in less than two decades, one signifier of which has been Estonia joining the EU, has had a very positive effect in equalising relations between Estonia and Finland, and reflectively to the increasing sense of similarity between Estonian and Finnish people. And last but not least, it is the strong sense of intermingled history under the Swedish and Russian rule and the continuous sense of the smallness and vulnerability of our countries that functions as a common social memory being continuously reproduced and that helps Estonians to successfully orientate in Finnish society today (Raittila 2004, p. 146).

2.2.2. Historical migration history between Estonia and Finland

In the earlier centuries some population migration between the areas of Estonia and Finland was obviously existent; however, it must have been insignificant compared to the population relocations due to the Second World War and its consequences.

Firstly, it is the translocation of Ingrians, a multi-ethnic and cultural group of people⁹ who were living for centuries in the area in between South-East Finland, North-East Estonia and in the western part of the St. Petersburg region, Russia. The historical living area of Ingrians, by that time belonging to the Soviet Union, became a battlefield in the Finnish-Russian war and Second World War. In 1929-1943 at least 60 thousand people from Ingria were deported to different parts of Soviet Union at the command of Soviet authorities. In 1943, when the Soviet Union was taking the Ingrian areas from Germany, around 63 thousand Ingrians were evacuated to Finland through Estonia. Later, after the 1944 peace treaty between Finland and the Soviet Union, the question of Ingrians remained unsolved in the treaty. Afraid of extraditions by Finnish authorities followed by possible deportations to the Soviet Union, 87% of the Ingrians decided to return to their homeland Ingria. In fact, after their return to the Soviet Union, it turned out that they were not allowed to live in their previous places of residences in Ingria, but were deported to Central Russia and other areas far away from Ingria. (Virtuaali-Inkeri web page)

⁹ According to the 1926 Soviet Union population census 126 000 people of the population of Ingria (the land of Ingrians) were the descendants of old Finnish tribes. In the year 1929 Finnish origin people contained 88% of the population of Ingria. (Saessalo 2000, pp. 30-32)

During war-time deportations and evacuations a significant number of Ingrians, about 3000 people, ended up living in Estonia. From 1956 onwards, when the deportations to Central Russia, Siberia and elsewhere started to end, thousands of Ingrians started moving back to their previous places of residence. The areas of historical Ingria were meanwhile inhabited by Russians and Ukrainians mostly, therefore, instead of staying in Ingria, many Ingrians actually moved to Estonia, because the language and culture in Estonia were the closest to their own. In 1989 there were 16 500 Ingrians¹⁰ living in Estonia.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, in 1990 Finland called people of Ingrian origin from everywhere in former Soviet Union to return to Finland. Ingrian origin was proved by having at least one Ingrian grandparent; later the conditions were changed so that two of the grandparents had to be Ingrians. Ingrians who migrated to Finland got a long-term residence and working permission and were allowed to bring along a spouse and underage children. Since the political and economic situation everywhere in the former Soviet Union was extremely unstable at that time, the interest in migrating to Finland was tremendous. Finland expected that the Ingrians would have some knowledge of Finnish language and culture provided by their Ingrian background that would distinguish them from other immigrant groups. As a matter of fact, it became quickly clear that most of the returnees represented middle or younger generations who mainly spoke Russian as a mother tongue, had almost no knowledge of the Finnish language and experienced difficulties in integrating into Finnish culture and society.

Today in Finland there are about 25 000 returnees of Ingrian origin (Virtuaali-Inkeri webpage); the majority of them arrived in Finland already in the first 5-7 years since 1990 (Kyntäjä 1997, Työministeriö 1998). Even though there are no exact statistics about the distribution of returnees by Soviet region and native language, it could be estimated (Kyntäjä 1997, Työministeriö 1998, Liebkind et al 2004) that about 1/3 of the Ingrian returnees have arrived in Finland from Estonia and for 90% of them Estonian has been a mother tongue. Because many of the Ingrians who lived in Estonia spoke Estonian as a mother tongue and have not changed their citizenship to Finnish, this group actually represents considerable part of the Estonian immigrants in Finland today.

¹⁰ That is about 1% of the Estonian population of 1.5 million at that time.

The flight of Estonians to the West during the Second World War is another aspect in Estonian migration history that, even though indirectly related to Finland, is important in defining Estonian-Finnish relations. During 1939-1944, though mostly in 1944 that is known in the history as The Great Exodus, 70-90 000 Estonians escaped to the West in the fear of Soviet and German mobilisations, repressions, persecutions and deportation. The majority of the people escaped by boats to Sweden and Germany from where many of them later ended up in the United States, Canada, Australia and elsewhere, but also Finland, which is known as the original destination of escapees. For instance, in 1944 about 5 000 young Estonian men escaped overseas to Finland afear of German mobilisation. (Kumer-Haukanõmm 2006, pp. 14-18) Since Finland also had a very insecure situation with the Soviet Union, most of the Estonians stayed there only temporarily and continued their escape to other countries. In later years, during the communist régime, it was not rare that Estonians tried to escape from Soviet Estonia in spite of the defence borders on the coastal areas. Since escaping was an illegal and hidden act that could cause serious harm for the escapee and his/her family, both when an escapee was captured as well as in the case of a successful escape, it is extremely difficult to make any exact estimations about the number of such escapees. According to Ignats (1985) there could have been about 1 000 Estonians during the period of 1975-1985 that managed to escape from Soviet Estonia. However, Estonians almost never escaped to neighbouring Finland, the closest Western country, because Finland was still not considered secure enough. Estonians were afraid that Finland would betray them and send them back to the Soviet Union.

2.2.3. New politico-economic situation and increasing migration flows

If in 1990 there were only 1 000 Estonians living in Finland, then in 2000 there were 11 000 and by the end of 2007 already 20 000 Estonian citizens living permanently in Finland, which makes Estonians the second biggest immigrant group in Finland after Russians (26 000). (Statistics Finland) These statistics do not include ethnic Estonians who do not have Estonian citizenship, who are not registered as permanently living in Finland, are students or who work in Finland illegally neither the Estonian speaking Ingrian population which does not have Estonian citizenship anymore (Kask 2006).

The political atmosphere in Estonia started to change already in the mid 1980s as a result of Gorbachev's policy of glasnost¹¹ that was part of the extensive reforms known as perestroika¹². The glasnost policy opened up the opportunities for freedom of speech and press in Estonian society and was an important facilitator of the independence movement. In the process of perestroika some elements of market economy, precisely, cooperatives, emerged in Estonia and together with that some private business activities started in Estonia already in 1987. This is the start of quickly re-emerging connections, both business-oriented and private interactions, between Estonia and Finland after the 50 year break.

Newly independent Estonia, a democratising political situation and a quickly developing market economy were the reasons for the active interaction between Estonia and Finland, Estonians and Finnish people. Finnish companies started large-scale investments in Estonia, especially in the capital area. Finnish people quickly discovered Estonia as a new fascinating tourism destination; their fascination at least in the beginning and mid 1990s was based mostly on cheap shopping and entertainment opportunities, so that typically they did not reach places further from Tallinn.

From 1990 onwards Ingrians and their families living in Estonia started to migrate from Estonia to Finland. That was a considerable population loss for Estonia, but at the same time there were also Finnish people who moved to Estonia, whether temporarily or permanently: Finnish businessmen while building up new companies in Estonian; Finnish students were studying in Estonian universities; and a considerable number of Finnish people have built their summer residences in Estonia.

The possibilities for Estonian citizens without Ingrian status to move to Finland in the 1990s were very limited, however, the practise existed, both legally and illegally. The motivations for moving to Finland were connected to the search for a more valuable life in Finland in terms of better salary, education, security, political culture etc. Also, there is a considerable number of Estonian-Finnish marriages that started both during the late Soviet times as well as in 1990s that have mostly resulted in Estonians' relocation to Finland.

¹¹ (Russian term)=transparency, the politics of Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985-1990 that attempted to fight against extensive corruption in governmental institutions and at the top of the Communist Party by addressing maximal publicity, openness and transparency in governmental activities.

¹² (Russian term)=economic restructuring, the politics of Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985-1987 that attempted to change the Soviet economic system from a command economy to a market economy.

After the beginning of the 1990s, when a big group of Ingrians returned to Finland, the increase in Estonian citizens' interests in living and working in Finland was significant after the EU enlargement. Even though Finland applied a two-year transition period for Estonian citizens to freely work and live in Finland (Finnish Ministry of Labour 2006), the number of newly registered Estonian citizens in Finland doubled in 2005 compared to 2004 and tripled in 2007 compared to 2006 (Statistics Finland).¹³ As mentioned before, those figures do not include Estonians who live and work temporarily in Finland. They are typically hired by temporary job agencies registered in Estonia that hire the personnel to Finnish companies.

¹³ The number of Estonians in Finland in 2004 - 13 978, in 2005 – 15 458, in 2006 – 17 599, and in 2007 – 20 006.

3. Methodology

As long as I can remember myself, I have always felt an inner pressure every once and a while to get out from the place I was in and breath the air of a place out there, better if somewhere I had never been before, but if not possible, the already known places did just as well. I used to say that “*my soles are getting itchy*” when the need for a travel started to grow. The more spontaneous a trip, the better it felt and still feels. The usual explanations for those breakouts from the permanent living spaces have been breaking the everyday routine, learning about the world from a different angle and encounters with new people – all of those together forming a complex feeling of excitement and enjoyment. At some point I realized that perhaps such a travelling is not so much about the destination itself, but about the state of “being-on-the-way” and the sense of increased freedom, which means that I can leave behind everything that I work on and worry about at home and live in the moment. Just because those things take distance from me then and there is nothing I can do about them. The time for the greatest elation of freedom for me is the very moment of sitting in the plane, train or bus, when I experience the physical feeling of being-in-between. (I talk about it longer in the discussion part of the study.) Yet my multiple ferry-trips between Finland and Estonia, although travels as well, represent a different experience. My emotions, while travelling between Finland and Estonia vary much from trip to trip and I have spent a lot of time during my trips and afterwards pondering over my experiences trying to understand, why is it so. With this regard, this study grew out from my personal experience, the life I have been living in the last 4 and a half years, and the methods I have used for explaining the phenomenon of travelling between Finland and Estonia are not carefully designed, but represent rather a quite spontaneous approach, the way how things logically continued to each other and what was available out there. What I am writing is so much about myself and of making things to make sense for myself that it was impossible to foresee the result. The only criterion I really tried to follow from the beginning to the end was the promise for myself to treat this project as my chance to enjoy writing. This in spite of the methodological complications of wanting to get the taste of what does it mean to a researcher to be entirely, personally involved with the subject matter, and at the same time, still writing a scholarly text that would be of interest to critical readers from academia.

3.1. Data collection: travel log, observation, interviews

3.1.1. Writing a travel log, personal diary and observations

As long as I remember my travels, I have always kept a travel log for keeping memories, but as well to enable myself to think through some events, impressions, feelings and thoughts connected to those trips. I see it as a way of organizing my world. Mostly travelling brings up new experiences, which I write down with excitement and enjoyment. For that reason I have also the notes about my first two (from 1999 and 2004) ferry-trips, written in a form of a personal diary. The several following trips between 2004 and May 2006 are not recorded. This must be a sign of such trips becoming a regular activity for me rather than evoking feelings and thoughts of newness and excitement. Starting from May 2006 when I decided my thesis topic I have kept a regular travel log of the 22 ferry-trips made between Finland and Estonia for several reasons: visiting my family, internship, summer school, graduation at my alma mater university, funerals, wedding and holidays. Since the log acquired a certain purpose, to serve as a reference for my later thesis writing, I tried to make use of three types of writing: a travel log, personal diary and observations. The travel log is the backbone of my ferry-trip notes. It has a certain structure, and following that during every single ferry-trip helped me in paying attention to a number of central events with a certain sequence and character during those trips. This way of writing that resembles recording helped me also in disciplining myself in the situation where ferry-trips have become for me a routine that often represent unpleasantness rather than excitement. The personal diary style is worth mentioning, because this is not involved in all of my travel logs, but only, if there were any personal thoughts and feelings, not directly related to a particular ferry-trip, that occupied me. Observations, in turn, are neither integrated into all travel logs, but more present in the beginning when I started to keep those logs and every now and then when I noticed events that differed particularly from the routine.

Nowadays, many people use web logs for those and other memorising and sharing purposes. Although the logs of my other trips can be found online, my ferry-trip logs are in old-fashioned written form, due to the need to be able to write down things in any given moment independent from the need to charge a laptop battery or deal with an unstable internet connection.

Travel logs and personal diaries are in social sciences and humanities treated as a rich source of data that enable us to look at the events that happened in the past, sometimes centuries ago, and gain through them detailed selected information and personal reflections about events. Indeed, the strength of these data sources rests in their subjectivity as a parameter that opens up arenas for understanding the so-far incomprehensible and gives voice to alternative explanations. Observation, in earlier times extensively used, especially in anthropology, as a method of data collection has received a lot of critique, especially regarding its ethical aspects. I have integrated observations, precisely participant observation, to some extent in my data collection in order to systematise the events during the trip, especially in the ferry and in the terminals. I treat my observations as background information and never use them on a personalised level.

3.1.2. Thematic interviews

Once I had started thinking about my trips between Estonia and Finland in a purposeful way and the notes were being made, there was one question that was making me restless all the time, *Do other people experience the trip in the same way, and if not, how do they experience it?* When travelling becomes regular it acquires the characteristics of any other everyday-like thing and people tend not to talk about it anymore. I noticed that people do not comment on their trips between Estonia and Finland. They may talk about some events that happened during their stay in Estonia, but the trip itself seems to be of no importance or becomes silenced. Also, while listening to the people in the ferry, it is difficult to get an idea of what are their feelings and thoughts about the trip. And obviously, what we observe, it is only what we see and think by ourselves, but this does not give very much information about what other people think. Thus, it became crucial for me, that besides reflecting on my experiences, I would be able to say something about the variety of experiences, in other words, uncover possible different point of views.

Interview is a good method for comprehending different point of views. When mastering well the interviewing strategies (Holstein and Gubrium 1995) an interview format enables being flexible with the sequence of topics during the conversation; going in-depth with topics that an interviewee feels comfortable with talking about; and

returning to the topics that deserve further delving. I decided for thematic in-depth interviews considering that their advantage compared to life-story interviews or focus group interviews, for instance, is the strong focus on the subject matter, Estonian-Finnish border-crossing practises, and an opportunity for highly personalised interaction between me, the interviewer, and the interviewees. At the same time, interviewing was the part of the study that required designing, organising and cooperation, different from the independent travel log and diary writing as well as observations that I had been occupied with so-far.

There were three different ways how I found my interviewees. One informant contacted me by herself after I had sent an email to one mailing list; others were personal contacts; and some interviewees were found using the so-called snowball method. In the latter case, some of my interviewees recommended their own friends or acquaintances. I was most actively searching out my interviewees from Tampere, since their location was the most suitable with regards to the distance criteria of my study (in some travelling distance from Helsinki) and convenient (since I myself live in Tampere).

Between May and August 2007 I conducted all together 15 interviews, 10 with women and 5 with men, in Tampere, Valkeakoski and Tallinn. I travelled to Valkeakoski (40 km from Tampere in the direction of Helsinki) once, because I found some good contacts there and heard that this is the location of one of the biggest Estonian communities outside Helsinki. And in the end I conducted one interview in Tallinn, because one of my informants moved back to Tallinn before we had a chance to make an interview in Tampere.

The interviews were between 45 minutes and 2 hours in length and most of them developed as free conversations in a considerably relaxed atmosphere. I would basically ask relatively spontaneous questions about people's regular practises, experiences and future plans concerning travelling between Estonia and Finland. After few interviews, once I figured out how to form my questions so that they would be the most understandable and logical in order, I started to follow a certain interview structure. However, none of the interviews were identical, and I always tried to figure out, what were the topics that my interviewees were more comfortable with, so that I could lead the conversation to a more in-depth exploration. Some of the interviews give quite a historical point of view, some only reflect on present travelling.

During the interviewing process I was almost always treated as an expert within the same subject area as I have the similar kind of travelling experience and I explained my relationship to the topic before the interviews started. This meant that people often tried to skip over describing some practises that they considered self-evident for everybody engaged in them, and then I needed to ask them to specify those practises. From time to time people were also curious about my own practises and opinions, which required constant decision-making about what and how much I can tell in order to not influence too much their own narratives.

3.1.3. Interviews with professionals

The historical perspective of this thesis required me to familiarise myself with historical material about the Estonian-Finnish overseas connections. However, much of the most interesting knowledge about the Soviet era travelling is not accessible other than in communist party records that are stored in the archives, which is not a user-friendly method to work with. Another way how the knowledge is shared and stored is the word-of-mouth heritage. Almost every Estonian who is old enough to have had the Soviet experience and especially those, who are originally from the Tallinn-area, can be considered an expert for sharing their experiences in border-crossing possibilities, money exchange, product-exchange etc. Yet it was clear that it will not be useful to ask those bits of information from random people. Therefore, I decided to interview a couple of people who have long-lasting, continuous and direct experience in overseas connection: a captain and a managing director in a shipping company (previously a captain). In-depth thematic interviews with those two people have helped me to gather together and systematize the word-of-mouth knowledge about Finnish-Estonian overseas connections from the Soviet era to today and I have been able to contextualise the phenomena as a whole.

3.2. Research approaches: narrative, ethnography and autoethnography

Josselson and Lieblich (1999, p. x) have concluded succinctly the idea which has directed me in doing my research by saying that narrative research is a “hermeneutic mode of inquiry, where the process of inquiry flows from the question, which is a

question about a person's inner, subjective reality and, in particular, how a person makes meaning of some aspect of his or her experience." What I do in this thesis is tell a story, moreover, it is telling a story in my way, through my lens. Would the story be told by somebody else, even under the condition that the same data collection would be used, it would be a different kind of a story. My life experience, both related and unrelated to travelling across the borders of Estonia and Finland, moulds my understanding and interpretation of how certain events are related to each other, what should be stressed and what discounted. The process of distinguishing entails making selections between more and less important, interesting, regular, irregular, confirmatory, contradictory etc. While I use those filters for narrating my story it is important to remember that because I rely extensively on other people's stories, the final written text in fact is a double narration. However, I have also had a part in creating the first narrations, because as Holstein and Gubrium (1995) have argued, interview is not a monologue, but an active process that has two participants, an interviewee and an interviewer, and thus entails that the interviewer has an ineluctable impact on how the interviewee selects the details to tell and how he or she creates a meaning to them. In this way the past, present and future of the interviewee are constructed in the very moment when the story is told and the result is always unique. One of the most interesting and debated discussions of the making of a meaning originates from the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973). While perhaps too extremist in interpretativism, his principle of finding "thick descriptions", meaning that we cannot understand the culture by looking at its surface and purely observing practises but we need to be able to contextualise those practises and even to look beyond them, is one of my main attempts in this study too.

In my study the meanings are created by narration, but it is the conditions of ethnography that the narration is built upon. There are at least two reasons why I mostly think of my work in ethnographic terms. Firstly, it is the extent of the researcher's participation and secondly the attempt of learning through everyday practises, both the main characteristics of any ethnography written in the social field. Researching everyday life practises, a term discussed extensively by Smith (1987), have gained the significance for other social scientists, except for anthropologists who have been almost always focussed on people's daily lives, quite recently but the more powerful the impact has been. Everyday life practises are a fruitful tool for discovering the social phenomena and their relationships, especially all kind of power implementations, from below, from

grassroots level, instead of looking at the world by following the top-down method. When I explore Estonian travelling practises step-by-step, in a very detailed way, then I expect that the nuances that open up for me, tell me better about what has it meant and means to be an Estonian and to live a transnational life on the Estonian-Finnish borderlands now and in the past.

While I have not done a long-term fieldwork in terms of living side-by-side with the Estonians who's travelling practises I particularly discuss and learning in this way about their life arrangements, I still look at other people's practises being highly engaged with their experiences. When doing my interviews, I reckoned that I was always personally there in my interviewees' stories because they were aware of me sharing a similar experience, although maybe in a slightly different manner.

Since I am not able to and I do not want to cast aside my personal travelling experience, the ethnographic approach of this thesis has actually turned to a combination of ethnography and autoethnography. Integrating autoethnography into this study has been both a mental and a physical experience. Ranta-Tyrkkö (2005) has approached the corporeal aspects of ethnographic fieldwork by stating that the information that is produced during the fieldwork will be strongly attached to the character and experience of the researcher who participates in the fieldwork. My fieldwork has been extremely corporeal in the sense that I acquired my experience about the different dimensions of border-crossing precisely by being an active traveller between Finland and Estonia over a long period of time. However, I consider my experience with writing autoethnography much more challenging emotionally than corporeally. The challenge here rests in the vulnerable self of the writer, which starts to dominate over the self-confident, analysing and focussed researcher in the process of working with the ethnographical material. Ellis (2004, pp. 37-38) has hit the nail on the head when she describes, based on her own autoethnographic experience, that "As they zoom backward and forward, inward and outward, distinctions between the personal and cultural becomes blurred, sometimes beyond distinct recognition". In this situation one can find confidence in the standpoint that fieldwork and ethnographic-narrating based on that does not need to provide final answers about the society and culture, but only one possible interpretation of them, because it is in the ethnography's nature to be bounded and partial.

3.3. Other methodological principles and limitations

In my study I try to follow several methodological principles that are mostly grounded in feminist studies and concern positionality, reflexivity, subjectivity, responsibility and othering. All those standpoints are already presented in earlier passages of this chapter as well as in the Chapter 1.6.

Here I would like to explain briefly the principle of representation that is not my aim in this study, but may perhaps raise expectations for some readers. Throughout the study I am focussing on Estonians who live permanently in Finland and travel regularly to Estonia. At the same time I refer to Estonians as ethnic Estonians or in some cases as Estonians with Ingrian status. Today about 1/3 of Estonia's population speaks Russian as a mother tongue and many of the Estonian citizens who actually live and work in Finland are the Russian speakers. So now one may think that my study is biased with the regard that I do not involve the Russian speakers into my interviewing sample, or moreover, that I am discriminating against the opinions of Russian speakers. However, this is not the point. I have left Russian speakers out because I did not want to complicate my study by bringing in the multiple ethnicity and origin dimension, which in the Estonian context means that the Russian speaking population has brought along new cultural and historical layers when settling in Estonia from the 1960s onwards. They may not feel attachment with the Estonian history from earlier periods and may have considerably different interpretations about travelling in Soviet times and also today. I do not feel well prepared to discuss and interpret those cultural variables and therefore I only concentrate on the Estonian speakers.

Secondly, I have purposefully overlooked the gender aspect. I am very well aware of the injustice done to women's perspectives of travelling throughout the travel writing history and acknowledge Kaplan's (1996) and Clifford's (1997) calls for remaking those histories. After my fieldwork was already done I discovered McDowell's (1999) excellent insights on how one should look at gender connected to travel. Influenced by this I was considering writing from a thoroughly gendered standpoint. However, I soon realised that in the ethnographies available for me the gendered nature of travelling practises does not usually appear or what is more credible, the gender aspect is hidden behind the powerful narrations of rules and restrictions that people are willing to memorise and share now that enough time has passed to be able to look at those

experiences from a distance. I believe that reflecting on gender aspects based on ethnographies that I have access to now would give superficial interpretations and diminish the credibility of my work. At the same time there are clear hints in the available ethnographies that a thoughtfully designed gendered research approach could give very interesting results about travelling practises within the Estonian-Finnish geographical space, as well as with regards to the communist régime and its influence on travelling practises in the Soviet Union in general. Therefore, I have rejected the gender aspect in this thesis and reserve it for future research.

In this thesis I only concentrate on necessity-like travelling and do not touch upon travelling related to leisure and self-exploration. In Soviet times travelling abroad was not associated with leisure. The sports and cultural delegations and visiting friends and relatives abroad during Soviet times do not represent travelling as a tourist. But instead a perspective of having a look to the outside, Western world, which reaches beyond the tourist-gaze. The kind of today's travel that is present in the ethnographies is also a part of necessity rather than tourism. To limit my study, I only reflect on travelling in a very specific geographical location – the Estonian-Finnish borderlands and leave the travelling practises within the Soviet Union, which indeed was widespread, entirely out.

4. From Soviet time “Iron Curtain” to today’s “freedom of movement”: breaking down restrictions of travelling

The following chapters, based predominantly on interview material collected during face-to-face interviews with Estonians living in Tampere and Valkeakoski as well as on my own autobiographical reflections, carry the central discussions related to travel as an application of today’s transnational life arrangement in the Estonian-Finnish borderlands. I have organised it in the way that first I discuss the possibilities of moving across Estonian-Finnish borders in Soviet times and the changes occurring together with the perestroika and transition from Soviet country to independent Estonia. There are two central questions, *What have been the main changes in time that show characteristically the political, economic and technological change in travelling from Estonia and Finland and / or back?* and *How did the Estonians’ travels to Finland happen in practical terms?* that lead the discussion at this point. This discussion will be later followed by more in-depth argumentation about the meanings and practises of journey as a transnational phenomenon focussing on the time-distance relations, space-place-nonplace connections, functionality, and handling transitions.

4.1. Towards demystification of travel

Travelling has been widely seen as an unnatural and forced condition, the antipode of the natural and voluntary condition of staying put (Kaplan 1996, Clifford 1997). Kaplan argues that travel and displacement, terms that should be in juxtaposition rather than in opposition, are in post-modern Western approaches seen as coupled in opposition to home and location, whereas the origin of this categorization has to be in colonialist practises. Moreover, travel and displacement are not seen purely as physical experiences of movement, but metaphors that have become a core of cultural representations. At the same time, the subjects of displacement, “immigrants, refugees, exiles, nomads and the homeless also move in and out of these discourses as metaphors, tropes and symbols but rarely as historically recognised producers of critical discourses themselves.” This in turn causes the mythologized narrativizations of displacement leaving the cultural, political, and economic grounds unquestioned. (Kaplan 1996, p. 2) As for rethinking the existent travel-writing and directions to the future, Kaplan strongly

advocates the need of exploring personal and individualised histories of travel and displacement instead of producing universal interpretations.

In this chapter, when I discuss the Estonians' border-crossing practises in the Estonian-Finnish borderlands, one of my major intentions is demystification. What I mean by mystification of travel particularly, but also mystification of everyday life practises in general, in Soviet Estonia rests in the symbol of the "Iron Curtain" and its interpretations. When one asks somebody who grew up outside the Soviet Union, *What did the life look there in the Soviet Union?*, she/he hardly has any idea about the daily practises there, but yet the abstract associations such as "life was hard", "people did not have freedom of speech" etc. exist. At the same time, the people who have the Soviet experience can describe in detail how was the life organised and how certain things came to happen, including travelling abroad; but this local knowledge for various reasons is not often discussed and shared, but tends to become silenced and forgotten. Instead, the metaphor of the "Iron Curtain" shadows so powerfully the daily practises, that the only commonplace associations that people without Soviet practise have about travelling in Soviet times are: "Travelling abroad was almost impossible" and "Connections with outside world were not allowed". When limiting the life in the Soviet Union down to those standardised imaginations, we completely overlook the practises themselves: the bureaucratic procedures, negotiations, networking etc.; there is no way to understand, how the failure or success of a travelling attempt actually happened. With the following I try to do the opposite and I call this process an attempt to demystify the travelling.

4.2. Changing practises of travelling

4.2.1. Acquiring a visa

The Soviet Union was a closed region, where free movement across the state borders was unimaginable both for the Soviet citizens and for the citizens of other countries. Until the year 1955 the only opportunity for Estonians to visit foreign countries was through a career on merchant or fishing ships (Pihlau 2003). In the later years the situation somewhat lightened. Visits to selected foreign countries, mainly those belonging to the communist block, was a privilege of sportsmen and artists who showed Soviet sport achievements and gave cultural performances during their visits. Also, some of the factories and collective farms complimented their employees for excellent work by

enabling them trips abroad, yet it was not the possibility of any factory or collective farm to enable their employees to travel abroad, but the farms and factories had certain hierarchy in the eyes of the communist decision-makers. Besides, the employees of some industries such as military would have never be entitled to such amenity as travelling to capitalist countries, because of being a so-called “strategic industry”. In any case, for an employee to be able to qualify for travelling abroad, it was a prerequisite, maybe with few exceptions, to be a member of a communist party and have a clean record in terms of anti-communist activities. This refers that travelling in Soviet times had a stratifying nature, which to certain extent can be seen as class-based, even though the communist régime denied the existence of classes.

Authorisation from above was required because of the fear that Soviet citizens could want to stay abroad instead of returning to the Soviet Union. This fear was reasoned, because there were numerous cases that people tried to escape during visits being members of sports, cultural or tourist groups. Also, as mentioned before, people tried to escape to the West directly from Estonia by boats and sometimes by land. It would be still wrong to claim that emigration from the Soviet Union was absolutely illegal. Sakkeus (1993) has stated that according to the official statistics of the Soviet Union in the years 1956-1989 the number of emigrants from Estonia to the West was 29 650. The most intensive emigration periods were the mid 1970s and the end of 1980s. People who got permissions for emigration were those who married foreigners; Jewish people and their relatives; or older people who moved abroad to their relatives who had escaped from Estonia during the Second World War, for instance (Ignats 1985).

I do not have much information, how the relationships that ended up with marrying a foreigner were established in Soviet times (perhaps sometimes people met when the foreign sports, cultural or other delegations visited the Soviet Union; also many Estonians were studying in Moscow, where there were also some students from foreign countries etc.), but what concerns the Estonian-Finnish marriages, then it is common knowledge in Estonia that such marriages were not very rare in the second half of 1980s, at least in Tallinn. They were typically Estonian women who got married with Finnish men and moved abroad; it happened seldom that an Estonian man married a Finnish woman. When I inquired from my interviewees, what were the places and situations where Estonians could meet Finnish people in Soviet times, one of my interviewees told that there were *always* some Finnish people around in Tallinn in the 1980s. There were few

famous restaurants and cabarets where Finnish people who were on a visit in Estonia usually went to entertain themselves and those were the usual meeting points.¹⁴ Also, the hotels Viru and Olümpia in Tallinn were built in Soviet times by Finns who lived temporarily in Estonia. Later on, in 1987, I remember that Finns also built the Rakvere Meat-Processing Plant in our provincial center in North-Estonia. From that time there are several stories known about local Estonian women who moved to Finland with the Finns, once they finished their work in Estonia. Marrying a foreigner in principle was not complicated, but moving abroad required a lengthy procedure of acquiring all kinds of permissions from the Soviet authorities as well as from the country of destination. An Estonian woman who moved to Finland in 1987 because she married a Finnish man explains:

T7: One needed all kind of permissions from everywhere. All kinds of. From Finland and from the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union... (laughs ironically) At that time there was the Embassy of Finland in Leningrad [St. Petersburg]. I had to go there several times with all kind of documents. It was somewhat easier for me, because just before I started to apply, Gorbachev had come to power and perhaps then it was easier to get those documents approved. I only waited for the decision, whether I get the permission [to emigrate to Finland] or not, for a half a year.

As she pointed out, leaving the Soviet Union was not impossible, but it was made complicated and uncomfortable. What does it mean, practically speaking, that one had to pay several physical visits to St. Petersburg to be even able to apply for emigrating to Finland (or elsewhere)? The shortest distance from Tallinn to St. Petersburg is 360 km (Fig. 2) and today it takes minimum 6 hours to travel the distance by car and about 8 hours by train. Years back, when the transportation was slower and the road quality worse, it had to take even longer. Thus, if one needed to visit the Finnish Embassy or any other office in St. Petersburg, it meant long travelling and takings days off from work. Perhaps it can be concluded that the bureaucracy was made purposefully so uncomfortable that many people rejected the idea of leaving the Soviet Union, simply due to practical matters.

Notwithstanding the wish to emigrate or not, crossing state borders for any period of time was impossible without obtaining a visa. Issuing visas was a lengthy and complicated procedure, probably comparable with applying for permission to emigrate.

¹⁴ People mentioned places such as the restaurant Kännukukk in Mustamägi district in Tallinn, and the restaurants, bars and cabarets in the hotels Tallinn, Olümpia and Viru.

In the late 1980s the process of acquiring visas became somewhat easier, but still, as it is described by a 47-year old Estonian man who started a private business between Estonia and Finland as soon as the Soviet grip weakened in the late 1980s, it demanded a great deal of decisiveness to be able to go the process through:

T2: To be able to visit a foreign country at all you needed to have a foreign passport issued by the Soviet Union. You got a stamp in it together with a permission that you were allowed to exit the Soviet Union. Then you needed to find an acquaintance or friend in Finland who had to send an invitation of visit and then you had to apply for a visa in the Finnish Embassy. /---/ But then in 1988 the rules changed. You did not need a stamp and permission of exit anymore. But the requirement for the visa still remained. In the beginning they did not give the visa for as long as you needed. It was always valid for one trip only: for one, two or three days. It was a very limited [time]. And then I drove there by my own car and brought all kind of stuff that we did not have here during Soviet times.

This passage does not only reveal the bureaucratic resistance against leaving the Soviet Union at different times, but it also points to the necessity of *useful* relations that helped to gain the desired goals in the Soviet system. Indeed, “you needed *to find* an acquaintance or friend in Finland”, as this man puts it, is the precise reflection of how people in Estonia perceived and carried out useful relations: useful relations did not happen, but they were made; visiting invitations were not sent by the relatives and acquaintances on their own initiative, but Estonians themselves were ready to take an active role in obtaining them. My interviewees also mentioned that if one did not have relatives or acquaintances abroad, it was not a problem to take action to establish such relations.¹⁵ Such networking served a certain purpose, similar to the friendly and reciprocal relationship between a corner shop clerk and a doctor, for instance. The clerk pleased the doctor with a bottle of good cognac, a few pairs of good quality ties produced in Czechoslovakia or a kilo of bananas that were miracles to find on sale for other customers and the doctor repaid back by offering a quicker and a better quality medical service to the clerk. I will talk later on more about the reciprocity of the relationship between Finnish and Estonian people in Soviet times and afterwards.

¹⁵ Assmuth has described a similar situation with Estonians when they tried to visit the biggest Estonian island, Saaremaa, in Soviet times. People needed invitation letters for visiting and the length of stay in Saaremaa was restricted. There were several regions inside of the Soviet Union that had restricted access, normally, because of being a site of military industry. Free access to Saaremaa was forbidden, because it was the most Western area of the Soviet Union and therefore strictly secured. Assmuth has also referred to the Estonian’s widespread practise of falsified affinity and travel documents while travelling to Saaremaa saying that “every Estonian had his or her own ‘cousin’ in Saaremaa.” (Assmuth 2005, p. 98)

When Estonia became independent, soon a stay abroad, including Finland, for three months for the purpose of tourism (including visiting relatives) became possible without a visa; a visa was required for working and any longer stay. The requirement for a visa remained until 2004 when Estonia joined the EU. Finland first applied limitations for Estonians working in Finland for two years, and after that unlimited travelling on both sides, living and working, was allowed without any visa.

The visa application in the Estonian Republic was considerably easier compared to Soviet times, especially, as the Finnish Embassy was located in Tallinn and its consulate was opened in Tartu. Perhaps the whole process lightened bureaucratically the most, because nobody had interest anymore to review one's and one's relatives' deportation and anticommunist history. However, people who wanted to apply for Ingrian status to permanently move to Finland, have described to me the process of applying in the beginning and middle of the 1990s as similar to the Soviet system. The application process could take several months and even years. Together with making the application one received a number that stated one's position in the application list. From that moment onwards, every month, one needed to go physically to the Finnish Embassy in Tallinn to be able to renew the number to a smaller one, meaning moving closer to the top of the list. This system was probably designed to prove the real interest of the applicants in moving to Finland, being based on the similar idea as in earlier years when people travelled to St. Petersburg to arrange their papers. Even if Tallinn was now much more closely located to people from almost everywhere in Estonia, such a physical and regular visit to the embassy in working days and during office hours required a great deal of rearrangement of a person's daily life.

4.2.2. Buying a ticket

Today buying a ferry ticket can be done online in a few minutes. In Soviet times buying a ticket was restricted by having to present a visa before purchase. Once one had gotten it, he or she was able to buy a ticket, which was a paper ticket and had to be purchased in advance. Tickets were sold only in that they were not considered expensive, or at least an opportunity to travel abroad was such a big deal, that every family would

have saved for that¹⁶. Only a limited number of tickets were available, because as explained before, there was only one, relatively small passenger ship per day sailing between Finland and Estonia.

In the easing of the communist régime, approximately from 1987 onwards, the number of Estonians travelling to Finland increased considerably. In the Soviet Union most of the people were living off their modest, fixed salaries. People in the countryside gained extra income by raising livestock, potatoes and vegetables and selling them. Many families also had cattle and they sold milk to the dairy processors. Those were the alternative sources of income and so such people were able to save considerable amounts of money throughout the years, because the consumption opportunities were limited in the Soviet Union. In the situation where there was no free market, where people could trade, economically thinking and venturesome people quickly found the opportunities to trade with Finland when the tiniest chances opened up at the end of the 1980s. People were eager to buy everything Western-produced from Finland, often second-hand, and were inventive in finding ways of exchanging roubles to Finnish marks, which otherwise was strictly limited. Russian roubles devalued quickly and people tried to buy-up foreign currency, which was the only opportunity not to lose their savings. Ticket-wise there was immediately a shortage once the number of both the Estonian and Finnish travellers started to increase rapidly, but there was no increase in ferry capacity for several years.

When the private ferry companies emerged, the ticket market also went into private hands. Multiple ticket operators appeared, tickets were sold in many travel agencies and ticket offices were set-up in the ferry terminals (Fig. 4). It was possible to book the tickets and pay for them using the technological appliances as in any technologically developed country of the day. The price of a ticket for Soviet and Finnish citizens differed in times during the Soviet era and prices continued to differ in the early to mid 1990s. Foreigners were not allowed to buy tickets from Estonian local sellers in order to avoid double pricing locally. It was a state policy to protect the interests of the local people, because until the second half of the 1990s equal prices would have been far

¹⁶ Unfortunately none of my interviewees could remember exactly how much the ferry tickets cost in Soviet times. A monthly salary of a cultural worker in the 1980s was around 100 roubles and a factory worker 120 roubles, a new car, Žiguli 05, cost 6500 roubles, a pair of good shoes 40 roubles, 1 litre of gasoline 20 copek and a bottle of vodka 4 roubles. For comparison, in the first quarter in 2008 the average salary in Estonia was about 12 300 kroons, a factory worker earned 6000 kroons, and a return passenger ticket costs on average 800 kroons. (Statistics Estonia; personal communication)

from affordable for the local Estonians. By the end of 1990s the two-price system disappeared.

Introducing online ticket systems, besides regularly updated ferry company websites as an information source, meant a completely new era for ferry companies as well as for customers. Home web access to online ticket systems enables the client to make last minute decisions between different ferry companies in any given time for the most affordable price. Today all companies operating on the Tallinn-Helsinki route offer their customers online booking and paying services. The number of tickets sold through travel agencies and call-in booking centres has reduced notably, whereas the percentage of tickets sold online has increased tremendously. At the same time ferry companies have purposefully decreased the chances that clients would buy tickets directly from the terminal offices on last-minute bases. Ferry companies try to eliminate this by simply charging extra for the tickets bought in the terminal. In recent years the price of an average ferry ticket has increased notably, and all passengers who I interviewed pointed it out as a negative trend. Many of the travellers express their displeasure with constantly increasing ticket prices saying that it is not understandable in the situation where the number of regular travellers has increased so much in recent years.

4.2.3. Exchanging money

Back in Soviet times money exchange from roubles into foreign currency with no reason and limit was unknown. When a Soviet citizen had acquired a visa to visit a foreign country this had to be presented also in the bank¹⁷ or money exchange offices, which were few in the whole of Estonia. The money that could be exchanged was strictly limited. According to some of my interviewees the sum could have been around 30 roubles per day, which could have easily made a quarter of a full-time monthly salary in the Soviet Estonia but was a very modest sum of money in Finland.

However, people were inventive to find out ways how to maximise their finances while travelling abroad. Many of the stories I have listened to reveal that smuggling items to Finland was commonplace. The valued items in Finland contained mostly jewellery, paintings, and other art. These items were not allowed to be carried over the borders.

¹⁷ There was only one bank called Hoiukassa in the Soviet Union.

People tell fruity stories about the procedures in the customs both when going and returning from Finland. They had to report everything that they carried along to Finland and the suitcases were inspected carefully. Their own jewellery and even the wedding rings were carefully registered in order to avoid that they would convert those items into money in Finland. Yet people found ways to smuggle those items across borders and they were able to later sell them in Finland. The preconditions for this business were the demands for those products in Finland, and the existing contacts with Finns who were interested in buying or could help with selling. Other kinds of valued items in Finland were: cut glass ware that was produced in Czechoslovakia or Belorussia and was widely available in Estonian shops; and Estonian handcrafts, especially ticking products. Those items were normally registered in the customs as presents and were then either presented to Finnish hosts or sold. On the way back from Finland people were allowed to carry presents or could bring along items for their own use only. Bringing items for the purpose of selling in Estonia was forbidden. Here I retell the story told to me by an Estonian woman. When she was visiting Finland in the 1970s she had bought tens of pairs of nylon ties that were not available in Estonia. In order to get away from inquiries in the Soviet customs and to minimise the risk that those ties could be taken away from her, she unpacked all the ties so that they looked like she had been using them. That was enough to avoid suspicion.

At the same time, there were also some more extraordinary ways, how Estonian people travelling to Finland have been able to ease their financial confines while being abroad:

T1: I had this kind of thing while going to the [sports] competition in Finland [with my son] that I had 1000 marks waiting for me in Finland. I was working as a journalist in Estonia and then those friendship connections [between Estonian and Finnish clubs and associations] started. The newspaper that I worked for in Estonia had a friendship newspaper in Finland. /---/ And we could send articles to this Finnish newspaper from time to time. If something interesting was going on then they asked that we would write. So I wrote about the calf competition and water motor-sport, about those Estonian boys and their trainer. I had a couple of articles with pictures. At that time we made also the pictures by ourselves. And they paid 400 marks per one article and 100 marks for the picture. So that I got 1000 marks for those two articles. I only had to go to the newspaper agency [in Finland] to pick them up. For that reason it was in fact better situation for us [when we visited Finland].

When Estonia got its own money, the kroon in 1992, both, Finnish marks and Estonian kroons were accepted in the ferries, but foreign currency was needed while

paying abroad. In 1995 the euro was introduced in Finland, but up till now Estonia has not joined the eurozone, so the need for money exchange still remains. Even now the price level in Finland and Estonia differs considerably, and since the prices on board remain similar to those in Finland, Estonians still consider shopping or entertaining in the ferry expensive. However, many of the Estonians express their awareness and surprise about how expensive everything has become in Estonia, compared to the situation years ago. In earlier times it was common for many Estonians living in Finland to do some shopping in Estonia while visiting there, both because of the different selection of products, as well as for much cheaper prices, but now they admit that it does not make any sense doing this for the price.

4.2.4. Length and frequency of staying abroad

During Soviet times one's stay abroad was strictly limited by visa, which was usually issued for a very short period of time. In most of the cases people could not stay abroad for longer than a week. This limitation was political in order to maintain better control over everybody visiting a foreign country, but practically it was also impossible to stay abroad longer, since the money of a Soviet person was not enough to afford a longer stay. Also, it was highly uncommon to make multiple trips to Finland.

The tourist visa allowed travelling in Finland for up to three sequential months, during the period from Estonia's re-independence in 1991 until May 2004. However, most of the visits to Finland remained relatively short. It was almost impossible to get permission for working in Finland and Finland was expensive as a travel destination. Yet the number of Estonian travellers to Finland started to increase considerably from the end of the 1980s onwards. Many people had friends, acquaintances or relatives in Finland whom they tried to visit and the other way around. Already from the beginning of the 1990s some Estonians were doing seasonal jobs in Finland, for instance picking strawberries in the farms, which were organised by the help of acquaintances in Finland and, I assume, were not legal jobs. There were also quite a number of Estonian students studying in Finland in the 1990s and many young Estonian girls worked in Finland as au pairs, mostly legally. The negative side of Estonians' increasing interest towards Finland, saw travelling between Estonia and Finland by numerous Estonian sex-workers and criminal groups who committed crimes in Finland.

While in Soviet times people were afraid of the Soviet customs because of their strict and sometimes humiliating procedures from 1990 onwards the centre of control and power from the point of view of Estonians switched on the Finnish side. The poverty of the country, the experiences with adventurous Estonians who were inventive in finding ways in how to take advantage of the Finnish welfare state, the fact that there were many young Estonian women earning their living as prostitutes in Finland and other experiences like that created a distrustful image of the Estonian people in the average Finnish mind. The kind of personal experience I told about me and my girlfriend's first visit to Finland is not a unique one. Many other Estonian women, especially the ones who looked young, pretty, and had a lot of luggage, have been treated very suspiciously and abjectly in Finnish customs while clear hints were dropped that they were suspected of prostitution. It was also a common practise in the Finnish customs that Estonian citizens were scrupulously questioned every time they crossed the border. Questions about the travel motivations, length of stay, place of stay, and names as well as addresses of the hosts in Finland were commonplace. The people who travelled very regularly or had permanent residence permissions were often remembered by the customs clerks and were usually not examined as carefully as the others, unless something extraordinary happened. An older woman who is married to a Finnish man has an interesting story to tell about her troubles on the customs because of exceeding the length of her permitted stay (Fig. 7-9) in Finland once:

T1: Once I had been stopped on the border and I was not allowed to board the ferry. It was before joining the EU. I had exceeded the 90-day permission. I knew that the stay in Finland was limited to 90 days, but it was nowhere written how to count the days. Once I asked at the customs, how to calculate it. The customs clerk said that I need to count the days starting from the day when I'm at the customs. Unfortunately I asked it when I was leaving Finland. I did not know that I have to count starting from my departure. And it went three days over. Then, of course, they stopped me and gave me a fine, about 60 euro. I said them that they can do what they want, I pay it, but please let me go on the ferry, I need to go to Estonia. I could have understood if I arrived and they would not let me enter the country, but now I wanted to leave, I did not want to stay longer...

Nowadays, nobody's stay in Finland is limited, but the length and frequency of Estonians' travels and stay in Finland differs considerably according to people's motivations for travel and stay.

4.2.5. Cross-border social networks

It is well-known and at the same time astonishing how easily Estonians and Finnish were able to create lasting connections in spite of so few actual opportunities for this. People became life-long family friends after furtive contact through a sports-club meeting, for instance. And it is hardly possible that those were only the Estonians who made efforts to establish and maintain this kind of contacts; obviously the interest lied on both sides.

Until the late 1980s invitations from Finland were needed in order to get a foreign visa. There is a fair number of Estonian citizens with Finnish origins who have relatives in Finland, but obviously, most of the Estonians did not have affine relations with Finnish people from pre-Soviet times such that they could have kept extant for many years. In spite of this circumstance many of my interviewees assured me that it was not a real problem to get an invitation for a visit from Finland. From some of the interviews it turned out that the contacts between Estonians and Finns were sometimes created purely for the purpose of receiving the invitation.

It is probably easy to imagine what could have been the benefits to the Estonians for acquiring invitations and being able to visit Finland. At the same time, taking into account the communist régime and its rules, it looks obvious that finding out that a Finn had sent an invitation for a person whom he or she hardly knew could have been treated as a criminal act and it certainly contained a risk. Besides, an invitation sent by a Finnish person assured that he or she is responsible for the Soviet citizen: an invitation entailed providing accommodation, food and help in case of emergency. It also guaranteed that the Soviet citizen would not get involved in any criminal activity, which included the risk of not returning to the Soviet Union. Although these conditions were usually not taken seriously, this act of ‘making a favour’ contained certain risks and therefore was probably seen as reciprocal.

In most of the cases it seems that the people on both sides, Estonia and Finland, somehow benefited from those contacts. Already from Soviet times, probably from the 1980s, in Estonia there arose a common saying that “*every Estonian has their own home-Finn*¹⁸”. Graf and Roiko-Jokela (2004, p. 92) have analysed the appearance of the

¹⁸=‘kodusoomlane’ (in Estonian)

concept of the ‘home-Finn’ and Korhonen (2007) has shown how widely this concept has been used and reproduced by Estonian media until today. In Graf and Roiko-Jokela’s (2004, p. 92) understanding, the ‘home-Finn’ was a Finnish tourist who was acquainted with an Estonian and visited the Soviet Estonia several times, becoming a welcomed friend at an Estonian home. The visits of home-Finns were looked forward to, because Finns always brought along items produced in the Western countries and were desired in Estonia.¹⁹ On the visits that Estonians made back to Finland they again brought along the products that were desired in Finland. The materialistic side of those contacts is clearly overemphasised both in the literature as well as in the shared memories of the Estonians and Finnish and it is difficult to uncover more complex motivations for those contacts and people’s attempts to travel cross-border.

Once the grown-ups of an Estonian and Finnish family had established a contact and met each other, it was also common that the children of the families became good penfriends. I remember my own friend writing with a Finnish girl with the help of a dictionary as well as being supervised by her parents since she had not learnt any Finnish. The other phenomenon that appeared together with opening up the borders in the 1990s was the friendship schools and classes all over Estonia and in many parts of Finland. In this way the children got an opportunity to visit each other, their families and widen their world through travelling and friends from abroad. A young Estonian lady remembers:

T4: It was in my childhood. /---/ We had quite many Finnish families as friendship families. They visited us and we visited them back. It was... I do not even remember when, I was a few years old I guess. Maybe five... My father went many times [to Finland], because he had some business there. He bought cheap cigarettes and took them to Finland. But when Estonia became independent, then we started to visit Finland more often. Actually it was more the Finnish families who visited us in Estonia, in our cottage and... because we could not travel so much. But after 1991 we went quite often, maybe not every year, but after every two years perhaps... We went to visit them back.

As it appears from this interview, there were often some “small businesses” that were connected to those relationships in one way or another. In Soviet times people could carry cigarettes and vodka for their own use when travelling to Finland. These items were later sold in Finland. In the beginning of the 1990s some people earned their whole income by travelling between Finland and Estonia, trading vodka and cigarettes, which

¹⁹ Just to mention few of the desired products: chewing gum, nylon ties, jeans, sneakers, tapes, books, porn magazines etc. (Tanner 2005, Graf and Roiko-Jokela 2004)

they could carry along in limited amounts. People tell that the Helsinki harbour area was full of people who were willing to buy these items; it was not a problem to find buyers and this business did not actually demand the existence of special contacts. Those again, whose businesses were based on buying-up used home appliances, tyres or various other products that could be sold second-hand in Estonia, became very common enterprises in the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, required establishing better social networks in Finland.

Some of my interviewees appeared to be so called return migrants. Those people often had some relatives living in Finland with whom relationships remained or were re-established after Estonia's re-independence. Many of them had visited Finland already in Soviet times and because of the existing experience with Finland with the support of their relatives were encouraged to emigrate to Finland.

Now that there are basically no limits for travelling and staying abroad, the networks between Estonian and Finnish families seem to have weakened. Perhaps it is because such "business" has lost its novelty. Perhaps it is also true that such contacts are simply not useful anymore.

5. Distance and time: changing and customised perceptions of travelling

5.1. The world is shrinking and stretching simultaneously

Postmodern writing (Harvey 1989, May and Thrift 2001, Stern 2001) concentrates widely on the notion of *time-space compression* that is known from the end of 1980s when used the first time by the human geographer David Harvey (1989). By time-space compression, Harvey means that because of the technological developments in communication and transportation as well as the features of global capitalism that all characterise the postmodern era we experience the acceleration of time and the reduction of distances. Harvey's interpretation of intensifying global flows is quite economy-centric. This becomes particularly evident when he claims that the task of postmodernism is to provide a "metatheory which can grasp the political-economic processes (money flows, international divisions of labour, financial markets, and the like) that are becoming ever more universalising in their depth, intensity, reach and power over daily life" (1989, p. 117). There while Harvey (1989) also uses the notion of 'annihilation of space by time', which has its roots in Marxist theory on the spread of capitalism and refers to a situation, whereby peculiar places and spaces disappear and everything becomes a "global village", because today's perception of time is becoming exclusively synchronised everywhere in the world. Massey, while in principle agreeing with the process of time-space compression happening, is critical towards Harvey's tendency to talk in terms of a 'spatial fix'. She argues that it is logically impossible to have synchrony and social change happening at the same time; to improve the concept we need to add the dimension of social differentiation based on gender, race, class, etc. The latter step is a fruitful arena for grasping the geographically uneven development, in spite of globally extended connections, in creating the situation of 'one world', something that happens both practically and not just in our imaginations. (Massey 1994)

Katz (2004), grounded in Massey's perception of time and space, has introduced the idea of *time-space expansion*, which is a process that represents globalisation's uneven development. With the example of children's everyday life in Howa village in Sudan and following their later life trajectories she argues that: "While from the perspective of transnational capitalists and those living directly in their midst the world may be shrinking, on the grounds of places like Howa – ever more marooned by those

processes –, it seemed to be getting bigger all the time” (Katz 2004: 226). When people need to cover tens of kilometres daily just to find the basics of living (water and food) or the capitalist touch moulds their living environments so that people need to travel hundreds of kilometres for work to earn a living then time-space compression may not have any direct affect on people’s personal lives. In this case, as Katz says, we need to talk about time-space expansion, a by-product of time-space compression. The Western global discourses often relate the time-space compression with achievement and opening up opportunities, but Katz argues that by those people in Howa village being able to stay put, conversely, is clearly seen as an achievement in one’s life (2004).

When I was a kid I was living in a small village with a population about 150 people. The closest regular connection with the outer world, a provincial town at about 20 km distance, started 5 km far away from one side and about 7 km from another side of the village – a bit bigger villages where regular buses run from. In this village one needed a car or was dependent on neighbours having a car for even being able to do daily shopping, since the village store was closed in the mid 1990s. My school was at 7 km distance and me and other kids from the village were used to waking-up early in the morning to be able to catch the school bus that stopped in the village centre at 7.15 in the morning, continued the circle through other villages for about half an hour and finally dropped us in front of the school. When the classes ended we normally had to hang around at school until the school bus collected us at 15.45. Sometimes, when the weather was good and the classes ended early we simply decided to take a walk home instead of waiting for the bus. Whenever we needed to stay at school longer than the school bus was scheduled, we were dependent on some parent from the village who had a car to pick us up or we stayed overnight at some friend’s place who was living close to school. This lasted for 12 years until I finished high school.

Most of my classmates went to study further in the capital, Tallinn. It was at a quite convenient distance and also the bus connection was good. I had always dreamt about studying in the old university town Tartu in Southern Estonia. So I chose the inconvenient way, because even though Tartu was located only in 140 km far away from my parents’ place, the buses went relatively seldom and I always needed to transfer to a local bus in our provincial town. Later I needed to ask my parents to pick me up from the

bus stop at 5 km distance from their place. It took me normally 3.5-4 hours to travel home.

Then again, I complicated my life even more in terms of covering distances between significant places by the decision to continue my studies abroad, in Tampere. The opportunity to obtain the kind of education I was able to get in Tampere was desirable enough to outweigh the travelling inconvenience. I guess I thought it pays it all off once.

It is the very same time-space expansion happening for a village girl from Estonia; a country left “behind” for 50 years due to communism, but otherwise modern; rapidly developing information society, now part of the arrantly spatialised EU (following the day-to-day repeated and reproduced myth about Estonia’s developmental scale); that is a part of the everyday lives of the people in Howa village. My own story is about looking for a good education (investment in a better future) that has been the leading force in my personal decision-making so far. It has expanded my orientation towards education gradually. First I started in a local school, then went on to a university town and later abroad. The time and effort spent on travelling, keeping connections with my family and friends, can be seen as the cost I have paid for that.

What has happened in this small village by now? The internet has reached the village, but there is almost no infrastructure left, almost nobody can work there, but needs to reach out. The younger generation that is still connected to the village needs to commute between workplace and home for considerably longer distances, establish homes in a provincial town or even in the capital. And now the more recent change is to travel to work in Finland for more economic reasons. This example of the situation in a quite typical Estonian village gives good evidence that commuting together with journey has acquired much more significance in the last 15-20 years only.²⁰ Of course, the Soviet village as such was quite a unique arrangement of life, because the establishment of collective farms kept people fully employed in the countryside and thus minimized their need to look for employment and connections outside their localities.

²⁰ This does not mean as if Estonian population so-far would have been rooted. Involuntary translocation of millions of people in Soviet territory due to war, deportation, occupation of empty territories and urbanization had taken place and were the aspects that have definitely had an effect on Estonians’ understandings of travelling and journey. Also, involuntary translocations of people in Estonian villages, based on the need for additional labour-force, especially the ones with a training in a particular field (accountants, agronomists etc.) were a common practice throughout the Soviet period until the mid 1980s.

When I think of people today, commuting seems to be strongly integrated in their everyday life. People living both in the big cities and countryside, need to decide, where does the limit go between reasonable and purposeless commuting, because they try to make rational decisions about their life arrangements. One of my interviewees, a 40-year old man, a father of three kids, who has worked in Finland for almost three years now while the family stays back in Estonia explained his decision-making rationale as follows:

T13: I have also this problem that in the place where I live [60 km distance from Tallinn] – there are no such jobs as one can live off. You still need to work in Tallinn. This means that I need to drive to work by car, one hour in the morning and another hour in the evening back home. It makes working days very long. I was building saunas in Tallinn for a year, working hours themselves remained short, but the [working and travelling] day was still long. Here [in Finland] it is easier. Here I don't have more free time, but working days are longer. And because of that you earn here also more money than in Estonia. Here the workplace is much closer. And so it is and so you need to see those things... And then you keep such a job.

Hence, similarly, as Cindi Katz (2004) explained staying put must not necessarily be considered a disadvantage related to the lack of means for travelling, but on the contrary, can also be seen as a privilege. It is a privilege, in the sense that now that there are increasingly more ways to spend one's time, we actually have practically less time to do what we could do. No matter, how one actually spends time, without the need for regular commuting one could (theoretically) have more independence over the use of time.

We could find many counterarguments here related to Janette's (1968) concept of *time-space convergence*, which is based on the comparative calculations on the relation between distance and time in historical perspective and concludes that the innovations in technology and communication have brought distant places closer together and the time spent for travelling becomes shorter. For instance, if 100 years ago daily travelling distances could reach 10 km and that meant 2 hours of travelling on foot then today within the same time period people are able to cover 200 km by car or 2000 km by plane. Many human geographers are confident that even though people today travel considerably longer distances between home and work the actual length in time still remains relatively constant. The distance thus does not really matter as long as the time spent for travelling is rational. With regards to my previous and following arguments I want to stress that the time-space convergence may be relevant if we look at the changes

in people's daily travelling practises on a very general level and we tend to objectivity, following the long-term processes. Yet time-space convergence has serious limitations when we go outside the urban and especially Western settlements and follow closely, what kind of changes in distance and time and with what cost people have experienced in different times of their life. Therefore the concept of time-space expansion functions quite effectively in appointing the continuously existent differences among perceptions on time and space for people with various background.

For my interviewees, migrating to Finland meant changing their life arrangements to a lesser or a greater extent, and travelling has become quite a central part of it. Changed life arrangement due to migration definitely has had its effect on one's way of thinking about the world in general. I heard several claims from my informants (and they were excited about finding it out too!) that their imagination of far and near have gone through a dramatic change since they moved to Finland and started travelling between two countries. What was almost insurmountable before has become perceived almost "the place next to" that can be surpassed spontaneously. When I asked one of my interviewees, a middle-aged lady, about her activities in Estonia while she is visiting there, she explained to me how she experiences increasing spontaneity and shrinking of space. This has not so much to do with technological change neither with having more means for crossing spatial boundaries, but I see it rather as a change in one's state of mind acquired through increasing experience of mobility.

T1: /---/ Two times in a year at least we go to visit my girlfriend in Tartu [180 km from Tallinn]. Estonia is so tiny, you reach every place easily. It is interesting that when I was living in Tallinn then Tartu felt so far-away. I only took it up on myself once per year [to travel to Tartu]. And in some years I skipped it even. Now that we have all those Finnish prices and gasoline and all that... /---/ going to Tartu is not such a special undertaking as it was in the past. [When I happen to be in Tallinn again] I call to my girlfriend and ask, Hey, are you at home at the weekend? O.K., we come over! (giggling) And then it's two hours and we are in Tartu. /---/

With regard to travelling across the state borders several people show great flexibility in being able to see it as a secondary thing; what counts is the actual distance.

T15: The distance becomes shorter for people and border-crossing easier. After all, driving from Tallinn to here [Tampere] is the same as driving from Tallinn to Tartu. Distance-wise. Or to Võru [located in the southern part of Estonia] or wherever. The kilometrage is the same. If you are able to think of this border-crossing as a secondary thing then there is no problem.

Actually, in those two passages we need not forget that the change of far-near perceptions may not be purely a matter of transnational life arrangements, but the overall widening of a worldview for somebody who had lived their whole conscious life under the rule of the communist régime. For describing this qualitative change the symbolism of “to be freed from the prison” has often been used. This societal change can be interpreted as opening-up, transforming and shifting the physical and mental borders, which, of course, cannot happen suddenly, but takes place gradually. Since the level of freedom for Estonians compared to the citizens of the older member states of the EU in terms of unhampered border-crossing has been much lower until quite recently, removing the measures of strict border control have been of utmost significance for Estonians. No doubt that the opening of borders has resulted in the change of spatial dimensions, what seemed to be insurmountable before has now become imaginable and achievable.

The same aspect of decreasing importance of border-crossing is recognised by another interviewee, a young woman who has been living in Finland for four years and travels to Estonia very often:

T4: Actually it would not make any difference where I live, here [in Finland] or in Saaremaa²¹, in the sense of distance, precisely. It is how it exactly is – I often travel to Estonia for the weekend. For me it is not so that I need to plan travelling one month in advance. For me it is also possible to go on the next day or even the same day – I take my passport and I go. If I get the ferry-ticket.

Distances, then, are seen as objectively measurable, in the sense that the magic of borders has disappeared and difficulties for travelling within a nation state can sometimes be considered more troublesome than across the nation states. Surely, this must be the effect of visa- and customs-free spaces where an individual experiences less and less direct control over their movements, that is radically different from people’s experiences during the communist régime.

The influential spatial experiences connected to travelling do not necessarily need to be attached to the implementations of state power. However, it is still the power, precisely state power that is underneath there when my interviewees talk about border-crossing and its symbolic and spiritual meanings:

²¹ Saaremaa, the biggest Estonian island, has a regular ferry-connection with the mainland. Many people of the Saaremaa’s population of 40 000 experience regular commuting between the mainland and the island for the purpose of work, education etc.

T15: Water is such an element that crossing it is always something more than just crossing a land border. Because water belongs to nobody. You go over something neutral and find yourself in an entirely new society. It contains some fear and curiosity: What is going to await ahead there? This is what makes people always restless.

5.2. Reasoning travelling and transnational lifestyle: non-economic explanations

Now, coming back to the part of the journey in my own story, it can be firstly interpreted as a means for realizing my educational project. It is so when we think of a journey as a bridge between home and what? – a parlour? – a classroom?, taken for granted that we have one home and returning back home does not have an alternative. Yet for most of the people such targeted (educational and other) projects turn-out being something much more complex than living physically abroad for a while. There is space for changing identities, both losses and expansions in social networks, negotiations in many fields of life.

The reasons for travelling between spaces can be something very different from acquiring education. Work, the need for healing in a particular place, other medical treatments, spiritual self-retrievals, establishing a family with a foreigner, those are just a few possible occasions that motivate the need for physical travelling from one space to another.

Be the reasons for moving to Finland work, love, education, inner need for new challenges, the escape from a distressing environment, some combination of those or something completely different, for my informants travelling hardly means the same as many scholars so far have envisioned about the essence of it. O'Reilly, for instance, talks about travellers in terms of wanderers and vagabonds (and backpackers) for whom travelling associates with mobility and independence, in the other words with the freedom to choose where to be. She points out the difference of such travelling compared to tourism by stating that here the focus is on the journey itself, not on arriving at the intended destination. During the journey one is able to acquire cultural and symbolic capital, useful both on the road and after returning home. (O'Reilly 2005)

The latter explanation for acquiring cultural and symbolic capital seems to be worth consideration while thinking about the travelling and gained experiences of Estonians living in Finland. While for me travelling between the two countries has been a

lesson in terms of constantly learning how to split myself between two spaces and most of all, how not to let myself get emotionally lost in transitions, so I was quite surprised that my interviewees in general did not tend to explain their experiences with travelling similarly (of course, it is also possible that people tried purposefully avoid from telling such things in order to not revive feelings that they have managed to overcome). The more surprised and touched I was when one of my informants expressed his inner feelings and sufferings while travelling between the two countries, Finland and Estonia and three significant places, one in Finland and the other two in Estonia, that he all calls homes, stating that:

T15: It was so that when I travelled somewhere then I was waiting all the time reaching the destination. And it was such a pain to leave from the previous place, [the fact] that I will leave it behind now. And then I went to this second or third place to be returned again. I was travelling all the time. Maybe I stayed at one place for a half a year, but I was all the time “travelling”. In my mind I was waiting for that moment when I can return. And at the same time, when I arrived there, I felt pity for the place I had to leave behind. What happened was a kind of Bermuda Triangular – I was all the time on a way, all the time thinking that if I will reach that place, this will be happiness, and when I reached the place, then it was sadness because of leaving behind the previous place, and the only thing I thought about was, when I will get back there.

I also felt compassion when he explained his gained wisdom about the source of the problems that people experience when living transnational lives:

T15: It is not so important how you share your time physically. A person reduces himself energetically, when he is not able to decide, where he is and who he is. Who he is depends on where he is. In Estonia I am a totally different person than here. I have my own past in Estonia, my friends, my society that gives me the rules I have to live according to. I know [those rules] by heart. And when I come here [to Finland] then I am completely different. I need to change my inner self all the time. And if you have three places [that you feel attached to] then you change yourself three times. And at some point this whole thing gets screwed up. You just don't understand anything anymore.

Another aspect that we can draw similarities between is travelling as a wanderer and as a transnational traveller, concerns the necessity to reason one's move abroad and the regular state of travelling to oneself and to significant others. As long as staying put has been seen as a natural state of order and moving away a disruption of the natural environment those who travel are always expected to give reasonable explanations about their decision to “stay away”. There are reasons that are more valid in our self justification than others: earning money, career opportunities, founding a family with a foreigner etc. At the same time, in several of my interviews there sounded this undertone

that Giddens (1999) has called a ‘condition of high modernity’. By that he means that while in earlier times most people were living according to relatively pre-defined life-circles then late modernity requires constant decision-making between choices (that may be equally good or bad). Giddens (1999) also claims that self-actualisation and ongoing projection of self-identity that go hand-in-hand are primarily characteristic of highly modern societies. Thus, it has become common to reason one’s need for living abroad with personal development, finding oneself, growing independent and other modes of self-actualisation. What I understand from the following passage, people may choose living abroad for creating a certain distance from (parental) home in Estonia where they can better develop their sense of freedom, independence and the feeling of “having and living my own life” that may be difficult to achieve in their known environments:

T11: /---/ I like exactly this that if I would really like to move back to Estonia, I could do that. This is exactly the distance that I like. Perhaps it is important for me. Many people are here only because of a job and money. /---/ If I would like, I could go back, but for some reason I like to stay and live here in Finland at the moment. Even though I am not very well paid, I still choose the situation I have now. But it is for personal reasons only. I like that when I go there [to Estonia], I have everything there waiting for me and everything is fine, but at the same time I know that it lasts only for 2-3 days and I will go back to my own life in Tampere. It suits me very well.

5.3. Towards highly customised practises of travelling

When conducting my interviews I was curious: *How does a typical trip, practically speaking, from Finland to Estonia and back look like for Estonians living in Tampere?; How much and in what aspect have their travelling practises changed during the time since they came here?; How do they perceive those trips related to their everyday life in general?* Many interesting reflections concentrate around the notion of ‘the length of the trip’ which is already discussed above. Subsequently, I am going to take a closer look at what people think about the rationality of their travelling practises and what are the manifestations of customised travelling.

Instead of being able to cover the distance between Finland and Estonia with one type of transportation, the combination of different transportation methods is needed. Logistically the journey is complicated, especially that often times the start and end destinations of travel are located quite a distance from the ferry-terminals. People who

travel between Helsinki and Tallinn only, are quite advantaged dependent merely on ferry-timetables. While the ones travelling from Tampere to Tartu, for instance, always need to pass through several phases of a trip that require separate preparation. One woman reflected with thoughts about her trips:

T1: This time between Tampere and Helsinki is an empty time so to speak. It takes 1.5 hours by Pendoliino, but mostly it still takes 2 hours. And it can be 2.5 hours in winter time, when there is ice and the trains are late. And the Paunu bus drives 2.5 hours. And even more, if you take the Paunu bus on the way back to Tampere, then it drives through the airport and it takes even longer. It is an empty time. I have used it for sleeping, for reading, but still it is somehow... this kind of thing, that it would be better without it.

At the same time, another woman for whom travelling between Tampere and Tallinn (and often times also Tartu) is a weekly practise claimed:

T3: Actually there is no difference, whether it is Helsinki or Tampere, along the highway it is only one hour and 20 minutes, it is like you do not even notice. [My husband] goes to work to Helsinki every day. /---/ In principle, it does not make any difference whether you go to Helsinki every morning or you need to come to work in Tampere from nearby Nokia.

These excerpts indicate that the perception of distance and time is very individual. It has sometimes to do with the frequency of travelling, so that the people who cover longer distances more often and with more regularity tend to see the distance less disturbing. My interviewees often admitted that in the beginning when they started travelling between Estonia and Finland the whole event seemed more time consuming and tiresome, but in the course of time they have learnt how to release the travelling stress and make the trip more comfortable for them. Interestingly, the customized practises of travelling differ considerably between people. Some say that they save much time since they started to travel by their own car instead of using public transport like buses or trains. Others, on the contrary, admit that they prefer nowadays to use the train when travelling from Tampere to Helsinki, because in this way they can rest after the working day and save their energy.

Changing practises of travelling are interesting to look at, because they tell us something about the changing world in terms of political and economic developments and its match with personal opportunities. For instance, many travellers noted that the customs service after Estonia joined the EU was considerably quicker compared to the time Estonia was not part of the EU. Now, that there is no customs, the case since

January 2008²² (Fig. 5), people would probably see the border crossing as a more positive experience than before. Today there is considerable variety in ferry companies and different passenger ferries that people can choose between compared to earlier times. Thus, objectively speaking, the average trip today is shorter than before.

People try to make rational decisions about travelling as in any sphere of their life. Stabilised or increased income is normally a reason for travelling by fast rather than by slow ferries, even though the tickets of the latter ones cost half the price or less. People tend to constantly estimate what is the most appropriate price-time ratio. If it is a rational act for many people to use the services of high-speed ferries in terms of season and money whenever possible, then it shows that the spectrum of rationality is actually much wider.

I personally was very surprised at hearing that there is a family who travels between Finland and Estonia weekly and, independent from the season, they always travel by slow ferries taking a cabin while on board. It was something that never came to my mind that there would be people willing to spend money on a cabin, while basically they could use the ferry purely for transportation. I had taken a cabin only twice while travelling by ferry between Finland and Estonia. Once, because I was stuck in the ferry over-night due to a storm on the sea. After all the passengers were boarded, the ferry just did not leave the harbour in Finland until the storm calmed down, in early morning. Another time I arrived in Tallinn at midnight and since I did not have a place to stay overnight until continuing my trip next morning, I decided to spend the night on a ferry in a cabin. I consider both occasions exceptional. However, for other travellers the typical trip to Estonia looks like:

T3: /---/ 4.30 in the morning there is a wake-up, then to the car, reaching the 8 o'clock ferry, three hours of sleeping in a cabin and arrival into Tallinn. /---/ I travel a lot by Eckeröline, because first of all it is so cheap, it has a very good service and after all there is no difference, whether it is a ferry that takes 3.5 hours or it is a so called fast ferry, where you are not able to get out quickly and in one way or the other you spend three hours for completing your trip. Then this additional half an hour does not disturb me anymore. And even if I would like to take this fast ferry and I want to reach the ferry at 8 o'clock in the morning, then I could not sleep off. Then I rather prefer to sleep off. /---/ I never travel without a cabin, and because fast ferries do not have cabins, this is the reason why we usually do not travel by fast ferries.

²² Note Bene that the interviews were conducted between May-August 2007

Hence, more important than the price it is the suitability of the ferry timetables with people's own daily timetable that counts when choosing between ferries. While conducting my interviews I became more confident that it had been a very wise decision not to concentrate on the Estonians who live in the Helsinki area, but to look a bit further. When one works in Helsinki and travels to Tallinn, this movement appears to be similar to everyday work commuting in big cities. But once we focus on the people who live at several hours driving distance from the main transportation centres, they need to count in additional circumstances and thus a whole range of new and interesting aspects opens up. When I was asking, why one of my respondents preferred to use the services of the Viking Line ferry company he reasoned:

T13: It was suitable for the time, that's why. It departs at 9 pm in the evening [from Helsinki] and also the arrival time [into Helsinki] is quite good, so that you arrive around 8 pm. In winter time there are only those slow ferries. Now Tallink has also this "Star". This is quicker, but I think it is not cheaper, I guess it is actually more expensive than Viking Line. It goes faster but then again those times are not suitable. Those departure times from Finland are worse, particularly. It goes very early during the daytime, you don't reach it, and then it goes at midnight. I don't know... to go by this midnight ferry as I did once – I arrived home at 3.30 am. They [family] don't even count this day as me being at home. You see, you arrived 3.30 am on Saturday and you leave on Sunday – you didn't spend even a whole day at home, only half a day. You get those problems at home when you go so seldom.

Also other people tended to stress that there is a certain minimum length of stay (in days) in Estonia that makes the whole journey reasonable. For most of the people the stay of three days counts as a reasonable visit, whereas one weekend remains too short, because then the actual travelling can take longer than being in Estonia; other people prefer, whenever possible, to travel less often but to stay at least for one week.

Travelling in a relaxed way requires a great deal of flexibility. People who work full time from Monday to Friday cannot obviously afford the time for weekly travelling to Estonia. Flexibility occurs in the way that people try to work, sometimes longer hours to be able to take a longer weekend once a month for example. It becomes more complicated for those who live as families where both of the partners work or who have kids who go to school. In this case the practise tends to be that the Estonia-trip will be made only when there are public holidays or school holidays. Thus it becomes natural that families travel to Estonia not more than every three months. It could be a different

practise for those Estonians who do not work full-time, are more flexible with work or do not have kids of school-age.

From a recent conversation with a friend who works as a doctor in Tampere I discovered a new dimension of price-time ratio in such a short-distance travelling as the trips from Tampere to Tallinn are. She told me that since she is travelling between Tampere and Tallinn every weekend that she does not have work-shifts, that makes 2-3 times per month, it is not unusual for her to travel by plane instead of a ferry. There are no direct flights from Tampere to Tallinn, but one always needs to transfer in Helsinki. Thus, it is actually more reasonable to travel to Helsinki and take a plane from there. For that reason the actual travelling time by plane²³ is almost the same as to travel by fast ferry. According to her at some point there comes the moment that if you have a stable and relatively good income (which doctors definitely have) you would rather travel by plane. She thinks that at some point the *quality* of travelling starts to matter. What is most important, by plane is you do not travel in undesirable company, such as uneducated and rude Estonian workers, drunkards etc. so that you do not need to feel annoyed about your fellow travellers. As a doctor she feels that her status does not allow her anymore to travel in this typical setting of a passenger ferry company. This example indicates that class seems to be a clear signifier of possible travelling practises in the Estonian-Finnish borderlands, however the facilities offered by the transportation industry do not privilege (at least in terms of the possibility to save time) the higher social classes as much as we could expect.

I was also asking whether she would consider using the helicopter service instead once the company starts the regular flights again in spring 2008. In the beginning she was doubtful about that, because she thinks that the accident was relatively recently and memories are still vivid, which scares her off. However, after thinking a short while she said that perhaps it is still the practical side that counts more. So perhaps she would still consider it if practicality demanded it.

When I travel to Estonia and back to Finland I do it mostly alone and during the whole travel time I try to keep my private space. Before the conversations with my

²³ She explained the step-by-step procedure like this: I go straight from work to the Tampere railway station and take a train to Tikkurila, it takes about 1.5 hours, from there I take a bus to the Helsinki-Vantaa Airport (5-10 min) and then a plane to Tallinn Airport (25 min). It is mostly possible to do the online check-in, so I don't need to line-up in the check-in and the time I spend in the airport is not that long at all.

respondents I was considering the opportunity that when travelling often and regularly, people obviously meet many times the people who travel for the same reasons and they might become acquainted. Therefore, I was quite surprised to find out that the common practise is quite the opposite. Many people admit that they would not look for the company of other people when travelling in the ferry, but contrarily they kind of enjoy the opportunity that they can be alone with their own thoughts and activities. When in everyday life there is little time to read or be with one's own thoughts, then the routine-like travel can give as a good opportunity to concentrate on those things. Several people summarised the travelling time to Estonia as "*It's a quality time for me*" or "*It's the time for myself*".

For other travellers quality-time during travel means something completely different. An Estonian woman who travels to Estonia very rarely, and goes there for the purpose of relaxing and to spend a nice time with friends and family explains:

T10: I like to enjoy my trip from the very moment I start it. I like to be seated in the car and start giggling immediately. That's why I always have some company to travel with.

Maximising the good feeling during travel by being surrounded with good company is a different coping strategy compared to the ones used by travellers who either travel more often or decide to "survive somehow" the travel part and then, finally being in Estonia, start enjoying it. Moreover, this last excerpt shows expressively the variety and subjectivity between the Estonian travellers and gives a good reason for taking into account that for some Estonians in Finland travelling to Estonia has more similar associations with the tourist-like pleasure-oriented travelling that Urry (1995) and Cohen (1979) are writing about rather than with the travelling for the necessity to physically connect two social spaces, one in Estonia and the other in Finland.

6. Transnational travelling within places and spaces discourse

6.1. Theorizing place and space

Rethinking of place and space forms a significant part of the anthropological writing today. In earlier literature, place has usually connotations with a geographically fixed place, a location that has history and about which people have a personal cultural memory. The function and meaning of places can change, but they do not disappear even if they will be unrecognizable because of the changes that have taken place, for example, if some natural places get turned into industrial areas. Space reaches beyond places, it can have connections with concrete geographical places, but not necessarily, if we think of the most typical example – cyberspace. The space is more about the embodiment of certain type of ideas, behaviours, actions that are characteristic to this particular invisible “room”. Recent discourses on place-space relations recognise that place is much more fluid and relational than it was thought before, thus also negotiated and a product of social construction.

Michel de Certeau has looked at the construction of place and space through the practises of everyday life. For him place is a configuration of positions at some point, which always evolves stability to certain extent. Space, on the other hand, is a place being practised. Space appears as soon as directions, speed and time come to the play, which are vitalising the place. (1988, pp. 117-22)

Massey (1993, 1994, 2005) has done extensive work in explaining the relationship between place and space. For Massey (2005, p. 9) there are the following characteristics of space that define the epistemological field of space: (1) space is the product of interrelations, (2) it is the field of multiplicity in terms of simultaneously coexisting trajectories and their multiple intersections, (3) and it is never ready, but always under construction, being made. In the other words, Massey imagines space as “a dimension of dynamic simultaneous multiplicity” (2005, p. 61). Now, places, on contrary to what has been previously imagined, “are not so much bounded areas as open and porous networks of social relations” and “their ‘identities’ are constructed through the specificity of their interaction with other places rather than by counterposition to them” (Massey 1994, p. 121). At the same time, because of the variety of concurrent intersections, multiple identities are attached to the same places, which results in continuous contest over the dominant image of a place.

Thinking about transnational travelling in terms of place and space is useful, because this approach enables us to imagine moving between two countries in a fluid way, without associating the movement immediately with political and economic restrictions. This is a different perspective compared to the border-crossing practicalities, which I had as a central framework in the discussions of the preceding chapters. It is possible that people travelling transnationally do not draw dichotomies based on the nation state borders, especially now that the border-crossing bureaucracy offers minimum difficulties for travellers. It is also possible to imagine that in their everyday practises Estonians in Finland do not perceive social spaces of Estonia and Finland as separable at all. Instead, they may perceive themselves as acting in a space or even multiple simultaneous and overlapping spaces which reach out on both sides of the Gulf of Finland.

Subsequently, the approach of spaces and places take the role of imagination seriously, which is important with regards to travelling and overseas connections in Soviet times. When the communist régime was able to regulate everyday practises, including travelling abroad, people's imaginations were still alive and uncontrollable. I will discuss shortly the symbolic features on the example of the "White Ship" that gives interesting evidence of the circumstance that spaces that we operate in are not restricted to state borders but people are able to associate themselves with outside spaces even within such an extreme case as communist rule.

Finally, the concept of space and place is useful in order to understand the existence of unboundedness, liminality and in-betweenness in travelling practises. I will discuss these characteristics primarily related to the settings of a passenger ferry.

6.2. The symbolism of overseas connections

Almost all my interviewees summarised their feelings towards the ferry-trip to Estonia and back to Finland as an action that *has-to-be-endured*. Everybody said that there is nothing exciting related to being in the ferry, at least not nowadays. Many use the same expression "*If it would be possible, I would skip totally this ferry-part*". It seems that even though they use also other kinds of transportation (car, bus or train) during the trip to Estonia or back to Finland, they have the strongest feelings, be it boredom or disgust or something else, towards being in the ferry in particular. I feel the same and this

makes me wonder, what is it so specifically in the settings of passenger ferries that evokes those standardised emotions?

As I have already described in the introductory part of this thesis, my first personal experiences with travelling by passenger ferry were quite impressive. On the contrary to what I assumed, my interviewees in general did not seem to have vivid memories about their first experience of travelling by ferry between Estonia and Finland. When I asked about their first ferry-trip to Finland and what they remember about it, they normally “jumped” straight from Estonia to Finland and described, what had struck them at a glance as distinct or contrasting in comparison between the two countries without mentioning anything about the ferry-trip itself. At the same time, when I asked from some random people who had never travelled by passenger ferry how do they envision a ferry-trip, they tended to have very romantic images about it. In their imaginations a large ship and its atmosphere would resemble the opulent “Titanic” movie: glorious, spacious and exciting. Among my respondents, there was still one woman who shared with me her disappointment of today’s passenger ships when comparing to the ideal in her memory:

T1: Of course, once [in 1980s] I had been on the board of Georg Ots. It was a special event for book-lovers, for those who belonged to the Book-Lovers Club. This was during Soviet times. So that I had been in a large ship, but this made only a circuit around Tallinn Bay, we did not reach the Finnish side. But I remember that this ship was more beautiful [than the ones nowadays]. I have this impression still that this ship [that I used in the year 2000] was not as beautiful as I had imagined. But this Georg Ots, this was... It is so deeply in my memory that the ships travelling between Estonia and Finland were so very beautiful and awesome. There was this movie about Georg Ots with all its bars at that time... All those bars familiar from the “Mr X” movie: Mefisto bar and Green Parrot’s²⁴ bar and... there were such a kind of velvety seats – as if you entered into a film or some play. And now it was somehow ordinary, less luxurious.

When we look at the story above in its historical context, namely, that the political situation in the Soviet Union made it impossible for ordinary people to visit capitalist countries, including Finland situated just in 80 km distance over the Gulf of Finland, it becomes clear that during Soviet times a ship-connection as such represented something more than primarily the transportation means that it could be considered as today. There is a symbol of the “White Ship”, often times described as a legend (however none of my respondents was able to tell the exact storyline of it), that several middle- or elder-

²⁴ Orig. name (Estonian): Rohelise Papagoi baar

generation interviewees made references to when I asked what was their association with passenger ships in Soviet time.

There is considerable amount of literature (by authors i.e. Eduard Vilde, Aino Kallas, Uku Masing) and works of art that carry on the legend. “White Ship” has been the literary metaphor, a symbol that in the Estonian cultural and political context has been associated with hope, with waiting for something that is unrealistic, but at the same time the waiting process itself is inspiring and gives hope and faith to a better future. After World War II, becoming part of the Soviet Union and being closed behind the “Iron Curtain” there appeared also political connotations with this metaphor. People started to wait for the imagined liberator coming from the outside world, arriving by the “White Ship”, who was supposed to bring freedom from the communist totalitarian régime and restore the Estonian Republic. This liberator was mostly associated with Americans. For in the Soviet ideology the metaphor at the same time was very negatively loaded. Using the metaphor was associated with the betrayers and the antagonists of the Soviet régime (Arula-Jahe 2005).

The metaphor of “White Ship” resembles somewhat the practise of ‘cargo cult’, widely discussed in anthropological literature. Cargo cult represents magical thinking and certain practises, mostly religious rituals that the tribes in Melanesian archipelago performed in order to gain mostly material wealth (money, vehicles, guns etc.) from the technologically advanced cultures that they had become familiar with through previous contacts. Sometimes the use of cult is metaphorical, representing “the search for a new social and moral order that would ensure local sovereignty and the withdrawal of colonial rulers” (Lindstrom 2004, p. 15). Cults were widespread in 1940-1950, in the post-war period Vanuatu and Tanna, for example, where locals worshipped Americans associating them with ships bringing cargo. Later on the “cargo cult” has found general use and can be associated with any isolated society that have become into contact with the outside world and the shock or impression that has been caused to the locals facilitates the impression that the outsiders are spiritual beings with divine powers that can be used for bettering the situation in a local area. In a cargo cult the stress is on its imaginary, unrealistic nature and this is, precisely, what the Americans arriving by the “White Ship” and bringing freedom represented for Estonians.

6.3. Passenger ferry settings: A place, space or non-place?

In today's context the symbolic use of the term "White Ship" described above seems to be disappearing. Understandably, the sense of opened-up spaces and the increase of freedom in movement reduces the need for such supporting imaginaries. Since the end of 1980s passenger ferry transport has become increasingly a subject of pure business, a space that is created to promote aggressive marketing. At the same time, business did not have any role in the Soviet time passenger-ship transportation conception. Today there is a principal difference between the two types of ferries, so called large or slow ferries and the small or fast ferry²⁵ expressively described in one of the expert-interviews I made thus:

E1: If I would make a comparison then the fast-ferry concept is similar to a tram or bus trip, from destination A to destination B. And the same applies also for such large ferries that are liners. But the ferries that offer accommodation – those are a kind of lazy man's hotel. For those who don't bother themselves with going downtown [Tallinn] and taking a hotel room. They stay in the ferry during the night, in the morning go to downtown, return and travel back home. They receive their entertainment in the ferry and things like that.

Surely, the travellers sense the difference between those two ferry-concepts. However, as it appeared from the preceding chapter it is not self-evident that the Estonian travellers would always choose the quick solutions from point A to point B whenever possible. The variety in need for customised use of a space is too wide for universal solutions.

T4: I find for myself a comfortable corner and there I normally sit and read newspapers. Recently I have already known in advance that I will buy for myself Postimees, Päevaleht and Ekspress²⁶ if they have them there on sale. And then during the whole trip I read all the newspapers through, from the beginning to the end. And then maybe I buy some coffee and then I walk around, move myself and then... This is with those 3-hour ferries.

From what I have observed in the ferry, and here I discuss only the practises on slow ferries, this above description of one's activities in the ferry really seems to be a common practise. In addition, one can often notice people trying to sleep, reading a book, doing crossword puzzles or sudoku, eating some food, that is usually taken along from

²⁵ These terms were used simultaneously and interchangeably by my interviewees, thus I do not have any reason to prefer one term to the other.

²⁶ All major Estonian newspapers

home, not bought in the ferry, and the latest fashion is carrying along personal laptops and watching movies. Still these private activities are often complicated to perform as it was pointed out in one of the interviews:

T5: Vana Tallinn was my favourite ship in a sense that it was this kind of older type of ship that was not full of bars and cafés and *à la carte* restaurants, but you could find there quiet corners, where you could sit down and even sleep sometimes if you were tired. Those latest ships are all oriented to the Finnish cruise passengers who sit in the karaoke bars and like to party. But the kind of ordinary Estonian passenger, who is often tired and would like to be in peace, has not been kept in mind at all.

While being in the ferry, some people, the traditional cruise tourists, take advantage of the fact that they are in the commercial area with entertainment, shopping and eating facilities. Others seem to see the ferry purely as a means of transportation, and they act accordingly, as if the commercial, cultural and social life did not even exist inside the ferry. Instead, they try to customise their being in the ferry by creating certain routines that help to overcome the trip in a most comfortable and bearable way. Subsequently, it is time to ask, *What do these, at least two different worlds that from the first glance exist side by side tell us about the ferry as a social space? Do those spaces exist side by side, intermingle, or conceive different perceptions of the very same space? And after all, what is its impact on one's journey as such?*

Following de Certeau's (1988) definition of place and space, the passenger ferry can be seen as a place thinking about its physical existence and the set of exterior and interior elements that make it a ferry: it is sailing in the water, it has several decks, cabins, eating and shopping facilities etc. Now, as soon as we imagine it with people, crew and passengers, exercising their roles and having relationships to each-other, we can think of it as a space. Everybody, even those who have no personal experience of travelling by ferry, is able to imagine the milieu and function of a ferry. Of course, these imaginations can vary considerably, but still they are the imaginations of one, unique space. Once we think of the multiple interactions taking place in this space, it becomes clear that the ferry, as in any other environment, must be an arena of simultaneously existing and intermingled social spaces.

There are many inseparable elements in a ferry-trip that have to be played through all over again in the same sequence, e.g. the check-in, security procedures, finding a spot to pass the time, and in this sense constitute a certain routine. But then again, every time

the combination of people and events in the ferry is different, and the inter-relations that happen are different too. It is in the very nature of a ferry-trip that there are many people involved in it; there is quite a lot of physical space for the people to move and for the events to happen in contrast to other means of transportation. People are free to move, choose and change their positions. But they are not allowed to leave the ferry, thus it is in the basic rules of the ferry-trip that people participate from the beginning until the end. Those elements are not equal to the ones typical for a bus- or train-trip.

In the postmodernist spirit, I have been pondering over the similarities and differences between terminals, metro and a passenger ferry environment. Augé (1995a, 1995b, 2002) talks about terminals and metros as non-places because of the anonymity and speed that people experience when stepping into those settings. Thus I ask, *If a ferry or any passenger ship is a manifestation of a non-place too?* and *Does it create depersonalization and allow extreme power implementations that happen in other non-places?* Planes definitely are non-places for me, because as a general rule everyone becomes a stranger there in this timely limited space, which is created just to carry people between distant places. If we talk about the conception of slow ferries then most of my counterarguments for non-place evoke from the fact that the ferry-trip, for its nature does not associate with speed, but, on contrary, it is slow, sometimes, at least in the Estonian-Finnish context, purposefully slow. Slowness here is a deliberate endeavour that serves the capitalist consumption life as a “party” in the way that it prolongs the possibilities of the usage of the bars, casinos, restaurants, shops etc. in the ferry, all designed to maximise the ferry companies’ profit. This atmosphere in turn creates opportunities to be taken care of and to feel personalized, which can hardly happen in the metro or in the terminal.

However, there are elements of being in between (neither in Estonia nor Finland, neither at home nor abroad etc.) and being in a setting with its own logic that for the typical Estonian passenger only serves one purpose, to cross the distance between one and another place, that again speaks for non-place.

6.4. Transitions: here, there and in-between

The Estonians in Finland are, of course, advantaged in the sense that even when living abroad, they are located so relatively close to Estonia that they could visit Estonia

weekly if they so wished. Most of the people that I interviewed visit Estonia quite regularly. The frequency of the visits varies depending on whether their spouses and children are living in Estonia or not, whether they have a full-time job in Finland or not, what is the flexibility of the job and whether they are in Finland for the purpose of study or something else. As a huge generalisation I would say that the frequency of travelling to Estonia for Estonians living in Tampere varies between twice per month to twice per year. The reasons for visiting Estonia are various, but most often people would name visiting family, maintaining connections with relatives and friends, cultural needs and practical needs.

T5: I want that my kids can maintain good connections with their relatives, friends and grandparents. Especially now that we have kids it feels very important because of them that they would be in an Estonian language environment and speak a proper Estonian. Here in Finland it is so easy for them to become Finnish, but if in summer time they are in Estonia, at least for a couple of months and they have their playmates there, who speak only Estonian, then they learn again the Estonian play language and games and.../---/

Independent from the fact of whether the motivation to visit Estonia is similar to the above mentioned or something different, journey is always the linkage between being here or there. A journey represents a transfer from one life-arrangement, living space, to another. I was curious, whether transferring from one space to another is something that people realise and experience in the same way. Yet it seems that people have various sensitivities towards changing an environment. Some of my interviewees described their journeys to Estonia and back to Finland as emotionally overloaded and painful experiences, no matter how often they travel (see chapter 5.2.); others claimed that shifting from one space to another goes smoothly, both physically and mentally. For some a journey from one country to another basically represents an obstacle that it is not possible to transfer immediately in a physical sense, thus being a practical matter.

T5: There is no excitement [about travelling]! If it would be somehow possible to move quickly, in two minutes, by time-machine from one place to another, then we would gladly do it so. And also, that all the wardrobes would be transferred directly [from Tampere to Tallinn].

Visiting Estonia associates with familiar, already experienced, welcoming and safe. For many people Estonia is still simply a home or childhood-home with relatives and other social relations. With this view the existence of a concrete place, a second

home where one is always welcome to arrive and stay as long as one wished is very important. I noticed that the existence of such a place was crucial for most of my respondents, and they talked about those places with warmth and gratitude without taking them for granted. Such places represent an anchor, arriving at those places means the end of a journey and together with that the release of travelling stress, settling in a familiar environment, until there comes the time to start a journey back to Finland.

T5: Yes, we have our own apartment [in Tallinn] that is empty at other times. It is so very good that we have our own place there. It is always so good to go there. Our family would not fit anymore on the sofa in the grandparents' living room. In our home we have plenty of space, our own garden, nice neighbours, neighbours' kids and... This was the idea when once we bought it [the apartment] and when we were continuously renovating it. Actually we have always had this plan that before the kids go to school, we would like to move to Estonia. For real. At least I have this plan, but let's see how it all goes.

Most of the Estonians I talked to have one anchor, *the* place in Estonia. Usually it is the place of their parents but several people have their very own places too: apartments, cottages or houses in the countryside that they would go and live in even for longer periods of time during summer. Several people have bought such a very own place recently. Of course, this can be called simply an investment for the future, but until they are not sure, when if ever they will move back to Estonia, this place functions as an anchor and a symbol about the end and start of a journey. However, there were also some people among my respondents who would stress that the place as such does not matter so much; it is all about the people who create the feeling of arriving home and, at the same time, finishing the journey. When I asked an Estonian woman, at whose place she is staying in Estonia or has she bought some real estate there, she replied:

T10: No, it's exactly the other way around for me, finally, I sold my place there. I have so many other places there that are always waiting for me. I do not need that there would be a house waiting for me, but that in that house there would be nice people to spend my time with. /---/ I go there to rest, not to mow the grass or weed. Those things are not important for me. I think I can be anybody, but not a materialist. I prefer to go and really communicate with people. If I have an opportunity to buy something, then I do it here [in Finland], because after all I live here.

I have many times wondered about the limits and overlapping of spaces and asked from myself, *Why do I feel being at home just at the moment when I have been seated in the train on the way back home from Helsinki to Tampere and not earlier and not later* (the journey still continues, wait, I'm not at home yet!)? And *Why do I feel immediately*

at home when I see the Tallinn skyline from a distance? Yes, maybe I do not feel at home in Helsinki, because I have never lived there. But neither have I lived in Tallinn! An intriguing fact is that my interviewees often times admitted that they experience similar transmissions during their trips. For some people the overlapping of spaces is more flexible than to the others:

T10: I get it already while packing my luggage. It is like to what direction you turn your beak, there you are. I am already there in my thoughts. I get the feeling immediately when I sit in the car [in Tampere], then it starts. When we are on our way back home from Estonia to Finland, then the kids start to speak Finnish already. I suppose they have the same bacillus – depending where the beak is pointing to, this is what you feel.

Yet in the transnational world travelling does not mean only physical relocation between different spaces, perhaps most of the connections are actually not kept and developed through face-to-face connections. Even if we now came to imagine that being on a journey starts and ends in different moments and the transitions from one space to another are various (and obviously the spaces are constituted differently for different people and are never exactly the same even for the same people), we need to ask, *Until what extent travelling takes place physically and how much of it happens in people's heads?* Whenever Estonians in Finland discuss their next visits to Estonia, make plans for that, agree and arrange events – it is a part of the whole process of travelling. Thus, even if physically not travelling yet in their minds people are already on their way. Some of my interviewees find this kind of constant “travelling” an unhealthy way of living, because the constant wish to be somewhere else and leave the present place creates the status of “being on the way” all the time and does not let them be to enjoy the moment.

Now one may even ask, *Where then lies the difference between dreaming, in the way as we sometimes dream about travelling to unknown and exotic places, and “travelling” (in thought) to Estonia?* Perhaps the limits go where one can recognise the combination of previous experience, both a very practical and emotional connection to the place out-there, the existence of significant others in this other place and commitments related to them.

7. Transnational connections: journey from the perspective of “everyday needs”

In the globally connected world, where keeping social networks and dealing with practical matters can be done quickly and effectively through telecommunications and face-to-face connection is not practically needed, one may ask, *Why do people still keep those face-to-face connections after all and what is the function of those connections?*

Lawson (2001) and Vuorela (2006) have both suggested using the term ‘familyscape’. In Vuorela’s (2006) interpretation ‘familyscape’ can successfully accompany the notion of transnational families (Bryceson and Vuorela 2003), marking because the family related interaction field that involves extended family networks. This term appears as a useful analytical tool in the context of transnationalism, because it allows to imagine that significant family relations can be stateless, reaching out the nation state borders. Familyscapes are exactly as wide as far, geographically, we find significant family connections to. Familyscapes are possible to manage without a real physical connection to the family members, because it is more the sense of belongingness that forms such scapes. I expect that familyscape would be an important factor defining the scope of Estonians’ travels between Finland and Estonia. For the Estonians who are living in Finland, the familyscapes may extend over Finland and Estonia, but they may be constituted only from Tallinn and Tampere, if the significant family members do not live further than that.

Transnational life-style moulds social networks both here and there. Even though social networks build on each other, across and beyond the already existing relations, the earlier relations, first of all built on family relations, normally appear as the most significant. Together with family it is the group of closest friends that form the group of significant others in Estonia.

People mostly find it natural that their relationships with other people change; some of them weaken and disappear, and new ones emerge. Even the most significant relationships need good care from both sides in order to maintain their quality. It is difficult to remain and strengthen all relationships even when living nearby each other, therefore people make efforts to maintain certain relationships and let others go.

Many studies (i.e. Olwig 2003, Glick Schiller et al 1995, Levitt 2001a, Ley and Waters 2004) describe how migrants all over the world have been able to keep significant

social relationships without any physical contact sometimes over many years. In those relationships it is the promise and repeated confirmations about the significance of each other and about the attempts to meet again (once it is possible) that function as a bridge between two ends that separate people from each other. In the case of Estonia and Finland those oral confirmations and promises do not seem to work well. It is again this measurement of distance, imaginary and directly unspelled, but often times alluded to that defines that Finland is so relatively close to Estonia that significant others are obliged to make visits to Estonia in order to show care and commitment. At the same time, it is interesting that this obligation does not work both-ways: most of my respondents noted that while frequent visits to Estonia are expected from their side, the significant others in Estonia are much less willing to make frequent visits back. It is as if the one living abroad has unbalanced the “natural equilibrium” by his/her stay abroad and needs to make these efforts to bring more balance into the situation. Every time when I see my family and friends in Estonian I confront their question, *When will we be able to see you next time?* meaning, when I am planning to visit Estonia again. This question is a statement of love and care, but functions at the same time as a creator of conscience that forces me to promise that I will go as soon as I can and sometimes provokes me to make timely commitments.

Many of my respondents claimed that they have been able to keep the relationships with significant others in Estonia unchanged. This gives a strong hint that it is due to their regular visits to Estonia. And the journey has thus been the means to constantly rebuild and strengthen the transnational network. There are certain events like Christmas, Easter and Midsummer Day that the Estonians in Finland often use as reasons to take a journey to Estonia. Other reasons are to visit acquaintances with birthdays and anniversaries. Participating in those events is a way to demonstrate that one still strongly belongs to certain social networks. The effort to travel for such events is a proclamation of care. If participation in the weddings, anniversaries and birthdays would still vary from person to person then the funerals of a family member or a friend is a must for taking a journey to Estonia. Those visits and journey are a matter of constant negotiation in the style of *“If I will go to Estonia now, then what will I leave undone in Finland?”* and *“Is this time a better/more reasonable time to visit than the other (that I cannot go then)?”*

The intensity of communication, and not only via internet and phone, but regular visits, is the key for keeping good and lasting relations with people back home. Yet when

I asked one of my interviewees, whether she would visit Estonia (meaning family and friends) more often, if she would live closer to Estonia, for instance, in Helsinki, her answer was:

T10: No, I would not visit more often. These are the same people I keep contact with – here or there. If I want to talk to somebody then I just talk and that's it. Later we pay the bill and then I talk again.

This statement made me pay closer attention to the composition of one's close family in Finland and in Estonia. Here it is useful to return to the concept of familyscape. Every time, when the significant family members live in a different country, familyscapes stretch across the nation state borders. If the most significant family members (mostly husband or wife and children, but although parents, sisters, brothers) live permanently in Finland then the central part of the familyscape is probably also concentrated more in Finland and the visits to Estonia take place less often and less regularly. On the contrary, if all those significant relations are centred in Estonia this also facilitates a more frequent and regular travelling to Estonia.

A father of three children who lives in Finland, to provide a better income for his family and travels to see his family in Estonia weekly, or fortnightly, says:

T13: I guess it is rather like going back home. You see, being here is like one work shift. You do your job here, be it one or two weeks, and then you go home. It is like going home after finishing your job. Being here is like one long working day. You stay here and at the end of the week you go home as if after finishing a working day. And then [you stay] a couple of days at home.

This passage provides a new perspective in thinking about one's definition of living abroad as well as about the journey in general. While my other interviewees are locating themselves in Finland and looking at the journey from the point of view of starting a trip from Finland and returning to Finland as home, then the above perspective does the opposite. He is emotionally rooted in Estonia and everything that happens away from Estonia is just a work-trip, a certain kind of journey.

Even though transnational life-styles require keeping connections here and there, we need to ask, why are the connections in the case of Estonians kept so tight, and not only connections in their wider meaning (every kind of communication), but as visits, face-to-face meetings. My impression after my study is that people try to maximise

taking advantage of the situation of living in-between. They feel spiritually richer and securer in being able to manage with their transnational life-arrangements and at the same time having viable social networks in both countries. Invariably all Estonians in Tampere I talked to, no matter for how long they have been living abroad, whether they live in Finland with their partner and/or kids or not, whether the partner is Estonian or Finnish, or whatever have been the reasons to live abroad, summarised their future aspirations in the following format: *“I cannot imagine that I will become old and die here in Finland. I would like to be at home!”* Nobody has clear plans, when exactly would he/she move back to Estonia, but everybody has hopes to do so sometime. When living with the idea of returning, people build future security with keeping tight connections.

8. Transnational migration as a global project vs. personal life-project

The aim of this chapter is to show one possible way, how we could make sense of the travelling practises and the role of journey in people's life-stories in a timely and spatially entangled way, so that the timely framework would not limit the credibility of social practises. If so far in this thesis I have treated the communist régime and its manifestations to travelling practises as principally different and even adversarial to the practises found in a democratic society, I now attempt to draw a joined-up picture of these scattered images.

What I see as a danger in this particular research is the temptation to see Estonian history within a developmental scheme, which celebrates today as democratic and liberal, sees the 1990s transitional period as shifting away from the underdeveloped towards developed, and connects communist and Soviet practises with almost undeveloped. This idea prescribes that today is morally better than yesterday. Wolf (1982, p. 368) calls applying such a linear scale "turning history into a moral success story". Moreover, because Estonia qualified for the norms of the EU, we situate present Estonia among the countries of the European Union, which has often been seen as an ultimate quality of the Western – a highly modernized and democratic state. However, not all that is called Western on a global scale is equally Western inside "the West". When comparing Estonia with Finland, which is a realistic comparison, because there are certain social practises between Estonia and Finland, we come to recognize Finland as an economically better-off country with a more democratic history and with more political stability. We can consider that Finland has a stronger civil society and it can thus be seen as a more developed country than Estonia. This mindset anticipates that Estonia as a country has a way to go towards the Western excellence.

This kind of developmental scheme inclines to see the transnational migration and journey triggered purely from economic aspects and leaves undiscovered all other dimensions and possible explanations. Also, this approach does not allow us to imagine that people may have arguments against developmental scale prescribed in their actions, at least in such a form as I described above. Subsequently, I will discuss briefly, how do I understand the connections between local and global worlds and later, what are the possibilities of looking at the Estonians' travelling practises as part of personal life-projects as well as global projects.

8.1. Global and local worlds intermingled

Recent social writing is gradually rejecting the idea that the global and the local apply to different social worlds, where local would be historically interlacing, conversant, sedentary and limited in scope, whereas global, usually seen as an epiphenomena of modernity, reaches over the small social worlds and binds localities together. Global is often determined as coming after the local and having recent implications to localities thus changing the local histories just here and now; the origin of global, on the other hand, has left unquestioned. Massey (1994, p. 120) is one of the first human geographers who turned the earlier perspective upside down by stating that “the global is in the local in the very process of the formation of the local”. This view basically neglects the clear-cut distinction between global and local and proposes that we should become open to the idea of very specific integrations and interrelationships regarding those two dimensions as we are when studying the relationship and implications of any other social phenomena.

To understand the relationship between global and local in the way of Massey (in anthropology, many authors have presented similar arguments since the 1980s, e.g. Wolf 1982, Gupta and Ferguson 1992, Worsley 1984) it must be first realised that transnational migrants do not operate between two or more localities (an Estonian and a Finnish one; Tartu, Tallinn and Tampere etc.) that are conceptually different from each other and should thus be seen distinctly. It would be also mistaken to argue that the living space constituted by Estonia and Finland, would be automatically more global than spaces that exist within a nation state. For Estonians, Estonia or Tallinn cannot be seen as more local compared with Tampere or Finland just because they were born in the former ones and have a longer personal history related to those places. We can only trace the manifestations and meanings of locality or globality in one or the other living space by analysing various political, historical and cultural developments thoroughly. This, doubtless, does not mean that people’s statements about their personal sense of being and/or becoming global or local (through transnational migration) could be taken as preconceived, but on the contrary, such claims are the source of important knowledge.

8.2. Global projects

Globalisation is definitely one of the underlying terms for my study. The relevant literature unexceptionally assumes that globalisation is a complex process that has happened and continues to happen in real and it is tightly related to other historical, political, economic, cultural and technological processes. The writings of Appadurai, Hannerz and Kearney (all 1996) are often considered the 1990s key texts about globalisation, especially in an anthropological framework. Anna Tsing (2000) has written an excellent critique about those texts regarding the attempt of all of them to build imaginary macroglobalism. Instead, Tsing suggests to undertake a task, which starts with detecting concrete practises and the folk understanding of global. Tsing sees global as a variety of projects, which really makes it easier to grasp, which processes are involved. Through this prism we are able to uncover the variety of globalisms and understand better the complexity of the world instead of just consenting the fact that global flows are too complex to get a clear picture of them. (Tsing 2000)

When we listen to the people's travelling stories and concentrate on what they say about their experience during Soviet times, we may easily start to think that Soviet citizens were not part of a globalised world, because their connections with the outside world were strongly restricted. This thinking is delusive because globalisation took just a different form in the Soviet system. The Soviet Union was focused on promoting development and competitiveness through a modernisation program, which brought vast areas with drastically distinct cultural, religious, political and economic backgrounds into a common political and cultural framework. Those areas became globally connected, oppressed by the same ideology and from this point of view the bases of globalisation in communist or democratic living spaces do not differ in principle. The making of the "Soviet citizen" (see e.g. Hirsch 2005, Brown 2003) as part of a large modernisation programme that was taken charge of by an ideology with strong political and economic programmes – phenomena that are both temporal and spatial. In a similar vein, globalisation as a capitalist ideology is just a means to realise certain political and economic programs that hegemonies take up.

I think that it is worthwhile to think through what is the relationship between hegemony and ideology in societies such as the Soviet Union, Estonia and Finland that my subjects were and are part of. Such a seemingly innocent phenomenon as journey

actually appears to be facilitated and structured by power relations hidden in the societies rather than expressions of people's free will and, thus, the way how people establish their goals and live their everyday lives accordingly is closely related to existing hegemonies and ideologies. International migration today is no less a part of the ideology than the internal migration was in Soviet times. As soon as free movement of people becomes regulated by (international) laws it is a clear indication to being part of political and economic projects. Thus, at a macro level Estonian people today are not necessarily much freer to choose their life-arrangements, including transnational lifestyle, than they were during the communist régime.

With regards to the possibilities of travelling in Soviet times we need to keep in mind that the "Iron Curtain" divided the practises of travelling in particular and mobility in general into two different spaces; one of them representing the Western world, the other the vast areas that were under Soviet hegemony. While travelling abroad was strongly restricted and controlled, the access to the other Soviet republics was principally free. Estonian people often visited St. Petersburg, Moscow, Riga and other cities in nearby republics. The health resorts by the Black Sea were very popular travel destinations. There were quite a few people that had travelled through all 15 Soviet republics; travelling to other countries in the communist block was not very difficult. As I stressed earlier, travelling for holidays needs to be seen differently from necessity-based travelling such as seeking work in different part of the country. Travelling to far-away areas of the Soviet Union also associates for many Estonians with their compulsory military service. Military service lasted 2 years and young men were sometimes sent to the most remote areas from Estonia and they had a chance to visit home and family only once during the service time. Thus travelling in the Soviet countries is a very multi-fold and complex theme; all those various forms of travels are out of the scope of this thesis, but their existence is important to keep in mind.

Throughout this thesis I have been trying to use the filter that enables us to see transnational migration and journey as part of certain global projects that have implications on people's life projects, subjects of re-evaluation and continuous change. Migration and people's relocations are a project that has political and economic foundations, and they become facilitated by cultural and historical continuity. By looking at people's everyday practises in transnational space and the connections that they make with previous spaces, I wanted to show, that people have their own interpretation of it,

and actually they start to accomplish their own personal projects within a given global project.

8.3. Personal life projects

By personal project I mean a long-term strategic plan that reflects one's understanding of one's "best lived life" and compounds actions taken and plans about what should be taken up in the future in order to accomplish this plan. Giddens (2000, p. 183) has argued that "Life plans are the substantial content of the reflexively organised trajectory of the self." I disagree with this point, because this standpoint is exclusively egocentric. It might be true until the point one does not have a family; as soon as the family, especially children become part of the picture, life plans for many people start to be more organised around the interests of the family, primarily children. For some the best lived life can mean maximising their personal welfare; for the others being able to provide better life for their children; for the third following their moral understanding of who one should take care of, for example taking care of elderly or parents in the first place by staying next to them, even if that would eliminate the opportunity to provide a better life for their children while living abroad. When talking about life projects, I do not assume that those are fixed and un-negotiable, on the contrary, life projects are subject to change. When one becomes a parent, breaks-up a marriage, acquires a responsibility over real estate, loses moral face – these are just a few examples that all have implications on people's life projects. Life projects interact with global projects and this makes people change their life trajectories. Sometimes it means a temporary stay in a foreign country; at other times it results in staying permanently abroad and even cutting ties with a previous home country; sometimes resistance to follow the temptation of cutting off from the difficulties here and now.

In my understanding journey is a certain kind of outcome of people's life projects, and above all it is related to the sense of morality in people's life projects. Moral commitments, imperatives and possible negotiations trigger all those trips across the borders within transnational networks. Yet how does the Estonian-Finnish travelling history from its beginning throughout the whole Soviet period fit into this concept of modifying people's life projects? Perhaps the global projects at those times did not give a chance to engage moving between countries into life projects? The risks were too high.

Though, yes, there were incidences when escaping from the communist régime was undertaken, and such escapees typically have explained their escape in terms of a moral inability to make their lives meaningful under the conditions in a communist country.

In many studies migration is referred to as an extraordinary event, an outcome of a situation where people have no agency over the decision to stay in put in their countries of origin. In this respect Olwig (2003) has offered an alternative approach stating that the life stories of migrants show that migrants themselves might perceive their migration history as part of a desirable livelihood project. Such narrations were also present in the ethnographies of Estonian migrants in Finland.

9. Conclusions

The aim of this thesis was to study travelling across the Estonian-Finnish borders and its transnational dimensions on the example of Estonians living in Finland. I firstly went through the Estonian-Finnish overseas travelling history and looked at the major changes that have happened concerning the possibilities for travelling. Then I contextualised the Estonian-Finnish overseas communication practises by looking at the linguistic, cultural, economic and political interactions between the countries. Relying extensively on the ethnographies of Estonian migrants in Finland, I subsequently focussed on the aspects that constituted people's everyday practises related to travels abroad, to Finland, or sometimes only the attempts to travel. I discussed step-by-step the practicalities in acquiring a visa, buying a ticket, exchanging money and the stay abroad in terms of the length and frequency of it as well as the existence and functionality of cross-border social networks in the Estonian-Finnish borderlands. By doing that in a very practical level and in detail my aim was the demystification of journey and travelling in Soviet times, meaning that I tried to show that even though travelling was complicated, highly controlled and not permitted to everybody, it is still a myth to argue that travelling to Finland as a capitalist country was impossible in Soviet times.

The historical approach was followed by the discussion on Estonians' present-day travelling practises across Finnish-Estonian borders and the social spaces that reach beyond the nation states of Estonia and Finland. The discussions here were based on the dialogue of the ethnographies of travelling, the one of my own and the ones of the other 15 Estonians I had interviewed. There were three important themes that I focussed in the discussions. Firstly, I explored the manifestations and people's perceptions of distance and time, concluding that both time-space compression as well as time-space expansion are relevant concepts if we want to understand contemporary work-related travelling in the Estonian-Finnish borderlands. Secondly, I found it important to stress that the spectrum of reasons for living in a country other than one's home country compounds much more than the economic reasons only and these are useful to grasp in order to understand what are the bases of the transnational life-styles and travelling as a part of it. Thirdly, I concluded that travelling practises are extremely multi-fold, flexible and

changing in time, which makes it impossible to track any patterns of travelling practises, and in this respect it is appropriate to talk about highly customised practices of travelling.

Within the next theme I touched upon the concepts of space and place and tried to show, how those concepts may be useful for understanding better the travelling practises. I looked at places and spaces as not principally discrete concepts, but as intermingled, subjects of simultaneous, fluid and flexible relations. In practice, this means that rather than having a clear sense of acting in the cultural, social, economic and political fields of one or the other country, Estonia or Finland, the practices give interesting combined forms and are the subject of constant change and rethinking. Undefined transitions, in-betweenness, being neither here nor there – these are the components of travels between Estonian and Finland that are always present, but people perceive them differently. With regards to people's attitudes towards the travelling across Finnish-Estonian borderlands I noticed that within the whole travel that compounds various elements the part of a ferry-trip is the one that awakes standardised and predominantly negative feelings. When exploring the reasons, why is it so, I concluded that this could be due to the undefined status of a passenger ferry among the means of transportation – neither a pure nonplace nor a private and personalised space.

I also pondered over the need for face-to-face contacts in the Estonian-Finnish transnational spaces and asked, why it is so that regular visits to Estonia appear so crucial in remaining good relationships. On the example of this concrete geographical space, it seems that the relative closeness to the home country actually prescribes that real efforts to visit have to be made in order to show care and compassion as opposed to only the promises that can be accepted in case of longer distances.

In the last chapter I tried to draw a macro understanding of how the migration as a global project communicates with individuals' lives so that people are able to overcome ideological, political, economic and cultural borders and the outcomes of it are always unique. Here I related the concept of global project with the one of personal life project and argued that personal life projects are influenced by global conditions, but the individual's orientations in life, which in the cases of the Estonians' ethnographies available for me I do not see so much in the service of the individuals themselves but their families, also have a great significance. This is one of the reasons why the travel is interesting and important to study on a very individual level and especially looking at its manifestations in everyday life practises.

Finally, I would like to reflect a bit longer on some aspects of my study that were important discoveries for myself and have changed my ways of thinking about travelling related to mobility, migration and border-crossing. When studying the ethnographies of transnational life-arrangements and how journey has acquired a very central part in Estonian migrants living in Finland, I was perhaps most stunned by the flexibility and adaptability that appeared in many of those stories. People have had to negotiate through time to be able to practically deal with the distance between the spaces of their today's and previous life-arrangements that they continue to be connected to, at least to some extent. In some cases the life-stories related to Estonia have lasted three to four times longer than the lives that have been lived abroad. Even though the media both in Estonia and in Finland envisages the Estonians in Finland predominantly as economic migrants, it was both my proposition and was clearly reflected in the interviews, that the reasons for moving abroad are much more complex. Even the ones who admit that one of their motivations for living in Finland is higher income compared to Estonia would usually name other reasons that were existent before or have appeared after moving to Finland. Breaking this simplistic thinking helped me to reject the idea, a prejudice, that the travelling practise and, particularly, journey (in my earlier thinking disproportionately associated with ferry-trips) between Finland and Estonia must be associated with negative feelings: loss of time, energy and money. Saying that, I do not mean that some people would look at the journey instead as a source of gaining time, energy and money, but rather that the emotional, and especially negatively emotional, side of travelling becomes suppressed and overlooked in the course of time and through increasing practise of travelling, journey will be rather seen as an instrumental necessity. Journey has become an instrument that helps to bring transnational worlds together in one place and it comprises much more than the physically experienced and timely counted travelling process from one country to another, from a certain social space to another. It represents the general status of living in-between, something that is always characteristic of any transnational life-style. At the same time the possibilities to connect to and disconnect from one or the other living environment are appreciated. People have learnt to make the most out of all the situations.

Keeping in mind the communist past, living abroad is still not seen as very common or even normal in Estonia. Yet it has become more normalised within the last two decades. Neither has travelling become a self-evident possibility; and travelling

abroad is still seen for the majority of Estonians as a luxury or privilege rather than a common practise as it is for many other EU citizens.

Last but not least, the writing process of this thesis has been part of my own identity formation process as a traveller in Estonian-Finnish borderlands. Creating a discussion between my own autoethnography and those of the others has enabled me to rethink carefully my own position in transnational travelling. In this process many things related to my travel have started to make sense for me for the first time, but there are at the same time at least as many questions that have arisen and remain unanswered.

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APPENDIX 1. Figures.



Figure 1. Estonian-Finnish geographical space.

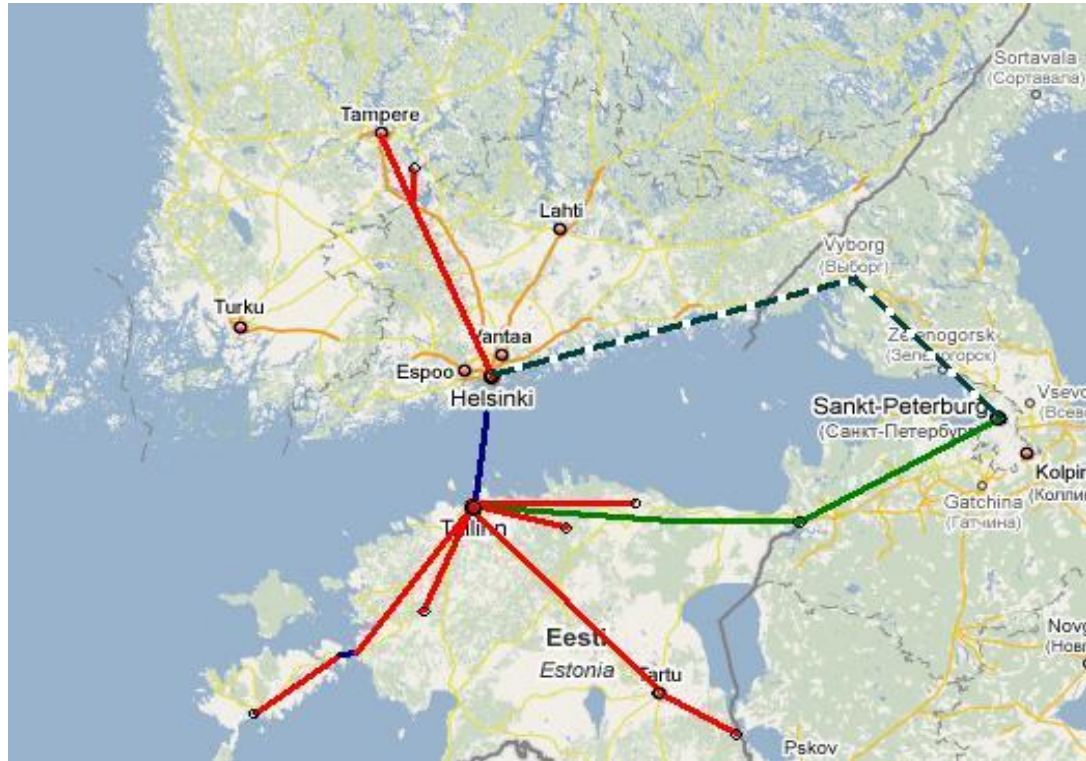


Figure 2. Estonian-Finnish transnational ties. Dashed line marks the Estonian-Finnish connections before 1965 (the overseas connection was closed); Blue line the overseas connection from 1965 onwards; Red line the typical travelling routes of the Estonians in my interviews; Green line marks the Soviet time periphery-centre connection, i.e. whole Estonia vs. St Petersburg, the latter being an important place in moderating and restricting the interactions between Estonia and Finland, because of the inevitable need for Estonians to travel there for applying and acquiring a visa for travelling abroad.



Figure 3. The passenger ship Georg Ots that connected Tallinn and Helsinki in 1980-1992.
Image from Estonian Maritime Museum.



Figure 4. A ferry terminal in Tallinn.



Figure 5. The ads in the customs in January 2008 when Estonia joined the Schengen area. The text “Ära passi! Läbi pääseb ka passita” means ‘Don’t wait here, you can pass without showing your passport’. *Image from Estonian daily newspaper Postimees, author Joosep-Georg Järvemaa.*

Tallinn - Helsinki

Effective: 15.05.2008 - 31.05.2008

	TALLINN	HELSINKI	Weekdays	Ship	Company
D	07:30	09:30	Tue, Thu, Sat	STAR	Tallink
D	07:30	09:30	Mon, Wed, Fri	SUPERSTAR	Tallink
C	08:00	09:40	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat	NORDIC JET	Nordic Jet Line
A	08:00	10:30	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	VIKING XPRS	Viking Line
C	10:15	11:55	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	BALTIC JET	Nordic Jet Line
A	10:30	12:10	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat	SUPERSEACAT	SuperSeaCat
D	11:00	13:00	Mon, Wed, Fri	STAR	Tallink
D	11:00	13:00	Tue, Thu, Sat, Sun	SUPERSTAR	Tallink
C	12:55	14:35	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	NORDIC JET	Nordic Jet Line
D	13:30	16:45	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	GALAXY	Tallink
D	14:00	16:00	Tue, Thu, Sat, Sun	STAR	Tallink
D	14:00	16:00	Mon, Wed, Fri	SUPERSTAR	Tallink
C	15:00	16:40	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	BALTIC JET	Nordic Jet Line
A	15:00	16:40	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	SUPERSEACAT	SuperSeaCat
D	15:30	17:45	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	SUPERFAST	Tallink
A	16:00	19:30	Sun	NORDLANDIA	Eckerö Line
A	16:30	19:00	Sun	VIKING XPRS	Viking Line
A	17:00	20:30	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat	NORDLANDIA	Eckerö Line
C	17:25	19:05	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	NORDIC JET	Nordic Jet Line
A	18:00	20:30	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat	VIKING XPRS	Viking Line
D	18:30	20:30	Mon, Wed, Fri	STAR	Tallink
D	18:30	20:30	Tue, Thu, Sat, Sun	SUPERSTAR	Tallink
A	19:30	21:10	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	SUPERSEACAT	SuperSeaCat
C	19:30	21:10	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	BALTIC JET	Nordic Jet Line
D	21:00	23:00	Tue, Thu, Sat, Sun	STAR	Tallink
D	21:00	23:00	Mon, Wed, Fri	SUPERSTAR	Tallink
C	21:35	23:15	Sun	NORDIC JET	Nordic Jet Line

Figure 6. Ferry timetable in the Tallinn-Helsinki route in May 15th 2008.

Source: Port of Tallinn webpage.



Helsingin rajatarkastusosasto
 Puh +358 20 410 6200
 Fax +358 20 410 6209

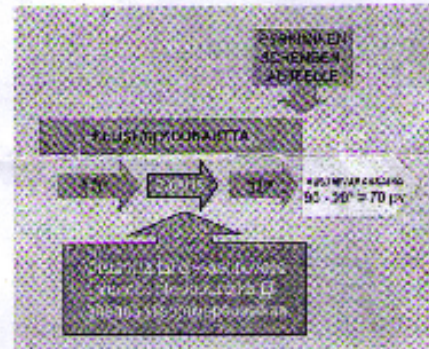
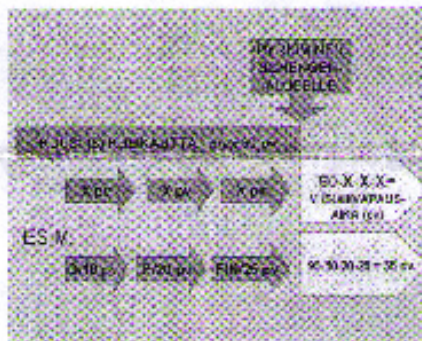
NÄIN LASKET VIISUMIVAPAAN OLESKELUAIKASI

Viisumivapaan maan kansalainen saa oleskella Suomessa ilman viisumia **kolmen kuukauden** ajan, jos hänen matkansa tarkoitus on matkailu tai siihen rinnastettava lyhytaikainen oleskelu. **Viisumivapaus ei anna oikeutta työntekoon.**

Kolmen kuukauden viisumivapausaika lasketaan alkavaksi saapumisesta johonkin Schengen-valtioon. Edellä mainittua kolmen kuukauden viisumivapaata ajanjaksoa laskettaessa otetaan huomioon oleskelu missä tahansa Schengen-valtiossa niiden kuuden kuukauden aikana, jotka edeltävät saapumista johonkin näistä valtioista Schengen-alueen ulkopuolelta.

Laskennassa ei oteta huomioon Schengen-alueella viisumilla tai oleskeluluvalla oleskeltua aikaa. Luvan päättyessä Schengen-alueelta on kuitenkin **poistuttava** ennen kuin alueella voi oleskella uudelleen viisumivapausajan puitteissa.

Huomioon otettavan kuuden kuukauden jakson alkamispäivä **ei siirry** Schengen-maissa oleskelun aikana.



Esimerkki:

Viron kansalainen saapuu Viirasta Suomeen **12.03.2002**.

- kuuden kuukauden aika, jolta oleskelu otetaan huomioon on 12.09.2001 - 12.03.2002.
- henkilö on oleskellut Suomessa 05.08.2001 - 20.09.2001 ja 15.12.2001 - 10.01.2002 sekä Ruotsissa 10.10.2001 - 15.10.2001. Näitä oleskeluita otetaan huomioon seuraavasti:

05.08.2001-20.09.2001 (12.09.2001 alkaen)	9 päivää
10.10.2001-15.10.2001	6 päivää
15.12.2001-10.01.2002	27 päivää
Yhteensä	42 päivää
Henkilö saa olla Schengen-alueella viisumivapaasti 90-42=	48 päivää

Säädinperusta:

UIKL (1978/93) 79 §

UTKA (143/96) 36 §

Schengenin sopimus 14.6.1985

Schengenin yleissopimus 19.6.1990

Yhteinen käsikirja (8348/01 Front 12 Comix 209 ja 1375/01 Front 51 Comix 713)

Sopimus passintarkastuksen poistamisesta pohjoismaiden välillä (SopS10/95)

Vierailijan olesku: Suomen tasavallan hallituksen ja Viron tasavallan hallituksen välillä sopimus viisumivapaudesta I artikla (SopS 10/95)

1/2002

Figure 7. The instructions (in Finnish) for foreigners from the Finnish customs how to calculate the period of three months of staying in Finland. Applicable for Estonians in the 1990s and in the beginning of 2000s.

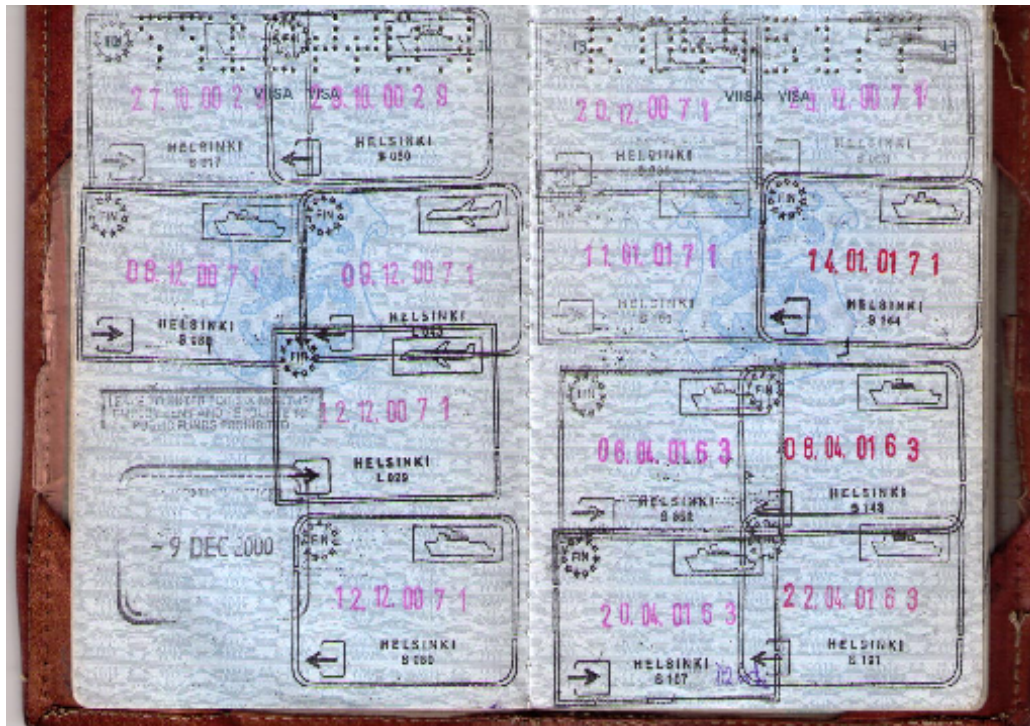


Figure 8. A typical screen from a passport of an Estonian travelling often between Finland and Estonia before May 2004.



Figure 9. A passport of an Estonian travelling often between Finland and Estonia before May 2004.

APPENDIX 2. Tables.

Passengers...	Quarters	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
...from Helsinki	1st	560938	555485	530830	478451	548797	469947	481022
...to Helsinki		397468	404755	363378	450933	542784	472309	490854
...from Helsinki	2nd	834439	841318	817232	815624	824746	854124	804452
...to Helsinki		673201	696816	637970	791164	819081	830798	798049
...from Helsinki	3rd	956764	996467	911251	1005184	968384	978593	941251
...to Helsinki		759644	779138	787098	1001992	964640	974118	953903
...from Helsinki	4th	690713	702652	648404	716391	710337	673582	671856
...to Helsinki		537093	520245	608018	700954	705482	667589	661587
...from Helsinki	1st-4th	3042854	3095922	2907717	3015650	3052264	2976246	2898581
...to Helsinki		2367406	2400954	2396465	2945043	3031987	2944814	2904393
Total		5410260	5496876	5304182	5960693	6084251	5921060	5802974

Table 1. Number of ship passengers departing from Helsinki and Tallinn in 2001-2007.

Source: Statistics Estonia.