

SYMBOLS AND CONTINUITY:  
A STUDY OF THE WINNIPEG ESTONIAN COMMUNITY

by

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A STUDY OF THE WINNIPEG ESTONIAN COMMUNITY**

**BY**

**TAAVO A. SULTS**

**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of  
the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
of the degree of**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

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## ABSTRACT

"It is by no means a novel idea that each culture has certain key elements which, in an ill-defined way, are crucial to its distinctive organization" (Ortner, 1979:93).

Recent years have witnessed a growing interest in ethnicity. A trend in social anthropology, associated with this phenomenon, has been the expanding concern with symbol systems and symbolic anthropology. This thesis is an attempt at delineating key elements of Winnipeg Estonian ethnicity; elements that are of a symbolic nature.

A difficulty in such an undertaking involves the potential hidden meaning of any given symbol. As a member of the community in question, this predicament was minimized. The more immediate concerns involved historically tracing the group in question, and determining whether or not symbolic continuity actually existed. Secondary documents, often written by Estonians themselves, were utilized for much of the older historical materials. Data for the subsequent sections, involving the presence of Estonians in Canada, was gathered primarily through interviews and participant observation. The research was conducted between 1988 and 1990.



It was found that many of the key symbols embraced by Winnipeg Estonians do have their origins in the past. Furthermore, these symbols are primarily drawn from two major periods of independence, and have remained remarkably consistent both in form and meaning.

The general conclusion is that Winnipeg Estonians can be considered a tightly-knit ethnic subculture at the core of which lie particular key symbols. These symbols, usually related to sovereignty, serve to not only link Winnipeg Estonians, but displaced Estonians world wide.

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## INTRODUCTION

From the Second World War onward, the basic methods utilized by anthropologists have become quite defined. Non-Western cultures, which the earlier anthropologists had studied, became known to most members of the discipline. But as these groups became contacted, affected, or assimilated by the industrial world, and because no "new" groups had been discovered, post-Second World War anthropology has shifted focus.

People no longer exist in pristine little vacuums, if, indeed, they ever did. Industrialism has linked peoples into a global economy at a lighting-like velocity. Not surprisingly, a recent trend in anthropology is the increased focus on social change. A second trend, more important for the purposes of this thesis, is the supposed diligence devoted to the study of the home society.

In this respect, anthropology has been somewhat lax. native groups have drawn much scholarly attention, and they most certainly should. Rapid social change may obscure forever the unique aspects of their culture or, for that matter, why some of these elements have disappeared. But anthropology should embrace the study of all humankind. Why

is it, then, that the study of ethnicity, and the focus on specific ethnic groups, is accorded comparatively little attention (at least until the last two decades)?

This is a study of the small community of Winnipeg Estonians. In comparison with other ethnic communities, the Estonians of Winnipeg are atypical in a number of respects. Some groups, such as the Italians of Montreal, are flourishing (see Boissevain:1974), but the Winnipeg Estonians have remained a small, little known ethnic enclave. Their community consists of seventy-three individuals. It may be difficult to envision how such a small community can be viable, or how it has persisted through time. Some may simply shrug and view them as a kind of anthropological survival which will ultimately disappear from view, given the natural progression of life events in a generation or two.

The significance of this study is related to these factors. The majority of Winnipeg Estonians are aged. Many informants, and perhaps the entire history of the community, may consequently retire from sight. Furthermore, Estonians have resided in Winnipeg for 60 years, yet few people know of them. There exists no study of Winnipeg Estonians, and very little literature pertaining to Estonians in Canada is available. Given these reasons, this work may fill in a gap in Estonian-Canadian studies.

One theme, explored in this thesis, details the importance of Estonia's historical antecedents and how these



have lent social form to Estonians in Canada. A second theme addresses the more familiar and conventional topics in the anthropological discussion of ethnicity. Included in this category are Canadian immigration policies and how these have affected Estonians. Demographic considerations and settlement patterns are presented, both for Canada, and Winnipeg. And, for Winnipeg specifically, organizational aspects of the Estonian community are described. These aspects include occupation, kinship and family, and the formal organizations of Winnipeg Estonians. The third chapter is designed to augment and amplify the final major theme in this work. Essentially, Chapter III delineates Estonian key symbols, and focuses on how these symbols reverberate throughout Estonian events. This thesis, then, proposes to trace Estonians through time, describe their social form as it exists in Winnipeg, and account for the force which animates this community.

We have mentioned that literature concerning Estonians is somewhat thin. Scholarly works by Uustalu (1952, 1961), Raun (1985), Ränk (1976), and Saks (1960), provide comprehensive overviews which trace the history and culture of Estonians. Subsequent works, usually written by Estonians, owe much to this handful of "classic" studies. Unfortunately, many recent works simply reiterate these pathfinding studies and add little in terms of solid analysis. Though interesting, some are tinged with political or nationalistic

biases. The Uralic and Altaic Studies Series, originating from the University of Indiana in Bloomington, has done considerable work in filling the gap in literature. Again though, much of it deals with historical materials and not specific case examples.

In tracing the history and early culture of Estonians, these works do provide a solid foundation. The problem is that little has been written from an anthropological perspective. With the exception of Aun's (1985) book; The Political Refugees: A History of Estonians in Canada, there are few works presented from a solid, comparative, analytical base. This thesis may provide a systematic study of the Winnipeg Estonians; a specific case example tracing their social history, describing their ethnic organization, and accounting for the forces which lend it form.

### Methodology

As a member of the community in question, it is obvious that my period of contact with Estonians has been of the lengthy variety. But this length of contact does not axiomatically result in solid anthropological analysis. Bacon (quoted in Pelto, 1983:X) suggests that the human mind, "...as an uneven mirror distorts the rays of objects according to its own figure and section, so the mind...in forming its notions mixes up its own nature with the nature of things." It is likely that complete objectivity is unattainable.

"Objectivity" is, after all, a word that is apprehended, and given meaning to, by the subjective mind. Similarly, interpretations of facts, events, or things, regardless of how objective one attempts to be, are inherently tainted with subjectivity. The key, it would seem, is to minimize, as much as possible, these elements of subjectivity. The discipline of anthropology enables one to temper these potential problems. Put plainly, a member of a community may take things for granted or possibly not even notice certain elements that an outsider would. But if one is aware of this factor, one can stand back, and sound research can take place.

Membership in the group also has numerous advantages. The most obvious involves access to the group in question; it is by birth, hence, automatic. As a member, one does not have to spend an extended amount of time gaining the trust of informants. Interviews are granted freely and every community member is a potential informant. As a member, one also has greater access to privileged information; information that an outsider may have difficulty in acquiring. Furthermore, language barriers do not exist. One, therefore, does not have to deal with the problems of acquiring accurate, word by word, translations, which may often miss the subtle nuances of actual meaning. Essentially, in-group perceptions, properly tempered through solid research technique, can result in fruitful analysis.

Research techniques involved in this thesis vary. For the historical materials found in the first chapter, it was necessary to consult secondary sources. The intention was to uncover as much as possible and focus on themes that consistently repeated to the point that they were "fact." The period involving the first wave of Estonians in Winnipeg posed a few problems. There is but one surviving member from this segment of the Winnipeg Estonian population. Interviews with this individual proved invaluable but, still, involved only one primary source. Other Estonians, who knew members of this first wave, were subsequently interviewed. As well, old photos, archival materials, and the Winnipeg Estonian Society Book of Minutes were utilized. The resulting store of information did not involve any inconsistencies and, to this researcher, provide accurate descriptions.

The history of the political refugees, on a general level, involved secondary sources such as Karl Aun's work, The Political Refugees: A History of Estonians in Canada. To complement this material, life histories of the Winnipeg Estonians were used.

For much of the remainder of the thesis, primary source data was utilized. Participant observation, interviews, photographic evidence, and archival materials, furnished the bulk of the data for organizational and event-related topics. The intent was to describe particular phenomena to the fullest

extent and arrive at conclusions that are, to this writer, accurate and logical.

## CHAPTER I

## CHAPTER I

### BACKGROUND AND SOCIAL HISTORY

#### Introduction

The Winnipeg Estonians keep a rather low profile. This fact, probably due to the small population residing in Winnipeg, is not replicated in many other Estonian communities throughout Canada and the United States. Karl Aun, in his book on Toronto Estonians, has argued that, "...because Estonians mingled freely with the Canadian populace while maintaining a fierce pride in their Estonian heritage, the group enjoys far greater recognition in Canada than their small numbers warrant" (1985:1). Furthermore, although Canadians may have encountered Estonian individuals casually or personally, "...very few know much about them" (Aun, 1985:1).

A few points are worthy of mention. Aun speaks of a fierce pride in Estonian national heritage. It is my feeling that this, and other aspects of Estonian ethos and ethnicity, are related to particular events in the history of the Estonian people. Because it is likely that few people know about Estonians, it may be that this work will partially fill

a gap and help us in comprehending Estonians and the nature of their ethnicity.

### Background

Estonia (since the 1944 Soviet annexation, termed the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic) lies adjacent to the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea. A small land, presently comprising 17,000 square miles, it is fairly typical both climatically and geologically of countries bordering the more southerly shores of the Baltic. With the exception of the glacially scraped coastal fringe bordering the Gulf of Finland, Estonia possesses a moraine landscape similar to Denmark or Germany. Though the latitude of Estonia is comparable to Churchill, Manitoba, prevailing south-westerly winds provide a tempering effect; mean winter temperatures of -7 degrees Celsius are not a radical departure from the mean summer temperature of 17 degrees Celsius. Precipitation is moderate and averages 22.3 inches annually (Krepp, 1961:10-11).

Estonia is the northernmost of the Baltic states. It is located in the midst of a number of maritime and terrestrial thoroughfares. To the north, the 60 mile wide Gulf of Finland joins Estonia to its linguistic brethren. The Baltic Sea, to the west, has historically been the focus of an invigorating trade (and more than occasional hostility) between Estonia and its marine acquaintances. On the east, only two natural



passageways connect Estonia and the Russian plains. Both of these, the pass at Narva crossing the Peipsi basin and the route between Petseri and Pskov, have historically been extremely important routes in an otherwise impassable East-West orientation. To the south, either overland or by water, there are no physical barriers.

Given the fact that Estonia is located in the midst of these natural crossroads, the possibilities for vigorous material, cultural, or economic exchange, are obvious. Equally true, but perhaps not as obvious, is the fact that exchange does not always follow reciprocal paths. Estonia has been the focal point of a series of political machinations and hostilities that have reduced the achievements of many generations, the most recent of which was the forcible Soviet occupation of 1944. It is my intention to briefly describe seven distinct phases of Estonian history, beginning with the Prehistoric era, and culminating with the political refugees that comprise the major focus of this thesis.

### The Prehistoric Era

Philologists and archaeologists disagree as to when the region now known as Estonia was first inhabited or where these first inhabitants originated. For the purposes of this thesis, these origins are, at best, tangential. Stone age man was, in all likelihood, very mobile, and it would seem unreasonable to call palaeolithic reindeer hunters that some

8,000 years ago resided within the present day boundaries of Estonia, "Estonians". What can be said, however, is that by 2000 B.C., the peopling of Estonia was characterized by far less nomadism than in the earliest prehistoric times (Uustalu, 1952:15-16). Uustalu has argued that by the beginnings of the "Boat-Axe Culture", around 2000 B.C., Estonia was populated by hunters and fishermen whose subsistence was augmented by cattle raising and elementary forms of agriculture (1952:16). The net result or defining feature of this early era may be said to include the concentration and connection of people within more or less discrete geographic regions.

In Estonia, the end of stone age and the beginnings of the Bronze age occurred around 1300 B.C. For Estonia, the Bronze age (1300 - 500 B.C.) denotes a period of time rather than of culture because of a dearth of Bronze artifacts. Lead and copper were not "discovered" in Estonia. Those bronze artifacts that are in evidence probably originated from the region once known as East Prussia. The inhabitants of the Vistula river region of East Prussia, which according to Saks (1960:16) included some peripheral groups of Estonians, probably received Bronze from other groups in exchange for native amber. A feature of this age, the so-called Gorodistche Culture, are settlements typified by heavy fortification and usually found on defensible locations such as hills. Almost always near good agricultural land, they were also associated with natural trade routes, such as the

Pärnujõgi and Emajõgi in Estonia, and the rivers Dvina, Dnieper, and Volga in Russia. The trend seems to point to a shift from a band-like subsistence to something that may approximate the level of permanent independent or autonomous villages (Townsend, 1985:144-146). The location of these village settlements on trade routes seems to hint at a larger sphere of economic or political relations.

It is during the Iron Age, however, that the greatest transitions are evident. Not only are shifts in subsistence levels and material culture witnessed, but a widening politico-economic scheme occurs. Uustalu (1952:18) has suggested a fourfold subdivision of the Iron Age, and for sake of convenience his typology will be used. It reads as follows: Pre-Roman Iron Age, 500 B.C. - 0; Roman Iron Age - 0 - 400 A.D.; the Middle Iron Age between 400 and 800 A.D.; and the Last Iron Age lasting from 800 A.D. until Estonian subjugation early in the thirteenth century.

The Pre-Roman Iron Age can be characterized as a period which crystallized the shift from semi-nomadism to sedentism. No longer were fishermen-hunters concentrated on coastal regions or lakes. The continued emphasis on agriculture and the adoption of fertilizers did, however, result in the tying of the Estonian farmer to their respective farmsteads. Because the soils on the Western (coastal) fringes had been inundated several times, there was a motivation for farming and cattle-breeding populations to reside in the more

favorable central and eastern regions. With the exception of a stronger emphasis on agriculture and the concomitant permanent settlements, transitions do not appear to be too drastic. The same cannot be said for the Roman Iron Age.

It is during the Roman Iron Age (0-400 A.D.) that the first considerable increases in trade, on what could arguably be termed an "international" level, are in evidence. Raw metals are very scarce in Estonia; consequently, any metal utensils, jewellery, or weapons, must have been imported either in the form of raw materials or as finished goods. Uustalu has argued that the primary source of metal was still from the south: metal goods of East Prussian origin arrived in Estonia via Latvia and Lithuania. Other southerly circuits of exchange, such as the direct sea route to the Goths on the Vistula (Weishel) river, played secondary commercial roles (Uustalu, 1952:21). What was exchanged? Various scholars suggest that Estonia played the role of a middle man in the bartering of Finnish furs for raw metals (see Uustalu, 1952:21). This would suggest that the importance of the Roman Iron Age in fostering commerce was indeed far-reaching (see Indreko, 1961:28-30). Full-time farmers became part-time merchants in an ever widening socioeconomic arena. This period of considerable progress came to an abrupt end with the collapse of the western half of the Roman Empire.

This aforementioned collapse ushered in the Middle Iron Age (400-800 A.D.) and coincided with the Baltic region losing

contact with the Germanic world. As the Goths of the Vistula River region retreated southward, they were almost simultaneously replaced by what Uustalu refers to as "slavs" who effectively cut off the previously established commercial routes (Uustalu, 1952:23). Two cultural centres, Sengallia and Klaipeda in Latvia and Lithuania respectively, did continue to influence Estonia, albeit in a diminished fashion. What we find then, is that "Baltic Culture," during the Middle Iron Age, was left in somewhat of a vacuum as far as external contacts go, until new social and economic circumstances redefined Estonia's position.

Between the years 800 and 1200, spurred by an eastward movement of European centers of trade and learning, we are confronted with another period of vigorous cultural and economic progress. This Last Iron Age coincides with a Byzantine influence which served to reinstate trade by the seafaring Scandinavians through or near to Estonia. Viking commerce, which in previous years had a westward focus, turned south-eastward and again Estonia found herself strategically placed. The prosperity continued well after the Scandinavian adoption of Christianity. Though the adoption of Christianity somewhat diffused Viking trade, hence Estonian interests in it, it also radically decreased Viking warfare. With the cessation of Viking hostilities, other peoples, including the Estonians, were not as hindered in their attempts to profit in the far-reaching economic theatre which Europe was becoming

by the year 1000. Byzantium, however, was not singular as a prime influence on the Estonian economy.

One other major economic center, namely Novgorod in Russia, played a crucial role in shaping the Estonian economy. Uustalu (1952:26) suggests that Estonia was keenly aware of the economic potential which Novgorod presented and Estonians were quick to take advantage of Novgorod's circle of influence. He argues that perhaps no greater source of wealth ever accumulated in the country than during the last century of the prehistoric era (1952:26).

Uustalu uses the presence of particular coins as indices of the degree and direction of involvement in trade. He points to the fact that only in Gotland have there been more coins "discovered." Those found in Estonia include approximately 4,000 Arabic coins, some 6,000 of German and Anglo-Saxon origin, and a few hundred that derived from Byzantium.

With the large number of influences and the location of Estonia in the midst of a vigorous but potentially volatile economic scenario, it is not surprising that intensities would once again peak. The major culprit in this next transitional peak was the Northerly expansion of the Teutons, the Germanic Order of the Brethren of the Sword, later known as the Order of Teutonic Knights. Let us briefly summarize the social order up to that point.

Vuorela (1964:170) has argued that Estonia, by the end of the prehistoric period, was the "strongest" of the Balto-Finnic people. The reasons for this appear three-fold. Estonia was, at this point, a country subdivided into counties, each of which was governed by elected elders. Eight large and four small counties, led by their respective representatives, would confer periodically on questions relating to trade, mutual administration, and to conclude and repeal treaties of peace and war. The political units appear to have been independent clan-like entities that, as a whole, acted as a kind of federation. The important point was that no tribute was paid outside of the federation (see Uustalu 1961:33).

In addition to the politically autonomous federation which administered a vigorous agrarian base, many Estonian farmers were also active part-time merchants. This had the result of concentrating much wealth in Estonia to the degree that even Saaremaa (the agriculturally unsuitable island off the west coast of Estonia) achieved prosperity. These two factors, a well administered agrarian base supplemented by sporadic mercantilism, placed Estonia in a rather lucrative position. These elements were further complemented by the third and final factor, namely, the decline of Viking hostilities. The cessation of Viking hostilities enabled Estonia to take part in the trade with the East. It also effectively opened up the Baltic to Estonian raiding. Piracy,

modelled after the Scandinavians and including the typical longboats, became more evident while defensive measures still had to be taken against Scandinavians and, now, the Novgorodians.

Uustalu (1952:3) has pointed out that between the years 1030 and 1192, there were at least thirteen separate campaigns instigated by the Russians which the Estonians had to repel. Still, during this twilight period, Estonia prospered. This prosperity, however, was one without extended hope.

Internationally, Estonia comprised a "pagan wedge" between a number of powerful Christian nations, and under the masquerading cloak of the Crusades, there were several attempts to subjugate them (Uustalu 1952:31). The first major invaders were the Teutons who, by founding Lübeck in 1158, captured much of the Baltic trade, and in all likelihood competed in piratical endeavors. The first report of that period, and one of the first major historical accounts that dealt specifically with Estonians, was that by a priest of the Archbishop of Riga, Henricus de Lettis. He refers to Estonians as one people; "Estones" being used for all of the clans. Henricus de Lettis (or Henry of Livonia) chronicles the introduction of a dark era for the Estonian people, a time when once defeated in their fight for independence, they found themselves under German ecclesiastical and feudal suppression.



### The Historic Era

#### The First War of Independence

The historical period, by and large coterminous with the period of Estonian serfdom, was a time of hardship for the people of Estonia. Year after year, military campaigns were waged against the Estonians, ultimately leaving them in a servile position for some 700 years. This section will focus upon the years immediately preceding the military seizure of Estonia, and will highlight certain episodes during the centuries of foreign rule.

In 1180 the first German missionary, Meinhard, later to become Bishop Meinhard in 1186, attempted to bring Christianity and its politico-economic concomitants to the Estonians. He did not fare well. Rome, already acutely aware of the advantages to be gained by Christianizing the inhabitants of the region, proclaimed a crusade against the Baltic wedge in 1193. In 1198, a second more war-like Bishop, Bishop Berthold, attempted this enterprise. Though his troops were victorious in the first clash against the Livonians, Berthold was mortally wounded. The Baltic peoples, spurred by this moral victory, swept the entire region of all missionary and Crusader influence. In 1200, however, Bishop Albert with the Pope's blessing, spearheaded a great force of crusaders who succeeded in subduing the Livs, the Latvians, and finally the Estonians. The Pope, impressed with Bishop

Albert's achievements, dedicated the captured Baltic territory to the Virgin Mary.

By 1208 the subjugation of the Livs, Letgallians, and Latvians was complete. The Estonian situation, however, still posed a disconcerting dilemma to the crusaders. Uustalu (1961:34) argues that the German princes were so involved in their own rivalries and concern over the "proper" distribution of spoils, that effective campaigns against the Estonians proved increasingly more difficult to organize. In addition, Russians, Danes, and Swedes were also exerting their influence against Estonia. These nations, though not involved in open hostilities with the Teutons, posed a potential threat in waiting. For this reason, pacts of alliance usually involving promises of benevolent trade relations were attempted. Henricus de Lettis writes: "The Livonian church was thus now beset with many tribulations, inasmuch as it was in the midst of many nations and the adjacent Russians, who all took counsel together over ways to destroy it. Accordingly the Rigans decided to send messengers to the King of Pskov to see if perchance they could arrange some terms of peace with him. Arnold ... was sent with his companions to the King of Pskov, to see if he would accept peace and open a road for Rigan merchants into his country. The King received them with benign affection and rejoiced with them in the tranquillity of peace. And all rejoiced, since they could now more securely wage war against the Estonians and the other pagans.

And this they did" (1961:100-103). What we find, then, are a number of powerful nations completing pacts of non-aggression and turning their military attentions towards the common enemy, the Estonians.

Between 1208 and 1227, a series of battles involving the amalgamated forces of the Christians further sapped the already diminished numerical strength of the Estonian defenders. A crucial skirmish in 1219, led by King Valdemaar II, who thirteen years earlier had failed in his attempt to seize Saaremaa, resulted in the Danish occupation of the stronghold of R vala. Later named Reval by the Danes and Tallinn (from Taani Linn meaning Danish town) by the Estonians, it was later to become the capital of Estonia. The importance of Tallinn was that it provided a base for the extension of Danish conquest to the counties of R vala, Harjumaa, J rvamaa, Virumaa, and later, L  nema . Saaremaa, however, remained independent, and on the initiatives of the army based in Saaremaa, the Estonians in 1223 succeeded in freeing the entire country of invaders. The one notable exception was Tallinn which remained under Danish control.

This was the last gasp in the Estonian's fight for self-determination. By 1224, owing to the dilution of its defenses to all borders, resistance had crumbled. In 1227 the foreign occupation of Estonia was complete, Saaremaa was conquered by a large force advancing over the frozen Baltic sea. The war for independence had been lost.

## Serfdom

Between 1227 and 1919 Estonia could be considered a land of peasants controlled and governed by a series of foreign upper classes. These foreign upper classes include the Danes, the Livonian Confederation, the Swedes, and the Russians. This section will briefly detail some of the more important features or events of one of the lowest periods in the history of the Estonian people, leading up to the conscious attempt to restore Estonian cultural vitality-the period of "National Awakening."

Danish rule initially involved a degree of legal status for Estonians. Treaties entitled the Estonians a certain amount of autonomy, the right to own land, and absolute individual freedom. Between 1227 and 1343 this legal status deteriorated progressively to the point that a great uprising - the Revolt of St. George's Eve - attempted to expunge all foreign rule. The revolt had extended political effects, not because it was successful, but because it was quashed by a third party, the Order of Teutonic Knights. The Danes "repaid" the Teutonic Knight's military intervention by selling them their land claims in Estonia. This ushered in the second phase of foreign rule in 1346 when the Livonian Confederation, the Teutonic Order, became the sovereign power.

Present day Estonia and Latvia encompass the area occupied by the Livonian Confederation. On Estonian territory, this was subdivided into the Teutonic Order, who

were the largest landowners, the Archbishopric of Riga, the Bishopric of Tartu, and the Bishopric of Läänemaa-Saaremaa. To further fraction any cohesion, towns, cities, and vassals also wielded a certain amount of political clout. Only one cooperative political organization, namely the Diets composed of vassals and overlords, existed to counteract the tension between landowners in their unending exertions to obtain absolute control.

Two simultaneous factors were occurring during this permanent political posturing. On one hand, the peasant's status continued to deteriorate. Perhaps more important, however, was the continued development of nation-states surrounding the fractionated Livonian Confederation that were superior to it in terms of political cohesion and military might. A crisis was imminent.

Ivan the Terrible, in the interests of the Principality of Moscow, had actually achieved a full victory against the Livonian Confederation but received none of the spoils. The breakdown of the Livonian Confederation resulted in the nobles of Harju-Viru and the city of Tallinn surrendering to the Swedes and not the Russians. The Teutonic Order followed a similar path and surrendered to the Polish-Lithuanian state while Saaremaa and Läänemaa came under Danish control. The demise of the Livonian Confederation, and its apportionment between Denmark, Sweden and Poland, along with Russian exclusion, culminated in a sequence of wars between the

aforementioned protagonists. The result of these hostilities was that Estonia was brought under the singular rule of Sweden in 1645. Though the estate owners remained mostly German, their legal or administrative sway declined.

The constant warfare, crop failures, and other factors, bode ill for the peasant; economically, peasants were still poorly off. Their legal status, however, improved dramatically. Peasants could now seek the aid of the state courts against landlords whose absolute power gradually diminished. Education also made great strides. The founding of Tartu University, in 1632, was a Swedish endeavor that allowed peasant children to also enter, at least in theory. This third era of foreign rule, the Swedish era, came to an abrupt end with the Great Northern War that began in 1710. The brief improvement in peasant status ended with it.

Peter the Great had appropriated, through the peace treaty of 1721, all of Estonia and Livonia. The terms of capitulation re-established all the privileges which the German nobility had exercised prior to the Swedish reforms. This further crystallized when the Russian supreme court, in 1740, gave legal blessing to Serfdom. Uustalu (1961:39) relates cases where peasants were sold, exchanged, or given away as gifts. Essentially, the landlords had absolute power over the lives of their peasants.

The deterioration of the peasant's condition was not without side effects. The economy of the great estates also

suffered. It was, in part, due to this that the next Czar, Alexander I, enacted decrees to partially protect the peasants of Estonia and Livonia.

Between 1802 and 1804, laws enabling peasants to own property and, in rare instances, to inherit land, were passed. These laws were actualized differently in Estonia than in Livonia, with unrest being more frequent in the former. Disturbances became increasingly more frequent, and landowners reacted by freeing the peasants from serfdom while retaining absolute land ownership in 1816. The slightly more benevolent laws in place in Livonia also lost their efficacy, and these nobles freed their serfs in 1820.

The peasants did not prosper under these new "reforms." Rather, the free contract principle abrogated peasant land ownership and resulted in rent contingent upon the whim of the landlord. The net result was an increasing unrest among the Estonian peasantry, disdain for the care of the landholdings, and conspicuous demonstrations of dissatisfaction with the Germanic nobility.

Perhaps the most dramatic expression of this unrest was the mass conversion of peasants from the Lutheran Church to the Orthodox Church. This public display against the Lutheran landholders resulted in further reforms between 1849 and 1860. Resultant agrarian laws, such as the possibility of freehold land purchase, were supplemented by further reforms by the Czar, Alexander II. The most important of these was the

separation of peasant communities from the guardianship of the landowners in 1866. Finally, the abolition of rent services came into existence in 1868.

This final era of foreign servitude, though one of the most pernicious in the history of the Estonian people, was not without important consequences. The freeing of the serfs, though initially economically disastrous, provided for the formation of an educational system. This, in connection with the slow but steady growth of a class of Estonian landholders, ushered in a period of cultural revival-a conscious period of National Awakening.

#### National Awakening

Aun has referred to the Estonian National Awakening as something which approximates a "quasi-revolution" (1985:6). It is during this period that some of the most important strides were initiated by the Estonian people, culminating in the proclamation of independence by the Estonian Democratic Republic on February 24th, 1918. This section will illuminate the interconnected phenomena which affected the people of Estonia, and how the Estonian populace reacted to the changing social conditions, in turn giving a new form to the larger social framework.

It is difficult to place the various social factors in any kind of cohesive temporal framework: some elements predate others while some continued to be influential throughout this



"quasi-revolution." In some semblance of sequence, then, the following must be considered: 1) the abolition of serfdom, 2) the prevalence of new Western ideas - particularly the notion of modern liberal-romantic nationalism, 3) local governmental reforms and the subsequent ability of Estonian forces to compete both politically and judicially with the German-Baltic nobility, 4) the rise of an independent class of Estonian peasant freeholders, 5) the role of Czarist-oriented reforms permeating throughout all of the aforementioned components, 6) the growth of the urban sector and, finally, 7) the vigorous rise in education throughout the 1800's (Aun, 1985:6-7); (Uustalu, 1952:110-136).

The defeat of the Russians in the Crimean War affected Russia in two major ways. First, it helped introduce ideas of liberalism to Russia, but, perhaps more importantly, it pointed to internal weaknesses in the Russian system. Liberal ideas, already prevailing throughout much of Europe, were adopted by Czar Alexander II, not due to the Czar's love of liberalism, but because of some cold, hard facts. Russia lost, principally, because of what Uustalu refers to as "economic backwardness" (1952:110). Russia's military potential could not be increased given the prevailing social and political conditions. Transformations were underway.

We have mentioned factors such as the abolition of serfdom, the removal of rent service, and the associated effects on the peasantry. We have also mentioned the increase

in peasant uprisings. Disturbances and public displays were becoming increasingly more frequent and were actually compounded by the reforms of Czar Alexander II. The Czar's demonstration of power in the field of reforms and, concomitantly, the German nobility's lack of it, further opened the eyes of the Estonian peasants. This was, however, not an easy period of transition.

Some of the new laws, imperfectly understood by the peasants, resulted in further demonstrations. In one instance, the peasants of the Aniya estate journeyed to Tallinn to inquire at the Chancellory of the Governor General the meaning of some of the new articles. Uustalu (1952:109) points out that they were summarily arrested and sentenced to severe floggings. Events such as these made deep impressions on the collective minds of the Estonian peasantry. But, with the Czar's local government reforms, they also paved the way for Estonians to compete with German hegemony. They opened up ideas of social action, not necessarily on political lines, but on economic ones.

Hand in hand with their hegemony being threatened, financial difficulties beset a large number of the German landholders, many of whom were absentee. They were forced to sell or rent their estate lands to the Estonian peasant. Slowly but surely, Estonian peasants came to form a class of peasant proprietors or small holders. An economically independent Estonian farmer class was being created.

Simultaneously, according to Aun (1985:6), the growth of cities offered new opportunities and careers for Estonians. This general prosperity; the improvement of the peasants legal and economic status, created conditions that made the phenomena of National Awakening a possibility.

Major strides in education were also an important element. Aun has argued that in Estonia, illiteracy had for all intents and purposes been wiped out by the end of the nineteenth century. In Russia four-fifths of the population remained illiterate (1985:7). Along with this high rate of literacy, the University of Tartu, an outstanding university with a strong liberal tradition, acted as an intellectual catalyst. Estonians were not intellectually paralysed and became more able to respond to the prevailing ideas of the times. But what were these ideas? Notions of nationhood and liberal-romantic nationalism were phenomena that occurred in varying degrees on a pan-European level. Exactly how strongly these ideas affected the various nations, or Estonia in particular, is difficult to articulate. Considering the high rate of literacy, along with the fact that many of these themes had their epicentre in Tartu (the seat of professionals and of intellectual thought in Estonia), it is safe to assume that the effects were more than minimal. These ideas of nationhood, along with the strides in education and the creation of an economically independent farmer class, were crucial factors in spurring on the National Awakening. This

phenomena was, as Uustalu phrases it, the "new fact that linked and inspired every political, economic, and literary activity...this awakening of national sentiment" (1952:122).

We have briefly outlined some of the social factors which have given form to the Estonian condition circa 1860. It is difficult to envision exactly how this character change occurred. Ideas of changing social conditions, class, or national consciousness, and a seemingly infinite series of events spurred on by and, in turn, spurring on other events, come to mind. In any case, in only two generations Estonia emerged as a modern nation, with an economically independent middle class, conscious of its cultural identity and confident of its collective future (Aun, 1985:6). It is not my intention to simply state how the larger social framework affected Estonia. What is perhaps more important is how the Estonian half of the dichotomy reacted to these shifting social conditions. It is useful to discuss some of the factors and key individuals involved at this juncture.

Two persons appear to have been at the forefront of the nascent Estonian National Awakening. Friedrich R. Faehlmann was the founder of the Estonian Learned Society, which had its origins in 1838. The founding of this society, along with a general upsurge in the level of education, furthered the already extant economic and political antagonism toward the German-Baltic nobility. The editors of, Estonia: Story of a Nation (1974), maintain that Faehlmann, in his boyhood, heard

Estonian folksongs of a legendary hero: Kalevipoeg (the son of Kalev). Later, along with his contemporary and the second significant leader of the Awakening, Friedrich R. Kreutzwald, they began to amass a series of the Old Estonian folk songs, folk tales, and stories. Faehlmann's death, in 1850, left Kreutzwald to finish the task alone. Kalevipoeg, consisting of the existing folk myths along with Kreutzwald's own poetry filling in the various gaps in continuity, appeared in 1857. This national epic was to have immense impact in influencing the National Awakening.

At the same time as Kalevipoeg appeared, the first Estonian newspaper, later named the Eesti-Postimees, became an important element in spreading Estonian nationalism. These occurrences were only made possible due to the flourishing social, economic, and cultural conditions in Estonia at the time. Much like a Durkheimian social fact, however, the Awakening was greater than the sum of its constituent parts. The wheels had been set in motion. In 1869 the first Estonian national song festival occurred on the initiatives of J.W. Janssen. These song festivals remain key symbols to the Estonians in exile to this day (see Chapter III, page 118). 1871 saw the foundation of the Estonian Literary Society and the birth of Estonian theatre and drama.

By 1878, two distinct and opposing schools of thought had appeared. The more moderate school, led by the chairman of the Estonian Literary Society and the Alexander School

Committee, Jakob Hurt, worked for a general improvement in social conditions and Estonian culture. Carl Jakobson, the leader of the radical school, fronted vigorous social activity designed specifically to counteract the excesses of the nobility, the German-Baltic estate owners. Between 1878 and 1882, Jakobson attracted a huge following. He was also at the focal point of some resentment. The Germans, for obvious reasons, had a profound hatred for Jakobson, but some Estonians, objecting to Jakobson's affiliation with the Russians in attempting to achieve his political aims, were also in opposition. Jakobson's mandate for equality with the Germans eventually won out over Hurt and the moderate school, but the result was anti-climatic. Jakobson's sudden death in 1882, coupled with Hurt's withdrawal from the mainstream of political activity, left both schools without effective leadership. Subsequently, a decline in nationalistic activities resulted. The one notable exception was the public unveiling of the blue, black, and white flag, later to become the national flag, amidst a great ceremony in 1884. It was not necessarily the weakening of Estonian wherewithal, however, that ultimately led to the demise of the National Awakening. An external presence, in the form of Czar Alexander III, would have in all likelihood succeeded in quashing the Awakening even if Estonia's central catalysts were to have remained active.

## Russification and Revival

Czar Alexander II spearheaded the Russian directive of Pan-Slavism, namely, the denationalization, Russification, or extermination of any peoples who were not of Slavic extraction. Uustalu (1952:136) argues that one of Alexander III's first actions was to send a functionary, Senator N.A. Manassein, to the Baltic provinces to report on the local conditions of the peasantry. Manassein, welcomed by the peasantry and likely not himself an advocate of Pan-Slavism, reported to the Czar in 1884. Essentially, three-fourths of the peasantry were landless. Manassein argued that purchase prices, rents, and taxes were exceedingly steep, with the net result being that Estonian peasants were powerless against the German nobility. Due to the fact that neither the German nobility, who had enjoyed their landholding privileges since the days of Peter the Great, nor the Estonians, were of Slavic extraction, Alexander III utilized the Manassein report for his own purposes. The peasants were to be absorbed.

A series of reforms, which heightened the economic crisis of the peasant, were forced into place, but these seem almost secondary to the second phase of Russification. It has been previously suggested that one of the central components of the Estonian National Awakening was the steady increase in levels of education. In 1885 all schools were placed under the Russian ministry of education. Uustalu relates that two years later, in 1887, "Russian was the language of instruction and

Estonian was permitted only during the first two school years" (1952:136). This policy likely affected the Estonian populace in two major ways. It is obvious that Estonian peasant children, having no knowledge of Russian, would inevitably suffer. At the university level, professors of German origin, lecturing in German to Estonians who were well versed in German, had to resign their posts due to their inability to speak Russian. Western oriented themes, such as ideas of nationalism, were consequently no longer presented. The result was that one of the most important developers and communicators of National sentiment, the education system, became effectively paralysed.

Education was not alone in its decline from Russification. The judiciary system, the police, and the Estonian press witnessed a similar fate. Lacking effective leadership, losing clout in both intellectual and judiciary realms, and burdened with a growing economic malaise, Estonian National sentiments lost focus. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, this induced apathy was beginning to change.

The upsurge in Esto-centric activities resulted from two specified forces interplaying with a generalized shift in social conditions. These forces included a resurgence of nationalistic sentiment, sponsored by young intellectuals, and the strengthening of the Estonian element (numerically, ideally, and materially) in the rural regions (see Uustalu, 1952:142-143; 1961:48-49). This was complemented by a slow,



but steady growth in the peasant economy (also related to the rural Estonian element) which had been interrupted by the reforms of Czar Alexander III.

A major problem which had plagued Estonia since the beginning of its contacts with the Germanic world in the 1200's, was the lack of a centralized administrative unit. Even during the period of National Awakening, Estonian sentiments were fractioned under the respective tutelages of Hurt and Jakobson. Foreign interests, beginning with the days of the Teutonic Knights, had a much easier time subduing Estonia by implementing the time-tested "divide and rule" principle. Though still evident to a degree, this was slowly beginning to change.

The major catalyst for conjoining the disparate views of Estonian nationals was Jaan Tõnisson. Synthesizing views that heretofore were divergent, Tõnisson utilized the newspaper, Postimees, as the spearhead with which to combat the still evident Russification. Based in Tartu, in the southern province of Livonia, Tõnisson promoted the nationalistic movement on an ideological level based on a moral order. He was not silent in terms of non-ideal concerns, however, demanding political equality with the Baltic Germans in local affairs. Economically, he was responsible for the organization of the farmers cooperative movement. The profits realized from this latter venture enabled the Estonian farmer

to break his relationship of dependency with the bank. The revival in Livonia was gaining a foothold.

In northern Estonia, a somewhat similar scenario was unfolding. The northern revival, led by Konstantin Päts, had its peculiarities however. As Russification was carried out by an "Iron Fist" in the province of Estonia, it was far more difficult to organize resistance to Russification on national lines than it was in Livonia. The Päts-edited newspaper Teataja for this reason focused on economic rather than ideological themes: economically they were juxtaposed, not in relation to the Russians but, rather, to the Germans. Päts and his followers also believed that "...social progress was influenced primarily by the economic relations between classes...(hence)...for the Estonian nation to advance...(it must)...raise the prosperity of all the classes of which it was composed" (Uustalu, 1952:146).

While the younger vanguard of Estonian intelligentsia was spreading the word, rural regions and towns were also gaining influence. Ironically, it was the process of Russification which ultimately led to this phenomenon. Uustalu elaborates on this point and suggests that "Estonian unity and cooperation was facilitated by the fact that all the people, whether in the professions, in business, in the factories or on the land, suffered alike under the pressure and exploitation of the Russian authorities and the German ruling classes" (1952:142). This unity was further enhanced by the

cleaving of these peoples to the symbols of national sentiment which Tõnisson, Päts, and their respective newspapers had become.

Progress was witnessed on many fronts culminating with the individuals responsible for Teataja organizing and winning the election for the Tallinn town council in 1904. Uustalu suggests that while, for tactical reasons, a Russian was elected as mayor, the real power behind the throne was wholly in the hands of the second-in-command, Konstantin Päts (1952:148).

Just prior to the Russian Revolution of 1905, Estonia comprised two major geographic and ideological parts. Livonia, the southern province, had a focus emanating from the intellectual seat of Tartu. Led by Tõnisson, the editor of the Postimees, the major direction was the establishment of national development on ethnical lines... "the development of a people depended on its consciousness of being a nation, and that this feeling of unity would inspire a higher morality" (Uustalu, 1952:144). The northern province, Estonia, had its analog in Konstantin Päts and Teataja, and highlighted economic themes. While differing in political aims, or, rather, in the ways in which these aims were to be implemented, most potential ideological differences were never actualized. The Russian Revolution made such postulated clashes a moot point.

## Russian Revolution and Nationhood

Russia's defeat in its war with Japan (1904-1905) was a signal to the many democratic and radical wings that social reforms were a pressing necessity. Demonstrations of various kinds against Russia's absolutist regime became more prevalent, culminating with Russian troops firing against members of a workers demonstration in St. Petersburg. This spark seems to have been responsible for a chain reaction of events which set Russia and its associated spheres of influence into turmoil. This section will address how the Revolution reverberated throughout Estonia and how Estonia adjusted, organized itself, and ultimately achieved its independence.

It should be quite clear that for an extended period of time there existed in Estonia a class of peasants that grieved their impoverished state. Not surprisingly, the Revolution "allowed" for excesses of varying degrees against German landowners. Agitated peasants flocked en masse to the great manors of the nobility and on occasion burnt them to the ground. This dissatisfaction was not limited only to the rural population. Uustalu relates a case of Tallinn's townworkers holding a mass meeting in the Tallinn market place. This meeting, authorized by the Governor of the Estonian province, met with an untimely end. The army, under martial law, attempted to disperse the meeting. Tempers flared and one hundred and fifty people were killed by Russian

troops (Uustalu, 1952:148). Similar events in the spheres of public and political life were common. Included in these events were executions, and the banishment of an unknown number of people to Siberia. Essentially, martial law, which was kept in force until 1909, totally paralysed public life.

On the political level, only the National Liberal Party, founded by Tõnisson in 1905, was able to survive the Revolution. Tõnisson's contemporary, Konstantin Päts, had summoned a similar congress, but martial law forced its foot fully in the faces of Estonian Nationals. Päts, along with many other high profile Estonians, was forced to flee abroad and was summarily sentenced to death in absentia.

By 1910, political activity on behalf of Estonians once again resumed. Päts death sentence was commuted to one year of solitary confinement and by 1911 he was again editing Tallinna Teataja. Political and public life was beginning to revive.

The economy, put into a critical situation by the Revolution and martial law, was also beginning to show signs of growth. New agricultural methods led to better yields and, subsequently, fewer financial constrictions. Farmers associations and the cooperative movement expanded credit or savings cooperatives, solidifying into Mutual Credit Institutions. In 1913 these institutions founded their own Central Bank.

Politically and economically, then, the Post Revolution Martial Law years were reasonably favorable. These were not the only realms which demonstrated vitality. It is a truism that when one is threatened or faced with asphyxiation, and when that threat is removed and one is again allowed to breathe freely, those subsequent breaths appear to have a sense of purpose and vitality to them. Estonian cultural life demonstrated much of this purpose.

Between the years of the Russian Revolution and the outbreak of the First World War, Estonia witnessed a dramatic growth in various cultural fields. Education again was on the rebound, but the genesis of an Estonian theatre with its own professional cast, the opening of the Estonian National Museum, and an entire range of topics that fell under the wings of the new Estonian Literary Society, all occurred during this period of relative stability. For some, these cultural strides may seem secondary or residual, but these entities were created by Estonians, for Estonians, and were comprised of themes with a decidedly Estonian flavor. They remain key symbols to displaced Estonians around the globe to this day. Some of these themes and their associated symbols will be elaborated on at length in a later section.

Up until the outbreak of the First World War, Estonia was a region that was gaining stride in its fight for self-determination. The war, with its periodic requisitioning, naturally put a strain on this effort. Two factors were in

Estonia's favor, however. The Great War did not directly touch Estonian soil until February of 1918. The mass annihilation and scorched earth tactics used at the time did not decimate Estonia as they had other regions. Related to this, is the fact that Estonia did not organize national units or battalions until the Russian February Revolution of 1917. They had witnessed the total decimation of Latvian units under Russian orders and did not wish to take part in a similar fate. Their potential numerical strength, small to begin with, was therefore not further weakened.

The February Revolution brought an end to the Czarist government and placed the Liberal Provisional Government in power in Russia. This was the second factor benefitting the organization of an independent Estonian state. Claims for Estonian autonomy had been attempted during the Revolution of 1905, and the latest revolution rekindled similar sentiments. The introduction of civil liberties, unknown during the czarist regime, revealed opportunities for Estonians to act out their national aspirations.

In March of 1917 the "Estonian Union" was founded with this stipulated aim in mind. This organization detailed plans for Estonian autonomy and presented them to the Russian Provisional Government. Uustalu elaborates: "To support these demands, the Estonians organized a mass demonstration in Petrograd on March 26th. Forty thousand Estonians, flourishing (sic.) their national flags and with thirty bands

marched through the Russian capital... The demonstration brought almost immediate results, and on March 30th, the Russian Provisional Government initialled the law granting Estonia autonomy" (1952:155). The basic goal was to unify all areas with an Estonian population into one single administrative unit (the Province) headed by a Commissioner as the representative of the Central Russian Government. All national affairs were to be handled by the majority, namely the Estonians.

A Provisional National Council (known as the Estonian Diet) was elected by popular vote and ultimately set up the executive body, the Government of the Province of Estonia. On October 12, 1917, Konstantin Päts became head of this body. This, however, did not conclude the long sought search for self-determination.

The political climate was not stable. Disorder in Russia was very evident; German advances in the south were further compounding the chaos, and on the night of November 7-8, 1917, there occurred what Russian Communists have referred to as the "glorious day of the Great October Socialist Revolution" (see Tomingas, 1973:29). Not a revolution in the true sense of the word, the Bolsheviks, during the night and with a strength of perhaps 25,000 men, succeeded in controlling railway terminals, police precincts, telegraph stations and other strategic outposts, while Petrograd's armed garrison of 300,000 troops slept.



The Estonian response to the Bolshevik coup, which had displaced one of the few governments which allowed Estonia any measure of self-determination, was decidedly negative. Yet, the Bolshevik's Council of People's Commissars on November 15th published a document called "The Declaration of the Rights of Self-Determination of Nationalities", granting Estonians (and others) freedom and sovereignty as well as the right to exert free self-determination even unto separation and the establishment of independent states (Tomingas, 1973:29).

The Estonian National Council took quick advantage of this decree, and it promptly declared itself the "sole repository of the supreme power in Estonia" (Tomingas, 1973:29). In effect, this meant a total severance from the Russian state. Five days after their declaration, the Bolsheviks decided that their decree should perhaps not be taken so seriously, and on November 20th, 1917, the Soviets forcibly dispersed the Estonian National Council.

The Estonian nationalists were not taken unawares. Though the council was dispersed, the event was not unexpected. The council had made prior provisions to delegate its authority to the so-called Council of Elders which clandestinely continued nationalistic activities. On February 24th of 1918, the Estonian Rescue Committee, having been delegated all authority by the Estonian Elders in face of an

impending German invasion, declared Estonia independent and sent out delegates to foreign nations.

The declaration, termed the Manifesto to the Estonian People, begins with the following:

"Down the centuries the people of Estonia have yearned to regain their independence. Generation after generation has nursed the hope that after the dark night of servitude and the violent rule of alien nations the time would come 'when in every home the torch will flash and flame at both ends' and 'when Kalev will return to make his children happy'."

"The rotten structure of Czarist Russia has been demolished in a struggle of nations, the like of which has never been seen before. A destructive anarchy is sweeping the plains of Sarmatia, threatening to engulf all the peoples who dwell within the borders of the former Russian State. The victorious German armies are approaching from the West to seize their share of the estate left and to occupy as a first step the countries of the Baltic."

"In this fateful hour, the Estonian Diet, as the legitimate representative of the country and its people, having made its decision unanimously with the democratic political parties and other organizations, and in accordance with the principle of the self-determination of nations, has deemed it necessary to take the following steps to determine the future of the land of Estonia and its people: from this day, Estonia is declared an independent Republic within its historical and ethnographical boundaries." (Source: Uustalu, 1952:158-159).

Estonia's declaration of independence was squeezed in between the retreat of the Bolsheviks and the invasion of the German army. German occupation began on February 25th and ended on November 11, 1918, the last day of World War I. On that day, the Estonian government began functions which were to continue until the Soviet invasion of 1940.

This embryonic period was certainly not one of indolent leisure. War torn nations are generally not the most resilient or affluent, and Estonia was no exception. Lacking trade relations with foreign nations, faced with an empty treasury, and finding itself at an industrial standstill, Estonia was confronted with yet another distressing scenario. Eleven days after the end of the First World War, on November 22, 1918, the Red Army attacked in an all-out offensive against the Estonian eastern border.

We have mentioned that Estonia did not attempt to organize its military, having seen how the Russians had deployed Latvian units. But from the February Revolution onward, the organization of Estonian army units had begun. German occupation disbanded most Estonian units, but with their withdrawal, and in fear of the impending Soviet onslaught, they were quickly reorganized. Their numbers, though, were woefully inadequate. Frontline troops suffered decimation, but their stand bought Estonia time, during which much needed reinforcements were organized. These reinforcements succeeded in first halting, and then clearing, the Red Army from Estonian territory. Hostilities continued, but the Soviets were finally defeated, and a peace treaty was signed between the two nations on February 21, 1920. The Soviet Union had "voluntarily and forever" renounced her sovereign rights over Estonia (see Roos, 1985:21). Based in Paris, the Allied Supreme Council recognized Estonia in

January of 1921, and in September of that same year, she was admitted to the League of Nations.

#### Independence and World War II

The duration of Estonian independence generally coincides with the interval of peace between the two World Wars. Scholars of Estonian history have tended to view this period with charged ambivalence. On one hand, praise is extended to the young nation for the thriving growth it experienced and the high standards of living it aspired to. These were reached, not by debilitating Estonia's neighbors, but by a strong emphasis on self-reliance. These aspirations were attained even though Estonia had been a province of a relatively underdeveloped Russia which had also confronted the ravages of the revolution and war. Conversely, the negative side of this ambivalent dichotomy seems to point to the ardent but futile attempt at remaining independent. An admirable cause, surely, but one that was to suffer from the predatory intervention of a hostile state. In the forthcoming section, I hope to highlight some of the more noteworthy features of independent Estonia, how foreign interests interceded and, finally, some of the crucial scenarios which unfolded prior to and during the Second World War which resulted in the exodus of Estonian political refugees.

Roos suggests that the livelihood of approximately sixty percent of Estonia's population was derived through

agriculture (1985:28). Having inherited a system of land tenure whereby the majority of land was held by a minority of 1,200 estate owners, it was becoming clear that the distribution of landed property would have to be altered. The land reform law of 1919 resulted in the nationalization of 97% of estate lands. Compensation was provided to the former landowners, the Baltic Germans. The result of these reforms was a tripling of farms, to 140,000, each of which comprised, on the average, an area of some 56 acres (Roos, 1985:29). This expanding agrarian base served a dual purpose: it provided Estonia with stable subsistence while also providing exports, thus giving Estonia some solid ground in her endeavours to reestablish foreign trade.

Along with agricultural goods, forestry products and oil-shale constituted Estonia's major exports. Prior to independence, Estonian industry was geared toward meeting the needs of Czarist Russia, which acted as both the market and as the major contributor of raw materials. The closing of relations with Russia necessitated a redefining of Estonian industrial policy. Uustalu (1952:212) maintains that there was a two-fold approach to post-war industry. On one hand, new industries, based on local raw materials, had to commence production. The second phase involved those industries that were already in existence: finishing machinery which had previously been located in Russia had to be provided. The

oil-shale industry in particular gave much needed industrial energy and export.

These first few years of statehood were not without their crises, but by the 1930's, though Estonia remained primarily an agricultural nation, "...industry reached the take-off stage...particularly in the manufacturing of textile products and chemicals and in the development of the technology and exploration of oil-shale. In fact, economic growth was so rapid that by the late 1930's seasonal workers for agriculture had to be imported from abroad" (Aun, 1985:8). Economically then, Estonia, having laid its foundation, was beginning to show signs of reaping the rewards of self-reliance.

While Estonia's economy was establishing itself, the cultural traditions born out of, and nurtured by, the period of National Awakening were tenaciously taking root. The associated symbolic elements of Estonian identity, unfettered by the obstacles of foreign rule, were similarly flourishing. By themselves, these elements may seem somewhat ineffectual, but when considered in concert with a population of recently liberated Estonians aware of their turbulent history, they become imbued with a force that is, and remains to this day, greater than the sum of its constituent parts.

Estonian literature characterized much of this intensity. Spurred by the tradition initiated by Kalevipoeg, Estonian writers were making their mark. In addition, Estonian folklore was put to the pen and some 630,000 items, dating

back to the thirteenth century were recorded (see Roos, 1985:35).

At least part of the credit for this lies with Estonia's educational system. Uustalu (1952:221), and the editors of Estonia: Story of a Nation (1974:66) suggest that the literacy rate of Estonians was approximately 98%. Though certainly in accordance with the aforementioned aims it also resulted in what Aun has referred to as the "overproduction" of university graduates (1985:8). Nevertheless, in terms of university students and books published per year per capita, Estonia placed among the leading nations (Jackson, 1948:235).

The song festivals, initiated in 1869, continued their performances, usually once every four or five years. Performers numbered between 15,000 and 21,000 with an audience input reaching 100,000, one tenth of the nation's population (Uustalu, 1952:233); (Estonia: Story of Nation, 1974:68). These festivals and the continued emphasis on education remain banners for Estonian political refugees worldwide.

As a further elaboration of these cultural themes will occur at a later juncture, we shall for the moment leave this topic. It is of use to turn now to the interventionary events which occurred during Estonian independence and which culminated in Soviet annexation and the flight of some 80,000 Estonians.

On the home front, Estonia had signed numerous international treaties and agreements. These were blatantly

violated when the Soviet Union occupied the Baltic republics in 1940 (for a discussion of the various treaties, see Roos, 1985:23). However, it was the non-aggression pact between Germany and the Soviet Union (generally referred to as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact) which had actually sealed Estonia's fate. The two powers agreed to divide the Baltic region into their respective spheres of influence. Finland and the Baltic states were to fall under Soviet control, thus fulfilling the longstanding Soviet wish to establish military bases in these nations. Regardless of its efforts to secure impeccable relations with neighboring countries, Estonia's future was inextricably linked to this pact. As Germany's successes on the French front shed some light as to the short-term outcome of the war, the Soviet Union exercised its fraudulent rights to the Baltic republics.

The Soviet Union's first demand involved the signing of a pact of Mutual Assistance. Under duress and faced with the threat of force, Estonia was compelled to submit. A Soviet military presence in Estonia was initiated on September 28, 1939 (Uustalu, 1952:239). Later, on June 15, 1940, the Soviet Union demanded an Estonian government which would be more favorable to Soviet needs. This demand was accompanied by an eight-hour ultimatum which effectively precluded negotiations. The ultimatum was accepted, but this did not prevent the Red Army from invading the following morning. Column after column of Soviet artillery and infantry rolled



over the Estonian border and by June 21st a communist puppet government was in place.

The year of Soviet occupation involved exploitation in its most heinous form. The presence of the N.K.V.D. (now the K.G.B.) obliterated any civil rights which the Estonians then had. This presence reached barbaric levels, when on the night of June 13th, 1944, over 10,000 Estonians were herded into boxcars and transported to the slave camps of Siberia (see Roos, 1985:41-42, Uustalu, 1952:247-249). Mass graves including over 1,700 people were discovered and many people simply disappeared without trace. With the outbreak of hostilities between Germany and the Soviet Union, another 30,000 Estonians were deported to labor camps in the Soviet hinterland.

In view of Russian atrocities which occurred during the first Soviet occupation, the Estonians probably considered the subsequent German occupation to be the lesser of two evils. Some of the remaining Estonian politicians, particularly the last Prime Minister, J. Uluots, attempted to restore Estonian autonomy, but German opposition negated any such action. If an Estonian were to reflect on the differences between the N.K.V.D. and the German Gestapo the tally might possibly read as follows: The N.K.V.D. were organized, informed, non-commiserate; they ruled by terror and were therefore ultimately deadly. The Gestapo were organized, informed, non-commiserate, but they ruled with some vestiges of justice and

were ultimately of some backhanded use. German occupation resulted in diminished Estonian life, but life nonetheless.

The Soviet winter offensive of 1943-44 revived Estonian fears. Uustalu (1952:255) has argued that the advance of the Red Army was marked by robbery, violence, rape and murder which would suggest that these fears were fully justified. Some 80,000 Estonians, having realized that a German defeat would result in total Soviet occupation, seized the initiative to escape. This escape can best be described as totally chaotic. Crowding into any kind of boat that was marginally seaworthy, some 24,000 fled to Sweden and between 50,000 and 60,000 to war-torn Germany. Many perished in rough seas or were sunk by Soviet aircraft and submarines. Between 1939 and the end of the Second World War, Estonia's population shrank by 25%, or by some 280,000 people. Of these, 80,000 were alive in exile.

As we set the stage for the immigration of Estonians to Canada, and to Winnipeg, it is illuminating to address certain immigration statistics (The Royal Commission of Bilingualism and Biculturalism report is summarized on the following page). In examining these figures, we can discern one major and one minor trend. The more obvious coincides with the appearance in Canada of the political refugees, via Germany and Sweden, between 1948 and 1952. More obscure, but worthy of mention, is the increase in immigration between 1924 and 1930.

TABLE I

## Immigration of Estonians to Canada: 1922-1965

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1922 ...	12	1937 ...	2	1952 ...	934
1923 ...	33	1938 ...	9	1953 ...	451
1924 ...	65	1939 ...	6	1954 ...	290
1925 ...	27	1940 ...	1	1955 ...	185
1926 ...	77	1941 ...	1	1956 ...	162
1927 ...	110	1942 ...	1	1957 ...	221
1928 ...	107	1943 ...	2	1958 ...	122
1929 ...	98	1944 ...	1	1959 ...	88
1930 ...	83	1945 ...	7	1960 ...	134
1931 ...	8	1946 ...	8	1961 ...	52
1932 ...	0	1947 ...	282	1962 ...	51
1933 ...	1	1948 ...	1,903	1963 ...	63
1934 ...	2	1949 ...	2,945	1964 ...	44
1935 ...	3	1950 ...	1,949	1965 ...	59
1936 ...	5	1951 ...	4,573		

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Source: The Royal Commission of Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Volume 4 (Book 4), The Cultural Contributions of the Other Ethnic Groups, Table A-1. "Ethnic Origin of Immigrants-Canada, 1900-1965, pp. 238-245, Queen's Printer for Canada, Ottawa, October 23, 1969.

The increase in Estonian emigration during the 1920's seems to be a multi-faceted phenomena. As estimated that some 150,000 Estonians returned to Estonia during the Russian Revolution and War of Independence (1985:18). This resulted in the Estonian post-war economy having to absorb a considerable influx of people. Some of these individuals, rather than attempting to eke out a living in a not yet stable economy, opted to emigrate to Canada. Canadian policies offered inducements to the Estonian emigré. The availability of homestead grants and other economic incentives suggest that many pre-World War II immigrants were economically motivated-

a strict departure from the political refugee status associated with post-World War II Estonians.

Aun has argued that many of these earlier migrants had no intention of maintaining their ethnicity. He cites the following case: "A remarkable example is a young Estonian sailor who landed in Montreal in 1924 and turned into a painter-artist, the first Estonian to become a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Art (1958). He married a French-Canadian girl, assimilated into French Canadian society and culture, and also Francisized his name, Oskar Lall, into Oscar Daniel de Lall" (1985:19).

One other scenario which unfolded in Estonia also likely led to Estonian immigration to Canada. Contrary to the above mentioned example, these events maintained Estonian ethnicity. Termed the "foreign policy syndrome" by Aun (1985:18), and discussed in detail by Roos (1985:23), it may be defined as a fear arising from Estonia's proximity to the Soviet Union.

If one considers Estonia's historical relationship with Russia, it seems plausible that this floating paranoia had been prevalent for some time. Events which unfolded on December 1st of 1924 crystallized these fears. On that day, Soviet bands attempted attacks on Estonian government installations. Roos argues that the subsequent investigation revealed that the decision for the attempted coup was made in the Soviet Union, that the Soviet Union had smuggled the

commandos into Estonia, and that the weapons used were supplied by the Soviet Union (1985:23).

Though unsuccessful, the attempted coup provided the impulse for heightened emigration. Aun (1985:18), citing K. Inno and F. Oinas, points to the doubling of Estonian emigration figures for the three years following the attempted overthrow.

Economic conditions were thus not the only incentive for emigration-political fears constituted a secondary factor. Aun (1985:18) argues that these later immigrants were more nationalistic, hence more inclined to maintain their ethnicity. Under their sponsorship, the annual Estonian Independence Day festivities were organized. The second such celebration occurred in Winnipeg in 1928; the first having taken place in Eckville, Alberta in 1926.

### Overview

The intention of this initial chapter "Background and Social History" is two-fold in purpose. Due to recent events in Soviet Estonia, namely Estonia's attempt to reinstate a pose of autonomy or self-determination, this small nation has attracted the public eye. As a potential showcase for "perestroika," Estonia, and its Baltic neighbors, Latvia and Lithuania, are drawing worldwide attention. But this is comparatively recent history. It is highly probable that very little is understood of Estonia's prior history. One

directive of this initial chapter, then, is to guide the reader through some of this earlier history.

For the purposes of this thesis, however, much of this historical description may seem tangential: how could the Pre-Roman Iron Age connect with and influence present day Winnipeg Estonian ethnicity? Nevertheless, this writer will argue that certain historical elements are important, and that these not only influence Winnipeg Estonian ethnicity, but also nationalistic postures in Soviet Estonia. Let us briefly summarize these features.

From the Pre-Roman Iron Age shift to sedentism, to Estonia's inclusion in international commerce during the Roman Iron Age, through the dissonance of the Middle Iron Age, and the subsequent vitality of the Last Iron Age, it is clear that geographic location has played a conductor's role in Estonia's livelihood and future. This presence at the center of a series of economic theaters has also resulted in misfortune and considerable burden for the people of Estonia.

For nearly eight centuries, between 1227 and the present, the castle walls of Tallinn have acted as headquarters for the caravan of rulers of Estonia. Danish monarchs, Teutonic princes, Swedish Kings, the various heads of the Polish-Lithuanian State, Russian Czars, the Nazis, and, now, the Soviet government, have all wielded control over Estonians. Whether the law has been bestowed by a benign stroke of the pen or exercised through the use of a heavy hand, the fact

remains that, during this period, Estonia has been governed by her indigenes for only twenty years. But these periods of independence, the years prior to 1227 and the years immediately preceeding and including Estonian sovereignty, are crucial to understanding present day Estonian ethos.

Prior to 1227, Estonia consisted of a politically autonomous but loosely-knit federation that did not pay service outside of it's constituent parts. Though this period of sovereignty occurred some 800 years ago, the point of significance is that Estonia, at this time, was free. Second only to particular aspects of the National Awakening, this era of Estonian history has been a focal point for Estonians in their expression of nationalism. While there is little mention of the years of serfdom, there appears to be a tendency to resurrect the pre-serf days, a time when irrepressible Estonian "Viking Ships," their sails full of wind, had unfettered reign of the seas.

By 1227, however, the loosely-knit Estonian federation could not match the strength of the more organized Teutons, who had maximized their military potential by cementing pacts of non-aggression with the surrounding nations. Danish involvement, as allies of the Teutons, resulted in Danish rule until 1346. A peasant uprising directed at the Danish landowners, the Revolt of St. George's Eve, was ultimately put down by the Knights of the Livonian Confederation. Livonian

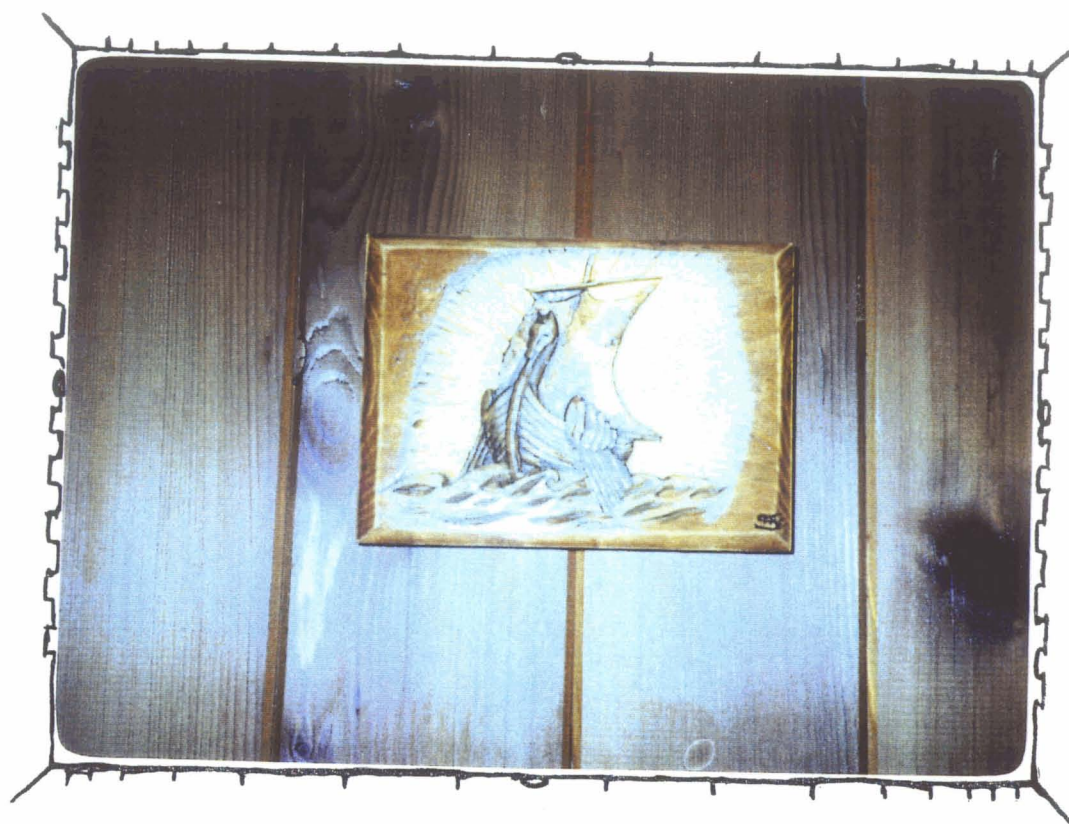


Figure 1: "Estonian 'Viking Ships' at Sea."

Woodworking is a traditional Estonian undertaking that has been maintained in Canada. This photo, taken in the basement of an Estonian residence, symbolically depicts the early years of Estonian sovereignty.



intervention resulted in Denmark liquidating her land claims in favor of the Livonian Confederation, who remained in power until 1645.

The Livonian Confederation was beset with the same quandry as the Estonian federation, namely, a lack of political cohesion. This hindrance became apparent when Russia achieved victory against the Livonian Confederation. Rather than relinquishing her property to the Russians, the various Livonian nobles surrendered to the Swedes, the Danes, and the Polish-Lithuanian State. A series of wars ensued, culminating in singular Swedish rule in 1645, though the Teutons remained as the landholding majority.

The Great Northern War of 1721 resulted in Russia seizing and maintaining control of Estonia until 1918. One consequence of Russian rule was the deterioration of the Estonian peasants' condition. But the estate's condition deteriorated proportionately, prompting Czars to initiate decrees designed to protect the peasantry. Finally, in 1820, Estonian serfs were freed. If it is at all possible or even desirable to reduce the subsequent ascent of Estonia as a nation to a single factor, the freeing of the serfs would be it. This freedom ultimately led to an educated class of Estonian land holders.

The larger social framework also influenced nascent Estonian nationhood. The French Revolution, specifically the nationalistic overtones associated with it, provided fuel for

the Estonian's aspirations. The outcome of these factors was the National Awakening. This phenomena, with its Esto-centered focus, became a driving force in inspiring nearly all Estonian activities.

1857 witnessed the first appearance of Kalevipoeg, the Estonian national epic, and in 1884 the blue, black, and white tri-color was unveiled. Both were, and remain to this day, powerful symbols of sovereignty for the Estonians. Cultural fields also flourished, with theatres, song festivals, literature, and museums becoming increasingly evident. These items were created by, for, and about Estonians.

The Estonians, spurred by these elements, were becoming more vociferous in acting out their national aspirations. This became a reality when their declaration of independence was squeezed in between the retreat of the Bolsheviks and the forthcoming German advance, on February 24th, 1918. At the close of the First World War, the Soviet Red Army attempted to recapture Estonian territory, but failed. A peace treaty was signed on February 21st, 1920. For the next twenty years, government functions were controlled by Estonians themselves.

The period of Estonian independence, though short, is crucial in comprehending Estonian ethos. The years immediately following the First World War were initially debilitating. But Estonian land reforms resulted in a stable subsistence base and provided exports in Estonia's attempts to reestablish foreign trade. The chemical industry, textile

production, and the oil shale trade in particular, further stabilized Estonia's economy.

The cultural traditions that had originated during the National Awakening were also thriving. Those traditions, already important symbols under Russian rule, took off when the obstacle of foreign rule had been removed. Song festivals, for instance, included up to 21,000 performers, and up to one-tenth of the nation's population could be found in attendance.

But an external element, namely the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, ultimately put an end to Estonian independence. Estonia's fate was again left up to others. Approximately 80,000 Estonians had absolutely no desire to remain in an occupied Estonia and fled ahead of the wake of the advancing Red Army.

In order to understand this exodus, one need only recollect the following points. On the one hand, most of the population were born or grew up just prior to or during independence. These individuals, furthermore, were living in a fairly stable economic environment and embraced Estonia-centered cultural traditions. This recently liberated population was also a highly literate one and one that had been exposed to ideas of Western liberal nationalism. Finally, powerful symbols anchored the ideas of nationalism and freedom.

A dramatic example of this adherence to freedom occurred in 1924. Fearing the possibility of a Soviet coup after the botched takeover in 1924, Estonian emigration figures doubled in ensuing years. It seems clear that Estonians value self-determination very highly. The following chapter will describe their settlement in Canada and some of the more notable aspects of Estonian-Canadian ethnicity.

## CHAPTER II

## CHAPTER II

### ESTONIANS IN CANADA

#### Introduction

The study of ethnicity has traditionally focused on the existence and maintenance of boundaries which serve to demarcate the group in question from the host society (see Barth, 1969). Barth's concept of boundaries was unique in that the structures within the boundaries received secondary attention. The boundaries themselves were viewed as the definitive features. But to focus on the structure of this membrane, the forces which created it, or the nebulous impulse which maintains it, would be premature. Neither is it the purpose of this section to honor the seemingly perpetual debate of: "Is it the host society which imposes the boundary" versus "does the group itself erect the boundary to maintain identity"? It is likely, depending on the case or which viewpoint one is to embrace, that a bit of both occurs.

As has been previously stated, it is the feeling of this writer that the Estonians, particularly in Winnipeg, are something of an anomaly. Because of this, and because it may be an intellectual faux-pas to "fit" the Estonian case into

a convenient and already existing typology, this chapter may appear somewhat eclectic. Some mention of the role of the Canadian state in lending form to Estonian ethnicity deserves attention. Of equal importance, and inextricably associated with the role of the state, would be the social history of Estonians in Canada and Winnipeg. Finally, some of the "structures" enclosed within the boundaries will be considered. Hopefully this will set the stage for a discussion of what exists at the core of Estonian ethnicity.

#### State Policies and Estonian Immigration

The 50,000 to 60,000 Estonians in Germany at the end of the Second World War were among several million displaced persons housed by the United Nations Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Administration (U.N.R.R.A.). U.N.R.R.A.'s major directive involved rehousing or repatriating displaced persons to their home countries. The Estonians clearly did not wish to return to their Soviet dominated homeland, and the task of relocating them fell to the International Refugee Organization.

Stasiulis has suggested that prior to the Second World War, the Canadian state engaged in "laissez-faire" and exclusionary policies in the social, political, and legal incorporation of non-dominant ethnic groups, whereas the post-war period has been characterized by a vigorous drive by the state to represent and, perhaps more importantly, regulate the

collective interests and goals of minority groups (1980:19). These "integrative" policies, seemingly put in place to control racism or alleviate ethnic inequalities, have a hidden element perhaps best described by O'Conner (1973). O'Conner argues that the capitalist state must fulfil functions of "accumulation" and "legitimization". In other words, the state must create conditions for profitable capital accumulation while at the same time maintaining conditions for relative social harmony.

The post-war boom in Canada necessitated a labor force to fulfil O'Conner's accumulation function and at this point we find the I.R.O., the Canadian state, and private firms quite directly involved in the future of Estonians.

Aun has argued that "...the lives of refugees in Germany had become meaningless and intolerable. Since the war they had lived crowded in camps and without gainful employment" (1985:21). The situation involved a dearth of employment, a lack of choice, and no desire for an immediate return to Estonia, certainly not under the regime of the Soviets. The bleak outlook necessitated action, and crossing the Atlantic was a politically safe alternative.

There appear to have been four routes involved in Estonian immigration to Canada: the signing of a contract with private firms working in conjunction with Canadian state-initiated labor policies; independent means involving the equivalent of 2,000 dollars in Canadian currency; immigration



through both church and individual sponsorship; and illegal means of immigration.

Canada, as a member of the I.R.O., had sent representatives to Europe in 1947 to select potential immigrant laborers from among the refugees. Aun maintains that 282 Estonians were among these but that, "...acceptance was narrowly restricted in numbers as well as to the occupations Canada was then short of: lumbermen, farm laborers, construction workers, miners, and women domestics" (1985:22). The journey, paid for by the I.R.O., involved the signing of a labor contract of a one year duration. Families were not accepted, and educational or professional standards, often far above the demands for the labor-oriented occupations, made little impact: physicians and judges worked as laborers. Yet they came. What were the alternatives? Existence in Germany was meaningless, and repatriation was analogous to death. The hope was that, sooner or later, opportunities would be found. Generally, after the one year contractual term had expired, these expectations were met.

It was not necessarily an easy route. Citizenship policies required residency for a five year period. This was one way of blocking the more skilled Estonians from bettering their position. Informants interviewed argued that proficiency exams, designed to determine an individual's level of qualification, were not used in Canada, though some suggested that they had heard that more liberal concessions

did exist in the United States. "You had to start from scratch" was a common theme in interviews. Yet no overt bitterness was witnessed, or if it did occur, a pragmatic approach was adopted. Though most did not find employment consistent with their previous professional training, they did fare well and, above all, they had found the one thing they had searched for-political freedom.

The 24,000 Estonians who had fled to Sweden arrived in Canada in a considerably different way. The Swedish government had treated the Estonians very generously. Aun argues that they were quickly channelled into the Swedish economy with some consideration directed toward their respective abilities (1985:21, 25). Economically, there were no major conflicts, but a new threat was brewing on the horizon.

The paranoia of the foreign policy syndrome made its presence known. Sweden had recognized the 1940 Soviet annexation of the Baltic republics. This fact, coupled with rumours of a war in which Sweden would maintain friendly relations with the Soviet Union, prompted many to leave Sweden. The fear of repatriation was their major concern.

Between 1946 and 1949, groups of Swedish Estonians pooled their savings, bought boats, hired crews, and left Sweden. Aun reports the following: "All boats were overcrowded, few were in the best shape for an oceanic voyage...typical was an old boat, Walnut, with a capacity of less than 200...with 355

passengers aboard" (1985:25). After a three month journey at twice its normal capacity, it seems incredible that the Walnut reached Halifax. It does demonstrate the strength of Estonian adherence to the ideals of political freedom. Aun has tallied a total of seventeen boats landing in the United States, ten in Canada, six in South Africa, five in Argentina, three in England, and one in Brazil. Two did not complete the journey and were never recovered (1985:25).

These ships were filled with illegal immigrants. Requesting permission to stay, the Canadian government waived immigration restrictions, and by 1950 a total of some 1,500 Estonians arrived in Canada via Sweden. The admission procedure was somewhat slower in the United States, and 466 "Vikings" fresh from their "Viking Boats" landed in Canada and were subsequently sponsored by the Lutheran Church of Canada (see Aun, 1985:25-27). This leads us to the final major form of immigration, sponsored migration.

A two-fold process led to the liberalization of the immigration process in 1949. On behalf of the Estonians and other refugees, the Canadian fear that they may have constituted a burden proved completely false. Secondly, the post-war economic boom was reaching a take-off stage. For most potential migrants, then, the major problem was to find a sponsor and this, due to the growing Estonian population, was becoming increasingly easier. The Estonians had, after all, known each other in Sweden or in the displaced person

camps of Germany. In addition, many of the earlier migrants, the economically-oriented individuals or those who left after the botched Soviet coup of 1924, had already established themselves. Estonian Associations provided contact points and benefited from the new influx of refugees.

The stipulation behind sponsorship involved two things: accommodation and employment. Though guarantors assured the Canadian state of these criteria, they were frequently not met. Informants interviewed have maintained that quite often sponsors could not guarantee employment or accommodation, but through Estonian networks, most found both in short time.

Essentially, Estonian immigration had two phases. The initial wave included economically oriented individuals and those who were affected by the "foreign policy syndrome." The overwhelming majority, however, consisted of the political refugees who fled Estonia ahead of the wake of the Red Army. Moreover, this latter group consisted of a tightly-knit community, immigrating en-masse, consisting of a high number of professionals and intellectuals, and held together by the common experience of the war. As Aun puts it, they had experienced totalitarian philosophies of both the left and right (1985:25). This fact becomes more important in view that most had been born in independent Estonia and had experienced an ethos born out of the National Awakening which flourished after 700 years of servitude.

Population Demographics and Settlement  
Patterns: Canada

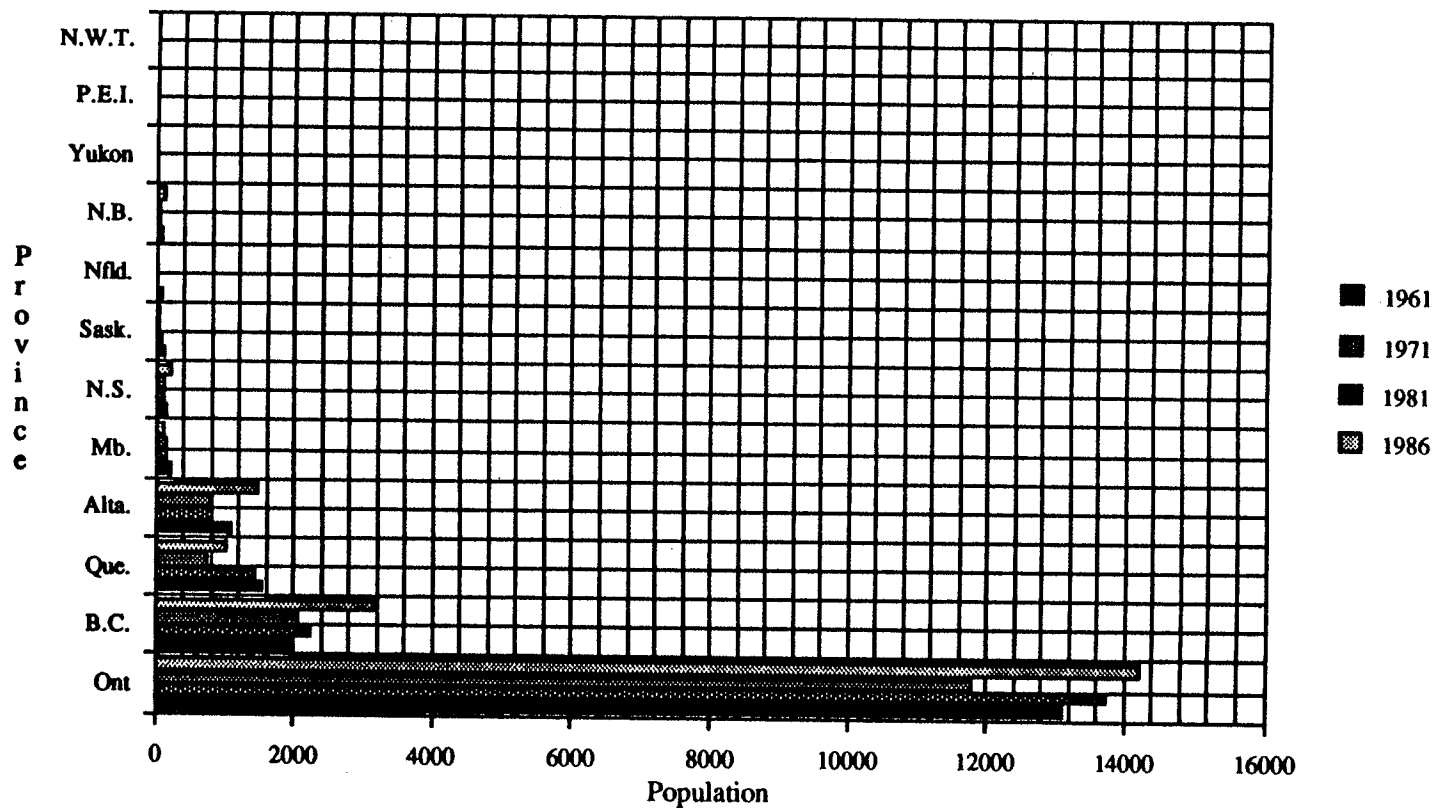
Demographic Considerations

We have suggested that there has occurred in Canada two quite distinct phases of Estonian immigration resulting in two distinct groups of Estonian-Canadians. The first group would include the economic migrants and those individuals who feared a returned implementation of Soviet policy, who had arrived in Canada prior to the Second World War. The second group consisted of the grouped "one-shot" migration of refugees who sought political freedom. One other segment, composed of second and third generation Estonians, comprise the remainder of the Canadian Estonian population.

The 1961 Canadian Census reports that 18,550 individuals of Estonian ethnic origin resided in Canada. The majority of these, (13,106), lived in Ontario. British Columbia, Quebec and Alberta followed with 1,986; 1,546; and 1,115 Estonians respectively. The remaining 797 were more or less scattered throughout the other provinces and territories (see Table III).

Prior to 1961, no records of ethnic origins exist for Estonians. Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians were all lumped under the rubric of "Baltic." To discover the number of Estonians residing in Canada prior to the Second World War we must refer to the immigration statistics as reported by the Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (see Table I).

Distribution of Estonians in Canada by Census Year  
Provincial and Territorial Breakdown



Between and including the years 1939-1961, a total of 14,319 Estonians immigrated to Canada. This leaves us with 4,231 individuals who either emigrated prior to 1939 or were born in Canada. Due to the fact that immigration statistics had only been recorded for Estonians from 1922 onward, we can only state that between 1922 and 1938 a total of 648 Estonians had immigrated to Canada. This leaves a total of 3,583 Estonians who had either arrived in Canada prior to 1922 or had been born in Canada up until 1961. The greatest proportion, in 1961, clearly involves the mass influx of political refugees, particularly between the years 1948 and 1952.

The 1971 census total of 18,810 Estonian Canadians and the provincial breakdown for residence closely parallels that of the 1961 census. The 1981 Canadian Census presents us with a few problems however. While the 1961 and 1971 census materials reduced multiple ethnic responses to single responses, the 1981 census utilized only single responses. The total of 15,915 Estonians reported in 1981 is, therefore, not comparable to the earlier census data. Multiple response data is not available for the 1981 census. The Canadian Census of 1986 does, however, include both the single and multiple responses. These read as follows: Estonians of single origin = 13,200; Estonians of multiple origin = 7,330 for a total of 20,530. (For a list of Estonians by census year see Table II).

From the foregoing discussion, a few details related to demographic considerations become evident. Most obvious is the fact that the numbers of Estonians in Canada are small. Equally obvious is the fact that, numerically, the Estonian community in Canada has remained constant for much of the last four decades. Perhaps less evident is that the type of member of the Estonian community has changed. Essentially, as no major influx of Estonians has occurred since the peak years of the late 1940's and early 1950's, the numerical constancy has been maintained by second and third generation Estonians.

Boissevain, in his discussion of the Italians of Montreal, has argued that, "...the proportion of immigrants determines the "Italianness" or degree of ethnicity of the community, that is, the degree to which Italian culture, language, and values are emphasized" (1974:3). If this tendency were to hold true for Estonians there would be, in quite short order, little evidence of "Estonianess" in Canada. Granted, different attitudes or behavioural patterns may be witnessed between the various generations but still the Estonians, "...enjoy far greater recognition than their numbers warrant" (Aun, 1985:1).

The Italians of Montreal are characterized by a series of, "...overlapping networks of social relations...which are given a certain territorial unit by the parish structure of the Italian national church" (Boissevain, 1974:26). A good deal of the Italian vitality in Montreal can be attributed to



their large numbers; some 126,000 in 1965. Moreover, an increase of 6,000 Italians annually has been presented by Boissevain, of which some 3,900 are immigrants (Boissevain, 1974:2-3). This annual influx of immigrants seems crucial in maintaining "Italianess" for Boissevain.

The same cannot be said for Estonians in Canada or Winnipeg. Total population figures are much smaller and no recent immigration has occurred. Yet, they persist. The reliance on new waves of immigration does not appear to be as critical for Estonians as it is for Italians, suggesting that "Estonianess" and "Italianess" are either enacted differently, or have divergent ethnic keys.

#### Settlement Patterns

Persons of Estonian descent living in Canada are decidedly urban. The census of 1971 reports that out of a total of 18,810 Estonians in Canada, some 15,935 resided in Census Metropolitan Areas. Toronto leads the list with 9,595 Estonians followed by Vancouver with 2,135. Montreal, Hamilton, and Calgary are next with 890, 760, and 500 respectively. Ottawa, St. Catherines, Edmonton, Thunder Bay, Victoria, and Kitchener close sequence with 475, 435, 380, 305, 250, and 210 Estonians (see Table IV). This urban percentage of nearly 85% is far greater than the Canadian total of just over 55%.

The proclivity to urban life has not always been the case. According to Aun, the first Estonians in Canada settled in Alberta at the turn of the century (1985:15). The availability of homestead grants lured Estonians to the rural regions, and by 1910, in Stettler, Alberta, there were forty-five Estonian farms with a total population of 160. Eckville, Alberta, had in 1916, an Estonian population which numbered 171. These economically-oriented, first wave Estonian migrants, many with a farming background, took advantage of the homestead grants and consequently were primarily rural. Though many of the children opted for life in the urban centers, Aun has argued that the rural Alberta Estonian population numbered around 500 in 1916 (1985:16).

After the First World War, the Estonian emigré had more in common with the children of the Estonian homesteaders. Usually single, young, and often with secondary school or university education, they found themselves with an urban orientation. Plying their trades or engaging in youthful entrepreneurship, they met with varying degrees of success.

The trend toward urban life continued, ultimately concentrating a greater number of Estonians, including the nationalistic ones whose Canadian presence was a result of their fear of further Russian coup attempts, into urban centers. An outgrowth of this phenomena resulted in the establishment of the first Estonian Associations. Designed to preserve Estonian culture, and in all likelihood organized

by the more nationalistic Estonians, they had a most important function in that they acted as information brokers. Associations provided contact points for newly arrived Estonians. Estonians in Winnipeg established the first Association in 1929, followed by Montreal in 1933, and Toronto in 1939.

With the influx of political refugees following the Second World War, it was only natural that the urban centers, particularly those with Estonian Associations, would receive the greatest number of Estonian refugees. Let us shift to the Winnipeg case.

#### Population Demographics, Settlement and Residence Patterns: Winnipeg

##### Population Demographics

Phases of Estonian settlement in Winnipeg parallel those of Canada in that both are characterized by two distinct stages. The first Winnipeg Estonians included individuals who, on their own initiative, attempted to gain economic satisfaction from what Winnipeg had to offer. For many "first wave" Canadian Estonians, personal satisfaction was likely more important than ethnic origin, resulting in fairly rapid social and cultural assimilation. But there were also a number of conscious attempts to preserve Estonian culture. These attempts were due to the fact that Estonia, during the inter-war years, was an independent nation, and that members

of the first wave included many Estonian Nationalists. The conscious attempts aimed at maintaining Estonian social and cultural solidarity also had a secondary socioeconomic focus and ultimately resulted in the formation of Estonian Associations.

The Winnipeg Estonian Society, established in 1929, becomes important in a discussion of population demographics primarily from a methodological viewpoint. Until recently, no other sources on Winnipeg Estonians have existed. Questions concerning how comprehensive the Winnipeg Estonian Society's list of Estonians is, versus the actual number of Winnipeg Estonians naturally come to mind. But for later years, when data is comparable, the differences are negligible (see Table V).

We must recall that ethnic maintenance was less critical for some of the economic migrants than for the Estonian refugees. It is useful at this juncture to view Estonian ethnicity from the standpoint of a social fact. Durkheim argues that social facts involve, "...ways of acting, thinking, and feeling, which possess the remarkable property of existing outside the consciousness of the individual...Not only are these types of behaviour and thinking external to the individual, but they are endued with a compelling and coercive power by virtue of which, whether he wishes to or not, they impose themselves upon him" (1982:51).

If we argue that refugee Estonians felt compelled to maintain ethnicity while in exile, then the close correlation between C.M.A. data and Winnipeg Estonian Society figures seems substantiated. Moreover, it points to a tightly-knit community. Those individuals who had cited Estonian origins (single and multiple origins), were also members of the Winnipeg Estonian Society; they attended W.E.S. functions. A compelling nature may underwrite their membership since their exile was certainly not an individual decision, and a silent obligation to maintain ethnicity, whether they wanted it or not, may have been in place.

The same cannot be said for the economic migrants of the first wave. Their orientations were focused more on individual concerns and they were therefore somewhat absolved of a compelling need to maintain ethnicity. This could naturally affect the numerical correlation between actual figures and the numbers presented by the Winnipeg Estonian Society prior to the Second World War. The W.E.S. figures are probably somewhat lower than the actual numbers.

How serious a problem this presents depends on one's viewpoint. Can the "less-compelled" Estonians be considered on the verge of assimilation and therefore non-Estonian? Or do these pre-World War II figures matter that much since, after all, they are the only ones we have to work with? Keeping these problematic questions in mind, we shall

nevertheless proceed with the available data and trace the numerical peaks and valleys of Estonians in Winnipeg.

The 1929 Winnipeg Estonian Society's membership list numbers 23 individuals. By 1948 these figures had increased to 47. With the post-World War II influx of displaced Estonians this figure swelled considerably and reached a peak of 160 in 1953. Slowly diminishing in subsequent years, the Winnipeg Estonian population now stands at 73. For a more complete listing of population figures refer to Table V. W.E.S. data is shown by years of availability and Census Canada Metropolitan Area figures are displayed for those few years that this data has existed.

In terms of the preceding data, a few points are worthy of clarification. Fairly obvious, and consistent with Canadian trends, is the fact that there were relatively few Estonians in Winnipeg prior to the influx of the refugees. As can be noted from the figures in Table V, the growth of the Winnipeg Estonian community closely parallels the Canadian peak immigration years of 1948-1952. To a degree, though, it is delayed because those individuals arriving in Canada (or Manitoba) via the contract route would have had to complete their one year labor camp tenure. Only upon fulfilment of their contractual obligations would one expect to find them in Winnipeg. Informants attributed the fairly rapid decrease for population figures to out-migration. Though employment opportunities existed in Winnipeg, these opportunities also

existed elsewhere, particularly centers with larger populations of Estonians, such as Toronto.

By the 1960's, the out-migration rate had subsided. The remaining Estonians had found gainful employment, and had no real urge to be uprooted. This ultimately resulted in the stabilization of the Winnipeg Estonian community. Death rates have been somewhat counteracted by birth rates, although the second and third generation Estonians in Winnipeg, as in the rest of Canada, are composed of an increasing number of individuals of multiple origins.

#### Settlement and Residence Patterns

On the basis of the Winnipeg Estonian Association list, it was possible to plot a total of 42 households within the metropolitan city limits. This total is probably not indicative of the actual Estonian presence in Winnipeg as some second or third generation individuals of Estonian background, people in "mixed" marriages, or individuals who simply no longer maintain an ethnic orientation, may not be included. Having some knowledge of the personal life histories of the political refugees and the fact that most of their offspring can in one way or another be accounted for, it is the feeling of this writer that this is not a serious methodological oversight.

As can be noted in viewing the Winnipeg city map found in the Appendix, (see page 187) Estonian residences are

distributed in their respective districts fairly evenly. Winnipeg proper has the largest number of residences with ten. St. Vital and Fort Rouge include six households each, followed by St. Boniface with five. East Kildonan includes four residences; Charleswood, three; and Tuxedo and St. James contain two apiece. One Estonian residence can be found in each of the following Winnipeg districts: Fort Garry, Transcona, West Kildonan, and St. Andrews.

Spread over the entire Winnipeg metropolitan area it would, at first glance, be easy to say that no real concentration of Estonians exist in Winnipeg. It would be misleading, however, to argue that these scattered households are indicative of a loose level of interaction. Winnipeg is not that large a city, and travelling from south-end St. Vital to west-end Charleswood for a social visit, is not viewed by Winnipeg Estonians to be a task of Herculean proportions. Interaction, for Winnipeg Estonians, is not necessarily dependent on geographic or spatial proximity.

Household proximics, on a very small level, do exist. There are some instances where the homes of Winnipeg Estonians are located within walking distance of each other, though the numbers of homes in these cases are not large enough to constitute a neighborhood. There are three explanations for this phenomenon. The first, and worst, might suggest that this is a totally random occurrence. I know of not one case where chance is the only factor involved. More often it was



the case that as one family moved from a central to a suburban area, other families followed suit, often choosing to reside relatively close to each other. Most often, however, the factor which underlies the presence of two or three households on the same street or block is kinship. The second generation offspring of the refugees, upon leaving the homes of their parents, sometimes didn't move very far away at all. For instance, four St. Boniface households located within a short distance of each other, include the home of an elderly Estonian gentleman, the house of that particular individual's son and his wife, and two separate residences occupied by their daughters.

In general, however, there are not many features of Estonian settlement patterns in Winnipeg that are truly unique. The wave II refugees, upon finishing their bush camp obligations, settled in Winnipeg to find employment. Their aspirations were often met, and upon bettering their financial situation, they followed a fairly typical trend of moving from low-income core area housing to middle income suburban life. No Estonian neighborhoods exist in Winnipeg. There are no concentrations of Estonians around parishes or areas which provide employment, as is the case for the Italians of Montreal (see Boissevain, 1974).

### Earning a Living

While the workplace no longer acts as a forum for interaction between Estonians, it does deserve some discussion. Aspects of Estonian labor force activity deserve mention not only because these activities once did serve such a function, albeit a minor one, but also because these aspects highlight the dualistic nature of Estonians in Canada. A dichotomy exists between the two waves of Estonians, among the refugee segment as it has changed through time, and between the workplace and home life. Much like the small number of Winnipeg Estonians, their lack of neighborhoods and other features which tend to point toward assimilation and not ethnic maintenance, the workplace was not an area of meaningful interaction. The workplace becomes important, not because it didn't limit social interaction, but because it did limit social interaction, but social interaction with Canadians. Essentially, Estonians had been displaced against their will, felt compelled to maintain ethnicity, and had little in common with Canadians who, by and large, knew nothing of their plight. In general, Estonians can be considered quite ethnocentric. In seeing this it is finally possible to grasp some aspects of Estonian ethnicity that heretofore have been ethereal.

We have mentioned that a dual nature characterizes Estonians in Canada. This duality has a number of facets,

each of which will be dealt with as they have appeared over time. The first dichotomy illuminates the differences between the two waves of Estonians. The first wave of Estonians were migrants and economically-oriented. That is to say that the first wave came to Canada voluntarily with interests geared toward personal satisfaction, meaning personal gains in concrete or material terms. The second wave did not fall into this category. Their flight was involuntary: they had no wish to leave Estonia but were compelled to do so. Indeed, Winnipeg Estonians of the second wave do not refer to themselves as immigrants at all, but as refugees. In this way, getting a job and establishing oneself in Canada was more of a necessity than a life's goal. Though the first wave did assist many second wave Estonians in finding living accommodations or employment, social interaction between Estonians in the work place was rare for the simple reason that very few Winnipeg Estonians worked in the same place. Blue-collar collective sentiments, or a kind of class-consciousness did not develop among Winnipeg Estonians.

There are a few aspects of Estonian views on the work place specifically, and Canada more generally, that do play a part in reaffirming Estonian ethnicity. Many, if not all Estonians, including professionals, academicians, and politicians, found that their previous vocations in Estonia would not be recognized in Canada. The necessity to find employment created situations whereby individuals ended up

working at jobs for which they were overqualified. One Winnipeg Estonian, a former lawyer in Estonia, found employment as a custom leatherworker. It would be difficult to imagine that he had much in common with his Canadian co-worker other than the less than notable coincidence that they both worked in the same medium. For reasons such as this, social relations in the work place were slow to grow. Aun echoes these sentiments, citing a prominent Estonian activist whose career had been supplanted by factory work in Canada: "What prevented the boring routine of my work from driving me crazy was the energy I expended mentally in calculating the meaningful and useful work that I could do for the Estonian community after my boring day of routine" (1985:43).

These types of scenarios point to another aspect of dualism. The refugee's Canadian occupations did little to define status for the Estonians themselves. The former lawyer, now leatherworker, is highly esteemed by members of the Winnipeg Estonian community, and spends much of his time working as one of the four principal executives of the Winnipeg Estonian Society. His day job, from this view, is still deemed to be one of the mundane necessities of life.

One other view, in this case encompassing feelings toward Canada and the United States, along with a millenarian attitude toward Estonia, comes into play. Estonians felt that their tenure in Canada would be a temporary one. Their hopes involved an eventual return to a free Estonia. Though most

have now given up this hope, it is still reaffirmed at Independence Day gatherings of the Winnipeg Estonian Society--even though most refugee Estonians have spent more of their lives in Canada than in Estonia. The compelling feeling of maintaining Estonian culture alive in exile shall be examined at a later point, but Estonian millenarian views have an associated feature, namely their feelings toward Canada or North America. It would be appropriate to determine how these feelings relate to earning a living in Canada.

Given their historical background, it should be fairly obvious that Estonian refugees are nationalistic. They are also decidedly ethnocentric. Time spent in bush camps did little to alleviate the initial negative impressions of Canada and this further supported their ethnocentric views. One aspect of North America was particularly unappealing, namely, that particular concomitant of mercantilism that tends to override elements of community, "true" appreciation of art or nature, indeed anything that the refugee Estonians held dear to their hearts. Aun suggests that, "American materialism, the measuring of everything in dollar terms, was unacceptable; and social etiquette was found to be either clumsy or artificially refined and self-consciously snobbish. A major complaint was that Canadians were interested in a very limited range of subjects on which they could converse: professional sports, neighborhood gossip, cars, and the economic aspects of life" (1985:41).

This view, not necessarily directed at Canadians themselves, who were found to be quite friendly, further supported Estonian ethnocentrism. This eventually led to a paradox. Ethnocentrism, and the fact that many Estonians were employed below their qualifications led to an intensive drive for success in the Canadian setting. While disgusted with materialism, Estonians seemed to be possessed with achieving material success. This involved adopting a certain materialist posture. While the refugees themselves did not necessarily take up this pose, it was certainly instilled in the second generation children. While the emphasis on the children was to maintain Estonianess, they were also urged to attend university and become professionals. What we have is a strongly ethnocentric group of Estonians, disgusted with North American materialism, finding themselves geared toward demonstrating their ability to succeed because they are, after all, Estonians.

Estonian materialism is not frowned upon. The competitive nature of Canadian Estonians is less a we-they scenario than one that is internalized. Estonians demonstrate their success to themselves, not necessarily the remainder of the Canadian populace. If one were to leaf through the Free Press during University Convocation one would find a series of photographs of a relatively small percentage of the total graduating class. If one were to leaf through "Meie Elu" (Our Life), or any other Toronto-based Estonian newspaper, one

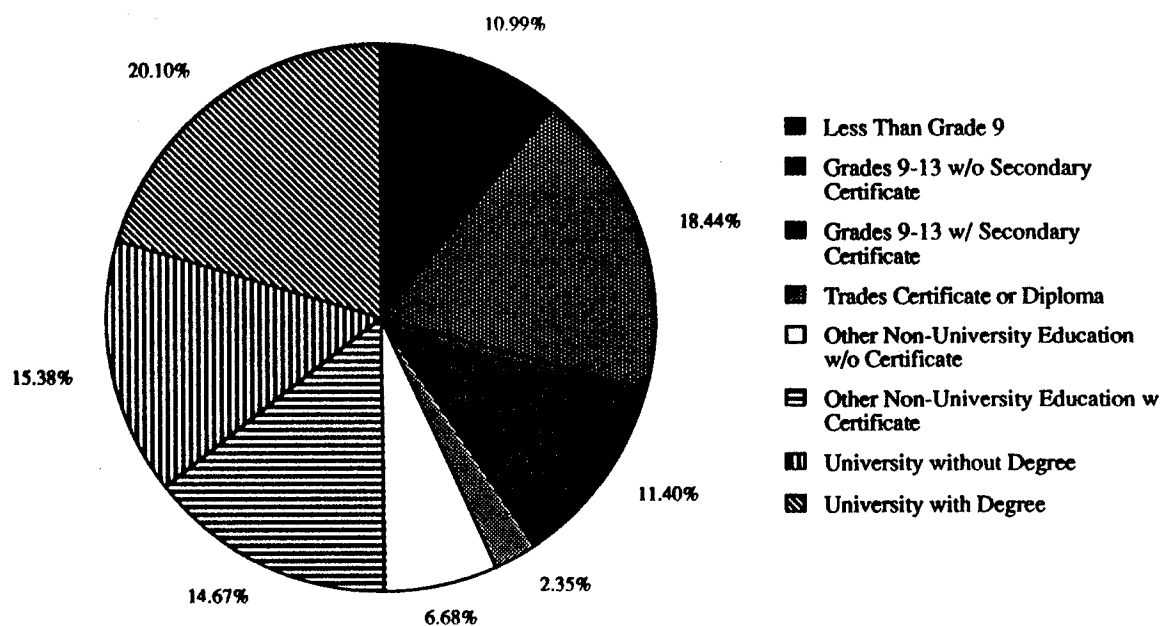
would see the photographs of a large number of graduates of Estonian heritage. The point is that almost all graduates of Estonian parentage receive such lavish treatment, demonstrating, in turn, to other Estonians, the success of their people.

If we refer to the occupational characteristics and post-secondary qualifications of Estonians in Canada, it is clear that they are well represented in the upper echelons of Canadian society (Table VI). For Winnipeg, owing to a lack of such published information, comparable data had to be arrived at through interviews. The Winnipeg categories are listed, in the case of second wave refugees, by former (Estonian) occupation versus present, or last occupation, in the case of retiree's. For second generation individuals, the categories utilized include their present occupation and level of education completed, or to be completed (Table VII).

Backed by their previous qualifications in Estonia and buoyed by the vision of the successful Estonian, the dream seems to have had very real consequences. Underlying this dream are the nationalistic sentiments that ultimately had their roots with the National Awakening and the compulsion to maintain Estonianess in exile. The fact remains that Estonians in Winnipeg appear assimilated. By and large their suburban middle to upper middle class existence would on the surface suggest a mainstream Canadianess. This appearance, however, is illusory. The circumstances leading up to this

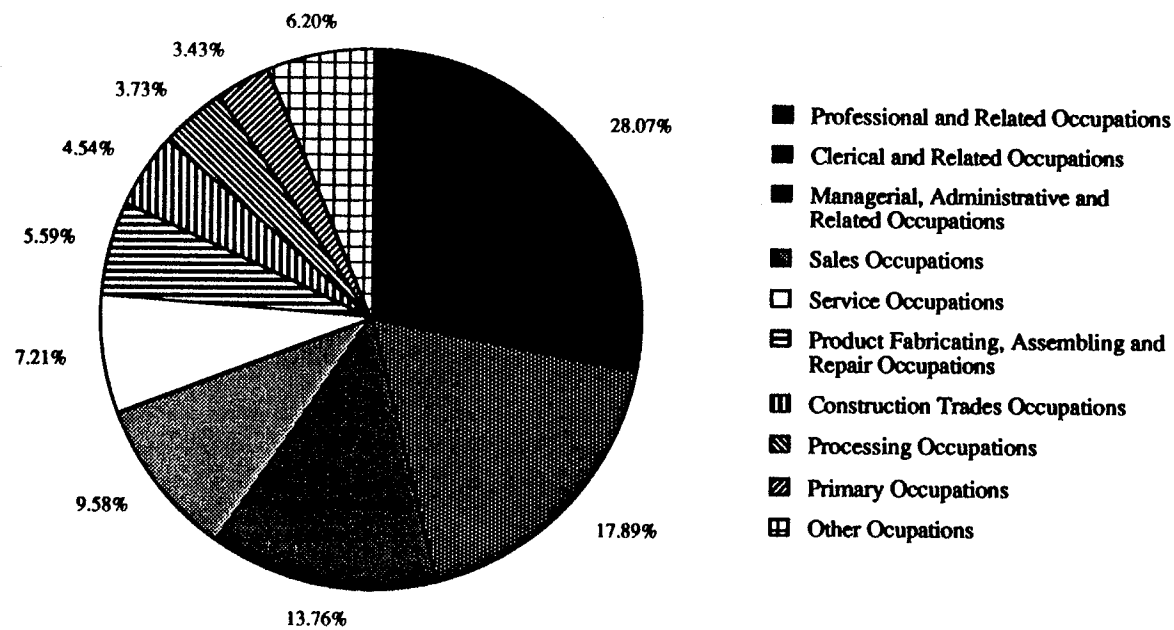
type of existence were quite different for Estonians even though the end result would indicate otherwise.

Post-Secondary Qualifications of Estonians in Canada  
Total Population 15 Years and Over = 16,845





Occupational Characteristics of Estonians in Canada  
Total Population of All Occupations = 9,925



### Family and Kinship

We have suggested that Estonians in Winnipeg are associated with networks best described as "closely-knit." But how does the network stand in relation to social life in general? For example, does the type of network that individuals are associated with affect their social reality? Or does the social reality result in a particular network? Elizabeth Bott (1957) definitely adheres to the first approach. Bott argues that the type of network in which a family is involved, affects in a very direct way the conjugal role relations in that family. In families with "close-knit" networks, there appears to result a high degree of conjugal role segregation. This phenomenon holds true for families of Winnipeg Estonians.

One must ask, of course, if other social realities such as Western liberalism or the National Awakening had affected the initial forms of social networks. We have attempted something of such a processual approach and it has been more succinctly dealt with by others (See Parkin:1969). For our immediate purposes it seems sufficient to say that Winnipeg Estonian families are associated with tightly knit networks that do involve a high degree of conjugal role segregation. The dual income, send the kids to day care, no sex-based division of labor, so common in this highly individualistic age, does not apply to Winnipeg Estonians.

An Estonian works, not necessarily as an obligation to self, but more due to an obligation to the family. The commitment to family and to other members of one's kin group warrants much more attention in Estonia, and to Estonians abroad, than it does in North America. The chaotic developments involved in the flight of Estonian refugees has, however, placed certain strains on elements of Estonian kinship. Most relatives, with the exception of members of the nuclear family, still reside in Estonia. Two phenomena, as they relate to family and kinship, come into play.

We have stated that Estonian families are closely knit and imbued with obligations toward family members that are considerably more rigid than those generally pertaining in North America. Following this line of reasoning, one would expect that a fair degree of attempted contact between Estonians in Winnipeg (or Canada) and relatives in Estonia occurs. This is precisely the case. In the years prior to Gorbachev's new policies, this contact was at best sporadic. Parcels and letters sent to Soviet occupied Estonia were always opened and, more often than not, they never reached their intended destination. In recent years however, obligations to kin have been far easier to fulfil. Blue jeans, coffee, spices, and other valued Western goods, are sent to Estonia quite regularly. Reciprocally, articles of Estonian origin, such as tapestries, music or other culturally-oriented materials, are returned. Echoes of Marcel

Mauss' attitudes toward the "spirit of the gift", the associated obligations to reciprocate, and the subsequent maintenance of social status or social relations come to mind. Visits to Estonia and vice versa are now also increasing in frequency, though the five people who have made the journey in recent years do not constitute a great percentage of the Winnipeg Estonian population. While events of World War II have led to fractionated Estonian relations (in terms of physical proximity) they have not diminished the attempt to maintain these relations.

The events of World War II have affected Estonian kinship in a second way. Estonian kinship is bilateral but because most relatives still reside in Estonia, very few Winnipeg Estonians, excepting nuclear family members, are related. This has resulted in a strange situation. All members of the Winnipeg Estonian community are referred to as either "onu" (the formal term for uncle) or tädi (formal for aunt) by second generation Estonians, regardless of their actual genealogical connections. First names are used by members of the same generation unless interaction takes place in a formal setting. The end result, particularly from the viewpoint of the second generation Estonians, is that of a relatively massive extended family. Fictive kin, then, owing to the lack of blood relatives in Winnipeg, have become quite important. Though the same terms (onu and tädi) are used in Estonia, in Winnipeg they have served to relate the majority of Winnipeg

Estonians. Obligations toward members of the fictive family are not necessarily very great, but fictive kin terminology serves to accentuate or define another element important to Estonian ethnicity, namely friendship.

### Friendship

J. Barnes has argued that individuals relating to one another through ties of friendship and acquaintance can be considered a network (1954). Though Barnes has viewed networks as a kind of a residual phenomena, in other words that which remains after other principles of grouping such as territory and occupation are "removed", it nevertheless provides us with a starting point for discussing the friendship network of social relations and its role as a component of Estonian ethnicity.

In order to understand patterns of activities and interactions that cannot be accounted for by formal structure, but which obviously express themselves in social life, we must turn to some network models. It appears true for the Winnipeg Estonian case, and in accordance with Blau's scheme, that a focus on active individuals, generating patterns by their own decisions in all contexts of interaction, has certain advantages (See Blau, 1956:53).

The study of ethnicity focuses on the social context. Network analysis follows individual interactions as they ramify throughout the social context. It follows that network

analysis can be a useful tool to cut across static models in order to arrive at, as Whitten and Wolfe suggest, "the relevant series of linkages existing between individuals which may form a basis for the mobilization of people for specific purposes under specific conditions" (1973:720).

We have suggested that Estonians in Winnipeg participate in non-Estonian occupations and do not work with other Estonians. Neither are they localized residentially in an ethnic neighborhood. In terms of urban services, they are again non-ethnic. They shop at Safeway and Eaton's. None of this is particularly illuminating or remarkable in terms of ethnicity. One aspect of Estonian ethnicity that is important, however, are the social relations forged through friendship networks.

In order for Estonians to interact, become friends, and forge social relations, they must first meet each other. A small proportion of the Winnipeg Estonians who had lived in Winnipeg in the 1950's, had known each other in the displaced person camps of Germany. Others had met in the bush-labor camps of rural Canada. It seems natural that these friendships would remain intact upon arrival in Winnipeg as they provided natural cushions against acculturative shock. In addition, some of these people had sponsors in Winnipeg who knew other Estonians. In a relatively short period of time, these overlapping networks of friendship served to introduce the majority of Estonians in Winnipeg. As much of this

process will be described in greater detail in the upcoming section on the Winnipeg Estonian Society, we shall for the moment leave it.

We can repeat, however, that social relations with Canadians were slow to grow. This has resulted in Estonians interacting mostly with other Estonians, and we should not underestimate the importance of these links. Without them, life for the Estonian in Winnipeg would be isolated, lonely, and impersonal.

Friends are always associated with the various events that an Estonian partakes in, be they the formal, semi-formal, or private occasions described in the forthcoming chapter. These interactions also occur outside of the "event-oriented" boundaries, and on occasion, the results do warrant attention.

We have said that Estonian residences in Winnipeg do not encompass features that define them as neighborhoods. An interesting phenomenon, with results that approximate that of a very small neighborhood, has occurred, not in Winnipeg, but at the summer homes of four Estonian households. Initially one family had procured two cottage lots just south of a popular Manitoba summer resort. Through information exchange in a friendship network, another Estonian family bought two lots adjacent to the first family. After a few years of land clearing, cottage construction, exchange of labor, and visits from other friends who came to help in the process, two other Estonian families decided to procure nearby summer cottages

that were then available. In the span of five years, four Estonian cottages were to be found within a short distance of each other. These summer homes have served as the location for parties at the lake, a semi-formal event in the Estonian network.

### Organizations

Estonian organizations in Canada, those brought over from existing organizations in Germany, and new ones formed after the Estonian's arrival in Canada, were designed to assist the immigrants in their adjustment to their new environment (See Aun, 1985:65). Aun argues that more than 200 Estonian organizations exist in Canada but that "no serious attempts to centralize Estonian organizations has been made" (1985:65). Though the Estonian Central Council of Canada claims to represent all Estonians in Canada and is, furthermore, a member of the Estonian World Council of New York, which would seemingly lend an international flavor to the structure of Estonian organizations, there exists a large number of organizations that exhibit no formal link with the Estonian Central Council or any other organization for that matter. Granted, contacts between Associations and the Central Council occur, but usually at the instigation of the local Associations or individual members thereof. The image of a series of organizations, the apex of which may be the Estonian Central Council of Canada, and which, in turn, subsumes all



other organizations and Associations, simply does not exist. Estonian organizations in Canada are quite decentralized and often compete for the same resources in terms of membership and available capital (see Aun, 1985:65-85).

Because Toronto has the highest Estonian population in Canada, it is not surprising that it also houses the largest number of organizations. Over half of all Canadian Estonian organizations are found there and include such establishments as the Estonian Arts Center, the Estonian Relief Commission, choir and sports clubs (Aun, 1985:65 ff). In the smaller communities across Canada, with populations of around 100, Aun has suggested that typical local organizations would include Estonian Associations, and the local Estonian Lutheran congregation (1985:65-66). In the very small communities, due to a lack of membership, only occasional gatherings occur, usually to commemorate Estonian Independence Day. In communities of all sizes, there also occur cooperative events organized by the various Baltic Associations, in the Winnipeg case, to demarcate August 23 as "Black Ribbon Day", the date of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Friendship Pact, which put an end to the Baltic Republic's autonomy. Winnipeg is fairly typical of the smaller Estonian communities across Canada in terms of formal organizations. It has its Winnipeg Estonian Society and its Estonian Lutheran Congregation, both designed to help the new emigré adjust to the Canadian setting.

## The Winnipeg Estonian Society

The Winnipeg Estonian Society, formerly known as the Kanada Eesti Selts "Side" (Canadian Estonian Society "Binding" or "Ties"), and now termed the Winnipegi Eesti Selts "Side", is the nucleus of the Winnipeg Estonian community. This section will address factors leading to its origin, the structure of the Society itself, its purpose or function, its subsequent decline during the Depression years, and its reestablishment with the arrival of the political refugees. Data for this section has been gathered from a number of sources. Information concerning the Society's first phase of existence has been acquired through the First Book of Minutes of the Kanada Eesti Selts, "Side", and through interviews with the one surviving Estonian individual of first wave origins. For the Winnipegi Eesti Selts, "Side", data, the first and second books of minutes, and interviews with the "Kaanditaadid" (the executives and candidates who act as principal organizers of the Society) were utilized. I would like to gratefully acknowledge these individual's help not only in supplying this researcher with the written materials but also with their invaluable assistance, cooperation, and hospitality extended during the course of the interviews.

In order for Estonians in Winnipeg to interact, it was necessary that they first meet one another. In addition to previously described methods of meeting one another, one other strategy must be considered. The key informant for the first

wave of Estonians in Winnipeg suggested that information in the Department of Immigration statistics proved invaluable. Though some had left Estonia for unstipulated reasons, many were economically-oriented, and, as such, came singly. Through immigration files, and the previously mentioned overlapping networks of friendship, they came to know one another, excepting of course, those who felt that assimilating was a more viable alternative. The major motivation for these contacts, the searching out of other Estonians, was described as "sheer loneliness." Clearly the problem of acculturation was initially a factor.

On May 15, 1929, a total of 25 Winnipeg Estonians met at one of their homes to discuss the possibility of forming a "Society", the first such Estonian Association in Canada. On June 16th, 23 of the initial 25 voted in favor of such an endeavor, and the first incarnation of the Winnipeg Estonian Society was formed.

In terms of the aforementioned phenomena, it is of use to turn to particular elements of network analysis. Wolfe (1970:229) has addressed a series of "sets" as models for linking persons in social situations. His "action set" is limited to links purposefully used for a specific end. If we use Wolfe's idea of action sets in conjunction with Adrian Mayers' (1966) sequence of ego, to quasi-group, to group formation, we may argue that something approximating this has occurred in the initial formation of the Winnipeg Estonian

Society. Mayer argues that "when the more constant members of an action set are at the same time those directly linked to ego, one can characterize them as the 'core' of the quasi-group. This core may later crystallize into a formal group" (1966:116). Time has unfortunately obscured the exact nature of the formation of the group and it is difficult to determine if there was one individual shaker and mover or, for that matter, a few of them.

By all indications, however, the Winnipeg Estonian Society was founded through the purposive actions of a handful of people. These "social catalysts", whom Boissevain (1968:549-550) refers to as the wheelers and dealers who, through their actions, affect the social relationships within the direct and indirect spheres of their maneuvers, may ultimately bridge the gap from individual (to quasi-group) to groups. Boissevain's notions of these social catalysts parleying their talents to their advantage, and ultimately into positions of power, was likely not a great factor for the Winnipeg Estonians: the goal was probably more communal than individual. Purposive actions of individuals and their ramifying relationships do, however, seem to have their place in understanding Estonian ethnicity. It also enables one to trace the growth (or decline) of the community by studying the Winnipeg Estonian Society as a focal point or central node in a network.

The internal structure of the Winnipeg Estonian Society is, democratically, fairly typical. Executive members include a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and a fluctuating number of "Kaanditadid"; executive trouble-shooters that are involved in making booking arrangements and the like for formal gatherings. Membership, or more accurately, attendance at meetings, fluctuates as it does in most voluntary associations. Those candidates wishing to run for office are voted for by the various members with the leading vote recipient obtaining the position.

In recent years, following the influx of the Estonian refugees, the Winnipeg Estonian Society has been more involved in formal-style events. This was not initially the case. Though the first Estonian Independence Day celebration on February 24th, 1928, occurred prior to the existence of any formal Estonian Association, interactions could be best described as rigorously casual. Rigorous, because the original 23 or so members met very frequently (i.e. every weekend), but casual, because these meetings usually did not involve a high degree of grandiose display or ceremony.

One member of the Estonian community owned a farm near Headingley, Manitoba, and, invariably every weekend, individuals would hop on the street car and meet there (only one or two automobiles were then owned by members of the Winnipeg Estonian community). The informal parties in Headingley provided a venue whereby the Estonians could speak

their common language, eat traditional Estonian cooking, and escape the loneliness and impersonal daily existence in Winnipeg.

House parties were a common occurrence, and because meetings of the Kanada Eesti Selts "Side" were also held in private homes, the two sometimes occurred contemporaneously. Between June 6th, 1929, and Christmas Day, 1936, the Society met a total of 31 times. These formal meetings, clearly outnumbered by social interactions of a more casual nature, nevertheless had certain consequences.

Money was obviously quite scarce during the Depression but it was a source of pride for the Winnipeg Estonians that "no one was in the soup lines." Collections had been taken up from those who could afford it, and an Estonian flag was bought, and to this day, is raised atop the Winnipeg Free Press Tower on February 24th to commemorate Estonian independence.

Correspondence with Estonia was also fairly common and a subscription to the Tallinna Päevaleht (Tallin Daily) was initiated. The Independence Day celebrations, the procurement of an Estonian newspaper, and one other event, namely "Jaani Päev" (literally translated as Jaan's Day and essentially involving a mid-summer night feast and ritual), were the more notable events, in addition to the frequent but fairly informal parties. Mid-summer night, for Estonians, the celebration of which occurs on June 24th, is unique as it

represents a throwback to the pre-Christian pagan days when Estonia was again an autonomous region. It will more fully be considered in the forthcoming chapter: Events in the Network.

Between Christmas Day, 1936, and the 9th of September, 1948, no formal meetings of the Estonian Society were held. A number of factors may have been in play. The harsh economic climate of the Great Depression was followed by World War II and Estonia's annexation by the Soviet Union. This cut off communication with the homeland. Numerically, the small group of Winnipeg Estonians had remained more or less intact. They still interacted as often and in the same manner as before, but as the key wave I informant put it: "We still met but there didn't appear the need to formally do anything. We had our little circle of friends and had accomplished what we wanted and what we felt we could." The impression received was that formally (in writing), the Winnipeg Estonian Society no longer existed, but, in reality, the community remained intact.

The Winnipeg Estonian Society was reestablished in September, 1948. The meeting's minutes were recorded in the same book, but with a twelve year jump between 'Protokol' #31 and #32. The Department of Immigration was again partially responsible for initiating communication between those of the established first wave and the political refugees, who were then beginning to arrive in Winnipeg. The surviving wave I

informant had received a telephone call from a Mrs. Garry from the Department of Immigration, who said that a number of Estonian women were due to arrive in Winnipeg. This informant went to the railway station to meet "the girls" who were to be employed as women domestics. Similar scenarios unfolded, and a logical outgrowth of the swelling local Estonian population was the reestablishment of the Estonian Society. In 1948, 47 people attended the first formal meeting in some twelve years. By 1953, the Winnipeg Estonian population had increased to 160 individuals.

The same structure in terms of executive membership had been maintained, and a few new functions in ensuing years had been initiated. Independence Day banquets on February 24th remained the principal formal event, the national Estonian flag still being raised at the Free Press Tower. Mid-summer "Jaani-Paev" again became a focal point and was held at the Vasalund Club in Charleswood. This was an appropriate location because of the nice banquet hall, the courteous atmosphere, and because of its location on the banks of the Assiniboine River, which provided two necessary prerequisites for the ritual—a location for a bonfire in close proximity to water.

In addition to the formal banquet style parties, which included events on Christmas, New Year's Eve, Independence Day, and Easter, a series of potluck suppers were organized in rented venues such as the Town and Country, and a Credit



Union in St. Vital. These involved generally high turnouts and provided occasions where Estonians could speak their language and revel in the presence of traditional gastronomic specialities.

In recent years, the Winnipeg Estonian Society has been involved with two other occurrences. Black Ribbon Day, on August 23rd, is jointly organized by Associations of all three Baltic republics and has been formally recognized through a proclamation drawn up by both the Mayor and Premier of Manitoba. In remembrance of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which dealt the death stroke for the Baltic Republic's autonomy, it reaffirms the Estonian and Canadian refusal to recognize the Soviet annexation of these nations. Deportation Day, June 13th, marks the commemoration of Estonia's own holocaust, when thousands of Estonians were herded to the slave camps of Siberia or simply executed.

In addition to these calendric events, the growing Winnipeg Estonian population of the 1950's and 1960's attempted some more culturally-oriented occasions. We have mentioned that singing and song festivals have been historically important Estonian pastimes. In an effort to recreate something of this, choirs were organized which periodically performed for the Winnipeg Estonian population. A small theatre club also had a brief existence, but both the choir and the theatre club fell by the wayside with the exigencies of time.

### The Winnipeg Estonian Lutheran Congregation

The overwhelming majority of Canadian Estonian congregations are Lutheran, though Orthodox, Baptist, Pentecostal, and Seventh Day Adventist congregations also exist (see Aun, 1985:75). All of these congregations were established after the Second World War with the arrival of the refugee Estonians. The Winnipeg Estonian Lutheran Congregation was formed in 1952. The perceivable basis for the formation of these congregations was to provide the means by which religious expression could be maintained. Certain concealed elements, however, may also have lent support to the formation of the Estonian congregations in Canada.

The events leading up to the flight of the refugees were marked by deprivation of various forms: family and friends were lost along with the refugee's own home country. The Soviet takeover had also forced the church out of public life. Roos argues that membership in the Lutheran Church, dropped from 851,060 to 60,742 between 1937 and 1981 (1985:59). But because the Church was a primary vehicle in initially resisting the Soviet takeover, it may have been viewed by the Estonians as a banner for freedom. Furthermore, Lutheran Church sponsorship played a role in the refugee's arrival in Canada. These factors, along with the rapid influx of Estonians, resulted in the formation of Estonian congregations, the presence of which not only provided

spiritual guidance, but also a forum with which "Estonianess" could be kept alive in exile.

Winnipeg Estonian Lutheran Church services are conducted at "Our Saviour's Lutheran Church" and are held three times annually: Easter, Thanksgiving/Remembrance Day, and Christmas. In previous years, due to the fact that Winnipeg's Estonian Lutheran congregation did not have its own pastor, services were conducted by visiting pastors. This was made possible because formal linkages exist between local Estonian congregations and national and international Estonian Lutheran Church organizations.

Aun (1985:78) has argued that many of the older Estonian pastors have died and that few young Estonians have chosen to enter the ministry. This has resulted in some Estonian congregations having to import pastors from abroad. The Winnipeg case has followed a reverse path. Initially, visiting pastors were the norm, but since the late 1970's, one local Winnipeg Estonian has, through correspondence, completed the ministerial exams and now presides over the three annual services, the baptizing of children, and funeral services. The soloist and organist are also members of the Estonian community.

In this chapter we have mentioned a number of factors which lend form to Estonian ethnicity. We have also looked at state policies, the social history of Estonians in Canada, and the organizations which exist for Estonians in Winnipeg.

We have mentioned that certain events are foci for the Estonians in their demonstration of ethnicity. In and of itself, this is not wholly sufficient. The image presented to this point is somewhat analogous to describing an exploded diagram of an electric toaster and the order of operations with which the construction of its component parts and currents can be understood. We may be able to understand how it fits together much in the same way that we can see aspects of Estonian ethnicity and the events which have led to its present form. One crucial element is missing, however. What makes it "work"? What is the nature of the electric current, the life-force, the "charge" of the Winnipeg Estonian community? What is it that, if one refers to the Manifesto to the Estonian People, will make "the torch flash and flame at both ends" (see The Manifesto to the Estonian People. Source: Uustalu, 1952:158-159). The following chapter will hopefully enable us to comprehend what this core of Estonian ethnicity involves.

### CHAPTER III

## CHAPTER III

### EVENTS IN THE NETWORK

#### Introduction

In the preceding pages one can find a skeleton of the Estonian community-on a fairly general level abroad, and on a more specific base as it relates to the Winnipeg case. This skeleton has been "fleshed out" by organizational materials found in Chapter II. Absent, however, is an account of the force which animates this community. It is the feeling of this writer that much of the life-force, the "passion", which lends vitality to the Estonian community, can be delineated through the observation, description, and subsequent analysis of Winnipeg Estonian events. These events, and their associated symbolic underpinnings, fall into four categories: formal, semi-formal, private, and finally, events in the extended network. These events in the extended network serve to link displaced Estonians worldwide.

We have hinted at the significance of symbols vis-à-vis the events of the Winnipeg Estonian community. Naturally, questions will arise as to what a symbol is, what the symbols for Estonians actually are, what kinds of symbols they are,

and perhaps most importantly, how they stimulate the community. Equally important is the relation of ritual symbols to social structure. Do these symbols and the concomitant ritual processes simply reflect social structure, or is something different occurring (see Turner, 1980:558)? As much of this will be addressed in the forthcoming analysis, we will direct this chapter to the description of the events, and the introduction of the symbolic elements as they appear.

### Formal Events

#### Introduction

Formal events for the Winnipeg Estonian community can be defined as occasions which involve fairly ritualized, communitas-oriented phenomena. This is not to say that individuals' themes are not present. Turner (1980:574-576) has argued, that even simple ceremonies may involve multiple levels of meaning. This "multivocality" of symbols does not disregard the individualized, internalized level of meaning. But, for formal events, these meanings on an individual level are subsumed under the umbrella of the collective. The community takes precedence over any individual. Formal symbols evoke powerful emotions due to common historical experiences and the similar social conditions of the community's members. This public meaning, in turn, provides something of a guideline by which the members of the community enact "Estonianess."

### The Estonian Independence Day Banquet

The Estonian Independence Day festivities are the key annual event for Winnipeg Estonians and, with the exception of World Estonian Festivals and Song Festivals, for other Estonian communities worldwide. The Independence Day feast encompasses the hopes and aspirations of the entire community. It serves to unite the members under the collective remembrance of nationhood and independence. We shall outline a little of the history and some elements of the banquet's organization, but the primary focus will be on the event itself and what occurs during it.

In prior years, a number of venues have been used for the February 24th festivities-some adequate, some less than satisfactory. For the last four years, since 1987, the Scandinavian Club on Erin St. has provided the setting for the event. There seem to be a few ethos-related reasons for this choice in location. In the past, sites such as the Plaza Motor Hotel had been utilized. This hall's location was adjacent to a bar that featured live rock and roll bands as entertainment. Estonians, generally, are not fond of high decibel rock and roll and the clientele associated with such music unless, of course, the band happens to be composed of Estonians as was the case when "Ultima Thule" visited Winnipeg. The band members of Ultima Thule were housed by a member of the Winnipeg Estonian community and their



"röögimine", literally translated as histrionic shrieking, was grudgingly tolerated by other Winnipeg Estonians.

This points to the inappropriateness of some locales, but does not address why the Scandinavian Club would be more suitable. It seems axiomatic that people are more comfortable with others that are "closer" to themselves, geographically, historically, or culturally (similar observations have been made by Stymeist, 1975:6, 50-52). Swedes, Danes, and particularly Finns, are viewed by Estonians as not quite Estonian, but certainly closer than "others" (others referring to the materialistic North Americans). For Estonians then, the apex of "civilization" consists of Estonians, followed by Finns, other Scandinavians, and finally, all "others". The Scandinavian Club also provides food which is quite similar to traditional Estonian fare and, perhaps more than coincidentally, a tapestry of a Viking ship. The Viking ship motif is not limited to Scandinavians. Estonians have utilized these ships as subjects for woodcuts and jewellery.

The event itself consists of two physically separated, but symbolically connected, stages. On the morning of February 24th, the Estonian National flag is raised atop the Winnipeg Free Press Tower where it remains until after the banquet. This phenomenon seems more associated with the demonstration to non-Estonians something of the plight of exiled Estonians. Perhaps a handful of Winnipeg Estonians attend the flag-raising, which itself takes no more than a few

minutes. Though not a major community event, the flag-raising does draw some attention. It is akin to the undercard of a boxing match in that the preliminary bout sets the stage for the main event.

The organization for the banquet itself is straight forward. The executive members of the Estonian Society contact members of the community, usually via telephone, to determine an estimate of the number of people expected to attend. While engaged in conversation, guests are reminded to bring their personal Estonian banners which are, in turn, placed on the banquet tables. Once the estimate of the size of the group is determined, booking arrangements are confirmed and the menu is decided upon. This brings us to the event itself.

Usually the executive of the Winnipeg Estonian Society and the local minister are the first to arrive. The treasurer greets the guests and collects the monies for the rental of the hall and the dinner. A large Estonian national flag is unfurled and situated amongst the flags of the Scandinavian nations, and the smaller banners are placed at the dinner tables. After a few drinks and a general milling about, the group is called to attention and the following sequence of events occurs.

The first step involves a few introductory remarks by the designated master of ceremonies (usually a member of the Winnipeg Estonian Society executive) that basically thanks

those present for their attention and support of the event. The master of ceremonies then beckons the pianist (also a member of the Estonian community) and the singing of the Estonian National Anthem commences. As with many anthems one can observe a solemnity in the air punctuated by the occasional tear as the performers recollect "freedom" and an independent Estonia contrasted to the Soviet controlled Estonia of today. If visitors from other Estonian communities, or from Estonia itself are present, a toast is commonly presented as is the song Ta Ela Ku. This is the traditional song of greeting which extends good health to the recipient and the community.

After reseating themselves, a formal speech is usually on the agenda. Though presented by a number of people, over the course of a number of Independence Day banquets, the components or contents of this pronouncement have remained remarkably consistent. Some reference to the golden age of Estonian independence always seeps into the speech. As well, a testimony that involves the wherewithal of the Estonian people is presented, and the reaffirmation, that if this resolve is maintained, that "justice" will be served. The speech is efficacious. One can view the expressions of the individuals involved and note a solemn innerdirectedness and a setting of jaws. Invariably some reference to Soviet occupation occurs, prompting gesticulation on behalf of the communities members-rolling eyes are punctuated by occasional

hostile commentary directed toward the Soviets. The insider-outsider dichotomy is further supported by this millenarian phenomena. This millenarian designation requires some clarification.

Hobsbawm (1979:440-444) has provided us with a key principle in terms of such movements. He argues that millenarian movements in the "classic" sense, and modern revolutionary movements, differ in their respective methods of achieving their goals. The classic millenarian movement operates through a miracle or divine revelation, and revolutionary movements proceed by way of explicit political or tactical strategy. Both, however, are motivated by a sense of "impossibilism" (see Lessa and Vogt, 1979:440). Furthermore, these movements can only be maintained by the groups absolute faith that their utopian goal can be achieved.

Hobsbawm argues that classic millenarian movements involve three main characteristics (1979:441). The initial stage involves a total rejection of the present evil world. Hobsbawm's second factor involves an ideology of a "chiliastic" variety (1979:441). This ideology refers to the period of perfection, happiness, and freedom from human imperfection, that had occurred in the past and will, somehow, occur again. The vagueness as to how it will occur is Hobsbawm's final point.

Winnipeg Estonians, particularly at Independence Day festivities, exhibit these characteristics to varying degrees.

They most certainly long for the reestablishment of the perfect days of the past. For Estonians, perfection would correspond to an independent Estonia. They simultaneously reject the imperfect present, in this case Soviet occupied Estonia, while never explicitly establishing how any of this can actually occur. The constant theme throughout, is the faith that it somehow can.

Estonians, particularly the extended network of Estonians abroad, also embody some of the more revolutionary criteria outlined by Hobsbawm. In recent years, given the changing political circumstances in Estonia, a more revolutionary posture has been adopted. A gamut of phenomena that revolutionaries embrace can now be found amongst Estonians. Demonstrations such as those witnessed during Black Ribbon Day occur, as do petitions against the Soviet occupation. National banners are always found in concert with such events, culminating with international occurrences such as Estonian World Festivals. As much of this will be considered in a discussion of the other formal events, let us simply state that the Estonian case may be one that is transitional between millenarian and revolutionary. Let us return to the Independence Day banquet. Perhaps we can glimpse a little more of how this Hobsbawmian "faith" comes in to play.

After the conclusion of the speech, other announcements, if there is a call for them, are delivered. These usually involve relevant Esto-related events, such as the recent tour



Figure 5: "Peace with Freedom"

In recent years, Estonians, and other Balts, have become increasingly more political in demonstrating their dissatisfaction with Soviet occupation. This particular scenario unfolded at the foot of the legislative buildings shortly after Lithuania's declaration of autonomy. The demonstrators were protesting the increased Soviet military presence in Lithuania which accompanied the Lithuanian declaration.

of an Estonian male choir. Their performance, in Fargo, North Dakota, was attended by six Winnipeg Estonians, captured on video-camera by one of them, and subsequently viewed by a number of Estonians that had not attended the performance.

The most recent (1990) Estonian Independence Day banquet included a guest, the nephew of a Winnipeg Estonian, who was in Winnipeg on a four month visa from Estonia. His presence generated a forum for discussion as to what the "situation" in Estonia was, establishing a kind of reconnection with a land that most had not seen for some forty-five years.

After these occurrences, the minister is called on to perform grace, and the feasting begins. Upon completion of these formal micro-events, which basically involve the reaffirmation of Estonianess, the actors seem to experience some degree of tension relief. Their solemn obligations to their community fulfilled, they are quick to engage in the less structured actions of eating and drinking. This brings us to the feasting itself.

There is nothing exceedingly notable that can be discerned on a community-based level. A few items, more or less individually-oriented, do deserve consideration however. We have mentioned that the Scandinavian Club's smorgasbord is quite similar to traditional Estonian fare. Similar, but not identical. This invariably results in some commentary as to the excellence of the food, because it is less North American and more "Estonian". On occasions, one can also witness some

reference to the inadequacy of the "rosolje" or the blandness of the potato salad. The more critical Estonians responsible for such comments seem to remind themselves, and others, that though the food is most exceptional, it still is not Estonian.

The remainder of the evening is quite typical of any number of formal, banquet-style dinners. Much eating, a degree of libation, and general fairly nondescript interaction occurs. On occasion, if the group's spirits are particularly high (it is difficult to otherwise describe this intangible type of "mood"), a spontaneous call for song may occur, for Estonians like to sing.

One final element, and it is not designed as a postscript, involves the presence of a wealth of personal symbols that are Esto-centered. Dresses, ties, pins, rings, all emblazoned with the blue, black and white Estonian national colors, are to be found everywhere. Traditional amber jewellery and viking ship brooches are also likely to be evident.

To summarize this section, it is of use to incorporate Geertz's views on symbols. For Geertz, symbols include objects, events, and acts that provide a vehicle for conception, with conception being equated with the symbols' meaning (see Lessa and Vogt, 1979:78). Furthermore, sacred symbols minimize bafflement or paradox because "they synthesize a people's ethos" (Lessa and Vogt, 1979:79). Geertz continues by arguing that it is through ritual that





Figure 6: "Sacred Ties"

Since 1884, the blue, black, and white tricolor has existed as the key symbol of the Estonian people. Outlawed in the Soviet Union, refugee Estonians display the banner in a number of situations. This photograph captures the exhibition of these national colors on the ties of the individuals pictured. The event depicted involves the opening speeches during the Independence Day festivities.

these preceding conceptions are confirmed (Geertz, 1979:86).

More specifically:

"...though any religious ritual involves this symbolic fusion of ethos and world-view, it is mainly certain more elaborate and usually more public ones, ones in which a broad range of moods and motivations on the one hand and of metaphysical conceptions on the other are caught up, which shape the spiritual consciousness of a people." (Geertz, 1979:87).

Geertz also suggests that these performances are models of what they believe and models for the believing of it and that "In these plastic dramas men attain their faith as they portray it." (Geertz, 1979:87).

In terms of these aforementioned postures, the Estonian Independence Day banquet can be summarized thusly. It is the most public event of the community, laden with key symbols that include oratory, flags, viking ships, tapestries, national colors, and the "Freedom for Estonia" proposition that, by the conclusion of the event, has provided a plausible scheme of what they believe and the method of believing it. A believable faith, ethos, or worldview is generated, and maintained, which ultimately shapes the flesh and bone of the Winnipeg Estonian social order.

#### The Estonian Lutheran Church Services

The Estonian Lutheran services, along with the Independence Day Banquet, comprise the more important formal occasions for the community. Three annual services are offered. These include services at Christmas, Easter, and a

November service that encompasses a Thanksgiving, Remembrance Day, All Saints Day, and Lutheran Reformation pot-pourri. Due to the fact that most Lutheran services are quite similar to each other, regardless of ethnic affiliation, it is not particularly necessary to describe the entire service. Because of this, we shall limit our commentary to three general areas: the organization of the services, the points at which the Estonian service diverges from the "typical" Lutheran service and, finally, a description of the brunch which concludes each service.

Two organizational levels, as they relate to the Winnipeg Estonian Lutheran Congregation, can be delineated. On a macro level, the Winnipeg Estonian Lutheran Congregation is a member of the Missouri Synod. The Toronto congregation is also connected with this Synod (see Aun, 1985:78). This connection is pertinent because much of the contents, and order of the particular services, have their source in Toronto. This results in a degree of parallelism between affiliated congregations.

On the local level, a church committee is responsible for the service's organizational aspects. This includes the pastor and three other members. After the pastor receives the materials for the service, the community's members are notified of the time and date of each respective service. The organist and soloist, both members of the Winnipeg Estonian community, are contacted a day or so before each service and

they, in turn, prepare their materials. The church committee members are responsible for the bulk of these items, ensuring that no other conflicting events are occurring during the Estonian services. These members are also responsible for the collection of the offering at the conclusion of each service. This brings us to the event itself.

The organizers, along with the soloist, organist, and those who assist in the preparation of the post-service brunch, are the first to arrive. The guests follow and seat themselves, and the service begins. A few elements are evident which distinguish an Estonian Lutheran service from other Lutheran services. The most obvious is that the entire service is in the Estonian language. Other, less discernible elements, but elements of some consequence, are that Estonian services are suffused with nationalistic components. There seem three ways in which these nationalistic components surface.

In addition to prayers that are fairly typical of Lutheran religious expression, there also exists a prayer for the homeland—a solemn statement directed to the well-being of the Estonian Republic. The pastor's sermon is also permeated with nationalistic sentiment. Often this discourse mentions reports from Estonia, or recent media-related items. Generally, these seem to highlight some of the more negative aspects of Soviet occupation but, notably, they include a call for the congregation to maintain their "faith". In this

manner, the sermon parallels the speech at the Estonian Independence Day banquet. The millenarian sense of "impossibilism" is, again, evident and repeatedly utilized in conjunction with "faith".

The final aspect which distinguishes the Estonian service from other Lutheran services is the singing of the third verse of the Estonian National Anthem. "Su Ule Jumal Valvaku", roughly translated as "God Watch over Estonia", is the one verse of the anthem which lends itself to a nonsecular forum more so than do the other verses. More recently, and likely in response to Estonia's directive of self-determination, the entire anthem has been performed.

In terms of ethnicity, then, the Estonian church services are important for a number of reasons. In a previous section we have mentioned that the church (in Estonia) was significant in resisting the Soviet takeover. This posture of the church, as a banner of freedom, has been continued in Winnipeg. Furthermore, the services provide the Winnipeg Estonian Lutheran congregation with a means for religious expression in their mother tongue. In terms of ethnicity, the services include symbolic elements of nationalism and "freedom" and, in so doing, may further support Estonianess.

After the conclusion of the service proper, the congregation moves to the basement for the brunch. The organization of this little meal is important as it again highlights aspects of Elizabeth Bott's (1957) thoughts on

tightly-knit networks. While the congregation is involved with the service, the non-Estonian spouses of the Estonian males are in the church basement preparing the coffee and setting the tables. The Estonian wives, prior to each service, usually prepare a tray of traditional Estonian sandwiches and bring these along with them for subsequent use. This degree of conjugal role segregation again hints at a tightly knit network (see Bott, 1957).

Two additional occurrences are important in an anthropological discussion of this brunch. On one hand, it provides a setting where a number of the community's members are present in the same place simultaneously, thereby providing a convenient forum for announcements or speeches that have an Estonian focus. Finally, and this is consistent with most formal, semi-formal, and private occasions, there occurs the gastronomic element. Usually one finds a number of types of open-faced sandwiches, a variety of baked goods, and copious quantities of coffee. Just how to interpret the symbolism of this food is difficult. What can be said is that traditional foods are usually evident at events of any kind and, in some unsubstantiated way, they somehow serve to further link the members of the community. If one was to hazard an informal guess, one should first note that these foods are not "everyday" foods. The items are of a more traditional type that are, in some way, less secular than other items. In this manner, they may seem somewhat

emblematic of Estonia; something that parallels a kind of totemic connection seems to exist, however intangible this connection may appear.

#### Deportation Day

On June 13th, 1944, over 10,000 Estonian men, women, and children were forcibly removed from their homes and subsequently deported to the labor camps of Northern Russia and Siberia. Roos argues that "some 60,000 Estonians were arrested, murdered, or deported during the first Soviet occupation in 1940-41" (Roos, 1985:41). But June 13th, 1944, when approximately one percent of the population disappeared overnight, has become established as a date in the sacred calendar of Winnipeg Estonians.

Every June 13th, Winnipeg Estonians congregate at the Memorial Boulevard location for a brief ceremony for their dead. The pastor conducts a short service reminding those present of the conditions of that day in 1944. From the point of view of the Estonians present, their participation in the event is short in duration, but nevertheless important. With Estonian National flags waving, wreaths are laid for those lost during the Second World War.

Though the ritual takes little time, and no subsequent meetings occur immediately after the event, this does not necessarily mean that the occasion is a minor one. There are



Figure 7: "The Deportation Day Memorial"

This brief ceremony, an amalgamated effort on behalf of the three Winnipeg Baltic communities, is held to mark the wave of deportations of Balts to Siberia. These deportations hit a peak on June 13th, 1944. June 13th has remained to this day a date in the Estonian sacred calendar.



indications that many Winnipeg Estonians, some not present at the wreath laying, have their own personal ways to memorialize this day. As such, it can be viewed as a sacred moment in time. It is a calendrical phenomena that is clearly endowed with sacred meaning for Estonians, and for the observer, it provides another opportunity to view a formal enactment of Estonianess.

#### International Black Ribbon Day

International Black Ribbon Day is the final, and chronologically most recent, formal event involving Winnipeg Estonians. Formally recognized through mayoral and provincial government proclamation, International Black Ribbon Day can be viewed as a symbolic counterstroke to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact signed on August 23, 1939. This pact, signed by Stalin and Hitler's generals, led to the partitioning of Eastern Europe with the Baltic Republics (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) falling under the Soviet sphere of influence. It was this pact which directly led to events culminating in the Soviet annexation of Estonia.

On the local level, Black Ribbon Day, like Deportation Day, is an amalgamated effort of the three Winnipeg Baltic communities. On an international level, however, this has involved major demonstrations. Every August 23rd, Estonian communities worldwide publicly demonstrate against Soviet occupation. In light of the recent stance of autonomy by

Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, Black Ribbon Day has reached near-revolutionary proportions. On August 23rd, 1989, over one million Balts joined hands in a human chain that reached over 400 miles, spanning the three Baltic Republics. Due to the smaller populations of refugee Estonian communities, Canadian-Estonian demonstrations do not reach these peak proportions. But Black Ribbon Day serves to unite flag-waving Balts worldwide and constitutes a key calendric ethnic event.

### Semi-Formal Events

#### Introduction

For our purposes, semi-formal events can be considered as somewhat ritualized, *communitas*-oriented events, but less so than the aforementioned formal events. It is of use to repeat Durkheim's notion of a social fact at this juncture. Durkheim argues that social facts involve "ways of acting, thinking, and feeling, which possess the remarkable property of existing outside the consciousness of the individual...not only are these types of behaviour and thinking external to the individual, but they are endued with a compelling and coercive power by virtue of which, whether he wishes or not, they impose themselves upon him" (1982:51).

It would seem to this observer, that the external, compelling, and coercive powers are manifest more so in the formal events than in the semi-formal. The compelling "I must



Figure 8: "Defiling the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact"

This calendric ceremony, also an amalgamated effort on behalf of the Balts, symbolically defiles the pact that directly led to Estonian occupation.

do this" theme is not as influential with semi-formal events. Yet, attendance at the semi-formal occasions is equally high. The reasons seem to have shifted to a "want" rather than a "must".

As with formal events, we shall describe the occasions and highlight any associated symbolic elements. Due to the fact that many of these semi-formal events can be subsumed under the rubrics of "parties", "feasts", or "dinners", there will be a noted overlap in many of the descriptive and symbolic materials.

#### Dinner Parties

In a previous section we have noted that along with the swelling Winnipeg Estonian population, directly related to the influx of the political refugees, there occurred a resurgence of the Winnipeg Estonian Society's banquets on Christmas, New Year's Eve, Independence Day, and Easter. In addition, a number of potluck dinners in rented venues also occurred. Though Winnipeg Estonian Society banquet functions are now limited to Independence Day festivities, and rented venues for potluck dinners are no longer utilized, dinner-style parties still occur. These, however, are now held in the private residences of members of the community.

Anthropologically speaking, this should not pose a serious dilemma. The subject here, is not the national origins of the group, nor the nature of the internal cultural

traditions, but rather, the maintenance of boundaries to preserve the organization of activities and interaction (see Barth, 1970:15; DeVos, 1975:6).

For this section, then, though we will focus on cultural elements which compose these dinner parties, it is important to not overlook another salient fact. The number of formal banquets and potluck dinners in rented locales has dropped. But, it would be erroneous to suggest that this is a reflection on the vitality of the group. The shift is one of degree rather than kind. The one formal banquet and the dinners in private residences "work" in much the same way as did their predecessors. Boundaries are still maintained.

What, then, are the relevant characteristics of these dinner parties? Significant aspects would have to include when and how often these dinners occur, as well as who the actors in attendance are. Finally, though we have suggested that content is in some cases secondary to the boundaries themselves, we shall include some related cultural content. As symbols are cultural and are contained within the boundaries, their relation to boundary maintenance should deserve some attention.

The residence-oriented dinners have supplanted the Winnipeg Estonian Society formal banquets in that they occur at roughly the same time: Christmas, New Year's, and Easter. In addition, these occasions do not occur at only one residence, there may be three or four Christmas dinners at

three or four Estonian residences annually. At first glance, this would not really seem to be anthropologically significant: nothing here effectively distinguishes an Estonian dinner from any other. What one must consider is the residences, and who inhabits them? They are Estonian residences, inhabited by Estonians. There is no humming and hawing as to whether one should attend a Christmas dinner or not, unless the invitation originates from a non-Estonian. We are again reminded of Estonian ethnocentrism.

In terms of this, a number of aspects warrant consideration. First of all, the residence is that of an Estonian, complete with cultural items that signify, at least to other Estonians, that very fact. Secondly, those in attendance, which can vary from a "just family and close friends" number of a dozen or so, to major dinners of thirty to forty people, are invariably Estonian. The exception to this rule are non-Estonian spouses, non-Estonian God Parents, both of which are welcomed to the fold through kin-reckoned processes, and, less frequently, other non-Estonians that the community members have met and befriended over their forty years in Canada. This is not to say that social interaction with non-Estonians does not occur; it does, but the dinner parties are more or less reserved for Estonians.

The final aspect worthy of attention relates to the observable cultural items. Though these items exist within the homes of Estonians (as "contents"), they may also have a

more extensive function. Namely, they can serve to mark the event or residence as Estonian. In this fashion, they exist within the boundary as simple objects, while their symbolic meaning serves to maintain the ethnic boundary.

A quick inventory of objects that lend themselves to observation would include the following:

1. The Estonian National Flag,
2. Some other objects that utilize the blue, black, and white motif,
3. A viking ship, either as a woodcut or as jewellery,
4. The Estonian National crest,
5. Estonian books, particularly the national saga, Kalevipoeg,
6. Tapestries of traditional Estonian pattern, and
7. In the case of five Estonian homes one can find saunas.

These cultural items constitute key symbols for Winnipeg Estonians. All or some of them are found in the majority of Estonian residences and, during the dinner party, define the residence as "Estonian". At these parties one not only "sees" Estonian symbols; Estonian music is often played and Estonian food is served. Dinner parties, then, can be viewed as events which symbolically mark off the group from the host society. The community, at least for the duration of the event, exists in its own little niche, bounded off from the larger social environment.

#### Parties at the Lake

These cottage focused events in many ways parallel the Estonian dinner parties in Winnipeg. Cottage parties, for



Figure 9: "A Dinner for Freedom"

A dinner party provides the occasion for this symbolic display. The meal features traditional Estonian fare and in the center of the table, one can again view the blue, black, and white national colors - in this case taking the form of a candle display.





Figure 10: "National Dress"

The following photographs illustrate examples of Estonian National Dress. During the refugee's flight, some individuals were able to transport these items with them. The photo at left was actually the wedding dress of the subject's mother. The lower photo, from an unknown gathering, shows a cross-section of various styles.





Figure 11: "Tapestry"

Wall rugs, tapestries, and the like, can be found in a number of Estonian households. The patterns on this tapestry are of a traditional style, though this particular work was created within the last ten years.

obvious reasons, only occur in the summer months, and with one exception, more or less spontaneously. The one occasion where the spontaneity does not exist, is during mid-summer night. Owing to a dilution of their numbers, Winnipeg Estonians no longer formally celebrate the mid-summer "Jaani Paev". But, on or about June 24th, a number of Winnipeg Estonians can usually be found at the cottages south of the before mentioned Manitoba resort. The lakeshore bonfire may no longer occur, but the feeling that those present are celebrating mid-summer night is somehow evident.

The other cottage parties are instigated by the cottage owners at a convenient time for themselves and their guests. The statement, "kutsume kõik Eestlased" (let's invite all the Estonians) is a common precursor. Naturally not all Winnipeg Estonians simultaneously attend these parties, nor are all of them invited en masse. An average turnout for these events would be in the range of twenty to thirty people.

Guests come and go, fish, swim or sail, but the common thread that binds them is to be found in the feasting. Everybody partakes heartily of the meal(s). The feast itself is not necessarily Estonian in style-barbecued steak and burgers are equally common-but this seems secondary. The fact remains that the group members are there and they are all feasting together.

At one summer residence, an interesting phenomena related to Estonian symbols has occurred. One Winnipeg Estonian took

it upon himself to carve, on a two-foot slab of birch, the Estonian National crest. Carved into the sides of this slab are the words "Tere Pere". Literally translated, this means "hello family". There is another connotation evident, however. "Pere" can also mean "people" as in "Meie Pere" or "Our People". The "Tere Pere" woodcut is not only a greeting but, much like "Dené" or "We the People" from the American Constitution, it is also the Estonian's name for themselves. The woodcut is not always in evidence. During festivities involving other Estonians, it is raised and taken down much like any other emblem.

One last item not necessarily related to cottage parties, but which will be dealt with here for convenience sake, is the phenomena of personalized Estonian license plates. Like the "Tere Pere" woodcut, it means absolutely nothing to a non-Estonian. Two such license plates can be found in the Winnipeg Estonian community. The first, "Eesti", is the Estonian name for their country: Estonia. The second, "Tartu", is the second largest city in Estonia; a city important in the history of Estonia and the center of Estonian "high culture". If a non-Estonian were to wander down toward the lakeshore during an Estonian cottage party, it is likely that he or she would view "Tartu", "Eesti", and the "Tere Pere" woodcut. The possible confusion that person may experience, would likely be viewed by an Estonian with a combination of restrained pride and subtle glee that,

unfortunately, cannot be conveyed through the written word. These internally constructed symbolic boundaries do more than just demarcate the Estonians from outsiders however. Such symbols, at least occasionally, have been mechanisms of recruitment.

In one instance, the occupants of the "Tartu" vehicle were on a camping/fishing holiday. At a rest stop, just prior to embarking for home, an elderly gentleman approached the driver of the vehicle and inquired: "Tartu? Are you Estonian?" This led to further conversation and, eventually, an exchange of particulars. The situation was that of an Estonian who had, 40 years earlier, more or less disassociated himself from other Estonians. The "Tartu" symbol directly resulted in him contacting the vehicles occupants and, subsequently, other Estonians. Ties of an Estonian nature which had been severed decades earlier, were reestablished.

### Private Events - the Sauna

#### Introduction

Discussion of "private events" will be limited to one item, namely, the use of the sauna by Estonians. Certainly, other occurrences that could be defined as private are evident, but it is not my intention to delve into individual, and perhaps highly personal ways, of enacting ethnicity. For one, individual themes are absolved of a community-oriented



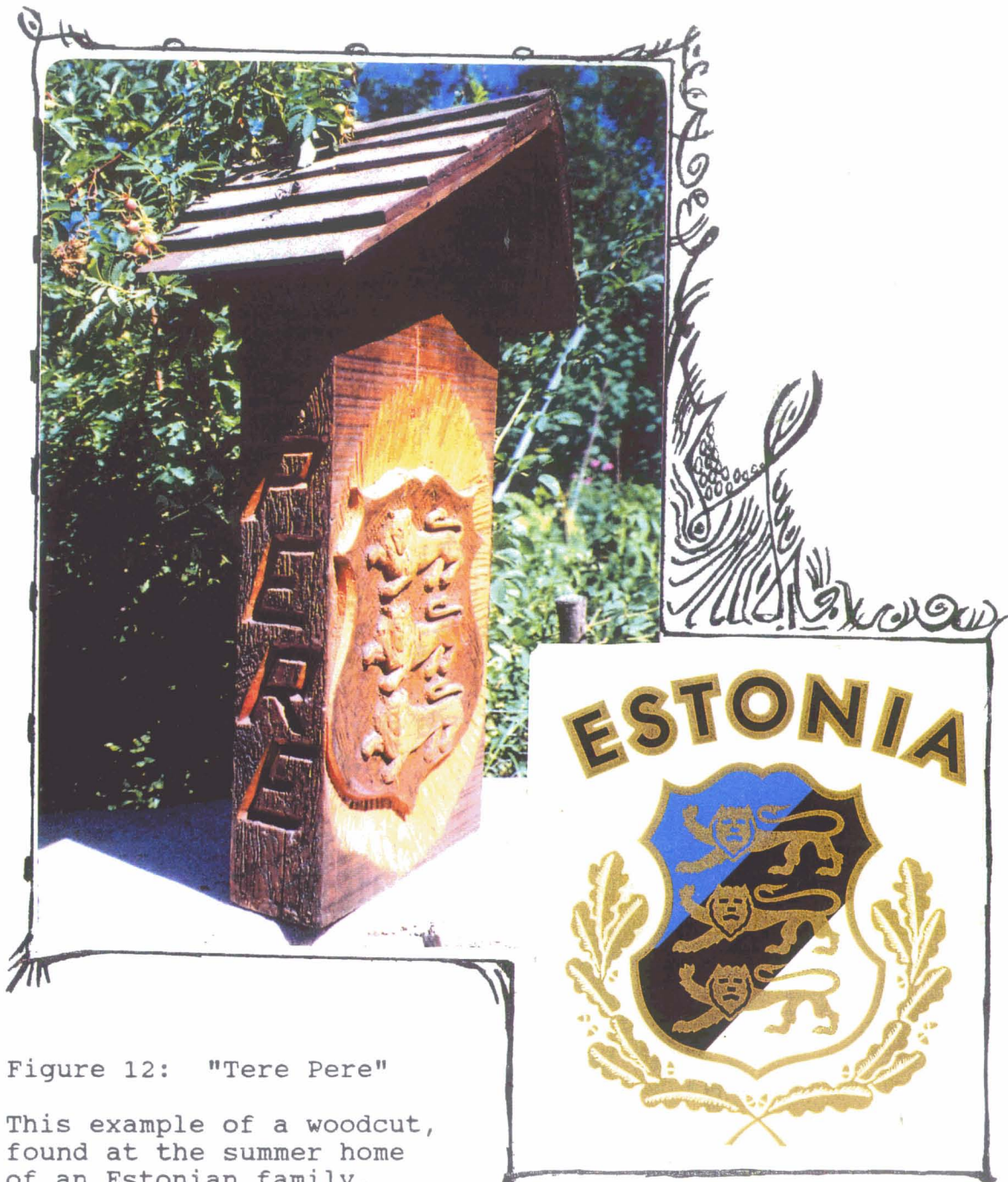


Figure 12: "Tere Pere"

This example of a woodcut, found at the summer home of an Estonian family, demonstrates an articulation of two symbols. The emblem

depicted is the National Crest of Estonia. Carved in the sides are the words "Tere Pere," translated as "Hello People." People, in this case, does not refer to individuals, but to the people of Estonia. The lower right photo is a decal and highlights the blue, black, and white pattern.



Figure 13: "Tartu-Eesti"

Personalized license plates on two Estonian vehicles further illustrate Estonian symbols. "Eesti" is the Estonian name for Estonia. "Tartu" is the name of the university city that was the seat of many important events during the National Awakening. Both express, in an emotionally powerful way, a connection with the homeland.

base and are therefore out of our frame of reference. Perhaps more importantly, such a discussion can be construed as something approaching an invasion of privacy. The sauna, therefore, remains as the single detail that lends itself to analysis.

### The Sauna

The Sauna is as much a part of the culture of Estonians as "mom and apple pie" are in the United States. "Sauna" is an Estonian and Finnish word for a wooden room traditionally containing a stove laden with stones. These stones are heated and subsequently doused with water resulting in an alternating dry heat-steam bath house.

Sauna use is widespread in Estonia and many of the refugee Estonians strove to recreate these conditions. One Estonian, an electrical engineer, designed a sauna heating unit that was subsequently marketed. For this reason, five of the forty-two Estonian households now contain saunas. In addition, two saunas were found at the summer homes of Estonians, though one individual has subsequently sold his summer residence at Hadashville. After selling this property, he built a new sauna room in the basement of his Winnipeg residence.

This Hadashville sauna was unique in its rustiness and in many ways sums up the Estonian's view of the sauna. Granite stones from the adjacent Whitemouth River were heated



red-hot by a little wood stove, a tin ladle at hand to cover the stones with water. The instant vaporization produced intense wet heat, the experience of which is viewed almost religiously. Hand bound birch branch "vihts" were at hand to whip one's body to increase circulation, and then the inevitable dip into the November chilled Whitemouth River.

Though this description may seem somewhat affected, it does illustrate an important point. The home made sauna house, the hand tied "vihts", the comradery of the participants and, in general, a traditional Estonian atmosphere, were a way of reaffirming Estonianess. Generally, Estonians seem protective of the sauna tradition. They tend to view the commercially made, dry heat saunas in common use in Canada, as a good idea that, unfortunately, just doesn't work.

### Events in the Extended Network

#### Introduction

This concluding event-related section will address the phenomena of Estonian ethnic festivals in Canada and, to a lesser degree, throughout the world. Though the arrival of the Estonian political refugees numerically bolstered Canadian Estonian numbers, resulting in fairly organized, sustaining urban communities, up until recently, there had been little interaction between them. As such, the festivals provided the



Figure #14: "Sauna and Viht"

These two photographs depict material aspects of a lifestyle Estonians have recreated in Winnipeg. The Sauna (top photo) is one of five found in Estonian households. The lower photo is of a birch branch viht. Vihts are used to whip oneself, ostensibly to increase circulation, but, with the exception of Finns, they are rarely used by non-Estonians. As such they can be viewed as a boundary maintaining device.

means by which a degree of organization between the communities could occur. In addition, the festivals were based on tradition, thereby providing the Estonians a means by which to maintain their ethnocultural community abroad. But the importance of the festivals go beyond "content-oriented" themes. Other factors of anthropological relevance also come into play.

### Estonian Festivals

We have suggested that urban Canadian-Estonians, particularly in those centres listed in Table IV, consisted of organized ethnic communities. When it became clear that their desired return to an independent Estonia was becoming increasingly less conceivable, the wheels were set in motion to create a Pan-Canadian Estonian ethnic identity. The Estonian festivals were viewed as the vehicles by which to attain this goal.

It is possible to draw parallels between the growth of the festivals and the more politically-oriented themes that the Winnipeg Estonians now engage in. The Black Ribbon Day demonstrations and the Canadian Estonian festivals are both comparatively recent phenomena. Both of these occurrences may again be viewed in terms of Hobsbawm's millenarian-revolutionary continuum. Early in their tenure in Canada, while the goal of returning to an independent Estonia was still tenable, the Estonians seemed content to mesh with the

Canadian population in a fairly veiled fashion. Other than "unusual" names and accents, which the society at large could not readily identify, little served to distinguish them from the mainstream-at least at first glance. They were content to privately engage in "Estonianess" in ways and for reasons previously discussed. When it became increasingly clear that a return to Estonia was, at best, unlikely, the more politically-oriented phenomena, such as Black Ribbon Day demonstrations and the Estonian Festivals, began to appear. A number of factors deserve attention at this juncture.

The vitality of individual Estonian communities seems to be declining, at least for the smaller ones, owing to the aging of their members, most of which are composed of the political refugees. It seems somehow inconsistent that while these individual communities are declining, the Estonian Canadian population, as a whole, is seemingly flourishing. This is at least partially attributable to the fact that Estonians are now socially more visible. In line with Hobsbawm's millenarian-revolutionary continuum, it seems that Estonians are no longer content to wait for their utopia. A political mandate, a mandate now expressed to Canadian society, is becoming increasingly more evident. The festivals, then, not only provide a means of continuing Estonian ethnocultural activities, but they also extol to the host society who they are and exactly why they are here. In addition, the festivals have served to redefine "Estonianess".

Boundaries were present prior to the existence of the festivals, but the insider/outsider dichotomy has become more graphically represented through this boundary maintaining device.

Because Toronto is the nucleus of Estonians in Canada, it is not surprising that this community was responsible for the organization of many of the festivals. It is of use to describe a few of these festivals-their organization, content, or other ethnically notable aspects-in order to determine their part in explaining Estonian ethnicity. Materials for this description will include this researcher's own observations of the 1984 Estonian World Festival and Karl Aun's description of Estonian festivals. For a more complete treatment of Estonian festivals, refer to Aun, (1985:133-141).

All Estonian Associations throughout Canada have their Estonian Lutheran Congregation and conduct Independence Day celebrations. In the larger communities, particularly Toronto, one can view a number of other celebrations or festivals and note the existence of numerous clubs and voluntary associations. As we have suggested, these communities existed in something of a vacuum. Little interaction, particularly on an organizational level, occurred between Canadian Estonian communities. By the mid-sixties, in line with a more political orientation, Estonians were beginning to assume a decidedly forward attitude.

During the World Exposition of 1967, the Montreal Estonian community was requested to perform for "Meeting Day". The Estonian ethnic performance included a choir, folk dance, rhythmic gymnastics exhibition and, in common with all Estonian ethnic celebrations, it closed with the singing of the national anthem. This performance was unique in that the location of the Estonian performance had been switched from its initially slated location to a smaller complex at the last minute. Aun (1985:135) offers that, for some unstipulated reason, national flags were not allowed at the alternative location. The Estonians, wishing to make a political statement through cultural means, adapted their dress to include the blue, black, and white national colors, and utilized tricolor ribbons for the rhythmic gymnastic performances. These stances aimed at symbolically disclosing to the host society something of their nationalist posture.

1972 marked the first Estonian World Festival. Between July 8th and 16th, Estonians from around the world (excepting Estonia), journeyed to Toronto for this event. Included were 3,000 European Estonians, the majority from Sweden. This festival included a number of cultural events, but it also served to draw external attention to the Estonians. Media coverage was prominent and Canadians were slowly beginning to understand who the Estonians were.

Baltimore was the site for the 1976 World Festival and was followed by Stockholm in 1980. Aun suggests that 1,500

Canadian Estonians made the journey to Stockholm (1985:141). 1984 saw the return of the Festival to Toronto and over 20,000 were in attendance at these events. This figure is comparable to the entire Canadian Estonian population but Aun (1985:141) relates that perhaps one-third of this total was composed of non-Estonians. Still, this total gives an indication as to the strength of Estonian ties.

The 1984 festival included 140 events ranging from the more traditional choirs, fine art and handicraft exhibits, and theatre presentations, to disco parties for the "younger generation" at the top of the C.N. tower. Six thousand attended dinner at the Toronto International Centre, reuniting friends and relatives that, in some cases, had not been seen since Estonia or the displaced person camps of Germany. In addition to the more culturally oriented themes, there occurred strong political overtones. "Freedom for Estonia" was a common theme throughout the 1984 festival.

In addition to the Estonian World Festivals (the most recent of which occurred in Melbourne, Australia in 1988) there also occurred "west coast" Estonian festivals. These festivals occur more frequently than the World Festivals (i.e. once every two years). The west coast Estonian festivals alternate between university campuses in Vancouver, Portland, Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. As with the Estonian World Festivals, these festivals are a means of promoting





Figure 15: "Esto-Fests"

These two photographs depict two of the most important key symbols of Estonians. The top photo was taken at a West Coast Estonian ethnic festival. The cottage pictured shows a perch constructed to form the prow of a Viking ship. The second photo was taken at the 1984 Toronto World Festival. In the background, one can again view the Estonian National Flag.



ethnic solidarity, maintaining cultural traditions, acquainting non-Estonians with Estonians...and promoting a nationalistic, independence-oriented, political stance.

Estonian events, be they formal, semi-formal, private, or extended, are suffused with symbols. As we have seen, these symbols owe their origins to particular points in history. These would include the period of Estonian autonomy prior to Teutonic conquest in 1227, and intermittent points during the nineteenth and twentieth century. This latter interval would include the years surrounding the National Awakening and the period of Estonian independence.

It is clear that particular social conditions, such as the influence of French liberal nationalism and the deterioration of Czarist Russia, have had effects on Estonia. Though these conditions have subsequently shifted, the symbols that arose during those times have maintained their effect. Furthermore, these symbols have remained remarkably consistent both in form and meaning.

The Estonian Independence Day Festivities provide an example of how these symbols function. The individuals partaking in the event are united by similar conditions and the experience of a common history. The group is further consolidated by the community's remembrance of nationhood. We have seen that National flags, other blue, black, and white articles, and Viking ships are present at the event. The key symbols provide the members with a Geertzian conception, the

meaning of which could be translated as "Freedom For Estonia." Through ritual, involving the symbols of the national anthem and the speeches defaming Soviet occupation, the community's members conception of a free Estonia is confirmed.

Estonian Lutheran Church Services, the Deportation Day and Black Ribbon Day Memorials, and Festivals in the extended network, further suggest community adherence to Estonian sovereignty. These latter events, in accordance with Hobsbawm's millenarian/revolutionary sequence, have elements more in common with revolutionary movements. A political strategy associated with Estonian festivals is the portrayal of their disenfranchised state, to others.

The Estonian community's events and their symbolic underpinnings, then, are notable for a number of reasons. First, the symbols provide the conception of a free Estonia while the associated rituals confirm this proposition. In addition, political statements concerning an occupied Estonia are presented. On a community level, these statements reinforce Hobsbawmian "faith" while simultaneously presenting the plight of their disenfranchised state to the host society. Finally, group events unify the community and concurrently support ethnic boundaries.

## CHAPTER IV

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY/ANALYSIS

As we have seen, Estonia has had a long and rather involved history. Prior to 1227, Estonia consisted of a loosely-knit federation. Though not politically centralized, Estonia, during this period, was autonomous. Due in large measure to its geographic location, at the hub of a number of economic crossroads, Estonia has been burdened by a series of externally initiated conflicts. Various protagonists, including the Teutons in 1227, the Danes, the Swedes, the Polish-Lithuanian State, Russians, Nazis, and now the Soviets, have vied for control of the strategically located little land. Between 1227 and the present, Estonia has existed as an independent nation, governed by her own people, for only 20 years. But these years of independence and the social conditions leading up to it, are crucial themes in understanding present day Estonian ethos.

Estonian independence owes much to particular 19th century social factors. Czarist rule, commencing in the early 1700's, ultimately resulted in the severe deterioration of the Estonian peasant's condition. But as the peasants condition declined, so did the estates that they were tied to. Reforms

were initiated and, by 1820, Estonian serfs were freed. In 1868, rent services were abolished. These two factors, in combination with subsequent reforms that allowed Estonians to compete both politically and judicially with the nobility, eventually resulted in the rise of an economically independent class of Estonian freeholders.

The rise of education standards was also a key element and resulted in a highly literate population. Estonians, therefore, were not intellectually paralyzed and were readily able to apprehend and respond to the ideas of the times. As an historical outpost to the West, with cultural orientations that likewise had a westward focus, it is not surprising that the prevailing ideas, accepted by Estonians, had their epicentre in the West. Two themes, occurring on a Pan-European level, were particularly important in their influence on Estonia. Initiated by the French Revolution, the ideas of nationalism and nationhood were quickly apprehended by Estonians. The combination of these factors resulted in the phenomena of the "National Awakening." As Uustalu puts it, this new fact, "...linked and inspired every political, economic, and literary activity...this awakening of national sentiment" (1952:122).

It is useful to restate Durkheim's premise of "social facts" and use it in conjunction with the phenomena of the National Awakening. Durkheim argues that social facts involve, "...ways of acting, thinking, and feeling, which

possess the remarkable property of existing outside the consciousness of the individual...not only are these types of behaviour and thinking external to the individual, but they are endued with a compelling and coercive power by virtue of which, whether he wishes or not, they impose themselves upon him" (1982:51). We have previously argued that once this Estonian national sentiment was in place, it did not completely lose focus, even though pressured by external forces. It is probable that Durkheim's element of silent coercion had a role in the continuing vitality of the National Awakening. Similarly, the Faehlmann and Kreutzwald authored Kalevipoeg, the first Estonian newspapers, Estonian song festivals, and the blue, black, and white, tri-color, all likely owed their origins to the compelling social fact of national sentiment.

External forces nearly quashed the Estonian nationalist movement. The Russian directives of denationalization and Pan-Slavism paralyzed the education system and the newspapers--both effective communicators of national sentiment. But the movement went underground, to resurface at the sponsorship of second generation nationals. With an intellectualized focus, the movement gained momentum, particularly when Jaan Tõnisson joined the disparate views of Estonian nationals. Tõnisson argued that, "...the development of a people depended on its consciousness of being a nation, and that this feeling of

unity would inspire a higher morality" (see Uustalu, 1952:144).

The movement came to a standstill when the Russian Revolution and the introduction of martial law froze Estonian public life. Slowly, however, Estonia began to show sparks of revival. The nationalistic sentiments, with cultural themes created by, for, and about Estonians, would simply not be put down. The First World War again curbed the Estonian nationalist movement, but Estonia benefitted from the fortunes of fate. The war did not directly touch Estonian soil until comparatively late and Estonia had time to organize military forces to combat the imminent Soviet attack. Estonia declared independence on February 24, 1918, and, after two years of war with the Soviets, its government maintained functions up until the Second World War.

Along with the events preceding and including the National Awakening, the period of independence is likewise crucial to understanding present-day Estonian ethos. Basically, the nationalistically influenced Estonian cultural traditions "took-off." Song festivals, for example, included one-tenth of the population, or 100,000 people, giving an indication of Estonian adherence to these sentiments. Incidentally, these festivals continue in Estonia, and in light of Estonia's ongoing directive of self-determination, 300,000-500,000 Estonians have been found in attendance (see Shipler, 1989:60-61). Singing the older anthems and new

nationalistic songs, these performances may constitute a symbolic signal in the Estonian demonstration of their desired autonomy.

Essentially, the inter-war years found an independent Estonia attempting to gain some measure of equilibrium. Slowly, the economy stabilized, and the recently liberated population, now conscious of their own cultural history, were left to embrace their Esto-centered traditions. Remaining, and underlying these traditions, were the nationalistic sentiments of the National Awakening.

It is, therefore, not surprising that when the Molotov-Ribbentrop non-aggression pact was signed, and when Soviet domination constituted an impending reality, some 80,000 Estonians escaped. As was the case with the botched Soviet coup of 1924, Estonians had no desire to remain in an occupied Estonia. This adherence to political freedom, grounded in Estonia's social history and further animated by nationalistic symbols, is a very real factor which shapes the ethos of displaced Estonians.

During the post-war years, some 50,000-60,000 displaced Estonians lived aimless lives in the deportation camps of West Germany. In addition, some 24,000 were to be found in Sweden. These two groups differed in their means of arrival to North America. Essentially, the Swedish-Estonians, who had fared comparatively well, departed Sweden due to rumours of a war in which Sweden was to have maintained friendly relations with



the Soviets. Again, we are confronted with the Estonian ideal of political freedom-Sweden had recognized the Soviet annexation of the Baltic nations, and Estonians, fearing repatriation, opted to leave an otherwise comfortable existence.

The Estonians in Germany, having not the monetary means to independently emigrate, signed contracts with varying nations who were in need of post-war boom workers. Canada, the United States, and Australia, were the primary destinations. All of these nations were far removed, both politically and geographically, from the Soviet Union. Again, political freedom was a primary motivator.

In terms of Canadian settlement patterns, a couple of tendencies are worthy of mention. Out of the 18,810 Estonians reported in the 1971 Canadian Census, the overwhelming majority (15,935) are urban. Furthermore, over 13,000 of the entire Canadian Estonian population, reside in Ontario. It is clear, then, that the numbers of Canadian Estonians are small. And because there has been no new influx of Estonians since the arrival of the political refugees, in the early 1950's, it is likely that this population will remain small.

When one considers the Winnipeg Estonians, the diminutive nature of the Estonian population becomes even more glaringly magnified. Only seventy-three Estonians reside in Winnipeg. Moreover, only forty-two Estonian households exist within the

geographic parameters of Winnipeg, and these residences do not constitute a neighborhood assemblage in any social sense.

Parallels between Winnipeg Estonian residence patterns and occupational characteristics can be drawn. The workplace does not act as a forum of interaction between Estonians. No collective blue-collar sentiments exist. Along with the decentralization of Winnipeg Estonian residences, this fact would initially point to assimilation, and not integration. But I would argue that Winnipeg Estonians constitute a tightly-knit ethnic enclave and are anything but assimilated. It seems that solutions to deciphering the keys of Winnipeg Estonian ethnicity cannot be found in these previously described structural arrangements.

In delineating particular aspects of Winnipeg Estonian organizations and events, we can finally glimpse some features that do support ethnicity. These organizations and events have particular commonalities. If one can discover what exactly anchors these commonalities-discern what it is that "charges" the lifeways of Estonians that are ethnically unique-then the solution to this ethnic puzzle may result.

Two formal organizations exist in the Winnipeg Estonian community. The first, the Winnipeg Estonian Society, was likely founded through the purposive actions of a few social catalysts. There did not appear to be any individual gains associated with being an executive in this organization. The Society is responsible for the organization of the Estonian

Independence Day festivities and is involved in most of the formal events. But, since members of the Winnipeg Estonian community are also members of the Winnipeg Estonian Society, benefits can be considered to be communal benefits, existing outside the consciousness of the individual. One is, again, reminded of the compelling nature associated with Durkheim's "social facts." One question that the reader should consider at this juncture, a question which will hopefully be answered by the conclusion of this thesis, is; What actually prompted these social catalysts to form the Winnipeg Estonian Society, and why do Winnipeg Estonian Society members, remain members, and continue in their event-related functions?

The other formal organization is the Winnipeg Estonian Lutheran Congregation. In common with the Winnipeg Estonian Society, one community member has felt compelled to complete ministerial exams and now presides over the three annual services. The contents of the services also highlight particular aspects of Estonian ethnicity. The service is entirely conducted in the Estonian language, including a solemn prayer for the homeland, and in general, the pastor's sermon includes elements of nationalistic sentiment. Moreover, the verse of the Estonian National Anthem, "God Watch Over Estonia," is sung, and at the conclusion of the service, ethnic food is served.

Formal events, such as the Independence Day festivities, and the defiling themes presented during Deportation Day, and

International Black Ribbon Day, are calendric phenomena that diverge little from the themes associated with church services. Always incorporating the Estonian National flag, or other blue, black, and white objects, they include utopian elements and the resolve for Estonians to maintain their "faith." The hope is that an independent Estonia may once again exist. These events have taken on a more revolutionary posture in recent years, probably due to the shifting political conditions in Soviet Estonia.

Pelto and Pelto (1983:200) have argued that information is often embedded in non-material social action. Estonian semi-formal, private, and extended events, in common with formal events, are action settings. Estonian events seem to be the only ethnical elements that serve to demarcate Estonians from the societal mainstream. It is, therefore, likely that information is embedded in the non-material social actions, or events, of the Estonian community. Let us briefly outline the common themes found in the four types of Estonian events.

A quick inventory of the micro-events and symbols found within the formal events would include Viking ships, food, national flags and anthems, speeches involving independence, and personal emblems. All of the symbols involved, serve to provide a conception, or the meaning of the symbol (see Geertz, 1979:78). Continuing Geertz's line of reasoning, these conceptions are confirmed through the ritual process

(1979:86) resulting in an intellectually reasonable ethos (1979:87).

But what do the symbols and rituals actually convey? It should be apparent that Estonian ethnicity is heavily endowed with nationalism. Though a return to an independent Estonia, particularly the initial years of Estonian tenure, seems unlikely, "...in these plastic dramas men attain their faith as they portray it" (Geertz, 1979:87). The Hobsbawmian utopianism, the Estonian "faith", is thus attained through Estonian key symbols and the associated rituals of Estonian formal events.

The events in the extended network, such as song festivals, West Coast festivals, and International Estonian festivals, mirror the microcosm of the formal events of the Winnipeg Estonian community. Similarly, most Estonian communities include the events of Independence Day, Black Ribbon Day, and Deportation Day. These events are not particularly overt ethnic strategies designed to reach the apex of a consumption-oriented society. Rather, Estonian representation in the upper echelons of Canadian society, both occupationally and educationally, may be viewed as a by-product of a series of social facts, grounded in nationalistic sentiment and associated Estonian ethnocentrism. These sentiments are anchored and given force by particular key symbols.

Lessa and Vogt have argued that one culture's symbolic analogy is another culture's puzzle (1979:90). Additionally, symbols evoke powerful emotions, both from common historical experiences and social conditions, and from universal features of human psychology (Lessa and Vogt, 1979:91). Sherry Ortner has furthered these statements and has attempted to delineate "key symbols." She argues that key symbols are indicated by the following:

- 1) The natives suggest that 'X' is important,
- 2) 'X' arouses either positive or negative, but never indifferent emotions,
- 3) 'X' is found in a variety of social contexts,
- 4) there is a greater cultural elaboration surrounding 'X', and,
- 5) there are greater cultural restrictions surrounding 'X' (adapted from Ortner, 1979:95-96).

I would venture that the previously mentioned symbols of the formal and extended events, constitute the key symbols for Estonian communities. One symbol, the Viking Ship, owes its origin to the pre-Teutonic period of autonomy. The other symbols, the blue, black, and white flags and objects, song festivals, and anthems, owe their origins to the National Awakening and the period of independence. Essentially, they convey the "Freedom for Estonia" proposition.

Symbols can also provide for particular strategies, or programs for social action in relation to culturally defined goals (see Ortner, 1979:95). In these terms, one can view Estonian symbols as the catalysts which compel Estonians to act. As such, the Winnipeg Estonian community can be viewed

as a series of social facts, spurred by key symbols, that ultimately result in the social phenomena of Estonian ethnicity.

The formal and extended events are calendric phenomena that are endowed with sacred meaning (see Leach, 1979:221-229). But Estonian Independence Day, Black Ribbon Day, Deportation Day, and the three Estonian church services, total but six days in any year. For a small community, there seems to occur the requirement of some reserve support. The non-calendric, less sacred, less compelling, semi-formal and private events are this support group. These are not just dinner parties and saunas. From the viewpoint of the Estonians, they are Estonian dinner parties and Estonian saunas, in Estonian locations, surrounded and defined by Estonian symbols. Again, many of these symbols involve national colors, and consequently, reinforce national sentiment. These events further integrate Winnipeg Estonians and perhaps answer why Estonians, though they outwardly appear to be assimilated, are actually not.

In conclusion, the Winnipeg Estonians are an alive, tightly-knit, ethnic subculture, at the core of which lie particular key symbols. Though Estonians are not socially visible and are not occupationally or residentially distinct, boundaries do exist. These boundaries are maintained through the compelling nature of Estonian key symbols which, in turn, create social facts. The combination of these social facts

results in the social phenomena of Estonian symbolic ethnicity. Symbolic ethnicity, in this case, is not a residual or tertiary phenomena as others have suggested (see Gans, 1979), but a case which illustrates the primacy of symbolic ethnicity.



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## APPENDIX

TABLE I

## Immigration of Estonians to Canada (1922-1965)

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1922 ...	12	1937 ...	2	1952 ...	934
1923 ...	33	1938 ...	9	1953 ...	451
1924 ...	65	1939 ...	6	1954 ...	290
1925 ...	27	1940 ...	1	1955 ...	185
1926 ...	77	1941 ...	1	1956 ...	162
1927 ...	110	1942 ...	1	1957 ...	221
1928 ...	107	1943 ...	2	1958 ...	122
1929 ...	98	1944 ...	1	1959 ...	88
1930 ...	83	1945 ...	7	1960 ...	134
1931 ...	8	1946 ...	8	1961 ...	52
1932 ...	0	1947 ...	282	1962 ...	51
1933 ...	1	1948 ...	1,903	1963 ...	63
1934 ...	2	1949 ...	2,945	1964 ...	44
1935 ...	3	1950 ...	1,949	1965 ...	59
1936 ...	5	1951 ...	4,573		

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Source: The Royal Commission of Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Volume 4 (Book 4), The Cultural Contributions of the Other Ethnic Groups, Table A-1. "Ethnic Origin of Immigrants-Canada, 1900-1965, pp. 238-245, Queens Printer for Canada, Ottawa, October 23, 1969.



TABLE II

Population of Estonians in Canada  
(Census Years: 1961, 1971, 1981, 1986)

<u>Census Year</u>	<u>Single Ethnic Response</u>	<u>Multiple Ethnic Response</u>	<u>Total</u>
1961	-	-	18,550
1971	-	-	18,810
1981	15,915	-	-
1986	13,200	7,330	20,530

Note: For Census years 1961 and 1971, multiple ethnic responses are reduced to single responses. The 1981 data utilizes only single response data and is therefore not comparable to the 1961 and 1971 materials.

Sources: 1961 Census of Canada, Catalogue:92-545, (Vol.1-Part 2), Series 1.2, Bulletin 1.2-5, Table 35-1, "pop. by ethnic group and sex, for provinces and territories, 1961", in Population: Ethnic Groups (30-11-1962).

1971 Census of Canada, Catalogue:92-723, (Vol.1-Part 3), Bulletin 1.3-2, Table 2-1, "Population by Ethnic Group and Sex, For Canada and Provinces, 1971," in Population: Ethnic Groups, October, 1973.

1981 Census of Canada, Catalogue:92-911, Table 1-3, "Population by Ethnic Origin and Sex, for Canada and Provinces, 1981," in Population: Ethnic Origin, Feb. 1984.

1986 Census of Canada, Catalogue:93-154, Table 2-193, "Characteristics of Selected Ethnic Groups, Showing Single and Multiple Origin by Sex, for Canada, in Dimension: Profile of Ethnic Groups, February 1989.

TABLE III

Distribution of Estonians in Canada by Census Year -  
Provincial and Territorial Breakdown

Census Year	Ont.	B.C.	Que.	Alta.	MB	N.S.	Sask.	Nfld.	N.B.	Yukon	P.E.I.	N.W.T.
1961	13,106	1,986	1,546	1,115	250	157	150	108	106	10	6	0
1971	13,730	2,265	1,440	845	185	140	100	15	50	15	10	15
1981	11,800	2,065	745	790	180	125	75	10	65	35	-	10
1986	14,225	3,160	1,040	1,485	150	240	80	15	130	-	-	5

Note: See comments for Table II.

Sources: 1961 Census of Canada, Catalogue:92-545, (Vol.1-Part 2), Series 1.2, Bulletin 1.2-5, Table 35-1, "Population by Ethnic Group and Sex, for Provinces and Territories, 1961", in Population: Ethnic Groups (30-11-1962).

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1986 Census of Canada, Catalogue:93-154, Table 2-193, "Characteristics of Selected Ethnic Groups, Showing Single and Multiple Origins by Sex, for Canada, 1986, in Dimensions: Profile of Ethnic Groups, February 1989.

TABLE IV

Selected Distribution of Estonians  
in  
Census Metropolitan Areas (1986)

Census Metropolitan Areas	Total
Toronto	9,595
Vancouver	2,135
Montreal	890
Hamilton	760
Calgary	500
Ottawa	475
St. Catherines	435
Edmonton	380
Thunder Bay	305
Victoria	250
Kitchener	210

Source: 1985 Census of Canada, Catalogue 93:156, Tables: 9-1, 9-2, 9-4, 9-5, 9-7, 9-9, 9-15, 9-16, 9-17, 9-19, 9-20, "Population by Selected Ethnic Origins, Showing Single and Multiple Origins by Sex, for Census Metropolitan Areas, 1986 Census" in Dimensions: Census Metropolitan Areas, March 1989.

TABLE V  
Population of Estonians in Winnipeg

Year	Winnipeg Estonian Society Figures	Census Metropolitan Area Figures
1929	23	-
1930	23	-
1931	23	-
1932	23	-
1933	23	-
1934	23	-
1935	23	-
1936	23	-
1937	-	-
1938	-	-
1939	-	-
1940	-	-
1941	-	-
1942	-	-
1943	-	-
1944	-	-
1945	-	-
1946	-	-
1947	-	-
1948	47	-
1949	80	-
1950	102	-
1951	111	-
1952	138	-
1953	160	-
1954	152	-
1955	150	-
1956	148	-

TABLE V continued  
Population of Estonians in Winnipeg

Year	Winnipeg Estonian Society Figures	Census Metropolitan Area Figures
1957	127	-
1958	-	-
1959	96	-
1960	-	-
1961	-	-
1962	82	-
1963	-	-
1964	-	-
1965	78	-
1966	75	-
1967	75	-
1968	-	-
1969	-	-
1970	-	-
1971	-	-
1972	-	-
1973	-	-
1974	-	-
1975	-	-
1976	-	-
1977	-	-
1978	-	-
1979	-	-
1980	73	-
1981	-	75
1982	-	-
1983	-	-
1984	76	-
1985	74	-

TABLE V continued

## Population of Estonians in Winnipeg

Year	Winnipeg Estonian Society Figures	Census Metropolitan Area Figures
1986	75	75
1987	-	-
1988	-	-
1989	73	-
1990	73	-

TABLE VI

Post-Secondary Qualifications  
and  
Occupational Characteristics -  
Estonians in Canada

Total population 15 years and over	16,845
Less than Grade 9	1,850
Grades 9-13 without secondary certificate	3,105
Grades 9-13 with secondary certificate	1,920
Trades certificate or diploma	395
Other non-university education without certificate	1,125
Other non-university education with certificate	2,470
University without degree	2,590
University with degree	3,385

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All Occupations	9,925
Professional and related occupations	2,785
Clerical and related occupations	1,775
Managerial, Administrative and related occupations	1,365
Sales Occupations	950
Service Occupations	715
Product fabricating, assembling and repairing occupations	555
Construction trades occupations	450
Processing occupations	370
Primary occupations	340
Other occupations	615

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Adapted from: 1986 Census of Canada, Catalogue:93-154, Tables 2-195 and 2-197, "Characteristics of Selected Ethnic Groups, showing Single and Multiple Origins by Sex, for Canada, 1986 Census," in Dimensions: Profile of Ethnic Groups, February 1989.

TABLE VII-A

Winnipeg Estonians: Occupational Characteristics  
(1st generation)

<u>Former Occupation (Estonia)</u>	<u>Present (or most recent) Occupation (Winnipeg)</u>
-	R.C.M.P.
-	Health Inspector
-	Hospital Worker
-	Upholsterer
Lawyer	Leatherworker
Military Officer	Picture-framer
-	Construction Co. Owner
Newspaper Editor	Carpenter
-	Professor
-	Physiotherapist
-	Forestry Personel
-	Autobody Worker
Police Officer	Millworker
Farmer	Processing
-	O.R. Nurse
-	Electrical Engineer
-	Bus Driver
-	Independent Photographer
-	Farmer
-	Manitoba Hydro Foreman
-	Draftsman
-	Bus Driver
-	Manitoba Hydro Foreman
-	Physiotherapist
Military Officer	-



TABLE VII-B

Winnipeg Estonians: Occupational and Educational Characteristics  
(2nd generation)

<u>Present Occupation</u>	<u>Level of Education Completed</u>
Actor/Writer	University graduate
High School Teacher	University graduate
Landscape Architect	University graduate
Engineer	University graduate
City of Winnipeg Employee	Secondary certificate
High School Teacher	University graduate
Management/Sales	University graduate
Bus Driver	Secondary certificate
-	Secondary student
-	Secondary student
Dentist	University graduate
R.C.M.P.	-
Zoologist	University graduate
Post-Office Worker	Secondary certificate

